



# Essential Modernities

Special Amsterdam Edition, summer 2021

price: £0.00

*iN THiS EDiTiON:*  
Amsterdam



# introduction

This is a special edition of Essential Modernities and the second time I have decided to publish a special issue.

The first year of the pandemic was characterized by most people's frustration of being unable to fulfill their plans. For most people the restrictions imposed by the system made it near impossible to do things, but for those who know how to make something out of nothing it proved to be a golden era. We were enjoying ourselves on the set of Sex, Drugs, Disease & Death, cut our chains in ROT and we're overloaded with international data at Punk Cinema Festival Amsterdam.

Since Essential Modernities 5, released well over a year ago in May of 2020 a crucial switch has taken place: the end of the individual, absorbed by the group. Even in the prosperous West we're no longer able to make decisions of our own. The desires of the individual have been pushed and shoved aside, crushed under the weight of the needs of the masses, or rather the needs of the group posing as representatives of the masses.

When dreams are bigger than yourself you need more than just yourself to accomplish them, an individual just won't cut it. There are roughly three options;

- 1) you can choose to abandon your dream
- 2) persuade someone else to abandon their dream and follow yours, either through inception or force
- 3) get lucky and find others with overlapping dreams

Having your own dreams obliterated doesn't mean you can't love living your life while living the dream of someone else. Love of life replaced by living for love. Dreams are there to be dreamed, not lived, anyway. It should not be expected to remain an individual when you start to follow dreams.

This edition is all about manifestos and manifesting. In this Special Amsterdam edition we'll be looking at examples of the the third option, at least I'm believing to think so, happening in Amsterdam last year.

When dreams overlap, so do thoughts. What is the barrier between what's yours and what's someone else's? Property ceases to exist and borders fade away. *Mi casa es tu casa.*

Direct interventions, collectively fueled, individually dreamed, the antidote against the ever increasing mass-hysteria. *iNo soy punky, soy naa!*

This edition is being released here in London, the capital of a country anxiously clinging to the sweet after-taste of illusionary individuality, while unable to escape the consequences of a global pandemic.

And remember; everything you see and read here is the truth, just not the only truth.

David Gębski, publisher





# ROT manifesto

January 25, 2021

Amsterdam

A spectre is haunting us - the spectre of lack of space. 'Out-of-Space' the question, then, was what we could do with 'no space' in the conditions we were in. Luckily for us, capitalism made us pretty good at self-management. It also made us fairly good at building hierarchies, structures of authority, and other practices that align with capitalism rather than anarchism. Hierarchies that exclude and close off the world we share.

In the current landscape of the city, where one cannot be free, there is an abundance of places where one is dictated how to behave. All places



are enforcing how one should act, feel and think, everything but giving one the possibility to alter the hierarchic structures currently present in our society. These structures restrict and distract people from living independently.

Society starts with the very bricks and concrete it is built upon. The hierarchy is stacked in real estates, nuts, bolts and shelves. Work with what is there, take what is rotting away, dust it off, embrace the dust and everything will be both a tool and a toy. One man's trash is another fool's gold. Seeing the beauty of this rotten system, drowning capitalism in the very pond it drinks from; skills intrinsic to everyone bending over like the good citizen they are expected to be.

Liberation is a continuous process, never stops, never complete. It is the process that matters; today we die, tomorrow we rot.

# ROT

## interview

by Ric Verstegen

*This is an interview with Olivia, ROT's 'owner', Olivia being the persona created to conceal the true identity of the people behind the concept.*

### **First off, what is ROT? A group, a building, both?**

ROT is neither, it's a concept, a way of life. It's working with what you have and appreciate what is there while at the same time not accepting that that's all there is. It's the name of the building but at the same time not stuck to this one particular structure, once this one is completely rotten away it will simply move on to the next one, spreading like a mold in the beams supporting our rotten society. The people involved might change, and so does the place, but the idea remains. All we need is another empty forgotten space that's rotting away.

**Your building was totally departed, but you organize events here now, what kind of events are those?**

Each weekend, when the nearby stores are closed there is a get-together of like-minded people, or at least people willing to change the system; the system that excludes, terrorizes and oppresses people. ROT is just a gear of a bigger machine, enabling its visitors to do things they can't do anywhere else; whether it is the way they move, talk or think. Art has traditionally been the medium to express oneself; critique the hierarchies in power; and unify and empower the oppressed. Assembling together by doing things we have in common, a passion for life and beauty, whatever form it may take.

