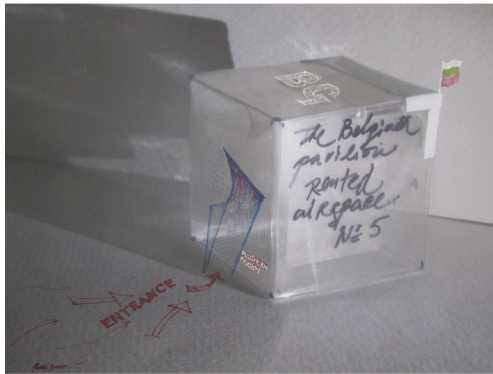


ROBERT BARAMOV



www.robertbaramov.net
robertbaramov@abv.bg

Rented Airspaces
at the Venice Biennale
2015



CITY ART GALLERY
VARNA



ROBERT BARAMOV ABOUT HIS PROJECT „RENTED AIRSPACES“ AT THE VENICE BIENNALE 2015/ INTERVIEW AT CITY ART GALLERY VARNNA

Your documentation related to the the action which you have already presented in 2 museums abroad, and now for the first time in the country at the City Art Gallery „Boris Georgiev“ in Varna. In the period 6th - 8th May 2015 you have signed 18 lease agreements with curators of national pavilions for 5x5x5 cm from their airspace in favor of the Bulgarian cultural backgrounds. What was the reason for your action?

I speculated with the fact that Bulgaria is the only European country which does not have any status of national participation at the Biennale in Venice.

Do you understand why this is so?

This project investigates a variety of reasons. One of them is lack of understanding

of the political class. The matter is complex and must be served in a socially acceptable way, and cultural circles apparently do not find the right tone. Recognize something in social networks describes itself as „elite of the scornful.“It is about a cultural elite confessing to different aesthetic principles of social behavior and morals, which in discussions with our administrative and party leaders leads to language, completely inaccessible to the political class. Collaborative disagreements lead to bilateral contemptuous attitude. My personal research and communication with political structures lead to the conclusion that they are not against national interest of our guild in Venice. They are indifferent and do not understand the importance of the initiative and that actually converts them to its limiters by presumption.

One of the aims of my project was to be a moderator and a translator between these two difficult compatibilities. In other words, knowing the needs of both sides, I mediate for decent communication in order to solve problems. During the talks that I had with the representatives of the political forces, I came across something that is beyond my imagination. Bulgarian media define it as the concept of „Who“. For me „Who“ adopted a real physical dimension - „Who“ speaks „Who“ is misleadingly charismatic, „Who“ has his political, financial and institutional dimensions. „Who“ is quite real, which probably exists in many other countries. I think there is no political class that can resist the massive pressure of an entire guild and this in our country can not be done. I found that people from cultural circles who profess the same



Opening at regional museum in Vologda, Russia

goals and ideas encountered in the common area of an event is not only not communicate, but also pretend not knowing each other. State scarcity in culture leads to fierce professional competition that is exacerbated over the years. Thus the state „divides and rules“. In professional circles two leading groups - with Cultural leader 1 and with Cultural leader 2. The first has a strong impact on the political system and is recognizable by the factor „Who“ / symbol of corruption and behind the curtains /. The second is has very good international career



The documentation of the project has found first alternative space abroad, that could be accepted as a form of resistance against the existing censorship in Bulgaria.

The presentation at the Museum of Banat includes:

17 +1 contracts with national pavilions at Venice Biennale, objects, drawings, video materials, etc.

and each of his recommendations or notes is considered as a veto by the cultural elite, who generally is not afraid to criticize ministers, prime ministers or presidents. The authority degenerates relations in cultural circles as zero tolerance for mediocrity is to be applauded, but I think the press to professional competitor possessing qualities is unacceptable when we have to solve important for all future generations cultural issues. On the other hand a glimpse at the financial flow to cultural sphere reveals permanent recipients of grants and favorites of the financial institutions, and everything would be wonderful if there were no doubts and indications that the work done supports the growth of a very narrow circle of people.

In fact, how did you realized your project?

