Master Thesis

DISPLAYING THE DISRUPTIVE

Dutch punk and the art institute

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PREFACE

The motivation for this research is my longstanding interest (and personal passion for) punk as a musical genre, as well as in exploring its aesthetic significance from the late 1970s and 1980s until today. For a long time I have been interested in artefacts that are inherently related and personally important to subcultures or countercultures, such as punk. I am very interested in movements that tend to broaden and question art and institutes, as well as the place these movements have within broader contemporary culture. Self-made, silly album covers, thrown-away flyers or torn T-shirts are just as relevant to look at as old paintings.

Growing up in Amsterdam, visiting do-it-yourself squatted places or digging into boxes of punk vinyl has definitely brought me to this topic. Thereafter, making my own banners and gluing flyers on my bedroom wall showed me at a young age the relevance of visual stimuli. It was evident that the Netherlands had a rich punk culture, but it has been less described than that of America and England. To stay close to my own roots and to give it the attention it deserves, I wanted to find out how Dutch punk was established and how it was related to the art institute. While doing research at Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (Institute for Social History). I found out that there were more zines, flyers and initiatives throughout the 1970s and 1980s than I could have imagined at first.

It is always hard to kill your darlings, especially when they reflect a strong personal interest. Thanks to my patient and enthusiastic supervisor, Dr. A.K.C. Crucq, my love and friends, I managed to make a selection of punk practices on Dutch soil and to explore their ambiguous relationship with the art institute.

INTRODUCTION

In 2016, Joseph Corré, son of the Sex Pistols' manager Malcolm McLaren and fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, stated the following: "rather than a movement for change, punk has become like a *fucking* museum piece or a tribute act."[1] He stated this right before he burnt £5 million of punk memorabilia on the River Thames in London, the once punk-capital. Corré's collection included some fairly rare pieces gathered from the careers of his father and mother, such as posters, banners and T-shirts that exude a memory of the so-characteristic do-it-yourself attitude. Nonetheless, the artefacts of a vexed era went up in ashes, and so did the value in money. On the one hand, this act was disruptive in its purest form: namely, to destroy instead of conserve and idolize. On the other hand, the objects captured a rebellious moment in cultural history, which can still be found in fashion and music today. Artefacts like these cannot be missed in the museums of modern and contemporary art, which focus more and more on social history and culture. In 2018, for instance, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam organized the exhibition *Amsterdam the Magic Center,* which focuses on counterculture in relation to contemporary art.[2]

In the second half of the 1970s, punk originated in England and the U.S. as a youth and counterculture movement, as well as emerging as a style in clothes, objects and art. The punk movement was characterized by what became known as a do-it-yourself (also called DIY) approach. Raw music, self-fabricated clothing and hastily made graffiti and pamphlets were inherently part of this cultural phenomenon and style. Adolescents who had barely ever touched a guitar formed bands and performed songs that lasted only two minutes. T-shirts were decorated at home with drawings and stencils. Flyers and graffiti were found on public streets or concert halls — all as means of communication. The history of punk in England and the U.S. has often been discussed in literature. The images of English artist Jamie Reid (1947), who contributed to a recognizable style of safety-pinned punk with his flyers and album covers for the Sex Pistols, also cannot be missed in describing punk aesthetics. It is not surprising that literature and research merely focus on these regions, since it cannot be denied that this movement was indeed well established in these countries. However, punk as a youth culture and style remained far from limited to those regions. It spread rapidly across the European continent in the late 1970s, also due to its democratic DIY mentality. Apparently, the idea that anyone can be an artist or a musician, no matter what background, experience or age, appealed to an entire generation. It is thus relevant to look at countries other than England and the U.S. In the Netherlands, for instance, punk as a phenomenon has received little research attention. This thesis therefore will look into punk as a youth culture and style in this country. It will then consider

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[1] Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett, "Joe Corré's £5m punk bonfire is a futile gesture," *The Guardian,* 2016,
[2] Ibid.

specifically how the Netherlands' rich punk culture emerged, which included a large graffiti scene, squatting, and high levels of *zine* production as well.

In this thesis I will consider the characteristic aesthetics of punk objects, which include posters, flyers, zines and album covers. Those artefacts all have a recognizable appearances and motives, namely the recurrence of cut-and-paste techniques, collage, photomontage, sketchiness, copying of existing images, humour and coincidence. These recognizable aesthetics are inherently connected to punk as a subversive movement. However, punk memorabilia are no longer solely part of this subversive domain, having entered the art institute as well. An interesting example of this phenomenon is artist Raymond Pettibon (1957) who started his career with flyers, album covers and comics for, amongst others, legendary hard-core punk band Black Flag in the 1980s. Nowadays, he organizes major solo exhibitions in museums worldwide. In his recent traveling solo exhibition *A Pen of All Work,* not only are his newest and most valuable creations on display, but his punk flyers and album covers make up a major part of the exhibition as well. Of course, his advantageous position in the art world did not happen overnight, since he had been working as an artist for thirty years. It does, however, show an interesting shift from the underground to the surface (i.e., the museum), which Joseph Corré condemns. Dutch graffiti artist Hugo Kaagman (1955) also began his career in the underground punk scene of Amsterdam, and nowadays has large exhibitions in established museums (e.g., his most recent exhibition in Het Noordbrabants Museum called *De Jaren 80*). Instead of being considered vandalism, graffiti is now seen as interesting. The phenomenon points out that from one perspective punk does belong in the museum and heritage institute context; on the other hand, it can be seen as an ambiguous gesture, because the subversive character of punk is at odds with institutionalization.

In this master's thesis, punk's ambiguous affair with the mainstream will be explored further. Part of this conflict is to see how a subculture or counterculture is recognized by the mainstream culture (such as the museum institute) because their social-cultural importance has been accepted by it. At the same time, this acceptance is at odds with the original idea of the subculture or counterculture, which does not want to 'fit in' at all. The question arises of whether a museum that brings underground culture to the surface for a larger public is ever able to do justice to the rebellious character of that subculture. I would like to stress that this thesis is not about finding the answer to the question of whether or not punk belongs in museums, which would not add anything new to the debate. Rather, I would like to see how they coexist and what display methods would do most justice to this disruptive subculture. Given its disruptive character, punk problematizes the museum, while the institute captures artistic styles in their variety. This issue is relevant, since mostly punk and museology (and art) are described as two separate things — although it cannot be ignored that they have met (and still do) many times from 1977 until 2018. The main question that follows from this is: 'How can (mainstream) art institutes such as museums do justice to disruptive styles such as punk?'

