

# TEXTS ANDSCRIPTS 20072012

By crossing into this zone you agree to step outside a Euro-centric tradition of art, Globalisation, Colonisation and Biennials in order to develop another model, which we will call post autonomy



DAVID  
GOLDBERGER

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2012

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ANDSCRIPTS  
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**by DAVID GOLDENBERG**

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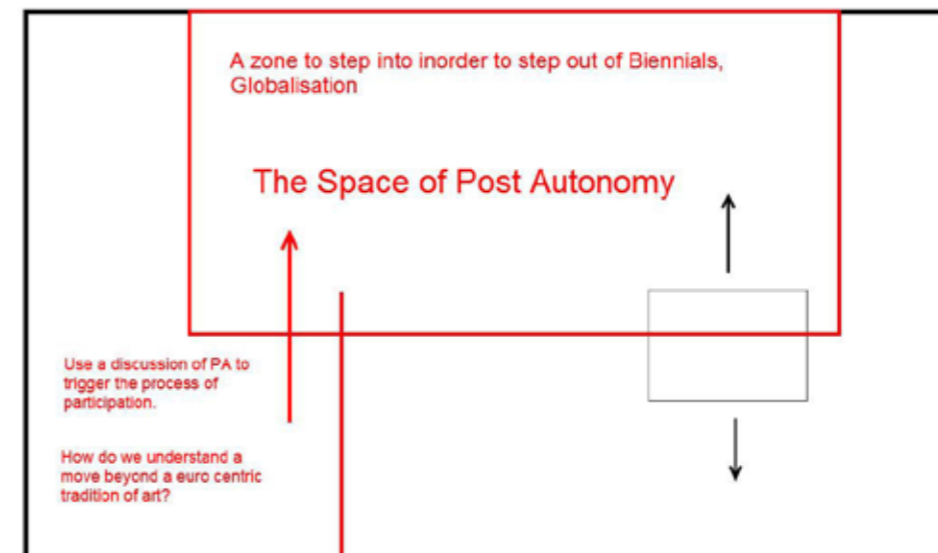
**The Passage From a Partial to a Complete Development of PA**  
text for unrealised project in India

**Post Autonomy Is Today**  
Arts Depot, Vienna, 2010

**Post Autonomy In Slow Motion**  
Baku Centre for Contemporary Art, 2011

**Manifesto of Post Autonomy**  
compiled by Maja Ciric from texts by David Goldenberg, 2010

**Post Autonomy Is Now 3**  
Mongolian Biennial, Genghis Khan Hotel, 2010



Walk/talk looking for signs of Globalisation within the built fabric of the Architectural space of a Global City - against the backdrop of a Biennial

Walk/photographic event - in a built architectural space, that has purposively constructed to embody a Global City where do we locate and read evidence of Globalisation?

Use buildings and views to trigger discussions

# THE PASSAGE FROM A PARTIAL TO A COMPLETE DEVELOPMENT OF PA

PA as another model of art within the context of Indian Modernism  
Breaking with a Euro centric tradition

## Introduction

The opening up of the space of Post Autonomy offers considerable difficulties and risks. Yet if we reach the conclusion that the existing form and description of art is unusable – if only because the use of the existing form replicates the Euro-centric construction of a model of art's inherent problems, namely its use in Colonising non European spaces and maintenance of the Nation State – then there appears little choice but to continue the labour of understanding the language and thinking which will make Post Autonomy intelligible, where PA assumes the possibility for a total fundamental rethinking of the model of art.

At the same time, two clear problems need to be confronted from the start: that there exists no other model of art than the Euro centric tradition, and that we are thinking through the development of another model from within the existing Euro-centric tradition. Nevertheless, PA signals the culmination of the trajectory of the development of a Euro centric tradition, so it is now possible to look back at a body of material that can now be seen to constitute a Euro-centric tradition, but also acknowledge that the tradition determined by autonomy has failed, and indeed that any further developments using autonomy as its basis's is futile; therefore, marking the possibility of other unforeseen trajectories. What are we to make of these developments and how do we realistically work through establishing another trajectory in art? At the very least, it is possible to recognise that PA offers a greater range of scenarios to read contemporary art than existing descriptions. Yet if we are prepared to commit to the actual potentiality opened up by PA, then we are faced with completely different concerns; in other words, how to move into and occupy the space of post autonomy? Again, we are faced with a number of considerable problems. How do we recognise and understand the gap we exist in, while working towards populating PA? Since what this points up very clearly is "*what is the relationship between PA and the Euro centric tradition of art?*" or between the existing situation of PA and the existing model of art. What language, terms and taxonomies do we use to describe and open up the space of Post Autonomy? What material do we use to construct the space and practice of PA? Does PA constitute another model, body of thinking or moment? In other words, can we take the easy option and replicate a pre-existing model or framework to embody PA? If we take seriously the challenge posed by PA, it is necessary to recognise that we simply cannot do this. We don't have the option of using concepts and terms determined within the first history of contemporary art shaped by autonomy. In my opinion, PA offers the scenario for recognising and working through the opportunity of starting again in order to move into and open up the space of PA. In other words, not only does PA offer a credible opportunity for change, it offers the space in the present for imagining how that change is possible. This takes into account Negri's realistic analysis of the occupation of cultural power and the acknowledgment of the lack of possible change today. How then do we articulate PA and go on to talk about PA and develop a practice that inhabits the space of PA? The various projects that I have staged need to be seen as a sort of rehearsal for working through these problems.

