

And so the question on everyone's
lips becomes, how do I participate?

THE GRAND DOMESTIC REVOLUTION

— User's Manual No°1

"A moment of life concretely and deliberately constructed by the collective organization of a unitary ambiance and a play of events."

Definition of a 'Constructed Situation'
From Situationist definitions
<http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/1.definitions.htm>

The aesthetics of everyday practice is lived as a political creation.

ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This manual is the first issue of an updatable series of DIY (Do-It-Yourself) publications sporadically published by different users of The Grand Domestic Revolution for other "coming" users. This content will trace their progress, experiments, and investigations in and out of the house.

We hope that the manual will act as an essential resource to enlarge the scope of readers and participants for "The Grand Domestic Revolution", as well as act as a tool for communication between different users.

Making this manual is not complicated at all. You can make on site (at home!) in the apartment by means of printer/photocopier or even without using them but handwriting and drawing!

Just please keep a minimal order by numbering your issue properly after a careful check of what's the latest issue.

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INTRODUCTION

What is The Grand Domestic Revolution?

The Grand Domestic Revolution' is the title of a year long project that deals with the evolutionary and collaborative process of "living" research in the contemporary domestic and private sphere - particularly in relation to the spatial imagining (or the built environment). It aims at re-articulating while exercising the notions of the social, the public and, eventually, the commons. For this purpose, an apartment, we named the Casco house, is rented to be both a symbolic and functional base of the project. The actual use and transformation of space and multiple forms of activities in and out of the apartment intertwine with cross-disciplinary research and imaginative practices.

The Grand Domestic Revolution is about the state of mind, the state of communal politics, the internal state, the external state, the desire to seek closure of the gap between the private and public spheres of existence, radicalisation of the collective spirit, personalised comforts and domesticated discomforts, singularisation and style, shattering the perfection of the interior, questioning, doubting, formulating strategies to overcome the domestic order.

The project appropriates its title from the book (1980) by architect and urban historian Dolores Hayden. Departing from the late nineteenth century era in the United States, Hayden illuminates the feminist (influenced) design practice and urban planning, and articulates the momentum of socializing isolated domestic space and (domestic) labour, reorganizing neighbourhoods and cities which she names as "a grand domestic revolution". Our project draws from this work, as yet, by questioning the actuality, necessity, and/or possibility of contemporary forms of "grand domestic revolution" also questioning the relevance of the feminist view then and its current development.

Over the course of a year, Casco will be externalising its space to occupy a nearby property, inside the top floor apartment of a residential building. The 70m² space will be transformed into a live(in) experiment as conducted by a host of guests who will be invited to devise a use for the public pronunciation of private space.

A number of practitioners and colleagues including artists, designers, architects, writers, educators as well as institutions, organizations and "neighbours" are invited to be successive and temporary residents, hosts, guests or "users" of the Casco house in order to strategize and realize the issues at hand. A reading group, monthly "town meetings", and other forms of ongoing collaborative projects are being organized. Accordingly, the Casco house will coincide and accommodate public use and visits to the usual visiting hours of Casco: Tuesday-Sunday 12:00-18:00.

Historically, the term 'revolution' has always been associated with the traditional 'left', in the true essence of over turning a dominant regime, while the term 'domestic' has its affiliations with the right - in its search for security, stability and concerns with the trivialities of reality. perhaps the question would be 'how to live desirably within the capitalist lifestyle', moreover, the re-functionalisation and integration of art and design into the living realm via integrated situations that traverse the border between the private and the public.

HOW TO USE THIS HOUSE

Multiple tenants & maintenance

This house does not belong to anyone but everyone at the same time. We hope there will be plenty of guests (and hosts) of this house whose "singularities" will shine through the multiplicity and simultaneous co-habitation.

This vision will require the responsibility, negotiation and the freedom of participants, including, among others, the shared responsibilities for basic house maintenance. We should take it upon ourselves to maintain the cleanliness of the apartment at all times. The dual role of the host and guest means the split function of self-serving hospitality.

Many Furniture

The apartment is equipped with a spatial device 'Many Furniture', designed by ifau and Jesko Fezer, who also designed Casco's interior architecture. 'Many Furniture' functions as a colour coded and flexible social system whereby a pallet of colours differentiates the abundance of "furniture" to prompt private construction, collectivity or publicness in support of both representative situations and informal ones. Below is the note from ifau and Jesko Fezer.

