



DESPITE EFFICIENCY: LABOUR

The true goal of the system, the reason it programs itself like a computer, is the optimization of the global relationship between input and output –in other words, performativity. Even when its rules are in the process of changing and innovations are occurring, even when its dysfunctions (such as strikes, crises, unemployment, or political revolutions) inspire hope and lead to belief in an alternative, even then what is actually taking place is only an internal readjustment, and its results can be no more than an increase in the system's "viability". The only alternative to this kind of performance improvement is entropy, or decline.

Jean-François Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition

Course	Stage Two 2014/15 BA (Hons) Interior Architecture and Design Unit
Projects	03 Credits 30
Duration	Term 1/ Phase 2: Weeks 03-12
Tutors	Aberrant Architecture and Lucy Jones
Project Overview	EXHIBITION DESIGN The project Exhibition Design introduces ways of understanding the relationships between the subjective idea (representation) and the physical process of making and installing the idea (realisation) while discussing processes, theories and methodologies of fabrication. Installation is then explored through a series of consecutive exercises, each introducing different techniques of fabrication. The project ultimately involves the design of a one to one fabricated element and its insertion and testing within a chosen site specific location, exploring user interactions and relationships.

Brief

Exhibition Design will challenge you to design and build a 1:1 installation by transforming the Herbert Read gallery into an environment suitable for hosting live performances, videos and other time-based artworks that will occur over a three week period. Entitled *Despite Efficiency: Labour*, the exhibition aspires to create a space for international artists to play out a variety of situations and models of unprofitable, futile or ineffective work. Participating artists include Marilou Lemmens & Richard Ibghy, Greta Alfaro, Fermín Jiménez Landa, Mirko Nikolic, and Salon Flux amongst others.

Design Parameters

The design should be flexible by responding to the different needs, wants, and desires of the invited performers that will visit the gallery at different times between 21st November - 12th December, as well as housing a series of videos while no performances are taking place. The exhibition design should be designed and constructed as a series of modules or 'kit of parts', which you will individually design and construct. It must be easily transportable and designed to enable different artist activities to take place, whether these are individual, for two people or involving a group of visitors. Furthermore, this building project asks you to approach making as a craft; to carefully consider material options, fabrication techniques, details, joints and junctions. We demand a high quality outcome demonstrating skill, accuracy and care.

Exhibition Theme

As “the specter of deflation” haunts Europe’s macroeconomic future, one wonders what are the micro consequences of ingrowth, uselessness, unproductivity, or underperformance in everyday labour? Work is apparently a constitutive aspect of our social interactions, and unemployment, becomes, therefore, not only an economic drama but also an identity one. However, taken today’s escalating lack of employment opportunities, high-rising welfare costs, and increasing social inequality, not only activist groups but the European Union and the Swiss Government are calculating the feasibility of implementing the Unconditional Basic Income, which would guarantee all citizens a minimum revenue independent of salary. Apart from raising critical questions around the notion of citizenship, the Unconditional Basic Income rests its logic in the same principal of sustainability as does the neoliberal model of waged work. Following Lyotard’s recommendation in his 1979 essays on the condition of knowledge in computerized societies, the architectural and artistic project *Despite Efficiency: Labour* imagines a different scenario, one in which the system’s viability is threaten by inefficiency.

Inefficiency can be understood as an effort without reward; as the negative result of a system designed to produce a benefit, to be profitable. In relation to present conditions of labour, the dialectic of efficiency/ inefficiency is at the core of new working paradigms. From life-hackers who propose efficient uses of technology to minimize the time spent at work, to the vindication of sleep and its power to resist capital’s constant demand of attention, and from the rise of the artist’s job –self-motivated, flexible, instable– as exemplary, to the reliance of many creative industries on the exploitation of unpaid work (internships), labour is today intimately connected to debates around (in)efficiency. Taking this panorama, *Despite Efficiency: Labour* aspires to create a (working) space where these ideas can be played out in different formats and shapes, independently of their utility.

Unit Schedule

W03	07/10/13	EXHIBITION DESIGN/Materiality design brief intro + site visit
	09/10/13	tutorials
W04	13/10/13	workshop
	16/10/13	tutorials
W05	20/10/13	workshop
	23/10/13	EXHIBITION DESIGN/Materiality formative review
W06	27/10/13	workshop
	30/10/13	tutorials
W07	03/11/13	workshop
	06/11/13	tutorials
W08	10/11/13	workshop
	13/11/13	tutorials
W09	17/11/13	installation
	18/11/13	installation
	19/11/13	installation
	20/11/13	installation
	21/11/13	OPENING OF EXHIBITION

Assessment criteria

Ability to demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of materials, details and assembly methods involved in analogue and digital modes of fabrication of interior architecture and design projects.

Ability to investigate, experiment, develop and fabricate ambitious and considered 1:1 scale design installations that effectively respond to the programmatic, material, contextual and environmental constraints of the brief and intended users.






Ability to visually represent design development, final proposals and fabricated outcomes effectively and to industry standard.