## Post Autonomy as a major competing description of contemporary art.

My interpretation and subsequent developments of what I refer to as the "mental image of Post Autonomy" derives from a basic scheme outlining a new description of contemporary art that has been given the general label of Post Autonomy, derived from Luhmann, and adopted and opened up by Lingner.

The narrative of Post Autonomy suggests a linguistic shift in the understanding and self-description of art way from Modernism to Autonomy, i.e the internal formation of the system of art. The trajectory of contemporary art shaped within the discourse of autonomy Lingner & Luhmann have suggested has reached a conclusion or "finalisation", where nothing else can be said or added to our understanding of the "autonomous formation of the art system".

To a certain extent both authors have hinted that not only has the existing or former model of art come to an end in terms of its development as an autonomous system, it has at the same time suffered an "internal collapse", something along the lines that art's initial strategy to unhook itself from existing powers and belief systems has failed, with the necessity to establish a completely new model. In that respect, this hints at something far more dramatic & fundamental than previous descriptions of art, because – if we take these implications to their obvious conclusion – then what we are looking at is something along the lines of a 2nd history of contemporary art. If we agree with this line of thinking, then since the trajectory of art has reached this conclusion, further developments into art are unable to use the former conceptual framework to describe these activities, and the trajectory into another cultural space. Instead a new thought scheme is required, a logic that prevents more than a mere rescue of this systems, so again we are faced with seeking far more drastic solutions.

The term PA, by signalling the exiting of that trajectory and entrance into another mental and cultural space, embodies all of these ramifications.

This narrative joins one of a number of narratives that have sought to describe and understand a Meta-history of art as defined within recent European history, where there is a clear beginning and end to its trajectory. Similarly, along with these narratives, PA speculates what takes place after the end of that trajectory.

## Post Autonomy signals the exiting from the self-description around autonomy and entry into another discourse

To address PA, we are required to confront many of the prohibitions into thinking into the notion of new models

Much of my thinking revolves around the implication of the moment on "exiting autonomy".

Preliminary thoughts. What can we make of the brief general statements that determine PA? How do we translate them into a workable scheme for a praxis? How do we understand and interpret this trajectory, shift and transition? And how do we understand the scheme of PA itself?

Given the implications of what I have just said, then in terms of moving forward we are faced with what appears to be considerable problems. How do we take this exiting and entrance into another intellectual and cultural space seriously, and go onto inhabit that space? Given the very considerable difficulty of comprehending the significance of what is implied by the end of the

system of art, it appears necessary to treat the trajectory in the form of a mental image and a fiction, which allows the possibility to open up thinking into the space on the basis of this meagre material and lack of space for developing other thoughts into culture. Does that mean that any exploration and articulation of PA is arbitrary and random? To both sets of questions I would say we are at too early a stage to understand the attributes of PA to answer these questions about PA. However, at present, we can best understand PA in terms of disrupting the thinking and staging of art. Yet at the same time, the implication of PA cannot be felt unless it contests existing space and descriptions.

For instance, how do we go about any simple articulation of thinking within the space of PA, without replicating the intellectual forms and behaviour from the model that we have exited? Further more what is obvious from the outset is that there is no existing template and master plan to allow us to simply enter and occupy this new space in terms of simply duplicating existing concepts and schemes. But the solution is obvious if we think about the problems inherent in the model of contemporary art itself and the shift to the key role of participatory practices within PA, which means that the mechanisms and processes for thinking and staging art are significantly different. I would go so far as to say that we don't know how thinking occurs at this early stage within this new configuration of participation.

### **Understanding the role of this “shift” on exiting autonomy.**

Use the implication of a shift as an opportunity to address key issues today, which existing descriptions are unable or unwilling to address, through setting up thought experiments, fictions and scenarios to imagine other potentialities.

