

Exhibition Information

Néstor Jiménez

One in a Million



MUSEO UNIVERSITARIO ARTE CONTEMPORÁNEO

GENERAR EMPLEOS México necesita EMPRESAS.



Un centenar de trabajadores del Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas, removiendo el hilo conductor que produce energía, en una línea de transmisión de alta tensión.

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We have presented this information on the exhibition in an interactive format so it can accompany you before, during and after your visit. You may also consult it directly in the galleries.



About the Exhibition

Who could be *one in a million*? The extraordinary man whose exploits are registered through online interactions? Or one of many others: the ordinary man lost in the crowd? This exhibition reflects what Jiménez (Mexico City, 1988) calls the *epic of an ordinary man* and represents milestones in the life of a representative working-class man. His epic, intimate and loving, is also an essay on a vulnerable and fluid masculinity, caught between the living conditions generated by the industrial capitalism we know and the growing disappearance of the worker who will be supplanted by automatization and artificial intelligence.

It is at this moment of change that Jiménez's works invokes the persistent materiality of things by addressing the contradictory reflections inscribed in Mexican muralism on political ideology, class and access to social welfare, now from the clarity bestowed on everything that is personal is also political.

About the Artist

Néstor Jiménez

Mexico City, 1988

Visual artist and graduate of the Escuela Nacional de Pintura Escultura y Grabado “La Esmeralda.” His work examines the relationship between processes of historical and political memory construction and the discursive and iconographic distortion of leftist (Marxist–Leninist) thought within the social structures and movements that emerged in the eastern periphery of Mexico City from the late 1980s onward.

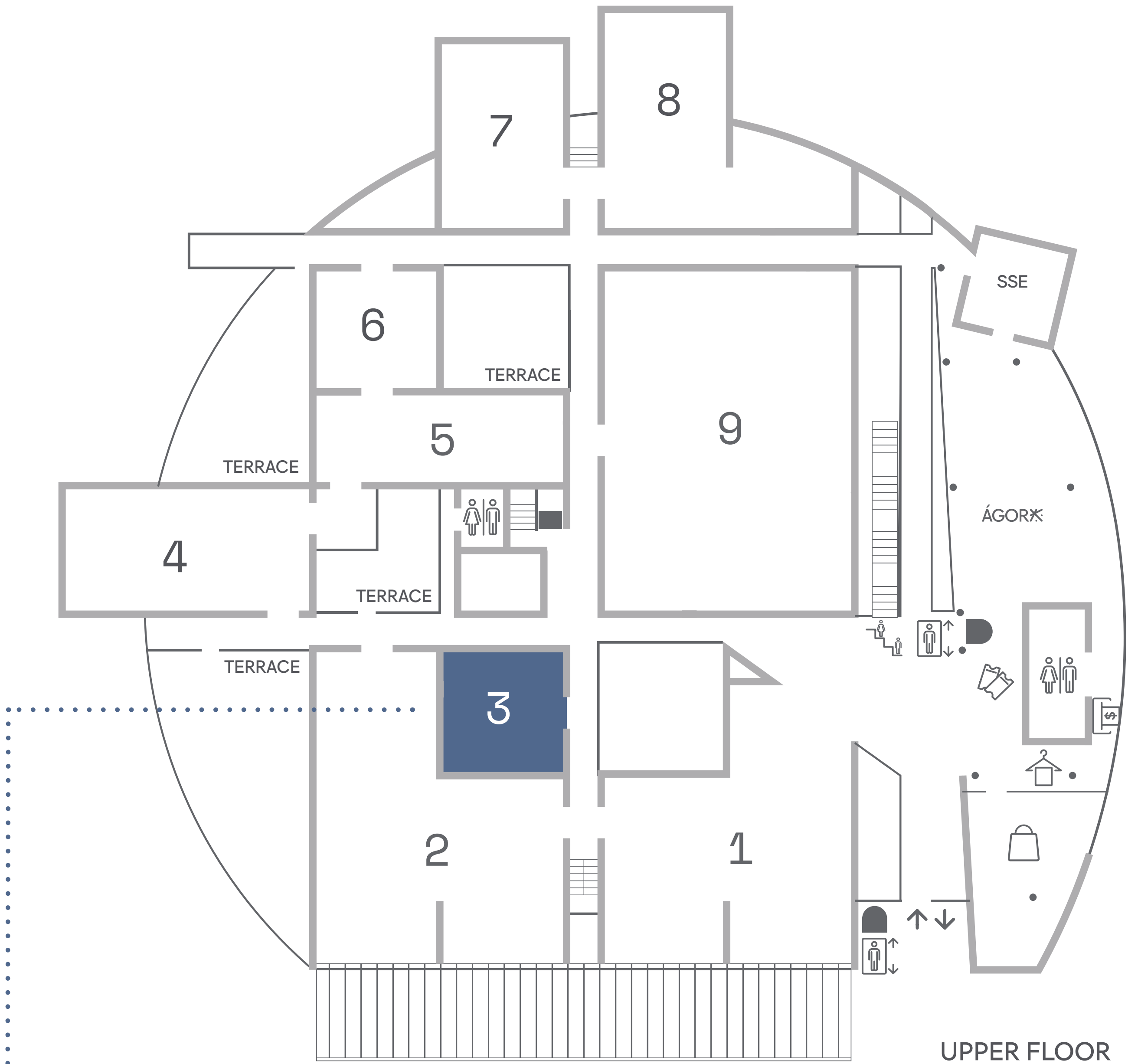
Through memory exercises, reconstructed actions, and invented versions of historical events, he produces paintings on reclaimed materials sourced from working-class and residual housing. These works propose distorted renditions of the area’s architecture and landscape as points of departure for reflecting on the political function of territorial representation, as well as on the various ways violence and its aftermath are portrayed in official media and their interpretive distance from national reality. His practice ultimately seeks to construct a plastic, antagonistic archive—counter to the state’s—on the historical development of social mobilization and the political tensions it generates when inserted into both private and public spaces.



