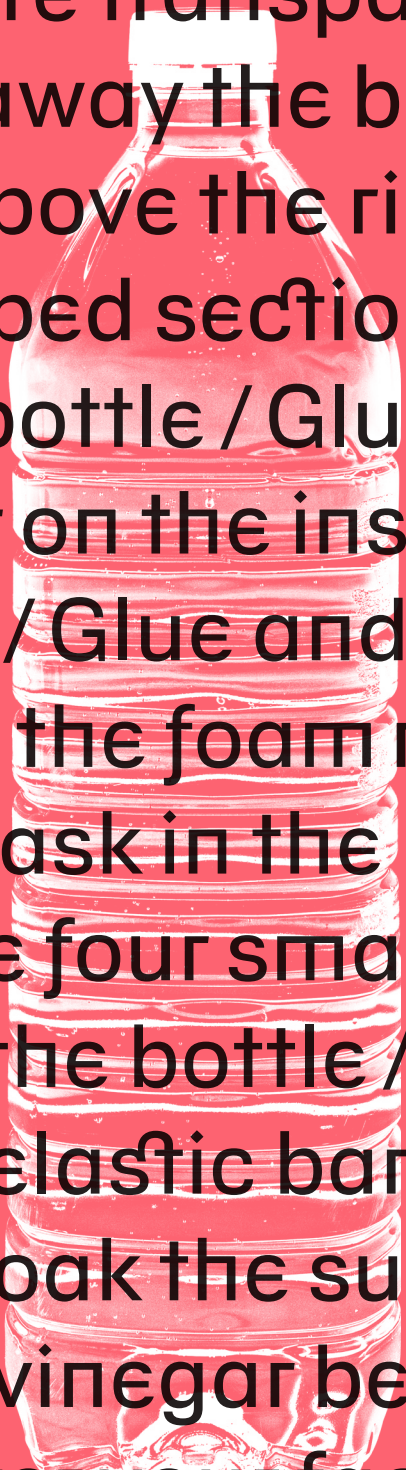
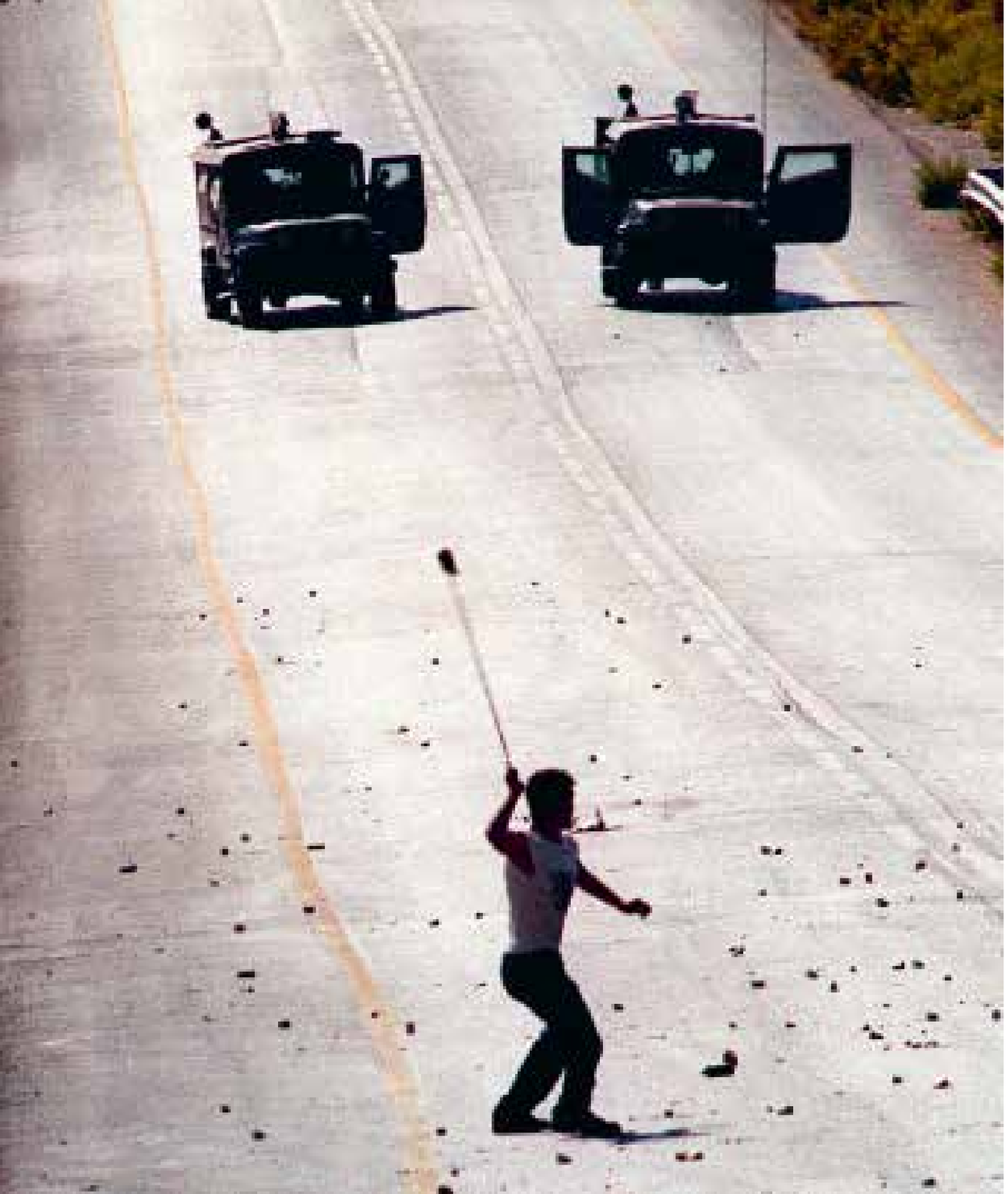


Get a two-litre transparent plastic bottle / Cut away the bottom of the bottle just above the ridged area / Cut a U-shaped section from the back of the bottle / Glue a strip of foam rubber on the inside edge of the bottle / Glue and sew a strip of cloth over the foam rubber / Put a surgical mask in the neck of the bottle / Make four small holes in the sides of the bottle / Feed the ends of two elastic bands through the holes / Soak the surgical mask with a bit of vinegar before putting the bottle over your face / These are the **Disobedient Objects**



Disobedient Objects

EDITED BY
CATHERINE FLOOD
& GAVIN GRINDON

V&A Publishing

‘To disobey in order to take action is the byword of all creative spirits. The history of human progress amounts to a series of Promethean acts. But autonomy is also attained in the daily workings of individual lives by means of many small Promethean disobediences, at once clever, well thought out, and patiently pursued, so subtle at times as to avoid punishment entirely … I would say that there is good reason to study the dynamics of disobedience, the spark behind all knowledge.’

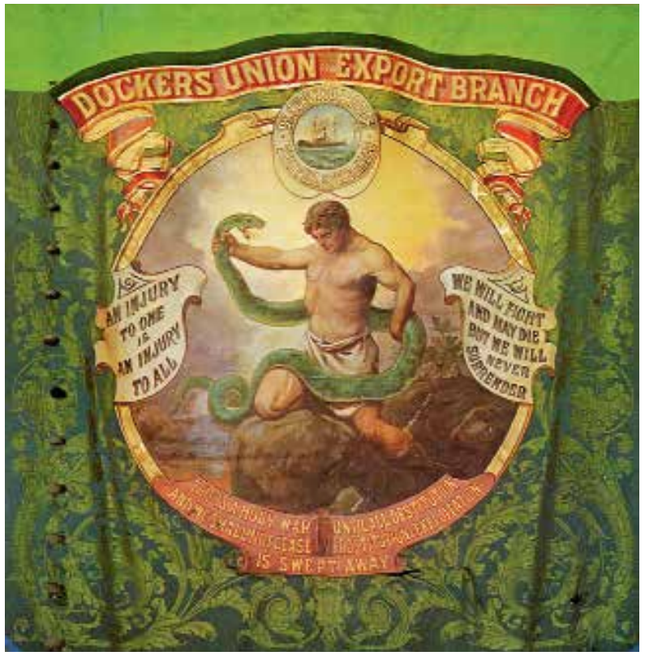
—Gaston Bachelard, ‘Prometheus’, *Fragments of a Poetics of Fire*, 1961

Just inside the grand entrance to the V&A, on a balcony looking down on the exhibition this book accompanies, there is a sculpture of Hercules. It is one of many images of him in the museum – he appears not only in Greek and Roman sculptures and pottery, but also resurfaces in eighteenth-century oil paintings, fine ceramics and silver presentation vases which, according to the V&A’s catalogue record, would ‘have been displayed on the dining table during a very grand dinner’. In their history of the revolutionary Atlantic of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker observe that for the classically educated architects of the Atlantic economy, Hercules represented power and order. They saw in his mythical labours their own epic imperial ambitions and aggressive economic enclosure of the world. Accordingly, they placed his image on coins, buildings and the finely crafted objects of their domestic lives. Hercules’ second labour was to destroy the Hydra of Lena, in whose image leaders of state and industry saw an antithetical figure of resistance and ‘disorder’. It was an unruly monster, part whirlwind, part woman, part snake. When Hercules sliced off one of its heads, two more sprang up in its place. Eventually he killed it and, dipping arrows into the slain beast’s gall, harnessed its power for himself and his future triumphs:

> From the beginning of English colonial expansion in the early seventeenth century through the metropolitan industrialization of the early nineteenth, rulers referred to the Hercules-hydra myth to describe the difficulty of imposing order on increasingly global systems of labor. They variously designated dispossessed commoners, transported felons, indentured servants, religious radicals, pirates, urban laborers, soldiers, sailors, and *A*frican slaves as the numerous, ever-changing heads of the monster. But the heads, though originally brought into productive combination by their Herculean rulers, soon developed among themselves new forms of cooperation against those rulers, from mutinies and strikes to riots and insurrections and revolution.[1]

Opposite Top Cup and saucer from a tea set with the emblem of the Women’s Social and Political Union, H.M. Williamson & Sons, Bridge Pottery • Bone china with printed transfers • Longton, Britain, *c.*1910 • V&A: C.37C–1972 (cup), C.37D–1972 (saucer).