In order to take full advantage of the implication offered by PA, I want to suggest that it can be used as a scheme to signal a fundamental and literal idea of a shift - away or beyond a Euro centric tradition, taxonomies and language, to address the role of art in a Global context through an exchange between different cultures. In that respect, the scheme offers the capacity for not only an internal interrogation from within the existing model but also the capacity for a model that is capable of being taken up and expanded outside that tradition. There are of course very obvious problems inherent in this proposition. For instance, in thinking beyond or outside the Euro centric tradition, what thinking and concepts are at hand to be able to understand the space we enter? And is it possible to think beyond or outside art through the thinking of art as determined within a Euro centric tradition of art? If we understand PA as a mechanism to disrupt thinking and practicing art, then there is a challenge to how thinking and staging art is possible, which is the reason for understanding Post Autonomy as a mental image as opposed to a concept, along with the challenge to put in place the means to articulate PA.

### **Progressing from a partial to a full development & understanding of PA**

Up until now, the research into opening up PA has revolved around its analyses from within the Euro centric tradition, and only inadequately within other cultural frameworks. Therefore, any understanding of Post autonomy in terms of something that exists on moving out or beyond a Euro-centric tradition is unknown. The existing developments through understanding the mechanisms of participatory practices within a range of local contexts and audiences can be seen as a partial development towards developing the language and concepts adequate for articulating PA. The further development of PA into a fully realisable scheme needs to be taken to the next stage within contexts that break or exist independently from a Euro centric tradition.

### ***How does a scheme that proposes breaking with a Euro-centric tradition as a basis for its beginning actually work?***

All narratives that have developed contemporary art in terms of Modernism have failed to address the negative aspects of Modernism, namely its role in colonising others/cultures while consolidating the Nation State. And since they are unable to resolve its inherent problems, there is therefore a necessity for a fundamentally different strategy and description. I would go so far as to say that it is impossible to use the existing descriptions and models to resolve existing problems, of addressing political and social problems in society, for the very reason that the existing models are not only developed from within the Euro centric tradition, they also set out to maintain the existing World order and centres of cultural power. Further more, the shift to the scheme of PA allows for the possibility of moving away from the burden of concerns that exists within the current descriptions of art, and to locate other concerns and issues; or rather I would say that existing concerns are determined within the existing Euro-centric tradition framework, so there is no other choice but to locate another framework.

All the above can be seen to make sense when we understand that participatory practices are key to PA, in so far that participatory practices break with the autonomy of the artist, art work and audience as shaped within a Euro centric tradition, the only methodology that starts with the break down of hierarchies and re negotiation of contemporary culture. Through participation there is an encouragement for different cultures to meet and renegotiate another space to share & take up further developments.

The thinking into PA has existed in the form of a “thought experiment” or “mimicking the formation of a new model” i.e. to understand PA is equivalent to working through the formation of a new model. In other words many of the projects have adopted the form of a visualisation methodology that seeks to mentally project an actor, whether myself or others, into a mental space we can call PA. At the back of this thinking is Negri's analysis of the process of gaining cultural power and the formation of cultural power itself.

Throughout the research into PA there has been a parallel examination into “The logic of participatory practices”, alongside a series of intermittent projects concerned with the move towards inhabiting the space of PA, that look at the mental and practical implication of establishing something equivalent to PA, where there is no clear idea for materialising a PA practice - the process of moving up to and crossing over the boundary line of a new model, staging projects imagining a space outside or beyond a Euro-centric tradition of art and visualising the space of PA.

# POST AUTONOMY TODAY

A one day symposium at the Arts Depot, Vienna

Stage 1

## Opening remarks

This event is intended to pool together current thinking and research expanding an understanding of what is termed Post Autonomy, which coincides with a recent project “Cooperation not Corporations” that took place at the International Test Site outside Belgrade this September, along with the distribution of a manifesto on Post Autonomy by the curator Maja Ciric.

By bringing together the different threads of research and thinking “is it possible to consolidate research and thinking into PA and start to begin to understand the shape and form of whatever is understood by PA?” Is it possible to understand the language and thinking necessary to inhabit, navigate and populate the space of Post Autonomy? Is it possible to begin to recognise the different positions and complexities offered by the competing camps and struggles over PA?

The presentation we are going to hear during the day gives a good sample of both the range of uses of Post Autonomy, along with key issues necessary to lead into the space of PA – primarily around the role of art through questioning the relationship between a euro centric tradition of art with the mechanisms of colonisation, the fundamental role of participatory practices to PA. The practical issues of staging any event examining Post Autonomy throws up considerable problems and each project raises the question of what constitutes the appropriate means for materialising PA within the existing framework and thinking of art. And it is equally clear that any real development into understanding PA requires a material context.