During the preview on 6th,7th,8th May I concluded lease agreements with the curators of national pavilions. Everything is documented with videos, signatures, communications by e-mail, etc .. By renting 125 cm3 air spaces I made Bulgaria

a part of the atmosphere of the Biennale in Venice. That is, you can talk for real, proven Bulgarian presence of the Biennale, which has the approval of the global elite. It is unique fact that I returned with the signatures of the directors of museums from all over world. Here I was puzzled by the umbrella of cultural media, which, to my great regret, does not come from political class, but behind which stand deeply worrying processes which today I will not comment. Varna City Art Gallery is the third museum that shows this project, but for the first time in Bulgaria. So far it has been shown in two museums abroad. I will leave a Part of the documentation at the City Art Gallery in Varna and it will be kept here. The new generation of art historians and cultural researchers will be able to see exactly what happened. There is also a very interesting folder titled „conspiracy“ with videos, conclusions retelling my conversations with both the cultural elite and representatives of political circles, which can be displayed only with my consent.

Did you find your Who?

„Who“ is not mine, and it should be spoken and worked with the representatives of the political system. It will be difficult while the main problems remain the lack of communication within cultural backgrounds, their domestic battles and professional jealousy.

This does not preclude you develop yourself as an artist?

It hinders of course, but I find a way to cope with and to move forward.

- Interview by Elena Vladova

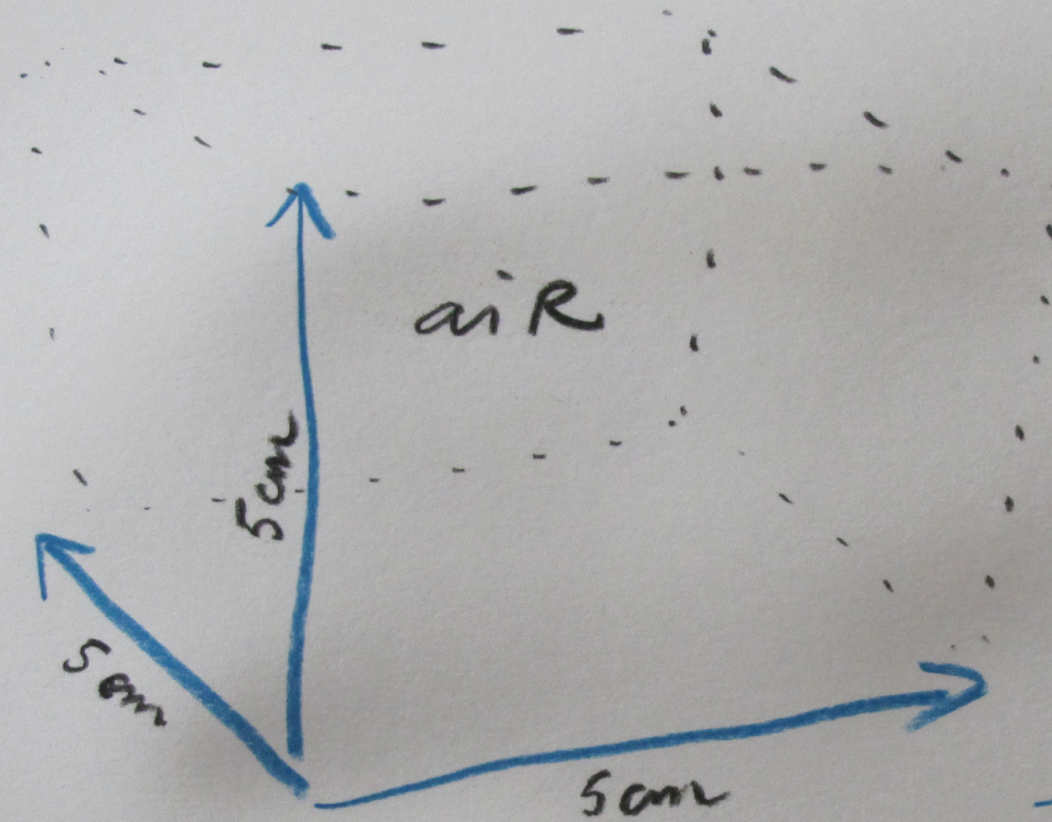
Views from the exposition hall at the Museum of Banat

