

Commentary (4.2.4.)

Aesthetics of Resistance? (4.2.4.1.)

Climate Justice Action (4.2.4.2.)

Active Time Revisited (4.2.4.3.)

In a Stolen Moment (ALLOTRIA versus HYSKENSTRÆDE)(4.2.4.4.)

Aesthetics of Resistance? (4.2.4.1.)¹

The artist/researcher: Frans Jacobi

The Invisible Committee, Never Trust A Cop, Kai Vittrup: Claus Handberg

Camera-men: Claus Handberg & Frans Jacobi

The artist/researcher:

Dear Audience. My name is Frans Jacobi. We are here together to make a short introduction to the form of performative artistic research I do in my phd-project, The Aesthetics of Resistance.

You have to help me a little here: I'm going to ask you to change places, so that all of you who are dressed in black sit down over here on my left, while all the rest of you who are not dressed in black sit over there on my right.

(Yes, I really mean it, would you mind ... black over here, Thank you! The rest of you over there ... Thank you!)

Thank you! Very good.

In a way, the idea behind this is reasonably illustrative: In the trial concerning the 905 demonstrators who were arrested on 12. December 2009 at Amagerbrogade in connection with the Climate Summit COP15, the police tried to argue that 1883 demonstrators within the appr. 100,000 strong demonstration belonged to the so-called Black Bloc.

The Black Bloc is a militant action formation on the extreme European Left. In a way, The Black Bloc represents the common cliché about the violent demonstrator: The stone-throwing troublemaker dressed in black.

The cliché covers a deliberately militant action form. Only through direct struggle can society be confronted. Or as the Black Bloc's secret lodge, The Invisible Committee, writes in the manifest, "The Coming Insurrection":

The Invisible Committee:

All the incivilities of the streets should become methodical and systematic, converging in a diffuse, effective guerilla war that restores us to our ungovernability, our primordial unruliness. It's disconcerting to some that this same lack of

discipline figures so prominently among the recognized military virtues of resistance fighters. In fact, though, rage and politics should never have been separated. Without the first, the second is lost in discourse; without the second the first exhausts itself in howls.²

The artist/researcher

In the run-up to the large-scale Climate Summit COP15, the German network, Never Trust A Cop, released a kind of action trailer on the Internet. Across a series of images of street fights, burning cars and activists dressed in black, direct struggle is called for:

Never Trust A Cop:

In Copenhagen 7th to 18th of December.
COP15 will try to get capitalism back on track.
We don't.
We will go to Copenhagen.
To show a dead system how to die.³

The artist/researcher:

This 4-minute long video was a decisive factor in the mobilization of the Danish police before the Climate Summit. Thousands of vandalizing hooligans in black are expected in Copenhagen. The then minister of justice, Brian Mikkelsen, is instrumental in the passing of a new law – the so-called hooligan package – which opens up the possibility of so-called "preventive arrest".

When the largest police force in Danish history on 12. December 2009 arrested 944 persons, left them sitting on the cold asphalt of Amagerbrogade and then confined them in the so-called climate prison at Retortvej in Valby, it's based on the presumption that the 944 persons belong to the Black Bloc.

When the police on 16. December 2010 lost a civil action from 178 of the 944 arrested persons in the City Court, they immediately appealed the case to the High Court. Here they tried to convince the judges that there was a well-founded suspicion against the 944 persons. That they constituted a potential danger and therefore should be arrested for preventive purposes.

When I attended the court case in the High Court on 7. November 2011, the police were putting witnesses on the stand. It's a question of rendering it probable that The Black Bloc is so big that it justifies the 944 arrests.

The argument is two-sided:

On the one hand, a video is shown where a number of demonstrators change their clothes on the street close to the place where a couple of windows are smashed in the Bourse. The demonstrators change rapidly into black clothes, take part in the window smashing and then change back to clothes in other colours, thus disappearing in the crowd. The police estimates that 300-400 demonstrators change identity in this way in the middle of the demonstration. However, on the video film only 12-15 persons are seen.

On the other hand, aerial photos of the demonstration taken from a relatively great height are shown. With a stretch of the imagination these photos show that part of the demonstration is possibly dressed in black. The police have enlarged the photos and framed a particularly suspicious area in red. Then they have engaged a surveyor to calculate the size of this area based on buildings, street crossings etc.

