

Relational Sculpture

4.381/4.391 Participatory Media:

Radical Networks, Tactics, Breakdowns

MIT Visual Arts Program

Fall 2008

Richard The

Relational Sculpture

A physical social sculpture which is established by an ambiguous network of people who contribute to it upon being kindly asked to do so.

About 30 containers are sent out to certain individuals. The containers contains instructions for the recipient. They are asked to fill the container with content of their choice, and if it would be possible for them to bring the container to the opening of the exhibition "*This is Tomorrow? Urban Utopia-Dystopia-Heterotopia*" on December 8, 2008.

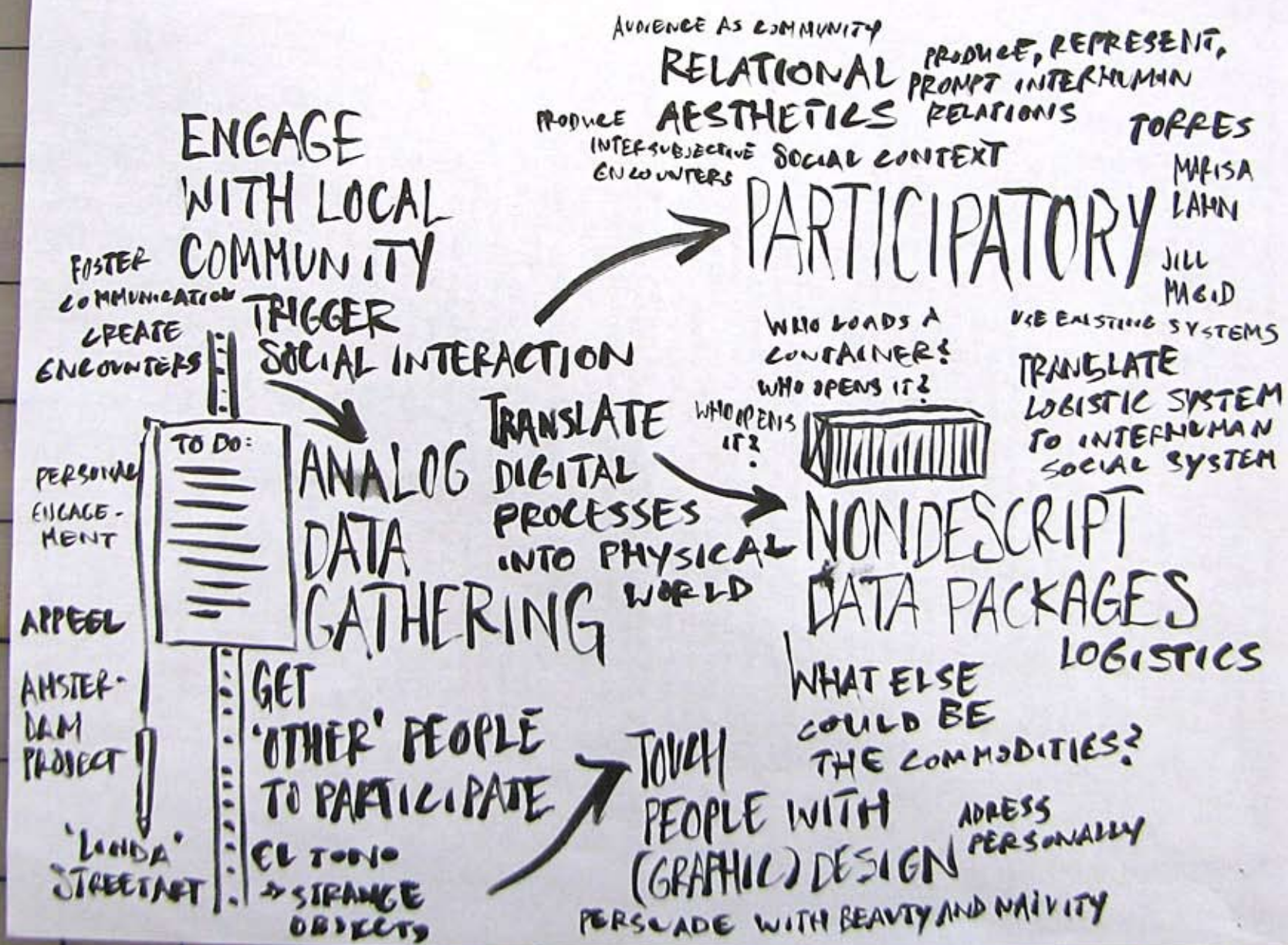
By bringing the container to the exhibit they contribute to a physical sculpture which will ultimately manifest in a social sculpture, representing and created by the interpersonal network of people.

