



MAŠTA



magazine for creative activism

play MAŠTA #2

Play!

Apocalyptic forecasts, climate change, and yet another war on terrorism. Every day media predict worst case scenarios. Would you take a magazine seriously that tells you: go out and play?!? Well, you had better, because it can change your life and the world.

If you think playing is childish, go back to kindergarten. According to us, playing means openness, a creative mind and freedom of expression. Why fight against the world you live in, or get stuck in fears, dogmas or “Yes, but...”? The next step in evolution: Homo Ludens, a playful being. Playing is an act of engagement and perception, a positive provocation. Experiment and play with your ideas, and change the world by creating the world you want to live in.

“If I can’t play, it’s not my revolution”

You there, go out into the sunshine, find a beautiful spot in the park, at the river side or on your doorstep, and start to read. After some time, you will discover that you feel the urge to stand up, to play and act. Take the freedom to change the world around you, express yourself the way you want. Make the world go forward by playing with it.

Mašta. Magazine for creative activism.



magazine for creative activism

A playground called normal life

"I am a racing car and you are the big old truck!" Game playing is not only one of the favourite activities since our early childhood, the ancient Egyptians also used to play as a means of expressing joy and amusement in life.

In 1938, the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga in his main work "Homo Ludens" established a definition of the act of playing that is still used in our society nowadays:

"Playing is a voluntary act or activity, performed in a restricted amount of time and space. It follows certain rules, but the reward is in itself. It is accompanied by a feeling of live and joy and the knowledge that it is something else than "normal life".

(Huizinga - Homo Ludens, 1938)

In the preceding paragraph, Huizinga describes the

most important aspect of playing. The aim of playing is only the playing itself and nothing else. While we are playing we can get lost in time and space and think about getting home only when it's already far too late. Then it's over, unfortunately. Unfortunately, because we did it with "excitement and joy", as Huizinga strikingly put it. We have to get back to our everyday lives that are determined by goals we have to achieve, by going to bed and getting up and by ideas other people have come up with for us. And the following day we have some time to go out and play for a couple of hours again, and next week, next month, next year...

When we're grown up it's a lot harder to play. Most of us have targets to achieve. These are difficult and far away and we need to



"There is an old saying, which is often said but hardly lived: "The journey is the reward." So why do we go "back to normal life", when only normal life is the place where playing starts getting fun."

work a lot for them. Others become artists. They are allowed to play – a bit. But only where others know that this is the playground for grown-ups so nobody is disturbed by their playing activities – in theatres, in museums or in concert halls.

There is an old saying, which is often said but hardly lived: The journey is the reward." One shouldn't always be striving for the future, but enjoy the moment. However, what would happen if the journey disappears? If we cannot be sure anymore that we are enjoying the moment? If everything starts to spin around, there are no directions nor rules. When the rules are set all the time, so that no one knows anymore what is right and wrong?

It always got exciting when the ball flew over

the fence right into the neighbours' roses. It got only exciting when the boundaries were crossed and the rose bed became the playground. Art also is only exciting when it's no longer in the museum, but in the streets.

So why do we go "back to normal life", when only normal life is the place where playing starts getting fun. Let's take a run up and jump over the wall from the street into our normal life. Because life isn't boring at all when playing isn't always the other thing. Just play in the streets and bring life to the arts.

"The human only plays when he is in the full meaning of the word human, and he is only fully human, when he plays."

Friedrich Schiller (*Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*, 15. Brief)

Gerko Egert



discover your own neighbourhood: practical tips and tricks

Most people like to travel to see new places and experience adventures. On holiday you can take a guided tour, visit a museum or just walk around and see what you will find. But did you ever take a guided tour in your own town? Do you just walk around in your neighbourhood to see what you will find? Probably not. It's a very good idea nevertheless. Your own city might hide more secret places and unknown mysteries than you would ever have thought.

Here are some ideas to get you started discovering your own neighbourhood. Because you don't need to use drugs to see your surroundings with different eyes. Let's start with some active discoveries.

The darts

The easiest thing is to take a map of your town and a dart arrow. Stick the map to the wall, throw the arrow and go to the place where the arrow has landed.

The alphabet

Now you've bought yourself a map, you could also use it to find the first street name in the register. Probably A...something Street. Also look for the last street name, for example Zachariasstreet. Find the two streets on the map and mark them. Now draw a line from A...somtehing Street to Zacharias Street. Go to A...something Street and try to follow the line all the way to Zacharias Street. To vary you could also walk your name. If you are called Kim you could walk from Klezmer Lane via Ivory Park to Melancholic Square. Or, walk the whole alphabet!

Getting lost mathematically

'Come and get lost with me, I know the way', says a poster of Loesje.

Getting lost can be very adventurous and can be done in your own neighbourhood. A good way to get lost is the mathematical method. Take the first turn to the left, then the second to the right, then again the first left and the second right etc. See where you will end up and discover new roads. See those roads. Now you're not only walking to get somewhere. Now you're walking them to see them.

As a variant throw a dice. 1 and 2 for left, 3 and 4 for right and 5 and 6 for straight on. Stop at every crossing and throw the dice to see to what direction to follow



Following

This is the last active tip of playing with your surroundings: You can follow anything. A leader, an ideal, a river or perhaps a person who looks interesting. That is, of course, quite exciting. Will that person notice? Will he or she call the police or start running?

A real hippie takes off his or her shoes and follows a butterfly. This is most convenient if you do it in nature, in spring or summer and if you are wearing long trousers. Don't be afraid of some dirty water.

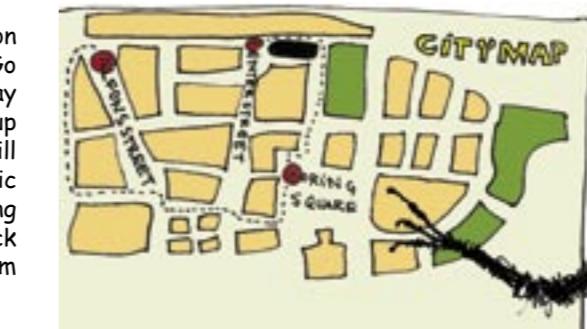
If you're totally not in the mood to move, it's still possible to make discoveries. Here are some tips that require less physical activity.

The bus

Get on a bus you never take. Stay on the bus until you reach the final stop and then return to where you have come from on the same bus. If you see something nice, you get off the bus, of course. Otherwise you just sit and observe what other people are doing and what's actually happening in your town. It's, by the way, a very good hang-over activity.

The last bus

Hardcore. Take the last regional bus and get off in a dark place. Walk home. Here you have your own midnight excitement. (And some activity after all.)



The car

Even in your own region you can hitchhike. Go to a highway on a day off, put your thumb up and see where you will end up. The less heroic variant is to ride along with an engine- or truck driver. Or the ice cream vendor.

The extraordinary

Do something you have never done before, or for a long time. Go bowling, midget golfing, do sports. Look for a skippyball, some marbles or a skipping-rope. Can you perform a handstand? Spit cherry kernels? Build a treehouse?

The tree

Climb a tree and sit on top. From up there the world looks totally different. You completely relax, you don't see anybody, the wind rustles. Rustle along; Woooooooooh.

