

#### WHAT IS MAŠTA?

This magazine is called Mašta. The word has a double meaning: 'imagination', as well as 'whatever'. Whatever you imagine can be part of the magazine. We call it organic creativity: open, borderfree, experimental, unconventional, challenging, positively provocative, flowing and playful. It's growing from input in the streets and on the website www.creativeacts.org. Main theme is creative activism. The magazine aims to tickle imagination and to inspire to act. We want actions and creations around the globe. The magazine is a result of the acts and the acts are a result of the magazine.

#### WHO ARE WE?

We are an international collective of young activists, artists, journalists and other creative souls under the name of Creative Acts. We are linked to Loesje, a posterflying girl from the Netherlands who runs her own international organisation: www.loesje.org. Like her we support a creative society with space for equality, human rights, sustainable development and fun

#### **PLATFORM**

We realize this sparkling magazine to create a platform for young people to share their opinions on the world, politics and life with the perspective of creative expression, activism and exchange. We receive reports from individuals and groups who do creative actions in the streets and in other places in public space. Images, articles, artwork and ideas are shared. All this together makes Mašta possible.

#### YOU WANT MORE?

Download the past 4 issues at **www.creativeacts.org**, and for more articles, photos, video clips and stuff on the free forum. Creative Acts welcomes you to share your work too. Contact via editor@creativeacts.org.

#### **MAŠTA COUNTRIES**

Mašta is spread in the following countries:

Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Jordan, Kazakstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mexico, Nepal, The Netherlands, Pakistan, Philipines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, U.S.A., Uzbekistan...



We are often told that a run down city district has been 'transformed', or that a previously dull person has undergone a 'transformation' to become glamorous and exciting, thanks to the power of some product or other. Transformations are represented to us as things that mystically happen from above, which are to be chased, revered, and feared, or at the least, stared at and respected.

The point however is, is that transformations are happening the entire time, everywhere. If we are observing them from outside, we are at the same time not noticing that we are a part of them.

Transformation, is a process that should belongs to us, and the struggle to take back ownership of this act of affecting change in society, is charted in the following pages.

If we decide that urban transformations are not to our liking, we perform our own: new bike lanes, street art, sculptures from nowhere and theatre on the highway. In the sprawling areas of 'public' space, creative actions highlight the most vital issues of who these spaces really belong to, and more importantly, who they SHOULD belong to.

We must be aware of the process of transformation, because it does not care if we realise or not, it carries on all the same. Throw yourself head first into a small act of transformative beauty, hoping for a big one that will make more such acts possible; for people who never had the chance. Consciously engage with the ever changing; committing random acts of mischief, or highlighting stark injustice in a way that brings a smile to people's lips, and transforms something into a parody of itself – wonderful and hard hitting at the same time.

A transformation will always leave a trace of the original, and contain traces of its creators dreams, it will never be finished, but instead be ongoing and changing. A transformation is not something that should happen to us, but something that we're a part of, on a tiny level, or a global one, we take it into our hands, and create something devastatingly beautiful for all.

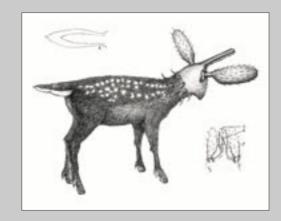
Transform,
Light a fire,
Keep your hands warm,
Transform,
Build a sandcastle,
In a sandstorm,
Transform,
Create colour,
From a blank form,
Transform,
Dance,
Take a chance,
Take the hard task,
Run to the streets,

Change the world,

It's your last chance.

## Favourite Transformation

\* I like the transformation, or metamorphosis, of a plant, from a seed to a green plant, producing a flower, and then producing new seeds, a lot of transformations from a small seed.



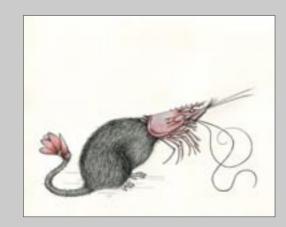


\* I like how cities and landscapes change from one season to another. Right now it feels that winter is transforming to spring!

> \* Sometimes it takes very little to redefine the context of a situation. Small objects or things that happen, have the power to change their surroundings. Sometimes the effect is individual, sometimes the effect can even be a sudden change in behaviour of the people who are around. I really like to try and consciously apply the butterfly effect in social situations.

\* The transformation from passive to active, from apathy to a full life.

\* Part of me would love to write about revolution and social change, bold new dreams turned into reality, but as I spend so much time doing this, I will focus on a very personal transformation for me. The moment when you lower yourself into the bath. As the underside of my body first makes contact with the water, I feel at my most vulnerable, an all-encompassing despair, like I am alone, or worse, like I'm falling, under-threat, exposed, doomed. Then however, this powerful feeling occurring as cold flesh touched hot water, turns into one of comfort, as the water warms the body surrounds it completely, and whispers that everything is okay, massaging the psyche back into a state of mental well-being. This is the transformation that occurs weekly, that will stalk me my entire life.









## A new society taking shape

>//"The last bit of Earth unclaimed by any nation-state was eaten up in 1899. Ours is the first century\* without terra incognita, without a frontier. Nationality is the highest principle of world governance - not one speck of rock in the South Seas can be left open, not one remote valley, not even the Moon and planets"//

> Hakim Bey, Temporary autonomous zone

The culture of domination has always been successful in adopting and exploiting fresh and radical ideas and movements by tearing off or striping down their radical message or any other message that doesn't conform to the values of the dominant modes of thought. We can clearly understand this process through the meaning of terms detournament and more importantly recouperation, terminology that was coined by members of Letterist International, a part of which later become the Situationist International. In simple terms, detournament means to turn the system's images against it, to simply divert them. It's about finding a way to take from the system without being taken in by it. On the other hand recouperation is the process by which radical ideas and images are commodified and

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incorporated within mainstream society. To be "turned" in turn was to be recuperated, recovered by the system as art, ideology, or any of many fragmentary forms of specialisation or partial opposition. We might say that the borderline between these two polarities has become blurred over time, because sometimes the things that appear to be detourned were already recoupered, which is, in fact, how recouperation works. The most "vulgar" example of recouperation can be found in Diesel's "Diesel Action! For Successful Living" advertisement. But, of course recouperation functions in many other more subtle, hardly detectable ways. Even the works of Situationist international hadn't escape recouperation, when later it were displayed as banal gallery artwork. So, are there any good ideas for escaping recouperation or do we simply have to

## within the shell of the old

+++ written by: **Igor Stojanovski** 

get out of the mainstream culture to create a different reality?

#### A DIFFERENT RADICAL TACTIC

In the mid 1980s the American

political writer and poet Peter Lamborn Wilson proposed the idea of the Temporary autonomous zone or simply the TAZ. In the book with the same title, which he wrote under the name Hakim Bey, he combined ideas from Sufism and Neopaganizm with theories from anarchism and the Situationist international. The concept of Temporary autonomous zone is based on Bey's review of the pirate utopian which appeared from the 16th to the 19th century. Pirate utopian were secret islands once used for supply purposes by pirates, that were early forms of autonomous "mini societies" existing beyond the reach of governments. They operated beyond laws and embraced freedom. As Wilson said in a later interview, he didn't think that he had invented the idea of TAZ, but that he has just simply recognized it. He named several potential TAZ's in what he called "already liberated zones" like the sixties-style tribal gatherings, the forest conclaves of eco saboteurs, the idyllic Beltane of the neo-pagans, anarchist

conferences, gay faery circles, Harlem rent parties of the twenties and other social events. As the basis on which the TAZ should be created, Bey suggested the dinner party concept of Pearl Andrews which he saw as the seed of the new society taking shape within the shell of the old, where the element of spontaneity is crucial, the individuality of each is fully admitted and intercourse is perfectly free.

In accordance with the realisation that the system can't be radically transformed through reforms and also that we can't wait for the revolution to eventually happen so we can experience real freedom, the concept of the Temporary Autonomous Zone as a conscious radical tactic is made from two basic points: the appreciation of the insurrection over the revolution, and from what Bey called "the closure of the map". The first point addresses the category of time and that is where the temporary aspect of the idea comes from, although some TAZs can last for a lifetime. Bey says that even though the revolution labels the insurrection as a failure, the insurrection represents a far more interesting possibility of liberation. He claimed that for the time being we should concentrate



our force on temporary power surges, avoiding all entanglements with permanent solutions. As for what he meant by saying that the world map is now closed, according to Bey, we now live in a time where not one square inch of Earth goes unpoliced or untaxed. So, why bother finding territory for creating a permanent utopia, when the state's watchdogs will always get you no matter where you are?

"The TAZ must be the scene of our present autonomy, but it can only exist on the condition that we already know ourselves as free beings."

Bey named three certain conditions under which the TAZ will emerge. Those conditions are psychological liberation, the expansion of what Bey called the counter-Net and the desolation of the apparatus of Control. The psychological liberation addresses the knowledge of the ways we are oppressed and self-repressed - "for most of the people work is a far more actual source of misery than legislative politics, and alienation is far more dangerous for us than toothless

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AND MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, IT IS A REMINDER THAT WE MUST ALWAYS BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR NEW RADICAL TACTICS IF WE WANT TO ESCAPE THE EVER PRESENT RISK OF THE SYSTEM TRANSFORMING THE RADICAL MOVEMENTS, INSTEAD OF THE OPPOSITE.

outdated dying ideologies". The counter-Net is what Bey also called the Web, as if the Net (which can be defined as the totality of all information and communication transfer), were a fishingnet and the Web were spider-webs woven through the interstices and broken sections of the Net. Without the Web, the full realisation of the TAZ-complex would be impossible. But the Web is not the end in itself, it's a weapon. Probably one of the most important aspect of the TAZ is that it must be a physical place in which all the senses are involved. So, cyberspace and especially Second life is, of course, out of the question for a place where a TAZ can emerge.

### A THEORY WITHOUT PRACTICE IS WORTHLESS

A randomly gathered network of individuals called the Cacophony Society which was "united in the pursuit of experiences beyond the pale of mainstream society through subversion, pranks, art, fringe explorations and meaningless madness", was the first to put into practice the concept of TAZ in what they called Trips to the Zone or Zone Trips. The Black Rock City, also known as the Burning Man Festival was the product of one of their Zone Trips. The TAZ was also embraced by the early

1990s rave culture. The ravers saw the illegal hanger parties as an authentic realisation of the TAZ. However, even though he saw elements of the TAZ in the illegal raves, Bey stated that ravers didn't get some parts of his ideas quite well, especially those in which he talks about technology and the use of it. Smart mobs and in some cases flash mobs can also be examples of briefly putting the concept of TAZ into practice. Besides the ones who advocated and tried to practice the idea of TAZ, there were also fierce critics of the idea who claimed that it's an escapist concept, since it's a "hit and run" tactic and fails to give substantial opposition to the systems of control. But the important thing is that the TAZ exists in the present time and it stands for much more than the mundanity of negativity or countercultural drop-outism. And most important of all, it is a reminder that we must always be on the lookout for new radical tactics if we want to escape the ever present risk of the system transforming the radical movements, instead of the opposite.