Opposite Bottom *Cacerola* lid, stainless steel, used in Buenos Aires, December, 2001. When the Argentinean government froze the bank accounts of 18 million citizens, thousands banged pots in the streets and shouted the slogan ‘All of them must go!’, forcing out four presidents in three weeks. It has been called the first national revolt against contemporary deregulated capitalism.



For Linebaugh and Rediker, the Hydra suggests, in silhouette, the lost history of the multi-ethnic classes essential to the making of the modern world. Historians like them have tried to look at history from below, instead of from the perspective of 'great men' and the agency of state and capital. History is inevitably a matter of selective inclusion. This is equally true of the objects of art and design history, whose collection is most often shaped by a market of wealthy collectors, even as some critical artists, curators and historians have attempted to intervene within the field. In that inevitable taking of sides, our project turns to objects that open up histories of making from below. These objects disclose hidden moments in which, even if only in brief flashes, we find the possibility that things might be otherwise: that, in fact, the world may also be made from below, by collective, organized disobedience against the world as it is.

But history from below can be difficult to perceive. Its protagonists are barely documented, and we can only tell so much by turning things like silver vases inside out in order to reveal them in negative relief. The art, design and material culture of these other classes went mostly uncollected, unpreserved, excluded from their place in the making of history. We know less of how these rebels represented themselves and their oppressors through objects and images than we do about the representations of Hercules collected by the V&A, after its founding in 1852 at the height of this struggle for enclosure. Culture, understood (in one narrow sense) as the objects and images we should know about and value – our history of art and design – is also often told from above. This exhibition is one for the Hydra.[2]

FIRST THEY IGNORE YOU. THEN THEY RIDICULE YOU. AND THEN THEY ATTACK YOU AND WANT TO BURN YOU. AND THEN THEY BUILD MONUMENTS TO YOU.

— Nicholas Klein, 'Address,' *Proceedings of the Third Biennial Convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America*, Baltimore, Maryland, 18 May 1919

Seeing through the Hydra's eyes is often a matter of historical perspective. Social movements,[3] whether focused on feminism, anti-capitalism, global justice or other issues, are at the centre of the struggles that have won many of the rights and liberties we now enjoy. They establish new ways of seeing the world and relating to each other that are often later taken for granted. Social movements are one of the primary engines producing our culture and politics, and this is no less true when it comes to art and design.

WHAT ARE DISOBEDIENT OBJECTS?

Disobedient objects have a history as long as social struggle itself. Ordinary people have always used them to exert 'counterpower'.[4] Objects have played a key role in social change alongside performance, music and the visual arts. Here the focus is on the previously under-examined area of the art and design of object-making within social movements, a people's history of art and design from below. Yet the imagination and creativity of making within social movements has played a key role in achieving social change; upending the terms of public debates; and directly influencing more familiar commercial art and design. The role of material culture in social movements is a mostly untold story. There have been many exhibitions of political prints, and there have been exhibitions of movement histories, mostly in social history museums, which included objects but did not focus specifically on them and their making.[5]

Likewise, writing on movement cultures has focused on print, performance or music, but less often on object-making.

Social movements, though they may appear chaotic, are one of the principal sites where culture grows. The most common lazy stereotypes, easy to find in certain newspapers, of movements as insensible, unthinking or inevitably violent, draw on even older classist, racist and sexist Victorian tropes of the flighty, swinish multitude or childlike, colonial savage, which have their roots in a bourgeois fear of the urban poor and 'oriental' culture. Little better is the notion of movement cultures as mechanisms of blunt political demands (as in the crudely statist notion of 'propaganda'). Instead, we borrow McPhee and Greenwald's phrasing of 'social movement cultures', which consciously identifies them as a site of culture and value.[6]

Our research converged on the question of movement objects. One of us (an art historian specializing in activist-art) was interested in the contours of how some aspects of social movement cultures have been included in institutions and

Opposite Top Dockers Union Export Branch banner, George Tutill for the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers Union of Great Britain and Ireland • Jacquard-woven silk with oil-painted images • Britain, early 1890s • People's History Museum NMLH.1993.580 • This union banner reappropriates the symbolism of Hercules' battle with the Hydra for labour movements. Inverting the symbolism of the Trafalgar Vase, the serpent here represents capitalism's constrictive enclosure of a powerful worker's body. Similar Herculean images would form part of labour iconography for many years to come.

Opposite Middle The Trafalgar Vase, Scott Digby • Silver • London, 1805–6 • V&A: 803:1-2–1890.

Top Cheap Art Manifesto, Bread and Puppet Theater • Print on paper • Vermont, 1985 • V&A E.45–2014.

histories of art and design, while others have been excluded. Movement cultures are the zero-point of political art, but tend to be alternately ignored or problematically recuperated by art and design institutions. Formally, music and performance emerging from social movements have received perhaps the most attention from writers, curators and film-makers; the material objects of movements have most often fallen beyond their remit. Institutions have an understanding of what constitutes good design based on criteria of aesthetic excellence rooted in self-perpetuating professional infrastructures and ideas of connoisseurship. The V&A, for example, has mostly collected commodity-objects of elite production and consumption – also primarily objects of private consumption. An exception is collections of prints and posters. The multiple, cheap and distributed nature of the poster means that even in its most finely designed form it has been integrated into everyday public life. From the late nineteenth century museums began collecting posters, precisely because their public context suggested an exciting modern medium. A form that has commonly been used by activists (especially from the late 1960s) was therefore already an established museum object-type. So it is as prints and posters that movement cultures have most easily slipped under the doors of museums. For one of us (a curator of prints) it was the presence of protest graphics in the V&A collections that prompted thinking about the absence within the Museum of other kinds of disobedient objects.

There are many ways art and design practices can be politically active. But we aren't primarily concerned with the institutional frames of the sometimes isolated gestures of either 'critical design' or even programmes of 'interventionist' participatory art.[7] Likewise 'activist-art' and more recently 'design activism' are established terms referring respectively to a nebulously broad range of artists' practices or to top-down socially responsible professional design.[8] We do not wish to denigrate such practices, and it is true that there are many kinds of 'activism', but at the same time the broad use of the term 'activism' has also functioned as an enclosure of cultural value, authenticity and impact on the part of professional artists, critics, designers, corporations and even NGOs. Rather, it seems imperative to begin with the actually existing but often unacknowledged grassroots cultures of activist social movements in order to properly contextualize the many overlapping current debates on art, design and social change.

Yet even taking this focused notion of activism risks erasing differences: the relative strengths and weaknesses of the politics on display, and variations in the power, privilege and access of different movements. 'Activist objects' might suggest a narrow typology of objects made by 'activists', an identity that does not always appropriately describe the forms of subjectivity involved in non-Western social movements. We also wished to acknowledge the micro-politics of the everyday, where social change is made before or beyond the composition of a recognizably 'activist' subjectivity.[9] For these reasons, we have avoided this more obvious term. Likewise, these aren't 'left' or 'right' wing objects. That rigid geometric scheme, which originates from the seating arrangements of the 1789 French National Assembly, is insufficiently nuanced to capture the diversity of movement cultures. Rather, these objects appear in varying, complexly composed movements, in which liberation movements may also be nationalist; deploy traditional, even religious, values; or oppose ostensibly 'left' communist states.

At the same time, 'disobedient objects' doesn't attempt to define a discipline. The term is intended as an evocative proposition or an invitation rather than a typology or closed concept. We look instead at the range of object-based tactics and strategies that movements adopt to succeed. Its edges remain open to questions. What other forms of agency do these objects involve? Can we identify material points where disobedience begins, or turns into something else? Are some politics unable to produce objects? We begin in the last years of the 1970s. Firstly, for practical reasons: many objects from before this period no longer exist, having been lost or destroyed, and have only been haphazardly documented in texts, photographs or films. The introductory section of the exhibition nonetheless includes a few key historical disobedient objects for context. Secondly, while the few years before 1980 seem a rather arbitrary beginning, they offer a means to start not with the crises of 1989, but with the swell of a global cycle of struggles that preceded them.[10] The objects made within social movements from this period to the present are not only bound to neo-liberal economic policies enacted on a broad scale from 1978,[11] but also to parallel changes in the organization and technology of work, leisure, communication and cultural production.

The earliest objects in our chronology in this respect are Chilean *arpilleras* (see p.122). In 1970 several United States corporations identified the democratic government of Chile as a problem. It was limiting their production and circulation of commodity-objects, from Pepsi bottles to the copper ingots melted to make the computer technologies then beginning to be woven into our lives. They asked the CIA to overthrow the Allende government. The CIA worked covertly to destabilize the country politically and economically and gave support to Pinochet's coup and the genocidal military dictatorship that followed. Meanwhile, Pinochet's US-trained economists used Chile to experiment with the then-untested economic ideas of Milton Friedman.[12] *Arpilleras* were objects on the other side of this history. Smuggled illegally out of Chile, they use traditional folk arts to simply and honestly make public the regime's torture camps and mass 'disappearances', and tell stories of women's everyday lives and resistance. In planning the Chilean coup, President Nixon instructed the

Top A *cacerolazo* protest, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 2008. Made in support of farmers striking against increased taxation, road blockades and noisemaking protests like this led the increases to be withdrawn.

from these cultures aren't unified by style or type. They can be monuments, full of symbolic historical accumulation, or small, quotidian and domestic. As much as they are often playful and humorous, they can also be simultaneously traumatic, traversed by antagonism and conflict. Their makers commonly experience pressure from governments and private economic interests, in the form of police harassment, violence, spying, imprisonment, even assassination.