To answer the main question I want to discuss how punk should be defined as a style within recent art history and to see what the Dutch stance is on this issue (in other words, what artists and places were of importance and why). Thereafter, I will discuss what relationship punk as baseline of DIY has with the museum or the institute. The main goal here is to see which museums and what specific exhibitions were of importance for the movement in the Netherlands, both in the late 1970s and 1980s and more recently. Finally, I will discuss the reception and perception of punk before concluding my findings in the final chapter.

The literature will vary from sociological and musicological to art historical research, which all play an equal role. Greil Marcus' *Lipstick Traces* (1989) is an often-cited book about the cultural background and history of punk. Without elevating it, Marcus underscores the importance of art history (such as Dadaism) in punk. Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979) describes punk, amongst other subcultures, from sociological and stylistic perspectives, which will help in understanding the origin and attitude of this movement. Hebdige focuses also on the shift from underground to mainstream, which was of great relevance. *Lipstick Traces* and *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* provide a theoretical framework for analysing punk, both as a style and as a movement. With style I mean the visual aesthetics of punk, such as fashion and art. With movement I mean the actions that are carried out. Author, researcher and artist Leonor Jonker is one of the few authors to elaborate extensively on the topic of punk in the Netherlands, in her book *No Future Nu* (2011). This book focuses specifically on the Dutch punk movement as visual style, including many exhibitions. I will use this literature to get an overview of the most important artists and exhibitions in the Netherlands. Besides as a sociological phenomenon, it is above all important to look into punk as an aesthetic one and as a style, since this is what makes it a potentially interesting subject for museums and art institutes. This research will mostly include contemporary art museums, an independent art institute, and one urban museum. I will also use flyers and magazines from the archives of IISG (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis/International Institute for Social History), Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and Stadsarchief Amsterdam to look specifically into Dutch punk. Examples come from alternative DIY magazines such as *Koekrant, Ratrace* and *Armageddon*. Cultural theorist Edward Said remarked, "ideas, culture and histories cannot seriously be understood or studied without their force, or more precisely their configurations of power, also being studied".[3] Exactly this power and force will be underscored.

When talking about *aesthetics*, I mean the visual and formal properties of album covers, flyers and zines that challenge traditional notions of beauty and ugliness.[4] With *disruption* I mean the

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[3] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003): 13.
[4] Oxford Dictionaries, accessed September 12, 2018, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/aesthetics

'interruption in the usual way that a system, process, or event works.'[5] I will also refer to *counterculture* as 'a way of life and a set of ideas that are completely different from those accepted by most of society, or the group of people who live this way.'[6] And *conservation* can be defined as 'to keep and protect something from damage, change, or waste.'[7] After this literature research I will have provided the reader with a background on punk in the Netherlands in a broader perspective (which has been less discussed so far) and the museum's response to it.

[5] Oxford Dictionaries, accessed September 12, 2018, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/disruption

[6] Oxford Dictionaries, accessed September 12, 2018, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/counter-culture

[7] Oxford Dictionaries, accessed September 12, 2018, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/conserve

1. PUNK AS STYLE AND MOVEMENT

"If one believes that the alienated young are giving shape to something that looks like the saving vision our endangered civilization requires, then there is no avoiding the need to *understand* and to *educate* them in what they are about."

—Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counterculture*, 1969, p. 1

Punk of course began somewhere and somehow, as did every historical phenomenon. *Punk* is slang for 'a young person who fights and is involved in criminal activities' or ' an idiot'.[8] The term itself is now inherently connected with the movement and style. In this first chapter I will focus on punk as movement in general and see how it can be placed within a recent art historical context. Hereafter I will focus on punk in the Netherlands, including the most important artists and events. The most important practices in the Netherlands that can be related to punk as a visual style and movement are the *zines*, graffiti, creating (squatted) stages, illustration and art collectives.

The Summer of Love and the city

The counterculture was not exactly something new; rather, it began with the so-called hippie culture around the 'Summer of Love'. The latter originated in Haight-Ashbury, San Francisco, in 1967 and was characterized by a strong anti-war attitude and the open use of psychedelic drugs such as LSD. The progressive mind-set of 'peace and love' allowed experimentation with drugs and sex. Freedom was celebrated in times of materialism, conservatism and the Vietnam War. A counterculture was fostered that strived for values that were not widely accepted, such as the use of psychedelic drugs and free love. Members of this counterculture are often recalled as the 'hippies'. When word got out, increasing numbers of people travelled to see bands that chanted for peace, free love and the use of psychedelic drugs. However, this utopian dream ended as well. As the British newspaper *The Observer* argues about this time, "San Francisco was overrun with dealers and teenage runaways, and the Haight-Ashbury scene deteriorated through overcrowding, homelessness and crime."[9] The atmosphere was no longer as before, and eventually the hippie scene became commercialized and was taken over by mainstream culture.[10]

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[8] Oxford Dictionaries, accessed September 16, 2018, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/punk
[9] The Observer, "What was the summer of love?" *The Guardian*, 27 May, 2007, https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2007/may/27/escape.
[10] Ibid.

The hippie era can be defined as a counterculture or subculture that questioned or rejected dominant views, but sociologist Dick Hebdige argues that "no subculture has sought with more grim determination than the punks to detach itself from the taken-for-granted landscape of normalized forms, nor to bring down upon itself such vehement disapproval."[11] Hebdige makes an interesting point, because punk is not striving for a utopian city like the hippies did; instead punk disapproved of all, themselves included. In line with this need to rebel and to break with former generations, punk made its way in the late 1970s. The year 1977 is often marked as when punk 'exploded', since many famous albums released then are still remembered as punk highlights. Examples include The Strangler's *No More Heroes*, The Damned's *Damned Damned Damned*, The Ramones' *Leave Home / Rocket To Russia* and the Sex Pistols' *Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The...* Indeed, punk exploded thanks to these bands and became known to a wider audience.[12] It was not necessarily becoming more popular, or mainstream, but rather more visually present. As soon as punk music spread, punk also became recognizable as a visual style in 1976, for instance in clothing and haircuts on the streets of London. The city was "gripped by recession, menaced by the IRA (the Irish Republican Army) and debilitated by unemployment".[13] In other words, this city became a playground for a new movement eager for rebellion and change: punk. But also the background of what was felt to be a dirty city in recession fuelled punk as a style and movement. Youth unemployment was increasing, and therefore young people were often poor. Because of a lack of resources, a do-it-yourself attitude became almost unavoidable. Do-it-yourself was the baseline of the movement, making it possible to alter things directly yourself. As do-it-yourself activist Cosmo argues in *DIY Culture: Party & Protest in Nineties Britain* (1998): "DIY culture was born when people got together and realized that the only way forward was to do things for themselves. Ingenuity and imagination are the key ingredients. Free parties, squat culture, the traveller movement and later Acid House parties pay testament to the energy and vision of people who decided it was now time to take their destinies into their own hands."[14]