VIDEOS

Artist and Web	Title and Year	Duration
 Greta Alfaro http://www.gretaalfaro.com/	European Dark Room , 2010	8'40"
 KpD collective (Berlin) consists of Brigitta Kuster, Isabell Lorey, Marion von Osten and Karja Reichard http://www.cascoprojects.org/gde/User/Exhibition-Works-KameraLauf	KAMERA LÄUFT! [Camera is rolling!] , kleines postfordistisches Drama, 2004	32'
 Marilou Lemmens & Richard Ibgly http://www.ibghylemmens.com/	Real failure needs no excuse , 2012	23'
 Terry Perk and Ed Oliver http://www.terryperk.com/ http://www.edwardoliver.net/	Six Memos , 2014	loop
 With thanks to Stephane Trois Carres http://vimeo.com/31713725	Inutile d'insiste [No point in insisting] , 2000	21'50"

PERFORMANCES

Artist and Web	Action	Date and time
 Marilou Lemmens & Richard Ibgly http://www.ibghylemmens.com		21st of November, 2015 from 18 to 20h (opening)
 Fermín Jiménez Landa http://ferminjimenezlanda.blogspot.co.uk	The right left	26th of November, 2015 all day
 Mirko Nikolić with Adelia da Silva Nieto, Charley Vines, Helena Martin, Kiron Muhammad, Lauren Gray, Naomi Ching, and Sasha Adamczewski http://www.mirkonikolic.com/home.html	Office of Ecological Labour: speed-reading (deep intra-actions of carbon, silicon, light, data)	3rd of December, 2015 10 to 17h
 Janez Janša, Janez Janša and Janez Janša http://www.mynamesjanezjansa.com	Trust	10th of December, 2015 18h Turner Contemporary, Margate
 Salon Flux with Jane Frances Dunlop http://www.salonflux.com	Salon Flux #7	11th of December, 2015 from 17h till late

Explanation

A paranormal event seems to take place at the Old Tobacco Factory in Madrid. The space and the objects in it appear covered or transformed into a brown substance that is not identifiable. The surface gets altered and melts, soon its colour, gloss and consistence change. Chocolate, as tobacco, belong to a tradition of colonialism and exploitation.

Format and Requirements

HD, sound, 16:9. Use projector

KpD explores the transformation of cultural, creative, generally unpaid or underpaid activities and careers that have been and continue to be stylized as models of autonomous work. Their film consists of fifteen lengthy interviews with precarious cultural producers in Berlin. The interviews were shortened and then interpreted by actors in front of the camera in a casting in Zurich. The questions asked of cultural producers were:

*How would you describe your work life?
What do you like about it and what should change?
When and why does it all become too much and what do you do then?
What do you consider a 'good life'?
Should cultural producers, as role models for society, join with other social movements to work toward new forms of globalization?*

Video, sound. Use plasma screen

Consisting of a series of performances realized for the camera in an empty office building in Glasgow, the video investigates the transgressive potential of non-productive action and its relation to labour, the workplace, and the imagination. The piece presents a continuous flow of improvised actions in which materials are moved, piled, and assembled in various configurations. Precariously balanced structures, visible for only a short time, collapse (because everything, eventually, collapses) to make way for new shapes and arrangements.

HD, sound. Projected as a 60" x 80" rectangle

Part of L'œil du Cyclone - Programmes Courts/Canal+ [The eye of Cyclone - Short Programs/ Canal +], a television series dedicated to visual culture. Inutile d'insister was the last episode of the series but was never broadcasted.

HD, colour, no sound. Use plasma screen

Video, sound. Use plasma screen

Explanation

Their action will incorporate, respond to, dialogue with the structure at the gallery.

Objects that are not instantly recognizable as finished goods or a finished product. All sorts of materials of all sorts of shapes and sizes. The more diverse the better. These could include very small things, like a bag of seeds, or screws, or ball bearings, to larger things like metal pipes, to a wooden plank, to a length of rope, to a metal hook, to a plastic sheet to a ...

Replace a bulb in an office in UCA Canterbury for a bulb in an office in UCA Farnham.

A hired car, a ladder, a GPS.

An absurdist performative reading of divergent streams of data under the pretense of research into the sustainability options for the university. The experiment is conducted as follows: a group of medium-sized palm trees is temporarily placed in Herbert Read gallery. They are equipped with light sensors which translate the strength of the sun rays on their leaves. An operating data server/router is positioned alongside them. A CO2 monitor is used to read the air quality. All these machines work next to each other, yet they are in parallel universes. Humans try to unpack this imbraglio of subterranean linkages among them through a patient sieving of data—CO2 concentration levels in the air, amount of light absorbed by the plants, transmission volumes of internet data—in belief that a comparative analysis based on data mining will surface the truth of what actor is out of sync and for what reason. The data gathered in the experiment is "made public" live, on spot and online.