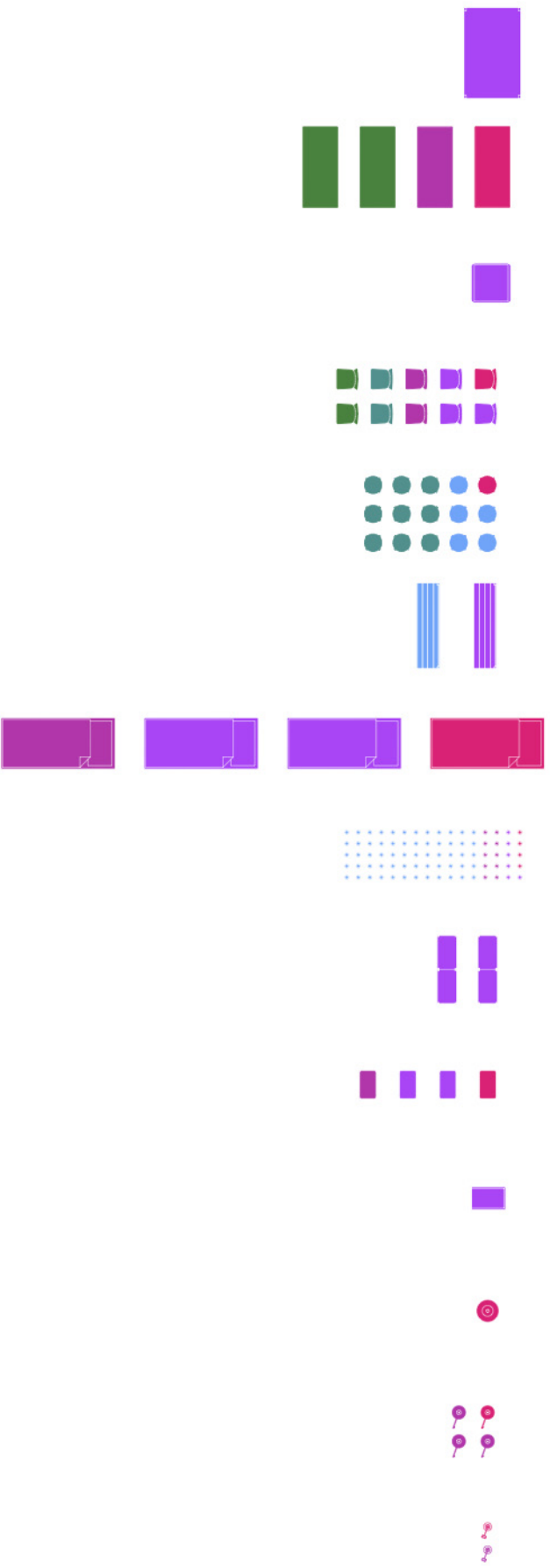
Furniture Table

The table shows a range of initial furniture settings for the Casco House. Starting from six different scenarios based on estimated requirements of future users (individual, family, group) and for different performances (opening, lecture, workshop). As a start, the peak quantity of each item should be provided to allow for all kinds of uses and adaptations. The luxury of choice being the premise for the negotiation of boundaries. Stacked in one room of the apartment the furniture will be arranged and rearranged by alternating users and events taking place. Superfluous items will have to be stored or converted to serve actual needs.

Colour code

The draft shows a colour-code revealing the distribution of items per user, user group or event. For instance, for a family a dining table, a coffee table, four chairs (one already assigned to the artist), a stool (likewise), a bench, three beds, ten cups, two shelves, three night stands, a baby change unit, one floor lamp and one clamp spotlight are calculated. Items dedicated to other users or purposes are included in the total number, their difference in colour thus indicating the overlapping of programs and highlighting forms of appropriation.

*Since the house is not that big, you may need a certain strategy of moving furniture from one room to another. One thing is clear, as we figured out, it is possible to move every piece of furniture from one end to another. It just requires some tricks!