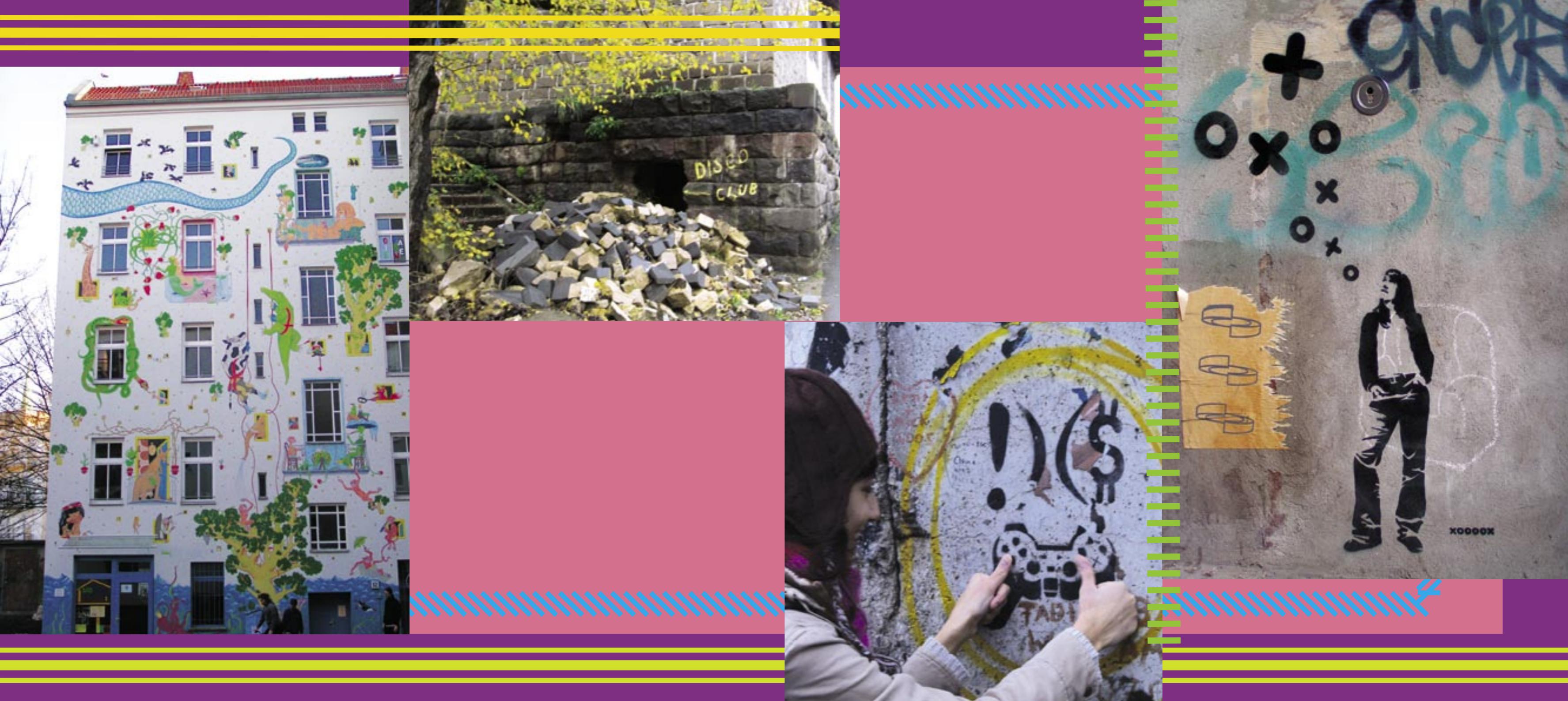


The 24-hour town show

Look for a nice spot in the middle of town. Choose a nice clear night. Take a blanket and a thermos flask with coffee. Sit on your spot and see what happens during the night. It's nicest when you do this with a bunch of friends. It's gets even more amusing when you do it at the weekend. Even if you're not drunk yourself, you can still enjoy other people being drunk :)

These were some tips. Of course there are many more possibilities. It's all about having an open mind to experience and have fun. Good luck!

Geertje Jansen



TO BE

AGAIN

AGAIN

AGAIN

'Es wird wieder' was sprayed on sidewalks and streets all over Berlin some time ago, 'it is going to be again'. This promising text made me wonder who left these traces behind. Was it a marketing gimmick or was it really some crazy people spreading this mysterious omen through town? Later, I met the guys who did it, and I was happy that they did it just for the sake of itself. No marketing gimmick, no spreading of names or fames, just making people wonder.

This incident raised an important question: is the economy taking over the creative and cultural sphere, or is creativity taking over the economy? Creativity is getting occupied by economic powers and commercialization, but meanwhile creativity is becoming the new central value in our society. Creativity is at our side. We are becoming a more creative and playful society, and we are really closer than one would think.

SPACE

FREE SPACE

Playing is an important element of a vital culture, and if playing is less present in a culture, this culture will go down, states historian Johan Huizinga. Playing is having spirit, it frees us from being just a mechanism in the wheels of

progress. The concept of play is often put in contrast to processes of mechanization and instrumentalization in modern societies. Herbert Marcuse recognized that in industrialized societies there is a minimalization of life and culture, with no space for personal development and autonomy. A revalorization of the aesthetics and playfulness would create a free space for a more human development of our societies.

RECLAIM THE STREETS

Situationist Guy Debord described a 'society of the spectacle', where humans are reduced to spectators in their society and passive consumers of their life, and stated that this spectacularization is visible everywhere, from the news media, propaganda, advertising to the actual consumption of entertainment. The only way out, if there is one, is *détournement*, disturbing and overthrowing the existing order in a radical act of playing with the world you live in. These ideas of playfulness influenced a multifaceted spectrum of avant-garde artists, intellectuals and creative activists from the sixties onward, and their playful actions and tactics have been a source of inspiration for other artists and activists across ▶



the planet.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

According to Marcuse and Debord, playfulness could be the solution to the rising instrumentalization and spectacularization of our society. Paradoxically, the idea of playing has become instrumentalized itself as a means to reach certain goals, being adapted in the professional fields of education and in game theories. Today, creativity and playfulness are used as an effective means to create markets and gain economic power in all aspects of the public sphere. Examples include commercials, the entertainment industry, mass-events, festivals, arts, media and all cultural spaces. Street art, adbusting and playful slogans are used to brand new products. The so-called 'creative industries' are becoming increasingly central to business.

CREATIVE CLASS

This development is illuminated by Richard Florida's idea of a rising 'creative class'. This creative class is a group of people who are a driving force for economic development in post-industrial areas. They are people whose job it is to create meaningful new forms. With the rise of this creative class, creativity is becoming a central value in today's global society. Irrespective of whether Richard Florida is right or wrong, creativity is a booming business. The result

is that economic power is gaining more and more influence in the areas of art and culture, instrumentalizing creativity for its own purposes.

ECONOMIC POWER OF CREATIVITY

More and more city governments and corporations recognize the economic power of creativity and try to use it as a means to gain more economic power. In city areas where artists reside, a rich cultural life will develop, and this will attract more affluent people to work, live and consume there resulting in higher rents and often in corporate, clean city areas. This process has been recognized by sociologists as 'gentrification'. Our culture and all its forms of expression are merely occupied by economic interests. Most cultural events and art exhibitions are sponsored, more and more art and artists are used as a marketing tool.

THINK ABOUT CARS

One could say, the 'spectacle' occupies the human sphere as a whole. Our personal pleasures and feelings are instrumentalized for the sake of consumption. This process of occupation of the cultural, artistic, creative and personal spheres is intense and omnipresent. If you think about cars it is not possible to be not somehow influenced by what commercials have been showing you for years. You cannot walk through the streets

without the presence of commercial images, and meanwhile almost all parts of human life have become instrumentalized as tools to increase economic influence on the human mind.

DINOSAURS

But let's be honest. The positive effect of these developments is that you can find more and more contemporary art and cultural events in the public sphere. The cultural, creative and human spheres are gaining ground *inside* the economic and political spheres. As creativity is the new economic fuel, economic interests are changing their focus. The economic world is getting under greater influence of human values, ethical and aesthetical ideas and spiritual thinking. Playing managers are just one of the preludes of what is happening in our societies. Quite a few people in power are starting to recognize the changes, and understand that if they do not join the game of this creative revolution, they will be the dinosaurs. If creativity becomes central to our economy, this will change society itself.

PLAYFUL SOCIETY

As creativity is not a source of order, control, and instrumentalization, but a source of inspiration, chaos, expression and playfulness connected to the human soul, our society awaits big changes. The society of the spectacle produces its own

détournement, and preludes a human play yard, with space for free expression and personal growth. This creative shift is settling accounts with the instrumentalization of creativity and culture, it de-instrumentalizes society and takes over economy itself. There will be more space for human development, for personal values and diversity, for social engagement and environmental awareness. This mental change is a promising chance for a truly sustainable living on our planet. We are awaiting a playful society where creativity is in power. It is somehow happening now, and it is just up to us to realize it.

Frans Prins



Literature:

- * Guy Debord, *La Société du Spectacle* (1967)
- * Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure and Everyday Life.* (2002)
- * Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens, Proeve Eener Bepaling van het Pel-element der Cultuur* (1938)
- * Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the 20th Century* (1989)
- * Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (1964)



Rebel clowns cheer up the protest

Interview with a clown

Have you seen a group of clowns marching through the streets? Have you seen clowns protesting outside a conference hall? Then you have probably met the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army.

The Clowns Army is a new and growing movement in the world of protest and action. Founded as an antimilitarist group for the July 2005 G8-summit meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland, the army is growing rapidly. The phenomenon is spreading like a virus. A happy one. Politically left-wing and with anarchistic convictions they now join protests in more social topics.