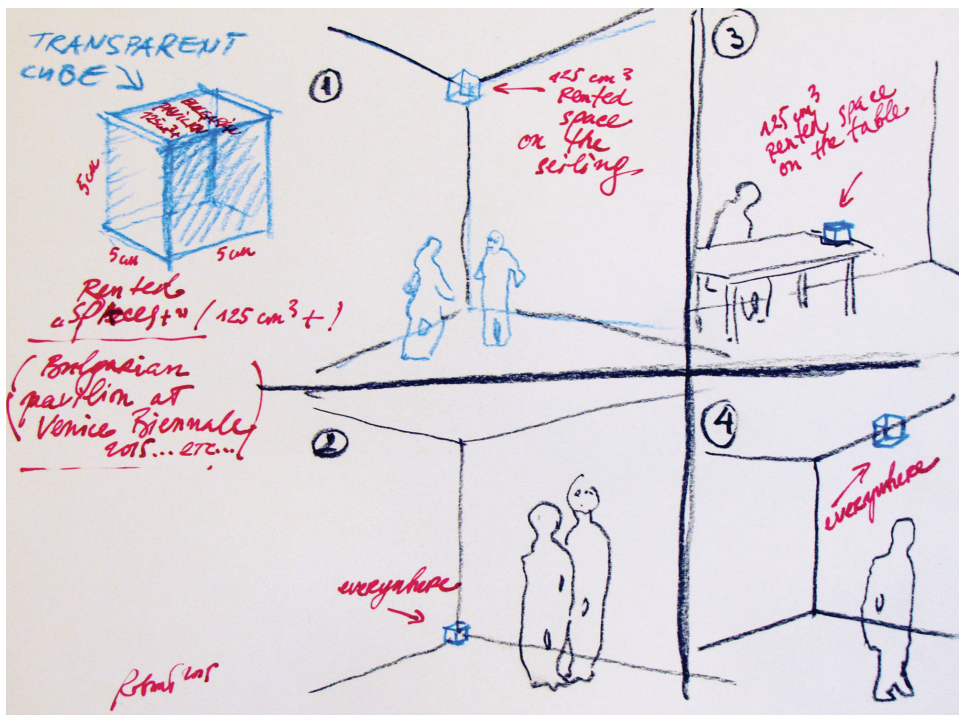
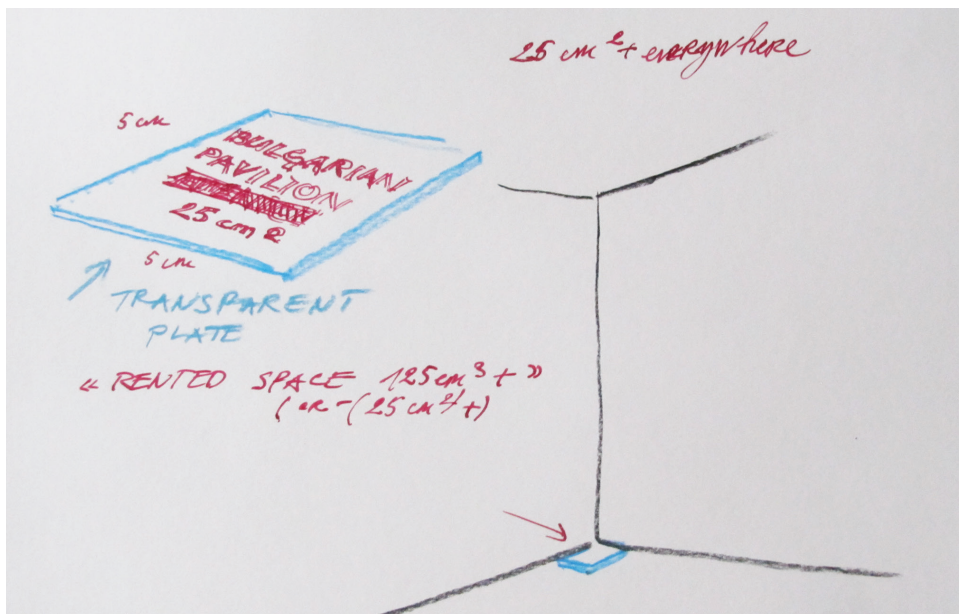


THE PROJECT „RENTED AIRSPACES“ AT VENICE BIENNALE 2015

The Bulgarian artist Robert Baramov negotiated lease agreements for 125 cm³ in 17 national pavilions at the Venice Biennale 2015.