Artist (Raspberry Red / RAL 3027)
Family (Blue Liac / RAL 4005)
Artist Group (Sigma Violet / RAL 4008)

Opening (Light Blue / RAL 5012)
Lecture (Waterblue / RAL 5021)
Workshop (Turquoise Green / RAL 6016)



Library

A growing 'GDR library' consisting of different research materials such as books (including 'The Grand Domestic Revolution'), articles, images, DVDs (artist's video, films) is installed. The first installment is done by Annie Wu and Binna Choi in collaboration, who will continue to develop the library, hopefully with other contributions in the future.

Please feel free to add more references by donating the books or leaving the URLs where we can find the source.

Unfortunately, borrowing the books and other reference is not possible. However, we have the photocopier and printer at hand in the apartment. Free duplication facilities are available for necessary reference material.

NO STEALING please. That will must be very painful for us and other users. As you know books are expensive which is why we want to share it. If you steal it, we loose that opportunity.

*Brief list of reference

books

art after conceptual art
design for the real world
experminent marathon
socialism and the new life
the theory and design in the first machine age
desde aqui hasta ahi
friends of the divided mind
the children of craig-y-nos
architecture and participation
resonant bodies, voices, memories
moderna muskeet projekt
extrastatecraft + imaginary property
forms of inquiry: the architecture of critical graphic design
designcity design for urban space
outdoor systems
living in the lowlands
werk
bouwen '20 '40
2000 jaar utrecht
spicies of spaces and other pieces
life a user's manual
barbara visser is er niet
modernism
apartemento
if/then
an artist in java
in the place of the public sphere?
coming to have a public live, is it worth it?
the fall of public man
the human condition
domesticity at war
building the house of people
the grand domestic revolution
zehar
edible estates

make everything new
communist like us
the inoperative community
being singular plural
taking the matter into common hands
la communauté inavouable
community of absence
self-organisation
beyond the plan
for every dog a different master
the ruburban plot
there is nothing there
work ethic
lygia clark
the new spirit of capitalism
payback
radical philosophy
dutch design double
metronome no 10
inflatocookbook
the black room
ich bin keine kuche
texte zur kunst
sonderfarben
asymmetric equality

disks

kala
ayatayat cinta
kitchen etc.
casting fortune
villa watch
casco private
after effect
about the relative size of things in the universe
to live outside the law you must be honest
edible estate video's
generale staten
freedomism
la chinoise
exterminating angel
two or three things i know about her
eames

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROJECT

- Research and organize

Let's brainstorm the questions and conflicts that are raised by the projects by taking the Casco house as a starting point. While staying over, cooking, watching, reading, discussing, gathering, and organizing events, we should develop a thorough empirical analysis of the movements that take place. Bring your research, inquiry and thoughts in and out of the house. And organize occasions where you can examine or further develop your thoughts.

- Attend various activities organized by other tenants

For the opening month, amongst others, Ade Darmwan and Reza Afisina of ruangrupa, an artist initiative in Jakarta, are invited by Casco and Centraal Museum to make a contribution. They will stay at and transform the apartment into 'ruangrupa Huis', alluding to a foreign cultural institutes such as 'Erasmus Huis' and playing with its institutional agenda. In line with her ongoing project 'What can we achieve together?', Sepake Angiama, curator and educator will stay over the weekend to hold an improvisational group performance. Artist Haegue Yang will host the screening of the film 'Marguerite, A Reflection of Herself' (2003) by Dominique Auvray. The film is a portrait of Marguerite Duras; her literary and political life intertwined with histories of families, relationships, and friendships. The screening will be accompanied by conversations and dinner. Drop by, join the events and

- Join and contribute to the regular activities

There are also ongoing or regular activities that can only grow with your contribution.

: Writing a GDR cookbook

The cookcook will be a compile of original or adapted recipes, each responding to a contentious issue surrounding food, health and politics dominating the media today. The task at hand is to develop the experimental joy of culinary duties as a way of resonating the theoretical mantra of collective living in the hopes of developing greater awareness and dialogue about eating, ingredients, natural food sources - essential knowledge for survival.

A particular method, borrowed from the Four Season QQ+Electric Palm

Tree cookbook is to write an imaginative recipe of even un-edible meal in correspondence with an image you encounter from the media or on a daily basis. It could be one way of digesting the plethora of image and communication!

Write here! On the papers available at the apartment!

: Reading (Eating) group

There will be a Reading (Eating) group that consists of people who are interested in reading and discussing some key texts in relation to the subjects that the project addresses, while enjoying cooking and sharing the dining experience.