"In Scotland the police thought it was the most radical wing of the so-called black block that would do extreme actions being dressed up and masked as clowns, so looking innocent. The protestors could play with this prejudice. This surprised the police. They were real clowns, though playing and fooling to make a statement", Elfie Tinkel explains.

Elfie Tinkel (33) is a recruit in the Dutch Clowns Army Colonel. She could be a run-away from a circus. Dressed up as you expect a clown to

be. Acting like the clown everyone knows from childhood. Playfully. You can expect a laugh and tears at command. She says: "A day without a laughter, is a day without an action."

"Using humour in the protest appeals to me. It makes doing an action more fun", Elfie Tinkel says. "The audience catches the message quicker when you use humour. People are more open to listen to you. A bunch of clowns marching in the streets triggers the curiosity.

It's extraordinary and so it is interesting. When we hand out flyers with an action they are also written in clown style. That means, not so serious."

Elfie sees the Clowns Army as a supplement to the existing action movement. "It's a new form of



"A day without a laughter, is a day without an action."

"If they don't want to join the real army, they are fit for ours."

protest. Some years ago the samba bands appeared and cheered things up. Now there are the clowns."

The Dutch group started in March 2006. It now consists of 15 members, Elfie Tinkel: "We are growing. At a training weekend one month ago 25 people joined." She expects some of them to join the army. "The movement is young, you know. And we don't examine new recruits much. If they don't want to join the real army, they are fit for ours."

Elfie Tinkel's group – in the language of the Clowns Army a 'battalion' – received training from two experienced clowns from abroad at the beginning. "Recruits of the clowns army are trained to make a convincing clown. You first have to discover the clown in yourself. When you have found her or him and understood, then you can also react as a clown naturally."

Campaigning as a clown is different from the usual campaign. "One can get away with things that one normally doesn't get away with", Elfie says. "As a clown I am not reasonably approachable. A police officer can't address someone in the group being responsible. We are playing the whole time. E.g. my group did an action at the Waterbeurs, a congress on water policy, in Amsterdam. The plan was to hand out to visitors our own water at the entrance. Playing with the guards, we slowly but steadily entered the territory anyway. When they said: 'Guys, could you just go back,' we literally did what we were told to do. The guys, but only the guys, went back. That are two of the characteristics

of a clown. A clown follows orders and a clown does that very literally. This tactic made the guards feel insecure. They had to really take care of the words they used. And they also had to laugh. This kept the atmosphere nice and relaxed."

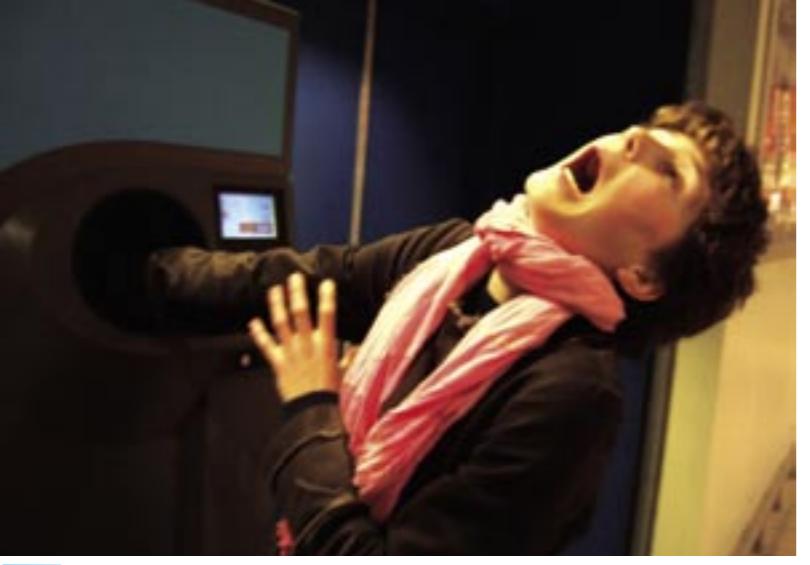
Actually, another time the group was brutally taken away by the police. "Of course it doesn't always work as good as we want, but most of the times it does and that's great."

One basic principle is not to attack people. Possibly one can attack the function of a person as a symbolic deed. Clowns make no use of violence; they play and fool around. Negative reactions can be turned into positive actions. Elfie Tinkel: "One can say that the overall principle is to play with the ruling authority."

The strength of this tactic is that a clown is approximate and ambivalent, neither here nor there, but in the most powerful of all places, the place in-between order and chaos. It walks around with a tear and a smile. "A clown is an elusive but infectious activist."

INTERESTED? CHECK:
THE NETHERLANDS
WWW.CLOWNARMY.NL
INTERNATIONAL:
WWW.CLOWNARMY.ORG
E-MAIL:
CLOWNARMY@DDH.NL

Marc van Dijck



PLAY THE RULES: RULE THE GAME!

ESSAY ON THE CREATIVE SUBVERSION
OF THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY

*"What we must do now is change the rules of the game
from arbitrary conventions to ones with a moral basis."*

Guy Debord, Architecture & Play, Potlatch #20 (May 30th 1955)

The act of playing is a social activity in which participants, by interpreting and applying rules, work toward a goal which usually has little relevance outside the situation of the game. Humanity could, as the writers Johan Huizinga and Guy Debord pointed out, aptly be interpreted as homo ludens, playing man (male/female/...). Just like man is interpreted as a maker (homo faber), or as a biological species (homo sapiens). Behaviour in public places could be considered as play. It often involves implicit rules, and these rules are exercised for the sake of the game.

THE RULES OF THE GAME

One easy example to recognize is the activity of flirting. There are strong rules guiding this behaviour (go after your goal unmistakably, but not too direct; make flattering remarks but not too obvious, et cetera). Another example is looking other people in the

eyes. Sometimes eye crossing should be avoided by any means. Or, when one's look is returned, everybody rapidly moves the focus of their eyes, complying with an unwritten yet undisputed law. Both examples given, are well enough analyzed in a plethora of etiquette books, written most notably in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, when the economy of moral reputation led the (wannabe) bourgeois class to the practise of advanced rules on behaviour. From the latter half of the twentieth century, obedience to the social norms guiding interpersonal communication spread to the working class. In spite of popular beliefs that public conduct is deteriorating, behavioural self-policing has grown to unprecedented levels.

In public places there is considerable incentive to monitor and guide the prevailing contact. The way this is achieved, is most intricate. In shopping malls, often privately owned security

personnel are the maintainers of conduct. The few lockable entry and exit points make very clear that entry is to be approved of by the authorities. The lack of reference to time through the absence of clocks and daylight is to ensure there's no reference to leaving. The places you can sit, or do things not consumer-oriented are extremely limited. There is a particular reason to only have fast food restaurants: customers should - after their quick meal - hurry to continue their shopping. If there are stairs in the mall, they are typically accompanied by a sign telling it is forbidden to sit on them. Every activity in this place is directed to smooth and swift, undisturbed and unlimited consumption. In there, there is no way to escape being approached as a consumer, and every attempt to thwart these expectations will be contained and detained.

Life has become increasingly compartmentalised, for every thing to do there is a different place. Within these enclosed spaces, human conduct is guided by the architecture of space, by signs and signals that inhibit it, by the behaviour of other users of the space. The capsules of urban space have become increasingly homogenous. The codes of conduct expressed by these spaces are the rules of the game which are imposed on its players. It is these iron cages of rationalized experience, if we may mis-use Weber's phrase, our creative destruction and subversive actions should aim at.

Stand still, and sing a song, or play some music somewhere in your city. Don't be surprised if someone starts to throw a coin at you. Every experience is for sale, why not spending on it? Before you know it, suited personnel responsible for 'security' will ask you for your permit to sell on the streets.

EXPERIENCE THE ECONOMY

Walt Disney is perhaps the most compelling example of a pre-envisioned construction of visitor's affects. The cartoon industrialist swiftly moved his attention to theme parks, where people pay to have instant pleasure, carefully engineered by the audio-visual champion. In *Jihad vs. McWorld*, Benjamin Barber argues that contemporary life could be viewed as a theme park in its totality. Suburbs are modelled after Disney's privately owned suburb celebration. The old city centres are being transformed into a museum, where on prefixed times a festival is organised. Our material world is getting less and less spontaneous. McDonald's understood this very well, and recognised it as its core-business. It set a standard for the market place of human conduct. As a result, control freaks mood engineers plan and decide on the scenery and contents of your life.