- > \* The book was published in 1985
- > Read the whole T.A.Z.- The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism book here: http://www.hermetic.com/bey/taz3.html

## Climate change comes to you



+++ written by: **Alex van Veen** (originally published in Dutch at www. ravagedigitaal.org, translation by Joep van Delft)



Guerilla sculpture provokes

The sculptures of Abel Heijkamp are suddenly appearing from nowhere into the public domain. Always with an extra message. "I want to cause confusion and provoke discussion."

Users of a roundabout in Den Bosch, a Dutch city, discovered in the early morning of 12th September 2008, to their amazement, that a bold piece of art has descended upon the centre of the crossroads. A gigantic furious Polar bear, made out of concrete and car tiers, appears to be throwing an oil drum at the passing cars.

The sculpture weighing 5000 kilo was placed, with the help of a tow truck, on a pedestal that night by the action group 'Acting Forward'. They did not inform the local authorities prior to the action. Abel Heijkamp, the sculptor, draws attention to climate change. "The polar bear came here, because its natural habitat is disappearing." The polar bear is furious "because people here are continuing with their shortsighted way of life." With this action, Acting Forward says that the negative consequences of traffic can not be made visible explicitly enough in public space, "a major source of contamination, and of emission of the green house gas CO2 that causes climate change."

"THE POLAR BEAR CAME HERE, BECAUSE ITS NATURAL HABITAT IS DISAPPEARING."

Acting Forward raises questions around situations and formulates an alternative when possible. With installing objects, they aim to cause confusion and incite discussions. "Making the reality visible in another context is the right means for that," according to Heijkamp. The choice for unmediated exposure of the sculptures is crucial to Heijkamp. "Placing a huge polar bear on a busy roundabout works a lot better than in a museum." The question is if it is art or activism. "As an activist, there are not so many possibilities any more: All kinds of democratic liberties are diminishing. As an artist, you are the pearl of democracy. Art is a symbol of freedom of speech. Provided that the art is non-confrontational. I think that this is an interesting field of play for extra parliamentary activists to take up." At first, the local authorities urged Heijkamp to remove the sculpture. Thanks to interference by the Deputy of Culture, the sculpture has been legalised. The presence of the furious polar bear who stands on the pedestal like the hulk, will never escape the attention of motorists.

## Adventures in open space

#### Organised chaos and creative action

+++ written by: Evan Sedgwick-Jell

Those things presented to us as 'the next big thing' or as radical new tools in organising and facilitation, are often in fact, merely new ways of utilising existing methods of working together. This is how, for me, the phenomenon of Open Space Technology exists. The method of planning, and executing said plan, was first coined by management guru Harrison Owen in 1983, the practice is today described on the internet hub of its users as: "one way to enable all kinds of people, in any kind of organisation, to create inspired meetings and events."

In Open Space meetings, participants create and manage their own agenda of parallel working sessions. This could be around a central theme of strategic importance, such as: What is the strategy, group, organization or community that all stakeholders can support and work together to create? With groups of 5 to 2000+ people – working in one-day workshops, three-day conferences, or the weekly staff meeting – the common result is a powerful, effective connecting and strengthening of what's already happening in the organisation: planning and action, learning and doing, passion and responsibility, participation and performance.

Sounds great, a method of organisation that creates huge amounts of energy and for a moment at least, forgets hierarchical relations in favour of progress and productivity.

However, the question remains: Is Open Space Technology really such a radical way of organising, or just a way of naming a way of organising based on equality and democracy, hijacked by corporate interests as a shiny new exercise in 'increasing productivity'?

Open Space does exactly what the name suggests: It creates an open space for ideas and people to move freely, creating a space in which new ideas can be brought to the task of achieving current aims, and producing some new ones in addition. The aims of the group are still the central matter. The Open Space method of organisation should not be something adopted as an exercise in distracting people long enough from their day-to-day drudgery of normal routine to allow them to tap into their creative sides. Instead it is a liberatory and ongoing process that reflects a commitment to non-hierarchical and democratic ways of acting to inspire and motivate people to fight for change.

Whether we call this 'Open Space Technology' or (in the words of Rosa Luxemburg) the 'dialectic of revolutionary spontaneity', or whatever else, the really incredibly exciting thing is how it works, and seeing it unfold before your eyes. Try it for yourself!

#### > Check openspaceworld.org



## The art of freezing a supermarket





IS DOING NOTHING REALLY THAT PROVOCATIVE?

#### ++ PART 1 - MOTIVATION

> Aren't we all becoming brain dead the moment we step into a shop? The numbing by the over-abundance of consumer relics seems the basic strategy of distraction. Distraction from the poor working conditions both locally and globally. Time to stand still in the temple of our times, right between the displayed shopping lanes between the holy of the holy consumer's capitalism: The goods.

> At exactly 11 past 11, a crew of creative activists, disguised as consumers, froze into statues for five minutes.

#### ++ PART 2 - EXPERIENCE ACCOUNT

> Friday night at Kaisers in Berlin, time suddenly stops for 5 minutes. Or does it? A group consisting of approximately 40 creative activists had that night decided to do a supermarket freeze, a form of flashmob. Our act was successful; we got plenty of different reactions from the other costumers. Some laughed; some gave us weird looks, some got annoyed or irritated, even some tourists trying to join in for a while.

> Five minutes definitely felt longer than five minutes. During those five minutes I was frozen in the middle of a main isle, one of the shop attendants comes up to my face literary just a few centimetres from me shouting: "This is forbidden, this is forbidden!" in front of my face several times looking really angry and upset. One of my friends could hear her talking to a colleague saying: //"I want to throw them out but they've done nothing wrong!"// So something in our action must have been really provocative.

> I was thinking, she wants me to stop doing what? I was doing nothing and how can to do nothing be forbidden? It could be seen as an action against or consumer society but also towards our obsession with time. The woman who got upset with me maybe just reacted to the nothingness of my actions. What I liked about this action is that we did not force some kind opinion onto someone, everyone was free to interpret this from their own point of view and therefore we got many different reactions. And after five minutes we all slowly started moving again, back to business.

> Is doing nothing really that provocative? Maybe we all should stop once in a while and think about what we are doing with our time.

## Throw bombs for a more natural urban environment: Seedbombs!

There are bombs that are not deadly or destructive. These bombs are made of clay, compost, soil and seeds. The result is an explosion of colours, a nice smell and green all around you.

The idea of seed bombs came from New York where people started getting fed up with the large amount of empty lots in their neighbourhood but as there were fences around these places it was impossible to be able to plant things yourself. The answer was the seedbomb which made access to these empty spaces unnecessary.

#### To make your own bombs:

A seed bomb consists of 1 part seeds, 3 parts compost and 5 parts clay. You can use any seeds you want: it can become a bouquet, a vegetable patch, Italian spices or even a mix. Just keep in mind that once you've planted the seeds by throwing your bomb it will not be taken care of by anybody. So choose seeds of plants that are robust and require low maintenance.

Make your own bombs and make the neighbourhood greener! Of course it's always fun to have a little stash at home so you can pass them out to your friends, family and carry a couple with you everywhere you go.



### **Transition Towns**

#### Nourish the neighborhood without oil

+++ written by: Ruuta Vimba

Cities are excellent examples of an ongoing transformation.

These changes arguably leave the concept of the city itself unchanged. The initiative Transition Towns aims to concretely change the very basic infrastructure of the city. Whereas in modern cities people are very distant from food production and energy generation, the initiative "Transition Town" aims to create smaller, self-reliant communities who engage themselves with ecological and sustainable practices.

Normally these dreams are connected to ideals about the countryside. Isn't it far-fetched to think that this will work in a modern city? Transition Town argues that it is not only a utopia fit for unrealistic dreamers. Instead, it is a bare necessity. The rapidly approaching crises of energy supply and climate change demands that we prepare ourselves. In the end, we are most vulnerable to climate- and energy changes in our daily city lives. The Transition Initiative states that people have to change their lifestyle and habits immediately to avoid a crisis. It asks society to unite into small units and radically reduce consumption of energy and carbon emissions, to create self-sufficient communities that are prepared for the looming energy crisis and the critical lack of energy in the future.

Everyone has heard of some claims about climate change and the lack of energy. One of the keywords for the Transition Initiative is "Peak Oil", a concept that explains the future relations between oil demand and supply. The demand for oil has grown over the last 150 years. Until now the market was satisfied with the supply of oil from resources that are fairly easy to access. The "Peak Oil"-theory predicts that between 2006 and 2012 half of the easy-available oil resources of the Earth will be used up. With a growing demand and a shrinking availability, the oil prices will boost at an unheard-of speed. Oil for



\* ...THIS INITIATIVE IS NOT AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN CASE OF AN ENERGY CRISIS. IT IS JUST A CATALYST FOR CHANGE. \* IN THE END WE ARE MOST VULNERABLE FOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY CHANGES IN OUR DAILY CITY LIVES. transportation and energy will in a short time become too expensive. Implementing the Transition Town model everyday current society asks a lot of work and demands a lot of willpower from people. Not only will it change the way we use energy, but it also effects education, youth, economics, transport and local governments. Before realising the implementation communities have to be informed, there will be heated discussions and seminars to teach people how to become less dependent on energy. In the future vision of the Transition Initiative every member of society is included, and his or her skills are guaranteed to work through the Open Space methods employed during the seminars (described elsewhere in this magazine).

The first place to officially call itself a transition town is Totnes in England. "Change is coming, whether we like it or not" as their website reads.\* Totnes has now started to work on their own Energy Descent Action Plan. They are educating people and realising projects on different subjects, from planting nut trees and promoting solar thermal kits to encouraging local production and helping businesses to switch to renewable energy. World-wide there are over 126 transition town projects, they can be found in the UK, Ireland, Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the USA.

