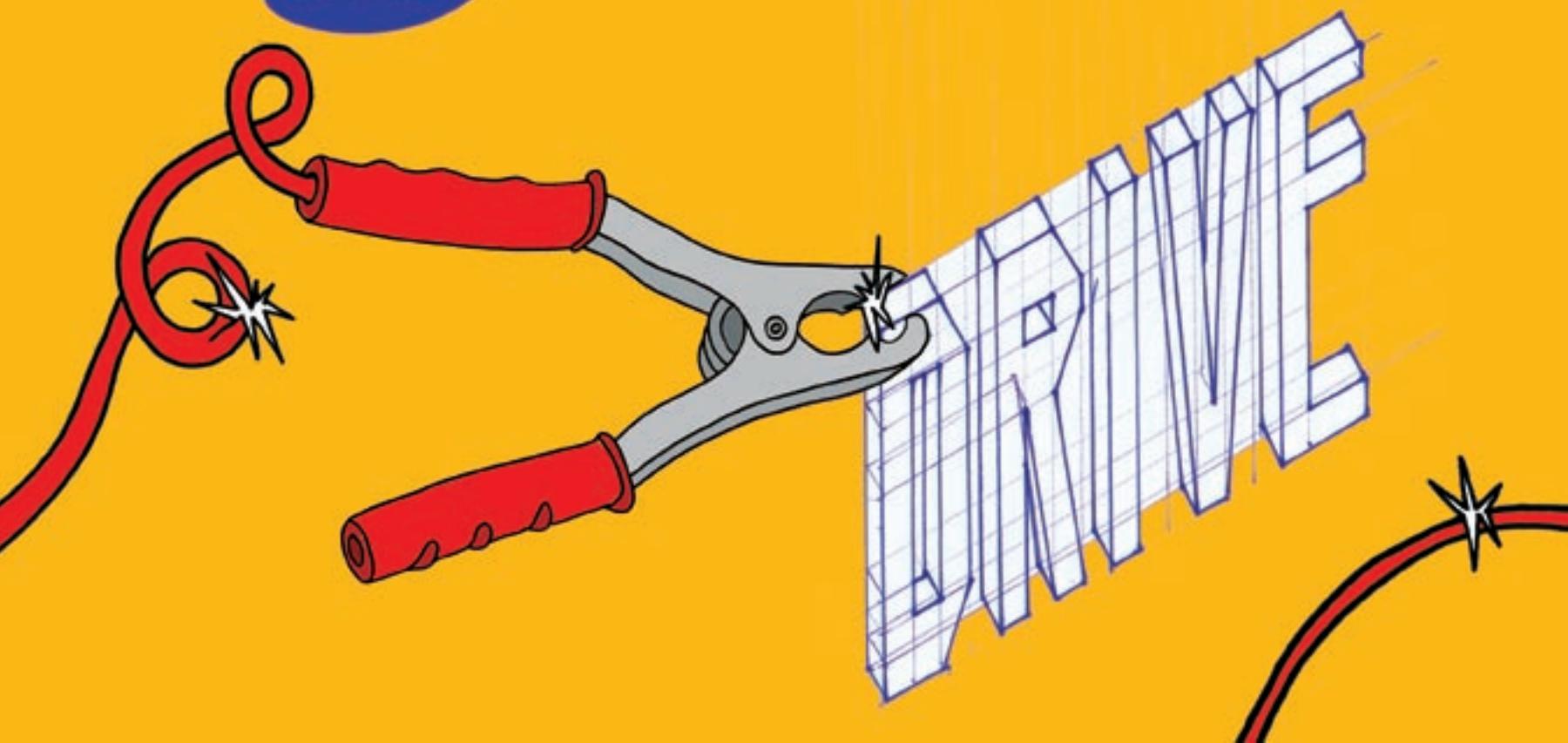




MAŠTA #3  
MAGAZINE FOR  
CREATIVE ACTIVISM



## What is Mašta?

This magazine is called Mašta. The word has a double meaning: 'imagination', as well as 'whatever'. Main theme is creative activism. 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](http://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.

## Platform

We realized this sparkling magazine to create a platform for young people to share their opinions on the world, politics and life. Next to this, to share their imagination tickling artwork. The topic of the third edition of Mašta is 'Drive'. We received reports from individuals and groups who did creative actions in the streets. Editors and photographers have shared ideas. A youth project in The Hague, the Netherlands, in September 2007 was focussed on Creative Acts. All this together has made this Mašta possible. You can read more about this magazine on the next page.

## Editions #1 and #2

Mašta is published in print and online. All copies of Mašta #1 - with the topic 'Creative Activism' - are given away. Mašta #2 - with the topic 'Play' - is still available via [contact@creativeacts.org](mailto:contact@creativeacts.org) or in the Netherlands via [www.loesje.nl/shop](http://www.loesje.nl/shop). Online all magazines are available in a pdf download: [www.creativeacts.org](http://www.creativeacts.org).

## Mašta countries

Mašta has 2500 prints and is spread in 33 countries: the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, USA, Mexico, Jordan, Lebanon...

## 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](http://www.loesje.org). Like her we support a creative society with space for human rights, sustainable development and fun.

# Welcome

What makes your brain storm? A weird looking object, a secret corner, or a beautiful view; hiding behind a photo camera or posing in front of one; crossing borders, or travelling through boundaries of imagination on the wildest rides; creative acts that whisper "do it, now!" And how is the whirlwind of resulting action motivated? Do you seek your inspiration from the external world, or is it hiding somewhere deep within you?

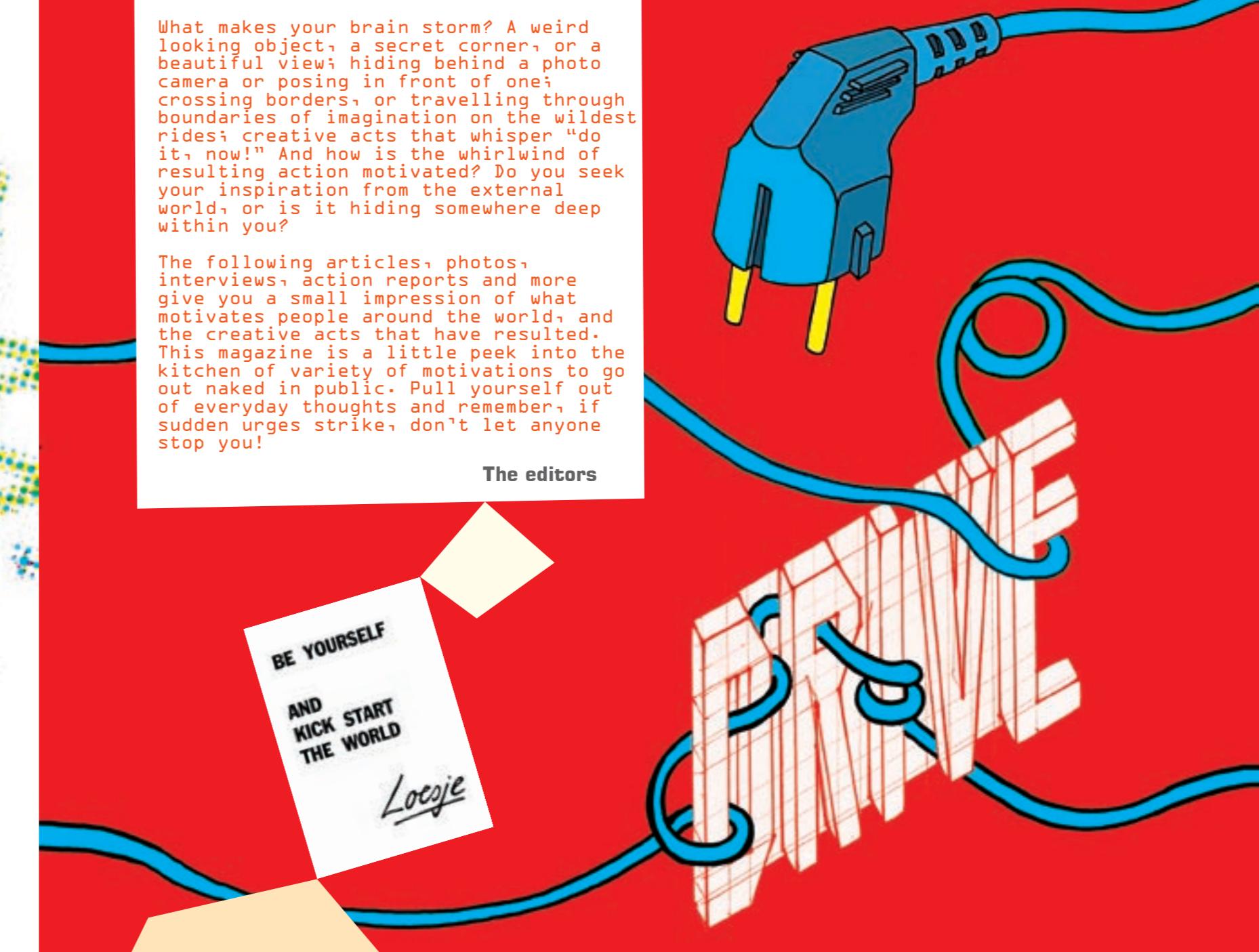
The following articles, photos, interviews, action reports and more give you a small impression of what motivates people around the world, and the creative acts that have resulted. This magazine is a little peek into the kitchen of variety of motivations to go out naked in public. Pull yourself out of everyday thoughts and remember, if sudden urges strike, don't let anyone stop you!

