The Transformation of Art
Introduction and Guide by David Goldenberg

This integrated design for an exhibition joins together a wide range of elements - images, texts, online debates, actions and parts that develop at different speeds, while continuing meditation into the new concept of **Post Autonomy.** All this puts a large demand on the visitor, so the guide is intended to solve this problem. On top of fulfilling this practical function, the guide has another purpose, to show that these elements map out a mental picture and materialisation of Post Autonomy, and if we dig further, the true potentiality of Post Autonomy. To do this, we ask of the visitor to imagine the end of art in order to take part in reimagining a new art, and this is my understanding of *Post Autonomy as the transformation of art.*

Installation details

Concept and design by David Goldenberg with the assistance of Ioana Pioaru

Digital prints, all on self adhesive vinyl, designed by DG & IP:

> **Mobile Documenta** - black and white image of a lorry;
> **Design for an Exhibition in a Container** - Diagrams of containers;
> **Container Port [a current situation]** - Color photo of a container port, purchased from Shutterstock;
> **Route** - map; collage of screen shots from marinetraffic.com;
> **Constructing An Imperial Center** - Map of Venice;
> **Participating Cultures;**
> **Visualizing Documenta;**
> **The Transformation of Art** - 100 blank small MDF panels with one small color image of a container on each panel, painted with blackboard paint;

"Venetian Drift" - two videos by Helen Kirwan and Jane Madsen;
"Before I forget…Frühstück bei Tiffany " - Slide show by Wim Salki;
Live link to the Center for Contemporary art, Baku;
Two blank areas for the audience to leave remarks and add to the content of the installation.

Actions inside and outside the installation
Organized by David Goldenberg, The Center for Contemporary Art in Baku, and members of the Post Autonomy Group :

> **a. Participating Cultures**
> **b. In search of Post Autonomy**
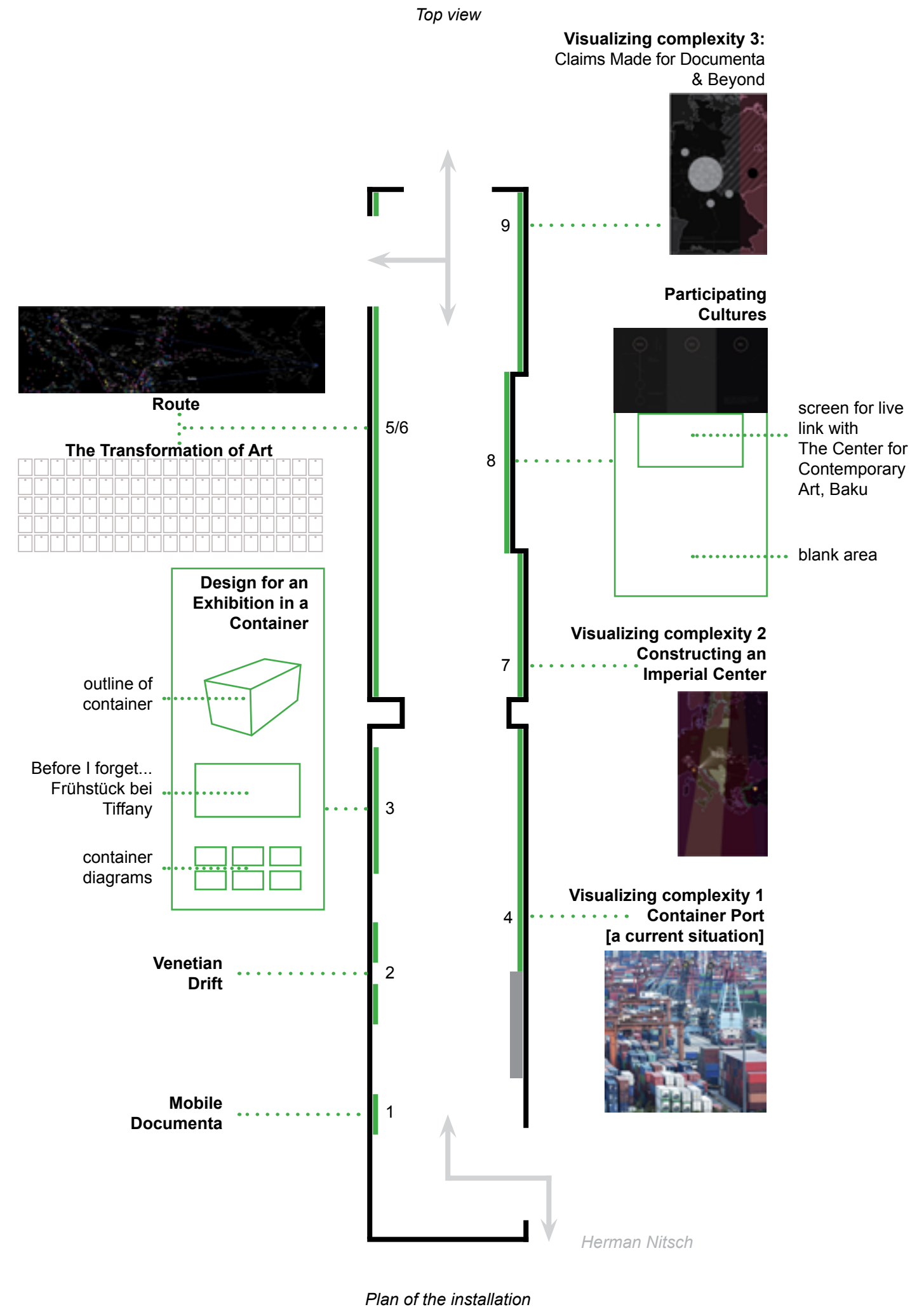> **c. The Transformation of Art**

Members of the Post Autonomy group

Ozlem Kalmaz
Bahram Khalilov
Helen Kirwan
Kate Kotcheff
Andrea Lind Valdan
Ioana Pioaru
Wim Salki

Outline

The installation builds on a number of threads from previous projects, (The Scenarios of PA, Milan, 2012) expanding the notion of Post Autonomy into a scheme that looks at realizing PA:
> **a. Alan Sekula's exploration of the shipping container industry** as a methodology for researching into Globalization, the challenges of a materialist reading of Globalization against an online virtual reading of Globalization, the spatial geopolitical role of art that led to the rise of Relational Aesthetics.
> **b. A real and fictitious idea for a Mobile Documenta** (decentering Eurocentric power)
> **c. Participating Culture** (scheme for realigning cultural power)
> **d. Going beyond the Biennial form** (The biennial form as a sign of the Eurocentric tradition)

Top view

Visualizing complexity 3:
Claims Made for Documenta
& Beyond

**Participating
Cultures**

9

Route

screen for live
link with
The Center for
Contemporary
Art, Baku

5/6

8

blank area

The Transformation of Art

**Visualizing complexity 2
Constructing an
Imperial Center**

7

**Design for an
Exhibition in a
Container**

outline of
container

Before I forget...
Frühstück bei
Tiffany

container
diagrams

3

**Visualizing complexity 1
Container Port
[a current situation]**

4

**Venetian
Drift**

2

**Mobile
Documenta**

1

Herman Nitsch

Plan of the installation

Description

The physical installation in the Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy

The installation should be seen as stage 1 of a traveling project. Stage 2 is planned to take place in Baku in October 2013, and stage 3 in Izmir in 2014. The overall work comprises an installation designed for a corridor space, participatory events inside the installation, online link with The Center for Contemporary Art in Baku, a six months program of talks and activities, and a durational event around Venice.

The reading of the work was intended from the very start to be unfixed, unstable and in process, in so far that the thinking, contents, concepts and visualization are in continuous formation.

Diagram of the installation

The work is located in a narrow corridor on the 1st floor of Palazzo Bembo, and divided in half, with three entry points. The corridor width is too small to stand back to take in the work as a whole or to take into view a single element. So you are required to experience each element close up, giving a sense of walking or cutting through the work, joining up the parts as you pass along the corridor.
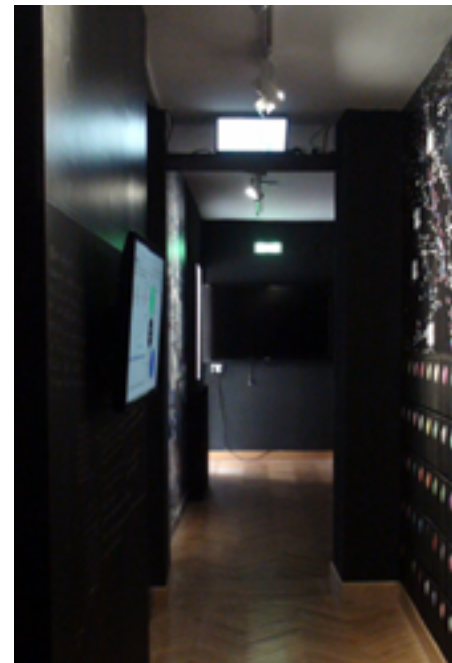
There are three entrance points in the installation, that potentially offer multiple readings of the installation:
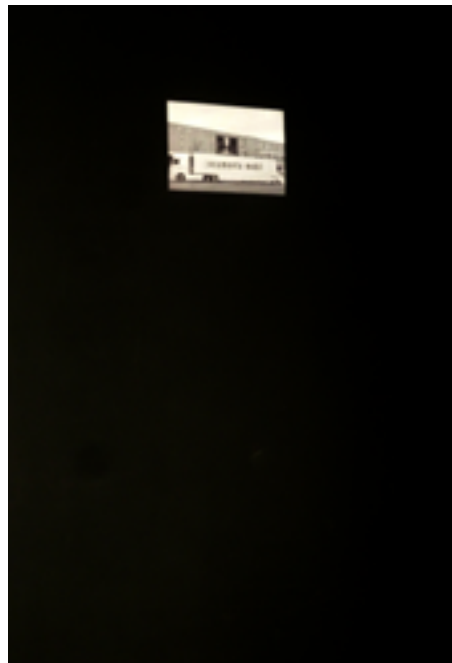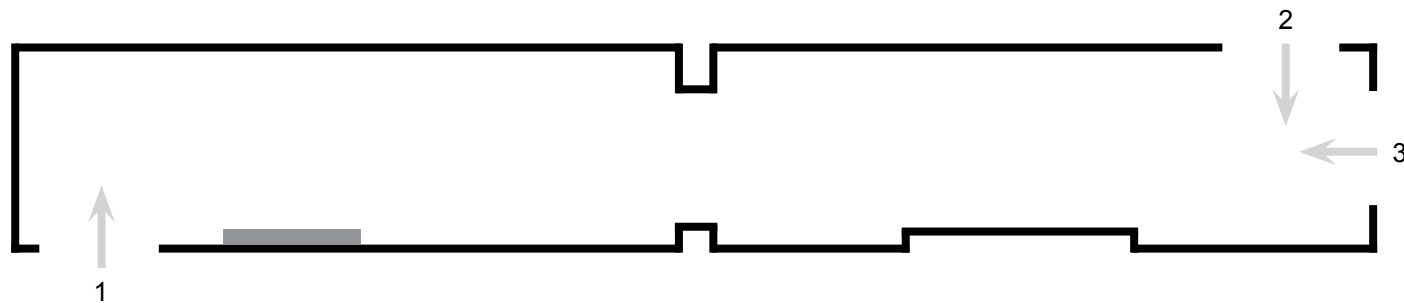
Entrance 1   *Entrance 2*   *Entrance 3*

For simplicity's sake, I want to give a description of the work from entrance 1.

I have used the division of the corridor into two parts, as a structure for dividing the space into two imaginary containers. So there are two spaces that correspond to two containers.
The first part offers an introduction leading into the second part and the central content of the installation. This can be read another way: *a visualization of the existing state of affairs of art followed by possible exit points and solutions.*

Production of imagery and concepts to populate the installation

From the start we have taken a completely realistic approach to the existing state of affairs in art and thinking, that confirms what other practitioners – Gillick, Sierra, Hirschhorn - have claimed: that *change within the current model and system is impossible -* unless another route, model, methodology, strategies, weapons etc. are found, starting by identifying and resolving deep seated problems that prevent further developments in art and thinking, which is the narrative and route we want to work through here.

At the same time, it appears that no existing description, theory, methodology is capable of revealing change – which is the reason for literally following Tupitsyn's understanding of Post Autonomy as a theory looking at the end of art and thinking (post art) – and the necessity for locating a route back to new thinking and a new art – in other words, we have a break and fissure in the fabric, in the manner art and thinking take place – or put another way, to use Nietzschean and Deleuzian terminology, "**a break in the repetition of the same"**, that opens into reimagining art again, and the formation of new thinking and new concepts. This fissure or break is a possible avenue or exit point or mental projection out of the recent mutations of Post Modernism or Neo Liberal art forms which remain invisible since we don't have the tools to identify its make up.

So what we appear to have is a scheme outlining the negative space of art, where the negative or absence is turned into a positive. Where the full, but negative space of art, is once more available to reimagine and inhabit, to think through, where you have a filling up of the imagination and mind with new imagery and thinking, and – what is far more important – we can then go on to imagine the full potential of art, which introduces a new subject matter for art.