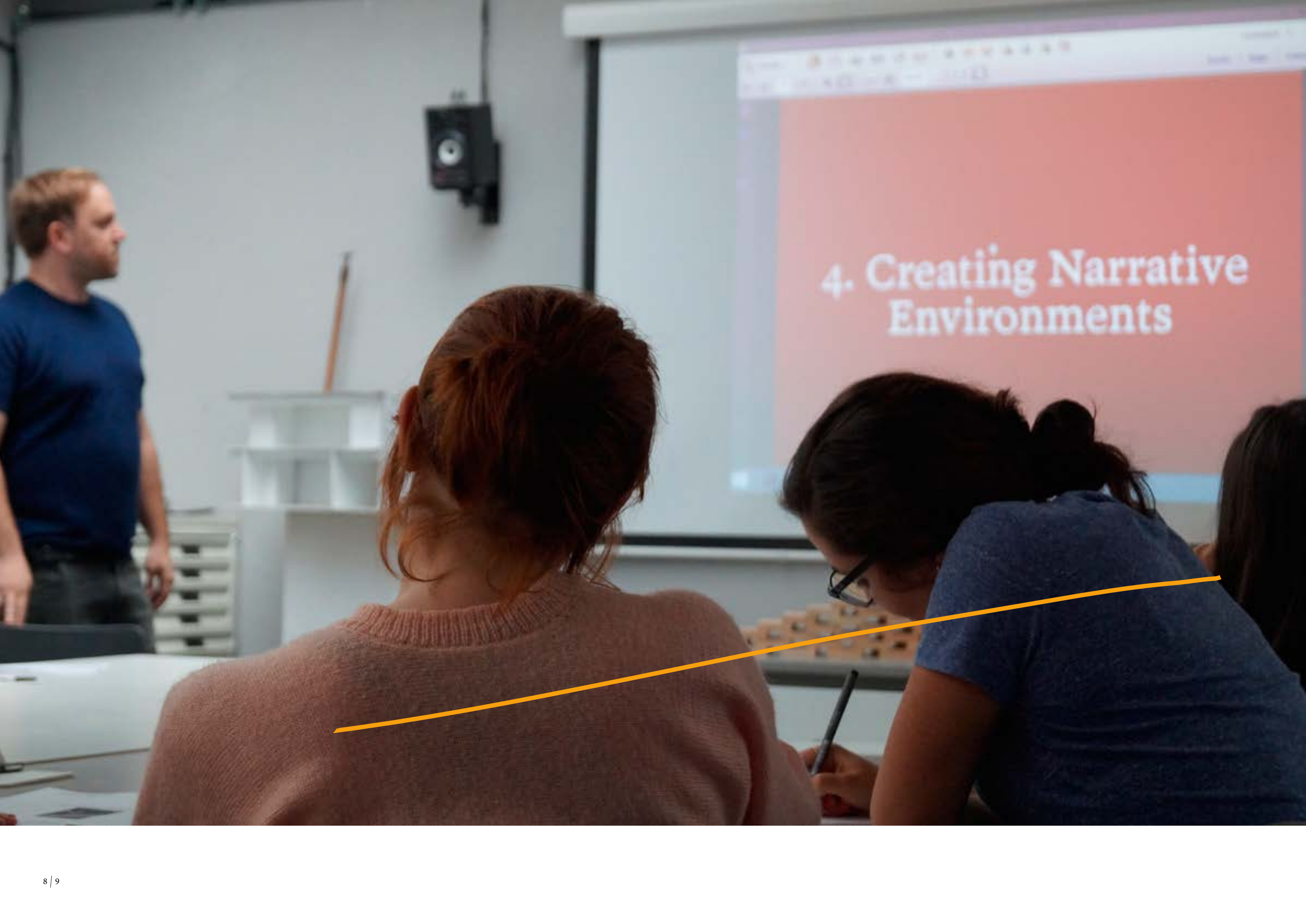
Plants, t-shirts and bands, chairs, computers, whiteboard, pens and papers, TV, Volunteers. Access to UCA's internet.

The project questions the role of credit cards in the system of trust on which the whole financial sector is based, while at the same time pointing to the peculiar relationship the artists establish with their audience.

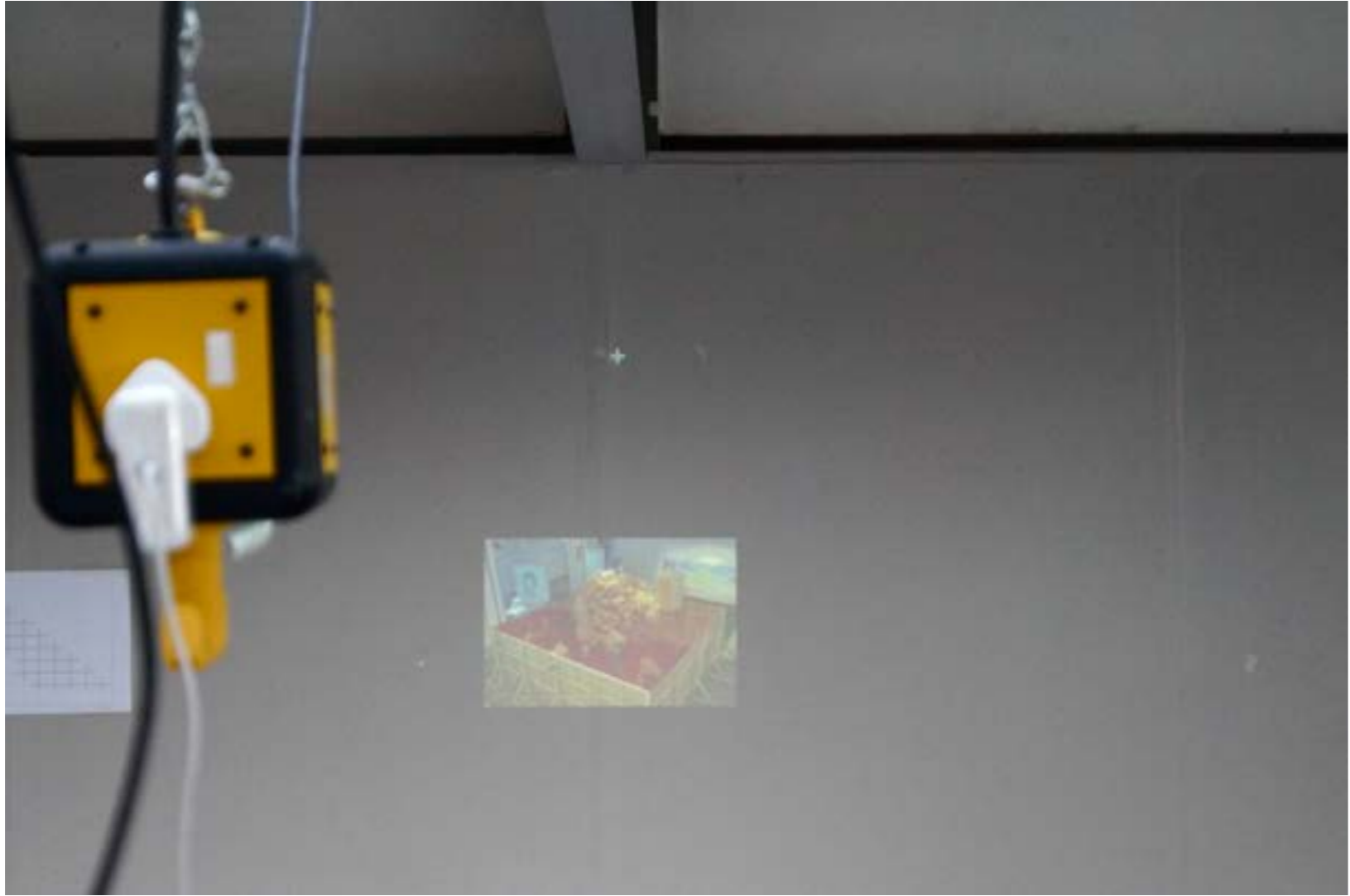
Projector, stand, pens to sign cards.