These examples put forward the idea of the experience economy. After the collapse of the Berlin Wall, after the ▶

collapse of the Berlin Wall, after the world lost its supposedly socialist system as an antidote to capitalism, capitalism has changed dramatically. The goal of the experience economy is to influence what you think, believe and feel to offer a unique and lasting experience. All your moods are to be manufactured and controlled by 'the creation and manipulation of affect' as Negri and Hardt called it in their book Empire. As a by-product, behaviour which isn't preconceived in the business plan has to be prevented. With carefully designed tactics, deviant behaviour is eradicated from smooth spaces designated for consumption. You are an integral part of the inescapable spectacle.

As Naomi Klein has convincingly shown in her 1999 best-seller hit "No Logo, big companies?" core business has shifted from actual material production to logos, an image, a lifestyle. If 'cool' people associate themselves with particular logos, value is added to the brand. This footloose way of production has merged with the experience economy. With intricate techniques, companies that accumulate on experience are using you to increase their experiential value. You and I, by our mere presence, add to the atmosphere in a cinema, city streets, or mall. Production and consumption of value are not that easy to separate. The

consumer has become a co-producer. The development to an experiential economy broadens and deepens the exterior need to comply with a set of behavioural rules from a self-policing towards an invasively organized, economically driven mode of conduct.

Have you ever smiled back to McDonald's? Eating fast food is not just engulfing one's belly with short-term effective yet unfulfilling generic meals; it is getting bathed in a totalized experience.

Helpdesk employees are instructed to answer calls with an obligatory smile, to sit up front and to use the boardroom-elected opening and closing sentences, in order to manufacture the most helpful and friendly --read lucrative-- customer experience.

Ever had fun in an empty disco? The atmosphere: it's you! And you, and you! Your mere presence, even better when moving to the beat, is everything. Forget about disco, it's all about collective and rhythm!



THE GAME OF RULES

When children play, a considerable amount of time is invested in the negotiation of the rules. The play is temporarily halted and transforms into a meta-game on allowed tactics, and agreed consequence of actions, which is an elementary part of growing up, yet the meta-game is an inextricable part of social, creative play. Creative activists should engage themselves in the meta-game, and aim their interventions to subvert the very rules that govern social life by not conforming to them. Dominant players play the games by their rules. By playing the meta-game, apparently marginal players are able to counter the imposed rules, and change the game.

Playful actions are not just actions in the periphery as we change the world, but operate in the core of the world we are to change. Today's power structures are depending heavily on the economic realities offered by the experience economy. Creative play could form an obstruction to the smooth path to accumulation. To challenge the economic realities, the means of the creation of value should be contested to bring back the value to where it is produced: to the active participant in situations. Open up meta-games to inflate the superficialities until they explode. Contest the restrictive present world and enter the encouraging and enriching realm of a multitude of possibilities.

Minerva Cuevas offered caffeine capsules in the subway of New York to prevent passengers from falling asleep and have a "rude awakening," as the posters on security communicated.

The guerrilla exposition easyCity reverted the rules exercised by the commercial city of Amsterdam. As a loot from the branch of the easy logo (easyJet, easyInternet,...), a store in a shopping zone was squatted and transformed into an exposition on the 'logic' of the decline of public space. The space looked like a shop, so people entered as consumers, unaware of the actual agenda. easyCity: 'Your comfort is our product. Total control of our trade mark.'

Joep van Delft

Playing in the city: **LE PARKOUR**

The city; a synonym for rules and regulations. Walls, fences, stairs, pavements, and elevators decide where people go. Signs tell them what to and what not to do. Everything starts in the morning and ends in the evening. The bus follows the same route everyday. The subway comes to pick you up everyday at eight thirty-five. If you miss it you'll be late for work. The city... it is serving us but at its own terms. There is no room for improvisation; we are confined to what it brings us. But are we really?

Remember when you were a child, when you played in the playground. The sandbox was your kingdom from where sand castles arose and in which great adventures took place. The swing allowed you to reach for the sky. If you swung hard enough you could maybe even touch it. The slide allowed you to achieve supersonic speeds while descending it. Your imagination shaped your world. You could do anything with it.

Growing older one stops to visit the playground. People think that they are finished with it, that it is something for children so they abandon their imagination and head for the real world. There they stop reshaping their surroundings and eventually get fenced in by daily life. But one is never finished playing. The playground from your childhood is just the start. For when you leave that small playground you are ready for the big one; the city.



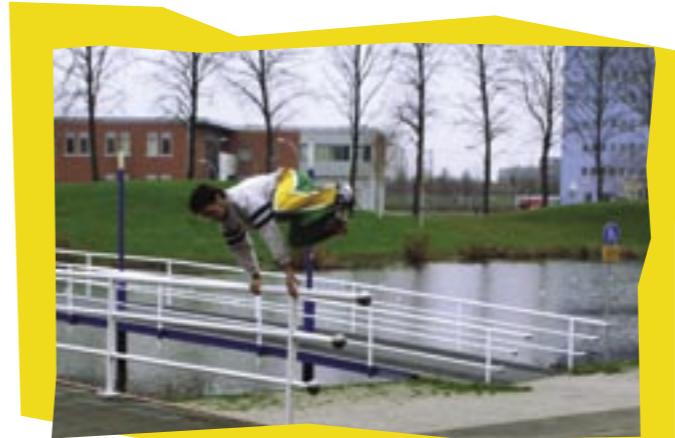
"FOR WHEN YOU LEAVE THAT SMALL PLAYGROUND YOU ARE READY FOR THE BIG ONE: THE CITY."

"YOU BECOME FREE WHEN YOU START TO SEE YOUR RESTRICTIONS AS OPPORTUNITIES."



SAND-PIT

Remembering your childhood suddenly the fences turn into obstacles which you can conquer, you jump over them. They stop being restrictions that stand in your way. Stairs stop going only up or down, they can also move to the sides. The sand-pit is replaced by your own body for now you live the adventures. The swing is replaced by the rooftops of the buildings. For climbing them actually



allows you to touch the sky. The slide is replaced by the jumps you do when it's time to go home and you descend back to the streets again.

So, is this really possible, you ask? It is. You see a fence and you just jump over it. Everyone can jump, everyone can run and everyone can climb. You just need to remember how you did it when you were little. So what do you do with that wall in front of you? Climb it? Jump it? Whatever

you think is best. It's up to you. You're free, conquer it.

We all have this playfulness in us. We just haven't allowed it to flourish because playing is for kids. But playing in the city is not only for kids. Playing allows you to free yourself from the prison that city officials are trying to put you in. Playing in the city transforms it to whatever your imagination can come up with. For when you start to see your restrictions as opportunities, you become free.

CONQUER

Two guys from France, David Belle and Sebastian Foucan, named this playing in the city. They call it Le Parkour – the art of movement. It's the art of conquering obstacles by jumping, climbing, vaulting and other more complex moves. The idea behind Parkour is simple; go wherever you want. Using the environment (city, forest, etc.) a traceur (people doing Le Parkour) travels through it. It's just you, your shoes and the surroundings.

A traceur goes under, over, around and through obstacles to reach his goal. Some call it a sport, others point out the similarities to martial arts and some call it a way of life but above all it's a tool. It enables you to find freedom. Physical freedom in both your environment and body. You conquer the environment and by doing Parkour you find out that your body is capable of a lot more than you think. A free body results in a free mind and soon you'll find yourself not walking but flying through the city.