: Guests Relay in Utrecht

Let's propose a guest from Utrecht whom you would like to meet in a group at the Casco house. This could be a very informal, intimate meeting in which conversations and interactions are stimulated. Then the guest may introduce another to us.

: Open Your House

We are planning to visit the homes of our neighbours, seeking for the possibility of sharing their concerns and the ways of cooperation.

: Unitary Dwelling workshop

Ongoing workshops on the planning of a future unitary dwelling project will take place. A living structure that does not segregate itself from the rest of society, is not purely utopic but functional, economically sustainable/ profitable. Formation of the the team: architect, designer, artist, social planner, urban developer, entrepreneur, economist and theorist.

To participate, please email Yolande or Binna from Casco (yolande@cascoprojects.org, binna@cascoprojects.org)

DISCLAIMER

'User's Manual: The Grand Domestic Revolution' is conceived by Casco Office for Art, Design and Theory in the framework of Utrecht Manifest-Biennale for Social Design, which takes the fundamental question of the very definition of "social design" as its central issue this year. The project's investigation is in turn intended to elaborate on both Casco and Utrecht Manifest's shared understanding and interest in the expanded notion of design practice in the wider social and political environment, as well as their role as "public" institutions in relation to private households.

This manual (Issue no.1) is written and edited by Binna Choi and Annie Wu. Annie Wu also designed it. For realizing the first issue, the cooperation with the Casco team and friends was invaluable: Yolande van de Heide, Sacha Semeniouk, ifau and Jesko Fezer, Mirjam van Drenth, Jaring Durst Britt, Thomas de Kroon, Jitske, Rein Blank, Mafalda Damaso, Tim van Puffelen, Kartel Ucar, Joey van Rumpt, Tim van Kessel, Eva Bullens, Ingrid Edwards, Marianna Papamarkou, and Marina Vishmidt.

Please check the agenda on both Casco and Utrecht Manifest websites, drop by or stay over, and be our guest or even host. For any further inquiry, please contact: Yolande van der Heide (yolande@cascoprojects.org).

APPENDIX

- Some useful reference selection

This book is about the first feminists in the United States to identify the economic exploitation of women's domestic labor by men as the most basic cause of women's inequality. I call them material feminists because they dare to define a "grand domestic revolution in women's materials conditions... While other feminists campaigned for political or social change with philosophical or moral arguments, the material feminists concentrated on economic and spatial issues as the basis of material life.

...

Between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of the Great Depression, three generations of materials feminists raised fundamental questions about what was called "women's sphere" and woman's work". They challenged two characteristics of industrial capitalism: the physical separation of household space from public space, and the economic separation of the domestic economy from the politics economy.

...

By daring to speak of domestic revolution, Pierce, Gilman, and other material feminists developed new definitions of economic life and settlement design that many socialists in the United States and Europe also accepted, although they often relegated these issues to some future time, "after the revolution," just as some suffragists put them off to be dealt with after winning the suffrage.

...

Socialists such as Engels and Lenin argued that women's equality would result from their involvement in industrial production, which would be made possible by the provision of socialized childcare and food preparation. Socialized domestic work was for them, only a means to this end. They did not consider socialized domestic work to be meaningful work, and they assumed that it would be done by low-status women. On the other hand, some American feminists such as Florence Kelley and Julia Lathrop looked to capitalist state to provide services to help employed women and did not analyze the indirect benefits to industrial capitalism such services would imply. Only the material feminists argued that women must assert control over the important work of reproduction which they were already performing and reorganize it to obtain economic justice for themselves... Their insights about the importance of domestic work were extended in the material feminist tradition, while Marxian socialists developed the communarians' critique of industrial work.

...

Insofar as material feminists worked in cities and towns, they developed the earlier communitarian socialist tradition of spatial analysis to accompany economic analysis. They argued that the entire physical environment of cities and towns must be redesigned to reflect equality for women. (This was a most significant contribution that corrected some of the earlier communitarians tendencies to work only in experimental socialist villages.)

...

During this era, material feminists saw that many decisions about the organization of future society were being incorporated into the built environment. Therefore, they identified the spatial transformation of the domestic workplace under women's control as a key issue linking

campaigns for social equality, economic justice, and environmental reform.

...

The transformation of transportation technology and urban life in the industrial city encouraged materials feminists to contribute their economic and spatial analysis of household work to debates about neighbourhood design and housing design.