How and where and who poses the question "what is Post Autonomy"?

Section 1 of the installation outlines problems and identifies issues that prevent change and further development in art and thinking, and demarcates an edge that art in its current form appears unable to cross. Having said that, and having recognised the problem with the existing state of affairs, it is equally essential that we are able to identify the precise issues and questions we need to ask in order to overcome the current limits to further developments in art and thinking without descending into wishful thinking, fantasy or perpetuating the same problems!

To face up to and confront this fundamental issue presents very real difficulties and thinking, which in my opinion is unable to be addressed within the circuit of existing discourses of the Eurocentric tradition, which is only able to formulate thinking and problems within the boundaries of that tradition. This is not intended to denigrate contemporary thinking but to point out an obvious problem. Instead, we need to look for an exit point beyond that Eurocentric debate to reformulate art and thinking. What I am describing is a route or trajectory that breaks out of that Eurocentric tradition and barrier, to formulate a new space for art, the space of Post Autonomy through the mental projection of the scheme of "Participating Cultures". In other words, instead of cultures adopting the existing model, a new model or models are able to be formulated in collaboration with other cultures. The scheme of Participating Cultures is concerned with identifying cultures and persons who are in roughly the same level of thinking and formulating concepts that we are involved in, identifying, inhabiting and populating the new space of Post Autonomy. But of course since this is formulated within a Eurocentric tradition, the term and scheme can only function as a form of thought experiment and mental projection that correspond to similar sounding terms or a space where such terms are in formation. Nevertheless this is a term that designates a scheme that allows us to mentally project out of the space of a Eurocentric tradition in order to realign cultural power by breaking with the existing circuit.

Expanding the notion of the new space of Post Autonomy to designate the space for a new art, along with the new term of Participating Cultures, where "Participating Cultures" becomes the tool to materialize PA and the realignment of cultural power, in turn generates further imagery and terms necessary to mentally populate and open up the space for opening out the barriers and limits that block further developments in art and thinking.

If we take the possibility of realigning culture, then we need to show which cultures and what the relationship to each culture is, which in turn starts to describe points and lines that establish a set of spatial geopolitical coordinates, that simultaniously provide us with a route and the shift and realignment of cultural power. And this is precisely what we have in our map linking Venice (Europe), Izmir and Baku, or to go back to the very first image of a Mobile Documenta, and the first configuration of the route for a Mobile Documenta.

This also leads to a further reading of the notion of Post Autonomy, where Post Autonomy signals the culmination of a limited notion of art and entry into an expanded notion of art.

Now that I have briefly shown the production of imagery, terminology and concepts, and their relationship to each other, I can return to describing the installation.
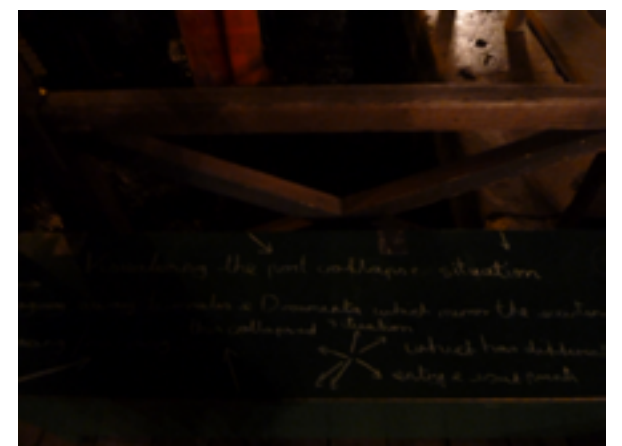
"In Search of Post Autonomy"
durational action from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m.
June 1st - 2nd 2013, Venice.
With David Goldenberg, Ioana Pioaru, Kate Kotcheff,
Andrea Lind-Valdan.

Each part of the installation was specifically designed and adapted for the architectural space of Palazzo Bembo.
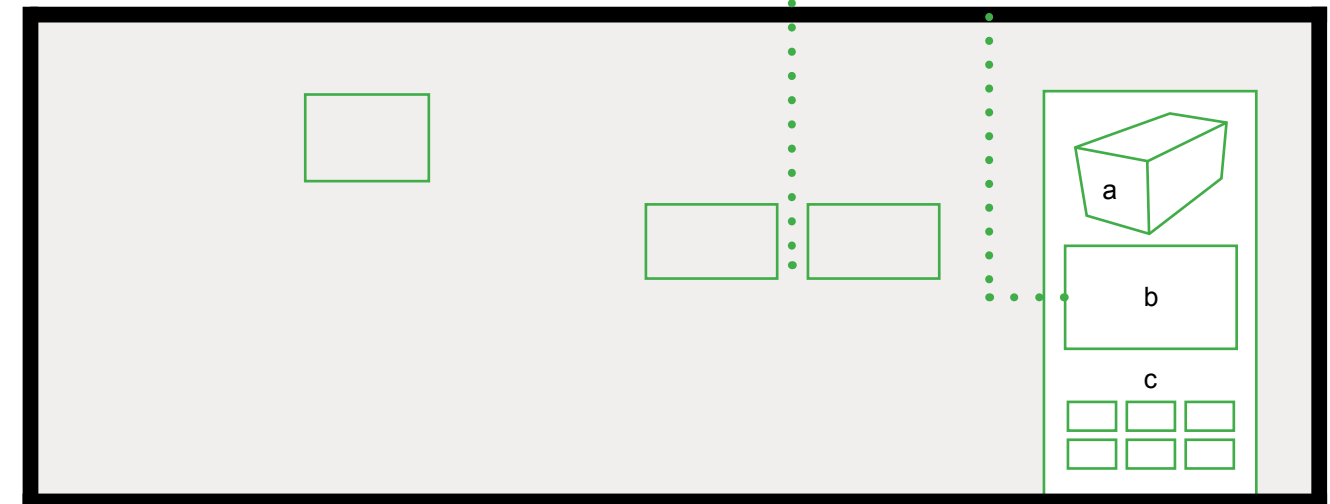
Given the redundancy of existing terms and poverty of conceptualization in art, we should understand the presentation as a series of visualizations, although for the sake of communication and simplicity, we resort to orthodox terms – installation, exhibition, project.

What is being played out are a range of processes for overcoming the existing limitations to developing thinking and art – so we have visualization, mind maps, thought experiments, visualizing complexity – via using the imagery for setting up both a fictitious and real Mobile Documenta, as a framework to hang multiple ideas on to break through existing ideas that hinder, block, limit further developments in art and thinking, and to imagine how this Mobile Documenta is able to work through imagining the realignment of power by establishing collaborations, routes (mental paths and actual physical routes), content, itinary, places, venues.
Again the notion that is behind the scheme – that is being entered and inhabited – is the idea of Post Autonomy, that is itself both a fiction and an actual term.

When you enter the installation, the first element you come across is the black wall, then to the right, above eye-level, and framed by the space of the black wall, a small black and white image stuck directly to the wall, an appropriated found image sourced from the internet, of a large lorry seen in profile, with "Documenta Mobil" printed on its side. The image is taken from a series of images produced in a 2005 publicity: "The History of Documenta: Exhibitions, Curators and Artists".

1. Mobile Documenta, black and white photo on vinyl, A4, 2013

2. „Venetian Drift"
Double screen video installation loop by Helen Kirwan and Jane Madsen, 2003, 11 mins

Next you can choose to look at the small screens or the mural size digital image on the opposite wall.

To the right and lower down, at eye level, two small flat screens are positioned side by side, showing two videos of Venice, shot in 2003, by Helen Kirwan and Jane Madsen. On one screen the hot dusty spaces of the Giardini and Arsenale are traversed by people aimlessly consuming art selected and sanctioned by participating states. On the other screen, tourists drift through the Grand Canal viewing Venice as an aestheticized theme park.
Directly to the right of the two small screens, on a large black painted panel that juts out from a door frame, there are another three elements:
a. above eye-level, a cut out shape of a container on self adhesive vinyl stuck directly to the wall. On the facing end of the container you can find 2 small blue rectangular shapes that correspond to the small flat screens to the left, and
b. on the large wall of the container a large rectangle that takes the majority of the wall, which corresponds to the large flat screen beneath the container shape. The large flat screen shows a looped slide show by Wim Salki - a sequence of color still images documenting traces of Neo Liberalism
c. Below the flat screen can be found further technical diagrams of containers.

a. Large diagram of a container printed on vinyl, 2013, 70,2cm x 64,1cm, visualization by Ioana Pioaru;

b. Before I forget...Frühstück bei Tiffany. A search for a species towards a formless and shapeless utopian new world order. Slide show by Wim Salki, 48 photographs, 2009 - on-going.

c. Six diagrams of a container by Ronald L. Crepeau, found on the internet, digitally adapted and processed by Ioana Pioaru;

On the opposite wall is a wall-size color photographic image of a container port, with different monumental arrangements and groupings of containers, cranes that move containers, and ships moored by the side of the port waiting to be loaded with containers.

Visualizing complexity 1
Container Port [a current situation], 2013, 260cm x 260cm, digital image on vinyl, copyright Shutterstock.
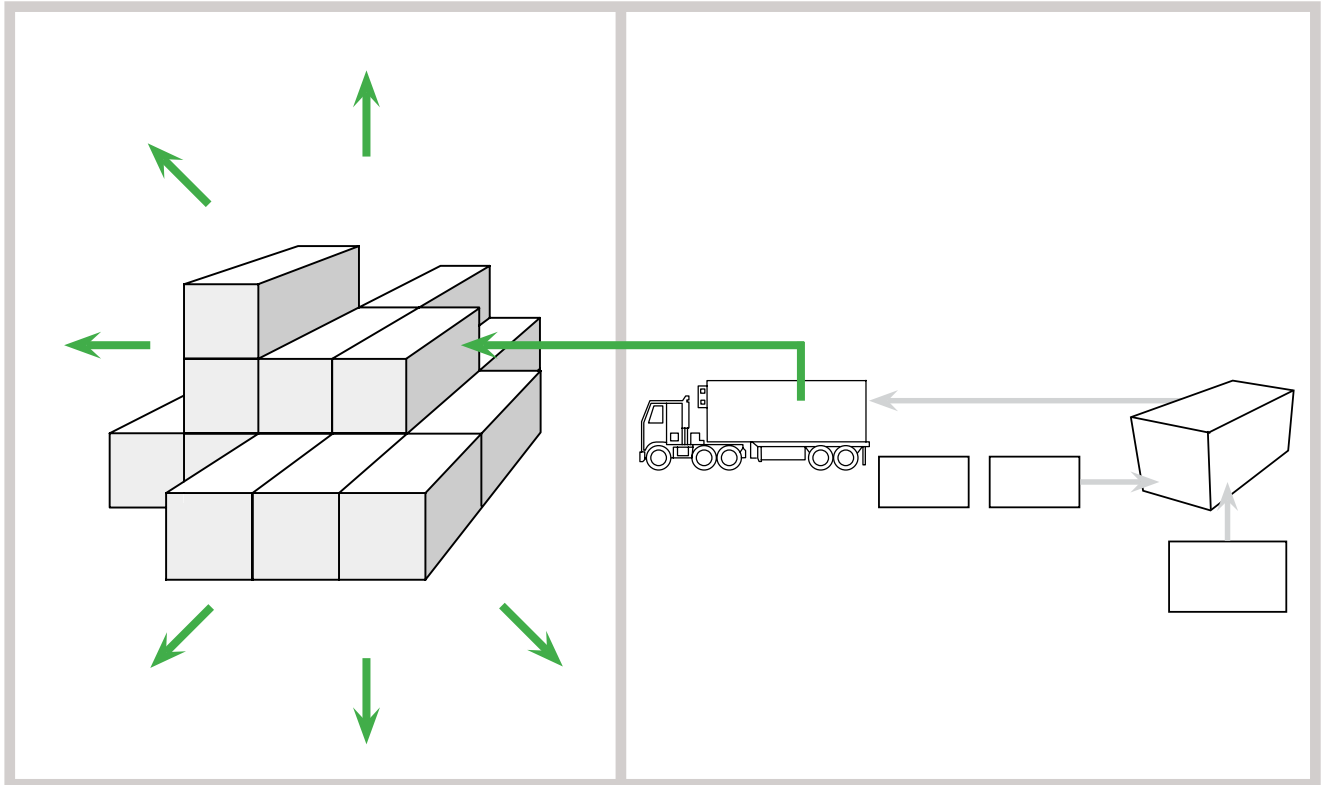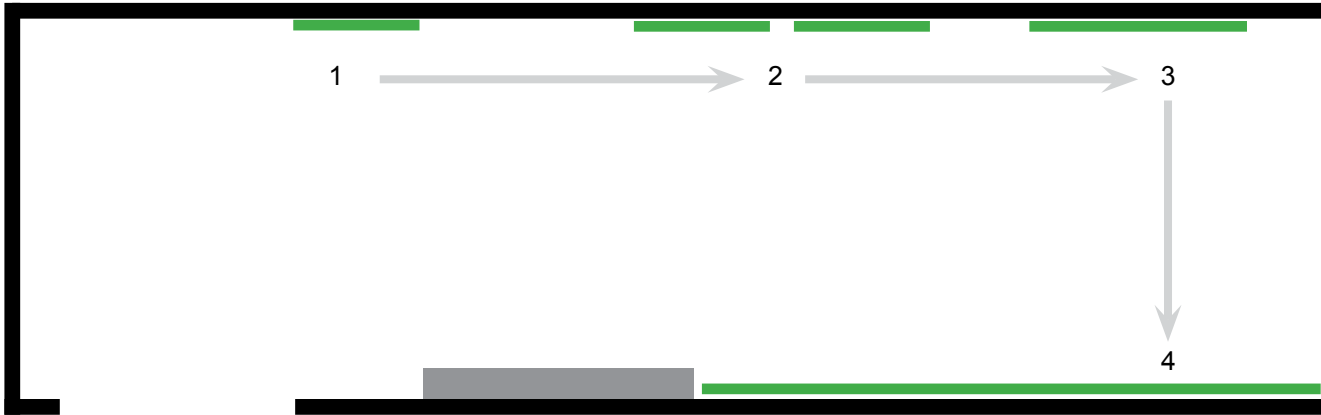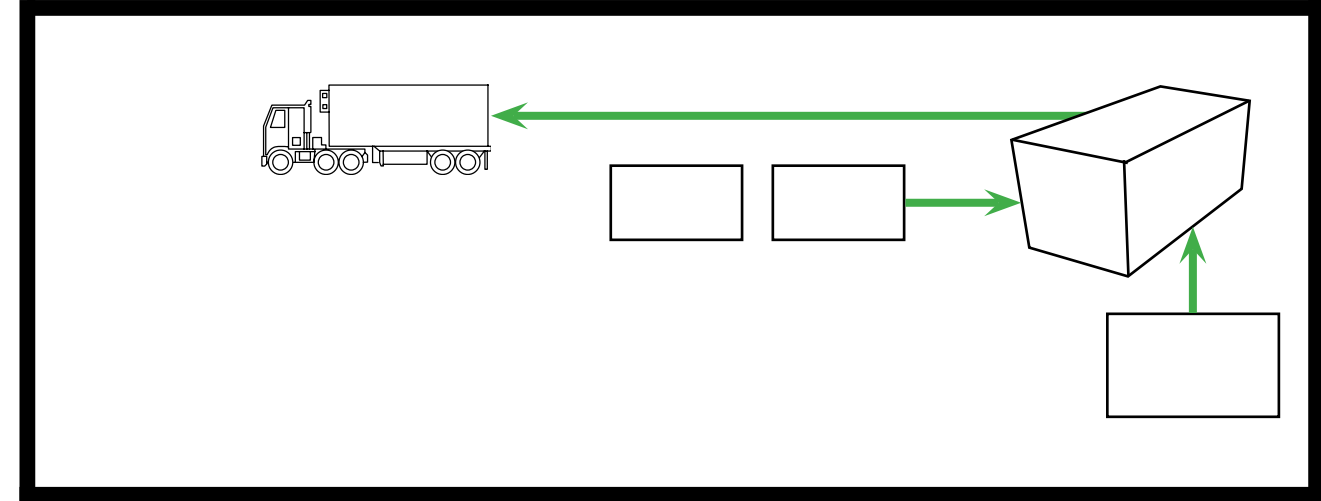
This completes an elementary description of the basic elements in the first corridor space.