The question of the value of these objects, not least in terms of beauty and aesthetic fineness, is starkly posed when these objects are placed in a museum such as the V&A. Displayed beside the V&A's examples of extravagantly fine craft, disobedient objects might seem to fail in comparative judgements of aesthetic quality. But a failure to pass can be a form of disobedience in its own right, not least in questioning the narrow grounds of 'quality'. Fine making often belongs to privileged social conditions involving time, institutional training, normalization and patronage. It is bound to discipline and governance. As a result, fine objects are themselves mostly failures in the task of making change.

Disobedient objects explore what Halberstam calls the queer art of failure.[16] They may be simple in means, but they are rich in ends. Working (in the words of Critical Art Ensemble) by any medium necessary, often under conditions of duress and scarcity, they tend to foreground promiscuous resourcefulness, ingenuity and timely intervention. This is not to balance aesthetic quality against social significance, but to begin to rethink aesthetic value itself. As Duncombe and Lambert argue: 'Political art … is engaged in the world. The world is messy. It has lots of moving parts. This material is impossible to fully control or master … Whereas compromise for the traditional artist means diluting their vision, compromise for the political artist is the very essence of democratic engagement.'[17]

Sometimes, however, a fine craft finish is exactly what allows an object to disobey. Carrie Reichardt, who works with ceramics and mosaic, maintains that the assumed politeness of the

CIA to 'make the economy scream'.[13] The *arpilleras*, in their act of making and their depiction of murders alongside sunrises over the Andes mountains, embody both a scream of negation and a thread of hope for another future.[14]

WE WANT BREAD,
BUT ROSES TOO

Lawrence Textile Strikers, attributed, 1921

There is no protest aesthetic. Political movement is always a matter of being emotionally moved, but each movement has its own aesthetic composition.[15] Accordingly the objects emerging

Top Tree-sit, Pureora Forest, New Zealand, 1978. Following these protests, the government abandoned widespread logging of native trees.

medium means you can get away with more. There is a power in the double take that occurs between form and content:

> The beauty of craft is that at first it can seduce its audience. People are drawn in by the sheer skill and time taken to create a piece. I believe this allows a dialogue to open up where the viewer can be challenged both emotionally and intellectually. There is an expectation that craft work is gentle, decorative and safe – but once an audience is engaged it is the ideal place to explore radical and controversial ideas.[18]

The Bread and Puppet Theater has since the 1960s been central to introducing puppetry to social movements in the United States. Through the pathos of its archetypal papier-mâché puppets and Cheap Art Manifesto it negates stereotypes about social-movement making as crude or naïve because the objects are produced quickly, under pressure and with limited resources. Rather, movement makers are skilful artists, craftspeople and technologists producing considered, practical responses to complex problems, which have proven both effective and aesthetically powerful.

I PONDERED ALL THESE THINGS, AND HOW MEN FIGHT AND LOSE THE BATTLE, AND THE THING THAT THEY FOUGHT FOR COMES ABOUT IN SPITE OF THEIR DEFEAT, AND WHEN IT COMES TURNS OUT NOT TO BE WHAT THEY MEANT, AND OTHER MEN HAVE TO FIGHT FOR WHAT THEY MEANT UNDER ANOTHER NAME.

William Morris, *A Dream of John Ball*, 1888

The strange, sometimes ambivalent or bitter victories of movements complicate any assessment of successful design in their objects. Some disobedient objects might seem like 'hope in the dark', in Rebecca Solnit's phrase,[19] isolated projects unlikely to achieve widespread change. But their acts of composing things otherwise, in defiance of all that is wrong around them, are beautiful failures that throw teleological definitions of success into question. Moreover, all successful movements are made up of very large numbers of people carrying out small, seemingly utopian experiments without seeing or even necessarily knowing of each other; having no idea of the sometimes unlikely opportunities their acts might create; not necessarily realizing they are already sewing the fabric of historical change.

While the organizations that produce disobedient objects might have little cultural visibility to begin with, social movements are instituent – they aim to institute new ways of living, new laws and new social organizations. As William Morris observed, social movements often find themselves woven into unexpected new contexts that obscure their origins. Or as David Graeber puts it, 'What reformers have to understand is that they're never going to get anywhere without radicals and revolutionaries to betray.'[20] In Bolivia, the Katarista movements of the 1970s revived the Wiphala flag symbolizing Qullasuyu, their quadrant of the Inca empire, as part of their rural, indigenous and anti-colonial politics. The rainbow flag of forty-nine squares recalls pre-Columbian designs and became widespread in indigenous mobilizations in the 1990s. But between 2007 and 2009, when a new constitution refounded the country, the Wiphala's resonances altered as it became an official state flag, draped on government buildings and stitched to the uniforms of police and soldiers.[21]

If governments sometimes claim credit for movement victories and appropriate their established cultures, businesses more often do so with their cultural innovations. Today's proliferation of rentable public bicycles in cities began in Amsterdam with a collection of 1960s anarchist-artists called the Provos, who left white bicycles in public spaces for anyone to use and then leave for others. The police confiscated them, saying people might steal them (some Provos

responded by stealing police bikes, painting them white and leaving them out, too). Their white bike plan eventually led to government-supported bicycle programmes, since adopted by other city governments around the world. Similarly, the problematic labelling of the recent Arab Spring as the 'Twitter revolution' belies another genealogy: Twitter itself was inspired by an activist media project, the Institute for Applied Autonomy's TXTMob, launched (alongside the Ruckus Society's RNC Text Alert Service) to circumvent mass media and connect demonstrators during the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York (these initiatives were in turn inspired by early experiments with mobile phones and text messaging by European movements in the 1990s, especially Reclaim the Streets in Britain).

MAKING TROUBLE: SWARM DESIGN AND ECOLOGIES OF AGENCY

Disobedient objects are most commonly everyday objects appropriated and turned to a new purpose, from the wooden shoe of the saboteur (from *sabot*, French for wooden shoe) thrown into a factory machine to the shoe thrown at President Bush by an Iraqi journalist during a press conference with the words, 'This is a farewell kiss from the Iraqi people, you dog.'[22] Collective appropriation can be found in the noisemaking pots and pans first used in Chile's *cacerolazos* in the 1970s, in which the archetypal objects of domestic design sounded a counter public sphere, or the mass jingling of keys, which unlocked the air of public space during the 1989 Czech Velvet Revolution.[23] But disobedient objects are about making as much as breaking. Disobedience can involve DIY hacking and alteration, and also the design of whole new ways of disobeying. The re-use of easily accessible objects, like the shipping barrels composing nineteenth-century barricades (from *barrique*, French for barrel), implicate these objects in unfinished dialectics of social struggle and make them one means of the global circulation of struggles. For example, wooden pallets, the structural foundation of one unit load, were produced by the mid-twentieth-century standardization of international container shipping. They were brought about by efficiency drives rooted in de-skilling and breaking the power of unionized longshoremen's labour. But these mass-produced wooden frames, designed for disciplining labour and circulating commodities, became, around the world, a shared infrastructural basis for the first 1970s tree-sits in New Zealand (see p.12); furniture and barricade elements in 1970s Kabouter squats in the Netherlands, or those of Okupa in Spain; and more recently the base of 123 Occupy's designs to support the protest-unit of Occupy Wall Street tents (p.40).

Top Wiphala flag, La Paz, Bolivia, 2008.

Disobedient objects are not mere props. Or rather, as disability scholars have observed, democracy has always relied on prostheses. The system of voting, for example, has always been propped up by objects, from the Chartists' call for the democratizing impairment of secret ballots, where paper cards replace voices, to the push-button electronic voting machines introduced in India in the 1980s, which facilitated voting for illiterate citizens. Social movements, too, have their own props and they can fall down without them. (Even though, in British ecological movements, the key material infrastructures of protest events are referred to, self-depreciatingly, as 'activist tat'.) Though we have avoided the term, we might think of these as 'activist objects' in the sense that they are active, bound up with the agency of social change. The objects do not possess agency in themselves, but make change as part of ecologies composed also of other objects, music, performing bodies, technology, laws, organizations and affects. A weaker, less resourced power can triumph through asymmetrical innovation, and since the 1980s the strategic advantages of smallness and mobility have increased. So while disobedient objects are often appropriated, they also often appropriate their context of existing architecture or situations, unlocking them to reframe a situation or produce new relationships. As many have argued, the best response to a powerful enemy can be a more powerful story. Eclectic Electric Collective's inflatable cobblestones thrown at the police playfully destabilize relations between police and protesters (see p.73). The Book Bloc (discussed by Francesco Raparelli) implicates the police in a dance with demonstrators. The police's attempt to control the streets using violence is reframed as an attack on access to education. The holes wrought in the shields by the police's truncheons are part of their provenance, a certifying signature of their unwitting co-authorship.

While their social and geographical contexts vary widely, disobedient objects share common modes of production, lines of communication and influence. History from below entails multiplicity, and we focus on the interweaving of different historical moments. These objects don't move from producer to market in a circulation of commodities, as in Marx's scheme of **M**oney-**C**ommodity-**M**oney,[24] but are one means of a circulation of struggles (perhaps, Movement-Object-Movement). Making a new world is always an experiment, but it doesn't happen in an isolated laboratory. The objects involved are prototypes that exist in the wild, to be modified and reworked to meet the needs of different times and places. They have a distributed collective authorship, involving multiple reappropriations and reworkings as movements learn from each other and develop each other's tactics, or solve similar problems with parallel approaches.