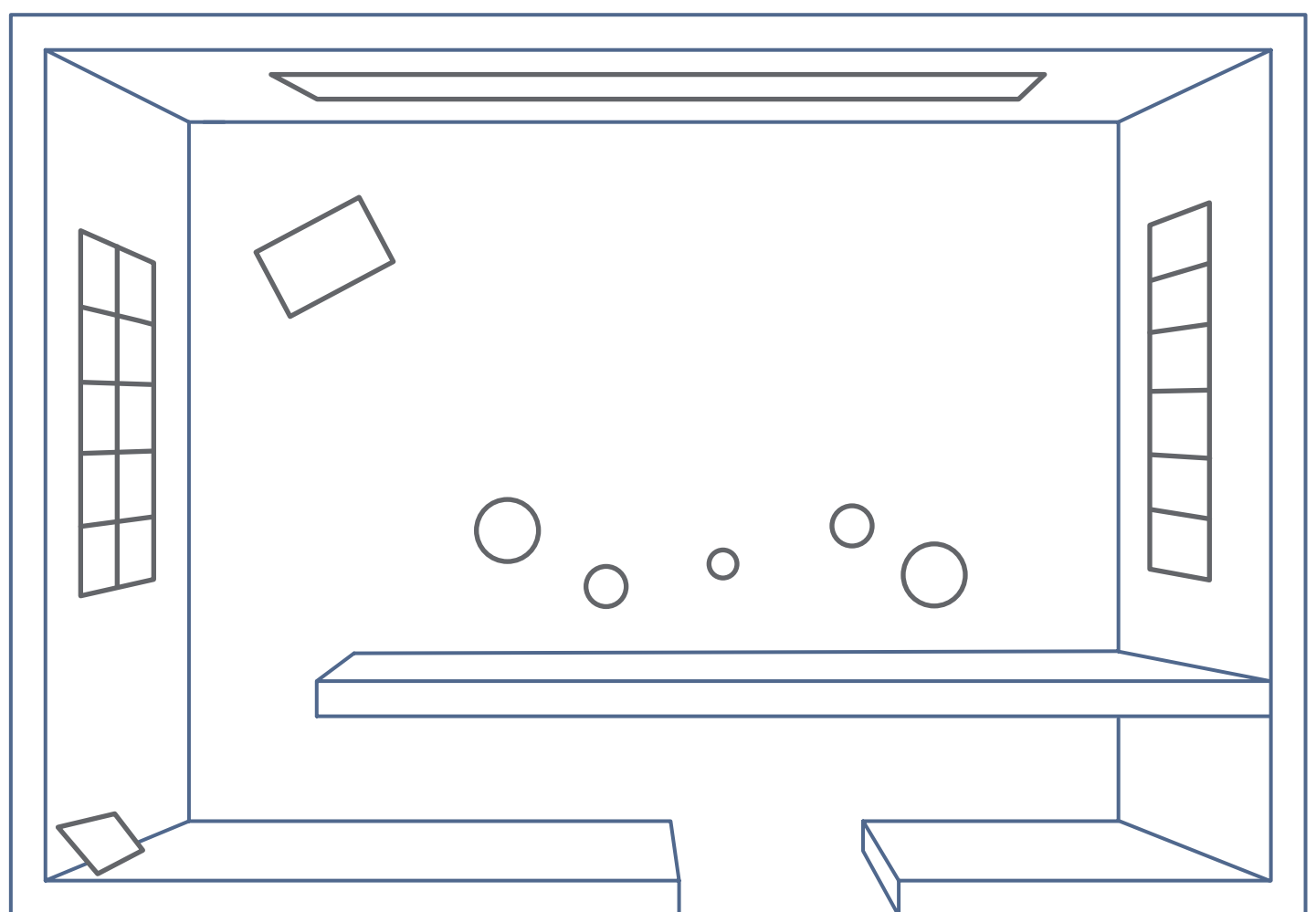
Museum Layout

Exhibition Gallery

● *One in a Million*



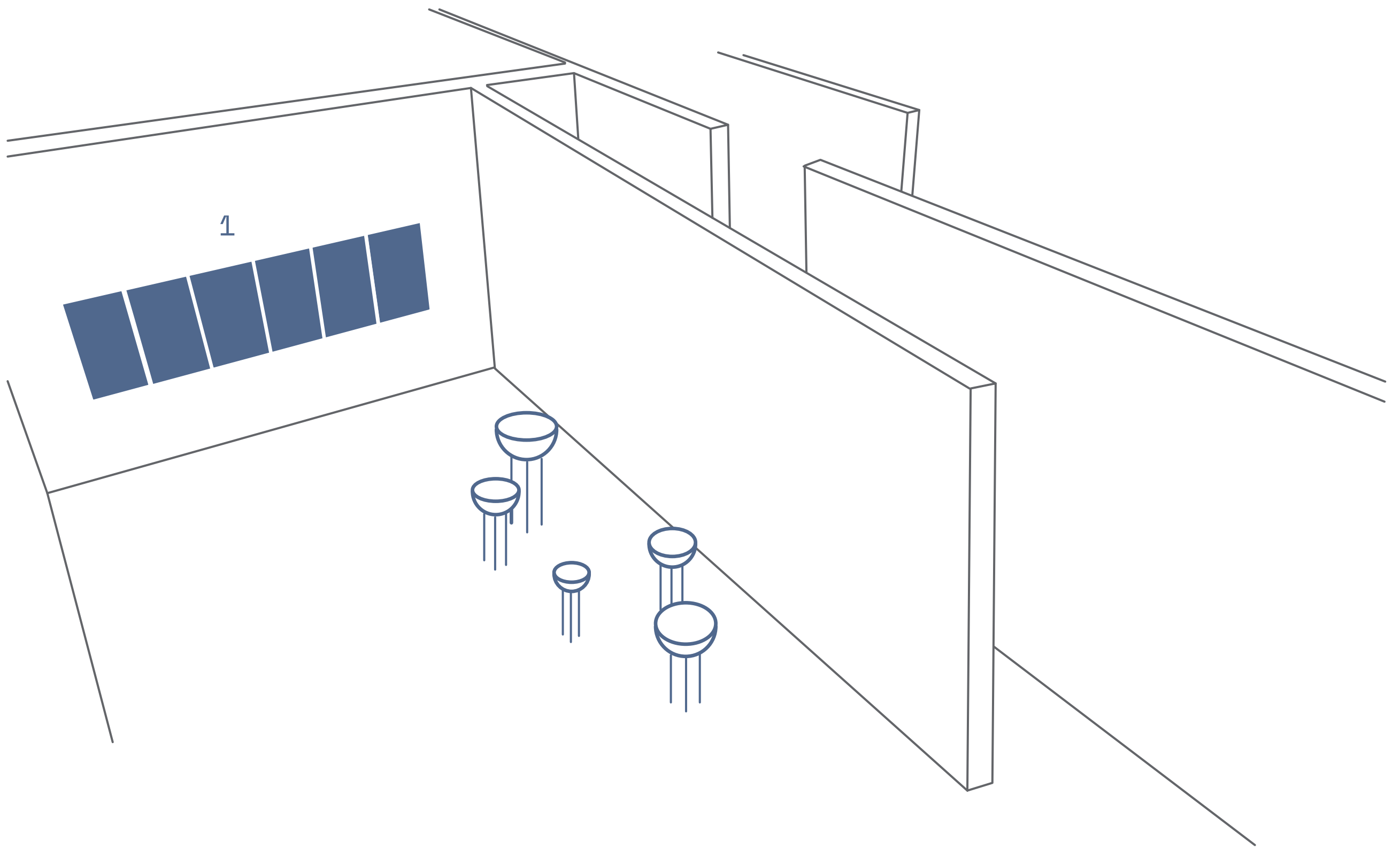
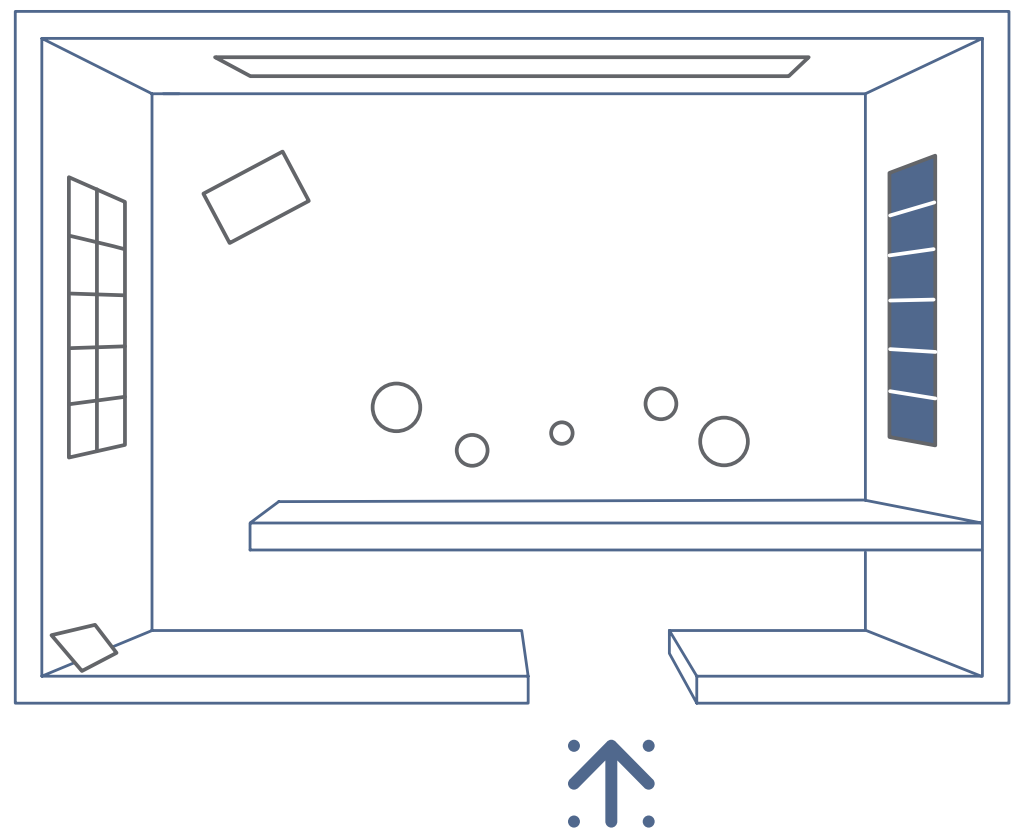
Layout of the Exhibition Gallery