To be more clear about the actual events that took place, there were movie screenings of movies that never before saw the light of day; painting evenings, coloring every last bit of our grey lives; anti-fashion events where everyone could form their own shape and idea through different fabrics and threads and finally until the seams were tearing



ROT



and we were left with nothing but ecstatic movement, united through dance and live music produced on the spot by anyone who had the desire to do it.

Everyone is able and allowed to do whatever they want, from organizing events to picking up a paint brush to just getting flat out shitfaced, ROT doesn't hold the monopoly on power, neither do its visitors.

**So, with those events, with this building and with the group ROT, what is your message? What is ROT about?**

Every museum and gallery these days; at least the ones ruled by capitalism and exclusion; capture the art in a white cube, a sterilized environment and even invented the medium 'performance' to indicate there was still some life left in the art world. ROT is focusing on every thing else but the white cube. It's the process that matters, the

interaction between artist and object, erasing the line between spectator and creator, uniting life and death by admitting that every process is a form of life and death at the same time.

*Be sure to check out their website with your Tor Browser:  
[rotnlje4uejcpckxv2irkuyismxx33n4ae2c45ixeplwckm2mgvaq3yd.onion](http://rotnlje4uejcpckxv2irkuyismxx33n4ae2c45ixeplwckm2mgvaq3yd.onion)*

# Punk Cinema Festival manifesto

What is profit in a time without value? How can concepts exist when there is no meaning? The only thing left are instincts and these are being manipulated.

The moment of Now is Nothingness filled with an aching numbness. Caused by the perpetual choking, portions of selectively calibrated data force-fed every moment by the sly hand of the dominant ideologies. A narrow narrative imposed. Irradiant colors of the real life in all it's doomed glory are neglected.

Inject the prohibited substance of the diverse particles! We all are in. Rich out your interconnections, observe wide. Out of independence comes punk cinema, setting artistic practices in motion. From the beamer to your retinas, free from regulations, censorship and any institutional pressure, punk cinema is willing to illuminate every dark corner of our compromised society.





# Punk Cinema Festival Amsterdam report

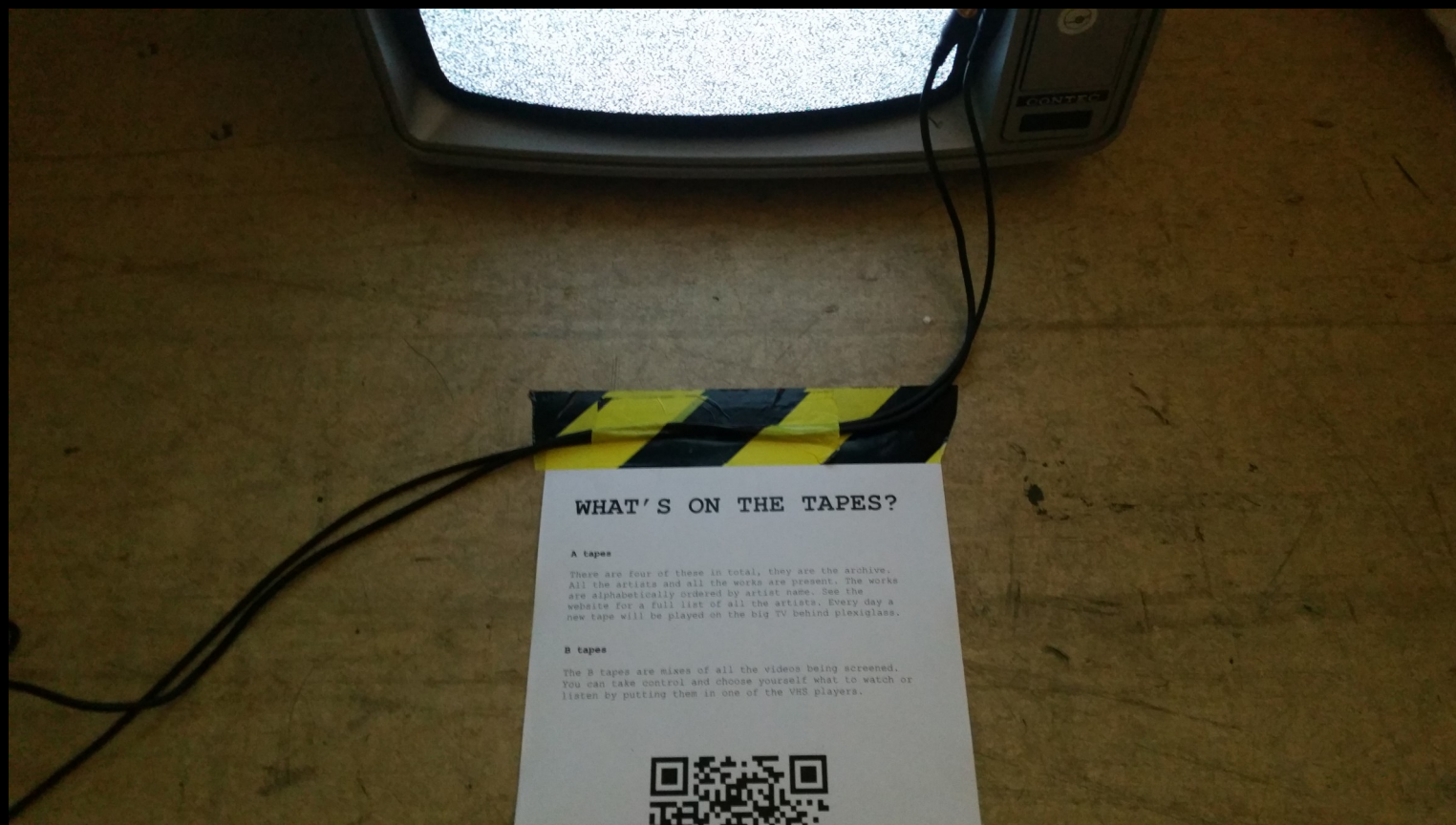
Punk Cinema Festival Amsterdam is concept-free, non-profit, inclusive, pandemic friendly and three other trendy words of your choosing... It's made in the name of Independent Art and aiming to make the communication between artists and public free of any institutional pressure, censorship or external regulations. It was shaped as a series of free screenings and took place on various locations on the streets of Amsterdam, in the fall of 2020. The choice of place is inspired by the works of the participants and occasional circumstances. You can take it like a direct intervention in the public spaces in the city of Amsterdam.