TRIPODS

Tripods, objects that augment the body's ability to blockade, are an archetypal example of this swarm design. On 26 March 1974, loggers arrived in the village of Reni in Uttarakhand, northern India. Female villagers, after trying to reason with them, explaining that they relied on the trees for their livelihood, were threatened with guns. In response, they extended Ghandian methods to *chipko*: hugging the trees in a bodily blockade. Their successes in forest conservation became a strategic rallying point for the nascent ecological movement. In 1978 in New Zealand, as part of anti-logging protests that led to the foundation of Pureora Forest Park, activists extended such blockades by moving out of easy reach, building platforms using wooden pallets high up in the trees to blockade the felling with 'tree-sits', a tactic also adopted in Australia's Terrania Creek in 1979 (in what became national park land, including the picturesque Protesters Falls), and in the US in 1985 to prevent logging in Willamette National Forest, Oregon. As the tactic spread, tree surgery businesses or industrial rope access firms were sometimes hired in the United States and Britain to assist police and bailiffs in extracting protesters from trees. But protesters out-designed the authorities once again. In 1989, during huge anti-

logging blockades in Coolangubra State Forest, Australia, activists raised a three-legged tripod about six metres high that blocked the single logging road into the forest: a tree-sit without a tree. The first tripod was a metal scaffold, pulled into place by a vehicle, but others there and at the parallel Chaelundi forest blockades used wooden logs (see p.65). One person sat atop the tripod, so that removing any of its legs would cause him or her to fall and be injured.[25] Some of these forests later became national parks. The North East Forest Alliance's 1991 *Intercontinental Deluxe Guide to Blockading* spread tripod (and lock-on) designs to the UK and US (some individual activists travelled between Australian, American and British actions, too). In the US, wooden tripods first appeared in 1992 blockades protecting the Cove Mallard wilderness. In Britain, the tripod was adopted by Reclaim the Streets, where urban activists with strong ties to earlier British tree-sits scavenged steel scaffolding poles to make tripods. In an urban context they constituted 'intelligent barricades' that closed a road to cars but left it open for pedestrians and bicycles. Beginning on Angel High Street, London, in 1994, these tripods made Reclaim the Streets parties possible. The design spread through the how-to guide *Road Raging*. Bipod and even unipod designs, alongside complex multi-tripod architectural arrangements using overlapping legs, sometimes in response to the development of specialized police removal units, proliferated in the United States, Asia-Pacific and Europe. Groups invested in lighter, more quickly erected aluminium (and even bamboo) poles over steel scaffolding. From the 2006 British Climate Camp protests, the tripod became a graphic icon of protest and was sometimes erected at camp entrances for purely symbolic reasons.

This ecology of agency also involves different contexts and power relations, traversing and transforming these objects. The role of the law is perhaps the clearest example. The state, in a paradox of sovereignty, attempts to define what are legal and acceptable forms of protest against it. Many modern forms of action, such as unions or strikes, were once illegal and required either secrecy or open lawbreaking. Recently in Britain new laws redefining 'public order', as well as cuts to legal aid and investment of public money in the surveillance and disruption of peaceful movements, have curtailed the right to protest.[26] Objects are intimately involved in this negotiation, back and forth, of what constitutes the space of 'legitimate' protest. David Graeber's essay details the reclassification – as 'potential weapons' – of sticks that support a dancing puppet (perhaps explaining a move to inflatables). In Britain, the 1994 Criminal Justice Act, Section 60, made wearing a mask at a protest (for example, in objection to police data-gathering teams) an offence. In 2012 United Arab Emirates police announced that people should not wear Guy Fawkes masks as 'objects deemed to instigate unrest are illegal', while their import into Bahrain was banned in 2013. The Molotov cocktail, which first appeared during the Spanish Civil War and later in Finnish resistance to Soviet invasion in the 1930s, entailed a semi-permanent change in the status of mass-produced glass bottles as unproblematic everyday objects. In Belfast during the early 1990s art students carrying milk bottles (which they used to wash their paint brushes) were often stopped as potential terrorists because – for the state – their artists' tools had become irrevocably associated with more insurgent appropriation. Here, too, we must include the many imaginary disobedient objects that have been conjured by the police, and fed to the media, which have at various points served as a pretext for curtailing protests. Despite their potent psychological associations, these objects never surfaced at protests and would have little practical reason for doing so – from condoms filled with urine at the Seattle 1999 WTO protests[27] to 'rioters armed with samurai swords and machetes' at the London 2001 May Day protests.[28]

Sometimes the media's imaginative framing of objects is embraced by, or definitive for, movements, from the fictional 'bra burning' in reports on the 1968 Miss America protests[29] to the coinage of the term 'Black Bloc' by the German press in the 1980s to describe the dress of some Autonomen.

Top *Pouwhenua* carried by Cyril Chapman (Ngapuhi tribe) in Hikoi (Maori protest march) for land rights, Lambton Quay, Wellington, 13 October 1975. The *Pouwhenua* is a land marker whose base will not touch the ground until all land illegally acquired from Maori is returned.

THE MASTER'S TOOLS WILL NEVER DISMANTLE THE MASTER'S HOUSE.

Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 1984

Context is everything. We should be wary of any uncritical affirmation of the power of making, 'creative' activism or transversal innovation in the context of the neo-liberal relations of the 'creative industries'. Rather, the contradiction remains open: to produce any value at all capital relies on the same capacity to be creative that is always also escaping and refusing. Even the most ultra-left or experimental politics are indebted to the creativity of social movement cultural traditions. This creativity can come from mobilizing folk-traditions and religious or spiritual values: for example, in British labour union banners' dense iconography; Indonesian group Taring Padi's protest puppets' adaptation of the traditions of *wayang* puppet theatre; Muneteru Ujino's neo-folk metal Mikoshi used in the 2003 demonstrations in Japan against the invasion of Iraq (see p.121); the carved Maori *pouwhenua* (pre-European land marker post) made for carrying at the head of the 1975 Maori land rights march and subsequent protests; or the avatar of the Broom-Wielding Goddess of Good Governance (Swachha Narayani) protecting street hawkers in Sewa Nagar market in Delhi, who, in her many arms, holds a video camera to film the police.

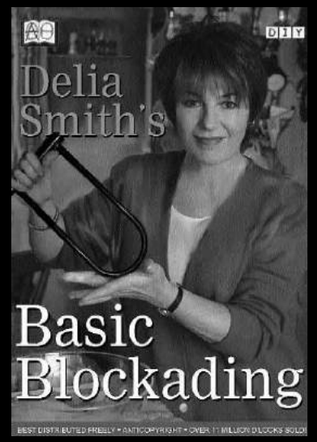
While some peace movements have taken up the Biblical phrase 'swords into ploughshares', many more pacifist and playful disobedient objects only function in specific social-democratic contexts, in which governments, even if in increasingly limited ways, recognize people as subjects with a right of resistance to speak and act politically. Without such acknowledgement – most often the case for movements in the global South or composed of people of colour and indigenous communities – struggles for rights and freedoms sometimes necessarily take different forms, from urban self-defence to rural or desert guerrilla warfare.

Their objects necessarily become improvised objects of physical force, often outmatched by but dialectically bound to the violence and oppression they resist: from 'fards', single-shot guns made by blacksmiths from scrap water pipes, used by neighbourhood protection groups in the poorest areas of the 2011 Egyptian revolution, to 'technicals', the improvised battle-vehicles engineered by anti-Gadaffi rebels during the 2011 Libyan revolution.

UNDISCIPLINED KNOWLEDGE

> I JUMPED UP AND SAID 'ARM ME – I'LL KILL A WHITE DUDE RIGHT NOW!' THE WHOLE [BLACK PANTHER] MEETING GOT QUIET. THEY CALLED ME TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM, AND THE BROTHER WHO WAS RUNNING THE MEETING LOOKED AT ME FOR A MINUTE, AND THEN REACHED INTO THE DESK DRAWER. MY HEART WAS POUNDING. I WAS LIKE, 'OH MY GOD, HE'S GOING TO GIVE ME A BIG-ASS GUN!' AND HE HANDED ME A STACK OF BOOKS … I SAID, 'EXCUSE ME, SIR, I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO ARM ME?' HE SAID, 'I JUST DID.'
>
> Jamal Joseph, interview in *Time* magazine, 9 February 2012

Disobedient objects also lead us to think about how movements produce new forms of knowledge and strategy that help us see from below. While they may find footholds in various disciplines, they also draw from popular global and local traditions of making, outside professional art and design or academia.[30] Some of these are evoked by the many how-to publications which instruct their readers on the design of disobedience: the barricade diagrams of Auguste Blanqui's 1866 *Instructions for an Insurrection*; Bread and Puppet Theater's *68 Ways to Make Really Big Puppets*; Dave Foreman's *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*; *The Squatter's Handbook*; *The Activist Tat Collective Recipe Book* for camps and convergences, or the recent collection *Beautiful Trouble*. These objects embody knowledge and skills. They are not formed from nothing. We might consider the section of Marx's *Grundrisse*, in which he argues that the fixed capital of factory machines materially embodies the 'general intellect' of workers – their aggregate skill and knowledge – in order to replace them.[31] This might prompt us to wonder what other anti-capitalist machines the general intellect might imagine and embody itself



in. We might think of the objects and performances of social movements as just such machines, embodying knowledge otherwise. There is certainly a mutiny of professional knowledge, including design, in these objects. But they are also moulded by the collective, informal, experiential knowledge of local laws around protest; how to negotiate with police; political meeting and street protest dynamics. Additionally, they spring from a base in leisure and domestic skills that become political tools, from camping to knitting and sewing. Behind the design of tripods stand other changes in leisure and education, for example, the growth of climbing as a sporting activity and the growth of indoor walls in the 1980s, often appearing first in university gyms. Such knowledges are one example of what Harney and Moten call 'the undercommons'. Its appearance in the museum echoes its role in the university:

Opposite *Delia Smith's Basic Blockading*, anonymous • Print on paper • Britain, n.d. • Private collection.

Top 'Spear' presented in a police press conference, one day after a demonstration supporting the printers' strike at Wapping, east London, 24 January 1987. It is actually, as the hanging loop indicates, a traditional supporting pole for a union banner. The Haldane Lawyers' Society report on policing of this demonstration records eyewitness accounts of groups of officers confiscating and ripping up union banners, removing the poles and retreating behind police lines.

Above This banner was created by *Taller Popular de Serigrafía* (*TPS*) in 2005 as part of the National Movement for a 6-Hour Working Day in Argentina. Underground rail workers' historic 6-hour day (limited due to the work's intensity, and previously removed only by the 1973–90 dictatorship) was lost when underground rail was privatized in the 1990s, but reinstated following strikes in 2004. In 2005, with high unemployment and crashing wages, a movement began for a 6-hour day for all. Its slogan was 'less work so we can all work'. The banner is seen here with train worker unionists speaking in 2005.