The editors

## You want more?

Check [www.creativeacts.org](http://www.creativeacts.org) 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](mailto:editor@creativeacts.org).

BE YOURSELF  
AND  
KICK START  
THE WORLD  
*Loesje*



# Objects that motivate

What symbolises your drive? Some of our editors and friends show an object that gives them inspiration or energy in a certain way. Where did they get it and how does it motivate them?

Lotte: "This pillow is always lying on my bed. It stands for dreams, because I think they give hope. The dreams you have at night can give you a different perspective on everyday life. The dreams you have during the day give you something to look forward to or a goal in life, or just a happy feeling. In dreams everything is possible. It's something that I wish to everyone, keep on dreaming!"

Nora: "This is a present I got from my sister. It's a sleeping mouse. It was hand made by her and this makes it very personal. I think it's nice to make people happy with presents. In that we can be each others fuel."

Luder: "I took this piece of see through plastic out of a garbage bin. Trying different angles and views gives me inspiration, like with this plastic. When you look through it, the world looks totally different."

Roxanne: "This little fish I took from a big store once, because it was inspiring at that moment, some kind of intuition. The fish for me is a symbol of freedom. It's changing waters all the time, travelling. Water seems like an infinite space, the idea of being free and not being tied down. It's about imagination and not only material stuff. You can always find many associations and possibilities, just choose!"

David: "This is a comic I didn't read yet. Comics are my drive because they motivate me, inspire me and you can learn a lot from them, like history, in a fun way."



Ruuta: "This is Sad Betty, I got her from a friend of mine. She is hand made by Indians and they believe that all bad and sad things you tell her, go away. I get inspired by my environment and the people in it, the places where I can find support. When people trust me and I trust them, there's safety. Just like trusting Sad Betty and feeling safe to tell her everything."



Joep: "I found this in my room... My drive is getting inspired by the world, information about it and everything happening on it. That can amongst other sources be found in books. I like books because when reading you have a solitary moment of concentration."



Myrto: "I had this button with me all the time, but just recently I decided this was actually a good symbol for what I stand for. My drive is the opposite of standing still and being passive. You can do whatever you want, act on it! Believe in yourself, that's also what this text says: I decided I can do anything!"

Martin: "I found this book in a bookstore at the Amsterdam train station. I love books because they contain knowledge. There are so many things to know, especially about the past. I believe that if we know the past, we can change the future!"



Tom: "This DVD shows the humour and the absurd that I like. Especially the combination of both. Monty Python combines them perfectly. And I never expect the Spanish Inquisition."



Parsla: "I always carry this MP3-player with me because my drive is music. It inspires me to do things. It makes you feel better when you are sad. There are so many kinds of music that I can always find something to fit my mood."



## A LETTER

Dear reader,

That's what you are, aren't you? A reader. That's all I know; and you don't know me either. Even the small paperclip in the upper right corner of my computer screen knows more about me than you do. It knows what I am doing, clearly stating: "It looks like you're writing a letter." That's a fact. And it comments in quite a friendly manner: 'Would you like any help?'

What should I do? Debate with the paperclip? Because this is not a letter in the classical meaning. It is meant to be printed in a magazine. Mass communication, ewww. I choose the 'Just type the letter without help'-button. This letter is a matter between you and me. That is what I want it to be. Moreover, this letter is the answer to the question what is driving me.

Letters – some words, representing a small and sudden encounter. They are always a surprise, for you can't see them coming. They are looking for, sometimes begging

for your attention, without being intrusive. It is like meeting somebody in the best possible way: intimate and delicate.

Furthermore, I like to imagine the locomotion of letters. They are meant to go out and see some place they never entered before. I like to imagine my letter travelling to places I never visited. Like this, it is possible to send some part of me to the rest of the world, where it can be picked up and smiled at, or, in an unattractive scenario, be torn apart and thrown away. (Even that is not too bad, because most likely I'll never find out.)

Letters make my world go round, or, the other way around, they prevent me from being swept away by the brutal force of a world that never stops going round. But at the same time, they serve as examples of encounters, of special human contact in general. I like to be touched by what they say and what they do.

Those encounters exist in the real, unwritten world too. The following are some random examples,

experienced in the recent past. Kader Abdolah, Jonathan Safran Foer and an anonymous man, (although not even necessarily a man.) What these people have in common, is that they were able to release one, i.e. me, from daily pursuits. And after these performers, we're going far, far back in history, to explore a universal drive.

Firstly, Kader Abdolah. He declared himself public possession at the Opening of the Academic Year, Radboud University of Nijmegen, 3 september 2007. And these are the words with which he unconsciously conquered a place in this letter: "Mankind needs a dream to distance ourselves from the beasts. A big dream. If necessary a false one." He reminded the scientific world of the importance of dreaming. Bravo!

Secondly, famous writer Jonathan Safran Foer. Managed to come incredibly close to his audience with both his books. Is awesomely creative, thereby crossing borders of what deserves to be in a book, mixing his text up with surprises. Bravo!

Thirdly, as promised, an anonymous man. Who bought me flowers, in the street, just like that. Bravo!

But what if I am wrong and the small things aren't my driving forces? What if they are just obscuring my sight of the bigger picture? In that case, I've thought about an alternative – a big, world-embracing idea, partly stolen from the Greeks (who stole it from others before them anyway!) I'd like to share some thoughts with you about the Greek classical elements, notably fire, earth, air, water. Plato coined the term element; Empedocles introduced the general idea, calling them 'The four roots'. Roots they are indeed, for we are able to grow from them, or remain small and humble. The elements were used to represent the realms of the cosmos whereof all things exist.

These days, they are considerably outdated as ingredients of a physicist's toolkit. Now we know about molecules and atoms, and even, but that you can't really call it knowledge in my case, quarks. Still, the Greek elements have some relevance, since I believe that they cover a great part of the reason why I am

moving. I can imagine myself staring into the fire, feeling immensely comfortable and warm and inspired by the energy of its stewing. You can be refreshed in the water, more or less being baptized. Air gives way to everything, borderless. Earth, together with the other elements, feeds a rich living community of a myriad of plants and animals.

And you know what Wikipedia tells me, although it confesses that citation is needed? The Pythagoreans added idea as the fifth element. And even if that is not true, I like the idea. Ideas make you light a fire, feel the water, breathe free air and wander about the earth.

There is never only one fuel! I like to suck it from encounters, from natural elements, from ideas. And not the least from the idea that we just had an encounter, sort of..... I'd like to greet you and thank you for that.

Yours,

Maartje Bakker





## A meaningful life. What drives us?

**Why do you want the things that you want?**

**Why do you do the things that you do?**

We all have basic desires that drive us. There are probably as many different lists with 'the basic human drives' or 'desires' as there are researchers. Motivation is a complex thing. From Maslow to Reiss.

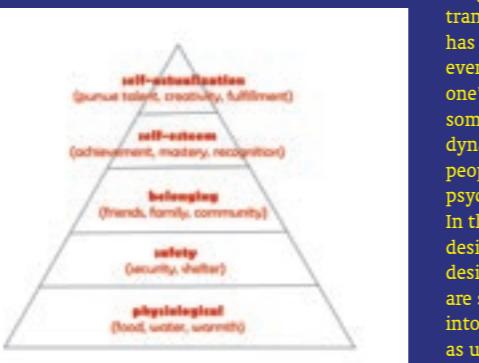
Needs and desires are the motivation for one's actions. They drive people, they make them do what they do whether it's done for survival or voluntarily, as a hobby. Motivation is having the desire and willingness to do something, without necessarily being aware of it. Motives may reveal a person's values. Knowing your own motives helps to understand yourself. Knowing other people's motives helps to prevent misconceptions. Knowing all different motives people have all over the world helps to create a vision of how to organise this world in the best way possible.

A drive is a motivational state. It's an internal condition, which can change over time in a reversible way. It orients an individual toward a specific category of goals. Different drives have different goals.

There are a lot of theories on motivation. The pyramid of needs by Abraham Maslow might be the most widely discussed theory of motivation. In the 1940s, this psychologist developed the idea of a pyramid (see image) of which the base is formed by the 'lower' physical needs like food; and one level higher, safety. When the needs at these levels have been met, one can look at the levels above with the 'higher' needs like love and belonging; and one level higher, esteem. On top, the level of self-actualization, the development of one's talents, can be found. Later, Maslow added another level, the level of transcendence: being set loose from one's own interests and focused on the well-being of others and society. Not many people reach the highest two levels. He examined about fifty people who had managed to reach the level of self-actualization; among them were famous people like Freud and Einstein. According to Maslow, the most basic needs must be satisfied before higher needs can emerge.