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Access



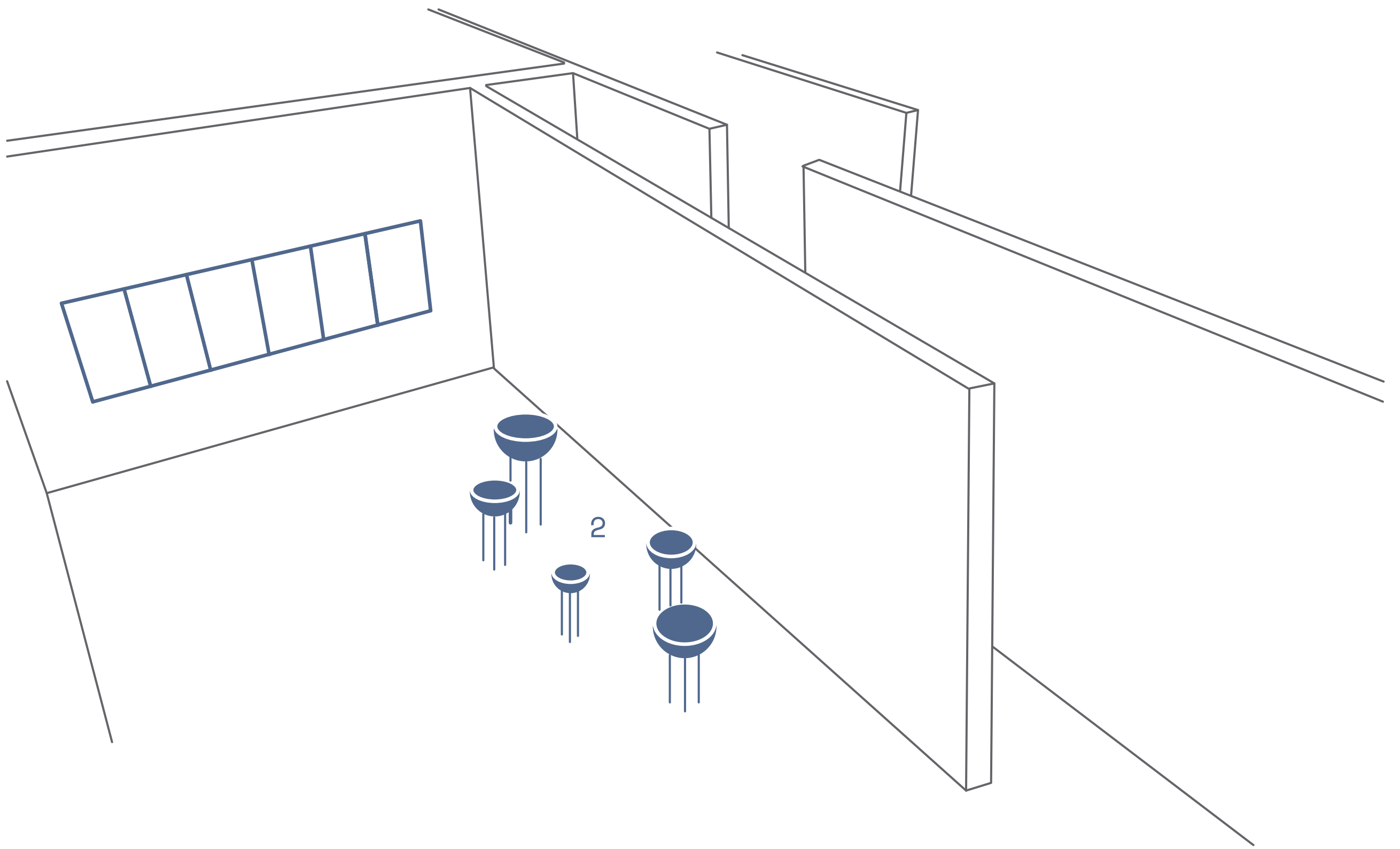
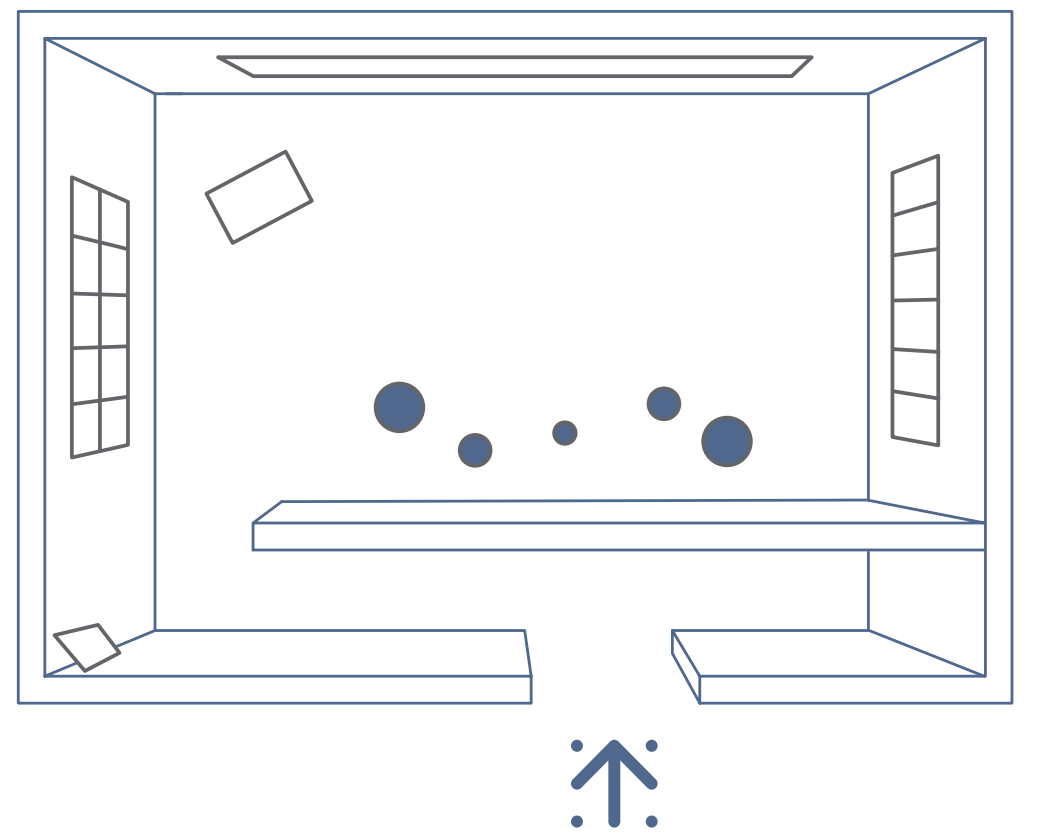
One in a Million