The people who started these initiatives provide no guarantee for success. What one should keep in the back of his head is that this initiative is not an answer to the question of what will happen in case of an energy crisis. It is just a catalyst for change. This initiative urges communities to unite their ideas, knowledge and experiences to create islands for living. It gives opportunities to people that want to change their lifestyle by offering supportive space. Maybe this could be the creative act of your life.

> \* http://totnes.transitionnetwork.org

## Lohmühle

+++ written by: Aagje de Groote

//Lohmühle is a trailer park in Kreuzberg, Berlin. There are about 20 trailers in this area. Attracted by the colours and shapes of the wagons I enter the 'community' and decide to talk to some people who live there.

#### "I don't want a structured life"

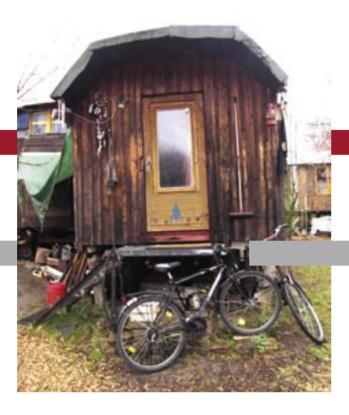
First I meet Sarah. She's from London. She is looking after the trailer while her friend, the owner, is away. "I really can't tell you much" she says when I ask her about her experience of living in a trailer. She looks very sleepy. "No time as well" she says. I knock on doors of the other trailers. Most people seem to be living in this place temporarily.

Marcos has been travelling in India for the past five years, looking for a temporary house he ended up in the 'guest wagon' in the park: "Staying at this place gives me the opportunity to figure out what I want with my life. Here I can make some new plans."

Peer has been living in trailers for four years now. He feels closer to nature, likes the freedom to travel and in general, he wants to be his own master. "I don't want to work to only be able to pay my rent. Neither to divide my time into work time and free time. This ways it's all one. And anyway, I want to have an adventurous life, not a structured one."

#### "I never asked someone to live here"

Gniewko is from Warschau and has been living in this trailer park for 15 years. "I came to Berlin and I lived in several places, including a squat. After a while I came



to live in this trailer park. I never asked anyone to live here. I just did.... Did I choose to live like this?" he asks. After thinking about this for half a minute he says: "No, not really. It was rather a coincidence. When the wall came down in 1989 it wasn't clear who this piece of land belonged to. East or West. So it was squatted. For a long time the living in trailers wasn't organised at all. It wasn't really a community like it is now. It was just a bunch of wagons on the same place."

"Now we meet each week to talk about our projects. There are three themes we are working on. We organise activities on cultural, ecological and art subjects. Two weeks ago we started with a dance project. Waltz, rock and roll, things like that. Also there are Jazz concerts quit often. Each year we organise a festival as well. Neighbours can join us of course. Also we have weekly film evenings in a big tent. In the summer we project the films on a big screen outside."

"Sometimes I miss the comfort. I don't have electricity and in the winter it's especially hard. I have a big battery that I use for lighting and other electrical items. But now that I have a laptop, the battery needs to be charged often. But these things I can deal with, with the help of friends. And I have to be sure that I can find drinking water. For washing we use rainwater and groundwater. Sometimes you have to be creative to find out how you can organise you daily life, getting heating, electricity and stuff like that."

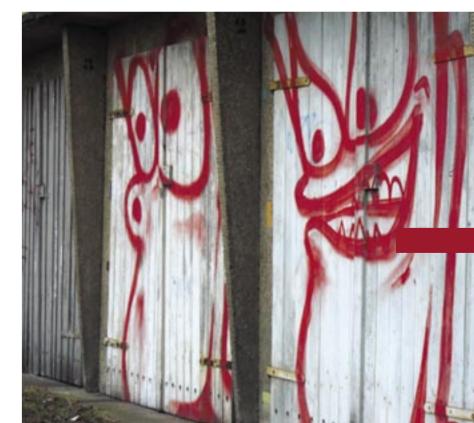
#### "I don't feel any connection with society"

"Personally, I don't feel any connection with society. I don't really feel that I contribute to society, so I don't want any help or money from society either. I can have an independent life, without help. From time to time I work at concert places to set up the PA and do the tuning of instruments. I used to work at a moving company but I can't do that any more as my back is totally wasted now.

The trailer park as a community would say that they are connected with society through showing alternative ways of living and culture. But for me this place is only the way that I want to live."

"I like living like this. I found a way to live in a way that suits me. And I don't think that will change any time soon. I don't need to work whole day and I can organise my life as I want. I don't think about the future either. The furthest I look is two weeks ahead. But believe me, I'm not bored at all. There's enough work to do around this place. The garden needs to be done. The wood for the heating needs to be chopped and so on. So I'm always busy around here. The city council managed to get us a 'contract' to use the area but I don't like that arrangement. We were using this area of land anyway, so I don't think there is any advantage for us really. In two years the contract finishes. No one knows what will happen after that."







## Hiding from the Radar

+++ written by: Farah Marzak

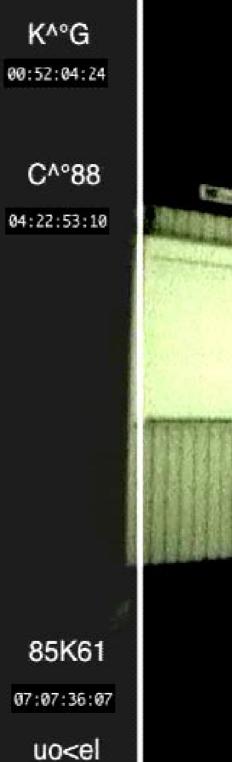
This is an invitation to quite an interesting game: Hiding from the radar. How long can you live and stay unnoticed? Try it out!

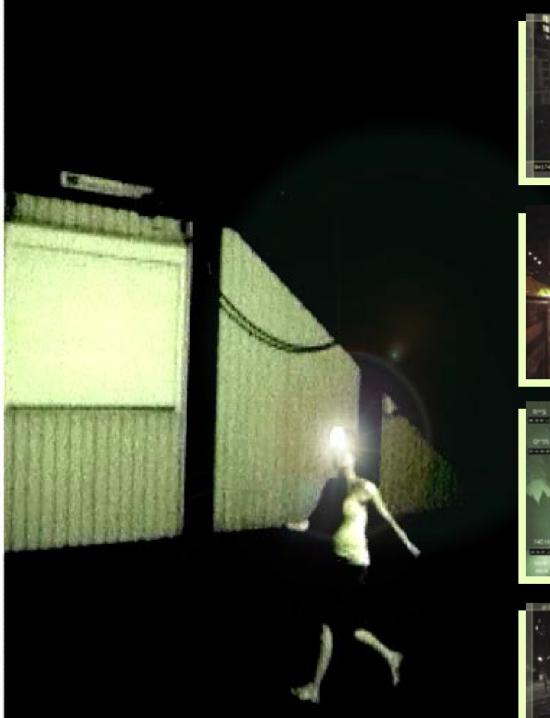
We know our data is stored when we book a flight, go to see a doctor or order something online. But even everyday things, like going to the supermarket, taking a train or just walking on the street are monitored by transaction data, barcodes and CCTV. When you make a phone call, the phone company not only knows who you called and when, but also where you were exactly when you made the call.

Knowing that this information is collected is one thing, avoiding it for the sake of privacy is another. How could you avoid having your information flow from being obtained, and for how long? Imagine travelling only by local

transport, not booking your tickets in advance, ending up at remote locations, where your credit card will not be of any help. Imagine living without an ATM card, making your money as you go and spending it on the most necessary things. Find creative ways to stay in touch without calling, sending an email or text message. Make new friends that can join you on this quest. See places you have never seen before. And perhaps report it all to us for the next issue.

There is one more difficulty. How are you going to find out if you were able to dodge the bullet and stray from the ever present radars? I cannot answer this for you. Try to identify where and how you leave traces. Try and invent ways to prevent them, or to make the traces you leave unusable. If you cannot avoid being recorded by CCTV, make sure you wear a funny disguise, a moustache, a hat, wig or the costume of your favourite animal.













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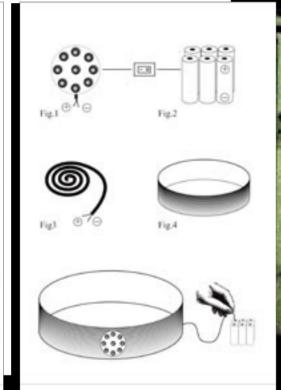


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L-R.A.S.C. ist ein Getät mit dem man sich zuverlässig gegen Infrarot. Überwachunskameras schützen kann. Das Gerät ist einfach konstruiert und eignet sich zum seiber bauen.

Sie benötigen dafür ein infrarotes Licht (Fig. 1) und der Lichtstäcke entspeechende Batterien (Fig. 2). Um das Infrarot Licht mit den Batterien zu verbinden beauchen Sie ein Kabel (Fig. 3) mit zwei Leitungen (+ und -). Wenn Sie die Verbindung hergestellt haben, erscheint das Infrarotlicht.

Um das Gerät an- und auszuschalten, können Sie einen Schalter installieren oder es durch das Einsetzen der Batterie einschalten, bzw. durch Entnehmen der Batterie ausschalten. Um sich ausreichend vor der Infrarot-Überwachungskamera zu schützen, ist eine starke Infrarot-Lampe notwendig. Nach Bedarf können Sie die benötigte Stärke mit einer Reihe von mehreren Infrarot-Lampen erreichen. Um die Infrarot-Lampe richtig zum Einsatz zu bringen, müssen Sie es vorne auf dem Kopf tragen. Dufür nehmen Sie ein Kopfband (Fig.4) oder eine Mütze (einen Hut, ein Tuch - spielen Sie mit Ihre Fantasie) und befestigen Sie darauf die Lampe.





Portraits of imaginary friends

Some say children create imaginary friends as a way of personal expression. Interested by this idea, I decided to play with it in a "public intervention". I made portraits of imaginary new friends and pasted them in the streets. The objective of this action was to create a visual provocation in a public space.

Things that we can see on a daily basis tend to disappear. If you live in one place long enough things won't surprise you any more. Buildings, sites and signs become imperceptible to your eyes. The information they transmit gets lost, details are being ignored. Public space suffers from this disease and our daily routine does not change it for the better. Yet children seem to hold on to the power of surprise.

What I wanted to do was surprise people, transmit a bit of childhood back to them by sticking imaginary friends in normally unnoticed spaces, waiting for them to be discovered. My aim was to bring people a new, innocent and fresh way of looking. Observers are turned into children and by this they recover the capacity of seeing little details and transform reality. Perhaps it's time for all of us to visit some old friends again.