By the way, this critical area is situated exactly out here at Torvegade between Knippelsbro and Christianshavns Torv.

Back at the Police Academy, they then make some tests where police trainees are positioned in close formation on previously surveyed areas corresponding to how closely people march in a demonstration. Based on these tests, it is possible to calculate how many demonstrators are located in the critical area within the red frame. According to police calculations, 1800 persons are thus located within the critical area, in the Black Bloc.

The two arguments are, paradoxically, diametrically opposed: Either the Black Bloc change their clothes on the way, and are only dressed in black for a short moment while they engage in an after all fairly limited amount of vandalization directed at 2 windows at the Bourse. Or they are dressed in black all the way and marching in close order across Christianshavns Torv on the way to new violent riots.

Now, the High Court rejected the arguments of the police, and the police lost the case on 25. January 2012. The Court determined that the arrest in question was illegal, made on far too slender suspicion.

However, the interesting thing here today is not so much the legal aspects of the case, whether the police win or loose. The interesting thing is that the police arguments

are based exclusively on purely aesthetic observations. The crucial point for them is who are dressed in what colour at which time? Are you dressed in black or are you not dressed in black?

Now, the colour black is in no way neutral – all of us who ordinarily wear black know that it means something. We also know fairly well what it means, what signals we are sending, when we wear black. But that it should be connected with a directly anti-social attitude is perhaps to draw the line too close.

Now, you could be tempted to believe that in this way I want to prove the quite extraordinary naivety, the hair-raising incompetence or the brutal black-or-white view of society or the Danish police. In no way is that my intention.

Even if you do not in any way approve of the acts of the police or their argumentation, you may well presume that the Black Bloc on some scale or other was present on 12. December 2009. Maybe the 944 persons arrested do not precisely make up the Black Bloc, but that the Black Bloc is engaging in militant action forms, there is really no doubt.

What I would like to illustrate with our small collective exercise here is rather that the aesthetic, in this case colour and the use of colour in public space, is one of the decisive agents in the game between police and demonstrators, played out around the ever more visual and performative protest movements of later years.

To illustrate that this theatre of the street is not only played by one side of the conflict – by a hugely aesthetically conscious generation of new protest movements worldwide – I'll finish this introduction with a quotation from the textbook "Operation", written by one of the grand old men of Danish police, Kai Vittrup:

Kai Vittrup:

The technique of Show of Force should be carried through to its extreme consequence. Thus all the movements, positions etc. of the police should be marked by discipline and a clear line of command. The colour of the uniforms and of the police vehicles should be the same, at least within the individual units. The police vehicles must be brought forward on line with or immediately behind the police positions, so that the size of these are visually included in the picture and thus strengthens the effect....⁴

The artist/researcher:

Thank you for joining in this small exercise. Thank you!

THE END

Climate Justice Action (4.2.4.2.)⁵

1:

From an activist point of view, one of the highlights in these past two weeks was the Climate Justice Action on Wednesday, December 16th. Planned for months and publicized and discussed for almost as long, the main purpose of this demonstration was to break through the fence and police barricades surrounding the COP15 area at Bella Center. Once inside, the aim was to meet with a group of like-minded delegates from all over the world and establish a People's Assembly. This Assembly would then discuss and change the agenda for COP15 – taking decisions in their own hands; the hands of the people.

The action is organized as two separate actions. The first, a legal demonstration called the Blue Bloc, set off at 8am from Tårnby Station, a couple of kilometers from Bella Center. The other, the Green Bloc, met an hour later at Ørestad Metro Station close to Bella Center. This second bloc is not legally announced as a demonstration, and is supposed to split into smaller groups and seek possible ways of entering the Bella Center area. Green Bloc is immediately surrounded and fenced in by the police, and after some running around the police arrested around 200 activists. Pacified.

The Blue Bloc, though, gathers more protesters and is estimated at around 2000 people as it moves slowly towards Bella Center. The police are following the demo very close and have a whole train of cars fencing off one side of the demo. There is constant protests over police intrusions into the demonstration from the organizers who are speaking from a truck in the middle of the demo. The demonstration is large, noisy and completely international. There is a wild, anarchistic joy in the air as the parade passes through the rainy gray suburbs.