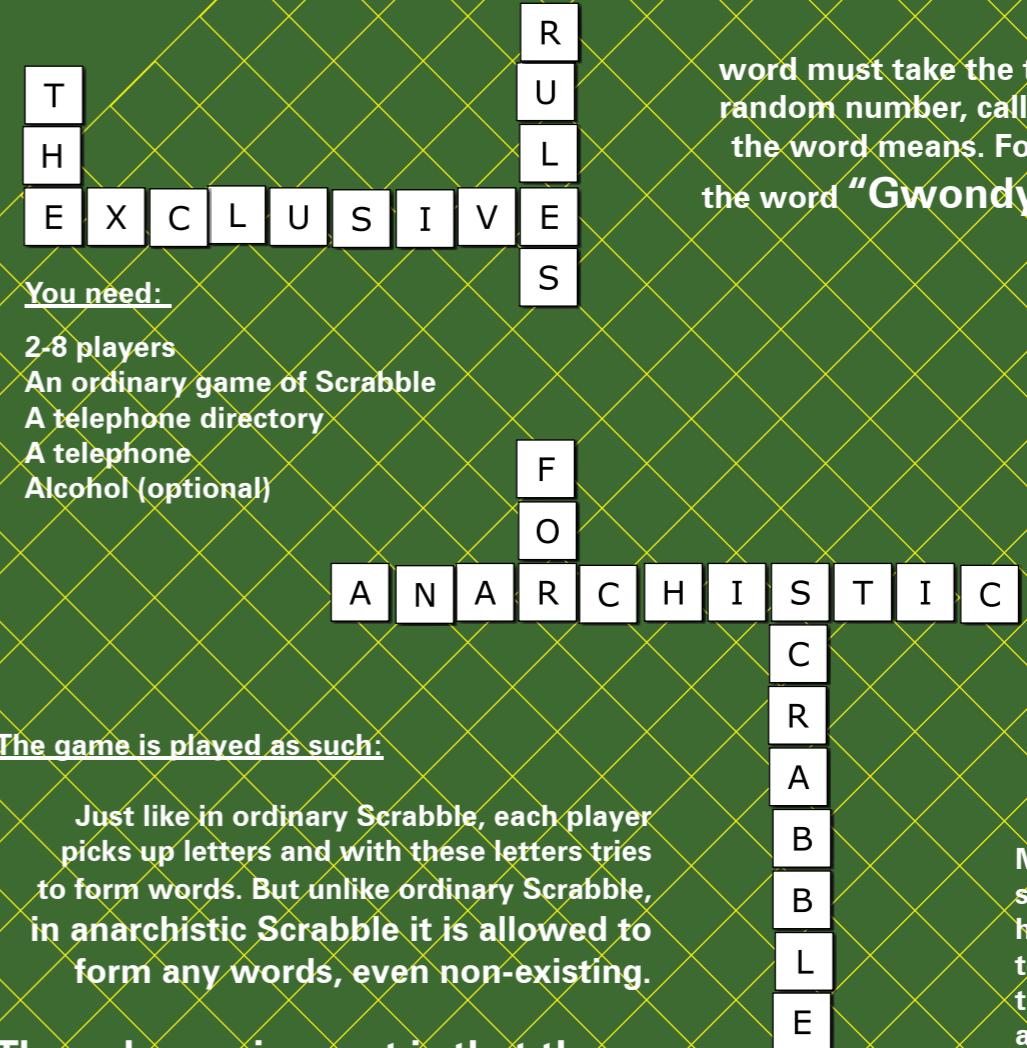
Simeon Nedkov

For more information on Le Parkour check out:
<http://video.google.com> (search for David Belle)
<http://parkour.net/index.php>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parkour>



Cris Koch, *Barby Sharky*, Acrylic on canvas, 280 x 230 cm, 2006

www.sonicmono.com



The game is played as such:

Just like in ordinary Scrabble, each player picks up letters and with these letters tries to form words. But unlike ordinary Scrabble, in anarchistic Scrabble it is allowed to form any words, even non-existing.

The only requirement is that the player forming the word must be able to pronounce the word and explain what the word means.

If the other players don't believe in the explanation, the player forming the

word must take the telephone directory, pick a random number, call that person and ask what the word means. For example: player A forms the word "**Gwondylkon**". She explains that it means a medieval dance performed in the northern parts of Scotland. The other players say they don't believe this. Player A then takes the phone directory and puts her finger down on Mr. Smith.

She then calls Mr. Smith, tells him she's taking part in a game of anarchistic Scrabble, and asks him about the meaning of "**Gwondylkon**".

Mr. Smith, being a boring square, tells her to stop harrassing him and threatens to call the police. Player A thanks him for his cooperation and then it's player B's turn. The game usually continues until it degenerates.

Points are not counted, since it is an anarchistic game. In any situation not covered by the rules above - use your imagination!

Magnus Löfqvist

PLAKATOMANIA

To go out on the street and do something spontaneous in the moment, based on a few materials found in the streets. That is what the artist Gosia Hejnat did in the video installation Plakatomania, filmed by the video artist Paul Prendergast. The movie shows how she intensively makes new pictures out of old posters, and tears them off the wall to take them home.

"I had no plan for the pictures, it was a reaction to the posters and what happened around me at that moment. What was not important I covered with white paint, and then I made new motives, from my own mind. In the end, I struggled with the finished works, to take them off the wall, to take them with me.

I see the posters as sculptures more than pictures. Every poster is a piece of the history of Berlin. It consists of posters of events, things that took place. I am afraid that in 20 years' time this mess of

Interview with Gosia Hejnat

**IN THE BIG CITY OF BERLIN,
WHERE PEOPLE DO NOT
LOOK YOU IN THE EYE,
AND ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR
EXISTENCE, I FELT IGNORED.
THAT IS ONE REASON WHY
I WANTED TO MAKE STREET
ART IN THE FIRST PLACE. I
WANTED TO SHOW THE WORLD
THAT I EXISTED, TO SAY
“HELLO”.**

**I REALLY LOVED THE
DIRTY POSTERS, AND THE
MESS. I WANTED TO MAKE
SOMETHING SPONTANEOUS IN
THE MOMENT, BASED ON SOME
FEW MATERIALS FOUND IN
THE STREETS.**



information and posters will not exist, the streets are getting more and more controlled, and a mess like this will not be allowed. Then the posters will really be a piece of history.

Spending the summer in Berlin, living close to the Warschauer Strasse, I found myself in the middle of a flow of information. Every day something new happened, and to announce it, a new poster was stuck on the street.

The posters that interested me most, were the ones in illegal places. Here no one cleaned the old posters away, they just stuck the new ones on top of the others, in thick layers. One incident that really made a big impression on me was when after a couple of days of heavy rain, I experienced how a big wall of posters no longer stuck to the wall but fell to the ground. It was a complete mess of information, information that was no longer useful, lying in the street.

I really loved the dirty posters, and the mess. I wanted to make something

spontaneous in the moment, based on some few materials found in the streets. Paul Prendergast is also fascinated with the street art in Berlin, which he also shows in his videos. I like the way he films and the music he uses. It was natural for me to ask him to make a video about my idea and document my actions.

It is a completely different thing to do art in a closed room, compared to doing it in the streets. For me it is more interesting to work on the streets, since you get more influences."

The installation Plakatomania, which consist of the video and the posters, has so far been shown in the exhibition Lost Shadows at Factory Berlin, but it will probably be displayed in other places as well. For more information visit the homepage of Gosia Hejnat www.bubble-art.com. The video can also be found at www.creativeacts.org.

Julia Wernersson





make a wish

*Can you express a wish?
Can you catch a wish?
Some people dared to make a
wish in front of my camera, I
wish that all their wishes come
true.*

*There will be an exhibition
with all the wishes in Berlin,
Germany in summer 2007.*

*For more information send an
e-mail to:
make-a-wish@gmx.net*

Myrtó Apostolaki





Interaction and experiment in public space by art

'Artists in the street' is the idea behind the Maïs festival in Bruxelles, Belgium. Between October 20th and November 20th of 2006 people could have been surprised by big and small art placed in sometimes unexpected public spaces. Notwithstanding the visibility, approachability, possible vandalism and bad weather, 20 artists created a public territory for interaction and experiment within the city.

Here are three of the 20 art pieces, which we liked best: **Balancement**, **Lilliputiens** and **L'homme-bulle**. See all work at www.maais.be.

Balancement - Swing, swinging: having the body balanced. Anne-Sophie de Visscher

dares people to have a moment of dreaming away on a swing in the middle of the street, in front of the train station. To stop for a moment and play. And maybe missing their train.

Lilliputiens - by Laura Couderc Tiny people sneak into the city. They walk everywhere. The non-moving figures because of their size give an extra imaginary dimension to the city. Moreover, they spread their own legend.



L'homme-bulle

L'homme bulle is an anonymous person installed on the corner of the Anspachlaan by Emilio López-Menchero. A huge white text balloon comes from his mouth. By this the people in the street are invited to spontaneously write something on the balloon.



Does life still understand me?

Please don't give me so many choices, just freedom

Imagine that you had multiple choices in everything that regards your life. All of the time. Would that be freedom? Would that make you happy?

The direction in which western society is heading is described by sociologists as a 'multiple choice' society.

"Under the influence of an interplay of economic (prosperity), political (liberalisation), cultural (individualisation) and demographic (family dilution) factors, individual freedom of choice has acquired more and more significance in the structuring of people's daily lives." (SCP, 2003)

I wondered, "How many choices do I make a day?" Does having the ability to choose make me happy? Having all those possibilities to choose from rather tires me. They bore me. According to sociologists in the Netherlands, where I live, in general this 'tiredness in choosing' and also 'choice stress' increases.