In the U.S., punk had already started around 1974 in the CBGB (short for Country Bluegrass Blues) club in lower Manhattan (see figure 1).[15] Like London, New York at that time was also experiencing an economic collapse and an increase in crime. Poverty and car theft were the order of the day. The front man of Richard Hell & The Voidoids (real name Richard Meyers, b. 1949) performed many fast and furious songs on the CBGB stage while dressed in leather and torn clothing. The bands The Ramones and Blondie cannot be seen separately from New York and CBGB, as they defined New

[11] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1979): 19.
[12] 'The area in front of the stage at a rock concert where members of the audience dance energetically and violently.' Oxford Dictionaries, accessed September 12, 2018, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/moshpit
[13] Susanna Greeves, "A Personal History of British Punk,' in *Loud Flash: British Punk on Paper*, ed. by Matt Watkins and Mark Inglefield (London: Haunch of Venison, 2010), 4-5.
[14] George McKay, *DIY Culture: Party & Protest in Nineties Britain* (London: Verso, 1998): 2.
[15] CBGB, "CBGB IS THE UNDISPUTED BIRTHPLACE OF PUNK," Official website CBGB, accessed October 31, 2018, https://www.cbgb.com/about.

York's still-popular punk style. Another example is singer, performer, writer and poet Patti Smith (1946) who is often recalled as 'the godmother of punk'.[16] This nickname shows that she was an important precursor for bands like The Ramones and Blondie.[17] Smith was interested in literature and poetry by writers such as William S. Burroughs (1914-1997) and Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891), as well as experimental visual artists such as Andy Warhol (1928-1987). She combined these influences with her own music. New York punk was more interested in literature and art, while British punk bands generally liked to be called "self-consciously proletarian".[18] Punks in both England and the U.S. were aware of (underground) cinema and avant-garde art; however, in both countries young artists used these influences in different ways. The punk scene on the West Coast of the U.S. started with the glam rock scene of the early 1970s. In the 1980s, it transformed to the place for American hard-core punk, which consisted of younger band members and more aggressiveness. The Dead Kennedys is a famous example of political punk from the West Coast. In 1979, its singer Jello Biafra (real name Eric Reed, b. 1958) legally ran for mayor in San Francisco. His campaign platform was rather unconventional, such as forcing businessmen to wear clown suits and legal squatting (see figure 2). Of course, he mocked the government with this action, but he was very serious in his political views with the band as well.[19] The Cuckoo's Nest was the venue for punk concerts and gatherings in Los Angeles, which at that time also faced social problems like prostitutes and hustlers. Black Flag created a large hard-core punk scene around the Cuckoo's Nest. Their dissatisfaction with the political climate, police brutality and racism became the fuel for the band's punk practices, which is seen in its album covers, flyers, political decisions and music. Black Flag dealt as well with the tangible tension of police brutality and fear on stage and in their visuals. Combined with aggressive visuals, their song *Police Story* from 1981 underlines the ambiance towards the police at that time in L.A.[20]:

"Understand we're fighting a war we can't win
They hate us, we hate them
We can't win, no way." — Black Flag, *Police Story*, 1981

Although punk was a countercultural and anti-conservative movement, it also condemned the Summer of Love, which was truly over by the 1970s. It was exactly in California, that part of America where The Summer of Love had been extinguished in peace, that punk arose with velocity. Californian punks

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[16] Gillian McCain and Legs McNeill, *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk* (New York: Grove Press, 2016): 20.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1979): 27.
[19] Paul Wetterau, "There is always room for Jello," *The Otter Realm*, February 19, 2003,
https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1097&context=otterrealm
[20] In 1992 this dissatisfaction got out of control with the infamous LA Riots, which started with the dead of taxi driver Rodney King due to excessive police brutality. This event later became a trigger for another generation of punk bands in LA, for example ska/punk band Sublime who wrote the song 'April 24th 1992'.

rebelled against the utopian ideals of peace and love, and they looked rather for disruption and chaos. Artists like Raymond Pettibon, who was responsible for most of hard-core punk band Black Flag's images, suggested overdosing and banning the hippies (see figure 3). Those examples are ironic and coarse, but they exemplify a more general undertone of disappointment with the hippies.

The roots of punk can thus be found in deprived neighbourhoods in major cities such as London and New York, which were troubled by violence, brutality and poverty. The threat of the Cold War also led to much anxiety. The serious doubt as to whether there was still a future for young people was expressed by the words 'No Future', which became a slogan heard in music and seen in graffiti sprayed on city walls. Hebdige interprets these times as an 'apocalypse that was in the air.'[21] But punk was also a response to the preceding generation, namely the Summer of Love era that highlighted the so-called 'hippie subculture'.[22]

The importance of music

CBGB in New York marked an important beginning in punk, which was all about music and performing. After endless, psychedelic guitar solos at festivals like Monterey Pop, punks decided to strip everything down in their music to the bare minimum. The 4/4 time signature in music is often seen as aggressive, fast and loud, which is in contrast with the hippie slowness and psychedelic utopia.[23] However the music itself is fairly simple and its tempo is often called 'break-neck' because it is dangerously fast (but nonetheless complex in its message). Cultural critic Greil Marcus states the following about the importance of music in his book *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century* (1989):

"What remains irreducible about this music is its desire to *change the world*. The desire is patent and simple, but it inscribes a story that is infinitely complex – as complex as the interplay of the everyday gestures that describe the way the world already works. The desire begins with the demand to live not as an object but as a subject of history – to live as if something actually depended on one's actions – and that demand opens onto a free street."[24]

Music is thus inherently part of punk as a progressive style, because for punk it felt like the possibility of taking immediate action. For them it was about not giving in to what was supposed to sound good according to commercial pop standards; it was about communicating with an audience directly and having the absolute power and freedom to personalize this interaction. The DIY attitude fit right in

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[21] Hebdige, *Subculture*, 27.
[22] Ibidem.
[23] Gillian McCain and Legs McNeill, *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk* (New York: Grove Press, 2016), 10.
[24] Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the 20th Century* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 5-6.

here as well.[25] However it is important to stress that *change* was a desire, as Marcus also underscores, not an ultimatum. I understand from this quote that *changing the world* was not as important or decisive for all punks, for some cultural freedom and collectiveness were already meaningful in their own right. Punk music therefore became a form of speech, which anyone could perform —and preferably very loud.