## Basic structure

### Stage 1

The beginning of a tour on PA that aims to pool current research and thinking on PA.  
The role of the Depot

### Stage 2

**A.**  
Why we cannot continue to use the existing model of art  
The inherent problem in the system, and the system’s inability and unwillingness to address these problems  
Locating another model

**B.**  
The scheme outlined by Lingner  
The value of PA as a model of art  
The consequences and problems thrown up by this model  
Locating the space of PA  
All recent attempts to address PA examine the space via the language of this model

### Stage 3

Develop the language and thinking of PA  
Where do we look to locate this language?  
How do we use Lingner’s scheme and language?  
Use Lingner’s scheme as the key text to point to the existence of this space

## Stage 2

### A.

The term PA is taken from two early texts written by the German artist Michael Lingner in the 1990’s: “Art as a Social System” and “Verbal Art Communication”, where PA functions as a hinge around which the conclusion or collapse of one trajectory of art leads into another unknown area and trajectory. To be more specific with the term Post Autonomy Lingner wished to acknowledge the conclusion and collapse of the trajectory of contemporary art as initiated and defined by capitalism, Kant and the enlightenment, a moment, a point where he suggested “art had reached a basic level of maturity”. With the simultaneous conclusion and collapse of the trajectory of art, instead of art disappearing, some sort of fundamental change or transformation is required. Lingner adopts Luhmann’s provocation and suggests that the thinking leading to this point is unable to assist in further developments instead we need new thinking that is specific to this moment. In other words, if the thinking and developments in art led to its conclusion and implosion, then that thinking is unable to assist with further developments. It is this movement and opening into another space that I want to examine further. I want to suggest that in these two texts, Lingner for the first time pointed to a completely new space. But we now need to look more closely at this space and understand its potentiality. Any further developments into PA requires to address this question: what is the potential offered by Post Autonomy? For that reason these texts need to be recognised not as theoretical texts, but as the outline of a basic scheme for understanding the trajectory leading into this new space and its navigation, mapping and inhabiting. At the same time, the reading of this trajectory of art as invented by capitalism has been taken up as a template for further thinking by other theorists, such as Groys and Roncierier, in order to understand more closely an art defined around Kantian autonomy, and how art coexists with other powers; but what I think is increasingly clear, is how this trajectory clarifies this history identity as a specific Euro-centric tradition.



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My own thinking and practice have been in the form of a series of engagements and responses to these two texts and a gradual understanding of how these texts and terms can be used to open up this space. At the very beginning, any comprehension of what is intended by Post Autonomy, any movement towards getting close to further understanding of Post Autonomy, gravitates around understanding the term or hinge the word Post Autonomy itself. Post Autonomy, in a sense, comes to embody in a highly condensed form the complete history of the enlightenment and art up to that moment; and apart from that, Post Autonomy tells us very little except for showing the trajectory leading to this moment and the exiting and entrance into another space. But I think it is very clear why it is unable to say any more than that, since it also recognises the limit of the language, thinking and terminology inherent to this tradition.

Other authors added to the initial outline in the 90's, before the publication of a second series of new texts and research during the last 10 years, specifically in the 2004 Journal "Third Text", with texts by John Roberts, Brian Holmes and Stephen Wright, and in 2008 a conference on PA organised by the philosopher Peter Osborne at Middlesex School of Art in London, around the Journal "Radical Philosophy", with contributions by Art and Language, Jeff Wall. The conference looked at continuing the tradition of conceptual art into what Osborne defined as "Post Conceptual" thinking that concerns itself with charting the loss of art's autonomy along with the problems posed by the loss of the Language of Modernism itself. In Europe, we can see developments into Post Autonomy via Charles Esche director of the Van Abbemuseum and Maria Hlavajova at BAK.

The interest in Post Autonomy has seen a renewed interest in the concept of Autonomy. Both in terms of Greenberg's use of autonomy and Kant's outline for art's precarious existence in relationship to existing powers whether the state, religion, financial, military.

This parallels my own research into PA during the past ten years, that examined PA through participatory practices to the examination of questions into what is understood by post autonomy. On the PA website, and for the Sharjah Biennial in 2004 and Istanbul Biennial in 2007. 2007/08

therefore a marked shift where PA was acknowledged as a legitimate term and an area deserving attention. However, it is quite clear that the research and thinking into PA is at a very early stage, and that we are very far from arriving at an adequate description of this category, or consensus as to its actual meaning, language and terms, including the interpretation of Post Autonomy itself. Therefore what we need to start with is an acknowledgement that we do not know what the language and thinking inherent to PA is - instead we look at it through the language and thinking of the existing model. But what I want to do is take this line of thinking to the next stage, and pose the question "*is it possible to recognise whatever is triggered by Post Autonomy to signal not just a new term but a new moment, an entirely new development and thinking into the Euro Centric tradition of art that allows us to go beyond that tradition?*"