For several decades Bulgarian cultural backgrounds have been seeking to be part of the national presentations at the Venice Biennale. The absence of Bulgarian pavilion the refusal of the political circles for assistance provoke Robert Baramov to start Initiatives (2013 - "Declaration of War") to draw the world's attention to the strange fact that Bulgaria remains the only member state of the European Union without a national participation. In 2015 his project "Rented air spaces" received massive approval by the curators of national pavilions, with whom contact has been established. During the preview on May 6th, 7th, 8th the artist managed negotiate with the teams of 17 pavilions lease agreements for 125 cm³ from the air spaces for their national presentations (among them France, Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain, Romania, Brazil, Belgium, etc. etc.), thus declares Bulgarian participation in the atmosphere of the Biennale beyond the official program. The author closed some of the rented volumes in transparent cubes with dimensions 5x5x5 cm and transported them to Bulgaria as tourist souvenirs. The registration of exterior presence in the spaces of national pavilions is commented as an innovative intervention in the status quo at the Venice Biennale on the one hand and on the other hand as an opportunity to generate energy which could solve problems of the Bulgarian artists in the process of active integration into the global cultural scene. By exempting from the institutional constraints and rules, Robert Baramov interprets the contemporary artist's role as initiating changes in cultural, political and social spheres. The positive reaction of the representatives of the world's cultural elite to the project can be considered as a confirmation of the thesis that despite obstacles and because of them contemporary art follows its natural instincts to be present in spaces that it and thus changes the established standards. The theme for sufficient integration of the former socialist countries and the role of their western partners in this process is placed on the table for discussion and public interest promises efficient development.





Phases showing the creation of the project, drawings with chalk and ink



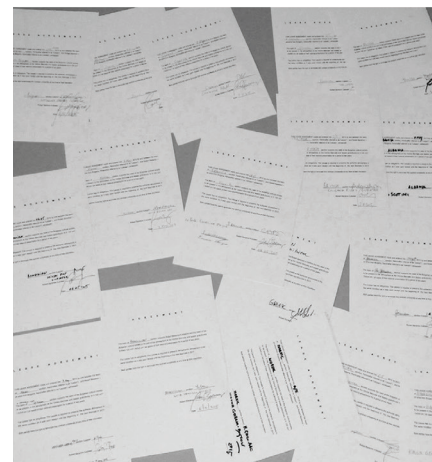
In the Belgian pavilion with the main curator Katerina Gregos



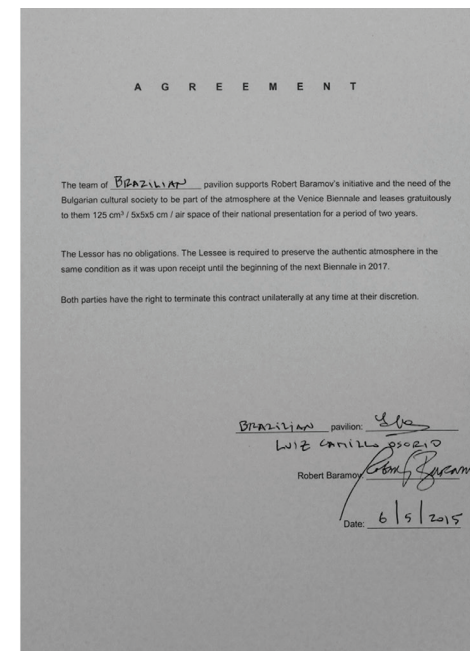
In the French Pavilion with Emma Lavigne



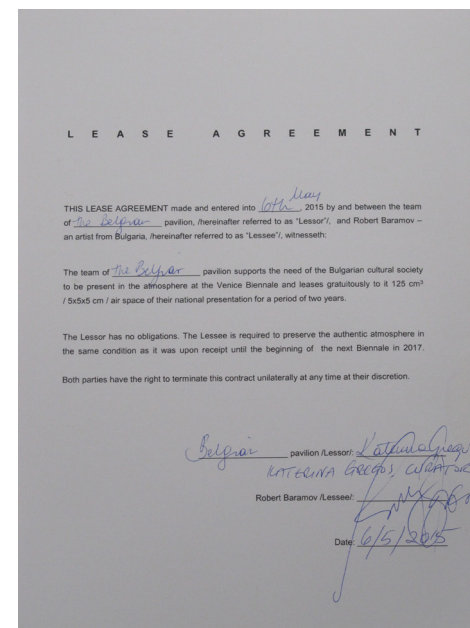
In the German pavilion with the main curator Florian Ebner