...

In the same spirit, Ada May Krecker had written for Emma Goldman's anarchist journal, *Mother Earth*, of the consolidation of home on a large scale: "The same forces that have built trusts to superseded with measureless superiority the myriad petty establishments which they have superseded, will build the big dwelling places and playgrounds and nurseries for tomorrow's children and make them measurelessly better fitted to our socialized ideals of tomorrow than could possibly be the private little homes of today".

...

The development of suburban home ownership as the national housing policy in the United States offered a post-world War I idea to a post-World War II society. Government sponsored mortgages and tax deductions for home owners in the post-World War II era, defeated feminists but provided a great boon to speculative builders, appliance manufacturers, and automobile manufacturers. As women were ejected from wartime jobs, they moved into suburban married life and the birth rate rose along with mass consumption. Builders created millions of single-family houses that did not involve careful site planning, provision of community space, or any design input from architects. These houses were bare boxes to be filled up with mass-produced commodities.

...

Friedan and Filene considered the feminine mystique to be more of a social than a spatial problem, yet the design of domestic space defied all architectural and technological rationality.

....

Most families continue to inhabit single-family housing designed around the ideal of woman as full-time homemaker. As women's participation in the paid labour force continues to rise, woman and men come to suspect the conflicts that outdate forms of housing and inadequate community services create for them and their families; yet it is difficult to imagine alternatives. It requires a spatial imagination to understand that urban regions designed for inequality cannot be changed by new roles in the lives of individuals.

....

The material feminist legacy can stimulate that spatial imagination by providing feminist visions of other ways to live: thousands of women and men who supported socialized domestic work demonstrated their social and technical ingenuity. ...When, at their most militant, the material feminists demanded that paid workers perform all household staks collectively in well-equipped neighbourhood kitchens, laundries and childcare centers, they called for architects to develop new types of housing and for planners to create new kinds of community facilities, giving these professions a human importance long since lost by architects working for speculative builders or planners in the zoning bureaucracy. The material feminists argued for these transformations at every political level, from the household and the neighbourhood to municipality and the nation, setting an example for others who might wish to unite such diverse issues as housework, discrimination against women in employment, housing policy, and energy policy.

...

The materials feminist tradition had offered two insights into

women's oppression: a spatial critique of the home as an isolated domestic workplace, and an economic critique of unpaid household work. Contemporary feminists have lost the first insight, and instead added a social critique of the sexual division of labour, which attached the concepts of women's sphere and man's world. While this advance is important it has not brought success, because contemporary feminists have overlooked the private home as a spatial component of their economic oppression in the way that material feminist overlooked the sexual division of labour as a social component.

...

Material feminists were dramatic propagandists, feminists who used new approaches to architecture and urban design to illustrate new ideals of equality through their proposals for community kitchens, laundries, dining halls, kitchenless houses, and feminist cities.

...

Source: Dolores Hayden, 'The Grand Domestic Revolution', 1980, MIT

Living Space as Institution

The domestic interior 'living space' has become an important agent for our culture to symbolise its idealisations. It is the primary context for the ideological foundations of the dominant culture to be constantly stated to the individual and thus, ultimately, to the community. The 'living space' is encoded into an idea type that is then projected, through the media, to the individual. By shaping the domestic 'living space' in accordance with the projected ideal types, an ideology is implicitly ever present and, like everything else in the 'new' reality', what goes on can be under the constant shadow of society's institutions. The basic constructs in our consciousness of ourselves and others are moulded by that part of the environment in which we want to be the most free and expressive. The physicality and inflexibility of the domestic living space's structural mass means that it is the inhabitants who must adopt as soon as they move in. This feeling of restriction and passivity is strengthened by the rules and regulations that accompany life within its confines...

While the layout and position of the housing block have been predetermined, so in a different, more subtle way, has the content. For the media also projects 'models' of preferred ways of life that are there simply to be emulated. The media's representations of the 'model' bring together various objects that denote forms of success, power, ability, etc., and these are stated to people as desirable attributes, the ones they should have themselves. The inference being that a person will acquire these attributes by making similar arrangements with objects in their own homes.

