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The First Exhibition of the Twenty-First Century—*Lumbung 1 (documenta fifteen)*, What Happened, and What It Might Mean Two Years On

Charles Esche^{a,b*}

^a*Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands*

^b*University of the Arts, London, United Kingdom*

It is obviously a little dramatic to claim *Lumbung 1 (documenta fifteen)* as the first exhibition of the twenty-first century. This milestone is drawn from the Western Christian calendar and as such it is completely arbitrary and culturally specific. Still, art history and other fields have a track record of using the turn of a century to signify a break with the past and the start of a new lineage.¹ As a provocation then, I wish to suggest that *Lumbung 1* in Kassel challenged a paradigm of contemporary art that was built on modernism. It pointed instead towards a different horizon, not only for the forms of art it presented but also for its institutional frameworks. In doing so, it sought to shift the conceptual and experiential basis of relations between artworks and the diversity of visitors that might see an exhibition.

Lumbung was a tumultuous and discordant exhibition that has still not settled in the collective imagination. Even its name is disputed with some insisting on *documenta fifteen* in honour of its past, while its curators and supporters often refer to *Lumbung 1* to bypass precisely those demands that the traditions of contempor-