1. *One in a Million*, 2025
Newsprint clippings on cotton paper
Courtesy of the artist and Proyectos
Monclova Gallery

This series of collages is composed of almost 200 hand-cut newspaper clippings, primarily from job advertisements and news stories related to social issues affecting informal, day laborers, or seasonal workers engaged in their work. The figurines are inspired by the paper-cutting pieces of Hans Christian Andersen, which he used to complement his short stories. Contemporary interpretations consider the popularization of paper-cutting as a consequence of the industrialization of paper production and the reduction in material costs, coupled with the implementation of improved distribution systems. For Jiménez, the gradual disappearance of traditional paper-cutting in Mexico, replaced by laser-cut plastic imitations often from China, is not separate from the elimination of the printed newspaper for job searching, supplanted by the digitization of both job advertisements and the jobs themselves.

One in a Million

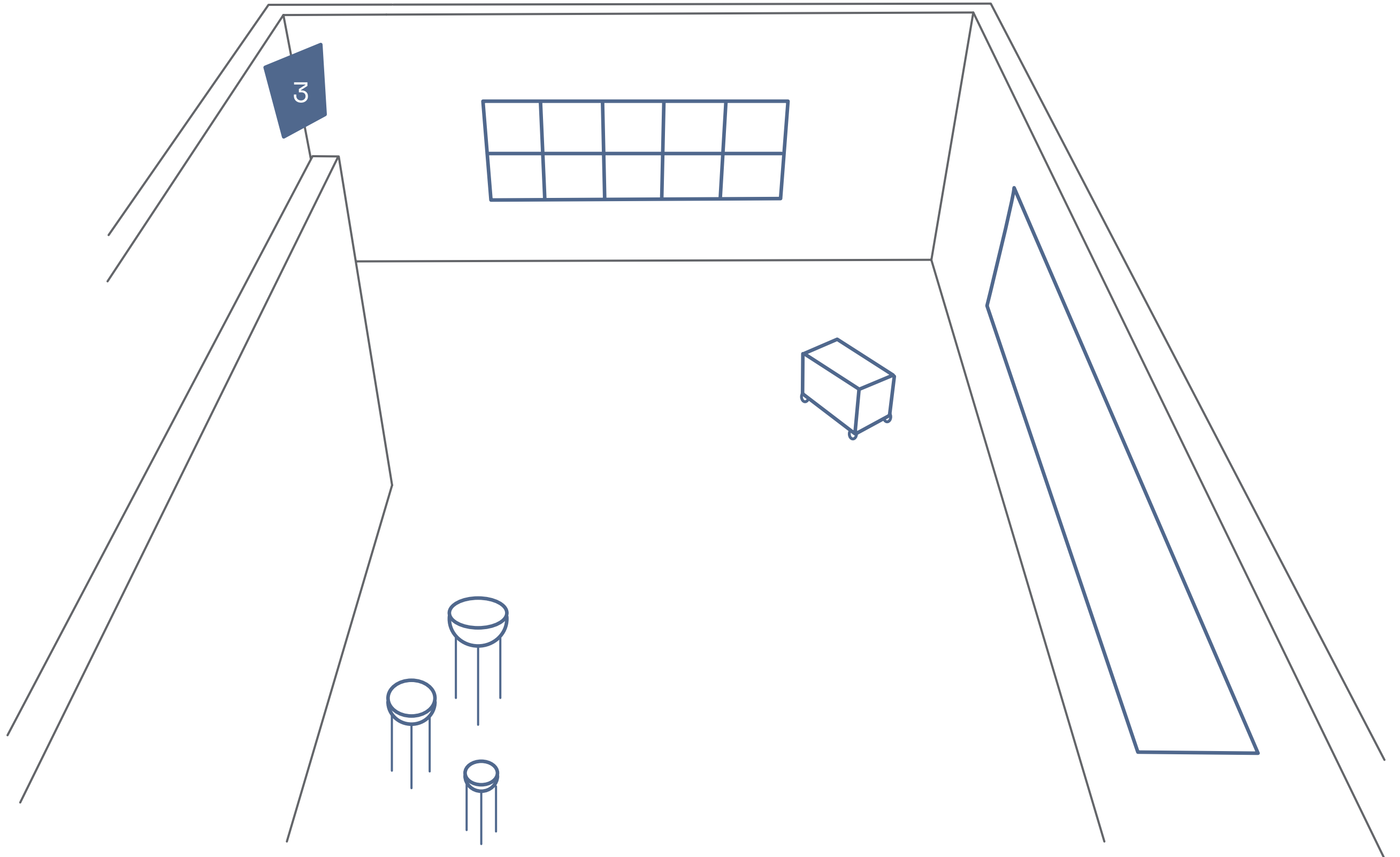
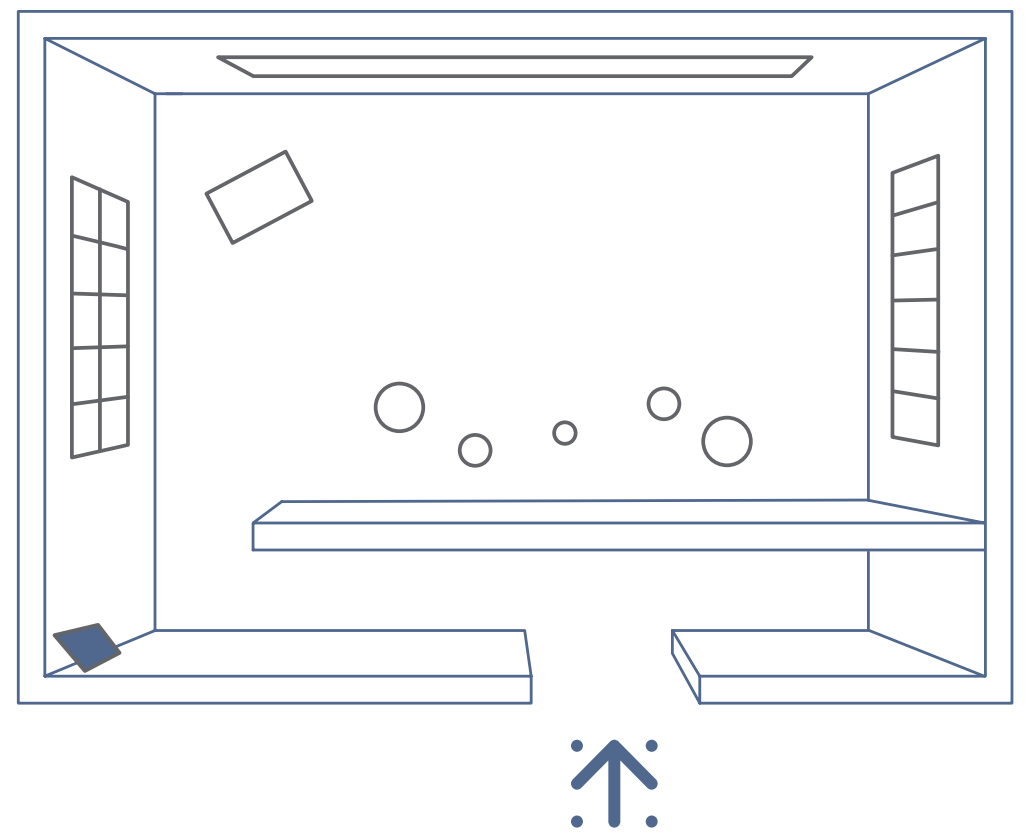