If we shift register, the corridor appears as the interior arrangements and contents for a container. But what is this container expected to do? Our thinking is that the first section of the installation, as a rough assembly of elements for a real container, is intended to function as an introduction to the second part and a visualization of the complexity that sums up the problems with the existing state and conditions of art and thinking. It is not clear how many containers make up the introductory part of our imaginary container park, but in this container we wanted to start to bring together research into understanding Neo liberalism, the Venice Biennial and reading the spatial reach of art.

Container 1
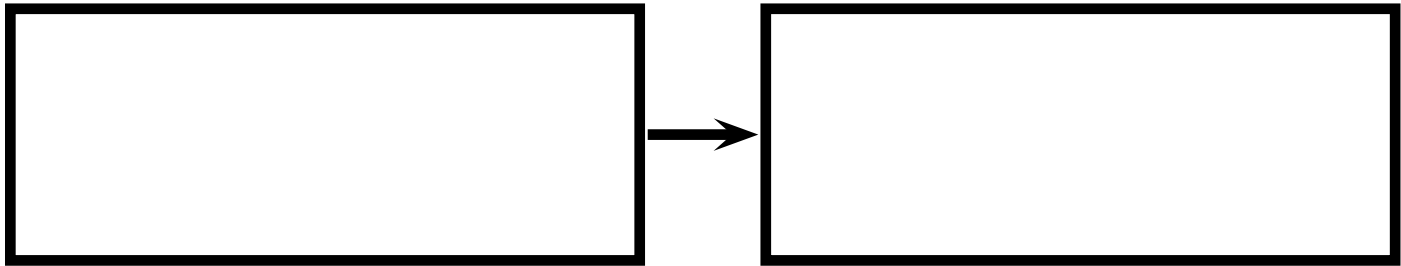
In our thinking, this part also tried to offer a visualization of the complexity of what is possible, the limits which we are unable to realistically bypass, where we think all art is fixed and where this project will probably remain.
We see this, without sounding melodramatic, as a space where thinking and art, for all sorts of reasons, is unable to occur. So if this is the case, is there a route to return to thinking and art? [however we understand the attributes of this new art and thinking]
Nevertheless, if we are able to bypass this limit, we asked ourselves a further question: "What do we need to see in order to overcome this limit?"
We need to identify what constitutes this limit; in this case, we start with the limit embodied in the existing language of art and the biennial form, then the mechanisms to open up these barriers, which we have identified as Participating cultures, and finally a space we go to, on the other side of this limit.

Container 2
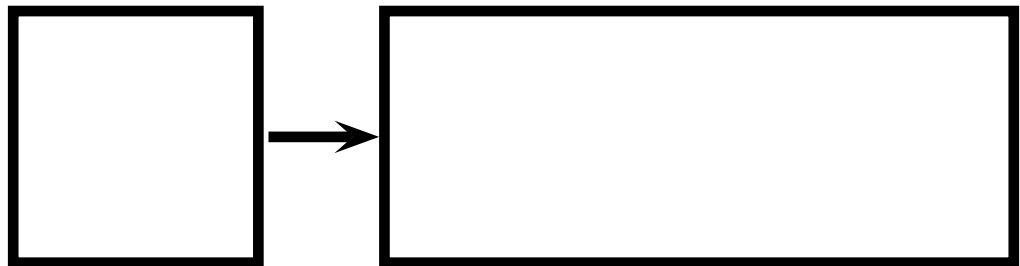
After the wall-size image of the container port we pass through the gap made by the left and right walls jutting into the space dividing the corridor into two parts, entering into Part 2 of the installation. This part consists of maps and names of places. If we cross back to the other side of the corridor we notice straight away that the whole wall is divided into two. From ceiling to below eye-level and taking up the whole wall area, another mural size digital image/map of Eurasia. This shows the land mass that makes up Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the sea areas and shipping lanes. In the top left hand corner we see the name of Venice and from the name a line travels out to connect with Izmir in the West of Turkey, and from Izmir to Baku. To take in the whole route map it is necessary to walk the entire length of the second corridor.
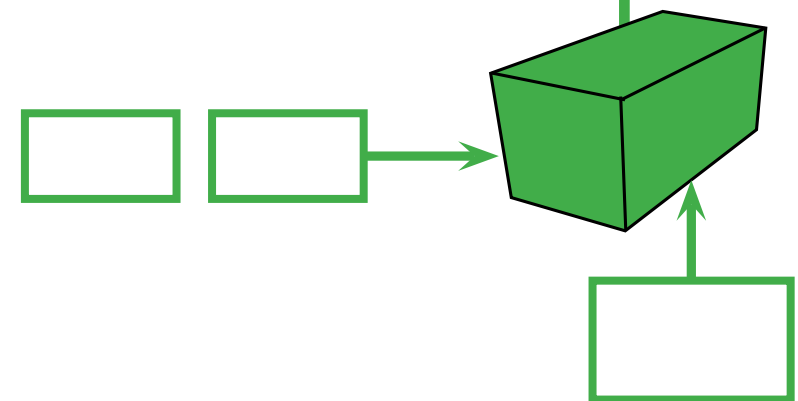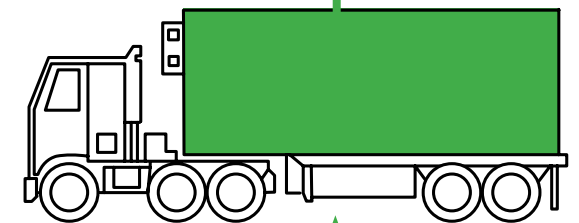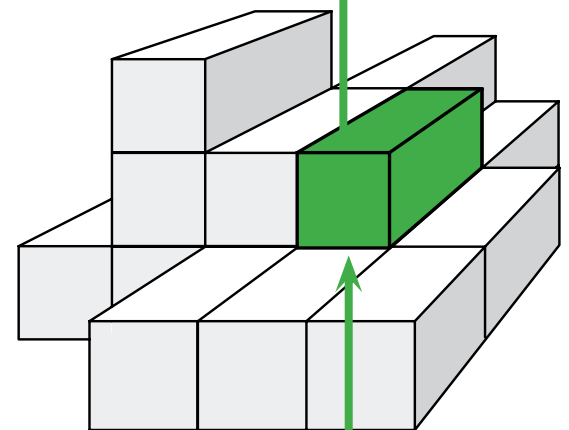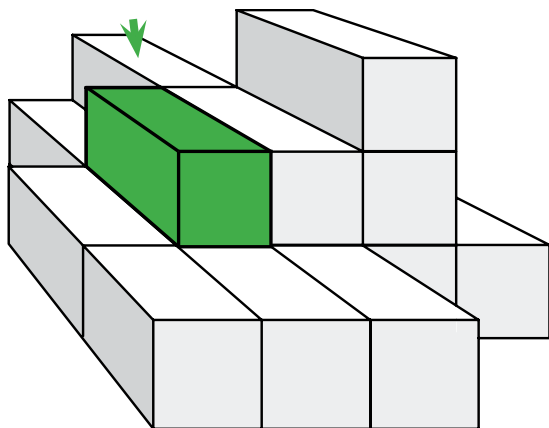
Route Map