It is said that the multiple choice

society offers individuals more scope for structuring their lives as they see fit. This greater freedom in structuring the course of their lives forces them to reflect on who they wish to be and how to become that person. Traditions fall away. Strong social bounds go lost. This not only leads to more personal freedom and a broader range of opportunities, but it also means that people can no longer hide behind those traditions and boundaries. They have to choose how they live their lives.

In this age, people can design their own egos, quite literally. The enormous amount of products produced gives them lots of choices in decorating and styling themselves. e.g. a supermarket 50 years ago had in average 500 products; these days this number is 25.000. People have an uncontrolled access to information thanks to the web. They can find all the information they may need to form a decent opinion. In my country, euthanasia, abortion and gay marriage are achievements. People can choose to make use of any or these rights, if they want. I love that.

I care for a lot of self-determination. Such achievements come with freedom. An increase in individual freedom of choice fits in with a society in which the importance of the individual carries great weight. Having a choice gives a stronger hold on existence.

TV-set

Even though, do I want to choose in all matters that involve my life? In the Netherlands, in the last two years, the health insurance system and the electricity market have opened, as in other countries in the EU. The result was that I could choose from many similar insurances and I could choose which company would provide the electricity to make my TV set work. I don't care as long as the quality and price are right. I don't want to go through a lot of information so I can be responsible for making a good choice between the electricity companies. Why does electricity have a brand anyway? That is rather ridiculous, isn't it? According to a survey by the University of Tilburg, the Netherlands, two out of three people who had an opinion about this, think the same. They don't want

to choose in these matters. Most of them say they lack the time. 'Busy, busy, busy.' Who isn't busy? Especially busy choosing?

The question is then why do I get all these choices if the majority of people don't want them. The answer is rather easy. Politicians think that people want choices. It's the thought of liberalisation. The state should intervene as little as possible and the people should be as free as possible. So the government allows the people as many choices as are possible and the free market will give people as many options as they want. It's the paradigm of choice. It means freedom.

Epidemic

Freedom? Having a choice in everything and infinite options to choose from, complicate my life as well. Free choice these days can also be seen as an epidemic by most people. When it doesn't improve the quality of people's lives but just takes energy from them, they need to choose. "This is not freedom of choice, but the duty to choose", sociologist Evelien Tonkens and philosopher Tsjalling Swierstra state in the book *"Vrijheid Verplicht."* It's a term used already in 1941 by ▶



psycho-analyst Erich Fromm in his book 'Fear of Freedom'.

Since more and more collective goods and public services like public transport, education, health care, electricity and water are privatised, people get more and more opportunities to choose in matters in which they don't want to have a choice. This is because companies take over the production of these goods and services from the government and now civilians, or *customers*, can choose the companies they want. More choices, more options, more individual responsibility. Wanted or not, I don't think that much can be done against this movement. Life is being consumarised.

Ironically, by forcing 'free choice' upon her citizens, liberal society now intervenes in people's lives more than ever, though liberalism claims to oppose state intervention. Who wants to go through life the same way as one goes through a supermarket? People are still members of a civil society.

Demanding

The multiple choice society is a demanding society. According to the psychologist Barry Schwartz having too many options to choose from creates fear of making the wrong

choice. It causes stress, depression and unhappiness. Although sales managers want you to believe otherwise, Schwartz concludes that fewer options will make people feel better, since the process of choosing is easier, making the final result more satisfying. Of course, Schwartz doesn't need to sell a thousand different shades of nail polish on the free market.

Yet, people have all those choices. Learning to deal with them has become an important skill. Flexibility and reflectiveness are qualities one needs. The multiple choice society brings psychological burdens, since one has access to all the imaginable information, one is supposed to be able to make the best choice. There is a huge social pressure not to fail. Not everyone possesses the needed skills to the necessary degree. One can work on that personally. Maybe education can focus on this.

According to Schwartz, having a strong inner compass can make one resistant against all demanded, obligated choices. An inner compass automatically gives one a direction. Many options are pointless and can be dropped. Choosing gets a lot easier. A good start for dealing with choices is to know what you want. It's good to wonder about that; not about all choices and options that pop up out of nowhere in this complicated society.

Opium

I don't think that stress, depression and unhappiness have been the goal of this liberal 'plan' to give people more choices to make between more options. It is a result though. It could be said that keeping people busy choosing is the modern *Opium fuers Volk*. The multiple choice society will keep the people occupied and (un-) happy.

In the case of health insurance, the Dutch government has taken the initiative towards having an independent website that helps people choose. The purpose is to facilitate choice. The question that follows is then why the government doesn't take the next step: to make that choice. The state could set a standard choice that fits the needs of the majority of civilians. This way civilians can choose if they want to choose. The state shouldn't decide that people think it's important which water or electricity they get. It's good that the state lets people have a choice when they want one and when they think that the choice they make improves the quality of their lives.

Being obligated to choose and search for the best options all the time doesn't feel like freedom to me. I can do it, but it bores me. Please call it like it is: a duty to choose.

If the state doesn't set a standard optional choice, maybe even for a whole package of collective goods

and services, I guess at a certain moment a commercial company will. Or more commercial companies. And then one must choose between those...

It doesn't feel like freedom to me being obligated to choose and search for the best options all of the time. I can do it, but it bores me. Please call it like it is: a duty to choose.

I like to have the possibility to choose from many options when this choice can increase the quality of my personal life. Electricity and health insurance companies don't do that. I don't need to be an individual consumer. I like to be an individual person. Choice in cultural and religious matters, in what work I do and in what I want to do with my life at all; those choices appeal to me. They

are enlightening, emancipating... they matter truly. They make me a person.

It makes me happy when I can choose for what I want.

Marc van Dijck

Literature:

* De meerkeuzemaatschappij, SCP; Breedveld, K. & Van den Broek, A., 2003

* The paradox of choice: why more is less, Schwartz, M. 2004

* Vrijheid verplicht, Hurenkamp, M. & Kremer M., 2005



File-sharing: pirates at play

On the 31 of May, 2006, Swedish police raided the internet service provider PRQ in Stockholm, seizing all the servers including the servers belonging to the file-sharing site The Pirate Bay. Three young men were brought in by the police, accused of copyright violation. No trial has yet been held in the case, but the site was up again in a few days after the raid and is still up and running.

The Pirate Bay claims to be the largest BitTorrent-tracker (see fact box) in the world, and is one of the 500 most visited sites on the Internet. It makes it easier for people all over the world to share movies, music, programs, e-books and lots of other information with each other. It's one of the so called 'peer-to-peer' programs via which people can share files online.

File-sharing and piracy are often talked about in the same sentence, but lots of the files being shared over the internet actually don't contain any copyrighted material. File-sharing is one of the fundamental functions of the internet and has been there since day one.

Various lobby groups regularly publish reports shouting out how many billions of dollars the music industry loses through file-sharing of copyrighted material. However, their calculations are based on the assumption that every copied album means one album less being sold in the stores. The truth may instead be that many of those downloading songs from the internet would never have bought the album, or even heard about the artist, if the music hadn't been on the internet. It may even be good for the artists.

Pirate ship

Actually, the discussion about file-sharing or not file-sharing is a pseudo-debate. Soon even the most conservative technophobes in the multi-national media companies will start to realise that as a fact. Closing down services such as Napster and will not stop people from sharing (copyrighted) information across the internet. Instead, what we should ask ourselves on board our pirate ship is how we can use all this technology to make the world a nicer place.

If all we can achieve with file-sharing is to become mindless consumers of more Hollywood movies without having to pay for them, then it's too bad. Then it will be easier for those wanting to preserve the copyright system to make file-sharers sound like a bunch of spoilt kids not wanting to pay for the latest movies and computer games. This would be a shame because there is so much more at stake than that.

Like the question of who should own the right to immaterial goods. Does it make sense that copyright laws protect a work 70 years after the death of the artist? And how do you control that copyright owners get their pay? Do we really want "Big Brother" to monitor everything we do on the Internet? Do we want a world where the laws are made to protect the interests of the copyright owners instead of protecting freedom of speech? The real debate is about copyright rules, and which of the rules make sense and which don't knowing that in the digital revolution sharing files is a common thing to do, like it or not.

Crystal ball

The media landscape is already changing rapidly and will probably look very different in 10-20 years. Looking in the flat-screen crystal ball, I see a society where the dividing line between consumers and producers has become fuzzier; a society with a lively amateur culture scene, but where the talented can still make a living out of their art. How can artists, programmers and others make a living if everything can be copied for free? Well, first of all, everything can't be copied; just because music and movies can be copied and distributed for free doesn't mean that people will stop going to cinemas, concerts, festivals, theatres, etc.