2. *Gastropods*, 2025
High-fired glazed ceramic, painted steel bases
Courtesy of the artist and Proyectos
Monclova Gallery

The installation is conceived as a counter-monument honoring the average Mexican family and the challenges they face in putting food on the table. Composed of five high-temperature ceramic bowls shaped like stomachs of varying sizes, their diameters reflect the abdominal circumference of an average family. According to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), the cost of the basic food basket increased by 4.1%, in 2025 exceeding the general inflation rate of 3.6%; while 53% of Mexicans have had to spend more on food in the last 12 months, a figure higher than the global average (47%).

Each bowl is glazed in different colors that corresponds to the various skin tones according to the latest data collected by INEGI on racial self-perception in the country. Based on the color palette of the ProjectWW on Ethnicity and Race in Latin America, created to measure the level of racial discrimination based on skin tone, recent surveys reveal that racial perception continues to determine discrimination and inequality in Mexico.

One in a Million



3. *History Will Not Defeat Us*, 2025
Oil paint on pine board
Courtesy of the artist and Proyectos
Monclova Gallery

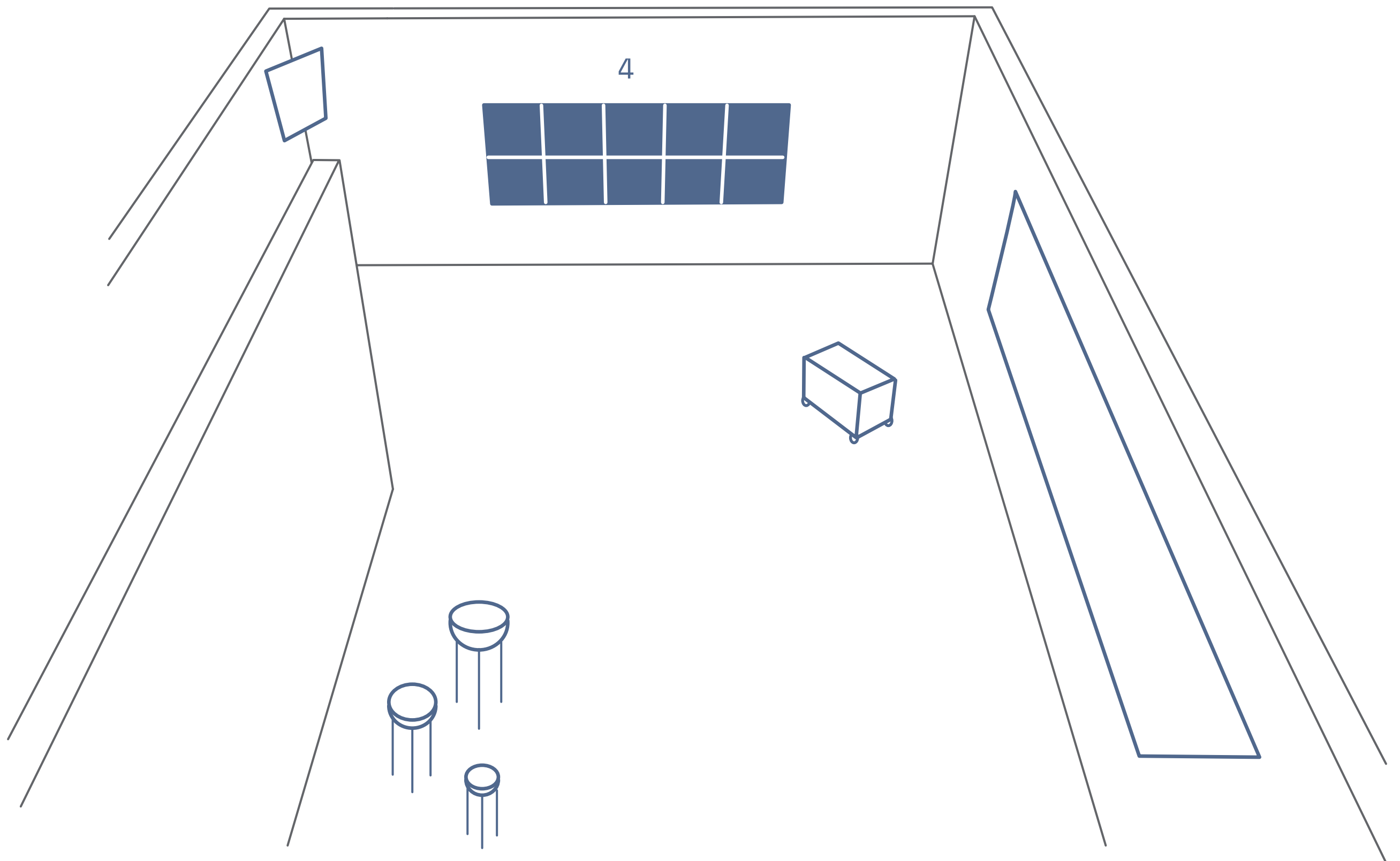
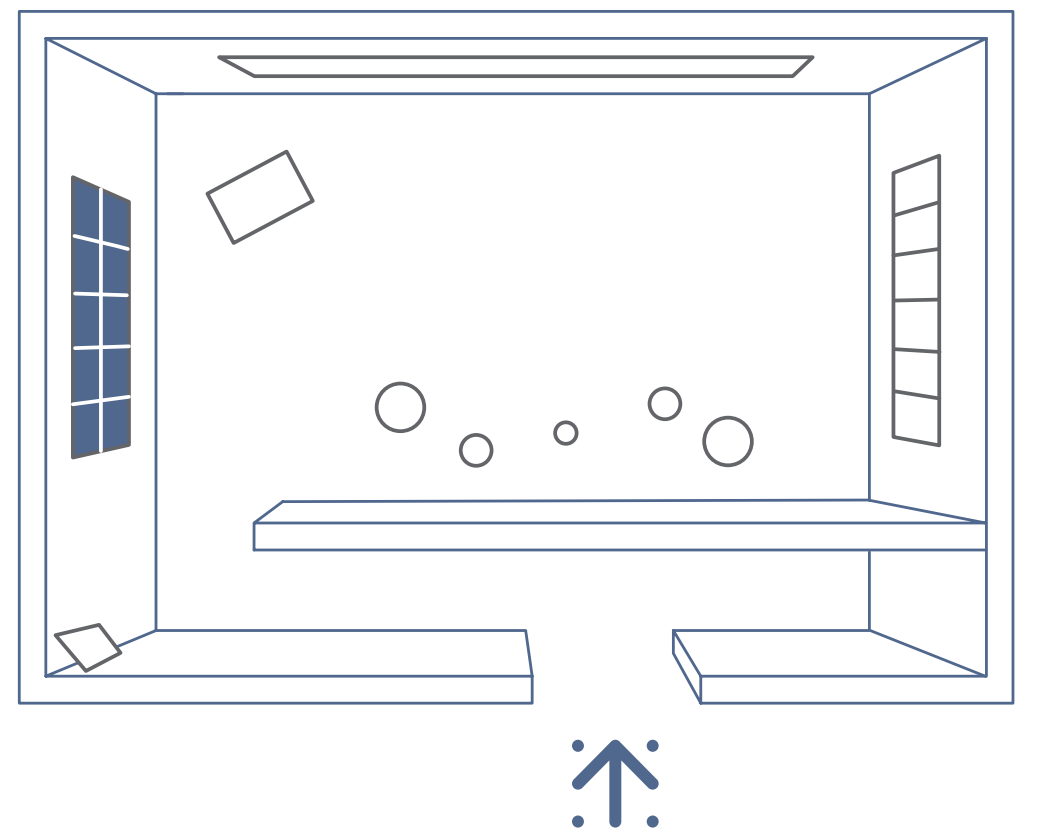
A mortuary portrait in oil that recreates the image of my father in his coffin, based on a drawing I made from memory weeks after his sudden death as a result of the impossibility of seeing him in person. I was limited to the blurry image transmitted via video call, which served as a way to finally materialize an image that never conforms to our predictions in shape or time.