Visualization and art history

Former Black Flag singer Henry Rollins argues that the poignant attitude of punk could be seen in other expressions besides music: "[punk] was more than just the music that commanded my attention. The artwork on the records and flyers, the clothes that people in the bands were wearing — it all made for a powerful combination."[26] Indeed, punk was more than a musical genre, as it also visualized its ideas in various creative ways. As punk fashion designer Vivienne Westwood stated: "The clothes are great and people feel great when they're in them. The clothes have got content and they're an expression of some kind of comments about the way you feel your situation in society is."[27] Beyond music, fashion — or rather anti-fashion — contributed in important ways to the subversive undertone of punk.

Between 1974 and 1976, the epicentre of punk clothing were Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood's shop called Sex at 430 Kings Road in London. Its interior was covered with graffiti, and the façade included a sign made of rubber letters four feet high spelling 'SEX' (see figure 4). Sex was the first shop to experiment with statements on T-shirts (such as two semi-naked cowboys and a picture of bare breasts) and to purvey clothing from the sex industry, such as rubber and latex. Westwood and McLaren did not settle for what was already available in the mainstream fashion industry; rather, they yearned to do it themselves and to be openly provocative. Ties and suits, usually worn by office clerks, were revived with the addition of buttons, safety pins, chains and paint splashes. Besides the norms and values that were propagated by clothing, hairstyles and concerts, iconic images were formed to communicate their urge for disruption. However, it is necessary to be critical here as well. Westwood and McLaren also profited from the movement by opening this shop in the first place. But it was not just the clothing of Sex that slowly became popular or 'cool'. The Sex Pistols — a manufactured band that McLaren coupled together to stage disruption — became popular to an extent as well. Both Westwood and McLaren knew how to manufacture punk and to earn money with its attitude. Punk had become a sellable style by the end of the 1970s.[28]

The images and attitude of punk are rooted in recent art history. Greil Marcus argues that 'punk

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[25] Ibid.
[26] Henry Rollins, "Henry Rollins: Burning Punk-Rock Artifacts Is Not Punk Rock," *LA Weekly*, December 8, 2016, https://www.laweekly.com/music/henry-rollins-burning-punk-rock-artifacts-is-not-punk-rock-7692478.
[27] Paul Marko, *The Roxy London Wc2: A Punk History* (UK: Punk77 Books, 2007): 12.
[28] Ibid.

is an ideological construct', which can be deconstructed by looking at the history of its 'visual style', such as its clothing and art.[29] Dick Hebdige underscores this point in *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979): "In the same way, subcultural styles [such as punk] do indeed qualify as art but as art in (and out of) particular contexts; not as timeless objects, judged by the immutable criteria of traditional aesthetics, but as 'appropriations', 'thefts', subversive transformations, as movement."[30] This quote by Hebdige is of importance, because Hebdige considers punk as a cultural force, as Edward Said had previously stated.[31] Greil Marcus also considered that punk wanted to be a subject of history, instead of an object, as quoted earlier on page 12. Punk deliberately 'appropriated', 'stole' and 'subversively transformed' its past. This is why this research will look into art historical movements in the first place, starting with the strategies of Dada. Dadaism and punk could be described as *brief outrageous spectacles* for the time being in which art, performances and music cannot be missed.[32] Whereas punk began in London and the U.S., Dada started in Zürich in Switzerland, which was neutral during the First World War. Dada began amongst a group of writers, poets and artists who utterly despised the violence of the war, which had proven that the world was not at all civilized and humane. As art historian Dietmar Elger explains in *Dadaism* (2004): "Dadaism was above all the expression of the particular attitude of mind with which international youth recreated to the social and political upheaval of the time. They formulated their opposition in anarchical, irrational, contradictory and literally sense-less actions, recitations and visual art-works."[33]

Dada artist Hans (Jean) Arp (1886–1966), for example, cut twelve pieces of coloured paper and then let them fall on a piece of cardboard, with their composition determining the result. Kurt Schwitters' (1887–1948) artworks consisted of found train tickets, candy wrappers, flyers and maps glued together on paper as a collage. It was a deliberate form of action and effect. In 1917, Marcel Duchamp (1887–1986) exhibited his infamous urinal in Grand Central Palace in New York; he also drew an ironic moustache on a Mona Lisa postcard.[34] These examples show Dadaism as being characterized by coincidence, collage and appropriation in order to combine, reverse and undermine existing conventions.

Freedom, experimentation, senselessness and humour were celebrated at Zurich's Cabaret Voltaire nightclub. Launched in 1916 by Hugo Ball (1868–1927), it was often visited by artists like Tristan Tzara and Richard Huelsenbeck, who questioned art, museums and politics. In 1920, Hannah Höch (1889–1978) created the collage *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte weimarer Bierbauchkulturepoche Deutschlands*, which shows cut-and-paste, DIY-like portraits of the Dadaists

[29] Marcus, *Lipstick Traces*, 20.
[30] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1979): 129.
[31] Said, *Orientalism*, 13.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Dietmar Elger, *Dadaism* (Cologne: Taschen, 2004), 7-8.
[34] Ibid.

themselves, along with political dissatisfaction and feminism (see figure 5). At the time, do-it-yourself or DIY was not used as a term, but it is strongly related to the later practices of punk. The reusing of images and objects is considered typically Dada: examples include the collage technique, the assemblage technique (different objects put together by nails), photomontage (collage of cut-and-paste photographs that create a new image) and ready mades (a found object is repositioned and modified).[35] Dadaism is visible, for instance, in album covers of punk records. Linder Sterling and Malcolm Garrett's album cover for The Buzzcocks' *Orgasm Addict* from 1977 is made with photomontage to create a comical but strong image that is still recognizable as representing punk style (see figure 6).[36] Also, the Sex Pistols' album cover artist Jamie Reid was influenced by this act of appropriation and of reversing existing conventions (e.g., his drawing of swastikas on a photograph of the Queen of England). Punk also had a mutual affinity with the 'neo-Dada' movement Fluxus from the early 1960s. Punk and Fluxus "challenged elite conceptions of art, and both sought to combine the realms of aesthetics and lifestyle," argues Raymond A. Patton in *Punk Crisis: The Global Punk Rock Revolution* (2018).[37] Both movements expressed an interest in music. As led by Genesis P-Orridge, for example, London COUM Transmissions was a music and performance art collective that pushed the boundaries of the previous generation and intended to provoke their audience. Experimentations in sound and in performances were characteristic for this group. However, COUM tried to provoke punk as a subversive and sellable movement as well. For example, group member Peter Christopherson intended to mock the Sex Pistols by inviting them for his own provocative, homoerotic photo shoot.[38]