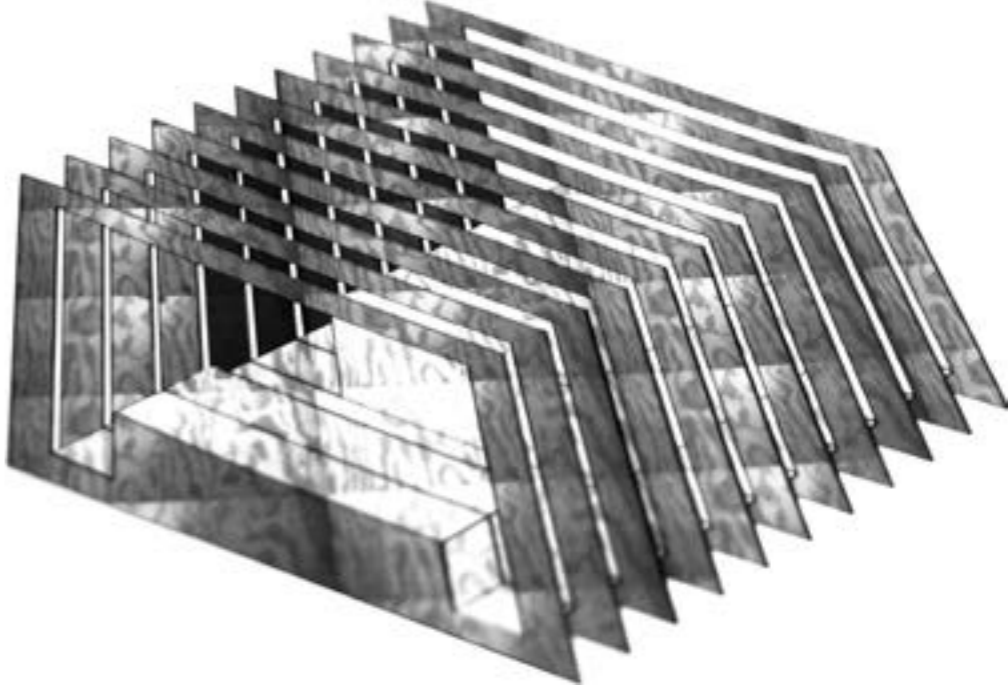
For one day, the art collective/platform Salon Flux will take over the identity of the digital Herbert Read Gallery (facebook, emails), as well as the gallery space itself which will be used to present a book, visuals, and music. The day will end with a party with vjs and djs at the bar.

They intend to bring some furniture, plants and posters into the space. Chairs, tables needed. Projector in the bar. There will be a bus bringing people from London. Order pizzas.



4. Creating Narrative Environments















To: XXX
From: Emma Braso
Date: Fri, Apr 18, 2014 at 5:48 PM
Subject: Invitation to participate in Despite Efficiency: Labour
Attachment: Exhibition proposal.pdf Herbert Read Gallery plans.ai

Dear artist,

I was very glad to receive your last email as the topic of your recent residency is connected in unexpected ways to the concept of a project I am currently developing for the university gallery where I now work.

This project, entitled Despite Efficiency: Labour, is the first on a series of presentations around the practical consequences and political potential of inefficiency, in this case, in relation to the sphere of work. As you can read in the proposal attached, the idea is to transform the gallery into a working space that will be used to stage a series of performances and to screen videos.

The Herbert Read Gallery is in the Canterbury campus of the University for the Creative Arts. UCA also has campuses in Rochester, and two more in the county of Surrey, in Farnham and Epsom, which are miles away... Attached you can also find the floor plans of the gallery and you can see a campus map here:

<http://www.ucreative.ac.uk/canterbury/campus-map>

The reason for this long preamble is that I would like to invite you to participate in the show and include one of your videos. How does that sound? If you accept, and once we get closer to the exhibition dates, we can discuss all details. For now, could you just let me know if you have any ideal screening conditions? As mentioned, the exhibition design will be carried out by the studio Aberrant Architecture with our Interior Design students, so any information you can provide will be used in their design process.

I would also like to extend the invitation for you to come to Canterbury to present a live project in relation to (in)efficient labour. Would you be available to come to the UK towards the end of November or beginning of December? I have been talking with the MA and BA Fine Art course leaders and they would also appreciate if you could give a talk to their students as part of their visiting lecturer programme while you are in Canterbury. The budget, as usual, will be limited, but enough to cover production expenses and your fee.

Your performance could be a response to the space that gets built or could happen outside the gallery; it could be a respond to the internal working logic of a structure like UCA or be used to explore other forms of labour. If you decide to produce a situation that involves participants, I am sure we will be able to involve students.