When the demo arrives at Bella Center the futility of the plan to break through the heavy fences surrounding the COP15 is obvious. It's a heavy double fence with huge concrete bases and the presence of the police is massive. After an hour of pushing – the crowd of activists using their sheer number and the collective weight of bodies, trying to push their way through the police barricades - the police decide to cancel the demo and to clear the cross-road where the battle is taking place. They bring in dogs and a whole brigade of armored vehicles. Now a dramatic battle takes place, and there is violence from both sides and a lot of arrests. Standing on the fringes of the battle, I see a constant flow of hurt demonstrators – hurt by pepper-spray or hit by the police - who are brought out to the small groups of medical supporters who have been following the demo all day. The police manage to force the demo a few hundred meters down Vejlands Alle, the road in front of Bella Center, and keep it there, now fenced in on both sides by police barricading the street with their vehicles.

Here, on the street, the temporary People's Assembly is established on a huge carpet in red and blue. It is reported that a similar assembly is established inside the Bella Center Area by the supporters inside. Now a series of short speeches start, and there is a lively, positive atmosphere. After a while, the demonstration starts moving back to Copenhagen City, where it dissolves as darkness falls.

2:

The two main images that the Climate Justice Action tried to establish were the breaking-thru-the-barriers-of-the-COP15 and the People's Assembly. Both are to be seen as symbolic gestures in the sense that neither event was plausible, and the

People's Assembly could easily have been held in another place without police restrictions. So, the only reason to create those two situations was symbolic. Then how to describe the symbolic value of the two images:

The breaking-thru-the-barriers-action presents the desire and the power of the movements, not only to confront the police, but also to conquer the barrier. The barrier is a strong symbol of the undemocratic exclusiveness of COP15. It's only a conference for the selected few. If the demonstration had succeeded in breaking into Bella Center, it would have been a symbolic break through the symbolic barrier, opening up the conference for everybody, for the people, the multitude.

The People's Assembly is the symbolic realization of this new openness. And it symbolizes a democratic process, where everyone has the possibility to join. Even though the actual assembly would only have been shared by a few hundred people, it would have worked as a symbolic representation of an open, all-inclusive version of democracy.

What really happened was more blurry. The idea of breaking through the barrier was obviously unrealistic, as the police presence was far too overwhelming. The number of demonstrators was also too small to push through the barricades. So the push became a manifestation of confrontation with the police. Two opposing forces meeting in a clash. This is where my doubt comes in; if the purpose of the symbolic gesture was to break open COP15, the result was quite different. The event manifested an image of confrontation. This negative image is of course not only produced by the Climate Justice Action, but also by the police, maybe even mainly by the police. But I think it is a problem that the Climate Justice Action chose a symbolic gesture that had such a strong element of confrontation – mainly because this confrontation was what the Danish government and the police had been building up as a negative expectation in the media in the month preceding COP15.

At the same time, I am really astonished and suspicious about the way the police handled the situation: The sober solution would have been to wait out the activists' big push. There wasn't at any point any threat of anybody breaking through the defence line of the police. If they had just kept this line and waited that extra half an hour, the defining moment of Climate Justice Action would have blown over, and the push would have dissolved by itself. Instead, the police chose to close down the demo, threaten everybody with arrest and clear the street in front of the barricaded entrance to Bella Center. This – unnecessary - police action created turmoil and violence on both sides, but it seemed like a consciously violent act by the police forces. A show of force. And it could be interpreted as a strategic way of fulfilling the negative expectation of the violent activist. A strategic move that produces the image of the violent activist.

3 :

I am still pondering over the Climate Justice Action last Wednesday: The second image that the Climate Justice Action created was The People's Assembly. It was realized in two places instead of one; inside the perimeter of Bella Center by the inside supporters of the action (removed by the police after only a short session), and outside on the street in front of Bella Center. In the street-version I took part in, a crowd of activists were sitting on a large blue/red circular carpet. A megaphone was passed around as a row of speakers from all over the world made short speeches addressing the climate justice themes. It was a beautiful moment full of sincerity and

joy. Even though this street-summit had only a couple of hundred participants, the inherent symbolic meaning was performed in a clear and poetic sense.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0ZzPI3Pc6s&NR=1>

This is a non-aggressive, positive image, and it is very hard to argue for attacking it. Looking at the whole Climate Justice Action in retrospect, I think it would have been a much stronger gesture to make this image the central focal point of the demonstration; instead of trying to push through the police defences – an obviously unrealistic quest – it would have been a stronger move to establish the People's Assembly immediately when the demo arrived at the perimeter of Bella Center. If the police had attacked such an event, they would have had a very hard time explaining why; they would have staged themselves as the fight-seeking aggressors I think they actually are.