Human beings have desires which influence their behaviour, and they want to climb up, but they can advance to the next level of needs only after the lower level need is at least minimally satisfied.

There are other theories on drive, on motivation. Ancient Greek philosophers categorised end goals as the needs of the body, mind and soul. A drive-theory



by Hull recognized four types of drives: hunger, thirst, sex and escape from pain. Freud argued that all motives are ultimately about sex. Hedonists reduced all motives to pleasure-seeking. Then there is the model of 'intrinsic motivation' in which theorists divide motives into two global categories: extrinsic and intrinsic. The extrinsic motives are called 'drives' and are about biological survival needs. The intrinsic motives are sometimes called 'ego motives', and include, for instance: curiosity, autonomy and play. An interesting, rather new theory skips this

distinction, and proposes a theory of sixteen basic desires to explain human motivation.

### Independence

Professor Steven Reiss from the Ohio State University in the USA did research on the basic human desires (published in 2004) and found sixteen of them: power, independence, curiosity, acceptance, order, saving, honor, idealism, social contact, family, status, vengeance, romance, eating, physical exercise, and tranquility (see text box). He states that everybody has them all, but in different quantities. Thus, everyone has a unique 'pattern'. A test to find one's pattern can give 43 million different patterns, something that corresponds to the complexity and dynamics of the human being. Reiss concluded that people are individuals to a much greater extent than psychologists have previously realized.

In this theory, there is no hierarchy between the desires, e.g. 'independence' is not a higher or lower desire than 'saving'. One just has certain drives that are stronger than others. A trap people easily step into is that they consider their own pattern of desires as universal. It's not. Other people consider totally different things important, according to their own desires and act according to their own pattern. Reiss calls this the danger of 'self-hugging'. "People are different, so they are motivated in different ways."

**"People are different, so they are motivated in different ways."**

What do we want? What makes us tick? From acceptance to vengeance to curiosity, Reiss explains the universal desires that shape our behaviour and ▶

shows how the ways in which we prioritize them determine our personalities. These desires, intrinsic motives, show the drive people have and how they are motivated.

### Street art

For example, why does one make street art? It's not something one needs to do to survive, but it may be vital in order to feel meaningful. Following Reiss' reasoning, the artist could be making street art mainly because he wants to be heard by people who do the same and the desire is 'acceptance'. Possibly, the artist is fed up with seeing commercial advertisements everywhere he goes and he wants to react to that and put his own pieces on the streets: 'vengeance'.

**Possibly the artist is fed up with seeing commercial advertisements everywhere he goes and he wants to react to that and put his own pieces on the streets: 'vengeance'.**

Maybe the artist wants to change the opinion that people have on the topic of racism and increase social justice in that way; the desire is a combination of 'power' and 'idealism'. Or his friends like to make street art and he likes to be with his friends, and the reason could be 'social contact'.

For all this, no matter what the artist's motive was, the art in the street was not his end goal but a method. The end goal was to satisfy his desire. That was where his drive came from. The end goal explains his behaviour.

It's great that the method in this case ultimately results in art in the streets - possibly more people start to support social justice.

### Fly-fishing

According to Reiss people can be sincerely happy when they live according to their desires. Knowing your desires, recognizing your drives and acting in accordance gives a feeling of meaningfulness.

**Recognizing your drives and acting in accordance gives a feeling of meaningfulness.**

See the article 'Multifaceted Nature of Intrinsic Motivation: The Theory of 16 Basic Desires', by Steven Reiss, Review of General Psychology, 2004, vol.8, nr.3.



**Marc van Dijck**

Everybody has them all, though in different quantities. The desires in Reiss' theory that drive us are (in brief):

- \* Power: desire to influence
- \* Independence: desire to be autonomous
- \* Curiosity: desire for knowledge
- \* Acceptance: desire for approval
- \* Order: desire to organize, also desire for ritual
- \* Saving: desire to collect, value of frugality
- \* Honor: desire to obey a traditional moral code
- \* Idealism: desire to improve society, includes altruism, justice
- \* Social contact: desire for peer companionship, to play
- \* Family: desire to raise own children
- \* Status: desire for social standing, for attention
- \* Vengeance: desire to get even, to compete, win
- \* Romance: desire for sex, courting
- \* Eating: desire to eat, essential for survival
- \* Physical exercise: desire to exercise muscles
- \* Tranquility: desire to avoid anxiety, fear



**IT WAS A DAY  
LIKE THIS  
WHEN  
MARCO POLO  
LEFT FOR CHINA**

**WHAT ARE YOUR  
PLANS FOR TODAY**

Loesje



## Conquering my fear

Don't you like to be alone in the dark? Are you scared of spiders?

Actually fear can be a good thing. To be scared of extreme heights, axe murderers and lions is quite reasonable. It's good to use fear as a drive, or actually, using conquering

the fear as a drive. It can help you accomplish lots of things and provide you with unexpected energy.

I confronted my fear and played with it. I celebrated my courage.

You know, I am scared of being dependant on



Clara Roethe



## WAR Inc.

An ordinary day in Iraq, hot sun, smoke drifts down a rubble-filled street, machineguns chatter in the background. Some American soldiers come driving up the street in their armored Bradley-vehicle, towards a house where suspected terrorists have been reported to live. Before entering, one of them fires a grenade from a Carl-Gustaf recoilless rifle through the gate of the yard. Shrapnel and thousands of razor-sharp darts are spread across the yard and the surrounding street. The screams of the wounded and the dying echoes through the alleyways. Who knows if there were any terrorists in the building this time? Anyway, we don't do body counts...



In another part of the world, the small town of Karlskoga is rarely seen on the world news. Nestled deep in the forests of central Sweden, in an area that hasn't experienced war since the middle-ages, this town is nevertheless home to the biggest weapon factory in Sweden. Every day, ordinary Swedish workers go to their job at Saab Bofors Dynamics and spend their days producing ammunition used in the Carl-Gustaf guns. In the evenings they drive their kids to the football training and then sit down in front of their TV's, complaining a bit about their dull job and watch the news. 80 people dead in a new bombing in Bagdad. Nothing new under the sun.

**Wherever there is a war, there are also always some people trying to profit from it.**



But everything is not quite business as usual. Early one Monday morning in Karlskoga I meet some activists from the peace camp Disarm -07. The camp is organized by people who had enough of the Swedish hypocritical attitude towards exporting weapons. They are members of a network called "Ofog" that are working for a world free from nuclear weapons. The parking lot outside the Bofors factory is filled with activists, police and media. Two persons have chained themselves to the main gate, preventing workers from entering. Some people are dancing, while others are drawing slogans on the ground and performing a "die-in" to commemorate the victims of Bofors weapons. Some activists have climbed the roof of the factory and are putting up a banner saying KRIG AB (WAR Inc.).

#### CSI

Earlier this night, four members of Ofog have entered the Bofors factory to perform a CSI, Crime Scene Investigation. "We suspect Bofors of violating Swedish law and international agreements and of supporting terrorism by exporting weapons to states waging illegal wars", Oscar Schön from Ofog says.

Wherever there is a war, there are also always some people trying to profit from it, for example by selling weapons. In theory, Swedish law places severe restrictions on selling weapons to a state involved in an armed conflict. Still, some of the biggest customers to Swedish weapon industry are countries like

Pakistan and the USA. Oscar Schön describes the situation of Swedish arms export as "Wild West", export figures have been rising steadily the last years, and control is virtually non-existent. In 2006, none of the applications for export permits submitted to ISP -(The state authority issuing permits to exports military equipment) were rejected. The driving forces are clear: more money for the industry and less unemployment for the state.

#### Moral obligation

But where does the drive of the protesters come from? "We as Swedish citizens have a privileged position. We can enter a military area without running the risk of being shot. Therefore, we have a moral obligation to do so, to help the victims of the weapons exported in our names. To speak up for those who are not in a position where they can protest", explains Cattis Laska, also Ofog-member.

Personal responsibility is something that the activists of Ofog come back to several times during our talk. When laws become an instrument to protect power rather than human beings, civil disobedience is one way to force a discussion. Even if one action doesn't stop Sweden from exporting weapons, it can make more people realize that Swedish weapons are actually killing people, in Iraq and in other places.

#### 45 minutes

Through a relatively simple action, Ofog was able to stop production at one of the biggest weapon manufacturers in Sweden for 45 minutes. In this way they have drawn attention to what people can do just with their bodies, by not passively accepting what's going on. Later this autumn, they will be back in Scotland, to once more take part in the blockade of the nuclear submarine base Faslane.