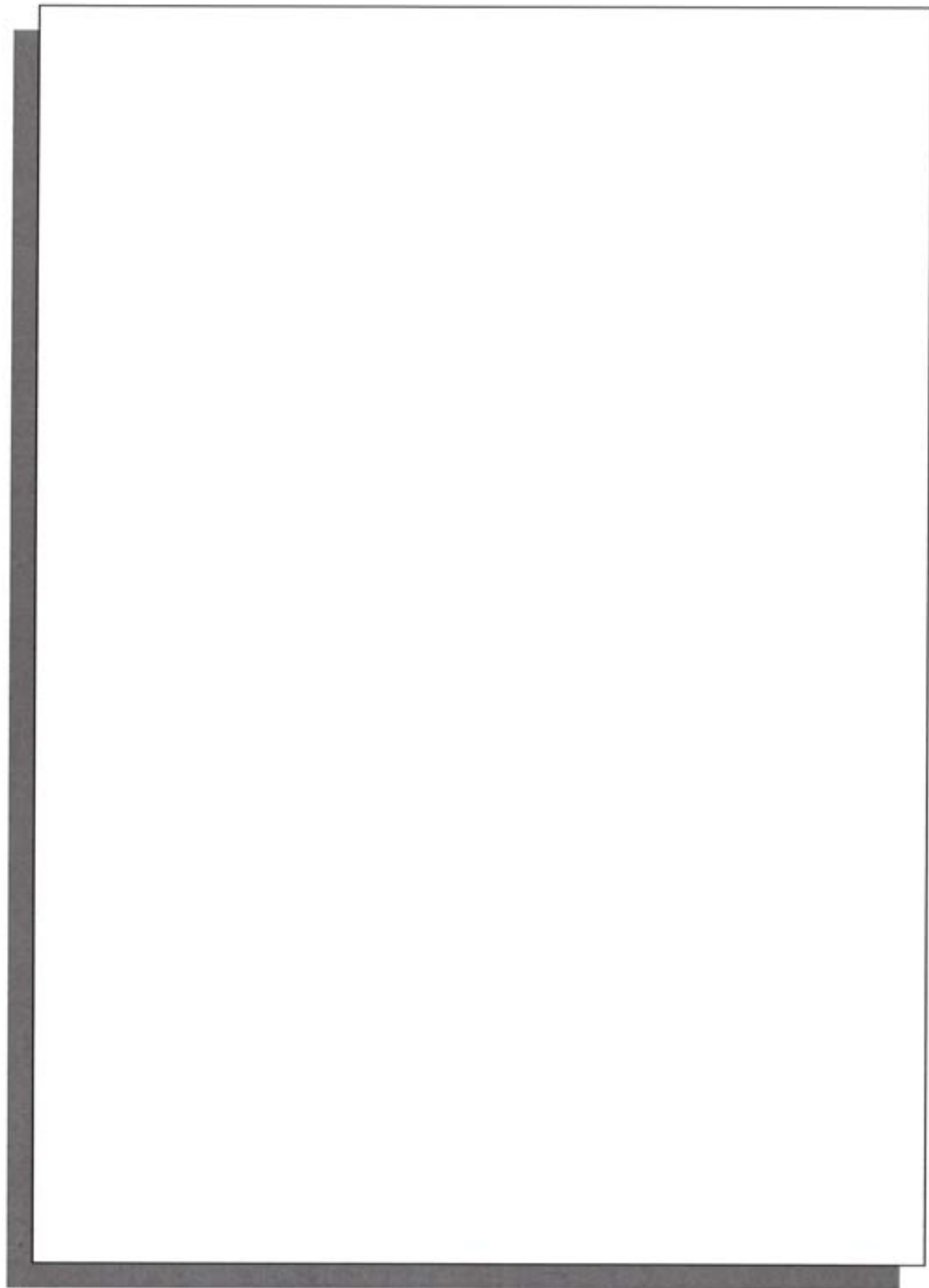
I have also been in touch with Turner Contemporary in Margate, about having an event at the museum during your stay in Kent. Hope this makes sense to you too. We would need to think carefully about what to do and how it relates to the overall project. I think it is probably easier and more efficient (!) to discuss all this on skype. Please let me know when you are available.

Hope this introduction is able to make you curious and want to keep the conversation going.