> It cannot be denied that the university is a place of refuge and it cannot be accepted that the university is a place of enlightenment. In the face of these conditions one can only sneak into the university and steal what one can. To abuse its hospitality, to spite its mission, to join its refugee colony, its gypsy encampment, to be in but not of – this is the path of the subversive intellectual in the modern university.[32]

In this sense, too, we take the Museum at its word to truly be a public institution. This project also enters a series of current tangential discussions at the V&A. A new team of contemporary architecture, product design and digital curators are formulating a collecting policy that addresses design, politics and public life – shifting the emphasis from understanding what a professional designer does to realizing the impact that design has on the way we live.[33] *Disobedient Objects* enters these conversations, challenging the Museum by confronting it with objects that demand to be treated differently. The project has been described to us as institutional critique and there is inevitably some truth in this. It prompts the question of whether the Museum can resist the urge to recuperate these objects. In the nineteenth century it was claimed that museums could prevent riots and sedition (as well as drunkenness) by mopping up working-class leisure time.[34] What happens when you place disobedient objects at the heart of a building that was conceived for such obedient purposes?

The position of this project, both 'within and against' an institution, emerges principally from careful attention to these objects and their own instituent power.[35] Our project isn't just about antagonism, although that is important. Rather, it entails a 'with and for'. As a project's spaces of autonomy develop, less time might be spent in antagonism than in co-research towards a collective project, composing the many 'yeses' behind the 'noes'. In this exhibition we returned, in one sense, to a quite traditional idea of the

etymological roots of a curator as one who cares. 'Care' is here used not in the sense of bureaucratic administration or discipline, but as an ethics of solidarity, mutual aid, even love.[36] Caring for these objects entails being with and for them, listening to them and understanding how their making is bound to a making of history that is both neglected and incomplete.

UNFINISHED OBJECTS

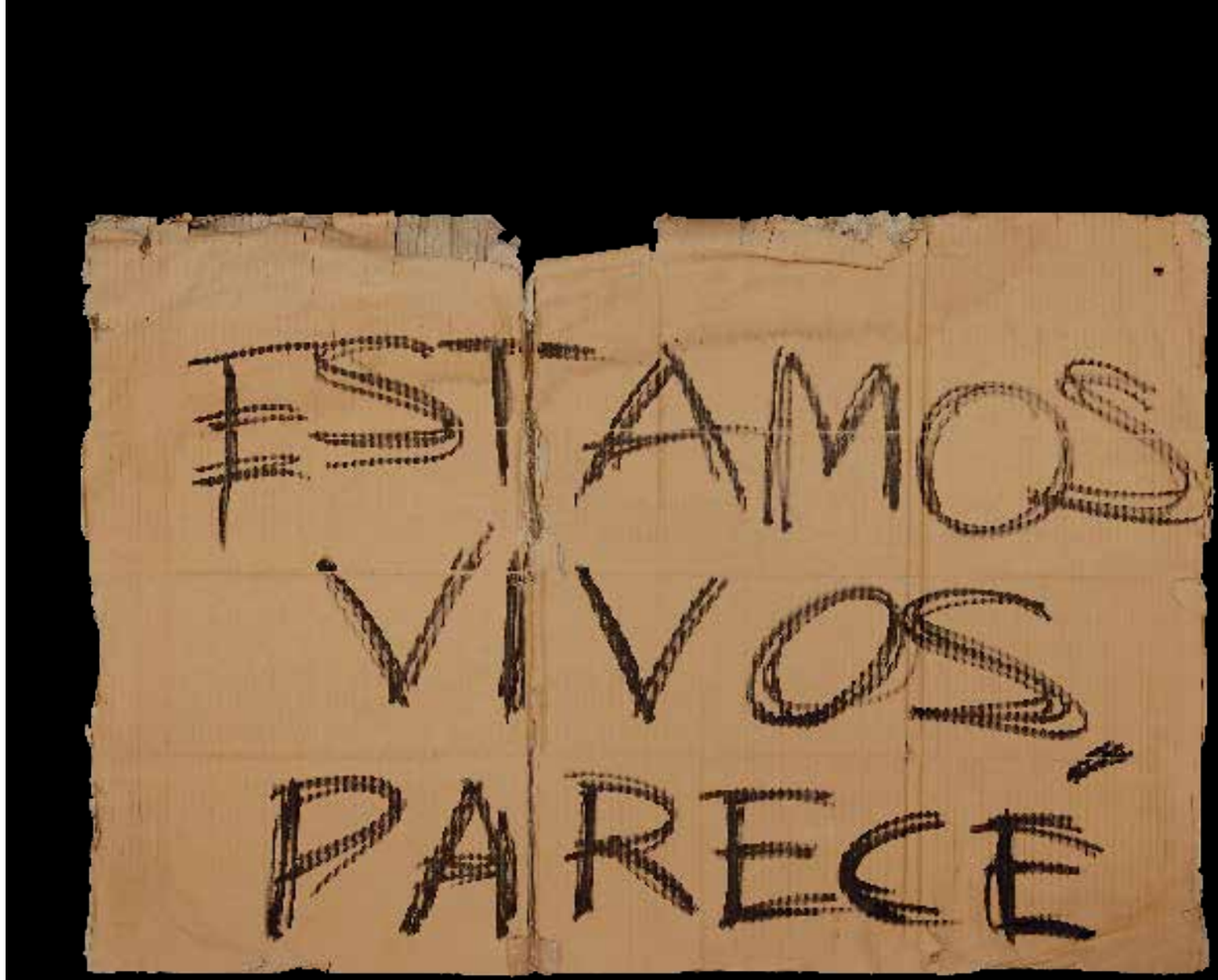
THE POSTERS PRODUCED BY THE *A*TELIER POPUL*A*IRE *A*RE WE*A*PONS IN THE SERVICE OF THE STRUGGLE *A*ND *A*RE *A*N INSEP*A*R*A*BLE P*A*RT OF IT. THEIR RIGHTFUL PL*A*CE IS IN THE CENTRES OF CONFLICT, TH*A*T IS TO S*A*Y, IN THE STREETS *A*ND ON THE W*A*LLS OF THE F*A*CTORIES. TO USE THEM FOR DECOR*A*TIVE PURPOSES, TO DISPL*A*Y THEM IN BOURGEOIS PL*A*CES OF CULTURE OR TO CONSIDER THEM *A*S OBJECTS OF *A*ESTHETIC INTEREST, IS TO IMP*A*IR BOTH THEIR FUNCTION *A*ND THEIR EFFECT. THIS IS WHY THE *A*TELIER POPUL*A*IRE H*A*S *A*LW*A*YS REFUSED TO PUT THEM ON S*A*LE. EVEN TO KEEP THEM *A*S HISTORIC*A*L EVIDENCE OF *A* CERT*A*IN ST*A*GE IN THE STRUGGLE IS *A* BETR*A*Y*A*L, FOR THE STRUGGLE ITSELF IS OF SUCH PRIM*A*RY IMPORT*A*NCE TH*A*T THE POSITION OF *A*N 'OUTSIDE' OBSERVER IS *A* FICTION WHICH INEVIT*A*BLY PL*A*YS INTO THE H*A*NDS OF THE RULING CL*A*SS. TH*A*T IS WHY THESE WORKS SHOULD NOT BE T*A*KEN *A*S THE FIN*A*L OUTCOME OF *A*N EXPERIENCE, BUT *A*S *A*N INDUCEMENT FOR FINDING, THROUGH CONT*A*CT WITH THE M*A*SSES, NEW LEVELS OF *A*CTION, BOTH ON THE CULTUR*A*L *A*ND THE POLITIC*A*L PL*A*NE.

Atelier Populaire statement, 1968

A long, familiar shadow is still cast by the outdated modernist framework of the 'museum as mausoleum' – places where objects go to die, where they are preserved as reference points in an authoritative scheme of the universe. It has been argued that in their need to make sense of all the things they contain, museums deny their essential heterogeneity and follow an impulse to flatten and homogenize the objects they display.[37] But swarm-designed objects are necessarily rough, raw things, whose edges are open to further modification and appropriation. Only their contexts of use make them whole, and this makes these objects unfinished in another, more teleological, sense. Rather than being 'dead' like a butterfly enclosed in a case, disobedient objects on view in an exhibition are unfinished, like a political sticker never stuck, its hope and rage still held fast to its laminate backing. Their aura is that of an unfulfilled promise. But this incompleteness needn't be a melancholy sign of failure so much as one of possibility.

A suffragette tea set promoting votes for women is a comfortable object to contemplate because a consensus has formed about the struggle that produced it – what happened, who won and what that means. The jeopardy, trauma and grief encapsulated in many contemporary disobedient objects, however, is raw and ongoing in ways that may make them uncomfortable or disturbing. They embody uncomfortable truths about the present and destabilize the official line of politicians and media organizations. They are full of uncertainty – and the empowering and terrifying idea that our own actions (and inaction) could make a difference.

Before we located them, some of these objects were retired from the street to rest unknown in private lofts or social centre basements.[38] Now they find themselves returned to visible public history to speak to us. For other objects, the disputes and struggles they represent have not ended, and when this exhibition ends they will return to take their place within them. Whatever our emotional reaction or identification with these unfinished objects, we mostly encounter them only for a brief moment, and even then always mediated by other objects and



Top Placard • Black ink on cardboard • Madrid, 2011 • M15 Archive • Produced during the Acampada Sol M15 movement mobilizations, it reads 'we're alive, it seems'.

social relations: perhaps inches from, or touching, our bodies in a crowd; held by (or holding up) our friends or comrades; in news footage of people who could be us; in photographs of days growing distant; or suddenly reappearing in a courtroom. The exhibition of these objects is, in fact, one moment when you might actually spend time with them, right in front of you, able to slowly examine them. How does this moment of exhibition (where the objects are placed in historical, and relative, contexts) relate to these other moments, the object's use by activists, newspaper photographers, and so on? When objects such as these have appeared in museums, they have usually been presented as ephemera, displayed not for close attention in their own right so much as incidental objects that were present while important social change was happening. More rarely, they have appeared as fetishes, valorized as 'edgy' or 'vital' cultural capital and thus commodified in ways counter to the political goals they were made to achieve. These two conditions, ephemera and fetish, are the principal dangers we have tried to avoid.