From indoor interactive VHS installations to outdoor screenings under bridges and on empty prison walls, it was refreshing to see places in Amsterdam in an entirely new light, illuminated by the works of over forty artists from around the globe.

*Be sure to check out their website with your Tor Browser:  
[pcfamqwrce4z7xphdvamsgtfb22oqlliykhiwnsxwe6qaqkogw5j6myd.onion](http://pcfamqwrce4z7xphdvamsgtfb22oqlliykhiwnsxwe6qaqkogw5j6myd.onion)*







## WHAT'S ON THE TAPES?

### A tapes

There are four of these in total, they are the archive. All the artists and all the works are present. The works are alphabetically ordered by artist name. See the website for a full list of all the artists. Every day a new tape will be played on the big TV behind plexiglass.

### B tapes

The B tapes are mixes of all the videos being screened. You can take control and choose yourself what to watch or listen by putting them in one of the VHS players.





# Punk Cinema Festival Athens open call

**Last week of September 2021** we are going to mess with the  
**streets of Athens!**

From the beamer to the retina, free from any regulations,  
circumventing censorship and any institutional pressure.

As usual  
Genre: any  
Duration: any

Please,  
download your **submission form**,  
send it with your work to **punkcinemafestival@gmail.com**.

We are open for your applications from  
**August 15th to September 15th of 2021.**

Sincerely yours,  
Punk Cinema Festival





# Anarcha-Feminist Group Amsterdam action-statement

We, the Anarcha-Feminist Group Amsterdam, have squatted this building. Built in the 18th century, its front unashamedly displays a flashy engraving of dutch colonizer Cornelis Tromp. This engraving depicts Tromp next to a young Black man who he kidnapped and enslaved. Tromp and his family gained their riches through murder and exploitation of non-white people during colonial times, yet he continues to be honored and depicted as a national hero.

Tromp is only one example of the terrors of colonialism. It is clear that the Dutch state and society continue to avoid confronting their violent colonial past. The effects of its exploitation have not disappeared with the supposed end of colonialism, rather racism has been institutionalized (de toeslagenaffaire being a recent example amongst many) and colonialism has been dislocated to prisons and the global south.

While the government is actively protecting these racist and colonial

statues and symbols, honouring warlords and murders like J.P. Coen, Tromp and Michiel de Ruyter, POC fighting against racism and colonialism are actively being prosecuted by the state. Marisella de Cuba, a woman working on anti-racist and women's struggles, was doxxed by fascists on twitter and later fired from her job at CED. We stand in solidarity with Marisella and all other anti-racist activists fighting against colonialism.

In Amsterdam traces of colonialism are everywhere, from the racism ingrained in white people's minds to recently renovated statues that glorify racist and colonisers. It is time to decolonise white minds and our city. Colonialism and capitalism cannot be separated. Colonialism provided the logic of exploitation, theft and cruelty that capitalism depends on.