There are also lots of new ways of expression yet to be invented. For example, the German band Einstürzende Neubauten has been asking fans to support production of their latest album by contributing money while the album is being produced. In return, the fans have received invitations to special concerts and other gifts from the band. While it may be harder to become outrageously rich as an artist, without being backed up by massive marketing of the big media companies, the smaller bands will probably

benefit from being closer to their fans. If you really feel close to an artist, you'll also want to support that artist, especially if you know that most of your money goes directly to the artists and not to a lot of middlemen.

Copyleft

In the computer programming world, there has been a movement of developing free software which has been going on for a long time. Thousands of volunteers and non-profit organisations create effective programs which are completely free of charge for the user. The secret here lies in cooperation; since the source code is open, every user can refine and improve the program continuously, as long as the product is not sold commercially. This license is often referred to as "copyleft", in effect a way to use copyright to prevent commercial interests from taking over.

All in all, the digital revolution will cause big trouble for some of the dinosaurs of the media sphere, who are too slow to adapt to the changes. Society as a whole can only benefit from culture becoming more available to everybody!

Magnus Löfqvist

"What we should ask ourselves on board our pirate ship is how we could use all this technology to make the world a nicer place."

The best way to attack the old copyright system is to share as much as possible. File-sharing is easy! The file-sharing protocol known as BitTorrent is an effective way of transferring large files.

To start using the BitTorrent-system, you just have to:

1. Download a client program, like Azureus or BitTorrent.
2. Browse the web (e.g. The Pirate Bay) to find a torrent (a small file with information about the file being shared) that you're interested in.
3. Download the *.torrent-file and open it with your client.
4. The client will now connect to a tracker and start downloading the real file.

When the program is finished downloading the file, don't close it immediately, but help out by sharing the file with other users. Always upload at least as much as you download!

Be aware, uploading copyrighted material might be considered illegal. Check your local laws to know for sure.

Sources:
Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org)
Sourcewatch (www.sourcewatch.org)
How Stuff Works (www.howstuffworks.com)
Yelah (www.yelah.net)
The Pirate Bay (thepiratebay.org)

And one day you were god... and me too

THE RULES
OF IMAGINATION
ARE
NEVER
FIXED
Loesje

LATER
I WILL BECOME
PILOT, CAPTAIN, PIRAT,
AMBASSADOR,
GARDENER, LAWYER
AND WORLD TRAVELLER
Loesje



Everything changes all the time. The astrologist who made Loesje's horoscope at the time she was born now works for commercial television. That's not good or bad, everybody has his or her own path in life. If you want to learn something, you learn it. If you want to become something, you become. If you want to be something, you are. Or you play

that you are. Sometimes that's even more fun; like we'd played Indians and cowboys when we were kids. Just imagine that you're somebody else. That you're doing something else. Suddenly you're not little Mary anymore, but a world-famous photo-model. No more John, 7 years old, but a tough police officer.

The game of the children

is the reality of the grown-ups. But they do more. They're also creating a world which isn't there. They're imagining themselves in a world where adults can't enter because they've forgotten how to. They just see an old towel instead of a superhero's cape. They see a couple of old boxes in the attic instead of the evil witch's house.

Did adults lose the ability to fantasize completely? No. Only they don't call it playing, but believing. In some god, for example. Or belief in more gods. Some of them believe in forces of nature and others have spiritual experiences and quite often they'll use special objects or places to let their fantasies come alive, like books, pieces of bones, rattles and even complete cabins of stone, in the middle of every town square.

The big difference between the imagination of adults

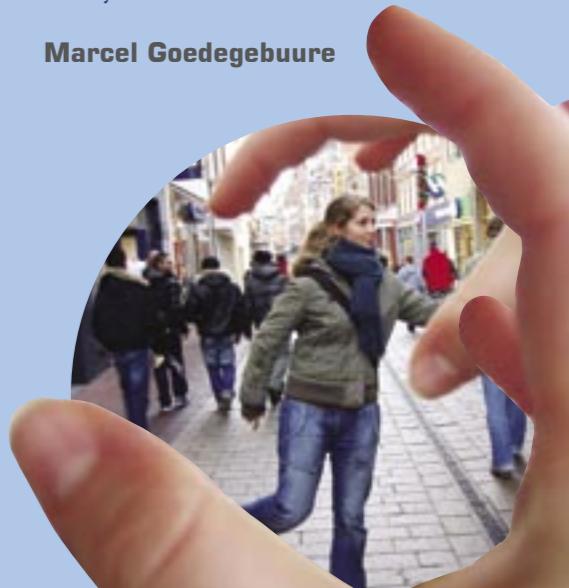
and children is that children are able to create their own world, while frown-ups' beliefs focus on finding more in the existing world. You could say that children believe in themselves and their imagination, while adults have to be helped. Children create their own

they'd be a jet hunter pilot. One day you're best friends with a tree, the next day you make up your own ritual with a sparkling piece of stone. Adults who make their imagination into their own belief again. It can change every day because they'll change every day, because everything is changing all the time and it will always be like that.

Marcel Goedegebuure



games and they can be different every day. Grown-ups need priests, reiki-masters or imams. All these people tell you on a regular base how you should see the world. Try to imagine how the world would look if adults still had the power of unlimited imagination. One day they'd play to be a bridge guard, the next day



<http://foreverchild.info>



Start laughing

What does laughing do to you? How do you laugh? Why laugh? People laugh in different ways, for different reasons. What about these reasons: it's fun, feels good and is definitely healthy even when you're laughing for no particular reason.

Let's do it. Alone, but preferably in a group. Like at the Loesje summer camp last year, in Poland. A group of 15 people started by paying attention to their breathing. Breathing deep and from the stomach. A first caress like a feather on the inside of the belly could be felt and who wouldn't smile? Do I imagine, or is laughing together a form of intimacy, does it bring real contact between participants?

Relaxed breathing and laughing freely might be the two healthiest things in life.

After breathing, different laughs were practised: laughing out loud, slapstick laughing, Santa Claus bellowing, mean laughing, laughing like a chicken. What happens if a square is drawn on the ground forming the floor of an elevator from which nobody can get out, and one starts to tickle somebody? And everybody tickles everybody in that little space? It's as easy as that; do it yourself.

Make people feel good. Laugh with them.

Photo's from a laughter workshop at the Loesje summer camp 2006, Poland.

Grow
sunflowers
in your city

The sunflower guerilla started in August 2006. When will it start in your town?



Brussels-farmer, Sunflower guerilla, is not an organisation, nor an association. It's a civic act, done individually or as a group, for the purpose of flowering public spaces, creatively promoting green energies and improving the quality of life. Everyone is invited to improve, recover, transform and/or adapt this action according to his own convictions.

*"We are planters.
We started a sunflower guerilla in Brussels, Belgium.
We have a blog retracing our plantings on <http://brussels-farmer.blogspot.com> (in French).
We hope other planters will start a sunflower guerilla in their town."*

PLAY STREET ART MEMORY!
DOWNLOAD IT NOW!

WOULD LIKE TO PLAY A STREET ART MEMORY GAME? THE EXCLUSIVE 'STREET ART MEMORY' CAN BE DOWLOADED FROM WWW.CREATIVEACTS.ORG/STREET_ART_MEMORY.PDF. DOWNLOAD, PRINT AND STICK THE THE PRINTED MATERIAL ON CARDBOARD. HAVE FUN PLAYING.



festa del gessetto

- Chalk's Day -

How to have an extemporaneous party made of free imagination

"Revolution will be a party or it won't be"

Lou Peep

Take a public square, or maybe a place (with a nice pavement) where a young people meet after school, university or working hours. Invite even more people... and surprise them with something unexpected!

Buy some hundreds of coloured chalks and distribute them to everyone there! If they ask why, just invite them to be inspired by the chalk.

In the beginning, people won't believe that there's no commercial aim behind the action, but soon someone will start to draw, someone else to improvise a poem, then they'll interact with each other, and soon the pavement will become a giant blackboard, full of colors and contents made of free imagination!

This is what L.U.P.I.P. (Laboratorio Urbano per la Provocazine dell'Immaginario Popolare - Urban Laboratory for Popular Imaginary Provocation) does in Padova (Italy), once a year since 1999, creating an appointment which is now a new non-official recurrence on the city's calendar.

Note: every city is suitable, do it in your own!