In my view, this is what the fight is really about: Who controls the symbolic gestures of the day. Who gets their messages communicated in the proper sense. On December 16th this game ended unresolved. Neither the activists or the police seemed to gain the upper hand. What is unsettling, though, is that the police are an active player in this game. In a true democracy, police forces should be staying sober, neutral. The escalation of police power with an independent political agenda, we have seen over these last two weeks, raises an unavoidable question: Is Denmark now a police-state?

Active Time Revisited (4.2.4.3.)

'Active Time' is a complex and rich idea that fuels the inquiries into left-wing activism by the Danish anthropologist, Stine Krøijer. Active Time is a 'figuration of the future'. By engaging in certain collaborative activities – by being active – the activists create an 'interstice of time', a temporal rupture in the all-encompassing time of capitalism, Dead Time. The activities constituting Active Time have a double quality; they are Direct Action, in the sense that they have a direct purpose in the autonomous social space that Active Time creates, but the activity also represents a world-view, an attitude towards something. It is in this latter sense Active Time is political. It is a figuration of a world-view, another world. Figuration means that the actions defining the specific interstice of Active Time are being performed by the activists, and therefore, a part of the other world actually exists; exists in the moment it is being performed. The performance of an action is what brings this 'other world' to exist as a temporal interstice. When the action is over, the autonomous social space it created evaporates, and the participants slide back into Dead Time as individuals. It is important that Active Time constitutes a collective identity, a collective body. This new identity is a crucial part of the political difference created by Active Time. Krøijer calls Active Time a 'figuration of the future'. The other world represented in the world-view of Direct Activism is radically different from capitalism to such an extent that no plausible transition seems possible, no democratic reforms, not even a revolutionary take-over, seems possible. There are no visions of any possible progress. There is no near future. The only possibility seems to be the total destruction of capitalism. Then, after the destruction follows another world – in the far future. This is the apocalyptic aspects of Active Time. But, if progress is not possible, figuration is. In Active Time, aspects of the far-off future are brought to exist, here and now. The 'other world' comes alive, it exists in a time-pocket, as a gap in the Dead Time of capitalism.

My concept of the sense-event is very close to that of Active Time, and I have been deeply inspired by it. There are differences, though. It is especially the idea of the future I have problems with. It seems to me that the term 'future' in itself involves an idea of a linear progress of time that is then contradicted by the idea of simultaneously existing, but radically different, time-zones. To me it is an important point, also in political terms, that the other world that appears in Active Time exists now. It is present. It is even more present than the dead flow of consumerist time, defined by passivity and distance, when we are submerged in capitalism. Active Time constitutes a presence. Therefore it is possible. As a critique of capitalism, this possibility is crucial. We are told that there exists no possible alternative to capitalism, that there is nothing outside of capitalism. By inducing Active Time into Dead Time, Direct Action proves that a possible other world exists, that an alternative is possible. Now. In my slightly schematic formulation of the sense-event, there is also a double presence involved, but the image being performed exists simultaneously in the present and in an outstretched forever. Image-time is not in the future, it is a category of time out of this world. A kind of meta-time uniting past, present and future; stretching out as a layer over the continuously developing everyday-time.

In regard to describing the world-views of Direct Activism, though, certain features of Active Time can't be dismissed. The idea that Active Time is constituted by collective practice, and thereby creates a new collective identity, is fundamental in understanding the political and existential impact of the temporal ruptures created in

contemporary activism. The whole idea of looking at concepts of time as the difference-making tools is crucial. By this, Krøijer is able to conceptualize the very complex socio-political foundation of contemporary activism in a manner that departs from the politically charged clichés and mis-interpretations that is dominating the public debate on these issues.

In a Stolen Moment (ALLOTRIA versus HYSKENSTRÆDE)(4.2.4.4.)

overwrite |ˌɔvərˈrɪtl

verb (past -wrote; past part. -written) [trans.]

1 write on top of (other writing) : many names had been scratched out or overwritten.