So what we are actually tracing here is the genesis of a new way of thinking in art, with a completely new category and set of taxonomies. In fact PA marks something equivalent to a 2nd history of contemporary art. If Post Autonomy actually signals a 2nd history of contemporary art, then how do we go about developing the confidence to seriously establish a credible research to map and populate this new space? However, if we go along with Lingner's initial premise that art of the Euro centric tradition has reached both a conclusion and collapse, and entered into another undefined stage, then the trajectory and scheme appears to offer the process for establishing another model. What we find is both the shape and form of a euro centric tradition of art with the opening into another space that breaks with that tradition. If we do not have access to the language and thinking to identify, articulate and navigate that space, that tells us no more than that we are at the very beginning of the process of locating that language. If we do not know what a new model looks like or what constitutes its attributes, again I think it is safe to say we are unable to say what role text and language performs, nor what form any practice will look like that opens up that space. Indeed, what actually constitutes an adequate form for opening up the space of post autonomy? If we are to take seriously a scheme suggesting the conclusion and break with the former model of art, then the gap and breaks through which the thinking and understanding leading to the space opened up by post autonomy require to be understood differently. What is becoming increasingly apparent is that the process leading to the inhabiting of this new space, the process of beginning to build a new model of art, via thinking through the consequences of breaking with a Euro centric tradition, and the role of art within a global context, even though this thinking takes place within that tradition, and can only be partial if it is to escape falling back into the trap of colonisation, it has to be part of a participatory process.

### **Stage 3**

#### **The language and thinking of Post Autonomy**

What material can we look to, to be able to start to locate the thinking and language inherent to Post Autonomy? How do we use and understand the scheme and language that Lingner used to point to this space? If we are to seriously go along with Lingner's suggestion that the trajectory of European art has reached a conclusion and reached a basic level of maturity, and that the thinking that belonged to that trajectory is unable to be of assistance in opening up this new space, then it appears that a fundamental new understanding of language and thinking is required, in so far that at the very least there is a substantial move away from the framework initiated by Kant. In order to indicate this shift I refer to (...) post autonomy as an image rather than a theory or concept.

Nevertheless, what is to be understood by art reaching a level of maturity and the necessity for its transformation?

# POST AUTONOMY IN SLOW MOTION

## Opening remarks

Last year for the 1st Mongolian Land art Biennial I speculated whether we were experiencing the final phase of Globalisation and Colonisation signalling the end of Globalisation and Colonisation, along with the proliferation of Biennials. I suggested that this event triggered the potentiality to rethink the role of Biennials – or even the invention of new forms for presenting Art – but more importantly, entrance into a new phase in the development of contemporary culture, marked by the shift away from a Euro-centric tradition. So it is not the dubious reasoning that led to these assumptions that I want to highlight but the imagery that the possibility of the end of Globalisation and Colonisation triggered.

In order to address the question of art institutions' link to Colonisation and Globalisation, I wondered *whether a space exists to step out of this process* and mechanisms art institutions are linked to in order to engage these serious problems without, in turn, inadvertently contributing to the problems! How to establish a language that allows us to address the problems, that belongs to a methodology that is part of a practice rather than a series of descriptions about the evolving complexity of contemporary art?

If we bring these points together *can we start to talk about the transformation of art*, where all cultures participate in the formation of a contemporary cultural practice, and the plotting of the coordinates of what can be roughly termed Post Autonomy, along with the language and thinking required to inhabit this new space.

## What is a Biennial?

To work our way into this thinking we need to start from the beginning and ask: what is a biennial and why is it necessary for any practitioner to concern himself with the Biennial as a medium? I want to start this off by presenting a collage of excerpts from recent texts on Biennials, starting with Oliver Marchart, co-curator of Documenta 11, followed by Hito Steyerl and then Ellen Fillipovic. The three quotes provide a rough picture of what is generally recognised by the medium of the Biennial, and its current manifestation – the Global Biennial or Deleuzian event based Biennial, and that by strategically looking at Biennials it is possible to reach to the core of the ideological function of what is understood by Contemporary art's spatial, Global and Colonial function.

The excerpt by Marchart is taken from a text by the Belgian Philosopher Dieter Lesage "The next Documenta Shouldn't Be in Kassel." The text has been in my mind for a number of years and has formed the basis for a number of projects, I think because it offers the clearest picture of main stream cultural power, its aspirations, and how that power can be influenced. In other words, this appears to be how a Euro centric power thinks about itself.