The Situationist International (also called the SI or the Situationists) was also an important group and well known at the time punk established in the late 1970s. Formed in 1957 during a congress in Italy, it was a group of artists, philosophers, intellectuals and theorists. They created a magazine under the same name somewhat later, presenting their theories, comics and cut-and-paste techniques. This magazine functioned as a laboratory for the group. As with Dada, the term *do-it-yourself* was not used yet by the Situationists, but both Dadaist and Situationist strategies are comparable to DIY practices. An important term for this SI group was Détournement, which refers to 'rerouting, hijacking'. This method or theory means to turn the expressions of capitalist society against itself. Punk rejected capitalism as well. Previous images were appropriated, in which the newly created work bears a new message, namely against oneself. This form of sabotage was a subversive and ironic prank that was later used by punk as well.[39]

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[35] Elger, *Dadaism*, 30.

[36] Jon Savage, *Punk 45: The Singles Cover Art of Punk 1975-82* (London: Soul Jazz Records, 2013): 20.

[37] Raymond A.Patton, *Punk Crisis: The Global Punk Rock Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018): 30.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Edward Ball, "The Great Sideshow of the Situationist International," *Yale French Studies*, no. 73 (1987): 32.

Irony was moreover of great importance. Created in collaboration with artist Asger Jorn (1914–1973), Guy Debord's book *Mémoires* (1959), consisted of cut-and-paste paragraphs, sentences, photographs, comics and phrases from other magazines and newspapers instead of original texts by the authors. Jorn smeared paint drips and lines across the fifty pages of the book (see figure 7). The cut phrases form new possibilities or *constructed situations*, as Debord himself called this technique. In addition, the cover of the book was made of sandpaper to destroy the books placed next to it. Hebdige underscores the importance of irony for punk as well: "punk's rhetoric was steeped in irony."[40]

The Situationist International were rooted within a deep dissatisfaction with modern life, above all capitalism and mass media, which writer and group member Guy Debord (1931–1994) called *the spectacle* in his book *La Société du Spectacle* (1984). Debord argued that modern life was a superficial manifestation due to capitalism, mass media and 'the autonomous movement of the non-living'. The non-living is the passive person that is only interested in consuming, which Debord condemned.[41] The Situationist International's dissatisfaction with the quality of modern life resulted in chaotic manifestations of refusal and revolt. The Situationists devoted itself to "ruthless criticism of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be."[42] As punk later discerned, the Situationists were against control by a dominant institutional system, because it is set on rules and boundaries. This is why Pop Art was interesting for punk as well, because it explored the connection between art, life and consumption and consumerism. Instead of rejecting it as the SI did, Pop Art (along with its most iconic artist, Andy Warhol), was more interested in mass culture and everyday consumption. Pop Art is also indebted to Dadaism, especially the provocative and humorous aspects of everyday life. Duchamp's urinal inspired Pop Art as well, as exemplified by Warhol's *Brillo Box (Soap Pads)* from 1964. Warhol infamously placed a fabricated, daily life Brillo boxes as a piece of art in the museum. Furthermore, Warhol made his own, DIY, movies such as *Blowjob* (1963) and *Empire* (1964). Warhol did not use actors or a script, since he preferred coincidence in his films. Both films are experimentations with his camera and thus consequently involve roughness.[43] These films by Warhol are often lengthy or even slowed down, while punk wanted immediate action. However, both Warhol and punk were inspired by the do-it-yourself attitude. Also involved in the practices of Pop Art were punk artists and musicians who shared the idea of playing with everyday life and experimentation such as Patti Smith, who was inspired by the experimental art of Warhol. Also, The Velvet Underground and David Bowie, who were precursors of punk, were affiliated with Warhol's experimental tactics. For instance, Warhol created the famous stencilled banana cover for The Velvet Underground, and Warhol inspired Bowie in

[40] Hebdige, *Subcultures*, 63.
[41] Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Black & Red Books U.S., 1984), 10.
[42] Marcus, *Lipstick Traces*, 175.
[43] Paul Mattick, "The Andy Warhol of Philosophy and the Philosophy of Andy Warhol," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 4 (Summer, 1998): 965-987

his first experimental songs and appearance.[44] Both punk and Pop Art shared the interest of the 'immediate, electrifying and accessible' outcome, however did so in their own ways.[45]

Dada, the Situationist International, Fluxus and Pop Art all desired action, effect, irony and humour. One more than the other alleged a (radical) politically engaged setting. However, Dada and the Situationists are particularly interesting in their destructive and disruptive nature, which punk shared. Debord even argues about the disruptive practices of the Situationists: "Our situations will be ephemeral, without a future: passageways."[46] For punk, this idea was also attractive and to be appropriated. The Sex Pistols' manager Malcolm McLaren and designer Jamie Reid got involved in the British variant of the Situationist International named King Mob, which distributed their ideas by posters and in the magazine *King Mob Echo*. Again, this Situationist-inspired group was based around immediate action to disrupt the established order and desired brevity instead of timelessness.[47] Dick Hebdige argues that those ideas of collage and cut ups were not necessarily changing society so much as rearranging it literally. This technique, used merely by Dada, the Situationist International and punk, was no "explosive junction", but rather a moment in itself. Hebdige argues that punk is often seen as a direct 'mutation' of art history, but that it should rather be seen as 'pure expression' based on the simple technique of 'theft' and 'appropriation'.[48] Greil Marcus underscores the idea of punk as appropriation of the past in a new way: "Every new culture rewrites the past, changes old habits into new heroes."[49] Both Hebdige and Marcus mention punk as being something in itself, although not thoroughly new. Marcus underlines thereafter that "this is not an (art) tradition canalized into an invulnerable future, but rather as an unsettled debt of history, extending into an unresolved past."[50]