Melissa Valso



Handbook for street activism

FREE DOWNLOAD

www.greatideas.loesje.org/greatideas.pdf

SOON AVAILABLE

from spring 2007 it can be ordered from
[www.loesje.org webshop](http://www.loesje.org/webshop)

INTRODUCTION

2006 A.D. Armenia

Close to the mountain where a guy with a beard was once stranded with his ship full of animals, a group of youngsters arrived from Armenia, Georgia, Germany and the Netherlands. They wanted to learn more about each other, their countries, their habits and also about creative activism as a way to change the world. During ten days we brainstormed, prepared and performed several street actions and came to a handful of conclusions and ideas about creative activism.

We didn't want to keep all this for ourselves, so we created this book to share our experiences and ideas with you and maybe inspire you to do your own actions! The actions that we present here are simple and unique as they were created in just a few days. These models are easy to implement in your own town or city, with local, regional or global issues, and with your own additions and twists.

This book's is about people, emotions, and cultures and experiences we had with them. It's about laughing, singing, dancing, talking, shouting and crying. About great food, bad food, great parties and small failures. It's about leaving your country, seeing the world from a distance and from very close at the same time.

Have fun reading and using this handbook. Keep improving your actions and expressing your ideas until we solve all the problems in the world.

GROUP ENVIRONMENT

Environment group wanted to make it easy and environmental friendly, of course, so we prepared the action in line with the the group shared ideals.

The action was also creative, simple, cheap, interactive and funny. Here is the description of how we did in practice and how this action can be repeated, making it better!

Message

We wanted to do an action in the city of Yerevan with an environmental message related to it. Talking with people who live there, we discovered that, apart other big problems as pollution, traffic etc, there is a huge lack of public green spaces. The ones that existed once, are now invaded from cafes and restaurants, so there is no more space for people to rest and have fun!

Someone had to claim back these spaces! Parks are good for people! That was how the action "Portable park" was

born. It is a movable, folding park that you can bring with you and use wherever it is necessary. We would perform this action, moving from one square to another, surrounded by the shadow of improvised trees, playing a bit, eating biscuits, talking with people and, why not, hanging out...

As an addition to that we planned an action called "Tree's thought". The idea is that trees themselves should say something about environmental issues as well. Cardboard balloons



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inspired by comic strips, both in armenian and english, were to be hanged on the trees in the streets... So they could finally express themselves saying things like: "Are you looking at me?", or "Dog, please, don't piss on me!", "Stop that noise, I want to sleep!", "Photosynthesis, let's talk about it", and so on... Flowers could speak as well: "Please, smell me", "Flowers rule"...

Tools and Material

Portable park - We found that the easiest way to make a garden was to use a big green sheet, as big as possible, depending on finances. Better if you find an old one to recycle :).

The trees - Our trees were interpreted by three lovely girls wearing a leaves crown and covered with real branches. We



changed our roles so everyone was a tree that day.

But who has never been a tree in their life? For sure there are billions of nice way to represent a tree, and more trees you have in you park more it will look 'real'!!!

Banner - To make the message more clear, we wrote a banner, made of white cloth, where was written, in the local language, the title of the action, and the trees was holding it... the movable ones, of course!

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Message
Making people realise the need for more green areas!

Tools
Trees and flowers talking, people playing in a removable park and talking with passers by

Material
Carton signs, markers, leafs, sticks, green cloth, biscuits, gloves, bags

Contact
setting a park, hanging the signs, dressed up like trees, talking to people about green areas in their city.

NOTE

Group came with a nice and easy message. From the start they seemed to concentrate more to make the actio than to discuss about different topics. They invented and created nice tools that requires a lot of manual and creative thinking work (tree and flower bubbles and portable park).

Second day they seem to work a lot on their material and to enjoy the work; their work is quite visible as well. On the action day they spend their morning working but they don't seem stressed and still enjoy their work.

Obviously atmosphere in the group is nice and that is crucial for any action. So except thinking on a good action for audience think of such an action in which all the participants will feel good. Often simple actions have such an effect.

We hope their good spirit will last during the action too.

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Games - A park is not a park without balls. Balls, freesbees, tennis rackets etc. are welcome, but if you forget it... you can always improvise and play with a plastic bottle!!!

Biscuits - To convince more people to join you, try to offer them some biscuits, they will be glad and smiling!

Music - Some guitar or a nice radio will make everything nicer.

Tree's thoughts - The balloons were the place where trees expressed themselves. Those were made by recycled cardboards, painted in white. With the markers we wrote the texts. Using a cutter we did two holes on the cardboard, and using some rope we hung it on trunks, branches, leaves... The flower's balloon were fixed on the ground with wood sticks.

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Cleaning the streets - We also bought some plastic gloves and bags with the intent to clean a bit from garbage the places we visited...



PAPER KAZOO



* TO PLAY THE KAZOO YOU HAVE TO 'SPEAK' INTO IT. TO ADJUST THE SOUND REGULATE THE TIGHTNESS OF THE CELLOPHANE

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, border free, experimental, unconventional, challenging, positively provocative, flowing and playful. It's growing from input in the streets and on the website www.creativeacts.org. We want actions and creations around the globe: creative acts. The magazine is a result of the acts and the acts are a result of the magazine.

Who are we?

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

Platform

We realized this sparkling magazine to create a platform for young people to share their opinions on the world, life and politics and to share their imagination tickling artwork. The topic of this second edition of Mašta is Play. You can read more about Play on page 2. We received reports from individuals and groups who did creative actions in the street. Editors and photographers have shared their ideas. All this together has made Mašta possible.

Edition #1

The topic of the first edition of Mašta was Creative Activism. From our website you can download this edition for free or order a paper copy.

You want more?

Check www.creativeacts.org for more articles, photo's, video clips and poems. The organisers of Mašta would like to welcome you as an editor too. Please share your work on the website or send it to the editor@creativeacts.org.

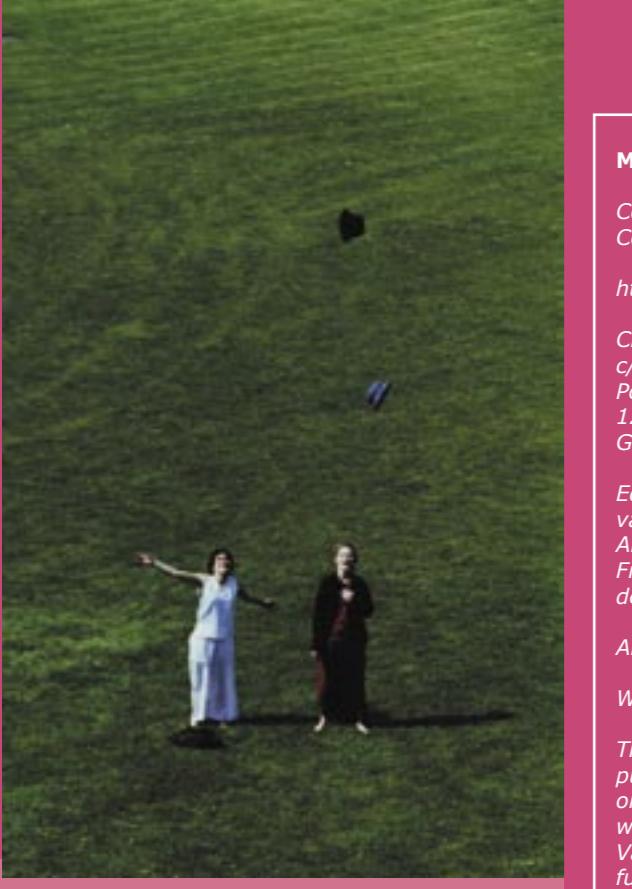
Mašta #1
Download it on www.creativeacts.org.



Go to the digital Mašta-project

www.creativeacts.org

Creative Acts



Mašta is a magazine realised by Creative Acts.

Contact us: info@creativeacts.org
Contribute to the next issue: editor@creativeacts.org

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Mašta #2
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P. 48: Melissa Vaslo.
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P. 52: Julia Wernersson.

Mašta #3: Drive

Mašta #3 is about inspiration, your drive. What makes your world go round? Not like cars drive, but like what is

your drive. It includes passion, inspiration, motivation, energy, dreams. Whatever keeps one going. A bit like oil, but cheaper.

Does it ring the bells of creativity?

Does it start your brain storming?

So don't be shy, break the borders and express yourself!

Send your creative acts and mind-teasing ideas to Mašta #3 before the 1st of September 2007 to editor@creativeacts.org or contribute online www.creativeacts.org



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