The Atelier Populaire's resistance to institutionalization intersects with the anecdote quoted earlier from a Black Panther meeting, which suggests that reflection can be as important as action. But the terms of that reflection are crucial, and this problem of representation must be the primary concern when re-presenting social movement objects. The Atelier Populaire's critique, though totalizing, is well-founded. Social movements, in contesting our ways of seeing and acting, find themselves beset by a long and recent history of misrepresentation, in which they are ignored or maligned by mass media while simultaneously being appropriated for their vitality and authenticity. Museums are not immune to this process of caricature. Visiting the Political Art Documentation and Distribution archive at MoMA in New York, two independent researchers found a collection of undocumented American Indian movement posters, with a Post-It note inside their archive drawer that read, 'not cool enough to catalog'. Other groups, such as the Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination or the various Occupy movements, have found themselves invited – as content – to participate in museum programmes. The museum then often attempts to contain or stifle the same organizing vitality that originally attracted it when it becomes apparent that such organizing might trouble the museum's sponsorship or labour relations.[39]

Disobedient objects were not made with a museum in mind. Nor do they rely on the museum to legitimate them – but this does not mean that they have nothing to gain from appearing there. That an exhibition can provide space to consider, away from the rush of a political action or the hyperbole of mass media, was demonstrated at the ARTPLAY design space in Moscow during the demonstrations (or 'fair election' rallies) against Putin's election as president in 2012. Recognizing that a new style of public protest was emerging in Russia, exemplified by individualized and often witty handmade

placards (see p.89), ARTPLAY invited protesters to lend their placards to the gallery for a short period during which they staged an exhibition, entitled *You don't even represent us / You can't even imagine us.* Afterwards many of the placards were collected by their makers and carried in further demonstrations. The exhibition was an affirmation that something significant was happening in terms of both politics and design. It marked a moment of birth rather than death for the objects.

Exhibitions are moments of collective meaning-making. Bringing these objects and histories together, and presenting them to an audience that never encounters them outside mass media, makes the museum a site for difficult questions and tests its claim to be a public space. But talking about movements outside the reach of those movements always involves discomfort. Rather than assuming a straightforward opposition between radical integrity and institutional separation, we attempted a more grounded approach to the re- and de-composition of these always-unfinished objects in relation to the making of movements. Movements begin already traversed by compromising power relations, and at certain points large institutions have also powerfully and honestly (as well as unknowingly) supported their development. Contemporary exhibitions have been a space of both possibilities and problems, paralleling the problems of radical history or philosophy texts that find themselves steeped in obfuscating language on inaccessibly expensive academic presses, or the contradictions of commercial distribution in which political documentary film can find itself. Invited to a dance with the institution that Holmes calls a game of liar's poker,[40] we set a wager on what the museum does to disobedient objects and what disobedient objects do to the museum. Just as troubling as the notion of museum-as-mausoleum is a newer metaphor that has emerged for the museum in a globalized free-market economy – the museum as supermarket, presenting the illusion of free choice. In the 'blockbuster' exhibition, the museum has perfected its own mode of cultural

consumerism. Within a vast building teeming with all the possibilities of its permanent collections, visitors are presented with an exhibition event that is carefully explained (some would argue dumbed down), packaged and branded.[41] In asking how the museum might resist this kind of reduction, Pierre-Olivier Rollin has envisaged a different kind of exhibition 'where the visitor is invited to develop creative processes instead of consumerist habits'. Such an exhibition would be non-directive: 'there should be room for hesitations, backtracking and alternative routes … it is of fundamental importance that visitors may not agree with the contents of the exhibition'. The responsibility of the museum, he suggests, is 'to organise an exhibition that is "controversial" at every level and that is permanently being "negotiated" by each individual visitor'.[42] It is within this kind of open-ended (many-headed) dialogic structure that we imagine disobedient objects might be able to come in to the museum and keep breathing.

Opposite This farmer in Hubei Province, China, resisted confiscation – by 100 riot-equipped government bailiffs – of his land for building projects in 2010 by using homemade rockets made of PVC pipe and fireworks in an elevated 'cannon tower'. He kept his land and sold it for record compensation.

Right This banner, pictured at a mass meeting in St Petersburg, 10 December 2011, employs a slogan by Pavel Arsenyev of the Laboratory of Poetic Actionism: '*Vy nas dazshe ne predstavliaete*' ('You don't even represent us' / 'You cannot even imagine us'). '*Predstavliaete*' means both 'imagine' and 'represent', evoking at once the failure of representative democracy, the misrepresentations of the media and the creative power of movements. It became iconic and was used continuously in demonstrations against Putin's government and election fraud from 4 December 2011 into 2012.

In thinking about the spatial organization of the *Disobedient Objects* exhibition, the starting point has been the idea that these artefacts are defined not by their form, but by their political efficacy. Their disobedience only becomes apparent when they are considered in context. To group these objects according to their formal qualities would iron out their particular contexts and reasons for being. There is a danger in conflating very different situations and experiences because the objects they produce look similar. In all instances we have attempted to present objects that are particular rather than typical.

The first four sections of the exhibition address the design logic of disobedient objects in relation to four strategies for social change: Direct Action, Speaking Out, Making Worlds and Solidarity. These four themes act as anchors around which the objects gravitate, encouraging visitors to make connections between objects and strategies of protest without these necessarily being mapped out. Introduced through quotations expressing these approaches, these strategies overlap and sometimes contradict each other. For example, there is a potential dichotomy between direct action and speaking out – what's the point of talking if you don't take action? What's the point of action if no one understands it?

Direct Action presents objects used in the empowering act of making change now, rather than asking political representatives to do so for you through mediated channels. From strikes to blockades, sit-ins and occupations, this sometimes means breaking the law, sometimes not. Direct action often involves blocking or slowing power, using objects such as the lock-on, which has its own history like that of the tripod. Speaking Out looks at how social movements get their message across when they are often misrepresented by mainstream media or are subject to censorship. Here we have traditional guerrilla communication (hand-painted placards, defaced currency) reinvigorated by social media, alongside tactical media experiments with new technologies. Making Worlds addresses the physical infrastructures of protest, which often embody 'prefigurative politics': anticipating new ways of living and relating to each other. These include the large-scale temporary structures of protest camps as well as small objects that provide support to protesting bodies, from bust cards to makeshift tear-gas masks. In Solidarity we come to intimate, personal objects that create an emotive connection between an individual and a collective movement: badges worn as public pledges of support, or jewellery made in prison that forms a link with campaigners on the outside. A final section of the exhibition is titled A Multitude of Struggles and comprises a series of stand-alone case studies. Here there is space for a more intense, less mediated engagement with the objects and the textures of personal narratives and design stories. The corresponding sections in this book illustrate some of the objects from the exhibition.

One of our principal methodological inspirations, besides the tradition of history from below, has been the use of participatory action research methods to engage with current movements. A fully developed action research approach wasn't possible, firstly, due to institutional constraints, and secondly, because we weren't engaging with a single local community context. But we aimed to be guided by the key values and principles of shaping research as a socially just activity: researching with, rather than on, communities; recognizing participants as experts and opening the research process to them; allowing them to fundamentally shape the research; and documenting outcomes in a way that is accessible and useful to those it claims to talk about. The research process of forming the exhibition's narrative and physical design has also been shaped by workshops with makers, movement participants and engaged academics. In the exhibition itself the objects are to be physically encountered as far as possible from the same perspectives as their users and makers, not upon pedestals or high upon a wall, yet resisting any attempt at a theatrical 'restaging', immersion or glib gallery participation. Normal V&A rules concerning plinths, barriers and touching distances have all been revised.

THE WORLD IS IN DIRE NEED OF *A* SOCIETY OF THE CRE*A*TIVELY *MAL*ADJUSTED. IT M*A*Y WELL BE THAT THE S*AL*V*A*TION OF OUR WORLD LIES IN THE H*A*NDS OF SUCH *A* CRE*A*TIVE MINORITY.

Martin Luther King, 'Transformed Nonconformism', *Strength to Love*, 1963

Foregrounding the ecology of these objects meant presenting as much context as possible (video, photographs, design notes, even hate mail), or highlighting process, for example by exhibiting the tools of clandestine solidarity street art in Syria – hidden stencils and disguised paint rather than the images on walls they produced. Sometimes supporting objects – for example, a letter written from prison – were more prominent and affecting than the object itself. Sometimes it made no sense to present the object itself at all outside of video, photograph or design diagram form. The exhibition is open to being actively read in different ways. Each object is accompanied not just by a curatorial text, but also by a statement from its users or makers, speaking in their own voice, given equal or higher visibility. The design diagrams in this volume, which take their lead from the way in which many movement how-to guides understand these objects, are also indicative of our approach to presenting individual objects. Such diagrams accompany them and are available to take away by the exhibition's exit. They offer another practical way to read the objects, inviting visitors to think tactically about why disobedient objects are made and the design problems they solve.

In caring for these objects, our attempts to engage critically with the Museum's organization in terms of sponsorship, education programmes, internships, 'late' events and the Museum shop have all become part of our project. Measuring its success will be difficult, not least in that any outcomes for the institution itself will be loudly projected, whereas those among movements will be quieter, less visible.

Like the objects it collects together, this project is incomplete. Its attempt to speak to the silences inevitably has to address its own, and it will fail in ways that we haven't yet anticipated.