Like Dada, punk was a 'particular attitude of mind' that did not shy away from anarchism and politics. However, Dadaists did not use the term do-it-yourself they can still be related. Do-it-yourself can be recognized in Dadaist strategies and practices, because this attitude stands for coincidence, humour, re-use and a democratic attitude. Images are destroyed (e.g. torn apart or cut) and thereafter constructed again — following the Dadaist formal theory that art could be made out of anything. Punk exactly appropriates this approach; namely, that anyone could make art and/or music. They were an attack on artistic and political traditions meant to outrage the conventional. Marcus states that Dadaism is about the "near-absolute loathing of one's time and place, the note held until disgust turns into glee", which was the attitude punk followed.[51] Punk is also clearly connected to the Situationist International. Jamie Reid used the idea of détournement for his pro-situationist collective Suburban Press, formed in

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44 David Bowie even wrote a song called 'Andy Warhol', which was released in 1971.
45 Mattick, The Andy Warhol of Philosophy, 970.
46 Marcus, *Lipstick Traces*, 182.
47 Leonor Jonker, *No Future Nu. Punk in Nederland 1977-2012. (*Amsterdam: Overamstel Uitgevers, 2012): 20.
48 Hebdige, *Subculture*, 130
49 Marcus, *Lipstick Traces*, 21.
50 Ibid.
51 Marcus, *Lipstick Traces*, 193.

1970. Reid tore photographs out of magazines and used images found in everyday life, combining them with newspaper headlines to reconstruct the image. One of his famous examples is his 12-edition print of the queen in front of the Union Jack flag with bold blackmail lettering, which was used for the Sex Pistols covers and T-shirts as well (see figure 8).[52] As Hebdige stated, punk clearly appropriated its art historical past with its do-it-yourself baseline attitude. However, there are differences. Pop Art, unlike Dada, Fluxus and the Situationist International, was less critical towards commercialism and the media. For punk, and the Situationists as well, this was undesirable. In Pop Art, the 'art celebrity' was more common, while punk also worked with many anonymous contributors.[53] Punk appropriated the irony and political dissatisfaction of the Situationist International and transformed this into a DIY attitude. Yet punk was not eager to stay solely between avant-garde art and radical politics. The difference with Dada and the Situationists, however, was that punk was not funded in philosophy, theory and art, like the Situationists and Dadaists, but rather "self-consciously proletarian".

Punk on Dutch soil: A background

The above elaborate discussion of the history of punk reflects its subversive style in music, art and attitude, as well as its predecessors in art history. This background was necessary to understand how a do-it-yourself attitude and premise of punk as a style emerged in the U.S. and United Kingdom in the late 1970s and how it made its way to the continent. As described above, punk arose in English and American cities at times of crisis. However, cities in the Netherlands also struggled with housing shortages, poverty, drug users and a strong dissatisfaction towards politics and Royalty. This context could also be seen as a playground for punk to emerge. It is hard to point out the exact place and date of punk's debut in the Netherlands, however two events marked at least its beginning. Namely, in 1977 the Sex Pistols performed at Paradiso in Amsterdam. Another significant event was singer Iggy Pop's performance at Toppop in 1978.[54] Iggy Pop demolished the stage set in tight silver leggings during the performance of the song *Lust for Life*.[55] Something unusual had happened in a time when the general public was used to hearing pop songs on the national radio, like the ones by Swedish pop band Abba, rather than the loud and aggressive music and performance of musicians like Iggy Pop. Punk was slowly getting its feet on the ground by the booking of shows from abroad in concert halls and television, but the Netherlands was a country with its own social flaws as well. Compared to England the class system (lower class, middle class and high class) was less determinative in the Netherlands, and police brutality was less excessive compared to America. Rather, the Netherlands experienced a generational conflict, which escalated for the first time in 1966. That year marked the riots around the

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[52] Richard Cabut and Andrew Gallix, *Punk is Dead: Modernity Killed Every Night* (London: Zero Books, 2017): 30-31.
[53] Raymond A. Patton, *Punk Crisis*, 50.
[54] Gijsbert Kamer, "No Future: 1977, het jaar dat punk in Nederland begon," *3voor12 VPRO*, February 27, 2012, https://3voor12.vpro.nl/artikelen/overzicht/2012/februari/1977-jaar-dat-punk-begon.html
[55] The complete performance can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4kl8LNm7hc

marriage of princess Beatrix and Claus van Amsberg, which was rejected due to Amsberg's German ancestry just after World War II. Although most of the Netherlands was royalist, a smaller group of people was fiercely against the marriage, amongst others the Provo's. During their tour with the Golden Coach a smoke bomb was detonated.[56] This rejection and rebellious attitude by the Provo's actually symbolized a larger generation of unrest and dissatisfaction.[57]

The Provo movement started in the mid-1960s in Amsterdam. This group provoked the established order by protesting, by making and distributing free newspapers (such as *PROVO* and *God*) and by making art. To question rigid and old-fashioned ideas, the group organized performances known as *happenings* that were intended to disrupt the public order in a playful way. They can be related to Dadaism, because of the humour and the (sudden) disruption of the established order. Provo artist Robert Jasper Grootveld is well known for his happenings at the Spui in Amsterdam, where he danced in a cloud of his own cigarette smoke while he called all kinds of incantations.

Of course, punk found its comfortable way in this time of counterculture, because it also shared the ideas of provocation, radicalism and questioning of authority. Although punk contained ingredients similar to those of the Provo movement, the groups' differences in temperament and circumstances were clearly present. The Provo movement was less choleric in character than punk would be. With the increase in unemployment and the general anxiety about the Cold War in the late 1970s, punk became bleaker than their predecessors.[58] 'No Future' was especially cheered in this time of a serious war threat and increasing social problems. It was seriously doubted if there was a future, or at least a tolerable one. In order to form a unanimous and recognizable group, punk also attached more value to its visual style. For example, store Buck Danny in The Hague was a popular shop for vintage and redesigned clothing with a punk record basement and a meeting place for artists, designers and students. They also were one of the few stores to sell clothing from London' Sex and English and American zines.[59] Both the clothing department as well as the record basement were decorated according the ideas of punk (but also Dadaism and the Situationists), namely by cutting and pasting materials such as newspapers, pamphlets and magazines.

Punk practices in the Netherlands

Punk was celebrated with *zines,* which could be described best as 'small magazines that are produced cheaply by one person or a small group of people, and is about a subject they are interested in.'[60] Zines are not particularly a Dutch phenomenon, but many have been published all over the Netherlands.