The following quote can be broken down into three statements – a definition of a Biennial, its function, and the options for changing Biennials – whether we should abandon institutions of art, invent other forms or continue to use existing institutions and change them from within.

In his book "Hegemonie im Kunstfeld. Die documenta Ausstellungen dx, d12 und die Politik der Biennalisierung" Oliver Marchart describes museums, biennials, and other large-scale art exhibitions such as documenta as hegemony machines, functioning not unlike the World Fairs that have contributed significantly to the project of nation building since the mid-nineteenth century.

Following the reflections of Antonio Gramsci in *Quarderni del carcere*, Marchart defines hegemony as a precarious balance between dominant and subaltern forces that, through the networks of society's institutions (museums, biennials, and large exhibitions), establishes a momentary primacy of certain forces. These forces can always be overturned, depending on shifts in an ongoing "war of positions." The concept of hegemony can be explained as the way in which consensus is produced as a primordial means of securing the dominance of certain forces. Every institution, which may at some moment seem to consolidate dominant bourgeois culture, may at another point be useful for a counter-hegemonic project – one that could eventually establish another hegemony. Following Laclou and Mouffe's radicalisation of Gramsci's theory of hegemony, Marchart points out that subjects and subject positions are only the effect of hegemonic discursive formations.

The progressive and emancipatory potentiality of institutions as discursive producers provides the main reason why they should not to be abandoned, as a great many leftists have done out of a belief that institutions as such necessarily consolidate petty bourgeois culture. Marchart strongly argues for such a potentiality, citing the hegemonic shifts in discourse that were produced in *documenta X & XI*.

*Dieter Lesage The next Documenta Shouldn't be in Kassel, e-flux journal, December 2008.*

The German filmmaker and theorist Hito Steyerl wrote in "Politics of Art: Contemporary Art and the transition to Postdemocracy"

The Global Guggenheim is a cultural refinery for a set of postdemocratic oligarchies, as are the countless international biennials tasked with upgrading and re-educating the surplus population. Art thus facilitates the development of a new multipolar distribution of geopolitical power whose predatory economies are often fuelled by internal oppression, class war from above, and radical shock and awe policies.

Contemporary art thus not only reflects, but actively intervenes in the transition towards a new post-Cold War world order. It is a major player in unevenly advancing semicapitalism wherever T-Mobile plants its flag. It is involved in mining for raw materials for dual-core processors. It pol-lutes..Gentrifies..it seduces and consumes...from the desert of Mongolia to the high plains of Peru, contemporary art is everywhere.

Why and for whom is contemporary art so attractive? One guess: the production of art presents a mirror image of postdemocratic forms of hypercapitalism that looks set to become the dominant political post war paradigm.

Here is the bad news: political art routinely shies away from discussing all these matters. Addressing the intrinsic conditions of the art field, as well as the blatant corruption within it – think of all the bribes to get this or that large scale biennial into one or more peripheral region or another – is a taboo even on the agenda of most artists who consider themselves political. Even though political art manages to represent so-called local situations from all over the globe, and routinely packages injustice and destitution, the conditions of its own production and display remain pretty much unexplored. One could even say that the political of art are the blind spot of much contemporary political art"

The 2009 “Bergen conference on biennials”, Norway, which brought together key texts and definitions of Biennials and the new Global biennials from the past 30 years.. They acknowledged that the term Biennial is a recent invention which started to be regularly used only after the 1950’s, while the actual definition of what constitutes a Biennial is still undefined, especially the new form of Global Biennial.

These contradictions are illustrated in the following quote about the ideological objective of Global Biennials:

“The promulgation of counter-narratives and experimentation with counter-models for exhibition making remains the utopian promise of the biennial in the age of globalisation. But how should we understand the term “globalisation” to which the biennial is said to be now intimately linked? Is the so-called globalization of the cultural sphere of the last few decades a development towards greater inclusivity of artistic practices beyond (Western) modernity or, on the contrary, does it represent the promotion of a (decidedly Western) hegemony for art, exhibition models, curators, and audiences? In other words, in the biennial’s celebration of globalisation, does it prove to be a truly inclusive, transnational, multicultural, “counter-hegemonic” project, as Okwui Enwezor contends? Or is the biennial, as George Baker argues, a mere consolidation of dominant bourgeois culture that is both “archaically nationalistic and explicitly occidentalist,” especially in its championing of globalization, which shows itself, in fact, to be “a process of Westernisation, not its critique?”

### **A position and language to discuss Biennials**

The purpose of these texts is to establish a basic setting for analysing “the global context of the field of art as defined by the network of Global Biennials.” However there are a number of obvious problems that need clarification before looking further into Biennials, which revolve around the question of “How do we articulate problems within the field of art?”