Bringing these objects together in an art and design museum depended on personal trust, and proceeded through networks and connections that were necessarily limited in geographical and cultural terms. The histories it uncovers will be blighted by omissions of balance vis-à-vis the Western movements closest to us, incorrect precedents for designs and strategies, or gaps in genealogies. In attempting to attend to such limits, the exhibition and this book will launch alongside an online participatory archive, jumpstarted with their content. Further object histories can be recorded and their genealogies remixed and complicated. The exhibition itself only opens a crack. It isn't a complete synthesis or theoretical overview, but looks at some objects of disobedience through a series of particular, local moments tied in varying ways to movements for change. It is an invitation to look into the conditions and forms of making in social movements, to analyze omissions, connections, possibilities. More broadly, it might also evoke questions about how we define cultural value – and what art, design, arts education and museums are for.

BEC*A*USE REBELLION, FRIENDS *A*ND ENEMIES, DOES NOT BELONG EXCLUSIVELY TO THE NEO-Z*A*P*A*TIST*A*S. IT BELONGS TO HUM*A*NITY. *A*ND TH*A*T IS SOMETHING THAT MUST BE CELEBR*A*TED. EVERYWHERE, EVERYD*A*Y *A*ND *A*LL THE TIME. BEC*A*USE REBELLION IS *A*LSO *A* CELEBR*A*TION.

Subcomandante Marcos, EZLN communiqué, December 2013

‘We are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.’ Preamble to the International Workers of the World Constitution, 1905

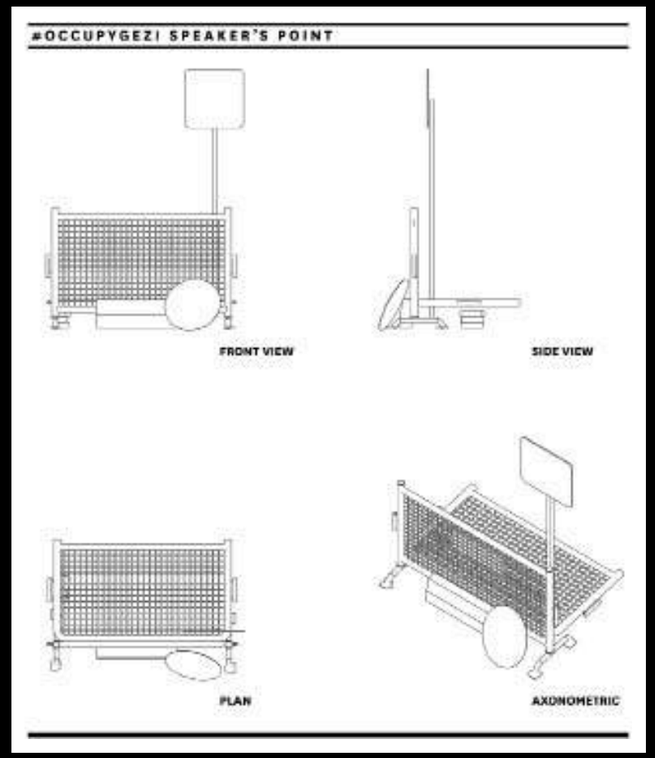
Mak-ing Worlds

Previous Traditional Turkish dervish dancer wearing a gas mask, Istanbul, 2013.

Right Village sign, produced by the Karnataka State Farmers' Association (KRRS), Mogenahalli, India, 1982. The KRRS has about ten million members, who use direct action against the neo-liberal developments that are affecting farming in India. Its aim is that of a 'village republic', with direct democracy and autonomy operating from the level of the village unit upwards. It was the first association to target the World Trade Organization and the issue of corporate globalization, setting up huge demonstrations. In October 1982 a village sign like this was put up to increase recognition of farmers, living in a context in which, for example, they were not offered seats when meeting state officials. The board reads: 'Officials and policemen, you may enter the village, on condition you are polite and civil. Farmers are available to meet between 6 and 7pm, and on Mondays.' The simple sign initiated a new arrangement, and versions of the board are still used at the entrance to many villages. The movement has been at the forefront of many important social changes in India.

Bottom Photograph and diagram by #occupygezi Architecture, a group of architects who documented the temporary structures built during the 2013 Istanbul protests.

Opposite A page from an anonymous pamphlet, *How to Protest Intelligently*, distributed in Tahrir Square, Cairo, 2011. An identical pamphlet in Ukrainian appeared in Independence Square, Kiev, 2014. It seems to have been translated online by protesters in late 2013, but Russian media have suggested it was produced by an NGO such as CANVAS. This and similar organizations have been accused by many of fostering dissent abroad in the interests of US foreign policy.



Top The Turkish government used record amounts of tear gas to disperse the 2013 Istanbul protests. Protesters devised homemade gas masks as a form of protection.

Right In 2013, during huge anti-austerity protests in Greece, demonstrators found a 50/50 solution of liquid antacid (Maalox) and water, sprayed on to the face, offered relief from the effects of tear gas, but left a white residue that marked protesters out to police. Pocket-sized sachets of antacid in the form of an oral gel (Riopan), which left no residue, became the popular remedy.

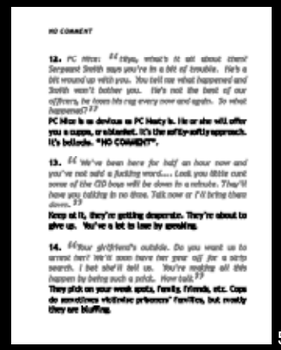
1

2

3

4

6



5

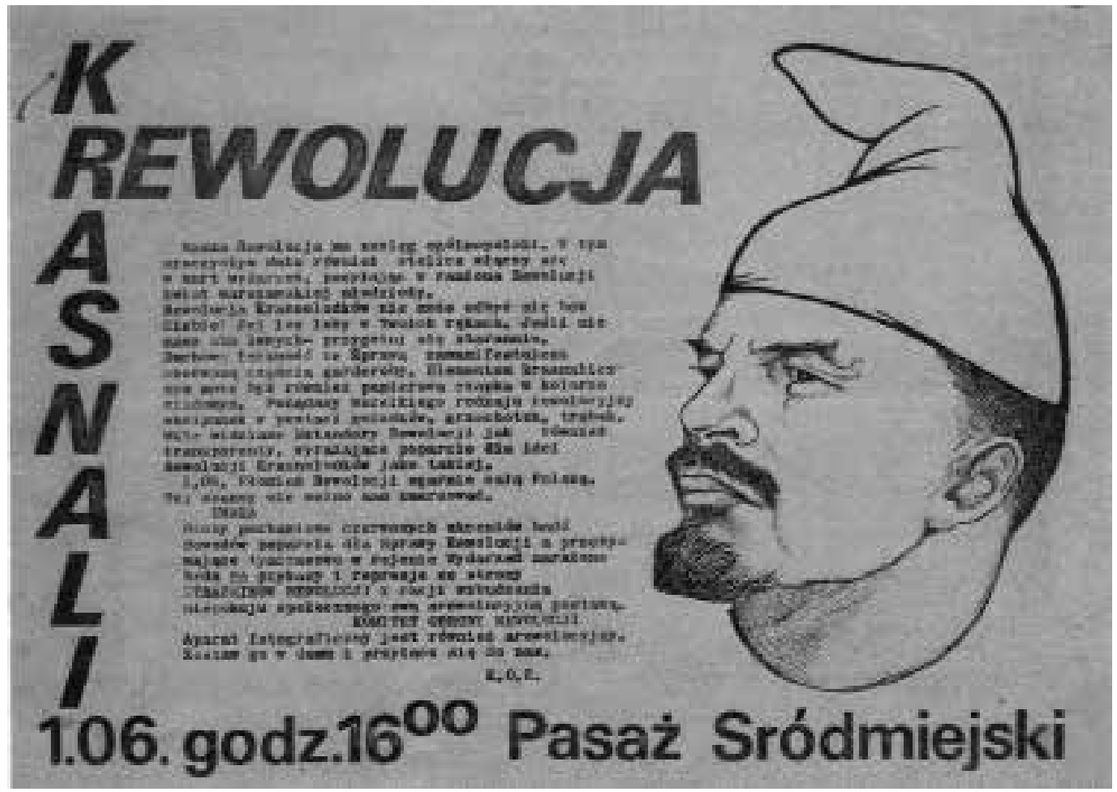
Above 1) Pamphlet, Black Panthers, New York, c.1968–9 • Black Panther Printed Ephemera Archive, Harvard University; 2) Bust card, Release, London, 1967 • Release Archive Warwick University; 3) Pamphlet, Scottish Homosexual Rights Group, Edinburgh, 1979 • SHRG Archive, National Records of Scotland; 4) Bust card, Green and Black Cross, London, 2012 • Private collection; 5) 'Defendant's Guide to Arrest, 3rd ed.', Legal Defence and Monitoring Group, London, 2006; 6) Billboard bust card, Space Hijackers, London, 2011 • 'Know your rights' pamphlets have a long history, but from the 1960s gay liberation and drug campaigning groups began producing small 'bust cards' to be carried in case of arrest. Release in London were first to use this term to describe them. The idea spread internationally. Following the increased criminalization of protest in some places, such cards have become increasingly common.

Opposite Occupy Sandy way-finder street sign, New York, 2012. When hurricane Sandy hit New York in October 2012, some Occupy activists turned their protest camp infrastructure towards disaster relief.

Di- rect

Ac- tion

'There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part! ... And you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels ... And you've got to indicate to the people who run it ... that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!' Mario Savio, Speech to the Berkeley Free Speech Movement, 2 December 1964



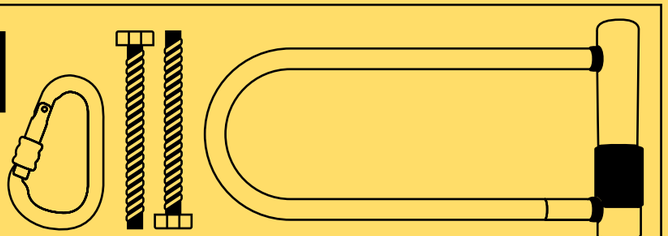
Previous Black Bloc protest, Hamburg, Germany, 1986. 'In response to these attacks [by police on squats in Hafenstrasse], the movement unleashed its own counteroffensive, marching more than 10,000 strong around a "black block" of at least 1,500 militants carrying a banner reading "Build Revolutionary Dual Power!" At the end of the march, the Black Bloc beat back the police in heavy fighting' (George Katsiaficas, *The Subversion of Politics*, Edinburgh, 2007, p.187). German media labelled the protesters 'die schwarze block' after their clothing. Different kinds of Black Blocs have appeared in movements internationally since, alongside pink, blue, book, childrens' and medieval blocs.