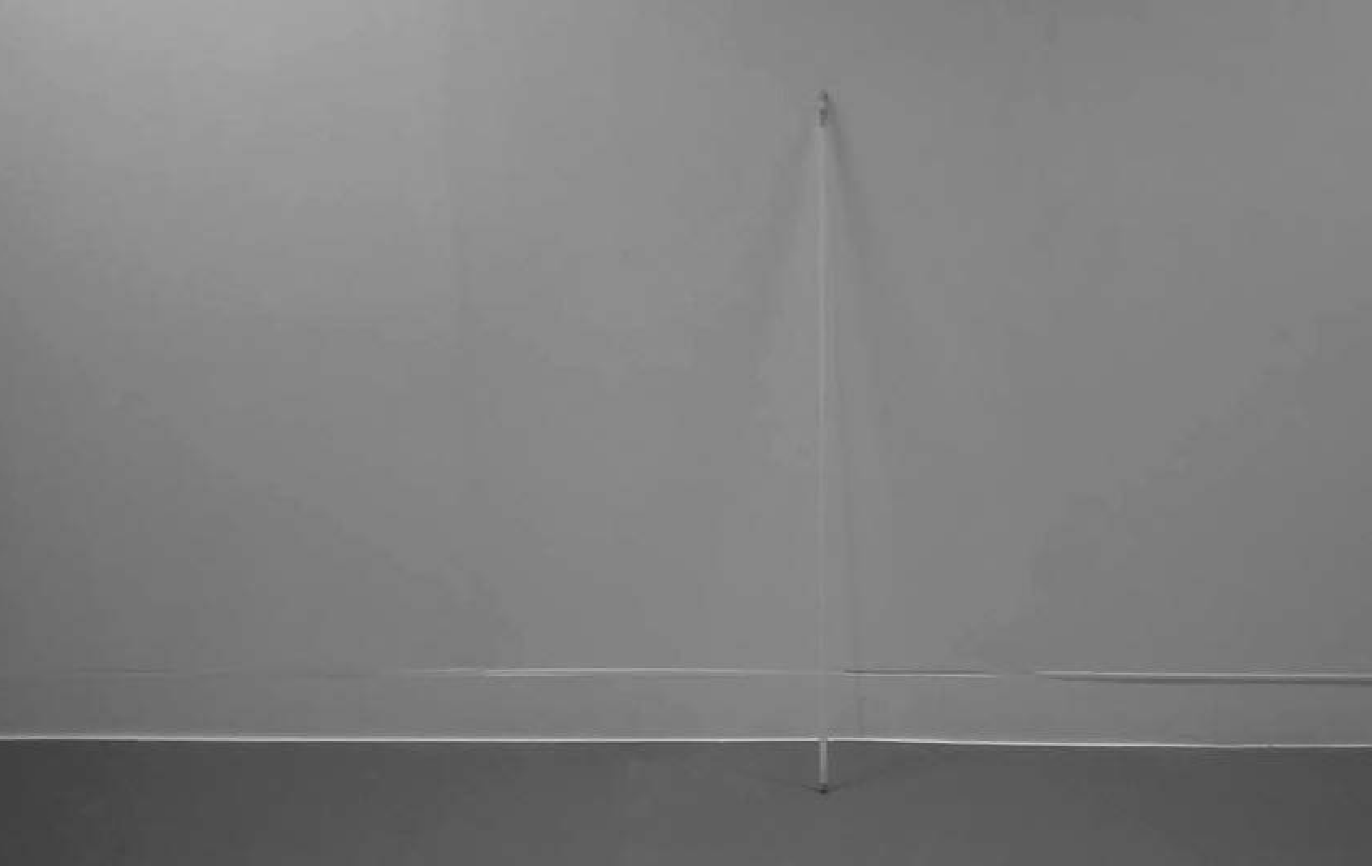
All best,

Emma Braso
Cultural Programme Curator
University for the Creative Arts, Kent
Phone: 0122781XXXX











positioning precarity (an excerpt from a performance)

(Jane Frances Dunlop)

I've been thinking about precariousness.

& what it means as a position.

A position of precarity.

I've been wondering about a shift in the position of the artist.

Or, rather, a shift in the image the artist projects.

A shift in the artist's project.

How does one escape a self-constituted system?

How do I make this thing myself?

How have I made myself into this thing?

I wonder if we are building our own precarity.

I wonder if our situation is even more perverse.

I wonder about the things we assume about each other.

We asked too many questions as a way of avoiding knowing answers.

I have been wondering if anyone will notice.

& how many people will work for free?

& what is the ladder doing there?

& how far can you go on chair with wheels?

I wonder about this cycle.

I am thinking about a lot of things I always think about.

Does art make visible the invisible ideologies of this contemporary moment?

Or is it doomed to labour as visible resistance/invisible complicity.

I've become interested in models of labour in artistic contexts.

I've become invested in artistic labour.

The labouring of artists.

Artist as labourer.

Labouring as art.

Professional labouring.

I've been wondering about occupying of the unoccupiable position of the perfect labourer.

Autonomous, motivated and flexible.

Doing different things.

Doing things differently.

Things not only as practice, her practice, his practice.

I've been thinking about the art industry.

This Art of the art industry.

How this Art transforms the artist into an instrument to generate financial and intellectual profits.

From which the artist never benefits.

Enough.

Or do they & is just not me?

Is it this Art who romanticizes the idea of the artist as an autonomous labourer?

This Art who imagines art as a space for freedom while divesting the artist from such her own autonomy?

Requiring her to pass through the processes that legitimize this labourer as the artlabourer.

And I wondering when those process are actually useful to me, the actual artist.

And can I even say that, because what would that mean?

And whether being useful can be something other than the making of the labourer who labours correctly.

Labours for their –

Labours for a –

particular 'symbolic capital.'

Whether symbolic capital—

(A strategy widely used by art institutions, by this Art)

—has a lot to do with the precarity of the artist.

There is nothing bad about the artist willing to benefit from her work.

& I have so many questions

What is the relationship between easy and efficiency?

Am I most efficient when the labour is easy or hard or does it matter?

I wonder, is it hard enough as it is?

Or is it too easy?

Was it supposed to be this easy?