There are a cluster of issues around this problem which can be seen as the language, thinking and practice suitable to address these points.

A

It is quite clear that the majority of solutions offered within the field of art often end up contributing to the very problems they initially set out to resolve – a clear example we can point to is the obvious failure of Institutional critical practices. Or practices that point out resolving colonisation and globalisation often end up extending those very same colonial and global mechanisms.

B

It also strikes me that if thinking, language and practices have been shaped by neo-Liberalism and Global Capitalism since the early 1990’s, then surely whatever observations and insights that are made remain trapped within that paradigm. This issue is closely linked to the capacity and availability of language within the field of contemporary art itself to be able to make observations about art, in this case Biennials.

At a time when art is under attack, the question posed by Lingner and Esche “Who has the responsibility for looking after art and defining art?”

C

Therefore, in order to be able to say anything at all, it appears necessary to locate and define another space. In this case, I shall discuss the issues of Biennials within the discourse of Post Autonomy, where Post autonomy signals the transformation of art. And it is only by shifting discussions about art to the discourse of Post Autonomy that I see any possibility for actual thinking and discussing art beyond its existing restrictions and limitations within the framework of art as a “Euro-centric tradition!”

# A MANIFESTO OF POST AUTONOMY

by Maja Ciric from recent texts by David Goldenberg

## Post Autonomy Today > Tomorrow

- Why? Because of the “internal collapse of the system of art”, given that art’s existence through a strategy to unhook itself from existing powers and belief systems has failed.
- This conclusion signals the culmination of a Euro-centric tradition’s development
- And, entrance into another intellectual and cultural space, a new space which requires inhabiting and mapping..
- This end and new beginning is equivalent to a 2nd history of contemporary art.
- Post Autonomy suggests a new discourse with a linguistic shift in the understanding and selfdescription of art

All narratives that have helped develop contemporary art in terms of Modernism have failed to address the negative aspects of Modernism, namely its role in colonising others/cultures, while consolidating the Nation-State. And since they are unable to resolve its inherent problems, there is a necessity for a fundamentally different strategy and description. One can go so far as to say that it is impossible to use the existing descriptions and models to resolve existing problems of addressing political and social problems in society, for the very reason that the existing models are not only developed from within the Euro centric tradition, they also set out to maintain the existing world order and centres of cultural power. Furthermore, the shift to the scheme of PA allows for the possibility of moving away from the burden of concerns that exists within the current descriptions of art, and to locate other concerns and issues, or to be more precise, which amounts to the same thing, the existing concerns are determined within the existing Euro-centric traditions’ framework, so there is no other choice but to locate another framework.space of PA? The various projects that I have staged need to be seen as a sort of rehearsal for working through these problems.

**A long term project** examining the mental image of Post Autonomy through various formats:

- Post Autonomy Today, A Discussions about Post Autonomy for the UK radio station Resonance FM
- Mongolian Biennial, Post Autonomy is now, August 2010
- Plausible Art Worlds, Basekamp, Philadelphia, USA, September
- A Exhibition/Event Common Ground, Belgrade, Serbia, September 2010
- Post Autonomy today, A symposium at the Arts Depot, Vienna, Austria, October 2010