— Néstor Jiménez

This portrait by Jiménez derives from an ephemeral image on the glassy screen of a cell phone that accompanied the grief of an ordinary man from afar. The artist appropriated the symbolic value associated with certain precious materials in historical European painting, where lapis lazuli was used exclusively by monarchs due to its rarity and cost. With full awareness, these oils, all of mineral origin, are now applied to the image of his father, whose hands were still stained with the varnish and paint used in his work the day before he died.

The title of the artwork paraphrases Fidel Castro in his famous speech during the Revolutionary Government's takeover in 1959 and is considered a promise to the Cuban people to liberate them from foreign oppression and systemic poverty. It alludes to the inability to escape today the socioeconomic inequality that is directly linked to a lower life expectancy in the so-called lower or working classes.

One in a Million



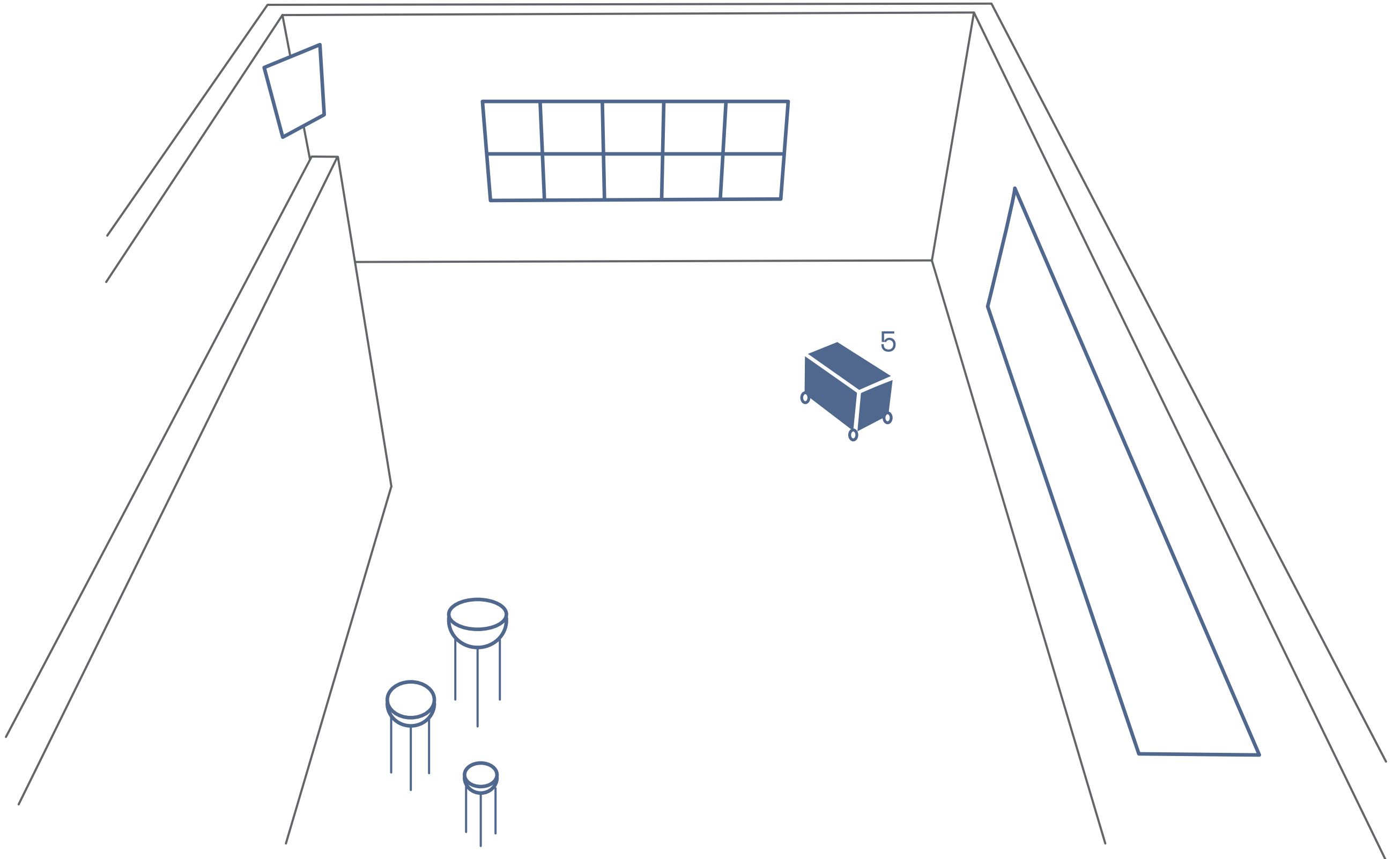
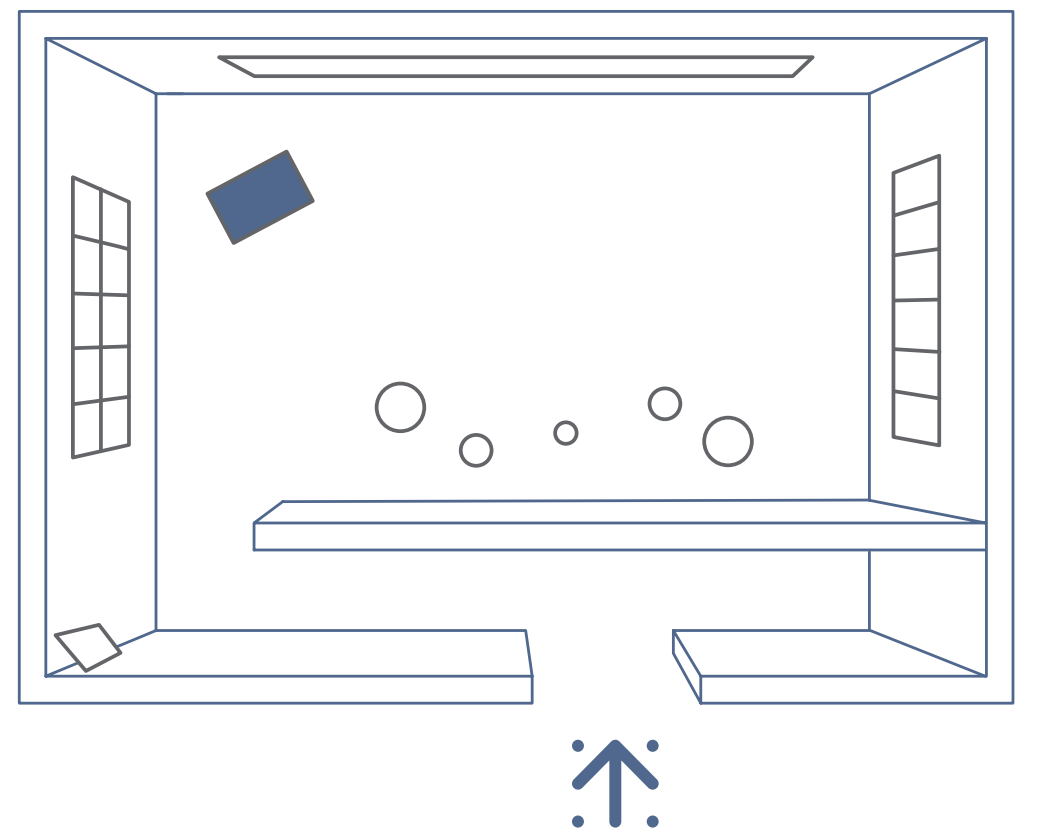
4. *Hibiscus* (6:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m., 10:00 p.m., 11:00 p.m., 12:00 a.m., 1:00 a.m., 2:00 a.m., 3:00 a.m., 4:00 a.m., 5:00 a.m.), 2025