I am interested in these challenges and questions:

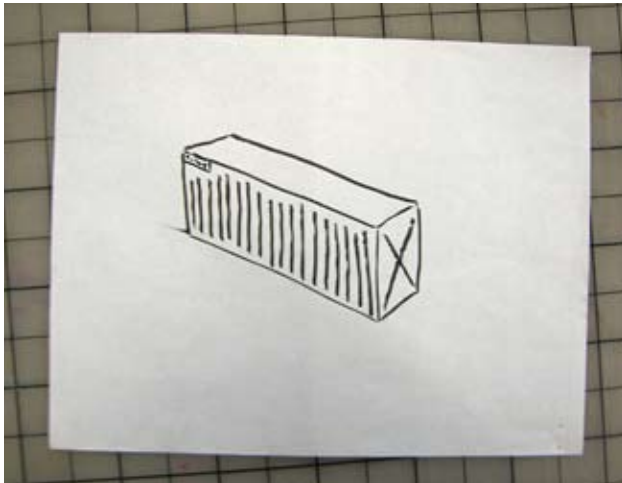
How do I persuade strangers to carry out free labor for me?

An essential part of the success of this experiment is the beauty of the individual elements: The sculpture itself, the container, the letter addressing the people.

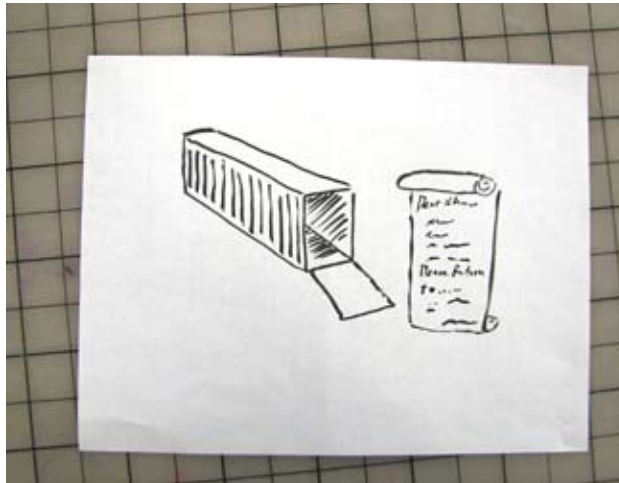
(At this stage many parameters are still to be defined, see the last page for open questions)



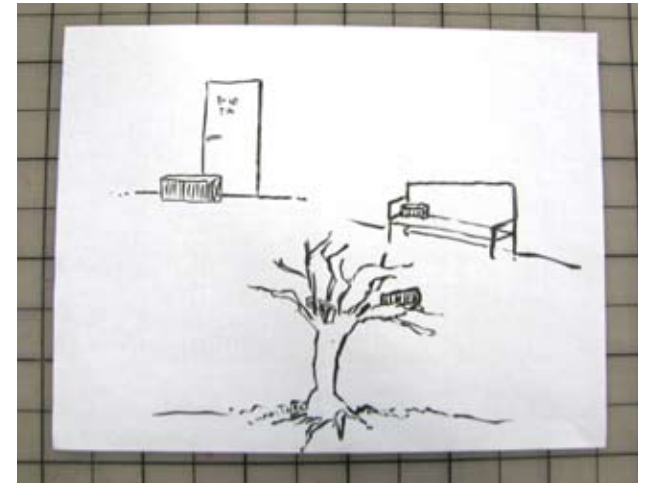
A collection of important keywords for this project