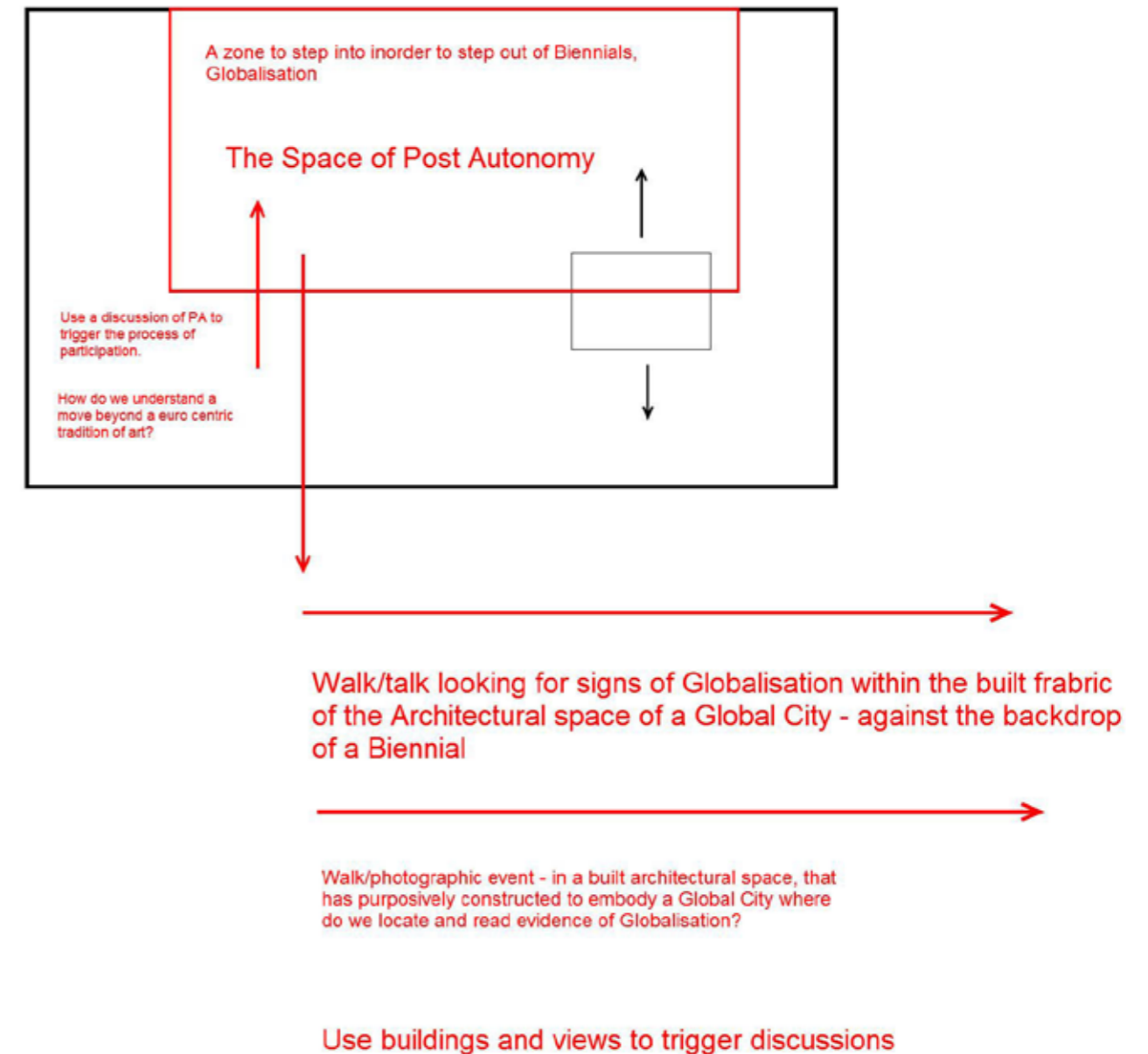
### Common Ground

- Language and debate constitutes the core material for inhabiting and opening up a zone outside the Euro-centric tradition of art, Globalization, Colonisation and Biennials. A scheme for developing a different model through realizing the full potentiality triggered by the mental image of Post Autonomy.

- Revisiting the concept of Autonomy in order to understand the attributes and condition of contemporary art itself and so as to pose the question “What concept and notion comes after Autonomy?”
- Post Autonomy as a route out/ critique of Post Modernism and Neo Liberalism, as well as revision of Globalisation and Colonisation and the role art plays in that context.
- Understanding what is meant by Post Autonomy today and how this idea can provoke new relations and situations in a global trans-national society, initiating a micro-political situation, and setting off an open ended process which looks at “gathering together a material form, where there isn’t a clear material form at the outset!”
- Developing thinking into Post Autonomy offers the possibility of understanding Post Autonomy as a term or label or a new category or a fiction in the form of an art project. A new body of thinking and practices distinguished from our current understanding of art that offer a broader range of scenarios to read contemporary art. A new term, territory, condition, language, terms and taxonomies which require to be charted.

**Participatory practices** are key to PA, in so far that participatory practices break with the autonomy of the artist, art work and audience shaped within a Euro centric tradition, the only methodology that starts with the break down of hierarchies and re negotiation of Contemporary culture. Through participation there is an encouragement for different cultures to meet and renegotiate another space to share & take up further developments.

*Excerpts taken from ‘Passage from partial to a full development of Post Autonomy’ and ‘Post Autonomy Now 3’*



This publication has been produced on the occasion of the exhibition

**The Scenarios of Post Autonomy**

**David Goldenberg**

September 19<sup>th</sup> - October 8<sup>th</sup> 2012

The Studio: Glenda Cinquegrana

via F. Sforza 49, I-20122 Milan, Italy

Text, photographs and scans: David Goldenberg

Cover and layout design: Ioana Pioaru

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[www.postautonomy.co.uk](http://www.postautonomy.co.uk)

Printed and bound in Romania

[printpress.ro](http://printpress.ro)



# TEXTS ANDSCRIPTS

By crossing into this zone you agree to step outside a Euro-centric tradition of art, Globalisation, Colonisation and Biennials in order to develop another model, which we will call post autonomy

**20072012**