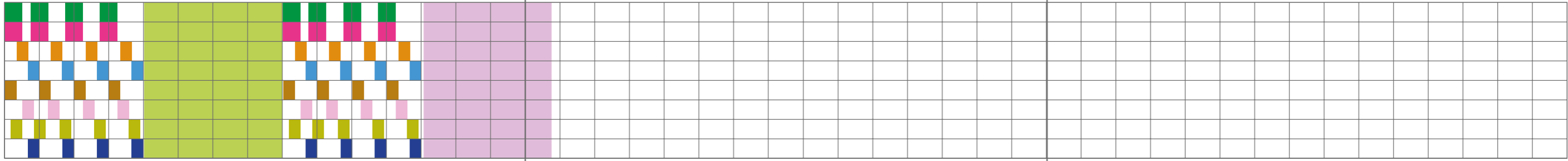
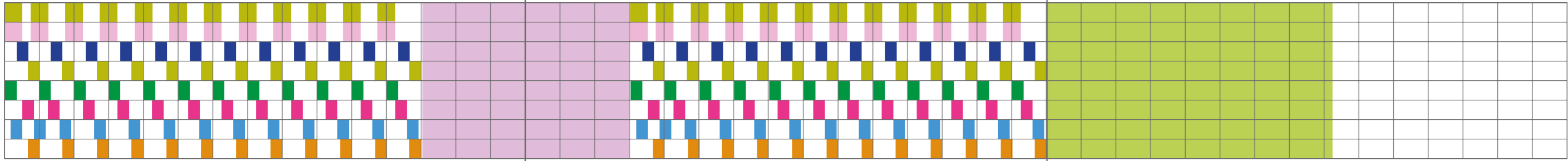
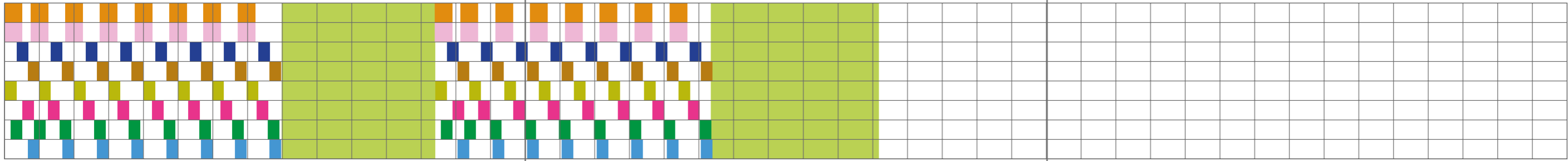
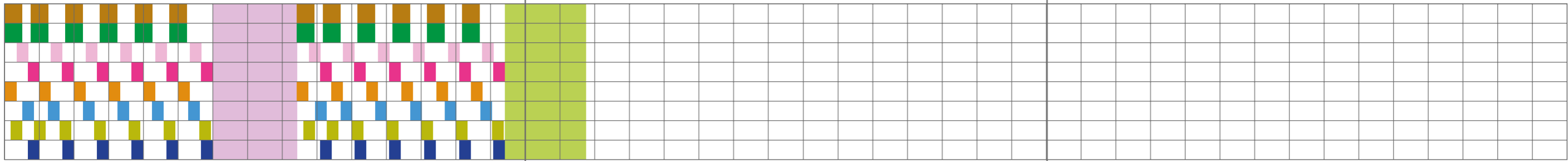
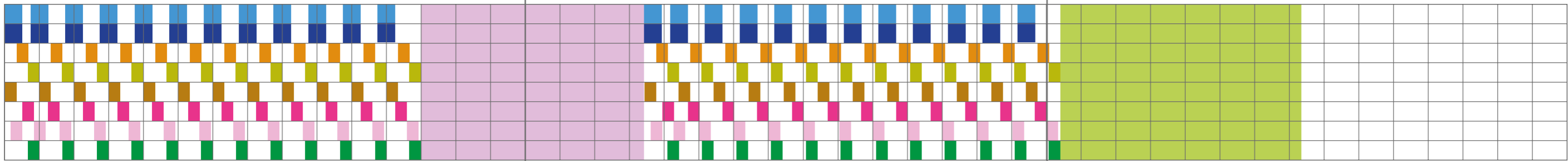
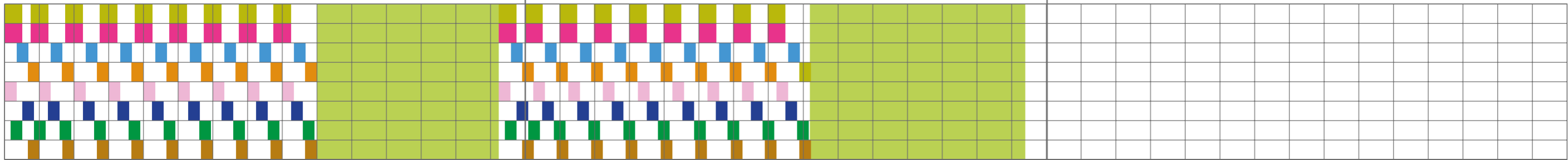
This hard?

I wonder if, despite my efforts otherwise, I am unradical.

I am unable to circumnavigate the moving landscape.

I am inefficient in my efficiency. Efficiently inefficient.

Is inefficiency a relative measurement?