### RIGHTS TO BE PEACEFUL

16th of December 1773, American colonists dumped around 45 tons of tea in Boston harbour to protest against the British Government policy. The so called "Boston Tea Party" caused independence riots and inspired lot of activists and reform leaders.

At this moment the world is on the threshold of broader modifications. Since the beginning of the economic crisis,

#### EMOTIONS CAN BE TRANSFORMED INTO PEACEFUL AS WELL AS VIOLENT PROTEST FORMS

society has accumulated negative emotions like disappointment about the system, or fears about the future. It logically brings out the need for changes that realise themselves in different protest forms – few examples in Europe during December 2008/January 2009 have shown that the emotions can be transformed into peaceful as well as violent protest forms. Lots of emotional and material anger-stones have been thrown into the windows of parliaments in Ireland, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Latvia. Action has been carried out to gain the attention of governments. Action requesting change.

Human rights activists and sources claims that people have historic rights to

peaceful protest to show their support or disapproval. Although, most of the precedents turn out to be an extreme form of peoples effort to communicate with governments showing their dissatisfaction, it can also be an act of solidarity with different social, political or other kind of groups.

The human rights organisation from England LIBERTY says, "public protest is deeply rooted in political culture" - as long as there have been governments, there have been people who expressed their opinion through different forms of

#### TODAY 21ST OF SEPTEMBER HAS BECOME WORLDWIDE ACTIONS' DAY, ACCEPTED BY UNITED NATIONS

protest and therefore consecutively there have been regulations to restrict their activities. While it leaves the impression that there has always been mutual fear and misunderstanding between the governing forces and people, there is a rich variety of non-violent action forms, to avoid aggression, Gene Sharp in the book The Methods of Nonviolent Action (Boston, 1973) has classified 198 of them. Within the methods, there is a wide space for creativity, for example, to reveal the best method of guerilla theatre, to promote the message through protest painting, sit-in,

#### lightening performances.

There have been several cases when peaceful protest forms where taken as a security threat, even at the national level - examples of law enforcement agencies reactions shows that peaceful action such as boarding a freighter "in order to unfurl a banner calling for an end to illegal logging" (by Greenpeace, Miami, 2002) can cause governments to react as thought it where a threat to national security.

The potential of peaceful protests is incomprehensible in all levels - form a boycott of concrete locally produced goods to global actions for peace, freedom of speech or any other overall topics.

Ten years ago film maker Jeremy Gilley started an initiative to establish a fixed date for peace in the calendar and spread the message through education, football, events and his movie. Today 21st of September has become worldwide actions' day, accepted by United Nations and acknowledged by peaceful performances and activities.

There are so many powerful peaceful options, isn't it a weird choice to pick up the only alternative to all of them and transform all emotions into grey, inexpressive stone in order to crush the window – only prism, what shows the outside reality to governing powers?



## Superglue

+++ written by: Dan Glass, Joep van Delft

Dan Glass, an active member of Plane Stupid from Scotland, is known fondly in the British media as 'Superglue Dan'. We asked him how he obtained this title and what he was trying to achieve.

I've been campaigning and taking direct action against the growth of the aviation industry for 2 years. Last month I found out I won an award for my work. To collect it I was to go to No 10 downing street and meet the Prime Minister, the same man who has been wilfully ignoring all Plane Stupid's work and 70 000 London residents rejections of the third runway. It didn't take long to decide what I would do... With a team from Plane Stupid backing me up I put on my second hand suit wearing a device in my pocket which was linked up to an anonymous Skype account on a computer in front of the team... At 6.15 he came out into the audience to shake our hands. I knew what I was about to do as I squeezed the superglue packet into my left hand

'By the way Prime Minister, I've just super glued myself to your arm.

Don't' panic. This is a peaceful protest in line with Plane's Stupid uncompromising commitment to non-violent direct action. We just wanted five minutes of your time because, Prime Minster, you cannot shake off climate change just like you can shake off my arm.

Prime Minster, you must realise that we can beat climate change- but not by expanding the worlds' biggest international airport at Heathrow, and supporting aviation, the fastest growing contributor to global carbon emissions. That's why we, Plane Stupid, are taking our campaign from the roof of parliament to inside ten Downing Street.

(to the whole audience including the PM)

We are the last generation with the opportunity to adequately tackle climate change before it is too late.

We need the Prime Minster to make the tough decisions he keeps on talking about and if he needs someone to hold his hand, then we are willing to do just that. But we are not going to wait around for politicians to catch up. Remember, he only has two possible legacies before he leaves office. As the first Prime Minster to take climate change seriously. Or the last one not to.

It's time you stopped hiding from communities on the front line affected by climate change.

Whilst we stand here smiling nicely for the cameras in the Arctic, Inuit communities are planning survival strategies for their families as the deep seas gradually engulf them. Whilst we stand here drinking champagne and eating canapés, communities in Tuvalu are desperately building sandbanks to stop their island, their families, their lives and ultimately,



their dignity, from going underwater. And, Prime Minister, as you know so well, whilst we stand in each other's arms, the community of Sipson in West London awaits complete demolition because the of the planned third runway at Heathrow airport.

Brown's Heathrow consultation is a fix pure and simple. It is the single most anti-democratic, anti-national, anti-human, outright evil thing this government has done since the Iraq war and that's saying something. If super-gluing myself to the Prime Minister is the only way to cut through the power of corporations like BAA and ensures he hears what people from West London really think, then so be it.

Okay then government, quibble. Bargain. Shout it down. Say something.

I talk of Heathrow, not because everyone is, but because it is a sign of things to come. In Heathrow, the battle lines are drawn. We could continue careering down the path of relentless economic growth and ignore the world's top scientists who are calling on us to curb aviation, or stop, take a breather and support workers in the aviation industry and communities surrounding airports into a sustainable lifestyle, before it is too late. The choice, Prime Minster, is yours.

Allow us, the future generation, to shake your faith. Put your hand in ours, let us lead you through this labyrinth and realise that we have this remarkable opportunity. I could be your son. Explain yourself to the next generation. The people of next

generation will either thank us for taking the necessary, logical action, or lament us for not being radical enough. It is not good enough to do our bit- we must do what is necessary. Do this, because it's important that you understand. If you find a basis to disagree, by all means take the other side. But please don't ignore it, don't look away. Prime Minister. It's time to stand up to the bullies from BAA and stand up for the British public.'

Every morning since leaving 10 Downing Street, I have woken up and asked myself whether I should write press stories or obstruct the machinery which is causing environmental destruction. The world is drowning in a sea of words, and I don't want to add to the deluge. Almost everyday I notice signs that more and more people are longing for our species to cease its self-destructive war with earth and each other. And that's the real strength of Plane Stupid; creating new spaces to confront climate change.

Powerful people know that ordinary people are not innately selfish or slaves to consumerism. Creating spaces to strategize resistance to forces promoting this intergenerational catastrophe is not just a campaign, or even a movement, it's a whole culture not negotiated by governments; but enforced by people. By the public. A public who can link hands across national borders and acknowledge that we are all learners, and always continuing to learn to tackle climate change.

Brown's brazen belief that we can run the

world disjointed from natural phenomena with his imprudent riot squad of aviation industry techno-crats has exposed the fragile relationships this government upholds with the polluting industries. The sheer ignorance of deliberately ignoring the consultation results regarding Heathrow expansion has placed on full public view the trickery and collusion inside the government walls.

Now that the government's sinister relationship with the aviation industry has been put into mass circulation, it could be disabled quicker than the pundits predicted.

Bring on the spanners.

If we succeed no one will remember.

If we fail no one will forget

Plane Stupid and communities taking action on aviation expansion-will not go without a fight

So we can ask the powers that be when deciding on these proposals and the fate of our people and planet. What does airport expansion mean in this ecologically damaging, corporative world? What does it mean in our society where a government can out rightly ignore the findings of the world's top scientists in the IPCC and still continue to relentlessly expand? What does expansion mean in our society in which the wealthiest 10% of the UK population take nearly 50% of all flights? When nearly 15% of people never fly? What does expansion mean to people in the areas surrounding Stanstead, Heathrow, Bristol, Glasgow, Edinburgh, whose everyday existence is blighted by noise and air pollution? Whose roads are

choked with cars and whose communities are destroyed? Or to the people of villages by the runways of Stanstead, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bristol?

Airport Expansion doesn't just signify an illogical reaction to reducing carbon emissions; it symbolises the social inequality about who has to pay for the impacts of climate change. Not just in Heathrow, but in economically marginalised communities all over the UK- proposals are being made. We must ask, would expansion plans be proposed in wealthier areas, through the fields of Surrey or the parks in Hampstead? So why is it ok to demolish the areas which economically poorer communities have depended on for decades around Glasgow, around Heathrow?

The pollution of the air is one of the clearest illustrations of the link between the control of nature and the control of people. Airports are not built by society but by elite with bureaucratic, political or economic power. The earth will not be saved while issues of justice, power and emancipation go ignored. This much destruction/ displacement is not in balance with the relativity of justice.

That is why it falls to those of us living both outside and directly within these communities to work together to create that mass-based, secular and non-violent resistance to the airport expansion plans.

Sorry, but I can't help venting. It's because actually many of us are scared -

for the present generation, my generation, for those to come and ultimately for life itself. We have a large responsibility on our shoulders. We are the first generation to be equipped with the science of climate change and also how to deal with it-yet we continue to plunder in completely the wrong direction. In fifty years time, future generations will either thank us for our actions or lament us for not being radical enough. Not tactics that line the birdcage but real acts of civil disobedience.

A noticeable period of quiet in Britain has lulled the government into discounting civil society as a potential political and social force. Citizens seemed to accept their fate before. Now, with community led campaigns against expansion plans, the brilliant climate camp, and not to mention the climate science as our fundamental grounding, that patience seems to be running out.

We want freedom to determine our own future. We don't want to clear up the past generations mess - we have to turn round to our parents and ask why they left this mess for us - just as we will unfortunately have to for our kids and explain what a lion looked like, how thick the Amazon was and explain what fresh air smelt like.

So when are we going to get angry? When are we going to say 'hang on, enough is enough?' When are we going to stop waiting? And reach for our alternatives, whatever they may be?

And remember, we are not alone.

If it can happen in Heathrow with over 5000 on the recent demonstration, if it can happen in actions at Edinburgh, Manchester and East Midlands airports, if communities are organising in Stanstead, Bristol and Aberdeen airports, it can happen in unison all over the UK. Why not?