**Magnus Löfqvist**



**"We as Swedish citizens have a privileged position. We can enter a military area without running the risk of being shot."**

**About Ofog** - Ofog was formed in 2002 as a network around an action to blockade the nuclear submarine base Faslane in Scotland. The blockade had been initiated by the group Trident Ploughshares, an organization that has been awarded the so-called alternative Nobel-prize "Right Livelihood Award". Since then, Ofog has taken part in several peace camps and actions for nuclear disarmament around Europe. Ofog works both with direct action, involving non-violent civil disobedience, and by taking part in debate and opinion forming.

## - What is your political drive? -

You wake up in the morning, you have breakfast, you meet your friends, you go to a concert, you spend time with your family, you go to the swimming pool, you take a nap in the afternoon, you go to school, you play volleyball, you ride your bike, you attend your friend's birthday and there is a moment you have to express your political feelings. You go to vote every four years, you go to rallies and marches every month, you are an intern in a politician's office or you only see people in suits on the front pages of the newspapers and that is the only thing by which you remember that politicians exist.

Your political feelings can be motivated by your community, friends, expectations you have about the society you are part of, media, etc. Or just have no motivation at all; have no political feelings, be passive when politics are debated near you. After all, how do politics work for you? How do you see the results of your political choices in your everyday life. Is your vote making a difference, do the rallies you attend change the opinions of some decision makers? Are there some other more important things you have to focus on, like social capital, job or travel plans? If you do not care about politics, why be nationalistic? If you have confidence that protests and petitions can influence the decisions of politicians, why not go to vote?

So one might consider there is a risk in having a political drive. One can be wrong despite having good intentions and groups of people can act without knowing all the facts. There is also the risk in not wanting to have a political drive. The big machineries that are the communities in which we live, are put in motion by the small pieces. And yes, you could say that there is no such big machinery in which all the small pieces work, but there is no one to give you a warning when the threshold is met. This is maybe the illusion which makes the machine to malfunction: some of the small pieces think that there are enough other parts that will also do their work.

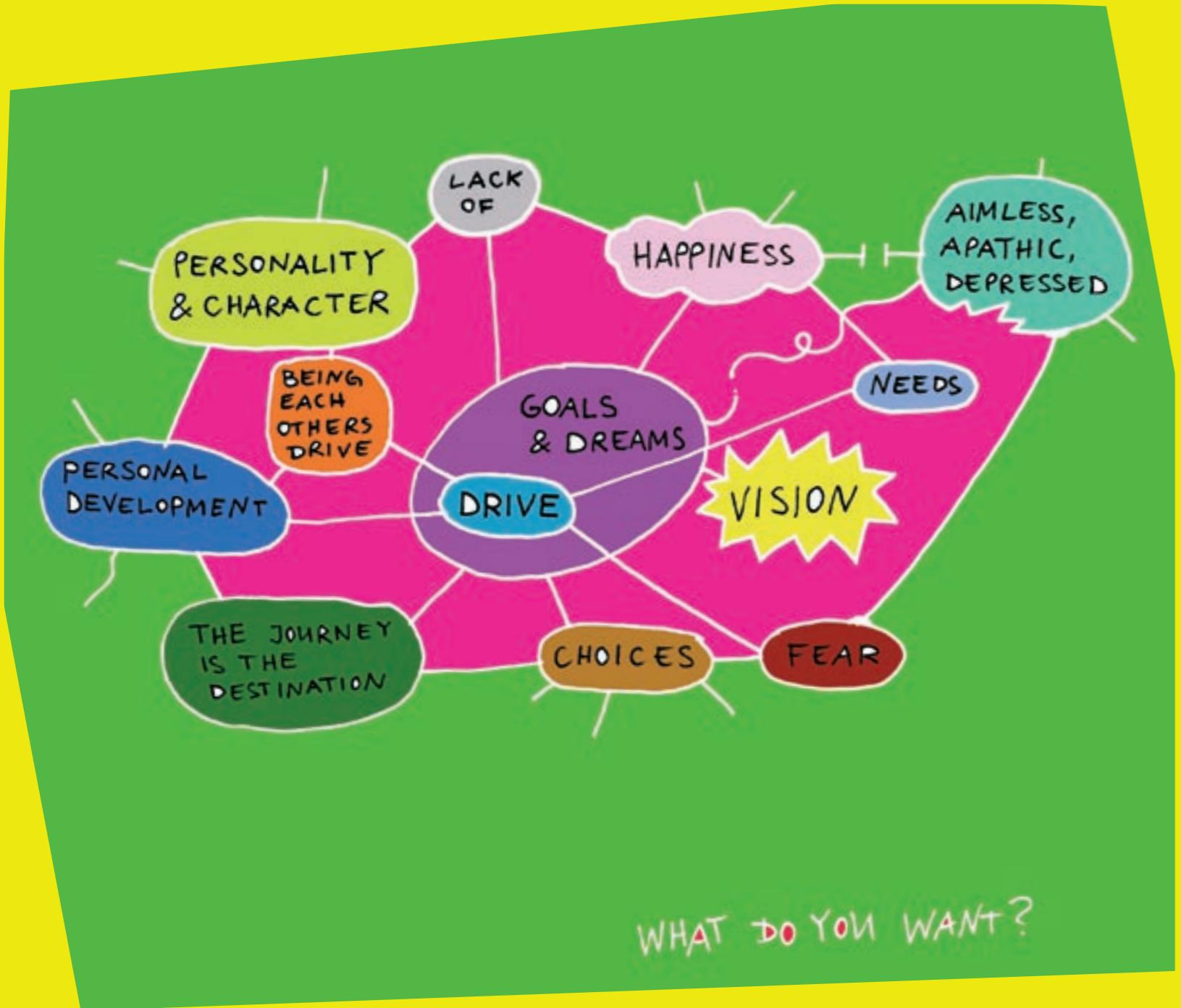
Instead of hiding behind false excuses such as the hate for politicians, ignorance towards political actions and ideas, the downplaying of the role politics has in society, better give the option of being active some thought and figure out how that can work for you. The number of choices when it comes to acting are varied, as was described above, but the option of ignoring politics means surrendering some control of your life.

So, what is your political drive?

Tudor Roșu

question  
everything







# The world is on sale

*The world is on sale, but what's the price? In times where buying new stuff is often cheaper than repairing you would expect people to have a lot to give away. And they do. But mostly the easy thing to do is to throw it in the trash. Have you ever looked at an overflowing garbage bin, wondering if the things would still work? Maybe you even considered taking something out? Have you ever stepped into an old pair of shoes and filled your bag with used cables and keyboards? Have you ever asked in a shop whether they've got anything for free? We did. We wandered the streets of The Hague, The Netherlands, searching for free things. We asked people in shops for things they no longer needed nor wanted and would give us for free.*

**The Sexshop, Coffeeshop and the children's toy store all refused our request. Some things are apparently never for free.**

In the name of science we marched into the city of The Hague, an army of freeloaders in search of free objects. We went through stores, streets, lost-and-found sections and trash bins. The mission was simple, to find as much stuff as possible without using any money what so ever. Trash bins are easy. And people put a lot in the streets. It seems that repairing is more of a hassle than buying something new. The more good quality free stuff we accumulated the greater our confidence grew. We were now ready to visit some shops.

Our hunt began encouragingly, the first kiosk we ambushed handed over a chocolate bar and some pirate stickers. Free magazines, good postal bags and a rose at a flower stand for one of the ladies soon joined the collection. Between our visits to the shops, we found some abandoned chairs and Christmas decorations on the street. Also very nice, but how would the Dutch railways react on

**It's a matter of going into a store, putting up a straight face and asking the question "Is there something that I could get for free?"**

our request?

The lady at the counter for international travels smiled and went around searching for something to give us. After some minutes she came back "I have some puzzles here, do you mean something like that? Do you want a paper bag as well?" We accepted the gifts – nine copies of the kind of small shove-puzzles kids can be busy with for hours, with a train and the pretty logo of the NS on them – and went on. After some asking around to no avail, we got lucky. From a small bookshop we received lots of smiles, magazines and candy.

## Free records

Phase two, our confidence high after success on the fields, we regrouped and decided to go for big business. The Free Record Shop, its name would suggest that this is just the place for us. Wonderfull Surely with a name like that they would be behind our worthy cause. After talking to the personnel for some minutes, trying to explain that we wanted things for free, pointing out that this is a 'Free Record Shop', the shop keeper first told us that they don't really have anything for free. The personnel really wanted to give us something, but did not dare to without approval from their boss. After some more minutes of talking we made them give us an empty cd case without the knowledge of their boss. They risked their job by surpassing the chain of command.

The real free records we found in another part of town. At the tourist office we managed to get free maps, two free cds with dutch music and a paper bag. The lady at the counter was a bit confused by our question, but seemed already used to the concept of free things.