SALON
FLUX
SPACE



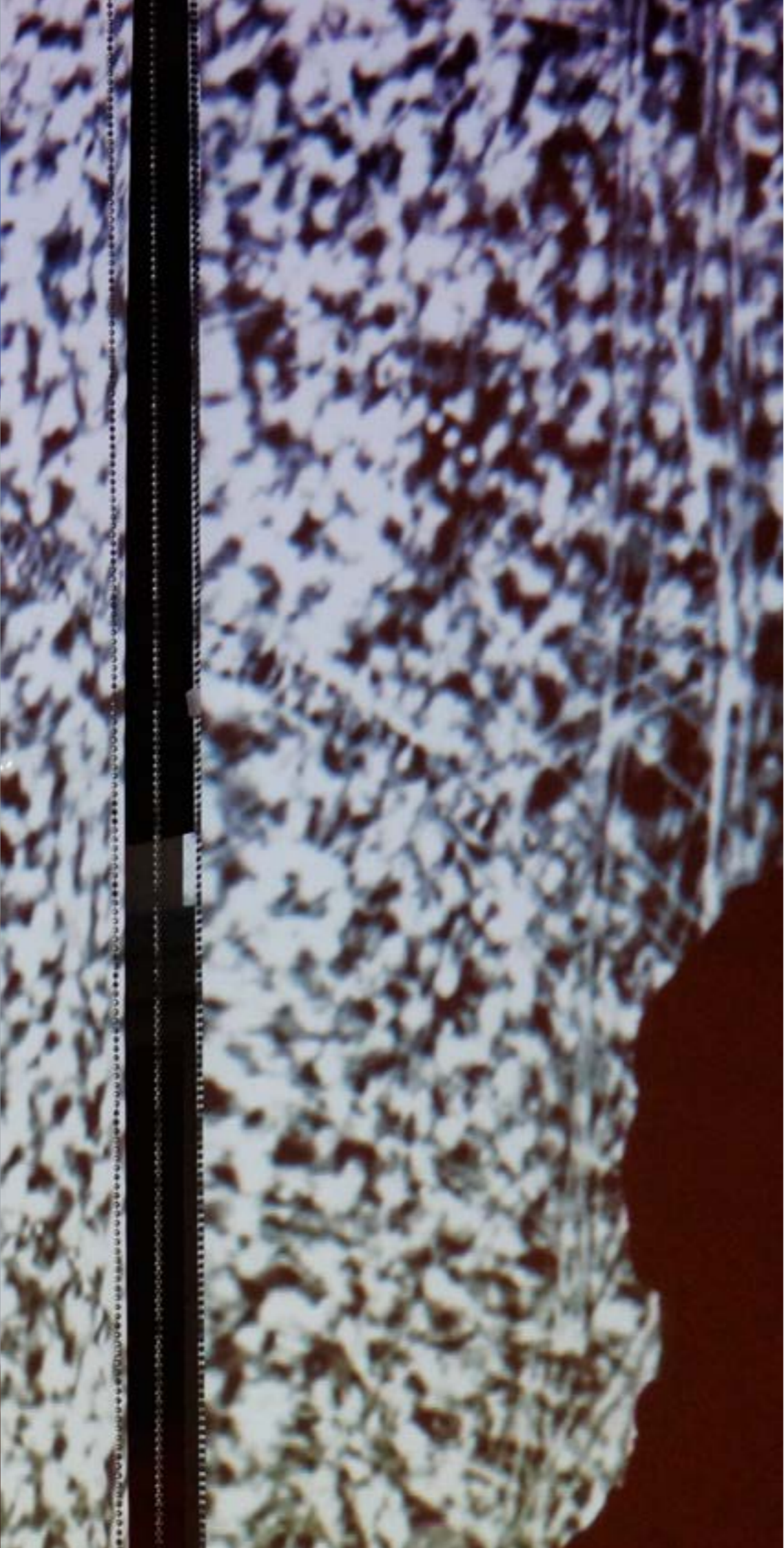
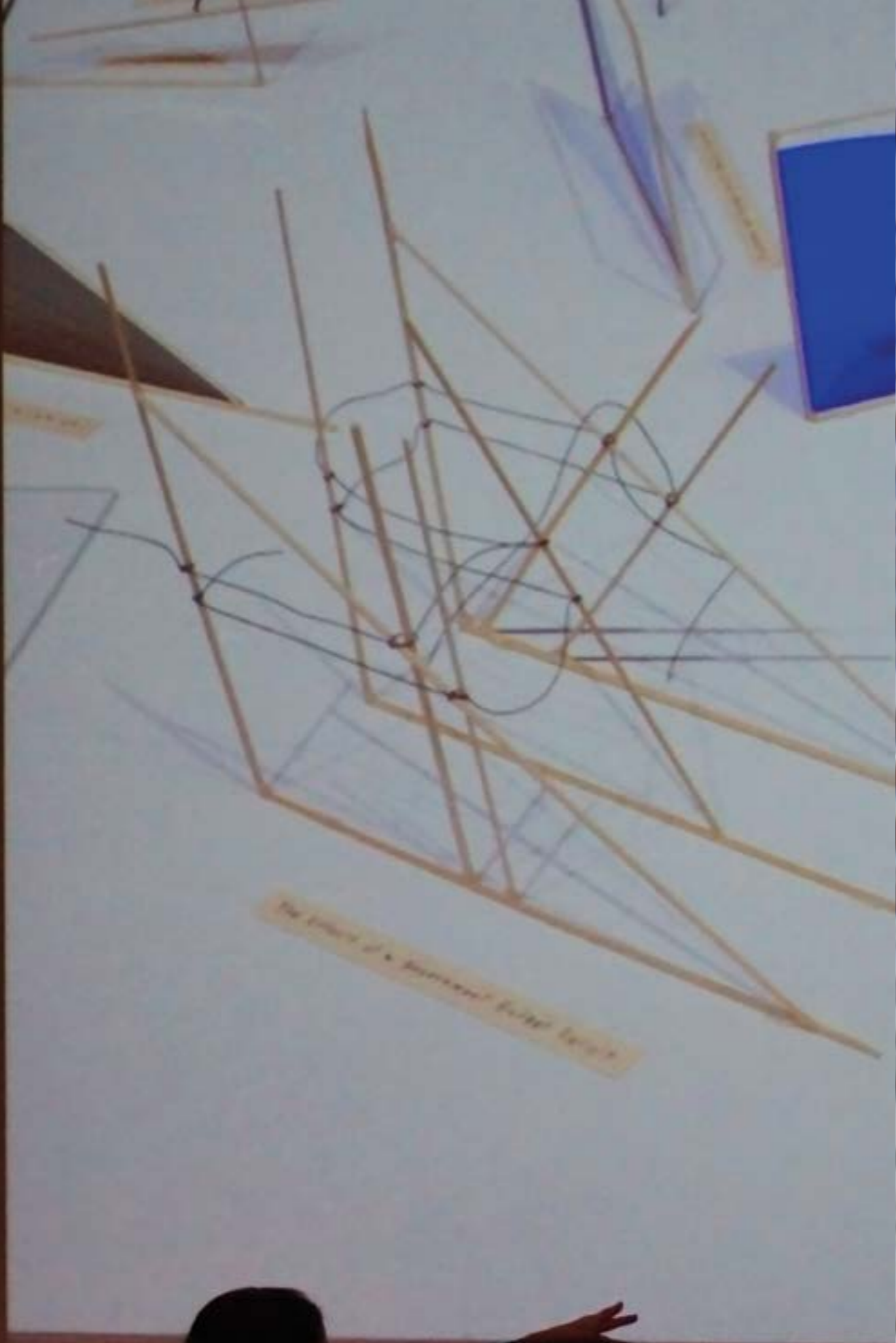












DESPITE EFFICIENCY: LABOUR

Herbert Read Gallery
University for the Creative Arts, Canterbury
22 November – 12 December, 2014
Curated by Emma Brasó

Exhibition Design by BA (Hons) Interior Architecture and Design students, UCA + Aberrant Architecture, London.

Video Works by Marilou Lemmens and Richard Ibghy, Terry Perk and Ed Oliver, Kleines Postfordistisches Drama, Greta Alfaro and Inutile d'insister /with Stéphane Trois Carrés.

Performances by Marilou Lemmens and Richard Ibghy, Fermín Jiménez Landa, Mirko Nikolić, Janez Janša, Janez Janša and Janez Janša, and Salon Flux in collaboration with Jane Frances Dunlop.

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