The time has come, the stakes are raised. Perhaps things could get worse, but actually, perhaps things could get a lot better. Another world may indeed be possible.

Once in a great while, a few times in history you could say, humans are left with the responsibility so great, so acute and possibly unexpected, that people can't quit decide what is more amazing - the fact or the thinking of it. But alas there is only one time, and that is now.

So, to you Prime Minister and leaders of the world - we wish the world would wake up to how serious it is. If we don't do something now, who knows what could happen. Our generation have the right, as everyone does, to live and study in a world unsullied by pollution where we can drink water that's rich and food that's uncontaminated. The epic situation of preventing ecocide must, in other words, become the project we put before all others and continue to build public opinion until they become a deafening roar. If we fail in this task, we fail in everything else. If we do not tackle these issues, there may be no place to tackle anything on at all. Watch this space.

The destruction of the weather is the greatest crime ever committed because it is the theft of the future. In order to fund our desire for ever more things, ever more energy, ever higher consumption, we are sacrificing that future. And the failure to do anything is no less a crime.

Despite the hype around the brave new 'globalised' world that is supposed to bring all manner of blessings for our generation and the next, an unsettling stench is seeping out through the cracks and those walls in the information superhighway. Beneath the shiny surface of our super techno digitalise, globalised, genetically engineered, wonder societies, our planet and our humanity is decaying. I don't want to ever look into the bright, clear eyes of a child and try to explain why the whales are being killed and the forests burnt. Never ever. I don't want to have to swallow my words and explain why playing naked in the sun is dangerous and some streams are poisonous. Why some dogs now have five legs and teenagers blow themselves up in the process of killing other children in the Middle East. Not me.

How did we get here I ask? Who was the genius who decided that it was good for us to put poison on our food? Who the hell assure the scientists who thought draining our oceans of all resources?

Are we richer? Do we feel richer in our offices, in our storerooms, does the money in our bank make us feel further connected than the wide open spaces

and thick dense jungle? When all that we have is devoid of natural meaning; when Microsoft word guides us more than the sun, the rain, the moon, the stars; when we can solve the intricacies of excel rather than the complexities of the make up of the environment- the soil, the species, ourselves on the planet...

If this is not my planet, then whose is it? If this is not my family, whose is it? If not my responsibility, whose? I am increasingly acting not out of guilt but out of self-love, a love that includes my family, my planet. When I educate myself I continue to break out of my denial and see that humankind is facing an absolute, unprecedented crisis.

Until this process is recognised for what it is, until it is addressed and attacked, damaging infrastructure proposals - however fiercely they're contested - will continue to be mock battles that serve only to further entrench unspeakable inequity.

We, all of us, have a rich tradition of resistance. You only need to be here today to remind yourself of this. The point is the battle must be joined. Not in its hundreds, not in its thousands, but in its millions.

If I am guilty of inciting to riot then I am red handed – my hands might be sticky with glue and bleeding, but my heart is on fire.

#### Superglue

#### Press Release

22nd July 2008 - A campaigner from the climate action group, Plane Stupid, today super-glued himself to Prime Minister Gordon Brown in the State Dining Room of 10 Downing Street.

Dan Glass, a 24 year old MSc student based in Scotland, entered the PM's official residence at 5pm this evening to receive the Sheila McKechnie award for his campaigning against airport expansion. He greeted Mr Brown and asked the Prime Minister why he and his ministers have refused to meet West London residents opposed to the construction of a third runway at Heathrow. He simultaneously put his super-glue covered hand onto Brown's polyester suit. When Brown went to turn away he found he had been super-glued by his clothing to Plane Stupid, and had no option but to listen to Dan or undress.

Audio clip available here: Real Player or MP3.

Dan is now reading messages to the PM from people whose villages will be bulldozed if Brown agrees to BAA's expansion plans. He's also reading out testimony from communities across the world threatened by climate change while Downing Street aides attempt to extract the Labour leader from the green campaigner. Dan is hoping to stay glued

to the PM long enough to begin quoting from confidential documents secured through the Freedom of Information Act, which reveal the government's public consultation on Heathrow expansion was fixed. The papers reveal Ministers have engaged in an extraordinary level of collusion with airport operator, BAA, fiddling pollution figures and developing a joint strategy to beat opposition groups.

The government consultation received 80,000 responses from the public, almost all of which opposed the government's plans, despite the fact that people were not even asked whether they wanted a third runway and no consideration of the climate impacts appeared in the consultation documents.

Dan took today's extraordinary step because Brown and his Transport Secretary, Ruth Kelly, have refused to meet residents from Sipson - the west London village, which would be wiped off the map if new Labour gives into BAA's demands for a third runway. Some of the messages Dan is reading out to the Prime Minister are quotes from newspaper interviews with Sipson residents.

Plane Stupid activist, Graham Thompson who is currently facing prosecution for scaling Parliament in IFebruary and branding the Palace of Westminster "BAA HQ," today said:

"Gordon Brown's only got two possible legacies, the first Prime Minister to really get climate change or the last one not to. Brown needs to realise we can beat climate change, but not by doubling the size of the world's biggest international airport. That's why we took our peaceful campaign from the roof of Parliament to 10 Downing Street. We're the last generation who can stop climate change, and we're not going to sit around waiting for politicians to catch up."

When BAA first sought permission to build Terminal 5, the company wrote to nearby residents promising never to seek further Heathrow expansion. Now they have colluded with the government to get a third runway and a sixth terminal by manipulating the consultation process which has been widely condemned as unfair, undemocratic and fundamentally dishonest.

Graham Thompson continued:

"Brown's consultation was a fix, pure and simple. It was the single most anti-democratic thing this wretched government has done since the Iraq war, and that's saying something. Dan thought that if super-gluing himself to the Prime Minister was the only way to cut through the power of giant corporations like BAA and ensure he hears what people from West London really think, then so be it."



## Is it okay to play dress up

Have you ever had this great feeling because of an action you took? You became that enthusiastic, you actually feel glad to be a part of the human race. But then you face another angle that messes up your party! Is it ok or not ok to do a 'dress up action' on the streets?

In the summer of 2008, I joined the climate camp in Hamburg. Hundreds of people participated to bring climate change into the spotlights. We discussed the subject and soon we would take part in some disobedient actions. Nataly and Erasmus, two Berlin based activists. introduced us to street theatre. During the workshop, we planned our very own action for animal rights. Our goal was to create an awareness about the consequences on the climate of eating meat. We dressed up like aliens and farm animals and went into a McDonalds. In the action the aliens tried to sell the farm animals. The CO,,2,,-emissions, created by the livestock, on their home planet were becoming too

It felt amazing being in costume. As an alien I made the people laugh and I felt like I could get the message across. I was left totally buzzing from the action.

I was even shocked by my own confidence that i got through wearing a mask.

Despite the very hot weather and the uncomfortable suit I had had a lot of fun. But somehow this feeling didn't last very long. Once I got back home my friend could see the funny side of the 'hippie weekend action' but he remained highly sceptical about the true impact on the burgerbuyers in the hamburger restaurant. More recently I heard about the bad press of theatre actions. Rachel Barge claims for example in "Save the polar bear suits for the after party," that street theatre activism makes the audience feel alienated. The article argues that protesters are not closing any gaps between themselves and the public, but actually increasing the distance. It could even significantly undermine the credibility of the environmental movement.

#### Could my well intended actions have actually caused more harm than good?

It is one thing to have made no impact at all, but another to think that maybe I had been counter-productive.

I questioned the argument taken in the article. I myself had never judged theatre activism that way. There is work being carried out in India, where street theatre is used as a form of communication; deeply rooted in tradition. Modern street theatre is organised by teachers and students, and attempts to raise awareness and create

social change. These bright, colourful and loud shows attract huge audiences. Indian street theatre activism has been commended for its work in highlighting women's and children's issues.

To make sense of all these questions, I went back to the group with whom I organised the street action. I put to them some questions about street theatre as a medium and about what they wanted to achieve.

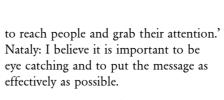
Nataly and Erasmus met through a programme for young people about campaigning for environmental topics. Brought together by their passion for taking action and love of vegan food they have been campaigning together for over six months.

Erasmus: 'I like the costumes. You can be crazy and people smile.'

Nataly says she feels much more confident when she is in costume.

Nataly: 'Even if I am just wearing a business suit I feel transformed.'

Erasmus: 'It's all about getting in contact with bystanders. The animal rights movement in particular has been criticised for being aggressive, violent and dark. I just make people smile and put a flyer in their hand at the same time. Wearing a costume you are more interesting to bystanders and it is just that much easier



Erasmus and Natalie: 'Street theatre activism is a great way to get attention for important issues because it can be so simple to create. All you need is some willing people and your fantasy. But it's also really important to do research and to learn about your topic. You have to be ready to answer questions. If you look like you don't know what you are talking about, then of course people are going to think you are there just for fun and to be a bit silly. No one will take vou seriously.

Nataly: A good tip is to make some flyers and test them out on people not involved in the issue. Does your flyer provide the reader with useful information? Is it eye-catching? Sometimes you can be so involved in a topic that you can't judge if a flyer is effective.

#### When you are protesting against something you will definitely annoy someone.

Erasmus's advice is to be sensitive to the people around you. If you interact with them, you can see if they smile or if they want to run away from you! Erasmus and Nataly laugh when he says: 'Staying at home won't help your cause anyway.' In one action villagers first thought the activists were being paid by some company to promote a product.

Erasmus: 'If big companies use people









+HOW TO BE A STREET THEATRE ACTIVIST++

- KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

GET INFORMED

DON'T RESTRICT YOURSELF. USE YOUR MAGINATION AND BE FUN AND CREATIVE COME UP WITH AS MANY WACKY IDEAS AS OSSIBLE FOR YOUR ACTION.

RESTRICT YOURSELF, GET REALISTIC, HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOUR IDEA WORK IN THE REAL WORLD ON YOUR BUDGET?

FINALISE AN IDEA

GET ORGANIZED

PLACE - WHERE WILL YOU DO YOUR ACTION

POLICE - GET YOUR ACTION REGISTERED

PROPS - SORT OUT WHAT YOU NEED LIKE

COSTUMES AND THINGS

PRESS - GET PUBLICITY

LEAFLETS. MAKE THEM AND DON'T FORGET TO TEST THEM OUT

PRACTICE, MEET UP BEFORE HAND, IT'S

IMPORTANT TO FEEL LIKE A GROUP DO IT! - THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

EVALUATE. HOW DID IT GO AND WHAT DID YOU LEARN FOR THE NEXT TIME?