Contracts with national pavilions



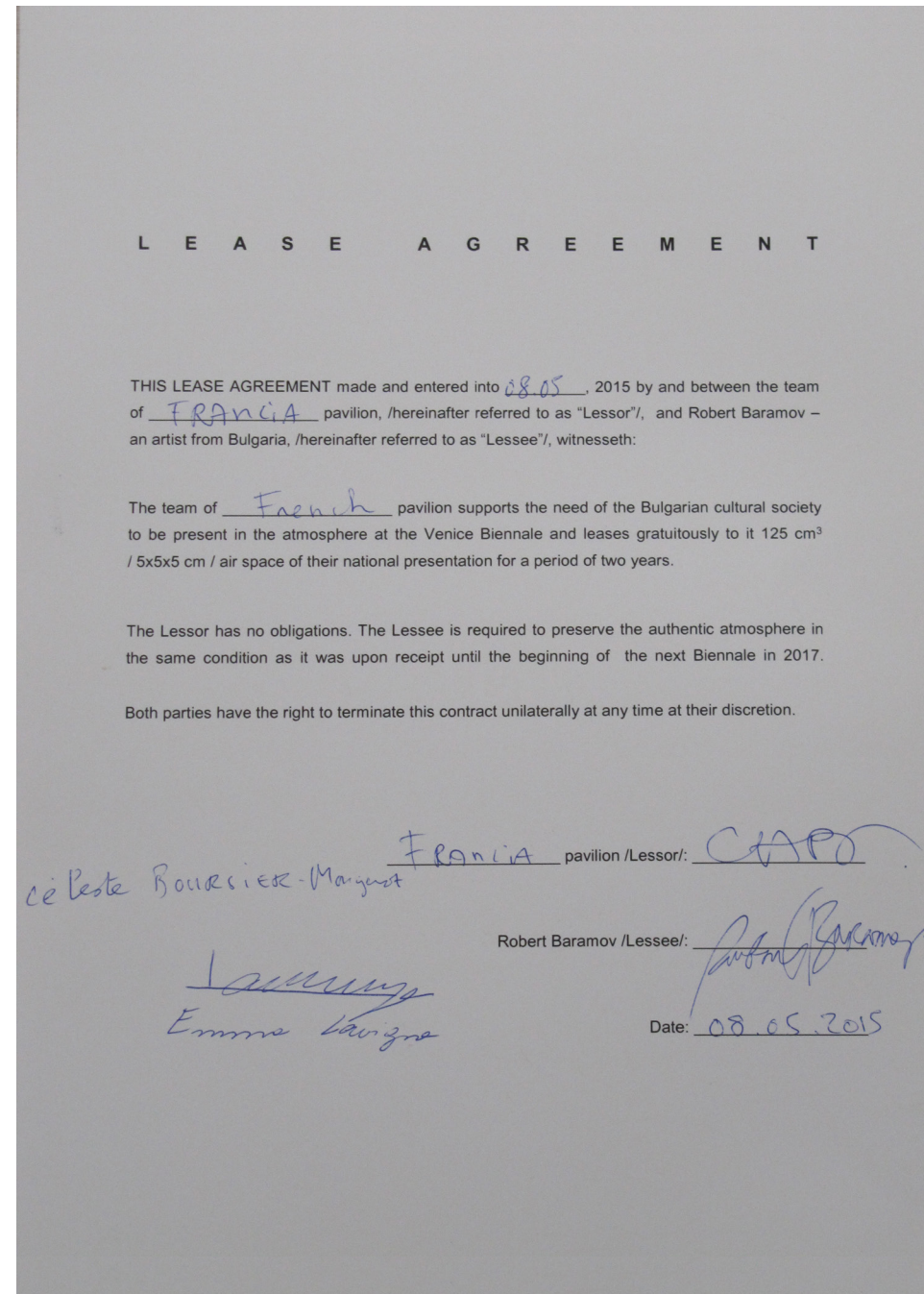
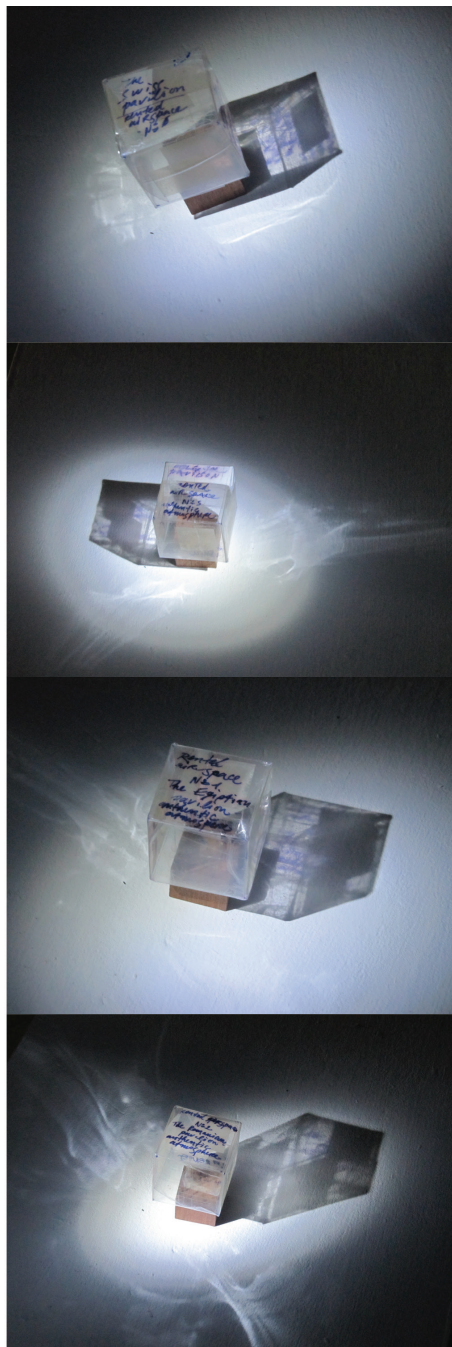
Lease Agreement with the Brazilian Pavilion