Source: Stephen Willats, 'Beyond the Plan: The Transformation of Personal Space in Housing', 2001, Powell's

Russian avant-garde artists and architects expressed their identification with the new regime by running artistic affairs during the civil war, evolving new theories of art and artists institutions for the new state, producing revolutionary propaganda and designing new types of buildings. They provided temporary transformations of the environment, such as Gustavs Klucis's decorative schemes for the

Firth Congress of the Comintern or Third International (the communist organization dedicated to fomenting world revolution) in 1922. They also designed permanent structures that would develop new models of collective living, which included Nikolai Ladovsky's Communal House of 1920, Georgii Kurtikov's Flying City, of c. 1924 and Anton Lavinskii's City on Springs of c. 1923...

The Constructivist group, formed in March 1921 (including Alexei Gan, Varvara Stepanova and Alexander Rodchenko), declared 'Death to Art' and announced their intention of using their artistic explorations to achieve the 'communist expression of material structures'...

Such transitional experiments were, the Constructivists stressed, not artistic ends in themselves, but abstract explorations that would ultimately produce practical design solution.

Source: 'Modernism: Designing a New World 1914-1939', 2006, Victoria and Albert Museum

Gropius designed three double houses for a chosen few of the Bauhaus masters with a single house for the director. Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky shared one house, Goerg Muche and Osca Schlemmer another, and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Lyonel Feiniger the third. The luxury of these houses, which were only allocated to the older generation of masters, provoked jealousy and caused controversy among the more politically engaged masters and students.

Source: 'Modernism: Designing a New World 1914-1939', 2006, Victoria and Albert Museum

Kirsten Simonsen talks of the importance of social interaction between neighbours: the people you say "hello" to on the street. While these ties are seen as weak in relation to the strong bonds of family and friends they are not unimportant. For women, these casual encounters create an engagement with a wider circle and through these there are possibilities of exchanges of goods and support services. Hanson and Pratt's work reveals women using these networks to find employment. The existence of a widespread network of weak ties also serves to make a neighbourhood feel like a safe and friendly "private world".

Source: "Changing the mould: The Frauen-Werk-Stadt model project", Rolse Gilory & Chris Booth, Zehar n.52 | 2004

Our Planet

Most of us feel like we don't have any control over the direction in which our world is headed. As always, the newspapers are full of daily evidence for concern. Unlike the challenges of past generations, however, these struggles are no longer just localized or broadly regional; they are an interlaced web of planetary challenges. How, then, do we respond in the face of the impossible scale of issues such as global energy production, climate change, and the related political aggressions and instabilities that accompany them? One thing we can do is act where we have influence, and in a capitalist society, that would be our private property. Here we have the freedom to create in some small measure the world in which we want to live.

Our House

Private property, in particular the home, has become the geographic focus of our society. When we take stock of the standard American single-family residence, it becomes quite clear where the priorities are. It is within the walls of the house that the real investment and life of the residents occur. The land outside the walls typically receives much less attention, and can even become downright unwelcoming. Any activity in the yard will typically happen in back, where there is privacy. We are obsessed with our homes as protective bubbles from the realities around us. Today's towns and cities are engineered for isolation, and growing food in your front yard becomes a way to subvert this tendency. The front lawn, a highly visible slice of private property, has the capacity also to the public. If we want to reintroduce a vital public realm into our communities, those with lands and homes may ask what part of their private domain has public potential.

Source: Fritz Haeg, 'Edible Estates: Attack on the Front Lawn', 2008, Metropolis Book

Make no mistake about it: communism is not a blind, reductionist collectivism dependent on repression. It is the singular expression for the combined productivity of individuals and groups ("collectivities") emphatically not reducible to each other.

We need to save the glorious dream of communism from Jacobin mystifications and Stalinist nightmares alike; let's give it back this power of articulation: an alliance, between the liberation of work and the liberation of subjectivity.

Up to this point, however, the industrial modes of production associate with capitalism and socialism had only taken possession of social inequalities from the outside, so to speak. The great conflagration of 1968 demonstrated that the new economic techniques now implicated the domain of social reproduction. Before then, the world of production was based on exchange values (commodity production) and the reproduction of use value (utility). All that is over. In this regard, one could consider the movements of that period as necessary preliminaries... Now the remaining private sphere -family, personal life, free time, and perhaps even fantasy and dreams - everything from that point on became subjected to the semiotics of capital. This transformation took place regardless of political climate: democratic, fascist, socialist. Socialized production succeeded in imposing its law, its logic, on every facet of social life on earth, vampiristically appropriating free time, the life blood of humanity.