## One euro

At the One Euro Shop we received a rubber lion pen. The Sexshop, Coffeeshop and the children's toy store all refused our request. Some things are apparently never for free. Along our way we got paper clips and a little plastic rabbit. It's a matter of going into a store, putting up a straight face and asking the question "Is there something that I could get for free? That you cannot use anymore?" The appearance of a puzzled face of a shop employee can be

priceless. We were surprised at how friendly and helpful most of the people were. After all, six young people asking for free stuff, and then talking about an 'experiment' and a magazine... it might be perceived as rude... wouldn't it? And does one, who asks for free things, feel like a bum? We were involved in a social-economical project. We were truly getting our free things together in a world that doesn't give anything for free.

## Water

All this hard work meant we were getting a bit hungry. The warm glow of the neon Burger King sign persuaded us to pay them a visit. A multinational like this, selling food all over the world to 11.400.000 customers a day and exploiting the earth to do so, should have something for us? After some talking with the manager we managed to get a paper crown each and a cup of water to share between the four of us. While waiting for the water we helped ourselves with some salt and pepper at the counter.

Visiting the Burger King did not make us less hungry, and hardly less thirsty either. Fortunately we were well equipped from our previous adventures in kiosks and stores and started nibbling on our emergency chocolate.

## Gift shop

Next came a small gift shop. The woman at the counter kindly gave us a nice paper notebook. After that we found a thousand underwear packages in the street, an empty pile of the overconsuming society. The brand new green carpet lying around close to it, didn't even manage to make it into being consumed. The Asian furniture shop down the road showed great generosity, we came out with two really nice plates. The small shop next door gave us spicy pasta.

In one day we got a nice pile of good stuff together. With lots of new ideas we went home to try out the Christmas candle holder, listen to the new music and eat the rest of the chocolate.

Project done by: Clara, David, Julia, Myrto, Nora, Tudor

Julia Vernersson

**The Asian furniture shop down the road showed great generosity, we came out with two really nice plates.**

**h 15.35**

First kiosk gives us chocolate



**h 15.41**

A small shop provides us with good postbags to carry free objects in.



**h 16.20**

The Dutch railways provide us with little kids puzzles.



**h 16.38**

A bookshop gives us lots of candy and a magazine.



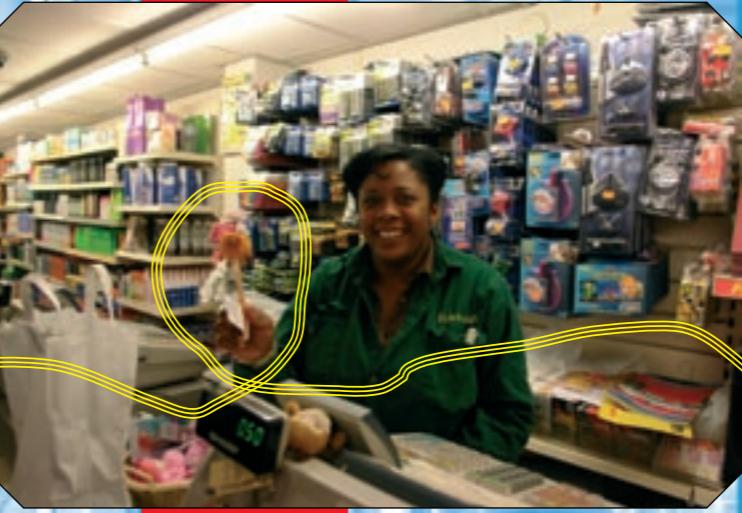
**h 16.45**

We try our luck at The Free Record Shop. Our catch: an empty record cover.



**h 16.09**

A small flower shop called 'Hages Hoekje' gives us a rose.



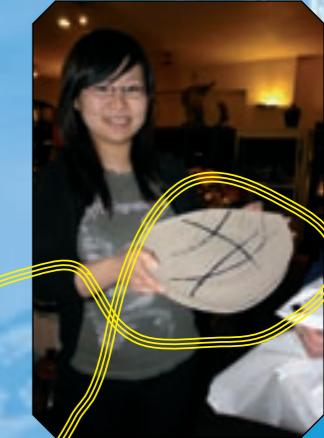
**h 17.05**

At the One Euro Shop we receive the weirdest object: a gummy lion pen.



**h 17.14**

After talking with the manager, the Burger King gives us paper crowns and one glass of water to share. We take their salt and pepper while waiting for our cup of water.



**h 17.30**

In a small giftshop we get a paper notebook.



The world is on sale

**h 17.49**

In another small shop we receive a nice hot pasta.



**h 17.42**

In an Asian furniture store we get two really good plates.





*With this action I wanted to remind people how easy and cheap it is to give love and how we usually forget to do it.*

I made this action when I was in Sweden on my EVS-project, European Voluntary Service. Here sometimes I felt that the people there were always alone. I missed so much the signs of affection that you can see in Spain: like people touching each other, talking to strangers, hugging...

With this action I wanted to remind people how easy and cheap it is to give love and how we usually forget to do it. I also wanted to show them how much time we spend consuming material goods. In looking for them, trying them out, deciding which one is better, cheaper or cooler. At the same time the big companies are continuously “bombing” us with thousands of adverts and publicity and creating in us the need for the next consumer necessity, like more clothes, cars or gadgets etc. It's easy to enter into this

circle and to forget other important things that you can't buy with money.

It is because of this that I made these wool hearts for someone to find. Don't forget that the best present for everyone is to give and to receive love, attention and affection. The different people who find one of these hearts can decide to keep it for themselves or to give the heart to another person.

**Geiko**

*Give me some love, I need it!*





**Companies  
don't sell  
a product  
anymore.  
They sell a  
feeling,  
or a drive.**

**Let's take the  
major example  
of Nike, with  
their drive  
Just do it.  
Just do what?**

## ***It's all about the brands baby***

**A car drives you some places. A ship can only transport you over water. The train has its' own track. It's your feet that get you places. And while being on this trip with yourself, what drives you is not just the food in your stomach, it's not just energy and it's not just a biological process. What made you go there? What is your drive?**

I once realised that I did not need a specific drive to keep on going. It scared me, a bit. What was my goal in life if I did not even have a certain drive to take me there? Where do I go to look for a new drive? I found out it had to do with the media. Every day the media projects images to you. Companies don't sell a product anymore. They sell a feeling, or a drive.

They try to show you, 'this is how it should be' and try to persuade you to act like that. The image a company is providing is the way to live. They want you to eat, live, breathe and sleep them.

### **Brands**

While they first just advertised in magazines and on television, these days companies are everywhere. They sponsor big events to get their name and their lifestyle out to the public. If the sponsorship does not bring them enough profit, they start their own event. Brands try to become part of a lifestyle because an association with, for instance, hip-hop or diets can make a brand cool and street-wise.

An example of this is Tommy Hilfiger, who started out with preppy clothes for the upper class. When a famous rapper was seen in one of his t-shirts on national television, they became a hit with young people just because these kids wanted to relate to the lifestyle of this rapper and thus, to Hilfiger. However, as trends come and go, the hip-hop world got bored with the brand and now, Tommy Hilfiger is focusing on the upper class, again.

A more recent example is Coca-Cola Zero. The content of the drink is the same as Coca-Cola Light, but that brand is associated with girls and diets. Therefore Coca-Cola came up with a new brand, and a new campaign focusing on

men. They actually created a new product just to be part of a lifestyle.

Most of the images that are projected are no longer invented by men in suits, but rather by people such as cultural anthropologists. As no one else does, they know how a certain culture will react to the company's image and lifestyle. They also hire a bunch of trend watchers. If being vegetarian and buying biological products is no longer alternative-hippy-esque, but cool, then the companies will be green too. And they will make sure to be telling you that.

### **Barthes**

This can be explained in a way that at first may seem complicated, but it's not. In sociology there has been a lot written about culture and how we react to it. Let's try to use one of these theories on our case.

To start: Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist who created a system for language. In the terms of De Saussure you have a signifiant. The sign itself. A letter or a written set of letters or the sound of the word. The signifié will give a meaning to it, and together they form a denotation. 'Cat' for instance. C.A.T is the signifiant, and the psychological meaning of the animal the signifié. The combination of these two concepts is not natural, but conventional, as language is a system of conventions. We agreed that a cat would be a cat. Roland Barthes, a French linguist, used De Saussure's system for his *Mythologies* (1953) in which he analyzes some aspects of popular culture. His purpose was to show that cultural utterances have "hidden meanings" that can be unveiled by structural analysis. These hidden meanings are inflicted by the bourgeoisie in Barthes' case, in our case by big companies and the ever evil media. So, if the combination of the signifiant and the signifié can be called the denotation, what if you add a new signifié to the denotation? It is then that you reach the connotation, the second, perhaps hidden meaning of the image. Let's take the major example of Nike, with their drive Just do it. Just do what?