Acrylic paint, concrete, metal hinge, ribbon, newsprint on oak plywood and balsa wood
Courtesy of the artist and Proyectos Monclova Gallery

This series of paintings represent the period of twelve hours of a wake. Each facade marks the hour from the orange hues of sunset, to deep ultramarine at midnight and back to the morning light. Jiménez has observed more black and white bows placed above a door or window in his neighborhood in the Pueblo viejo de los Reyes in Coyoacán, as part of a tradition surrounding mourning.

The forms of the homes reference the architectural sparsity of affordable housing, where a cubic module of 45 to 74 m² of constructed area sometimes is later altered by its inhabitants with paint and additional floors or balconies. Yet, the orthogonal spaces of Clemente Orozco and even Giotto are also recalled, where architecture contains and delimits the vacuum of space where human action takes place. Resolutely empty of figures, these works are inhabited by mourning and missing, indicated with the small, three-dimensional note of the tiny bow that pins the works back into the space we inhabit, expressing by this simple gesture the passing of one state of being into another.

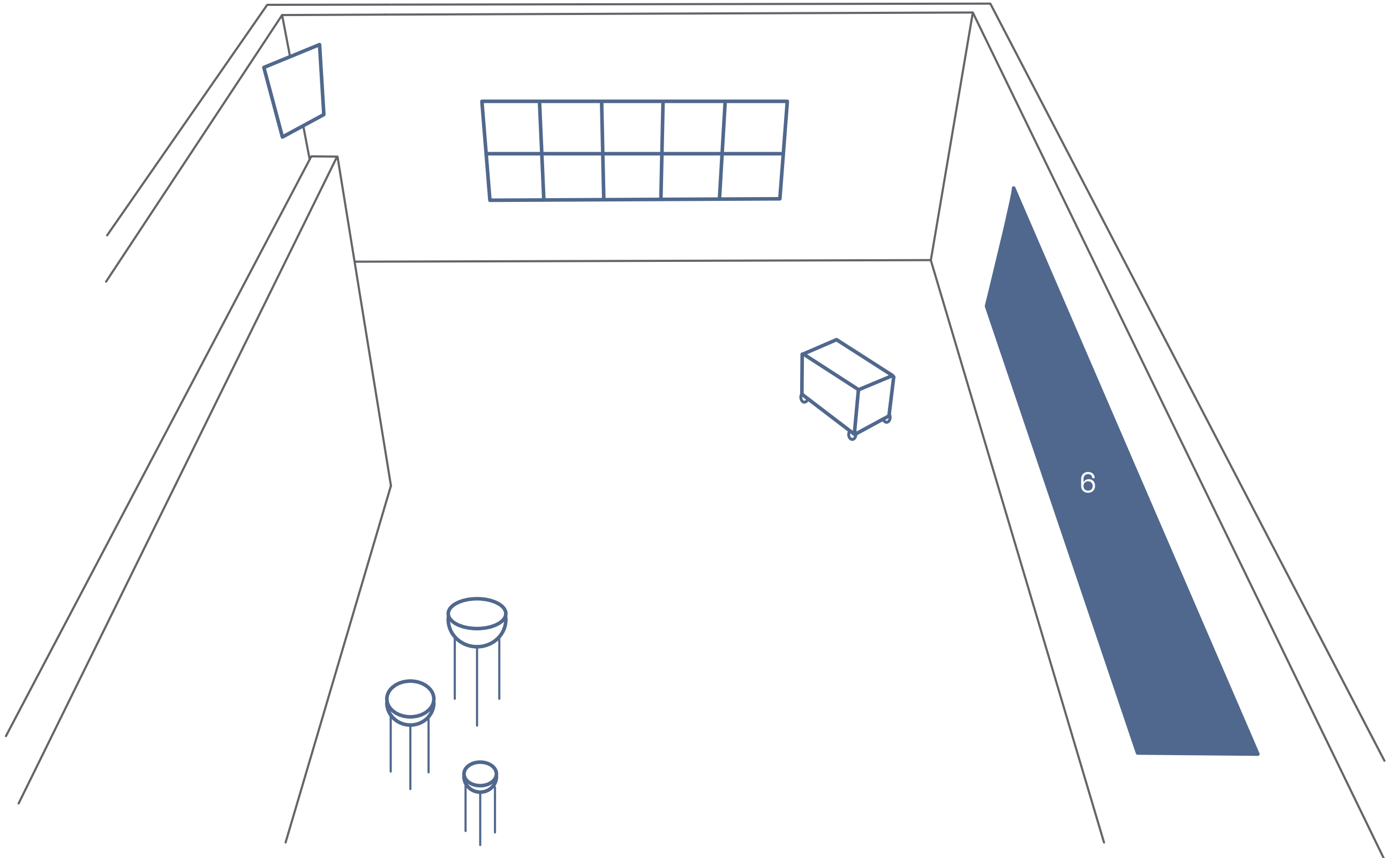
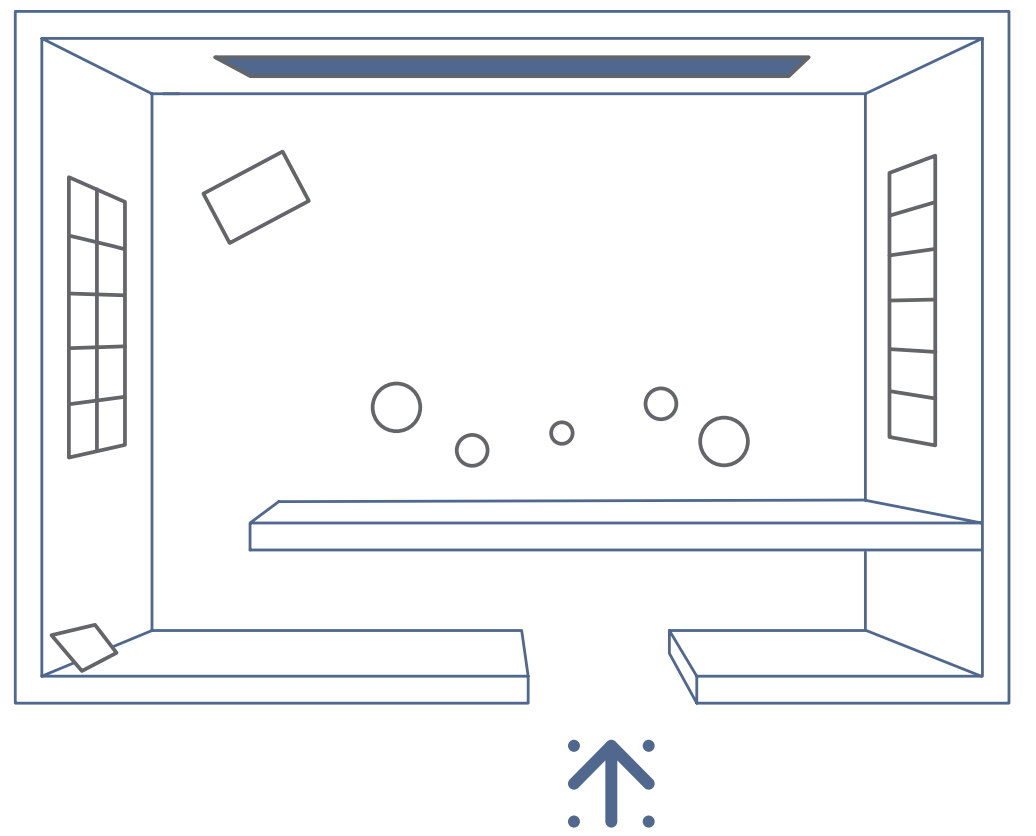
One in a Million



5. *The Mousetrap*, 2025
MDF, wood, acrylic paint, aluminum,
Arduino board, motion sensors, servomotors,
rubber wheels, wire
Courtesy of the artist and Proyectos
Monclova Gallery

This mobile sculpture is constructed from reclaimed wood that replicates the makeshift dwellings that, for Jiménez, evoke those inhabited and used for land occupation by militant organizations dedicated since the 1980s in the fight for affordable housing. *Ratonera* [mouse trap] is the derogatory term used to refer to informal shacks, here modeled on a minimal scale, but with the proportions and materials found in urban peripheries. Mounted on a robotic vacuum cleaner with a smart sensor, this dwelling ironically becomes part of the museum's cleaning process in a mechanical operation that amplifies the inverse relationship between labor and purchasing power as opposed to political influence and dignified housing.

One in a Million



6. *The Yoke*, 2025
Concrete and oil on plywood
Courtesy of the artist and Proyectos
Monclova Galle