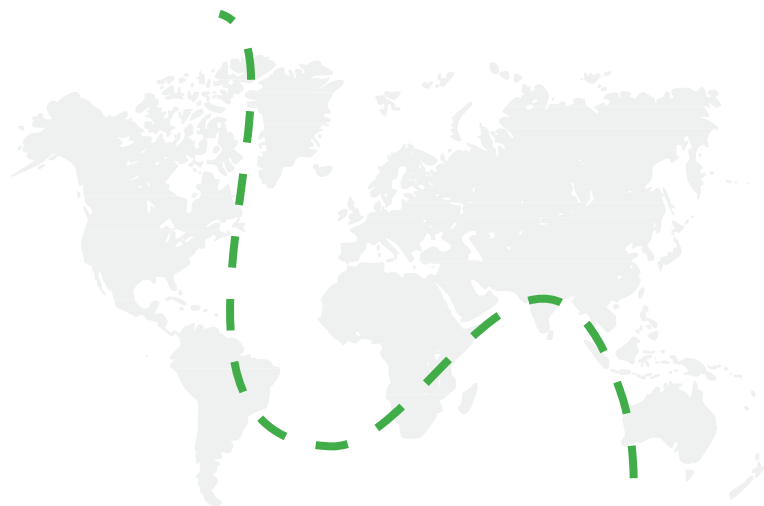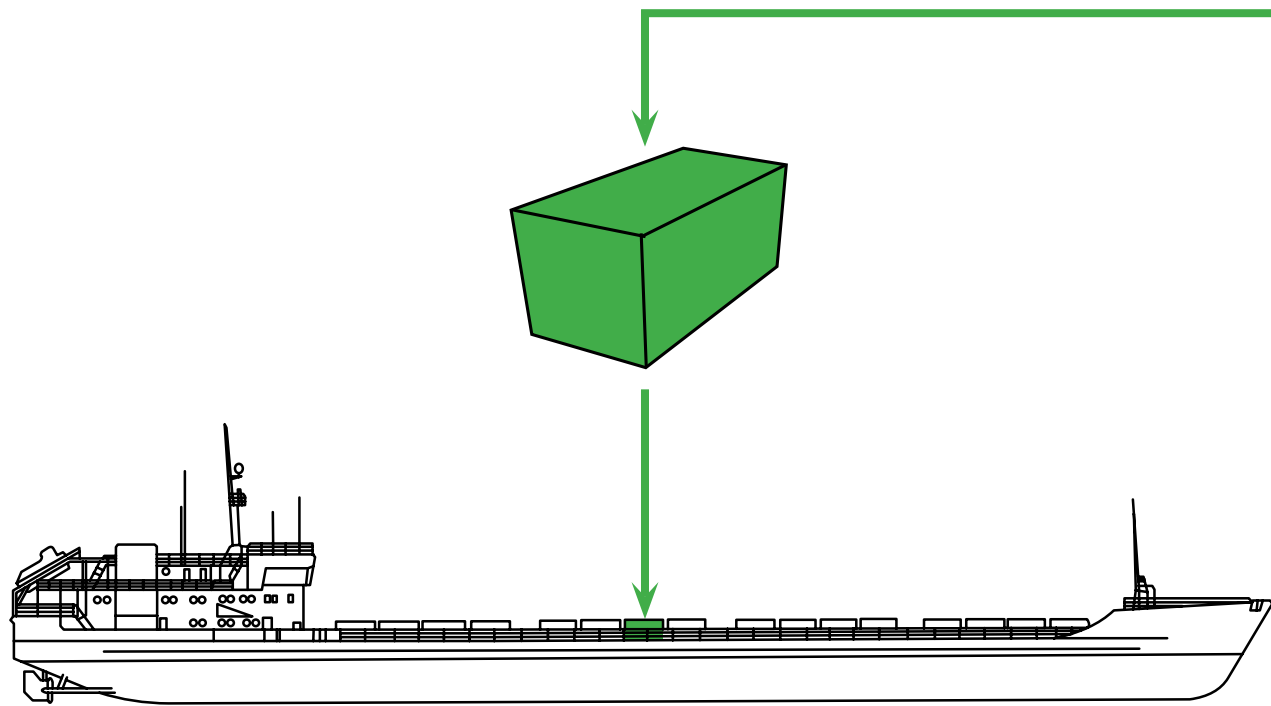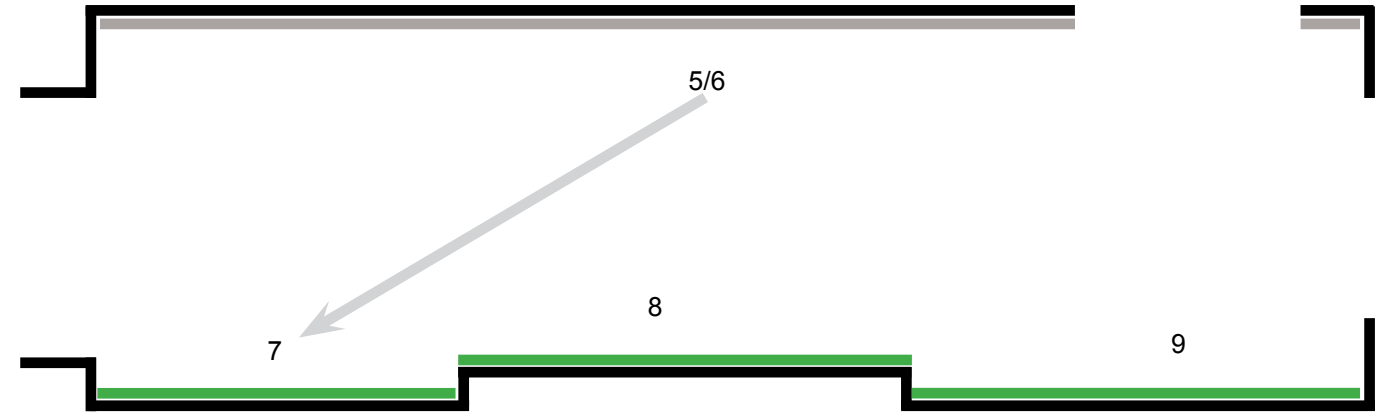The Transformation of Art

Venice

Izmir

Baku
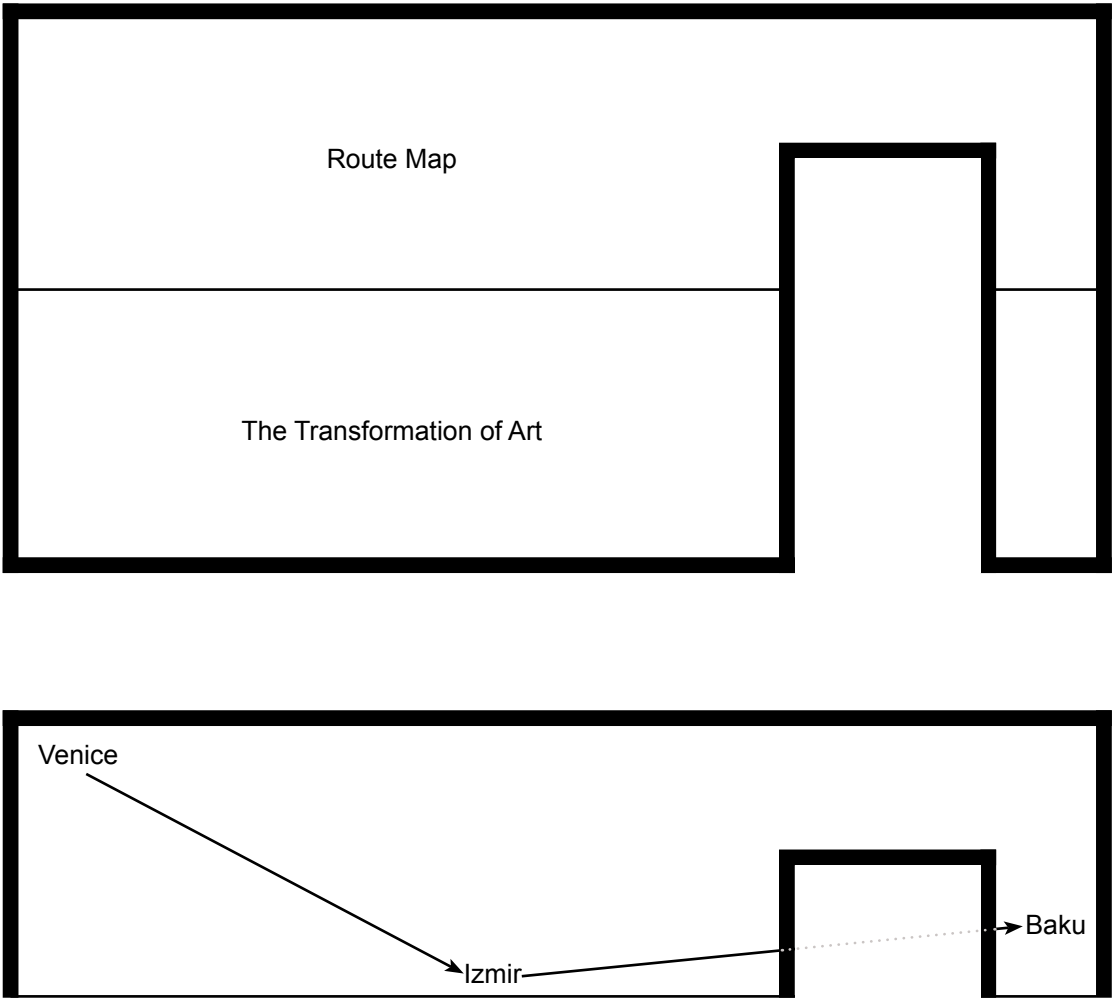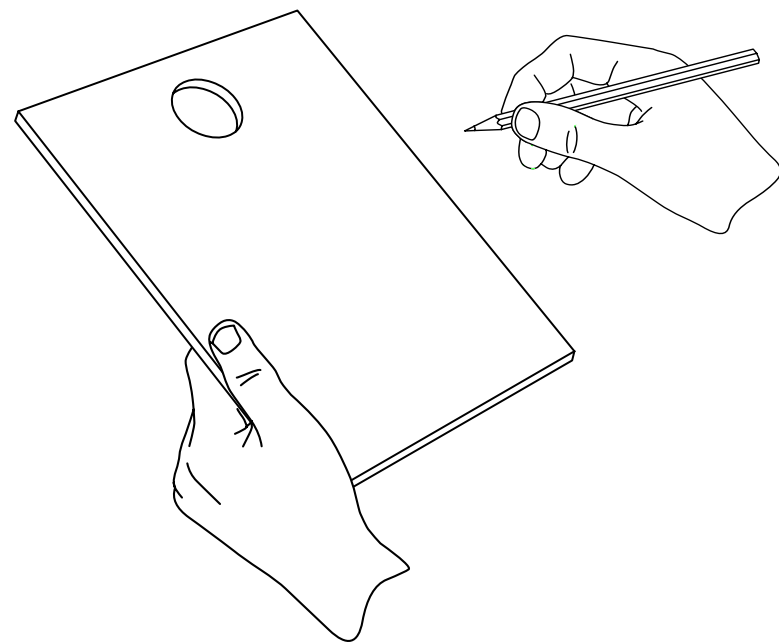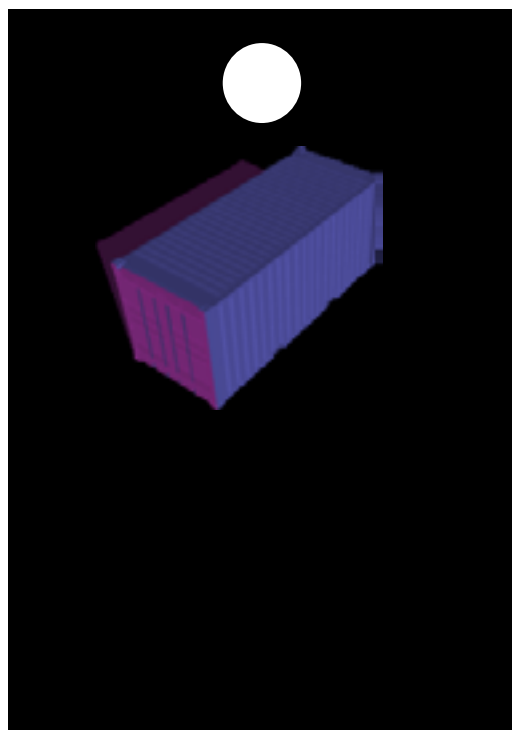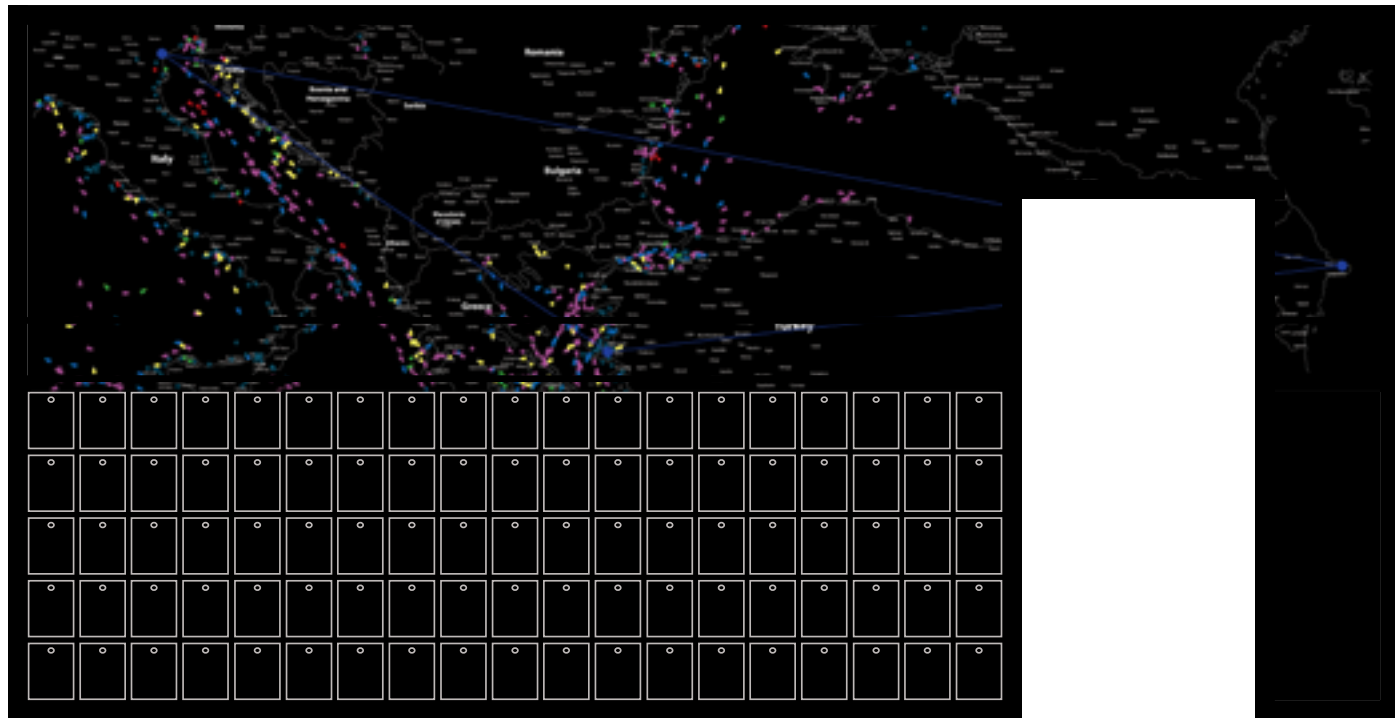
Example of one panel from "The Transformation of Art" wall section.