The media of communication will be nondescript containers

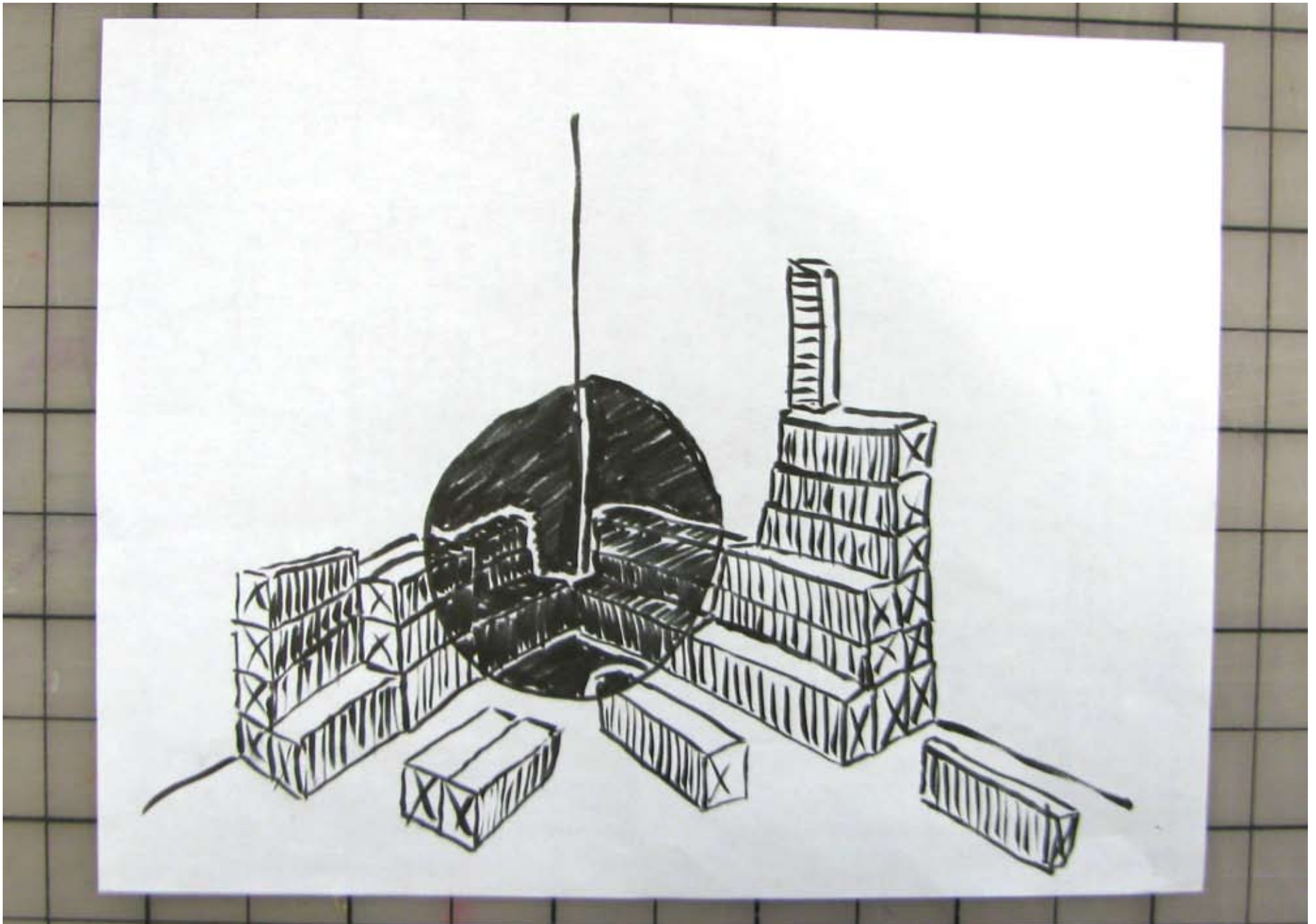


They will contain instructions of what to do with it, and might also include other things, such as little nice, maybe personal presents.



Various ideas about the distribution.

- Send it specifically to people? To people at MIT? Around Cambridge?
- Leave it in public space? Outside?
- In a restaurant?
- In the ATM area of bank branches?



Eventually people will (or will not) fill the containers with a content of their choice and bring them to the final exhibit location:
MIT Visual Arts Program [265 Massachusetts Avenue, N51-328, Cambridge, MA 02139]



Related Work:

Felix Gonzalez-Torres-Candy Spills

El Tono-Politonos



Own Work:

With Sagmeister Inc.: Obsessions Make My Life Worse and My Work Better

With TheGreenEyl: Appeal

Open Questions:

- Send the packages to people directly?
- Or place them in public space?
- Include “presents” in the containers? If yes, what exactly?
- add an online layer of engagement?
- when to send out exactly?
- what should the contribution be?
- add a webcam on the spot?
- only during opening date?
- what happens with the sculpture afterwards?
- create an empty structure locally? which has to be filled by the contributors?
- create a situation of social pressure?
- what is the exact shape of the sculpture?