- Computing destroy (data) or the data in (a file) by entering new data in its place : an entry stating who is allowed to overwrite the file.
- another term for overtyping .

2 write too elaborately or ornately : there is a tendency to overwrite their parts and fall into cliché.⁶

We are the ones who decide, when we want to fight!

On January 11th 1983, a large police force had gathered around the squatted house Allotria in Nørrebro, a former working-class area near the center of Copenhagen. The so-called BZ-movement was at that time large and had squatted around 6 or 7 houses in the same neighbourhood. Society at large were provoked and tired of this expanding counter-culture. Both police and squatters had been building up tension and prepared for the final struggle about the squatted houses. Allotria was selected as the first battlefield; it was here that the real fighting would start, and it was here that the symbolic fight would be fought. The police had gathered more than 1000 police officers - the largest police force aimed at one situation in Denmark since the Second World War. Large parts of the neighbourhood were sealed off from normal traffic and curious citizens. A team of voluntary medicals and a huge media delegation was in place. The rumour was that the police was prepared for violence on a scale never seen before, even fatal casualties could be the sad outcome of this monumental confrontation. What then happened was a completely unexpected rearranging of expected positions.

In the weeks up to the confrontation, the squatters in Allotria had been digging a tunnel from the house under the street and into the ground below the opposite house, where a plumber had his small workshop.

In the morning when the house was surrounded, the police lifted up a container with a group of armed, special forces to the third floor of Allotria, where they hoped to be able to access the house easily. The squatters hurried down to the basement. They filled the house with so-called stink bombs and hung a huge banner out on the front of the house: "We are the ones who decide, when we want to fight". Then they left the building through the narrow tunnel under the street. The astonished plumber and his wife let them pass out through the back of his workshop to the other side of the street, where a truck was waiting for them. Hidden in the back of the truck they passed out through the police fences and disappeared in the crowds of people gathering around the battlefield.

The police forces stormed the empty house from their container, using heavy amounts of teargas. Only after considerable time did they discover that no one was there to fight them. The gathering crowds outside became more and more amused, while the heavy police forces seemed ridiculous.

Already the same afternoon Allotria was demolished completely. In the following days, the squatters became the heroes of the Danish media. The successful escape from confrontation had completely turned around public opinion. They received

outspoken support from all levels of society, and the police was ridiculed and laughed at for a considerable time to come.⁷

The interesting aspect of this event – apart from its dramatic, riot-romancing elements – is how the act of retreating becomes the decisive move that turns around public opinion. The squatters are taking part in the building-up of tension on equal terms with the police force, but by leaving the conflict at the perfect strategic moment, they are winning the conflict, at least in the sense of public discourse. Activism is here turned into a carefully choreographed public theatre, where the entire police force is unwillingly included as actors on a stage they have somehow set for themselves.

Inside the movement the following time wasn't experienced as a victory – although public opinion was won, Allotria itself was lost, and in the months following, all other squatted houses in the area were conquered by police forces. So, in a paradoxical way, the great positive impact that the Allotria Tunnel made for the movement also marked a change; instead of being a fairly peaceful squatter movement, the BZ became the BZ-brigade: A far more militant and disillusioned movement that somehow lost momentum by the end of the 1980s.



Allotria 1983

Fight for your right to party!

In the late evening of May 8th 2009 a so-called pirate-party blocked off a street in the central shopping district of Copenhagen. Gathering 4-500 participants by an effective sms-chain, the party continued for some hours, and in this short interval marked a new turn for the activist movements in Copenhagen.

Hyskenstræde is a small side street off the main pedestrian street, Strøget, in the old city center of Copenhagen. Strøget is the central shopping area in Denmark, and in this sense it is a strong symbol of both commercial capitalism and Danish tourism. It is on Strøget that all the international shopping chains and all the large and exclusive malls are situated; from Magasin du Nord to Hennes & Mauritz. The smaller sidestreets are narrow, the houses are old and beautiful. Shops are small, exclusive and expensive. The area has only a few people living there; it's more a zone for shopping and leisure; full of cafés, restaurants and cinemas.

By choosing Hyskenstræde as the site for the pirate-party, the organizers made a clear choice: Instead of operating mainly in Nørrebro or the farther outskirts of Copenhagen – in their own areas so to speak – it is now one of the main areas of capitalism that is being targeted.

