

# Critical Cartography of Art and Visuality in the Global Age II



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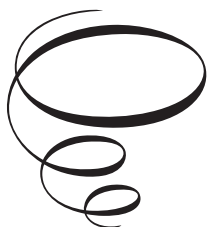
## *The Territories of the Contemporary*

Edited by

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Critical Cartography of Art and Visuality in the Global Age II:  
The Territories of the Contemporary

Edited by Rafael Pinilla and Christina Grammatikopoulou

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The radical, universal equality of “all or none” only exists if political equality is thought in aesthetic terms, from the equality of *force*. Political equality is an aesthetic thought.

Christoph Menke, *The Force of Art*



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## INTRODUCTION

In October of 2015, the Research Group *Art, Globalization, Interculturality* of the University of Barcelona organized the Second International Congress with the subject *Critical Cartography of Art and Visuality in the Global Age*, two years after the first one<sup>1</sup>. The objective was to address —or in a certain way, to return to— questions that from our academic viewpoint are crucial to approach art, visuality, cultural policies and the main global paradigms of contemporaneity; a commitment that, as the name of the congress underlines, is based on critical positioning.

Unlike the first congress, the second one opted for a greater focus especially in spatial and material reality, considering cultural praxis and global processes as inseparable from its physical dimension. This is why we began with a threefold framework that related to the interests of the Research Group: territorial dimension, artistic practices and labour transformations are central issues, with a particular emphasis in this case on feminism due to its impact on material production and the construction of the socially shared space.

Obviously, territory is not viewed as a two-dimensional space that can be abstracted into a map; it rather emerges as a multidimensional place of proximity and difference, of consensus and conflict, of hegemonies and dissent. It expands —in social terms— from the private space of domestic labour to the public field of politics; rather than treating them as separate fields, they are viewed as a complex continuum, where the narratives of displacement, dissent and utopia are being interwoven. In order to understand its multiple dimensions and problematics (cultural, political, social), we have favoured an interdisciplinary approach, that extends beyond art theory and aesthetics, into the realm of economics, geography and political theory. In this way, the three panels of the congress, reflected in the general chapters of this book, are formulated under this approach: *The Geoasthetic Hypothesis: Constructing and Deconstructing Territories*; *Creativity and Dissent: The Future as a Contested Territory*; *Value, Labour and Gender: Spaces of (Un) Recognition*.

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<sup>1</sup> For the First International Congress, see Nasheli Jimenez del Val and Anna Maria Guasch, eds., *Critical Cartography of Art and Visuality in the Global Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).

This interdisciplinarity became the common ground that fomented a dialogue among social theorists, researchers and artists, who brought their background and experience to the table. The discourse was further enhanced by an “intergenerational” dialogue among young researchers at the beginning of their careers with established academics whose trajectory has received significant critical recognition. In this way, the meeting also acquired a “pedagogical” dimension in its own organizational configuration, based on the selection of the different interventions and projects that made up the main panels. It is for this reason, that we have decided that this kind of academic heterogeneity—discursive and formal—should be reflected in the same structure of this book.

It should also be said that in this type of events, trajectories tend to coincide with different interests and presentations that break free from formal guidelines. The “tone” that results from varied approaches was welcomed by the editors; it reflects our position that an excessive theorization of art often results in predictable discursive formats, with little regard to visual experimentation. This is why it would also be fair to point out that this “openness” was materialized thanks to some of the interventions that cannot always be closely reproduced in the publication format.

In any case, we believe that what can be reproduced—or evoked—are the ideas, proposals and artistic works of all those who for two days came from different universities of the world to the University of Barcelona and the Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona to think critically on art and the cultural complexity of our contemporaneity. The intention of this publication is to give an account, as much as possible, of much of what happened at that meeting bearing in mind its link with concrete coordinates—spatial and temporal—that have already taken place. As editors we hope that the exciting debates of those days will be reflected in the selection of texts that follow: seen retrospectively we are convinced that this is the case.

Rafael Pinilla Sánchez  
Christina Grammatikopoulou

Barcelona, September 2017