**Decolonize Amsterdam now!**



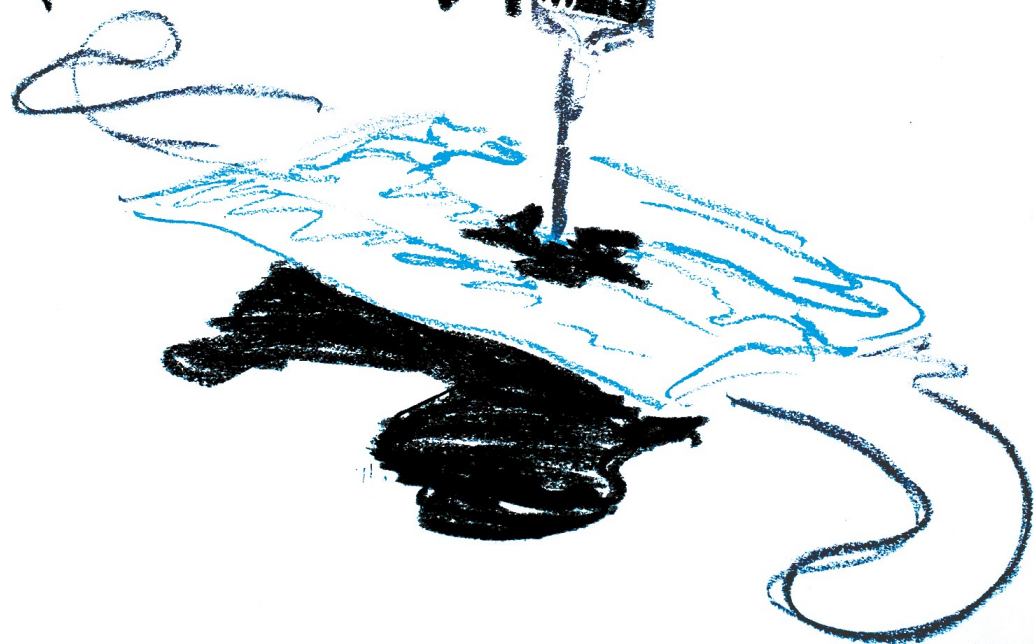
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SEX,  
DRUGS,  
DISEASE &  
DEATH



# Sex, Drugs, Disease & Death

## interview

by Rosa Rensink

The ever crowded city of Amsterdam was quiet for the first time when filming during the first hit of the pandemic, autumn 2020. I got an exclusive look behind the scenes of the making of the movie *Sex, Drugs, Disease & Death*. A movie following a group of vagabonds seeking shelter int the cracks of the system: a dystopian society where sex, drugs, disease and death are the order of the day. On set we talked with the director of the movie, David Gębski, resulting in this insightful interview.

## **Did you have an idea in your head when you started or started and did the idea develop on the way?**

I initially had an idea. I had been chilling with Eduardo in ‘The Box,’ and I said to him: “One day I’ll recreate this moment through film, and I want you to play the lead.” I saw a natural rock 'n roll star in Eduardo before he's had experienced his 15 minutes or fame. He seemed perfect for a movie that revolves around sex, drugs, disease and death. The bigger the success circus, the bigger the shadow. I also told him that it’d be impossible to completely accurately recreate history, but I’d like to try anyway. During the process of writing and building the set the story naturally took on it’s own life.

## **Why sex, drugs, disease and death; why those four?**

I was inspired by Punk Cinema Festival Amsterdam to make my own



feature film. I just so happened to stumble upon my subject. If rock 'n roll is dead, how can this guy be so alive? That lead me to conclude that the adagium should no longer be 'sex, drugs, rock 'n roll,' but 'sex, drugs, disease & death' instead.

**Sex, Drugs, Disease and Death are also four characters in the film, how did you cast the characters?**

I simply let them pull the names on notes from a hat. For example, Eduardo pulled Sex. And because nobody wanted to play Disease I have taken that role on me. I also found Disease fitting well because you have an influence on your environment with the camera and everything changes as soon as you point your lens at it.



## **Why skating?**

Skating is perhaps one of the most fleeting forms of art that they exerted. I didn't want to record who they were, but what they were doing: making art.

**All music in the film was made by people who also play in the movie, tell me more!**

It's important that the image and sound go well together. That's why we were looking for the right acoustics and we found it under rail crossings and in rusty pianos where we then held sick jam sessions.

*At the time of writing the filming has ended and the production is in it's final stage. The film is expected to appear in underground screenings (Punk Cinema Festival Athens perhaps?) somewhere beginning of Oktober.*



# last words

*No light without shadows, no picture without light.*

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