The street was blocked off at one end by a van carrying a large sound system, and at the other end by a row of old oil-barrels with fires, marking the sealed-off area. In between these barriers loud electronic dance music was blasting, while the crowd was raving and spray-painting graffiti all over shop windows, walls and parked cars. A tall ladder was even provided, so that graffiti could be painted on the second floor level of the buildings. One or two cars were destroyed by people dancing on the roof or by being set afire. After some hours of heavy partying the event ebbed out, and a few real hardcore participants moved on to smash some shop windows and spread the vandalizing further into the city.

During the whole event a large police force surrounded the pirate-party, but by order from the deputy-in-chief they remained calm, letting the raving and vandalizing continue, giving the participants a chance to 'let off steam'.

Street Dancing part 3, communique no. 1 & 3

In 3 short statements released a week after the pirate-party, the organizers try to explain.⁸ They talk of pirates and of the end of politics; of Foucault and Carl Schmitt. They talk of vandalizing as sex, they talk of an orgy of vandalizing. They talk of being pissed off, of being bored by capitalism and of tearing down without building up. They talk of politics as rude, violent and unmediated. They talk about an explosive urge for freedom.

Not quoted but constantly roaming around between the lines is Hakim Bey and his TAZ – the temporary autonomous zone. In his text 'The Temporary Autonomous Zone' Hakim Bey starts out with a worldwide network of pirate societies in the 18th century, and from these 'pirate utopias' develops a proposal for a new political paradigm: TAZ. The phrase, temporary autonomous zone, more or less explains everything; it's about uprising being its own goal and "insurrections blossoming spontaneously into anarchist culture". It is NOT about revolution, but about creating (secret) unmediated zones of self-governed micro-societies.⁹

The Hyskenstræde Party is exemplary, classic TAZ. Temporary both in scope and in real time. Autonomous in all its illegal, anti-everything attitude. Zone in its apparently clean-cut slicing off a limited area out of capitalist normativity.

Hakim Bey even offers a plausible motto for the event:

"Fight for your right to party" is in fact not a parody of the radical struggle but a new manifestation of it."



Hyskenstræde 2009

Nights in This City

In his book, 'Site-specific Art', the English theatre theoretician Nick Kaye describes what he calls 'writing over the city': In the performance 'Nights in This City' by the English theatre-group Forced Entertainment, a performer/tour guide takes an audience in a bus on a 'strange tour of various locations in Sheffield'. In an increasingly distracted and fictionalized narration of the city that the tour is driving through, a new storyline is added on top of the reality the audience is accustomed to. The city is being 'written over'. But the new story or text doesn't establish a new solid interpretation of the sites visited; instead the writing over suggests a 'moving on' through the sites – a half fictional, unstable, temporary relation to the city that enables a performative and loose (superficial) attitude, vibrating in layers of quotations and references to other sites and other cities. As Kaye quotes himself:

"The space that we really live in is a kind of electronically mediated one. And it feels like one's landscape – the sources of one's images, the things that haunts you – are likely to be second, third, fourth-hand".¹⁰

Even though the idea of the 'writing over', and the graffiti done by the partying pirates in Hyskenstræde is an almost too obvious analogy – graffiti as written text on a public surface already inscribed with historic and established meaning – the transitive interpretation of the city offered by this idea could be a clue to understanding the event of the pirate-party. Instead of conquering the street, as the general interpretation seems to be, the party-pirates are only 'passing through' the site. But in the 'passing through' they are partly erasing the established interpretation of the site, giving it a new and ambiguous meaning.

A fall into cliché

During the whole event a large police force were surrounding the pirate-party, but by order from the deputy-in-chief, they remained calm, letting the party and the vandalizing continue, giving the participants a chance to 'let off steam'.

Seen from the point of public opinion, though, it was the police officer-in-chief who made the most unexpected creative move that night. By remaining calm and not interfering with the wild and escalating vandalizing, the police forces managed to completely ridicule the party-pirates in society at large. By NOT engaging in violent confrontation, the main argument of the pirates was cancelled out; the claim that they are spied upon, controlled and held down by the police didn't come true. As they were allowed to rave, vandalize and even leave the scene unnoticed, all of a sudden

they were the ones asked to explain and justify their acts. When morning broke, public opinion in all its overwhelming entirety, from the far right, through mainstream and far into the radical left, united to condemn the 'autonomous bullies'. The old cliché of the irresponsible, spoiled middleclass youth gone beserk in untamed egoism became the predominant mode of interpretation.