It is a matter rather of manifesting the singular as multiplicity, mobility, spatio-temporal variability and creativity. That today is the only value on the basis of which one can reconstruct work. A work which no longer is crystallized in the form of private property, which does not consider the instruments of production as ends in themselves, but as means for attaining the happiness of singularity and its expansion in mechanic rhizomes - abstract and/or concrete.

Source: Felix Guattari & Toni Negri, 'Communists Like Us', 1990, Autonomia (Semiotextes)

For now, I can just say that I find your proposal, as I already said in my initial reaction, extremely compelling. The home as a space of politics seen and unseen, the division between public and private which makes the separation of the political from the economic possible, the very status of the 'private' as a threshold beyond which politics and public debate cannot reach (from the home to 'private' schools, 'private' prisons, 'private' health care), 'private' as that which is not open to question - this seems to be the cornerstone of the social consensus in such a fundamental way (the way 'private' is articulated with 'individual', which is articulated with 'freedom').

You have a kind of notion of 'privacy' as the last refuge of the human when everything else has been lost - autonomy, solidarity, an idea of a future we can intervene in shaping...there is also the etymological but also affective link between 'privacy' and 'privation', being deprived, which also connects to the Greek notion of 'oekonomia' as the home, which has no political significance - following that whole thread is a lifetime's work in itself (just one more point in this direction - there's also the argument Marx makes about the 'market' as the sphere of equality, and 'the hidden abode of production', the workplace, where the exploitation happens that makes the market possible - for the feminist movement, it would have of course been the 'hidden abode of reproduction')

Additionally, I'm thinking of the anxiety of many public art institutions, i.e. most art institutions in Europe, though not in the rest of the world, seems to revolve around evoking, cajoling, or projecting this idea of a 'public', of becoming a substitute site for some kind of collective dimension, which is supposedly gone from everyday social experience, and the differences between utopia and management, between situation and spectacle, get increasingly blurred, especially in managerial concepts like 'participation'. It's a laboratory where social relations are tried out, but it's also a depressing little room where nothing happens, even if it's the size of the Tate Modern. This is why I think the idea of a domestic site is so great - not only is it turning that notion of the art space as 'public' upside down and taking it seriously by moving into a private space and seeing how it can be 'opened' through practice, it's putting forward an actual home as a site of production of subjectivity, it is literal, not trying to create a domestic atmosphere in a gallery space in order to ask questions which have already been asked for generations, even in the art world....

of course there's the whole history of the home as the site for experimenting with ways of living that then are supposed to extend into the way social life is organized more broadly, so the politicising of the family unit, of gender roles, of domestic economies - and then how those attempts are influenced by the degree of social movement or stasis happening in that society (we can think of the experiments in communal life in early revolutionary Russia turning into squalid 'communal apartments' or communal living in the West in the 50s-70s turning into cramped flatshares in skyrocketing capitalist housing markets today). To me, it seems the home is the prime political site, it's where politics are born or where they are buried. And the home as a site of contestation for the women's movement is totally crucial, you're right, and we also can see the refusal of housework turning 20, 30 years

later into the commodification of housework, as domestic servant jobs performed by migrant women are increasingly acceptable again. So this is another way that the home becomes the barometer of political change - the contradictions of a women's movement that didn't manage to change capitalism very much is perfectly exemplified there. Or, rather, the contradictions of the fight.

And then the specific Dutch situation is interesting as well, because on the one hand you do have a kind of very introverted culture, but one that, until recently, had a mass consensus of the public good embodied in welfare state ideals and an ideology of 'tolerance' that it is now busy distancing itself from with a new xenophobic 'common sense'. I think everywhere we are witnessing this 'shutting down', especially with the economic collapse, and the home is the first place we have to look for how to get rid of both the economy and politics and start inventing.

Source: A letter from a colleague

That 1970s art work informed by feminism is currently a site of intellectual energy is perhaps due to the problems of labour that shape our current public sphere: from the "end" of the welfare mother to home officing; from the new threats to privacy made possible by the ever-expanding role of the Internet in the lives of people in developed nations to the multinational corporate reorganization of public space. These issues seem to run through the fabric of our daily lives with astounding thoroughness. If the politics of the 1970's were marked by various battles for equality, and the politics of the 1980s were shaped by struggles over the politics of representation under the Reagan/Thatcher era, where the spectacle reigned supreme, then the core of the contemporary politics may be shaped largely by the reciprocity and contested relations between the public and private spheres and the forms of labor that support them.