There are two parts to this section of the installation:

Pt 1 - collected statements/drawings recording practical suggestions for reimagining and replacing the Biennial form

Pt 2 - Arranging/organizing the statements/drawings into clear groupings of similar sounding ideas.

*Top: **Route,** 2013, digital image on vinyl, 458cm x 125cm, collage of screen shots taken from www.marinetraffic.com, digitally processed, visualization by Ioana Pioaru;*
*Bottom: **The Transformation of Art,** 100 MDF panels, 15,9cm x 20,6cm each, occupying a surface of 125cmx332cm, digital image of container printed on vinyl, blackboard paint, 2013.*

Every political change
and reestablishment of
borders is mirrored in
the nomadic movement
of the pavilions

National art
containers

Visualizing complexity 2
Constructing An Imperial Center, 2013, digital image on vinyl, 135cm x 250cm, visualization by Ioana Pioaru.

5/6

7   8   9

If you turn around and look at the opposite wall you will notice it is structured into 3 parts.

9   8   7

Understanding Venice as the *Ur Biennale,* and problems in reading Western history

Let us look at the first recess as you enter the second corridor space (7). This is a wall-size digital map of Europe. The image is constructed from four color bands, each color is taken from the marbles found in the columns of Basilica San Marco. Each line of the band bisects a significant political border that has constructed Europe - the relationship between Venice and the former East/West border during the Cold War, the border between the Orthodox Church's and the Catholic Church's area of influence, and the line dividing Europe and Asia. Next, there is a line running along the coast from Venice to Constantinople which traces the route taken by the Venetian-funded 4th Crusade, in 1204, that resulted in the sacking of Constantinople, the fall of the Roman Empire capital, and the shift of power back to Italy. It is said that this money funded the Italian Renaissance. There is also the crest of Venice and the crest of the temporary Latin Empire that the crusaders army set up. This is followed by the changes to the political states and different empires between 1204 to 2013. Next there is a large cluster of names around Venice listing the names of countries taking part in the last biennial, and finally a number of quotes analyzing the relationship between the inclusion of new pavilions to geopolitical changes.
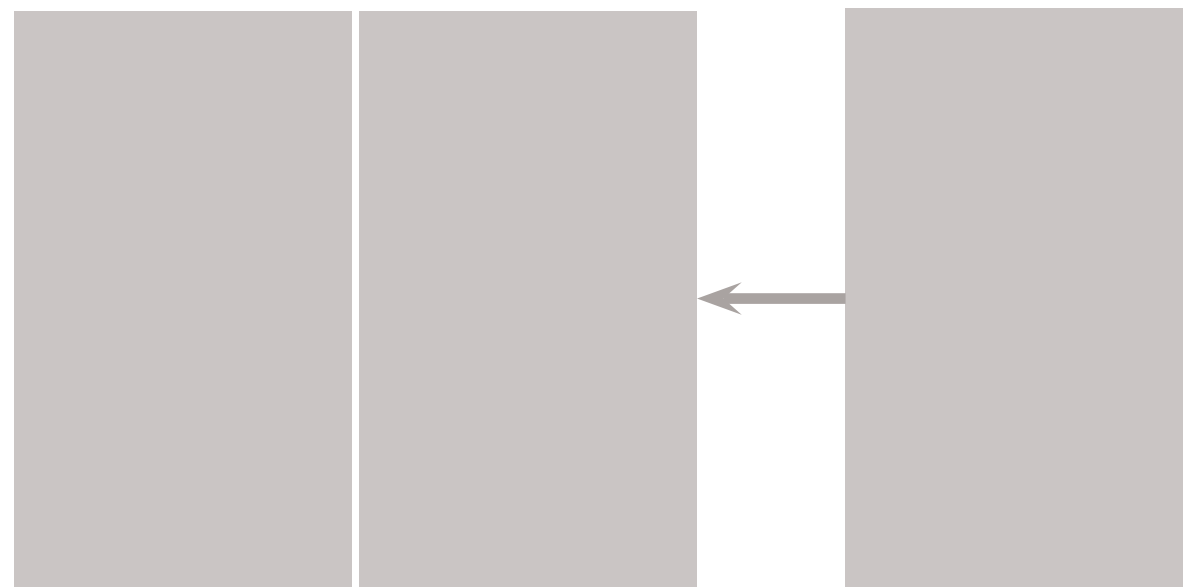
The relationship between the Venice image and the following two images

Next we move to the central wall titled **Participating Cultures** which comprises three elements:
a. a digital image;
b. a flat screen linked directly to The Center for Contemporary Art in Baku;
c. a blank blackboard area that participants can use to add content or statements concerning assembling the concept and materialization of participating cultures.
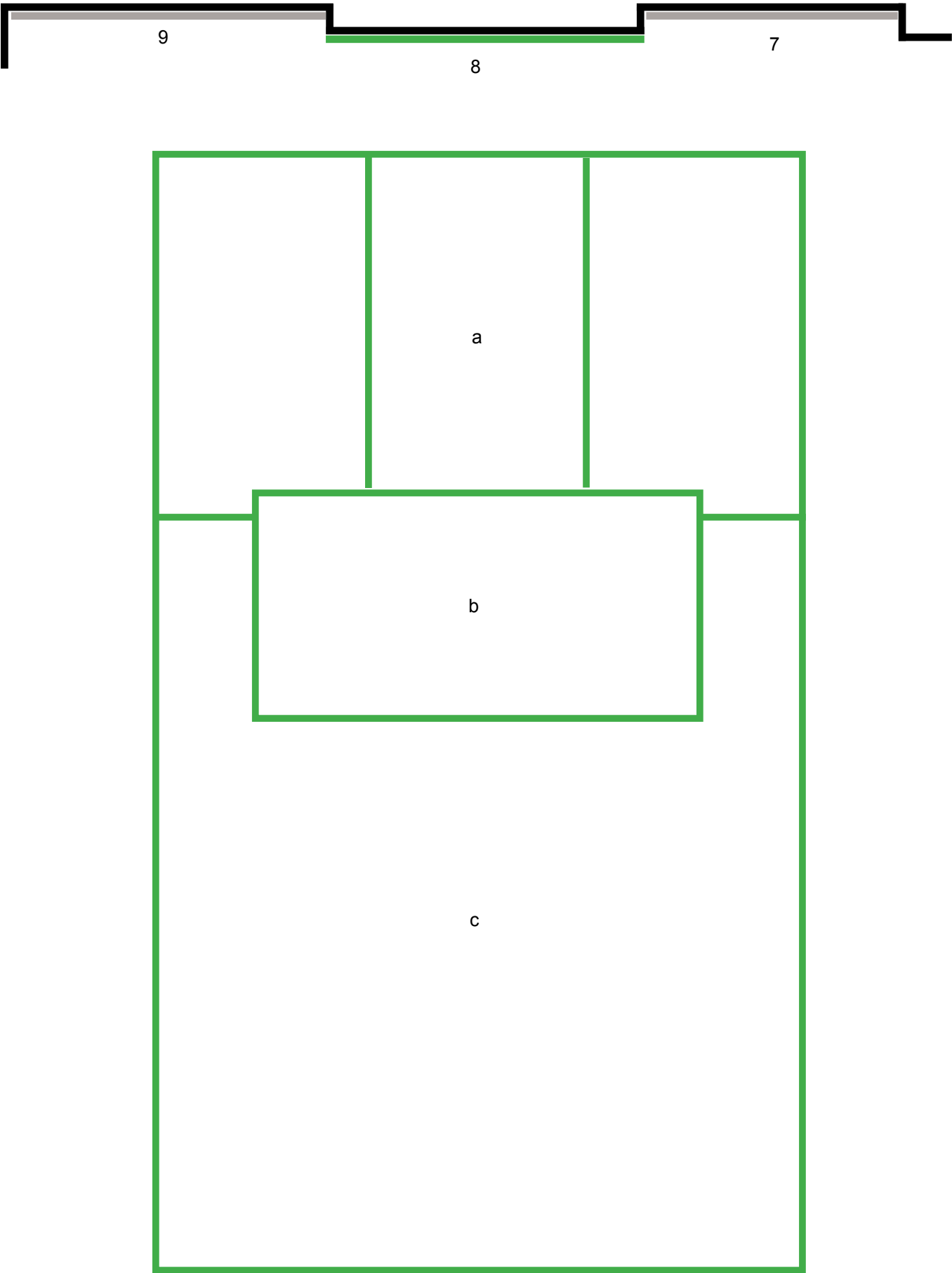
a. The top part of the wall is taken up by a single digital image - and we see a repeat of the names found on the large route map - Venice, Izmir, Baku. Again the image is divided into three vertical bands. Two of the bands contain clusters of statements - which have been taken from six months of online debates with participants in Europe, Izmir and Baku looking at assembling the notion of Participating cultures. So the statements are intended as a snapshot of current thinking and research into Participating culture, gathering together current thinking from different cultures interpreting and materializing new thinking, language and production of new concepts.
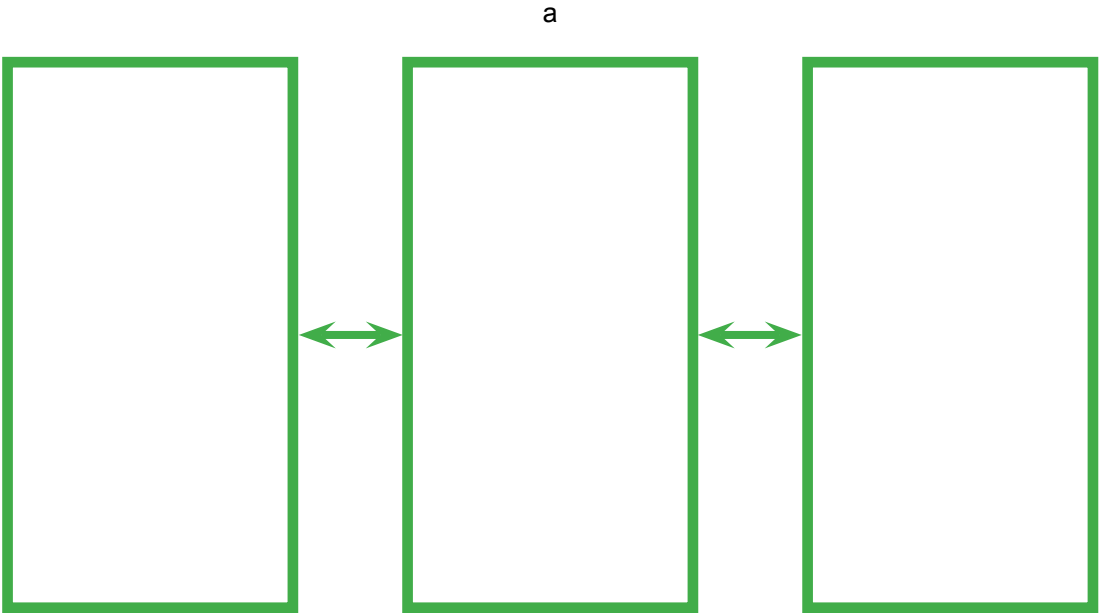
Participating Cultures, 2013, digital image on vinyl (170cm x 90cm, visualization by Ioana Pioaru)
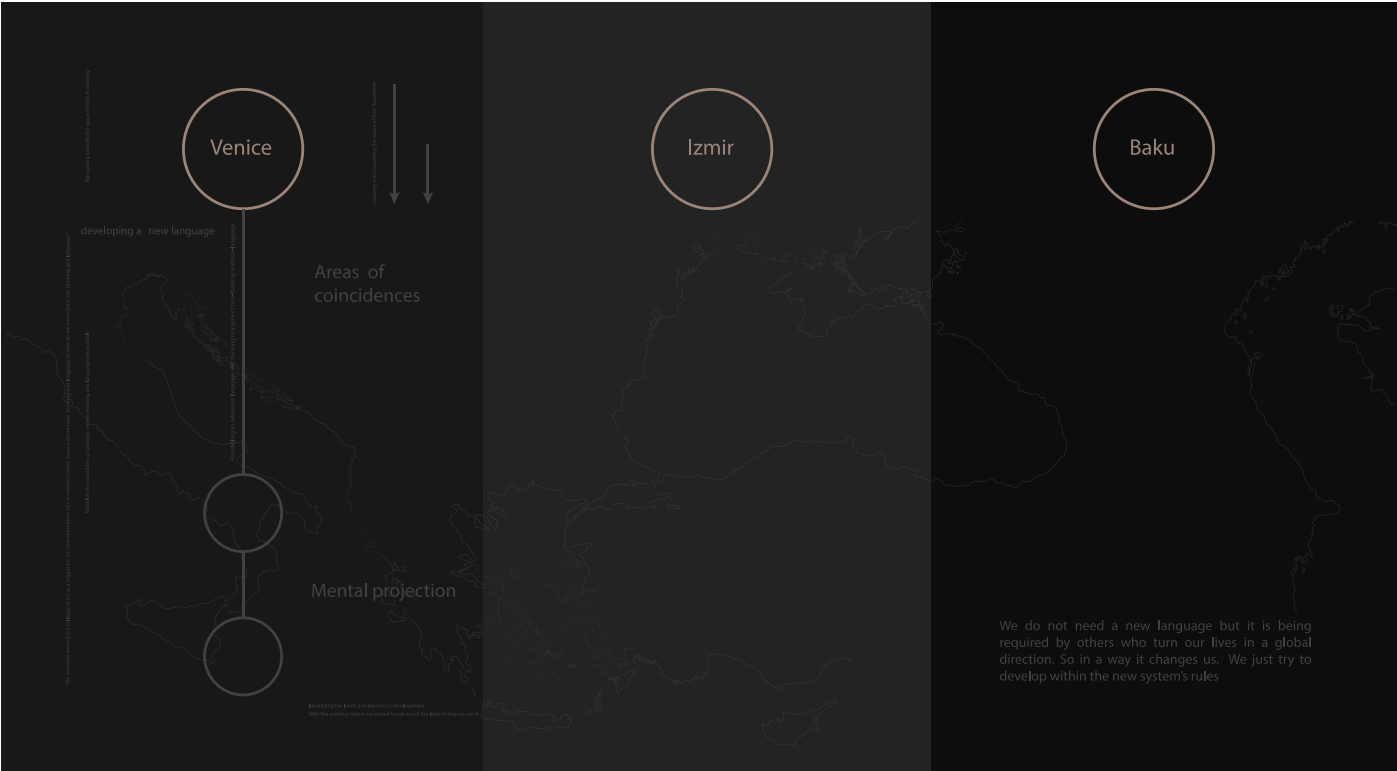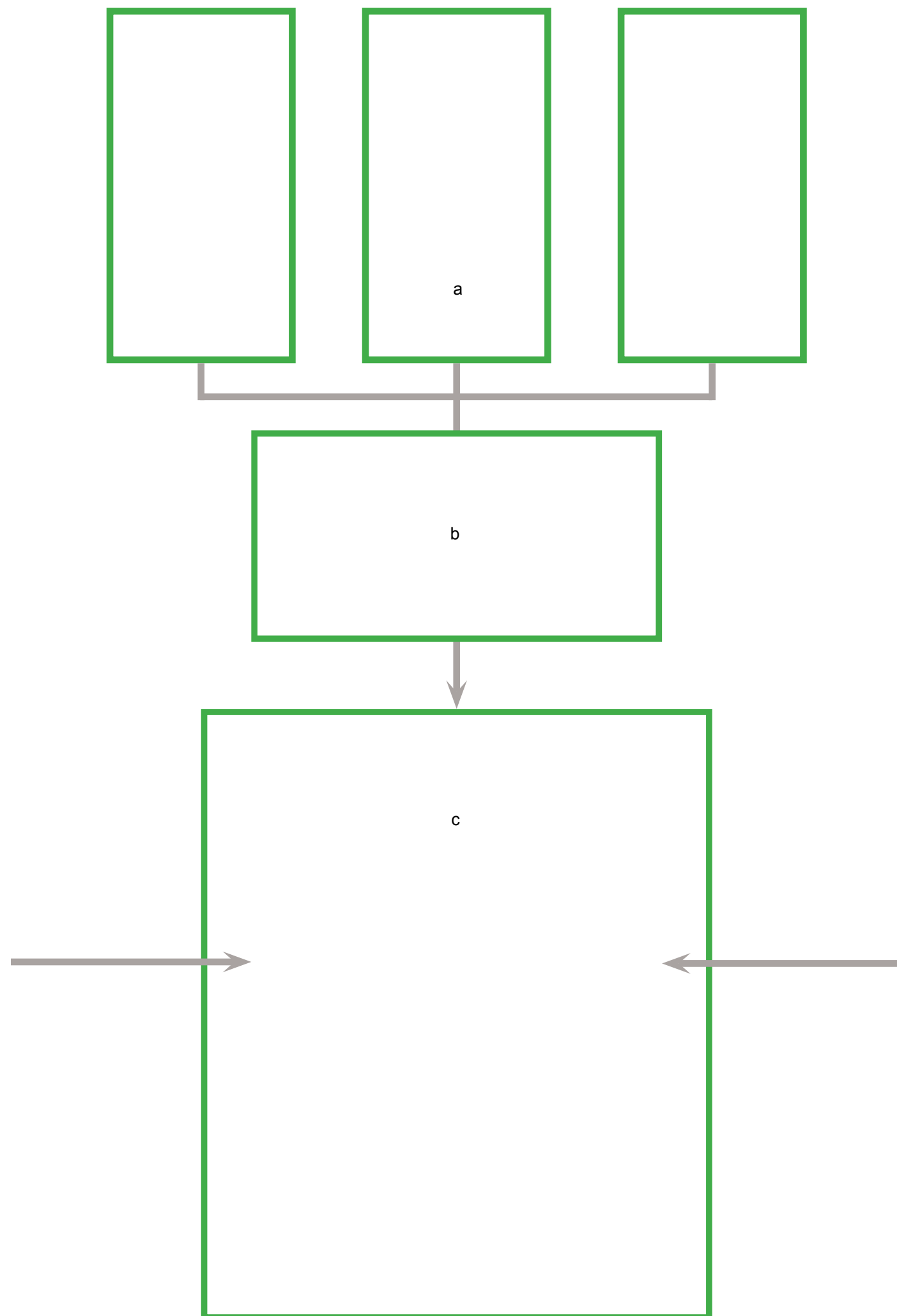
b. The next element on the central wall consists of a large flat screen TV which is linked directly to The Center for Contemporary Art in Baku and the daily audiences passing through the center, their coordination of a series of online program of talks and activities with David Goldenberg and Ioana Pioaru.