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[56] It is still the question whether the Provo's were the main group behind the smoke bombing action during 1966.
[57] Jonger, *No Future Nu*, 11-25.
[58] Hugo Kaagman, "Ons Amsterdam," *Hugo Kaagman Official Website*, March, 2013, http://www.kaagman.nl/index%20ai.htm
[59] Jonker, *No Future Nu,* 120-125.
[60] Oxford Dictionaries, accessed September 18, 2018, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/zine

Fast, outspoken and cheap, these zines were intended particularly to "form other opinions in a domain of our own, in a counter-domain where we can articulate our true feelings and authentic experiences without them being distorted and made harmless by the corporate world that ultimately doesn't care about us, but only about our money" (thus wrote Dutch punk zine *Reflections* in 1999).[61] The collage technique characteristic of Dada was used optimally, as well as photomontage and xerography.[62] Although punk seems to be about rejection and rebellion, Dutch zines were surprisingly consistent in their content.[63] Almost every zine had a section for public opinion (e.g., on the royals, commercialization and squatting), interviews, DIY tips (e.g. how to make Molotov cocktails) and a review of a concert. The do-it-yourself baseline attitude determined the look of the zines, which could vary widely (see figure 9 for a variety of topics, lettering and aesthetics). Its readers needed to "go out and start their own fanzines," thus Jonker, which shows that those zines were personal expressions and encouraged by the DIY mentality.[64] It is thus impossible to define the 'typical fanzine', since they could be provocative or informative, childish or artistic, long-term or one-off, all depending on their creator(s).

One zine in particular is often mentioned in the literature, namely *Koekrant* founded by Amsterdam-based artists Hugo Kaagman, Diana Ozon and Dr. Rat (see figure 11). *Koekrant* was also known as *Koecrandt, Coekrandt, Koekkrant, Koekrand* and *Coekrant* to underscore the humorous aspect and variety of content. This zine included alternative writers and artists and was published in the form of a stencil or photocopy. Kaagman, Ozon and Dr. Rat looked for inspiration in other zines abroad, such as by Mark Perry's *Sniffin' Glue* from England. Both Koekrant and Sniffin' Glue were chaotic, typographical and eclectic. Besides this zine, which was well received by punks, Kaagman, Ozon and Dr. Rat were also known for other artistic projects. Kaagman (1955) remains an artist who is known for his use of Delft Blue and graffiti. He mixed images of Delft Blue (typically Dutch, and found in every bourgeois kitchen cabinet) with stencils of critical and ironic elements, such as commercial logos of fast food chain Burger King and money bills (see figure 12). Diana Ozon (1959, real name Diana Groenveld) is a poet, author, performer, graphic artist and lecturer. As a punk poet, Ozon bridged the gap between youth and literature. In her poetry and fiction (e.g., *Squatter Jack* of 1991), she described the squatting and punk scene.[65] Kaagman and Ozon were both interested in the playful, rebellious character of the Provo movement, and they organized activities such as the Art-O-Maat. This was a

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[61] Author unknown, *Reflections Zine* 12 (1999): 77.

[62] Xerography is a dry photocopying technique and used at times before the computer was invented.

[63] See for example the following zines in the Institute of Social History: *Oppose, Bagoyer, Nictoglobe, De Opstoot, The (Other) Paper, Generation News, Nooit Meer, Little Ms. Benzine, Fabeltjeskrant, Nooit Meer, Ratrace, Lachende Sater, Verziekkrant, Stort, Kaaskop, Lastpost, Bloedlinx* and *Van Oranje naar Rood* which are mostly published around the 1980's.

[64] Jonker, *No Future Nu*, 140.

[65] This book is a satire on the squatter world of 1980's Amsterdam from an inside perspective, since Diana Ozon was part of the movement. Squatter Jack becomes involved in Columbian drug smuggling and the maffia, but besides those adventures the book also tells the story of falling in love inside the squatting scene.

customized cigarette machine filled with small, inexpensive zines, comics and poetry books placed on the Amsterdam Spui (see figure 13).[66]

Together with Ozon, Dr. Rat (1960–1981; real name Juris Tjerk Emilis Ivars Vičs) founded the graffiti-covered nightclub DDT666, and both were involved in almost a hundred editions of the Koekrant. DDT666 and Koekrant were both housed at the Sarphatistraat in Amsterdam in a squatted building called the Zebra House, recognizable by graffiti sprayed zebra stripes. DDT666 was a self-created stage for loud band evenings and lectures. In Amsterdam, Kaagman, Ozon and Dr. Rat used graffiti to imagine how the world *could* be. Dr. Rat left an important oeuvre that was inspired by second-hand photo books, typography, literature and mass media. Those were mixed according to the punk attitude of cutting and pasting available images (see figure 14).[67]

Graffiti was a great source for punk. Ozon and Dr. Rat believed that through graffiti the streets could function as open museums, since it could be added by anyone and seen by anyone. Fast and cheap, it was democratic in the sense that anyone could see and do it. Gallery Anus in Amsterdam, for example, was a place where young artists practiced their own personal graffiti slogans and cut their stencils. It became the base for artists like Walking Joint, Ego, N-Power, De Zoot and Vendex. Those graffiti artists preferred fast painting focused on slogans, instead of what looked good to the eye. Gallery Anus was also known for exhibiting punk artefacts and objects. For Kaagman, Dr. Rat and Ozon, graffiti meant more than merely besmirching the streets: it reclaimed the grey, concrete city through colourful art. Their more serious approach towards graffiti as a useful medium for the punk attitude culminated in the *Prix du Graffiti* in nightclub DDT666. Nonetheless, a DIY-based gallery solely focusing on graffiti art needs to earn an income as well. Hence, this gallery also provided cheap stencils that could be sprayed on T-shirts for a minimal sum.[68]

Artist Erik Hobijn also started from a strong dissatisfaction towards society, increasing unemployment and authority. Hobijn founded the Stads Kunst Guerrilla (City Art Guerrilla) at the Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam. Stads Kunst Guerrilla was not necessarily interested in zines; it focused more on performances and direct action on stage. Like Dr. Rat, Hobijn and his companion, William Magelhaes, were interested in life on the streets, and so they started quickly with graffiti art as well. The idea behind Stads Kunst Guerilla was 'violent or extreme resistance and to decorate the street in which you profile yourself with your explosiveness and the signs of it.'[69] The Stads Kunst Guerrilla described themselves as being like "a terrorist because you wanted something that the rest did not want."[70] As an ultimate means of resistance and DIY, the Stads Kunst Guerrilla claimed its own places