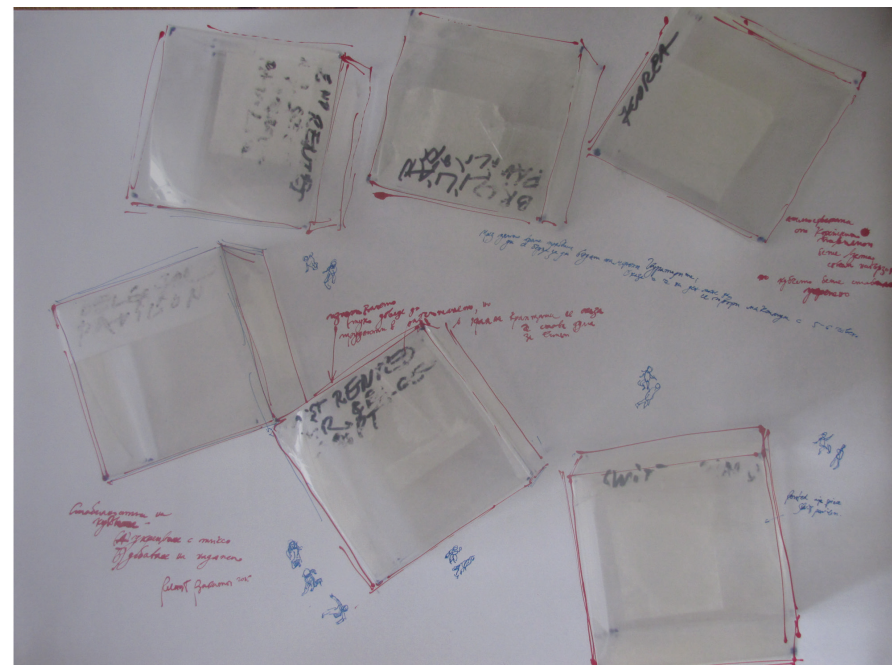
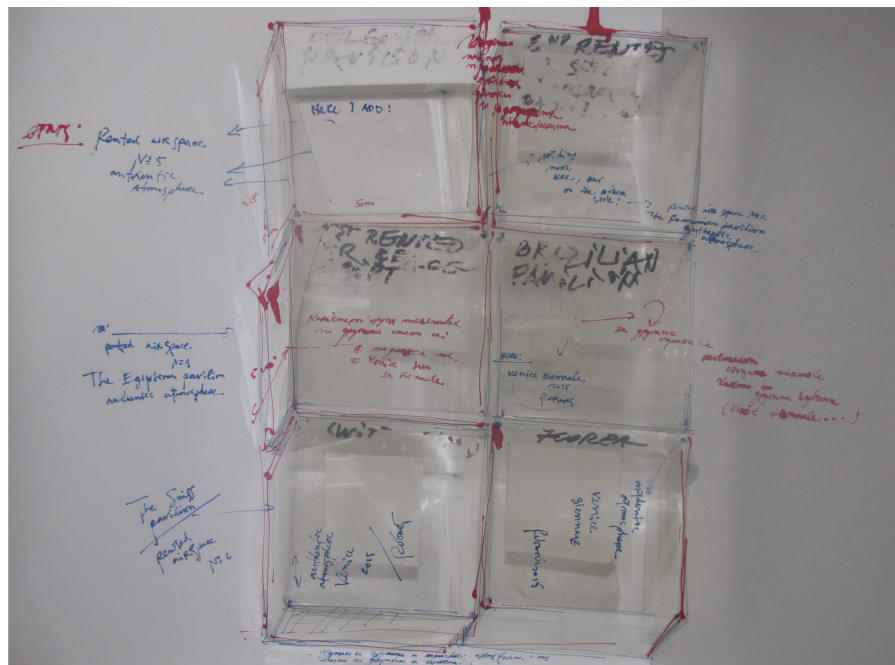
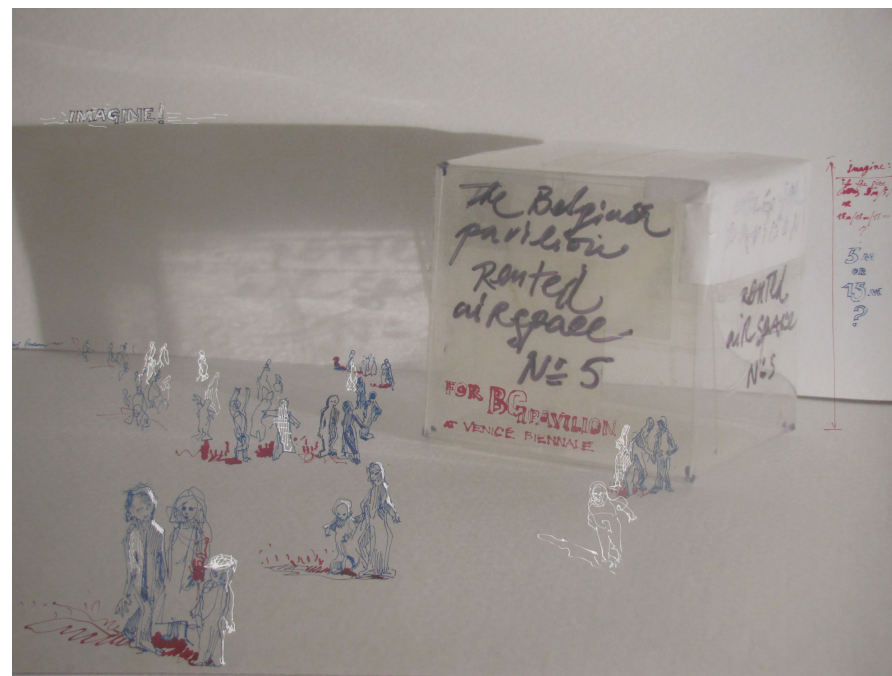