The online platform is the principle vehicle for orchestrating different audiences to come together to meet and discuss or work through activities - digital drawings, diagraming, debates, texts and projects in the Center for Contemporary Art.

Skype snapshot taken during a session with the Center for Contemporary Art in Baku

c. Texts and short statements are written in chalk in the blank area below the screen - these are accumulations of texts and thinking from two online debates between the PA group inside the installation, the public passing through the installation, and members from Baku. This section is intended as an ongoing open process.

People contributing to the concept "What is a participating culture?" from the Center for Contemporary Art in Baku

PA group contributions

Audiences passing through the installation
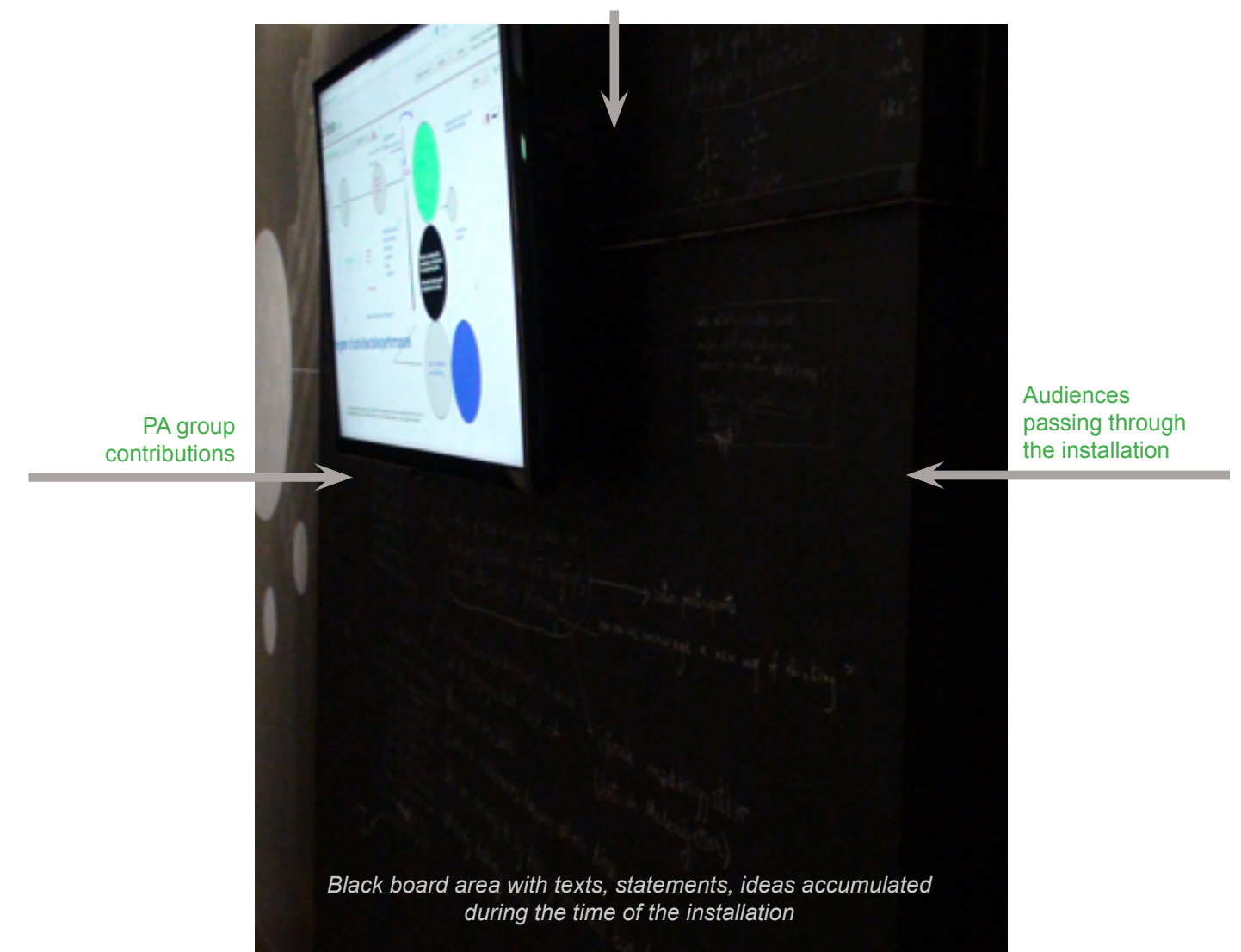
Black board area with texts, statements, ideas accumulated during the time of the installation

5/6

8

7

9
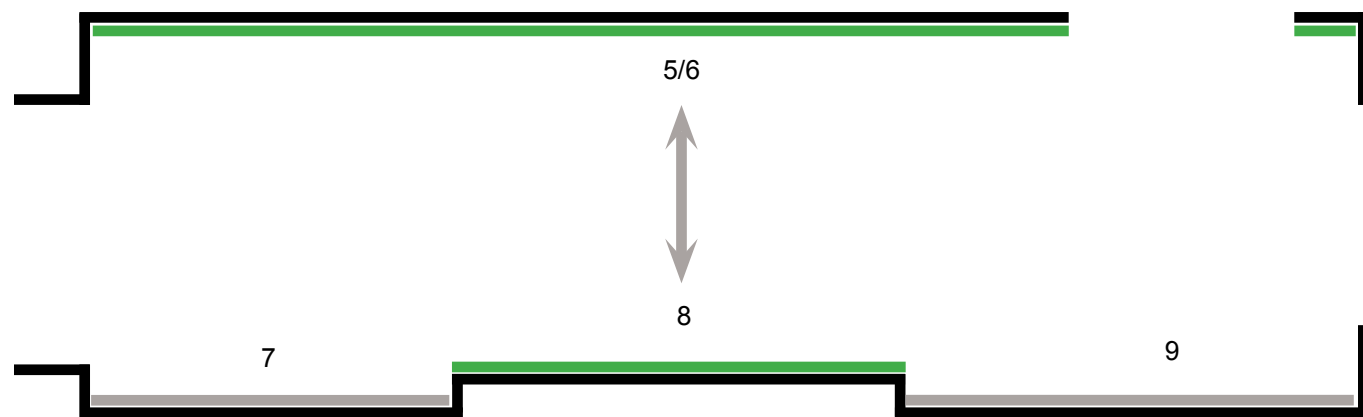
Two blank areas inside the installation set aside for additions from different audiences