Hyskenstræde and Allotria mirror each other in the sense that the act of retreating from conflict becomes the defining act of the event. Or at least it defines how public opinion about the event is created. To use the 'writing over' term: The act of retreating from conflict creates a narrative that overwrites all other narratives and becomes the main narrative signifying the event.

Even though the police force was scorned by politicians in the following days - "how could they sit passive and let obvious crime pass right in front of them?" - the turn of public opinion stems from this strategic passivity. By avoiding confrontation the police creates a scenario, where the partying pirates are cast in all too much light - an explosive urge for freedom falls into cliché.¹¹

But Hyskenstræde also mirrors Allotria in the sense that seen from inside the movement, everything is seen from a different point of view:

Street Dancing part 3 communique no. 2

We don't exist. Only the need of Denmark to find us exists, but we are not to be found at all.

YO YO YO. We would like to send a huge thanks to everyone who took part in one of the best parties that ever took place in the desolate heart of Copenhagen! We might have built your house, we might have taken care of your children, we might have sat behind the cash register in your supermarket, we might have written the chronicle in your newspaper, we might have made the pictures hanging on your wall or we might even have cleaned the buttocks of your grandparents. But right now we are not to be found – by anyone.

WHAT WHAT WHAT! We celebrate you! You were so wild. Your disciplinary dancing, your crawling and caps are our happiness! The other day we found some of those that also don't exist. And we created a party that don't exist. And we left some traces that were found – by someone.

SAY SAY SAY! We wanted to mess up the claustrophobic market for a while and we were spooning with you for two and a half hours, and that was really a nice spoon! The traces doesn't point to our quarters, to our working places or to who we are voting for. Or to who we don't vote for. The traces don't point to our parents or to our childhood. The traces don't point to our level of income or to our friends.

FRESH! FRESH FRESH! We really like you all. And we hope to see you around. The traces are crude lines. They prove that we had sex up against a street, down thru Strøget,

thru the market. They trace 50 meters of an endless city that don't exist, but is owned by someone else.

DEF DEF DEF! In a stolen moment owned by us that don't exist.¹²

Notes:

¹ 'Aesthetics of Resistance?' was performed as my part of the seminar: 'Artistic Research?', at Overgaden, Copenhagen 23.2.2012

² The Invisible Committee: THE COMING INSURRECTION (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e) 2009), p. 110-111

³ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWEzLoUgXw0>

⁴ Kai Vittrup: OPERATION (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Police 2003), p.97

⁵ This commentary was first published as 3 entries on my blog on the activism surrounding the Climate Summit: <http://climate-action.blogspot.dk>

The argument presented in it reflects my thinking about these matters at that point. My research since then has showed me other possibilities of interpreting the push-thru-the-fence action. These more recent views are presented in the script of Climate/Kettle.

⁶ New Oxford American Dictionary

⁷ <http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allotria-huset>

For a longer version of the story see: ULRİK DAHLIN: *Tunneler fra Allotria*, Information 11. januar 2003

⁸ All 3 statements were presented in this article:
Os der ikke findes: *En eksplosiv frihedskraft*, Modkraft.dk, 15. maj 2009
(<http://modkraft.dk/sektion/kontradoxa/article/en-eksplosiv-frihedskraft>)

⁹ Hakim Bey: *The Temporary Autonomous Zone* (<http://www.t0.or.at/hakimbey/taz/taz3a.htm>)

¹⁰ Nick Kaye: *site-specific art*, (London and New York: Routledge 2000) p. 8

¹¹ The Danish art-theorician, Mikkel Bolt, has a completely different analysis of this event than mine in this interview: CAMILLA STOCKMANN: *Kunstespert roser hærværk i Hyskenstræde*, Politiken 22. AUG. 2009 (<http://politiken.dk/kultur/ECE773474/kunstespert-roser-haervaerk-i-hyskenstraede/>)

¹² All 3 statements were presented in this article:
Os der ikke findes: *En eksplosiv frihedskraft*, Modkraft.dk, 15. maj 2009
(<http://modkraft.dk/sektion/kontradoxa/article/en-eksplosiv-frihedskraft>)