One of the common pre-industrial tool used to plow the land is known as *the yoke* and refers to the device composed of two draft animals, often oxen or donkeys, joined by a yoke, or a wooden or metal beam placed on their necks. Jiménez places this amalgamation of animal and tool at the center of his large-format pictorial composition, where the yoke pulls a concrete block that symbolizes, for the artist, hard labor and the “wear and tear of the body as social punishment for ignorance.” He clarifies that physical exhaustion as a consequence of class is “an idea deeply rooted in the popular mentality that perceives school as a path to social advancement and that historically fosters the hierarchical separation between formal education and manual labor.” While the mural aims to monumentalize human beings in their social tragedy, Jiménez also alludes—in the brutal determinism of its forms—to the social prejudices associated with the precariousness of manual and artisanal workers.

Exhibition Credits

Exhibition organized by the Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, UNAM

MUAC curatorship: Lucía Sanromán, chief curator

Enlaces MUAC: Aitana Mendoza Pineda, Alejandro Jerónimo Cortés, Alejandro López Cancino, Ángel Gabriel Melo Martínez, Atzin Kiviñuu Ayala García, Camila Betancourt Hernández, Camila Ramírez Lozano, César Mauricio Vizuet López, Daian Amairani Aidana Sánchez, Dana Sciuchetti, Daniela Castrejón Soria, Emanuel Moreno León, Emilio Silvar Lira, Fernanda Isabel Martínez Padrón, Irving Diego Bautista González, Ismael Sánchez Rojas, Jaqueline Jazdeth López Martínez, Jorge Luis Torres Mendoza, Karla Guadalupe Salinas Nuñez, Luisa Ivette Ortiz Ramos, María Elizabeth Tejada Porras, María Franco López, Mariana Leslie Rivero Soto, Rebeca Ángeles Callejas, Rodrigo Acevedo Toledo, Rosa Gabriela Nájera Robles, Sandra Itzel Mercado Caballero, Sharon Arlette Altamirano Cabrera, Sofia Veléz Jurado, Valentina López Avalos, Zazhil Ha Maldonado Campos

We would like to give our special thanks to those workers guarding and protecting our exhibitions.

All the exhibition views are courtesy of the artist.

One in a Million

07.02.2026 – 03.07.2026

475+

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UNAM, rumbo al medio milenio...

Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

10:00 a.m. to 18:00 p.m.

Thursday

10:00 a.m. to 20:00 p.m.

Saturday

11:00 a.m. to 20:00 p.m.

Sunday

11:00 a.m. to 18:00 p.m.

Monday closed

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