Area inside the Center for Contemporary Art in Baku & audiences passing through

Computer screen inside the Center

Flat screen TV inside the installation

One hundred blank panels

Blank area below the screen

People passing through the installation

Online debates/ drawings between members of the participating group
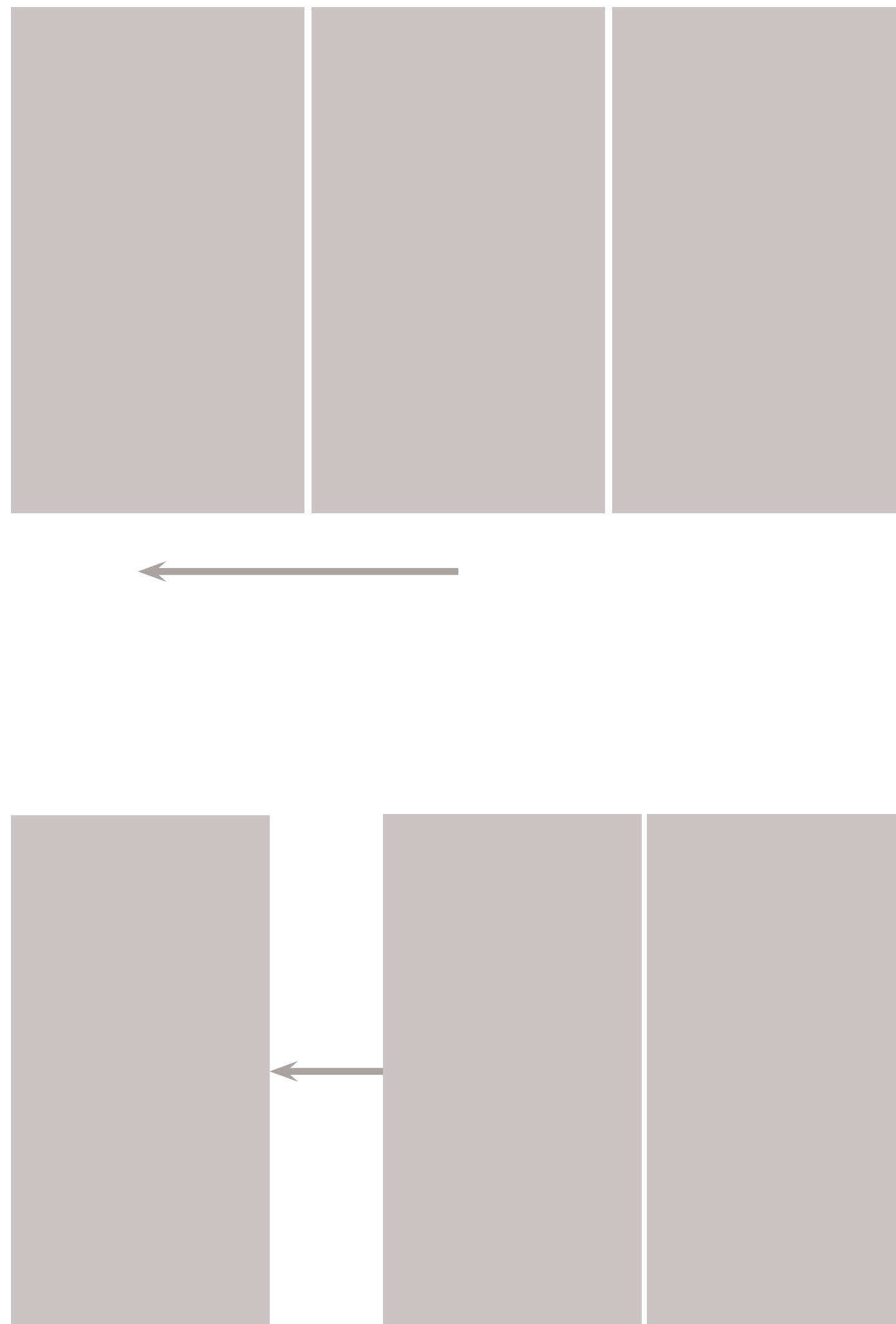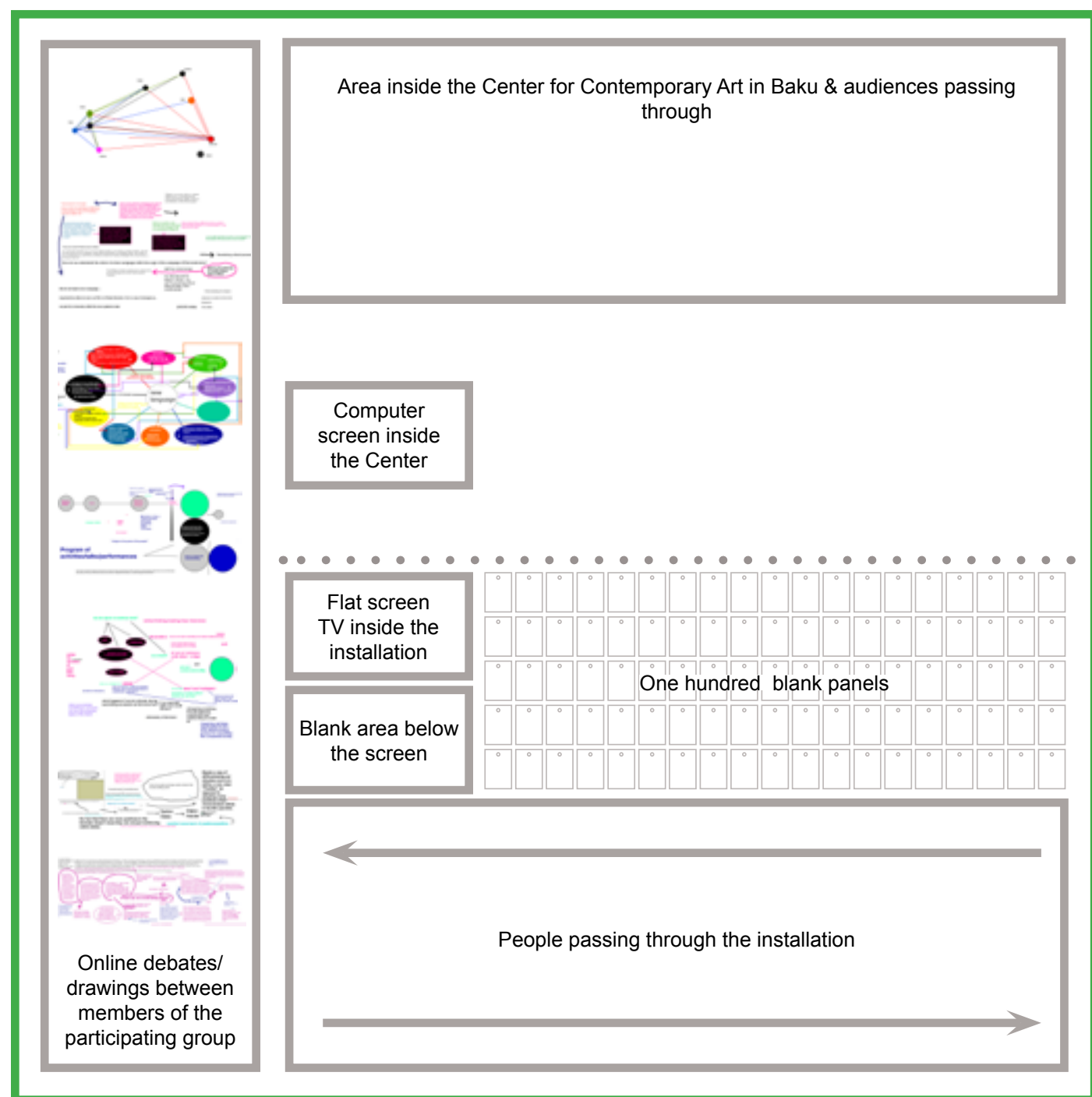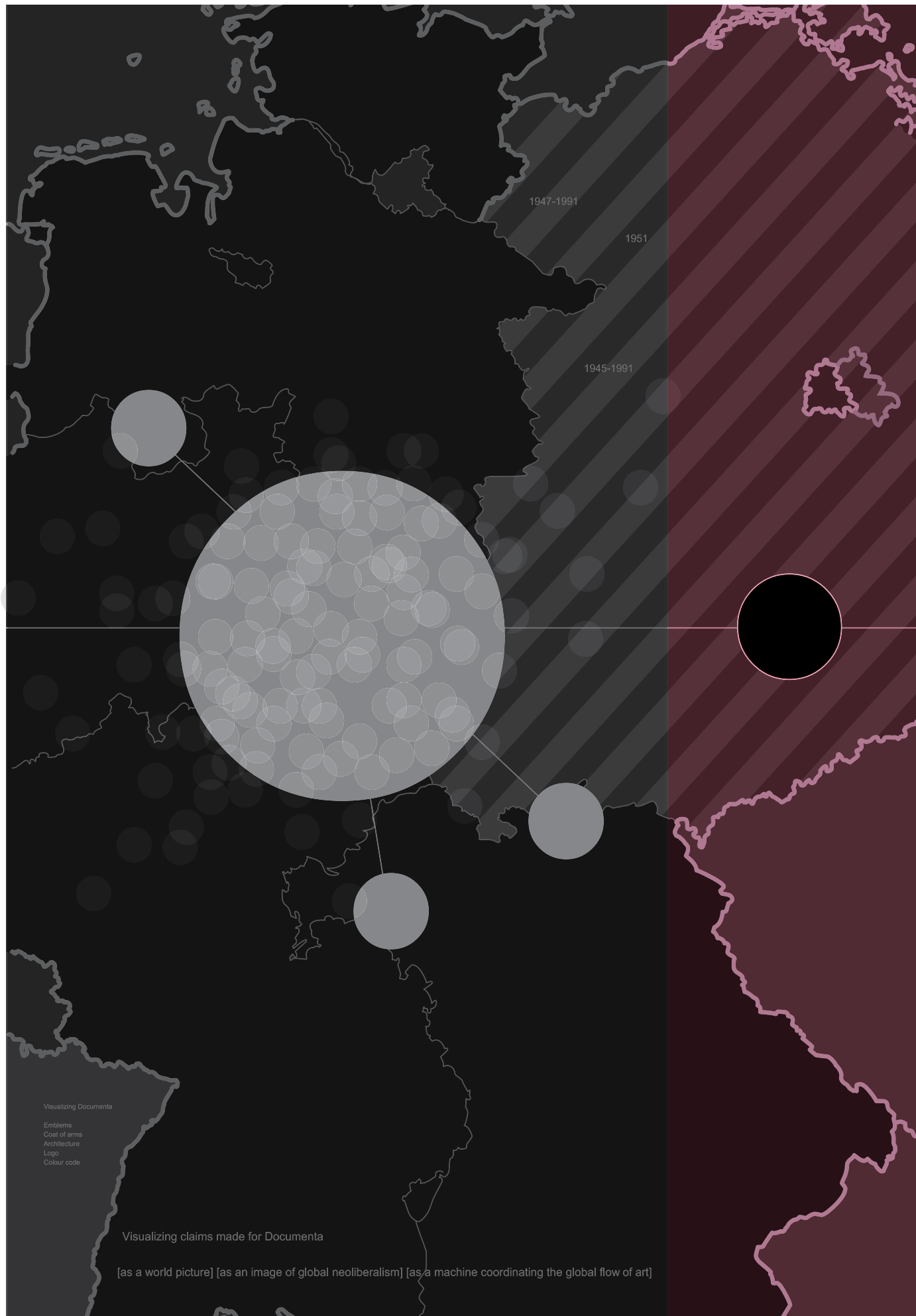
Visualizing complexity 3
Claims Made for Documenta & Beyond, 2013, digital image on vinyl, 151cm x 250cm, visualization by Ioana Pioaru.

Visualising Complexity 3 - Claims made for Documenta and beyond

After the Participating Cultures section you come across another wall size image, another map of a country, this time unnamed, although there are a number of dates and terms in the top right and in the bottom of the image that give a clue. Again the image is structured into colored bands.