A perfect drive, just go on and do it. Where the question "do what?" might be the most logical reaction for me,

some other people might be too numb to question it. The image of Nike, a sports hero or heroine that shows us the newest types of trainers. The signifiant is the sports hero and the trainer, the signifié would be "buy these trainers because they are the best". But, the connotation would be; live a healthy life, be athletic, be like us. The danger of these connotations is that you might not read them; or you may read them naturally and store them somewhere along with your drives or the image of how you should be. Being able to read and explain these connotations can give you the power to choose for yourself and see through the images.

### **Green**

It's interesting that Barthes wrote *The death of the author* in 1968, in which he claims that it is not the writer who puts in meaning into a story, but that it is the reader that will find his own interpretation. The death of the author means that there is no longer one right interpretation, but that there can be many. According to the Barthes' theory, I would then be giving meaning to the commercials myself.



Can I then ask myself, do I see what I see, or do I see what I want to see? Why do I then try to reach something that I find revolting, or did I just not get the picture? These media-inflicted drives, do I create them myself? As said above, companies also follow trends. If being green is hot right now, then they're green too. Sadly, if the green-hype is over, all of the sustainable theories will be thrown into the trashcan. In a way, we are the ones handing down the images and the trends for the companies to work with.

However, it is you that decides how much influence the images will have on you. Don't ignore outside influences and the outside world. It is the thing that forms you, that you react to and that you live in. What you can do is select from all these stimuli and find your own way through the concrete bushes of drives and commercials and sell-out feelings.

Even media-inflicted drives can guide you, as long as you can adjust them to your personal needs.

**Farah Marzak**

## ***Even media-inflicted drives can guide you***

**Check out**  
[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org) for general information on Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes. Or try to get a copy of the *Mythologies* of Barthes (1953)  
*Death of the author* (1968)  
*Cours de linguistique générale* by two students of De Saussure, Charles Bally en Albert Sechehaye. Unfortunately, De Saussure was never able to write down his own theory, but his students did it based on his classes and their notes.  
And to get to know more about companies and the way they act and react, it's good to read the almost classic *No Logo* by Naomi Klein.

# Confronted by a thousand of trash people

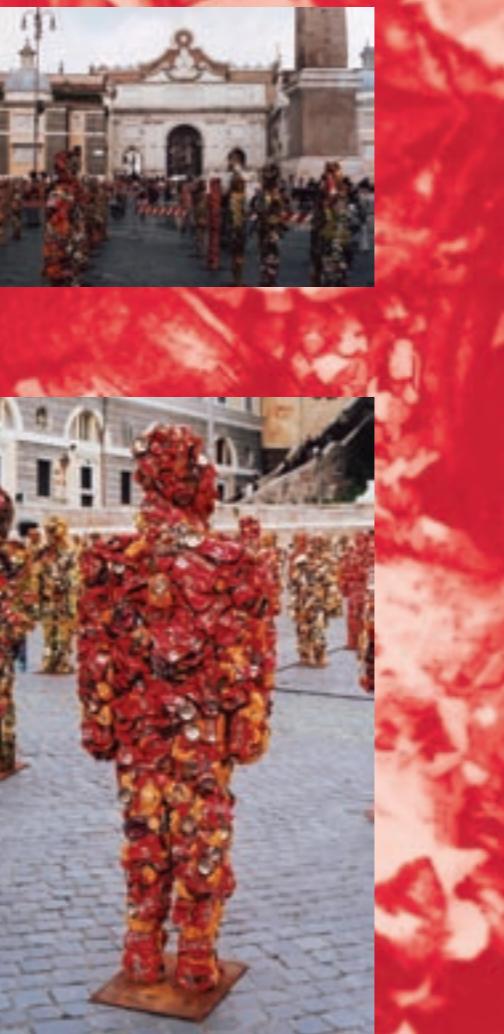
Action art creates, like no other kind of art, the dialogue between art and everyday life. Especially when placed in public space. According to the German artist HA Schult "We live in the trash time: we produce trash and we become trash." An army of 'trash people' is his creation. The figures are images of ourselves.

In 1996 Schult installed one thousand life sized figures made out of recycled junk, in the amphitheatre of German city of Xanten at the river Rhine. He had the idea to send them around the world,

See also: [www.haschult.de](http://www.haschult.de)

confronting people with what they are made of. One could see them as symbols of the unbounded consuming society, as a now time expression.

They ended up expressing themselves at the world's most important spots. La Défence in Paris, Red Square in Moskou, the great wall of China, Gizeh in Cairo and Piazzo del Popolo in Rome (see photo's, March 2007) and more. For 2008 two places are yet plotted: New York City and the icy scenery of Antarctica.



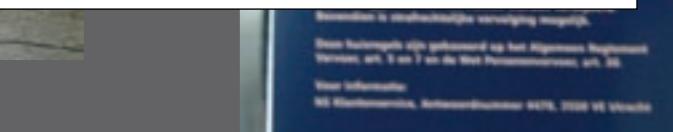
## • STUPID RULES AND LAWS •

- It is illegal to impersonate a person of the clergy. Alabama, USA
- It is forbidden to bring bears to the beach. Israel
- Though it is illegal to produce, store, sell and trade absinth (special alcohol), it is legal to consume it. Switzerland
- While prostitution is legal, it is illegal to use the services of a prostitute. Sweden
- All land must be left to the eldest son. UK
- Picking up abandoned baggage is an act of terrorism. UK
- Water guns may not be used in New Year's celebrations. Cambodia
- Bicycle riders may not lift either foot from the peddles, as it might result in a loss of control. Mexico
- A man may be arrested for wearing a skirt. Italy
- A life sentence is 25 years. Australia
- Until the Port Arthur Killings it was legal to own an AK-47 but not legal to be gay. Australia
- 35% of a radio stations content must be "Canadian Content". Canada
- It is illegal for clear or non-dark sodas to contain caffeine. Canada
- It is illegal to climb trees. Canada
- Drivers of power-driven vehicles who stop at pedestrian crossings are liable to a fine of up to five yuan, or a warning. China
- Restaurants may not charge for water unless it is accompanied by another item such as ice or a lemon slice. Denmark
- It is illegal to take photos of police officers or police vehicles, even if they are just in the background. France
- Between the hours of 8AM and 8PM, 70 percent of music on the radio must be by French artists. France
- An ashtray is considered to be a deadly weapon. Germany
- A pillow can be considered a "passive" weapon. Germany
- Any person who shall pretend or exercise to use any type of witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or pretend knowledge in any occult craft or science shall for any such offense suffer imprisonment at the time of one whole year and also shall be obliged to obscurion for his/her good behavior. Ireland
- Young people wearing bathing suits are prohibited from sitting less than 12 inches apart. South Africa
- Every person must pay for owning a radio or television even if they don't use it. Germany

## ...READ IN THE NEWSPAPERS

### No dying in the British Houses of Parliament

In november 2007 an inquiry has been done in the United Kingdom for what people think was the most stupid law in their country. A little-known law which prohibits people dying while in the Houses of Parliament has been voted the UK's most ludicrous piece of legislation. A total of 27 percent of those questioned thought the law was the most absurd. 7 percent voted for the legislation banning placing postage stamps upside down which is seen as an act of treason. In third place, with 6 percent, came a law stating that only a clerk in a tropical fish store has permission to be topless in public in Liverpool.



Stupid is who stupid does or stupid is who stupid imposes?

What is the sense of a public park if you are not allowed to step on the grass? What is the point of having a city with nice architecture if you are not allowed to take pictures of them? Why should there be night jobs if you are not allowed to work after nightfall? If these questions make you think, we have some more clear examples: Why are you not allowed to take bears to a beach? Why can't one bring a bicycle into a skate park? What is the point of having masks if you are not allowed to wear them in public? The list of dilemmas can go on, but there is one question one should ask when confronted with such a law or rule: stupid laws exist, but who is the stupid one? Is it the one who made up the law or the one who follows it? We did some research and came to an impressive list of stupid rules and laws.