- CELEBRATE!

dressed up like giant chickens to advertise their products then it must be a bit effective'

Nataly is against violent and aggressive actions. They can be counter-productive. If you are physically or verbally aggressive and try to blame people for everything then you will meet hostility to your ideas. She thinks that activists are capable of bringing real social change if they present their argument in a fun and friendly way but with real information to back it up and alternative ideas for practical change.

++ Links: www.aseed.net http://itsgettinghotinhere.org www.nandu.net (german website)









The magical touch of advertisement ensures that you really desire new sport shoes or a stylish mobile phone. Goods amassed in shops with hyper discount are there for you, to fulfil a need that you didn't even knew you had.

Do you recognise the situation? Do you realise in such a situation you are being manipulated?

There are people that do not realise. They are brainlessly buying things that advertisement is telling them to buy. They are wearing shiny new trendy goods and feeling happy, without the awareness that their 'happiness' is not their choice.

But actually choice lies in our own hands. As a reminder of this simple fact, we went to a place where the effects of advertisements are most directly experienced. We entered a shopping mall.

We brought shopping carts full of junk symbolising brainless purchase and identical clothes as symbols of a lack of individuality. We were going around the shopping mall in front of them, adoring stock goods together with them, blindly repeating advertising slogans.

We were their reflection. Did they recognise themselves in this mirror?

Some people were supporting our action with smiles, some people were looking at us with wonder and some were looking through us, acting that we didn't exist. Despite that this spectacle was hard to ignore, some people chose to do so. Our act of choice already is a victory over brainless consumption and ever-growing shopping bags.

## **Brainless Consumer Action**

+++ written by: Eduards Gausis











## **T-Girls**

+++ written by: Susan Banafti



Freud once said: "When you meet a human being, the first distinction you make is 'male or female,' and you are accustomed to make the distinction with unhesitating certainty."

We all transform ourselves in one way or another. We often want others to perceive us in a different way. We want to see ourselves in another way. If we don't like the look of our body, we change it. If we don't like our face, we put on a mask. And under the surface, we transform our characters to accustom ourselves to the job we want. The lover we want. We try to transform our souls, becoming ghosts of who we were.

Transforming the self is generally accepted, society likes people to fit in. But what if the space to fit in becomes too small?

It is only in the way that we perceive others that we perceive ourselves. There is a whole world outside the box.

Transformation is not only a state of mind: It is a state of being.









## Urban Repair Squad, Toronto

+++ written by: Michael Louis Johnson

It's time to repair the streets. Not the holes or dysfunctional traffic lights. It's time to create real bike space on the streets of big cities. Car culture, rampant for generations, has destroyed the concept of shared space. Car-drivers cut and weave through the streets, in constant state of competition, trying to claim more and more public space as their own. This behaviour is causing a real threat to society, as the air around us is getting polluted and it becomes more and more difficult to safely cross a street. These motored vehicles might be stronger when it comes to power, they're not as smart as a two-wheeled iron horse.

The Urban Repair Squad, an anonymous group from Toronto, has taken power and started a bike-revolution in their city. In the last two years the Urban Repair Squad has installed numerous innovative features of urban transportation infrastructure. Inspired by their actions, new groups are being formed in Brazil, France and Turkey.

#### +++ THE "RUSH HOUR" BIKE LANE

One of the biggest issues holding back bicycle infrastructure in Toronto is the perception that bike lanes mean a loss of on-street parking. This pits local business owners against cycle advocates, bogging down the process as every kilometre of bike lane is hotly debated in a committee, then voted down by weak-willed suburban city councillors. But cars are not the only ones using the streets of the city.

The Urban Repair Squad came up with one possible solution: the "Rush Hour" bike lane. Most main arteries in Toronto have parking restrictions during rush hours, opening an extra lane of traffic to deal with the increased commuter volume. By making the extra lane "bikes only" it would encourage commuters to ride instead of drive, and there would be no loss of parking during the rest of the day. In 2007 the group installed such lanes on three major streets in Toronto, much to the praise of

the cycling community and the chagrin of City officials. These "rush hour" lanes were also double the width of the standard bike lane, allowing bikes to ride side-by side instead of single file. This little bit of road paint has done much to embolden Toronto riders to feel more and more comfortable to claim the space on the road that is rightly theirs, no longer cowering off to the side.

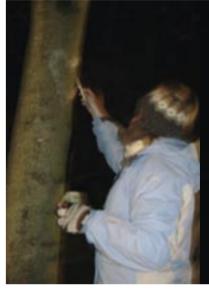
#### +++ THE "BIKE BOX"

2008 saw something new for the city of Toronto, the Bike Box. Growing in use in Portland, New York and Vancouver, the bike box is a painted zone at intersections that allows the bike traffic to group up in front of the cars at a red light. Then when the light turns green, the bikes clear the intersection first, making it much easier for vehicles making right turns. The bike box is also good because it puts the cyclists in front of the cars, instead of beside and behind them, where they are stuck "sucking tailpipe". This is a big feature for Toronto as right-turning vehicles have killed many cyclists. The URS bike box lasted a few weeks before the city got wise to it and painted it out.

- > Your city is broken.
- > Don't wait for the bureaucrats to fix it.
- > DO IT YOURSELF.
- > For more on the Urban Repair Squad visit www.urbanrepairs.blogspot.com. Michael Louis Johnson directed the short film Le Depart in honour of the Urban Repair Squad and is a member of Toronto artist/activist group Streets are for People!

## Moss Graffiti

How could spray paint, with its overpowering smell, ever be a suitable medium to communicate a message for a sustainable future? Why not use nature to advertise environmental issues. Go out, get yourself a nice stack of one of the oldest still existing life forms, and get nature back into the picture!



- + Gather some moss. Preferably moss that grows on bricks or trees.
- + Take some yoghurt or buttermilk.
- + Grate the moss, and stir it thoroughly until you have a nice green-brown mass.
- + Add sugar, beer or anything which could be a nutrient to the mixture to feed the moss.
- + Go out again, and find a spot which is covered in shadow most of the day.
- + Paint your favourite message or picture.
- + Let nature do the job.















\*\*Secret Of The City\*\*







+++ written by: Maria Nordlund



. ... ... ... ...









+++ written by: Evan Sedgwick-Jell

Streets serve a functional purpose, like conduits, facilitating movement, taking and leading us from one place to another. Whether narrow and twisting or straight and grand, few would dispute the necessity of streets, roads, and highways. However, central to the philosophy of the creative activist is that the street is more than a mere line from A to B. It is not a canal flowing with unthinking, never-stopping people, driven on by the business of life. For in modern times, this bare functionality has become hidden under layers of subtle social interaction, of different and varied activity. A thousand things

#### A DEAFENING CACOPHONY OF SIRENS, TRAFFIC, AND FOOTSTEPS IN THE RAIN

distract from the pressures of modern life, while at the same time contributing to and shaping them, amplifying them to a deafening cacophony of sirens, traffic, and footsteps in the rainThe street, the urban space between A and B, exists in a dialectical relation to our alienation and isolation. It exists simultaneously as the problem and solution, the expression of the atomisation of society, and the potential means of connection. The creative activist, or in fact anyone who is seeking a solution to the problems of modern alienation, has the option to use this space to realise the idea of the street as a shared common space; using action to illuminate what becomes possible on this dimly lit stage. The street as a space for expressing such ideas, forging relationships and observing intricate social interactions in our society has always existed in different ways, but major transformations which define

its modern expression can be traced to the end of the 19th century, as Paris played host to radical changes in street culture.

Almost a century after the bourgeoisie revolution that changed the course of European history forever, discontent and revolutionary feeling was rising in Paris once again. After the 1848 revolution, criticism of the regime, and widespread poverty remained high. Baron Georges-Eugène Haussman mayor of Paris from 1853 until 1870 oversaw a huge modernisation of the city, and a destruction of many of it's poor and historic districts.

Paris had long been famous as a European centre for luxury items and high culture, and with the century in which capital became ingrained as the ruling force in society, it's streets became a playground for the rich. Haussmann's huge boulevards cut swathes through the old districts of Paris, providing wide pavements designed specifically for the activity of walking as leisure, lit from above by soft and elegant gas lighting. In contrast to the labyrinthine and twisting alleyways of the city districts through which they were driven, the new avenues were also much harder to barricade, at the same time facilitating the movement of troops to put down civil unrest. This was demonstrated clearly during the 1871 Paris Commune, and its subsequent defeat by government troops. Urban development had taken on the politics of the state, and a sinister anti-progressive tinge; and revolution, the popular urge for change, found both its expression and downfall in the

The street, newly formed as an ethereal realm for the enjoyment of the upper classes, thus existed in parallel, as a tool for the perpetuation of relations of inequality, mirroring changing economy and society, acting as an arena for the airing of discontent. A duality existed of beautiful new opportunities



'These arcades, a new contrivance of industrial luxury, are glass-covered, marble-floored passages through entire blocks of houses... On both sides of these passages, which obtain their light from above, there are arrayed the most elegant shops, so that such an arcade is a city, indeed a world, in miniature'. (i)

In the observations of writers such as Walter Benjamin, the birth of this new cityscape was chronicled, the conflicting feelings of fascination and disgust it created, the seemingly infinite possibilities which turned into a paralysis, obstructing

## THERE EXIST SO MANY CHANCES IN THE STREET, THAT IT IS EASY TO GRAB HOLD OF NONE

all meaningful personal relationships. This is starkly represented in the poetry of Charles Baudelaire:

Of the dread landscape that I saw, Where human eyes were never set, I still am ravished by the awe That, vague and distant, haunts me yet. (ii)

The epitome of the Flaneur, Baudelaire appreciated and observed 'The ravishing monotony
Of marble, metal, water-flow', and 'Babel of endless stairs...
[and] arcades'.(iii) The Flaneur is our new character born of the drastic changes in the cityscape and corresponding social

relations. At the time, they were typically well off men, with little to do, but to walk around, experience the lives of a thousand ghosts passed by in the streets, to flick channels, to observe life vicariously, shying away from meaningful connection. Stalking the arcades and boulevards in search of everything and nothing, walking and watching, allowing life to pass them by like well dressed couples under ornate gas-lighting.

This brings us to the point: today in one way or another, we, the privileged inhabitants of Europe, find ourselves in this position consistently. Have you spent half a day, a whole day, drinking coffee, and merely observing; children scaring pigeons, couples meeting and embracing, lost tourists examining maps from all angles? How many times have you watched people, wishing to interact, reach out, and connect, to fall into their lives and live the heartbreaking poetry of their face creased with laughter?