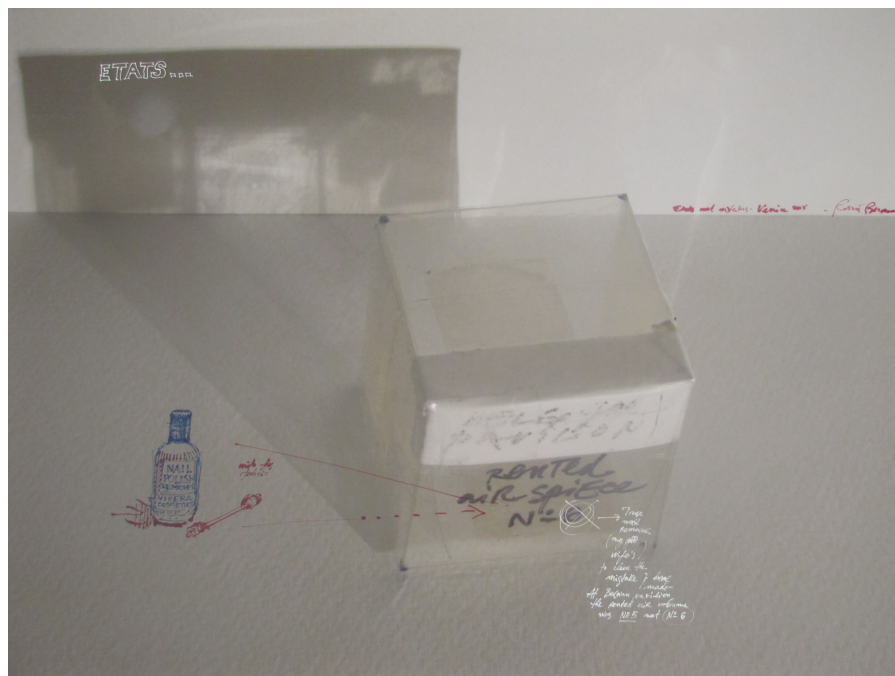
Lease Agreement with the Belgian Pavilion