Myrto Apostolaki and Tudor Rosu

# Drive

Sounds! Lights! End of nearing!  
To stop being anything I can.  
Just like the French body and  
performance artist Orlan, a  
French washing detergent, to  
keep evolving. To never stagnate,  
and thus never to be faced with  
or having to deal with the static  
perception of being relative. I  
guess I would rather live my life  
as a poem, a disharmonic and  
strangely logic, wall of sound,  
gently flowing into a state of  
shape shifting on a daily basis.  
Like the searing, liquid bubbles  
of the blues, gently flowing into  
the spotless night sky, bursting  
in kisses and impregnating it  
with full, fulfilled, electricity.  
I somehow kind of wish to be a  
blue stream of water, to never  
stop falling whilst evolving into  
that which suits me best. To  
survive, but only to a minimal  
degree. To communicate in  
order to eradicate the need to  
communicate. To envy the light  
in the streets, who observe the  
needlessness of being needed.  
Speaking in colours is not easy.  
Much like a Samurai, to create  
the steel soundless stirring of the  
perfect blade, and turn into the  
perfect body of rage, untouchable,  
everlasting and beautiful in  
completing a gritty, black-and-  
white canvas of focused war with  
broad fans of silver and blood

Lionel Van Heghe

red. The art of Iai-Do.  
The only thing I wish to  
learn from the years is to  
transgress into a state of total  
and uncompromising mental  
emancipation, to evolve beyond  
humanity, and somehow,  
miraculously end up as the  
astral equivalent of an animal,  
free of fear, understanding, or  
any other self-inflicted form of  
mental, emotional or spiritual  
barrier. To become an ethnic-free  
frequency, not necessarily living,  
just moving along extremities  
and absorbing everything along  
the way, before disappearing into  
a night and a wall of sound. To  
technically analyse drumming.  
In the constant search for  
abstraction, moulds are bound  
to be shattered. In the search  
for philosophical abstinence, the  
base of the abstract and the free  
of form, the moulds should only  
get smaller and irreversibly  
less significant, for the smaller  
the material, the bigger the  
suggestion, and the more effort  
is demanded from the mind to  
materialise the non-material.  
Surreal sound play should not  
be feared, as it is mostly the only  
companion left desirable.  
It is an attempt to keep busy  
through the easiest way: to use  
one's imagination.  
Never fear, doubt is here.

Ineke Vermeulen

# Superball

my heart's a superball,  
sometimes it jumps, sometimes it falls,  
but it always bounces on

looking for chances to bump into  
looking for opportunities  
looking for the beauty of  
going nowhere in particular;  
but ending up in the strangest places

my heart it never stops  
because everytime it hits the ground  
it's launched back into the sky  
always looking for  
someone new to play with  
can you, throw me, higher?



# Making ugly corners beautiful

## Reclaim the streets

We are affected by the world around us and our moods and feelings can be lifted by the sight of a blue sky in the morning or even the day ruined by the appearance of dark rain clouds and a grey sky. Our surroundings, our city, our street, these are places that can inspire us or even that bring us down. With this in mind we decided to do our best to cheer up the city of Den Haag, The Netherlands.

In order to do this we went out into the city with the plan to bring a little bit of sunshine and happiness to the darker and dirtier corners of the city. Armed with not much more than some balloons, some chalk, white tape and a marker pen -and a subversive sense of humour- we embarked upon our mission.

Our first idea was to brighten up one of the many pains of modern life, the construction site. Not only do these places sound, smell and look ugly, but they often cause traffic jams and can suddenly spring up in place of well known and well loved buildings in our part of town. Not any more.....



We were lifted by a great sense of having transformed something depressing into something uplifting, by the sight of our work and also by the smiles of the passers by. It really seemed like we were communicating with them and breaking the uncomfortable silences that seem so prevalent in many of today's shared spaces. We continued spreading balloons and strips of tape with messages. We were breaking the silence, getting out and talking to our neighbors and we wanted others to do the same. Starting at the bus stop!



Clara, Martin, Nora, Tom, Zoraida



By this time we were feeling pretty pleased with ourselves and decided to head home through the park. We had used up our balloons, tape and even the pen was almost dry. Fine we thought, we can't do much to make such a lovely park seem prettier. At least that's what we thought!



The stairs in the park, the silence at the bus stop, the sight of the construction site, these are all part of our neighborhood. Far too often we sit back and complain about things, without taking action. Everyone knows decorating your house can cheer you up and make you feel more like you belong; the same applies to the streets. We should do all we can to spread a little bit more of happiness and always remember that it doesn't make sense to have ugly places, so get out there and start making them beautiful.

Wise beings say: "It doesn't make sense to have ugly places."

### Checklist for actions in your neighborhood

- white tape and a marker to write with
- balloons and string or pegs to hold them in place
- a broom, garbage pan and plastic bags to gather the rubbish
- chalk to write on the street
- cookies to eat
- double-sided tape to transform road signs
- sunflowers to plant
- friends to share the fun and ideas
- sense of humour
- a camera to take pictures

# How to make stencils

**1. Idea** - The most important thing before starting is to know what exactly you want to say with this stencil. With stencils you can show your opinion about any topic that is important to you or for society around you. Or just make something that will cheer up others!

**2. Drawing** - When the idea is ready, put it on cardboard or on transparent paper over a projector slide. You can express your idea as a drawing or a text or link them both together.

**3. Bridge** - To make precise stencil details it is necessary to make bridges inside the stencil - small gaps that keep your picture together. There are several techniques that can be used to make bridges. Some of the most popular ways are showed in pictures.



**4. Cutting out** - To cut out your stencil you need a sharp paper knife and patience. Put something thick under your stencil (for example, cardboard from boxes) to be sure that you don't mark the table. Especially when you do this at your mother's place. If you accidentally cut out some parts that are used as a bridge in the picture, you can fix it back with paper tape.

**5. Spraying** - To keep your hands clean, it's good to use rubber gloves. Make sure that stencil fits close to the surface you want to spray. for example, you can use folded paper tape on the other side. Spraying can needs to be in 20 to 30 centimetres distance and a right angle to the surface that you want to spray.



Wanna have a ready stencil design of Drive, the theme of this magazine? Go to the [www.creativeacts.org](http://www.creativeacts.org) website and download the pdf. Copy it in the size you like it and follow the guide.



# Teddy bears from Holland to Ecuador

**"Het Grote Gebeuren"** (*The Big Happening*) balances between a social experiment and a poetic street art project. The creation of small, mysterious situations is the means by which to research human behaviour within a societal context. In one of the projects "Het Grote Gebeuren" has placed presents for people in the streets, to see how they would react to it.

What happens? Het Grote Gebeuren places presents for the citizens of this world on random chosen locations. This has been done in Holland, where the project started at a school and in streets, but also in the country of Ecuador. In this way a situation is created where people have to make a choice, which tells us more about who they are and how they approach the world, than they would admit themselves. Het Grote Gebeuren stimulates social communication and tries to get people together. It also wonders how people react to these kind of situations. To what extent do fear, greed and laziness influence the social behaviour of people?

One of the first projects Het Grote Gebeuren has done is putting a box with home made teddy bears in front of a primary school, for the children of the first and second grade. I thought it was interesting to do this action anonymous. I wanted the school to react to the box with the teddy bears without knowing from whom they came and why, as an unconditional gift. If I had given the box personally to the school, it would be as

if I wanted to get benefit for it, as if I wanted to hear "thank you". That's what it is not about. I think that exactly the tension of a mysterious box in times of terrorism and suspicious parcels is interesting. How big is the fear that controls people? The school took the box inside and opened it. But they didn't unpack it. The box remained



there for a week and then disappeared. A big disappointment. I expected more to happen. Of course I thought of what could happen. But that they would do nothing, I didn't expect. I can understand that they can't just give the teddy bears to the children, because the school is responsible. But I expected that they would at least do more research instead

I wanted the school to react to the box with the teddy bears without knowing from whom they came and why, as an unconditional gift.

of just ignoring the box. But I didn't give up this easy. I e-mailed the principal. I tried to make clear that it was meant as a positive project and if they didn't want to give out the teddybears, that I would like to have them back. But unfortunately I didn't get any answer. The principal is probably not waiting for this kind of stuff, but a short answer isn't that much trouble, is it?

## MISSING

One more attempt. I spread around 15 posters on the school and in the area around it. Posters with pictures of the teddy bears, with the text: "MISSING" above it and "if you have more information about this teddy bear can you please call ... (my phonenumber)" under it. The goal of course was to get a reaction from the school. But no, I didn't get any reaction from the school. The posters were removed directly the next day. Surprisingly I got different reactions. Mostly from children who found a teddy bear, although they were totally different from the teddy bears on the posters.

Did this action totally fail? At first I had that feeling, probably because of the disappointment. But how more I went on and on with it, I realized: Actually it's a good

reaction. It indicates that there is a big fear. The school is very frightened. They think, if we just ignore it, it will stop. People are curious. I'm convinced if something like this happens to you, you would really want to know the "who" and "why". Only fear can stop you. If they would just have given the teddy bears to the children, then nothing much would really happen. The children probably would be happy. I could have maybe sent to the school, at a later date, somebody to interview the children and the teachers. But that would be it. What happened now is a much more solid reaction. It says a lot about what occupies people these days. An interesting thing about this project is that "positive" actions (the gifts) can provoke "negative" consequences (the fear and suspicion).

## Streets

A different project Het Grote Gebeuren did is placing teddy bears in different streets of Enschede, the Netherlands. On the back of these teddy bears was written: "If you find me, can you bring me home? I live on

the... (random chosen address in the same district)." So a random person will find the teddy bear and can take it to the address. The inhabitant of the address also has no clue where the teddy bear comes from. For me it was interesting to see if people would still do this for each other. And how will they deal with the situation when it becomes apparent that the teddy bear doesn't belong at that address? The reactions were very different from each other. In one district all the teddy bears where brought to the addresses and in an other district none of the teddy bears where brought to the addresses. In one district all the people reacted negative on the action, they thought it was suspicious and dangerous, while in another district all the people reacted positive and showed good understanding of the idea.