We live still in this world first created by the urban revolution of the 1800s, and it's accompanying cultural movements. There exist so many chances in the street, that it is easy to grab hold of none. The street was changed into something that only certain people had the right to enjoy, while others felt distant from it, excluded. The architecture of streets will always reflect the interests of those in power, but we have the opportunity to act, and to reclaim them, to make them ours.

Transformation, is what we have experienced in the initial metamorphosis of the street from functional urban artery to concrete catwalk. Transformation of the fleeting moments spent outside between private or self-contained destinations – cafés, bars, theatres – to the journey as an act in itself, as separate from its functional purpose, as a chance to submerge oneself in the smoggy milieux, to escape from the self. The transformation of covered streets and arcades, to the shopping centres, elegant marble turning to fortress like concrete and



metal, a thousand shops, and infinite chances for consumption. But the transformation is incomplete! The point is not to submerge oneself completely in the lives of others, staring out from glazed eyes, the same way we sink in the static fuzz of television. We must both know and express the self. There exists in the street, and its modern expression, the chance to reach out, to embrace the world, to realise (as Erich Fromm once said in 'Fear of Freedom' his work on the damaging process of alienation):

## WE HAVE TO TURN IT INTO THE SOLUTION, AND NOT THE CAUSE OF THE PERPETUATION OF OUR PROBLEMS.

'[A] faith that is the strongest the human mind is capable of, the faith in life and in truth, and in freedom as the active and spontaneous realisation of the individual self'.(iv)

The street remains fascinating to us because of these fantastic ideas of a connection we could make there, one that will be forever a fantasy, yet one that plays on our mind, bringing us a hope that is often never fulfilled. But what if it could be? Use the people watching merely as a precursor, as research into how you can best connect with these flows of humanity; people who are after all, people just like you. The street is not just our theatre, but the most meaningful expression of our

present-day reality, a vast grey public space, bewildering, yet so full of opportunities that it presses on the brain to imagine even a fraction of what is possible.

We have not just the opportunity, but the responsibility, to use this space, and as creative activists, as those seeking change, we have to turn it into the solution, and not the cause of the perpetuation of our problems.

Take the asphalt up, wear it as a dress. See a thousand sunsets blinking in the traffic lights. Cartwheel across the intersection. Inject a virus of imagination into cold faces, and watch the smiles flare white-hot until the horizon. Demonstrate and connect. Transform yourself into the street, turn right, turn left, turn it into a surface on which ideas roam free, where cars must wait until fantasies have roared past them in a flurry of colour and sound, an altered reality following straight behind. This space belongs to us, it is our means, and we are the transformation.

See you in the street...

> i. Quoted in: Benjamin, Walter, Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century (Germany, 1935)
ii. Baudelaire, Charles - Parisian Dream, from: Roy Campbell (trans.), Poems of Baudelaire (New York: Pantheon Books, 1952)
iii. Baudelaire, Charles - Parisian Dream, from: James McGowan (trans.), The Flowers of Evil (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)
iv. Fromm, Erich, Fear of Freedom (London: Lowe & Brydone, 1942)



# Street art even cops can appreciate

+++written by: Jasna Dimitrovska

#### **INTERVIEW WITH C215**

C215 is a 35 year-old street artist most famous for his distinctive street art stencilling technique that captures the poetry of every little detail of the subject he depicts. He is based in Paris, France, has a Ph.D. at the Sorbonne in Art History, publishes illustrated poetry books, works on collaborative art events and gives stencil workshops to children in non-western countries. Mašta is happy to get his reflections on the social engagement in art, his experiences with street authorities, commercialization of street art and selling out or not to the creative industries.

//Do you remember the first stencil you have ever made?

Sure I remember,.. it was a portrait of Ava. The mother of my daughter, Nina. I made it with a computer, not very original I guess. I made a few posters of Ava's portrait and placed them in the streets for Nina. It was in 2006. She was 3 years old by then. So I'm a beginner in stencil art. At least in comparison with the most of my fellow stencil artists.

//One of your artworks, made on a door of an electricity box has been stolen. How does that make you feel? First, it was really strange to cause such a big theft. The artwork was made on a big iron door at the corner of a busy London street. I was upset and disappointed because I place art in the streets to share it with everybody. It's not meant to provide a free artwork to a collector or even speculator. Afterwards I realised that this piece of street is

now saved from being buffed or tagged over by city workers or graffiti painters. And probably it will pop up again in a few years. That is weird but still joyful. What is important is to keep painting in the streets. Thieves, buffers or taggers shouldn't be a reason to stop sharing art with the people passing by.

//The subject of your art among other things is beggars, orphans and refugees. People that are rejected by the capitalistic society. Why is this issue important for you as a street artist?

I think it's important to express something personal. Trying not to be fake. It isn't only a stencil subject fitting perfectly with street art. It also reflects my political ideas.

When I read Blek (Le Rat) latest interview I was disgusted by so much demagogy. At the same time he's declaring that he is painting homeless people in the streets

#### I PUT SOMETHING AT THE RIGHT PLACE AND SIZE, AND THE WHOLE TELLS A STORY

and that he's voting for Sarkozy. The most capitalistic president France ever had. To me it's important not to trick people and to be sincere.

//Have you ever had problems with the authorities while putting up your stencils on the streets?

I've been arrested in Paris, Strasbourg, Amsterdam and Brooklyn. On every occasion I spoke with the cops, and every time they let me go without even a fine. I am not a 'vandal' and I select my spots to paint. I paint on neglected spots, that are tagged over or rusty. And I put a lot of work in my street stencils. Even cops can appreciate that.

//Obsessions can make your life worst and your work better'. Do you think there is truth to this quote? Absolutely. But in a certain way, the problem is being split between passion and ordinary life. What is essential is to make a choice, follow this line and then at the end your whole life revolves around your obsession.

//In one of your interviews you said; 'Street art is more aiming at transforming contextual situations

in a defined architecture'. What is a good contextual situation for you? Poetry is really hard to explain. I find places with elements that I like. Rusty doors, bars, tags, stirred up posters, and so on. I put something inside at the right place and size, and the whole tells a story then. At least I hope so.

//Your influences from the contemporary artists are mainly Ernest Pignon Ernest, Swoon, Dan23, and Banksv. Do you have any other influences outside of the art world? It is not so easy to define what are the precise influences for this or another side of my work. I pick things up and my influences end up in a big mix. I try to stick to my personality and give myself a maximum of satisfaction. I like to travel and speak foreign languages, to meet people from other cultures and to feel free by painting in the streets. And I'm being vain by doing exhibitions and giving interviews to the newspapers. I want to share my stuff with poor kids, to show my social discontent and moreover create art everyday. So freedom, in a certain way, is my main influence outside of the art world.

//What is the stuff that you don't like seeing on the streets?
Any kind of violence. Advertising, door codes, CCTV's, security people guarding rich buildings, begging people, street kids, and particularly homeless people freezing in winter. Any kind of art or self expression is welcome, even the worst.



HAVING TOO MUCH IS AS MUCH UNACCEPTABLE AS HAVING NOTHING



WE NEED NEW
TALENTED PEOPLE
TO GO OUT
TO PAINT





#### I AM NOT A 'VANDAL'

//You travel a lot, people can see your work all over the globe and you give stencil workshops for the local communities in the places you visit. Do you usually get invitations from locals or do you initiate the contact? It depends. Sometimes I organize my trips alone, but most of the time there is a professional or private invitation. People who know I am travelling a lot, offer me a room or a sofa when I'm interested to paint in their city. I accept as many invitations as I can. Every new city is a new experience to get, with new friends to meet.

//What is your opinion about 'squatting as a chosen way of life' and 'squatting as a necessity for surviving'?

Everybody does the best he can in this difficult world. Having too much is as unacceptable as having nothing. This world needs a social balance.

//Let's, for a second, put aside the anthropomorphic horizon of perception that we as human beings are restricted to. You also paint animals. Are animal rights important to you?

I did my master in Art history about Franz Marc. He's a 20th century German painter who came to abstraction by trying to catch the animal perception of the world. I like to paint animals because they belong to a disappearing world. By the way worldwide kids love to see animals in the streets. I sometimes use animals as symbols, and paint them more often dead. Nature is dramatically fading away.

//Do you think people/artists have succeeded in 'reclaiming the streets'? No, I think it's just a beginning. We need new talented people to go out to paint: Fine arts people, graphic designers, sculptors, video makers, performers and refugee artists. There are not enough people putting art in the streets to say something massive has been done. Graffiti people and writers did a massive worldwide good job in the last thirty years. But not street artists just yet.

//How do you provide for yourself?
Do you have some other job or can
you manage to live solely out of your
art?

I am a full time stencil artist and that's ok. I am working from eight to ten hours everyday. Being a little work addicted. So I do not fear the future.

//What kind of subsidiary factor could make you stop doing street art one day?

Going blind or loosing my hands.

//Do you mind that the street art has become so popular and commercialised?

No, it is actually really good. The problem is that most of the recognised street artists, being famous and busy, stop putting up art in the streets.

//Could you work in the advertising if you were offered a lot of money? Let's say like Shepard Fairey? It depends on the project and the brand. But I prefer to say no, because I wouldn't be good at working with advertisers. I have only a little experience in that field. And it's a bad experience. I don't like ads and agencies.

//What are your visions for the future?

I would love to be optimistic, but the social and ecological evolutions get me down. I dream about an artistic and philosophical Renaissance in Europe. But that's certainly idealistic. So I just hope to watch my daughter grow during the years, and conclude that she is happy in life. So private life 'till the end, and painting until I die.

PHOTOGRAPHY NO LONGER IS WHAT IT USED TO BE. BY A SIMPLE CLICK MY MEMORY IS CHALLENGED AND IMAGES APPEAR THAT WERE NOT THERE BEFORE. WHERE THEY EVER REALLY THERE?

## Image Fulgurator

We trust photography, technology and science highly. When entering a crime scene, the forensic department from the police will take photos. In sports games, a photo finish is used to determine the winner. And wars are started because of some photographic 'evidence'.

But with one click on the button, this all could be altered.

Julius von Bismarck has created the fulgurator, a powerful tool to transform reality. As he describes: "The Image Fulgurator is a device for physically manipulating photographs. It intervenes when a photo is being taken, without the photographer being able to detect anything. The manipulation is only visible on the photo afterwards."