Source: "House Work and Art Work", Helen Molesworth, Art After Conceptual Art, Generali Foundation/The MIT Press, 2006

Roland Barthes was elected to the Collège de France on Michel Foucault's proposal in March 1976 and created the chair of literary semiology there. A few days after his inaugural lecture on the 7th of January 1977, Barthes starts his lectures entitled « Comment vivre ensemble » ("How to live together") for the year 1977. The initial question that he asks to himself (: « How to find the right distance between me and my neighbour in order that an acceptable social living may be possible for all of us ? ») finds a direct answer in Barthes' following proposal : the idiorhythmy as a way (as a fantasy) of living, i.e. a system in which everyone should be able to find, impose and preserve their own rhythm of life. These lectures about living in community seem strangely refer to themes that Michel Foucault had previously dealt with. According to Barthes, power is precisely what forbids any idiorhythmy because it imposes strict rhythms to individuals. The design of the paragon of an idiorhythmic way of living should be that of an anchorite or an ascetic stylite secluded on the top of his column (cf. Buñuel's Simon Of The Desert) ; on the other hand, the total rejection of idiorhythmy

is what will produce such communities as convents, monasteries or phalansteries (and we should also add two other types of communities that proscribe the possibility of idiorythmy to individuals, two main institutions in Foucault's works: psychiatric hospitals and prisons). During his 1977's lectures, Barthes will apply himself to clear a path to a living-together (probably utopian), towards this fantasy of society he suggests: a society that would allow everyone to live according to his own rhythm inside the community but without being based on an extreme solitude for each individual (hard to reach, except in the case of the authentic extatic mysticism and in the case of a deep - pathological - feeling of dereliction), a society that wouldn't be based on the extreme alienation of individuals by a power (whatever its forms) fixing strict rhythms.

-- Guillaume Patin, Editor / Curator

Source: Ubuweb

Thanks to Nick over at Critical Spatial Practice for informing me about about this great project by Emily Carr students in 2008. It is highly reminiscent of the house-people-yourself efforts of the Mad Houses in Atlanta who make single-person homes that are placed without permission into the spaces of the city.

What makes this project different is that the designers really see their small houses as a viable, affordable, project for the city of Vancouver to take on. The houses, each 64 square feet, would be situated in groups of 10-12 around a shared kitchen and toilet facilities. The city of Vancouver was approached about adopting this project, which costs approximately \$1500 (Canadian) per tiny house. An entire instalment of this micro-community "could be made for about what the government is paying to renovate a single suite in one of their Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) hotels scattered around the city."

Source: <http://unhoused.livejournal.com/>

Buildings never stop changing. Some do it well and become loved. Some do it badly and get worse over time. The difference is intelligent design and intelligent use.

source: http://web.me.com/stewartbrand/SB_homepage/Bldgs_slides.html

From the polis to the public sphere, political theorists have shared the intuition that space is crucial to democracy. Whether the goal is to create a unified demos or to empower the disenfranchised, shared places help forge communities by enabling and constraining the way in which people come together. Particular places orchestrate social behaviour by providing scripts for encounters and assembly.

- From Margaret Kohn, 'Radical Space: Building the House of the People', Cornell University Press, 2003

Political spaces can function as focal points for organizing otherwise dispersed energies

- From Margaret Kohn, ' Radical Space: Building the House of the People', Cornell University Press, 2003

In other words, cooperatives were spaces distinct from the precarious private home, capitalist market, and authoritarian factory, places where it was possible for the disenfranchised to live publicly. Cooperatives were not salons or gentlemen's clubs but rather sites of a counter-economy. They tied economic interests to social identity and ultimately to political participation. They made it possible to imagine the most banal tasks of daily life, such as hopping milling bread, or drinking a glass of wine with friends, as an act of identification with socialism. The cooperative experience also defined what socialism meant - not a doctrinaire set of principles but a popular movement for economic change and political inclusion of the working class.

- From Margaret Kohn, ' Radical Space: Building the House of the People', Cornell University Press, 2003