So a random person will find the teddy bear and can take it to the address. The inhabitant of the address also has no clue where the teddy bear comes from.



They are confronted with situations they usually don't get involved in so easily. And then they should form their own opinion.

This project is also done in Ecuador. A totally different country, different mentality and a different political situation.

Why I do this?  
I don't want to change people and I also don't what to tell them what they have to think. I think that's no use. People don't want to be told by others what they should think. But I want to make people consistent. That they at least realize what happens. That they at least think about it for a moment. Or that they are confronted with situations they usually don't get involved in so easily. And then they should form their own opinion.

Links: [www.hetgrotegebeuren.com](http://www.hetgrotegebeuren.com).

Elise

## Guerilla sunflowers grow in 's-Hertogenbosch

In 's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands, a sunflower guerilla action campaign was undertaken and proved to be a success. The idea to plant sunflowers all over the city, in between the concrete and asphalt came from the article on a sunflower guerilla by Brussels Farmer in Maatje #2.

First the sunflowers were sowed in little pots and after about fifty of them were large enough to survive on their own, a team was formed to plant them on a quiet June evening. When dusk set in the people armed themselves with shovels, the small sunflowers and little flags to make a statement, then sneaked quickly and silently through the streets. The small, home made paper flags, that were put next to each little plant, made it clear that in time this was going to be a sunflower, so that the gardeners from the city services would not be able to overlook them. On the other side of the flag, a text from the Loesje-collective was printed that said: 'Are you already caught sowing flowers in public green zones?' to encourage other people to do the same.

If you're serious about

planting guerilla style you can plant fifty flowers in one hour and in several locations. We visited the surroundings of a large home for elderly people, some busy roundabouts and a traffic square with daily traffic jams.

### In bloom

After a few weeks the gardeners came, dug out weeds, and left the little plants with flags cheerfully where they were! The plants grew enormously fast and at the end of July every passer-by could enjoy the sunflowers in full bloom.

After an article in the local newspaper, written by a surprised journalist, somebody anonymous even took the effort to put sticks next to the flowers that were already over two metres by that time, to give them support so they would not break because of their weight.

In September, after the flowers had given away their most beautiful moment to the public, they were gone. Let's hope somebody picked them before the gardeners came for the last time!

Due to the success, we are planning for at least 250 sunflowers next summer, it is so easy to do and they cheer up boring places and the public so much!

Lonja de Hart

More info on  
sunflower guerilla?  
[En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerilla\\_gardening](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerilla_gardening)





# Riders of the apocalypse

***Some people suggested them to earn money with building luxurious bikes, but they don't want to turn their movement into a commercial action.***



## *Riders of the apocalypse*

*What do you do if you don't get enough drive anymore out of sitting together, talking about a better world and drinking beer with your friends? On October 14th 2006 four guys in Riga decided to make freaky bikes and ride them through the city (and drink beer). Just because doing this is like a great party, and to promote bicycle culture in their city. Now the movement in Riga has grown.*

It wasn't their dream to become "freakbikers", it just turned out from spirit of beer and with the help of the almighty Internet, where they got informed about the international freakbike movement, of which the Americans seem to be the most active and also the craziest, wearing leather jackets on their freaky rides and act like in strange brotherhoods. The freakbikers in Riga did give themselves a name too: Apokalipses Jātnieki, meaning "Riders of the apocalypse".

A freakbike is an extraordinary vehicle, that could be made by anything what one has in an old garage, like bike details, pipes, armchairs and any other junk. A freakbike is like a sculpture, led by kinetic energy.

After the Latvian freakbikers decided to make workshops for other people to join them, they developed into a movement of more than twenty people. They now gather during the weekends in their garage. Here they started to weld. Their motto is "the crazier the better". Some bikes even look unridable. Freakbiker Mikus admitted that this can happen, but that this doesn't stop them from making new ones even crazier.

### *Snowbikes*

In the beginning they didn't think that it would be such a movement, they just thought to have nice bycycles and rides. When the group became bigger, they had a lot of events and also exhibitions of their bikes. Media like newspapers and TV got interested. Some people suggested them to earn money with building luxurious bikes, but they don't want to turn their movement into a commercial action. They got the mission to promote bicycle culture in Riga, because they think it's no fun to sit in a car in traffic jams. Freakbikes are a nice way to attract people to the bicycle culture. When the group participated in an environmental action, a TV-guy asked why they call themselves like "Riders of the apocalypse", does it mean that everybody will die soon? "No", they answered, "only cars will die out."

Since winter is coming soon to Latvia, the freakbikers already think about making crazy snowbikes with skis instead of wheels. And let's hope that they still – also with the snowbikes – won't need their medicine case, which the governmental Art Foundation sponsored them recently.

**David Schilter**





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Contact us: info@creativeacts.org

Contribute to the next issue: editor@creativeacts.org

<http://www.creativeacts.org>

Creative Acts  
c/o Loesje  
Postfach 910138  
12413 Berlin  
Germany

Editors: Myrto Apostolaki, Joep van Delft, Marc van Dijck, Luder Esveld, Lotte Huijs, Farah Marzak, Melissa Valso, Julia Wernersson, Pärsla Kärklija

Art Director: Melissa Valso.

Co-ordinating editor: Marc van Dijck.

Overall co-ordinators: Luder Esveld, Julia Wernersson.  
Webmaster: Tom Buytaert.

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Mašta #3  
Photos & illustrations made by:

Page 2: poster by Loesje  
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P. 8-9: drawings by Clara Roethe  
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P. 10: left: poster by Loesje; right: photo by Frans Prins  
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P. 13: Ofog  
P. 14-15: top and right: Ofog; bottom: Magnus Löfqvist  
P. 16: Frans Prins  
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P. 24: Kárlis Taukačs  
P. 25: Tom Buytaert  
P. 26-27: Geiko  
P. 28-29: Eduards Gaušis  
P. 30: Myrto Apostolaki  
P. 31: Myrto Apostolaki and Tom Buytaert  
P. 34-35: Tom Buytaert  
P. 36-37: Eduards Gaušis and Kárlis Taukačs  
P. 38-39: Elise  
P. 40: Lonja de Hart  
P. 41: Clara Roethe  
P. 42-43: Archive of Apokalipses Jātnieki  
P. 44: Eduards Gaušis and Kárlis Taukačs  
P. 45: George Georgiadis  
P. 46-47: logo YiA by Youth in Action; poster by Loesje



**Mašta #4: Designer Me**  
**Identify yourself.**

Stereotype this. I am a dadaist life-artist, a collage of ready-made identities. I am the master of remix. A bit local, a hint subcultural, a trace global. Always subversive. Today, I am my own Designer Me.

Consume the style. Is identity fit for consumption? Is it that simple?  
I don't buy it.

Newsflash: Terrorism, us versus them, humanitarian intervention. Do you believe in the culture of clashes? If another world is possible, so is another way of life.

I belong to no one. I dissolve, your expectations delude.

Street art craves for individuality, requests signs of personality from the impersonal public space. Reclaim public space, make it more suitable for your way of life.

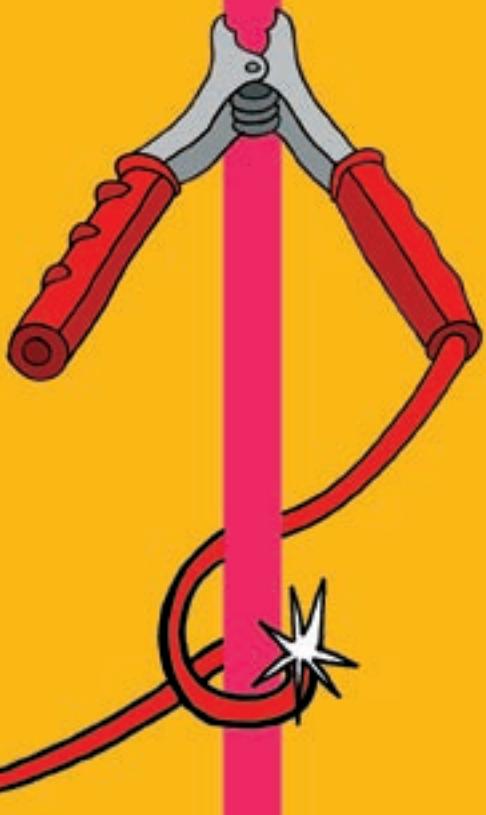
Who will you be in the next five minutes?

**Contribute!**

Help us make this magazine a success. Publish your articles, photos and art work in Mašta #4. Feel welcome to share your ideas and opinions on [www.creativeacts.org](http://www.creativeacts.org) or send them to editor@creativeacts.org.

**Deadline for contributions: May 1, 2008.**

Mašta can only publish a selection of the materials; we ask for your understanding.



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