The working of this device is simple. The fulgurator reacts to the flash of a camera, and it will, for a split-second, project an image at exactly the same moment the photo is taken. It doesn't only react to the flash of the camera it is attached to but also all other camera flashes around it.

The fulgurator is mounted on the back of a camera, as if it were a flash. Secret messages can be passed on and the truth can be changed forever.

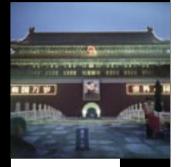
Imagine some of the most powerful pictures in the world...

Did it really happen? Or even more so, imagine visiting a historical landmark or special place, seeing it with your own eyes and coming back home finding out nothing is what it seems to be? Von Bismarck has changed the idea of the photo as a personal memory tool, and has changed the face of reality.

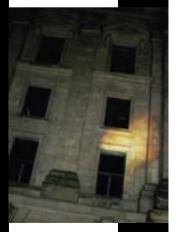
How would you use the fulgurator?

www.juliusvonbismarck.com/fulgurator









### Reverse Graffiti

+++written by: Lena Mikhaylova

If you thought that the meaning of graffiti was only putting a shaped layer of paint on a clean wall, a surprise is awaiting you. Painting is no longer the only way to leave a message behind!

Imagine somebody goes out in the middle of the night, concealing a cloth and some water, stops in front of one of the dirtiest wall in the city and starting to clean... Is this voluntary help? Overtime?

When he leaves again, you'll seeing something that makes sense, some text or a drawing.

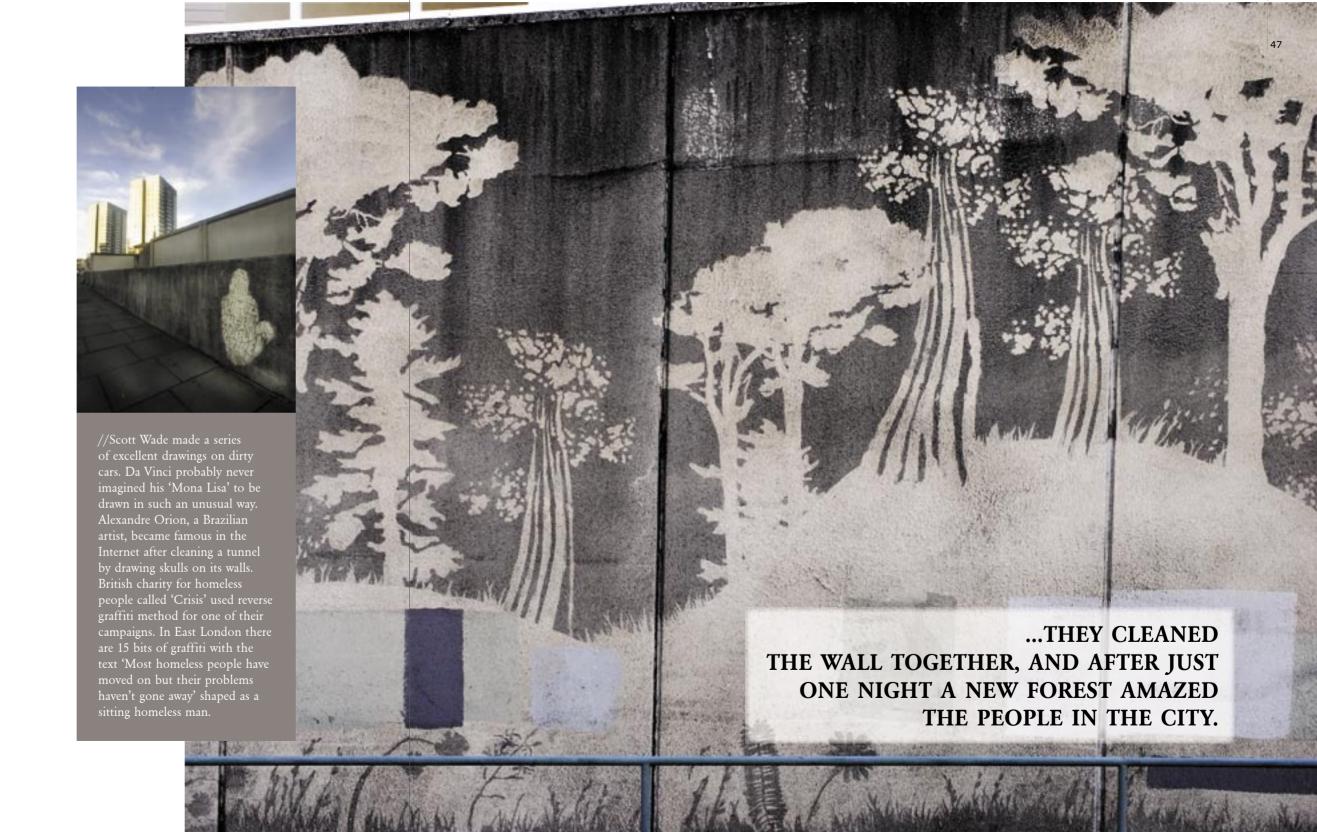
This is reverse graffiti.

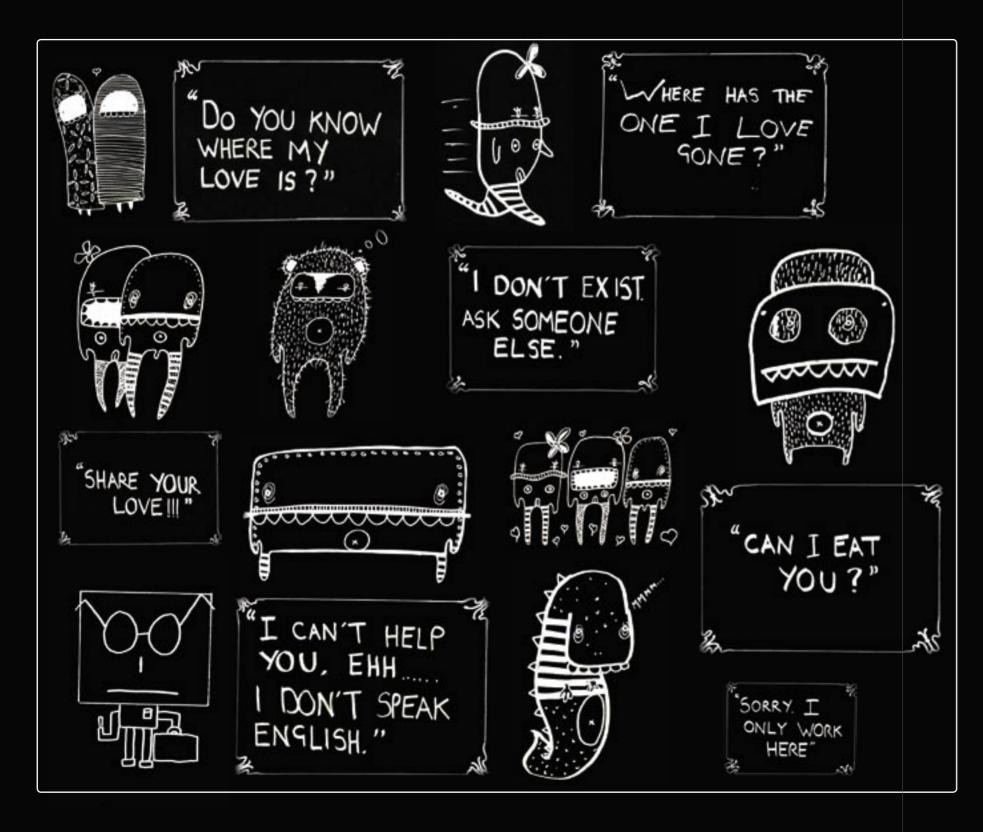
There are many good aspects to creative cleaning; traditional graffiti has a negative side to it. It's quite hard to remove, so if you get caught you're in trouble. It also costs money to buy the paint and moreover, cans of spray paint seriously damage the environment.

The easiest and oldest example of reverse graffiti is writing or drawing on dirty cars (who hasn't seen or written 'wash me'?) But people with imagination and talent can create these artworks on dirty vehicles. Although, they are temporary artworks, and will disappear when a long needed clean or the rain comes, the artwork surprises passers-by.

#### REVERSE GRAFFITI DOES NOT NEED A LOT OF PREPARATION AND MOREOVER, IT'S FREE!

For some a car is just too small. How about using a whole wall for your work of art? By using a high pressure water gun, you can spray your work straight into the dirt of the wall. To make cool forms or clear letters, you could use a stencil made out of wood. It requires a bit more time but the results will be great! But before you bring out the hoses, check how dirty the wall is. Perhaps the dirt will come off easily and all you need is a cloth. The results of this kind of creative act thoroughly depend on the creator. The 'father' of reverse graffiti, Paul 'moose' curtis, created a forest on one of the dirty walls in San Francisco. He was helped by many people and they cleaned the wall together, and after just one night a new forest amazed the people in the city.







Favorite Transformation: Juj Within the shell of the old: Jovan

Petrushevski (both pages)

Climate change comes to you: Ravagedigitaal

Adventures in open space: Jan Lietaert, Jovan Petrushevski

The art of Freezing a supermarket: Jan Lietaert

Throw bombs for a more natural urban environment: seedbombs!

Transition towns: Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya

Lohmühle: Aagie de Groote

Hiding From The Radar

Portraits of imaginary friends: Bitxo

Rights to be peaceful: O\_lie

Superglue: Yasnah

Illustration page with blimps: Yashan

Is it ok to dress up: Niti Dhingra

Brainless Consumer Action

T - Girls: Susan Banafti

Urban Repair Squad, Toronto

Moss graffiti: Maria Nordlund, Lena Mikhaylova

Secret of the city

Streets As Sites For Change

Street art even cops can appreciate: C215, Marvocado (smaller pic of

"stenciled face" on a door)

Reverse graffiti

Mašta 6-no theme: Yasnah

#### Colophon

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#### MAŠTA#6 - No Theme

\*\*\*Do you really need restrictions or abundance to be creative?

If you give freedom the name: "freedom", is it still free?

What can I do with this freedom in the complexity of today?

Is the theme 'No Theme' the same as the narrowest theme imaginable?

\*\*When "The Rules" are gone, which rules remain and influence your submissions?

Next Mašta (6) is an experiment: we want to see if no rules can liberate your creativity, if no theme makes the magazine open.

Because Mašta means "whatever" or "imagination" it is about whatever imagination is possible: Mašta.

Any questions?

Please, send your submissions, reports, pictures,

articles ideas or whatever to

editor@creativeacts.org.

Check out deadlines and previous issues at

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