Rented Airspaces from 1 to 8, Plexi 5x5x5cm



Agreement with the team of the French pavillion



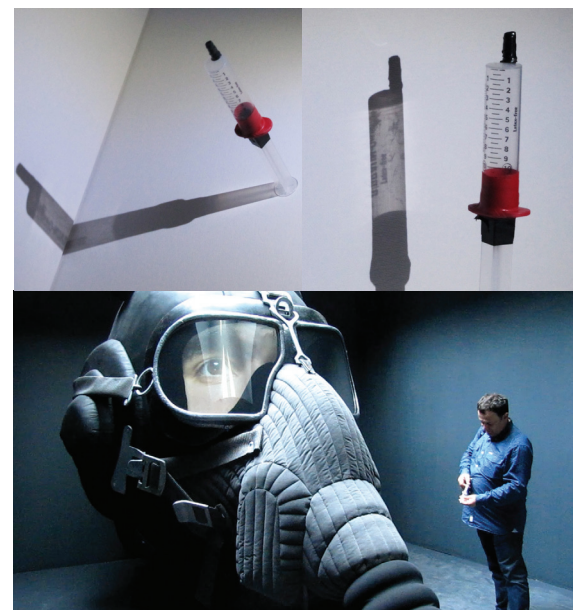
Drawings with blue, white and red ink on photography 100x70cm



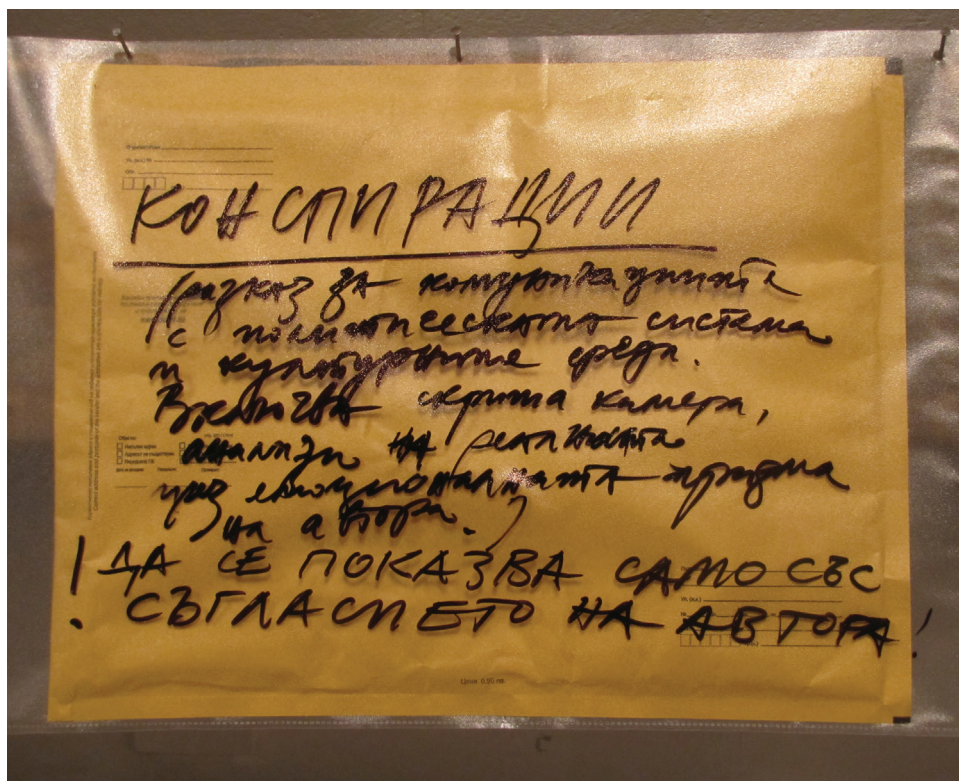
Talks in the National pavillions and around, Photography and Video



Tourist souvenirs, packing of the Rented Airspace, Video



Specific story from the Russian pavillion



КОНСПИРАЦИИ

(разказ за комуникацията
с политическата система
и културните среди.

Включва скрита камера,

анализ на реалността

чрез емоционалния призм
на автора.

! ДА СЕ ПОКАЗВА САМО СЪС
СЪГЛАСИЕТО НА АВТОРА!

CONSPIRACIES

(A narrative about the communication with the political system and -- through the emotional prism of the author.)

With instructions from the author. To be viewed with his consent only!

Sealed envelope, 22x32cm