Top & Right TAF!/Enmedio, 'We Are Not Numbers' postcards, filled in during January 2013 protests in Barcelona organized by Platform for Mortgage Debt Victims against Caixa Catalunya, the bank that evicts most people in the region. People wrote personal messages such as: 'Thieves', 'You're taking our lives' and 'One day you will be judged'. They were pushed through the closed doors of the bank as images of people affected by mortgage debt were pasted on their walls.

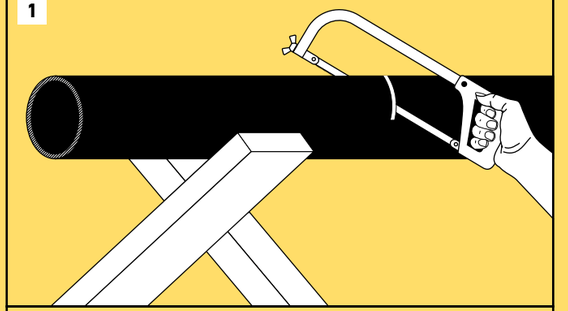
Opposite Top 'Revolution of Dwarves' happening, Wroclaw, Poland, June 1988. The Orange Alternative formed under martial law in Communist Poland and carried out surreal happenings that played with the limits of the law (protests were illegal) and undermined the government's legitimacy. Ten thousand people attended this artistic happening, wearing orange dwarf hats and chanting 'We are the dwarves!' The militia was forced to follow instructions to round up and arrest all dwarves.

Opposite Bottom Flyer for 'Revolution of Dwarves' happening in Wroclaw, Łódź and Warsaw, Orange Alternative • Wroclaw • June 1988 • Orange Alternative Foundation.

LOCK-ON DEVICES

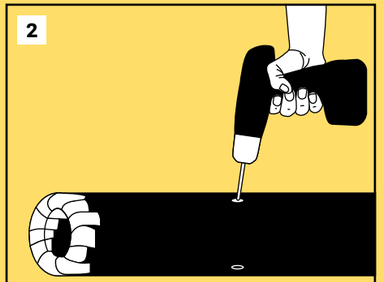


1



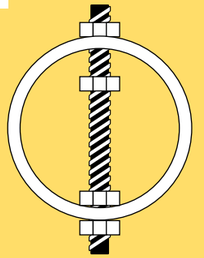
Use a hacksaw to cut the metal pipe into c.4-ft/1.2-m lengths – shorter ones are possible, but make access to the 'cuffs' easier.

2



File down and pad the ends with foam and gaffer tape, and drill holes in both sides.

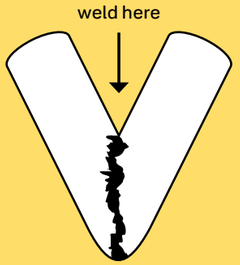
3



Put a bolt through the holes with nuts on the inside.

4

Wrap a chain around your wrist and attach a carabiner to the end of it. Insert your hand into the tube and lock the carabiner around the bolt.



V-shaped tubes are an effective way for one person to secure him or herself around something.

General Safety & Support

> Dress for the weather. Stuff bin liners and pieces of roll mat down the back of your trousers.

> Plan a safe, comfortable lock-on position. Bring snacks.

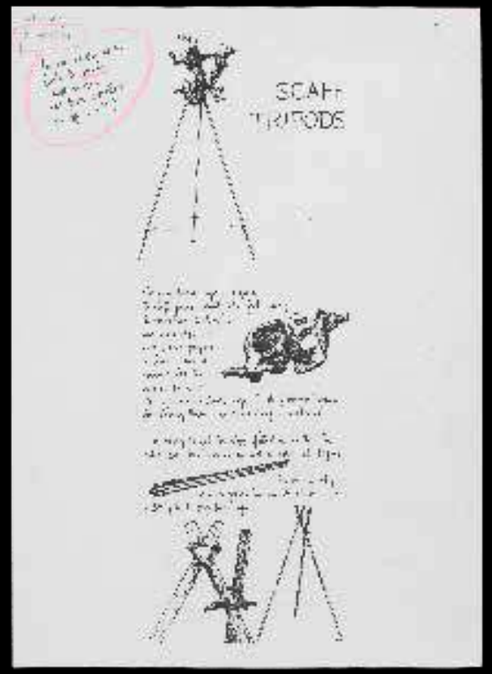
> Have an affinity group support your safety and well-being, deal with media, security, etc.

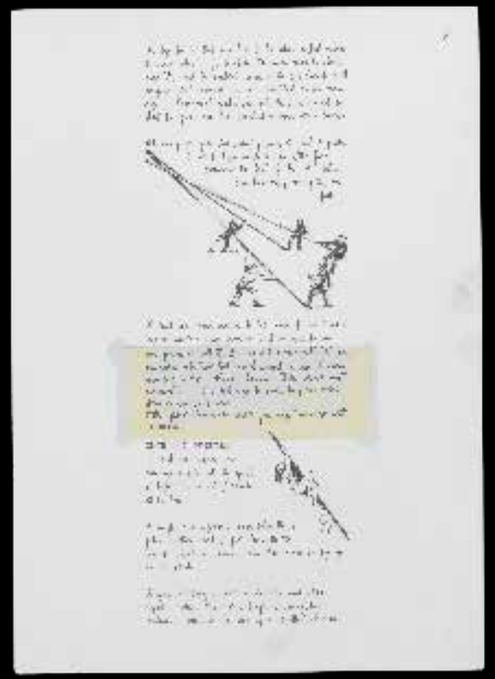
> Plan ahead: how long will you lock-on for? Know the law. Practice media statements.

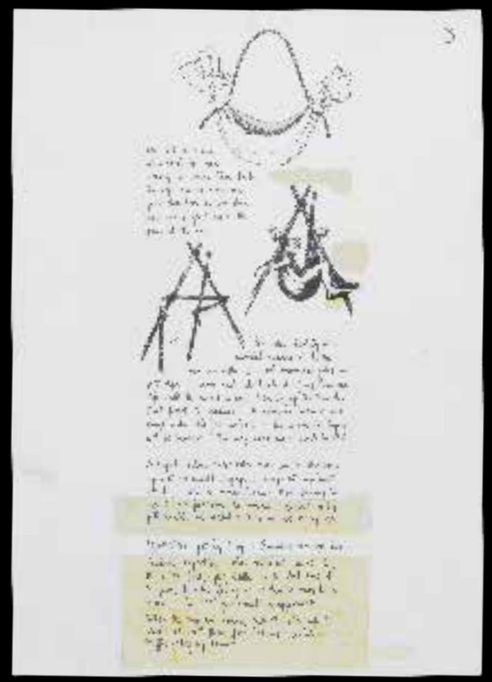
> Lock-on at the last practicable moment. Go to the toilet first.

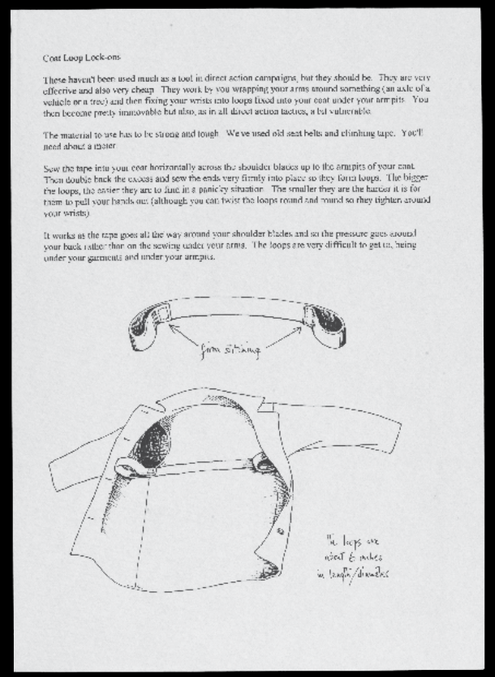
BASIC LOCK-ON

Place a D-lock around the neck, then secure it to machinery to immobilize it or to gates to close them.









Previous Top A Palestinian demonstrator, locked-on to a newly established Israeli separation barrier that annexed land in the West Bank village of Bil'in, March 2006.

Previous Bottom An activist locked-on during a 1995 protest in Stanworth Valley, Lancashire, against construction of the M65 motorway. The protest camp's eviction was the longest-running in post-war British history.

Opposite Working diagrams for scaffolding tripod designs and for coat-loop lock-on, drawn by B. Dahl • Pen, Tippex and glue on card • February 1997 • Private collection • The much-reproduced final versions of these diagrams appeared in *Road Raging: Top Tips for Wrecking Roadbuilding*, published by Road Alert! in 1997, during opposition to the building of the Newbury bypass in Berkshire, but the tripod designs were originally produced as a photocopied pamphlet.

Top Left First ever tripod blockade, New South Wales, Australia, 1989, used to blockade logging roads in order to oppose the renewal of a woodchipping licence to a private company. Some of these forests became National Parks.

Top Right Boom barrier at the June 1980 eviction of the Free Republic of Wendland, a camp of 1,000 protesters against a nuclear waste facility in Gorleben, Germany. The anti-nuclear movement has continued to grow globally. In 2002 an act legislated the closure of all German nuclear power plants by 2021.

Above Left A 100-ft/33-m scaffolding tower, Claremont Road, London, 1994, blocking construction of the M11 Link road. The tower was named Dolly, after one 93-year-old resident who refused to be evicted from her home in the street.

Above Right Banner suspended between tripods at the entrance to the 2009 Climate Camp, Blackheath, historic site of the 1381 peasants' revolt camp. The banner hung framing the view of Canary Wharf in the distance.