The bottom text in many respects can be seen to be central to the installation. How to visualize claims?...How to visualize complex information and concepts [when concepts no longer exist but are in formation]? How to visualize claims made for Neo Liberalism? How to visualize claims made for Documenta? How to visualize claims for a world image? How to visualize claims made for Documenta as a machine that controls the Global flow of art?
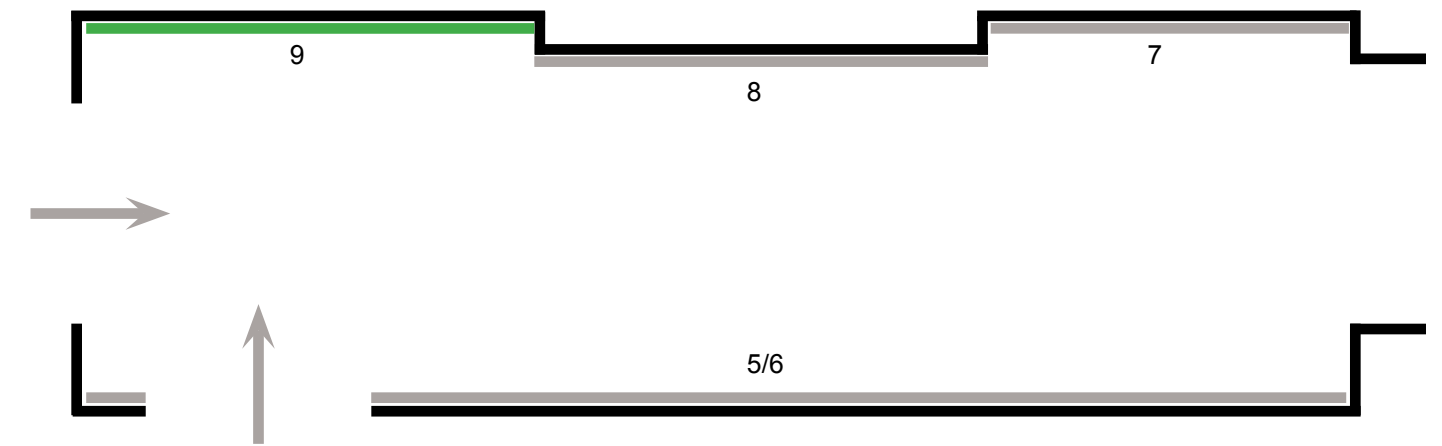
The image combines a geopolitical map of Europe overlayed with a mind map that has already been used in Participating Cultures and the Route map, these are all mental projections.
The mind map stands in as a schematic/diagramatic outline of Documenta in Kassel, Germany, as the largest and fullest form of the biennial form [plus satellite spaces] and, what is important, offers a negative blank space for imagining and rethinking beyond Documenta - a space to develop beyond Documenta - which links up to the blank spaces in the bottom half of the Participating Cultures wall and the 100 blank panels that make up The Transformation of Art.
The geopolitical location and function of Documenta within Cold War politics and European Union politics and for its overcoming/reimagining, establishes links directly to the scheme for a Mobile Documenta and its route, and in turn, Participating Cultures.
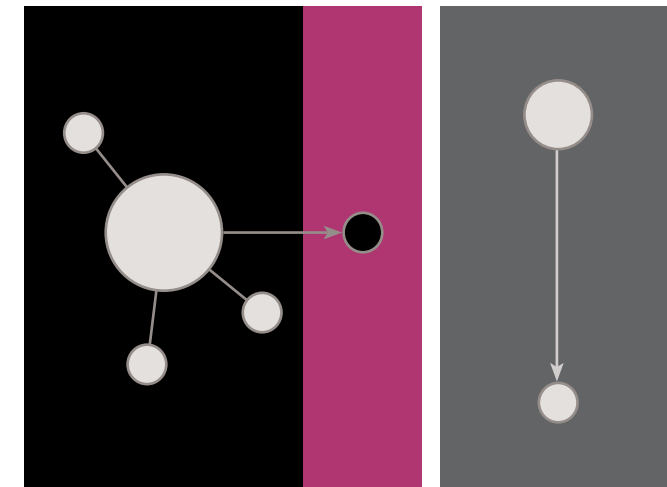
Linking up mind maps, diagrams, movement of thinking, mental projections

Container 1

Container 2

55. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Eventi collaterali
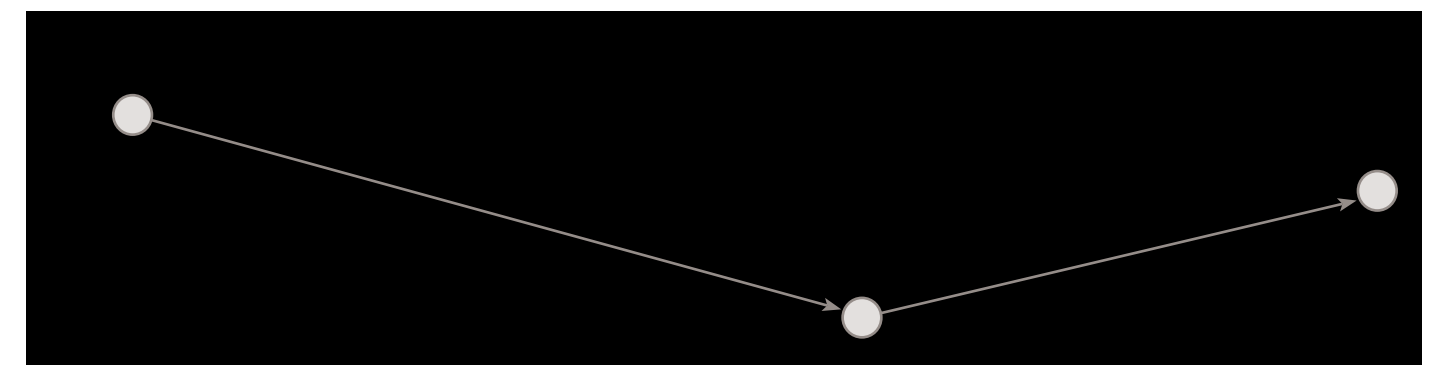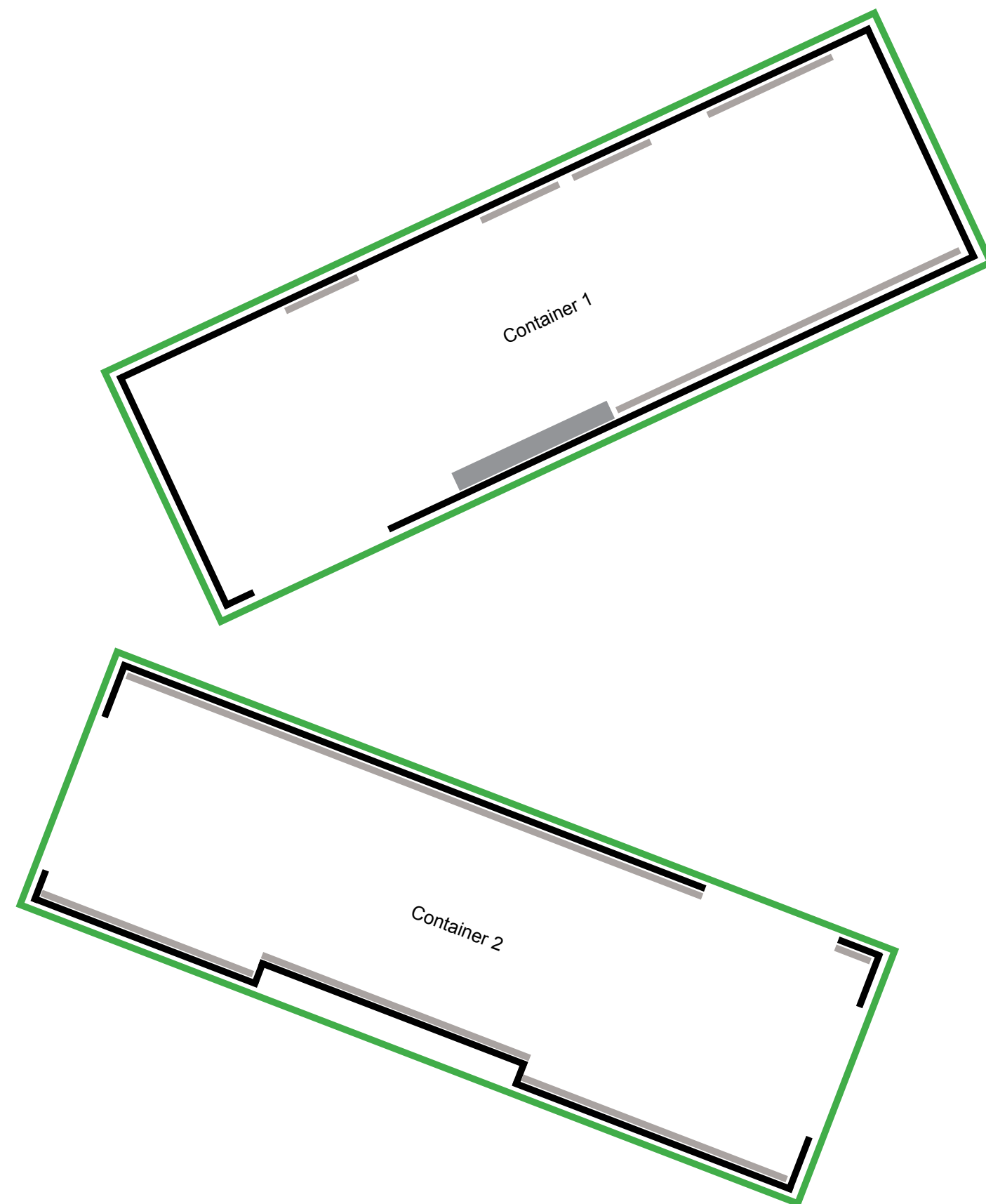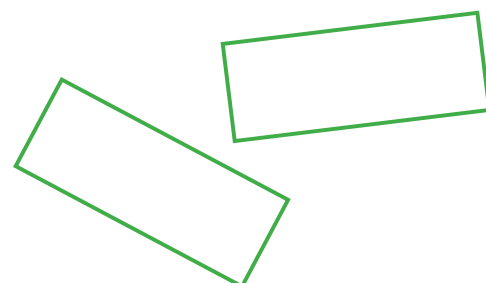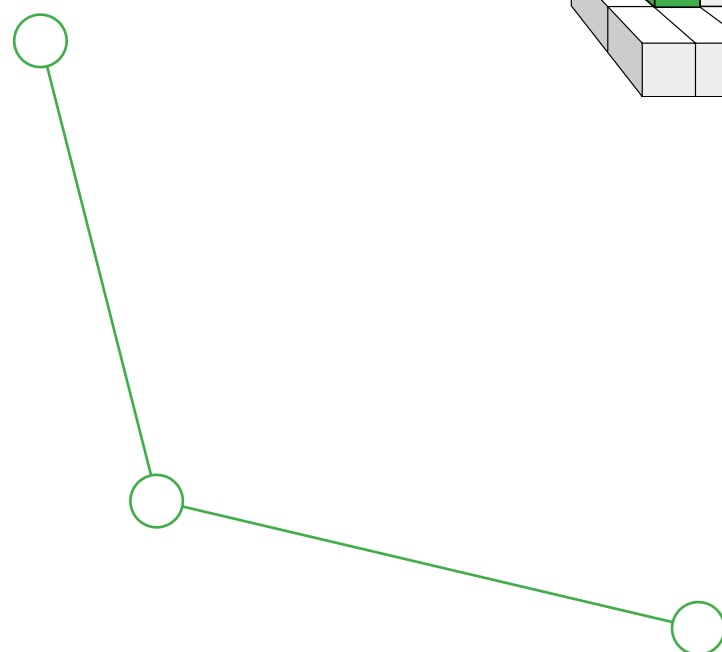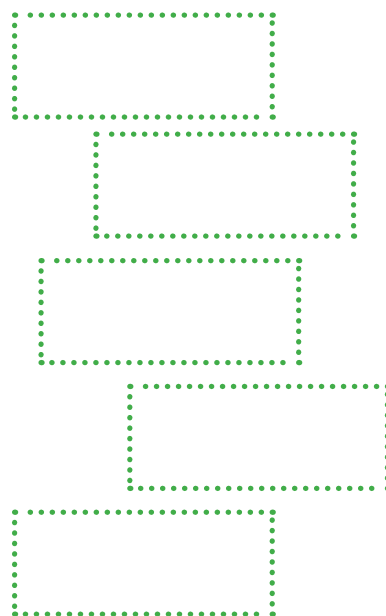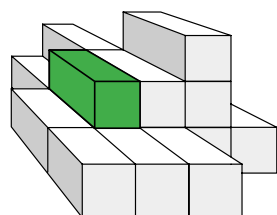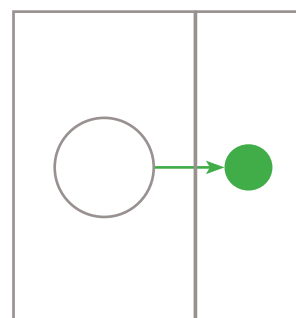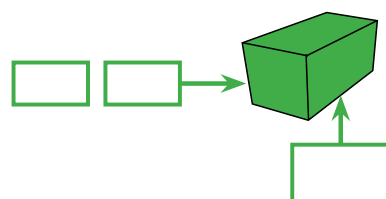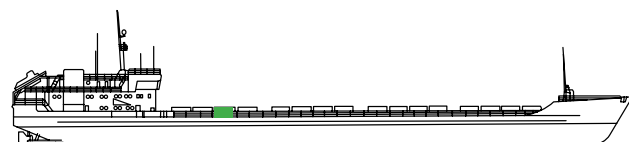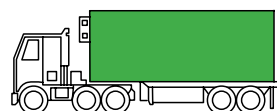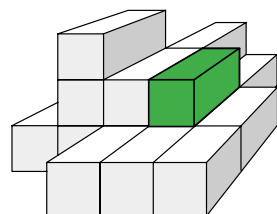
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THE TRANSFORMATION OF ART
by David Goldenberg

as part of the group show
PERSONAL STRUCTURES

CURATED BY: FRANCESCA CRUDO, SARAH GOLD, CAROL ROLLA AND VALERIA ROMANINI.

Palazzo Bembo, Rialto, Grand Canal
Riva del Carbon, San Marco 4785, 30124, Venice, Italy
From the 1st of June to the 24th of November, 2013.

Installation design and images by David Goldenberg
visualization by Ioana Pioaru
2013
Courtesy Glenda Cinquegrana: the Studio

THE STUDIO
GLENDA
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