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[66] Jeannette Dekeukeleire and Harry Ruhé, *Punk in Holland: God Shave the Queen* (Amsterdam: Galerie A, 2011): 4-8.
[67] Diana Ozon, "Ivar Vičs, graffiti king Dr. Rat," *Diana Ozon Official Website*, 2004, http://www.diana-ozon.nl/?e=119.
[68] Jonker, *No Future Nu,* 34.
[69] Marianne Vollmer, "Pionieren in het buitenland," *Kunstenaar en Initiatief* 6, 2004, https://www.denieuwe.nl/Initiatief/artikelen/MarianneVollmer.html.
[70] Ibid.

and stages in which to create art. They squatted a place in De Nieuwe Meer, which at that time was an undefined terrain far outside Amsterdam's busy centre. They organized cinema evenings, performances, parties, and lectures, and Hobijn demonstrated his mechanistic installations for an audience.[71]

As proven by Peter Pontiac (1951–2015), illustrations were another source of inspiration for punk in the Netherlands. Pontiac was interested in comics, and eventually in 1980 he came up with the punk anti-hero *Gaga* (see figure 10). Gaga includes a strong critique of increasing violence in the squatting scene, which Pontiac experienced first hand. But the drawing style as well as the message of Gaga was related to punk. Pontiac actually processed pieces of newspaper in his comics.[72] Again, this process is related to the artists of Dada, who also reused pieces of everyday life in their visual expressions.

Rotterdam had the Rondos, one of the bigger punk bands in the Netherlands at the time. Besides making music, they also created zines. Music and art were strongly related here. The Rondos originated from the art collective Dubio, which began fanzine *Raket* at the end of the 1970s. The group was known for its graffiti, buttons, provocative actions and performances that rebelled against the established art world.[73] They called themselves 'artsy punks' (not being too serious with this term however; rather, they used art to explore punk and its creative possibilities).[74] The Rondos were housed in a squatted building called 'Huize Schoonderloo', where their zines were printed and band practices took place. In the 1980s, Rotterdam became an attraction for creative subcultures, which emerged from a different generation than the one associated with the city's former working culture. Space, opportunities and like-minded people were abundant: once again a perfect playground for punk.[75] As an important aspect of reforming the city, squatting was used to gain space for alternative ateliers, stages, art initiatives and theatres. At first, squatters and punks were two separate groups with differing opinions, but after a while punks as well needed to move out and join the already existing squatting scene. This new interest can be seen in zine articles that discuss the tactics – such as changing locks and barricading – for squatting in vacant houses.[76]

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[71] Ibid.
[72] Jonker, *No Future Nu*, 147-148.
[73] Jonker, *No Future Nu*, 78.
[74] "De Rondos Bibliography," accessed September 20, 2018, http://rondos.nl/rondos_biografie/index.php.
[75] Fred de Vries, 'Punks en skinheads gaan in Rotterdam samen,' *De Volkskrant*, May 12, 2000.
[76] Jeannette Dekeukeleire, *Punk in Holland*, 26.

2. CURATING PUNK

"The poster does not propose its ideas more or less persuasively, but it imposes itself on me. I read a book if I want to do so; I go to see a painting if I feel like it. But the poster? I see it, even if I do not want to see it. I am obliged to breathe it and to have its force enter my blood!"

- Maurice Talmeyr, *L'âge de l'affiche* in Revue des Deux Mondes, 1869

In the previous chapter, one has seen that punk is inherently connected to style, such as in clothing and in visuals using collage, humour, appropriation and coincidence. It became clear that punk was a significant social and cultural movement with a distinctive style, which left its mark on contemporary culture. Therefore, it is not surprising that museums and art institutions became interested in punk as a style and started to make exhibitions and projects displaying punk as a style. As with Dada, however, the artists actively involved in punk as a disruptive social and cultural movement largely operated outside of the institutionalized art world. Therefore, in this second chapter I will look at the ambiguous relationship between the museum as an institute and punk as a disruptive style, which is founded precisely on an anti-institutional attitude. This analysis will include museums and institutes that focused their intention on punk – from the moment this subculture reached its peak until the present. Since this thesis is about the Netherlands, I will focus on Dutch exhibitions and institutes that have approached punk from 1977 to 1980. Also, recent exhibitions show us two main strategies for displaying the disruptive, namely: 1) focusing on the involvement of the visitor and 2) assuming a distant perspective.

Museums and punk: an ambiguous affair

Looking at punk in hindsight, the connotation of art history and practices in it is obvious. Punk was inherently connected to art in its own ways, in the sense that art was used to communicate its attitudes. As seen before, the visuals and music inherent to punk were necessary for shaping the movement. The style at the time was an ultimate form of expression (think about safety pins, collages of newspapers and critical texts), and the movement that mocked authority became almost stereotypical. Punk-related tea mugs and fashion T-shirts, for instance, do not do justice to the movement itself; rather, punk as style becomes commercialized (see figure 15).

Nonetheless, punk (like Dada and the Situationists) characterizes itself by being particularly interested in the 'moment in time' instead of timelessness. This style of punk, as described in chapter 1, was inherently part of punk as movement because it was a form of anti-beauty as well as a practical

consideration. Flyers and zines were printed on inferior paper with cheap ink, because it simply was fast and anyone could afford it. These visual media were not meant to last, let alone to be conserved in the museums. Their main objective was to communicate, just as the punk music would do. The images used in zines and flyers were therefore not made with eternity in mind. After all, they would be rumpled between rough hands or trampled in a mosh pit.

As stated in the introduction, a good example of punk inside the museum is Raymond Pettibon's 2017 exhibition *A Pen of All Work* in the Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht. Pettibon can be seen as a 'punk artist', since he was closely involved with the Los Angeles punk scene. Pettibon never attended art school. His career started from DIY faith, as his brother's band Black Flag simply needed some album covers and flyers. He drew a few quick sketches on cardboard or on papers lying around. The drawings were quick, improvised and not meant to last. Pettibon was discovered in the 1980s by several galleries in New York. Today he is a successful artist whose new work is sold for millions (and older 1$ flyers for hundreds) by his representative David Zwirner. Although only his later work is worth this great amount of money, in the traveling exhibition in Maastricht those first drawings and sketches form a major part of the exhibition. It is inevitable to walk past a large wall with his punk flyers and sketchy satire, which define the visual style of his later work as well. He never got rid of his black ink brushes, and the political context is always present somewhere, from paintings of Ronald Reagan to Donald Trump. Those earlier flyers are necessary to tell the whole story and to define punk as a moment in time. Pettibon's solo exhibition is just one recent example of American punk entering the space of a museum or art institute. How then did this movement settle on Dutch soil, from the peak of punk in the late 1970s until today?

Places and spaces for art: 1977–1980

In 1979, an exhibition called *American Punk Art* organized by Marc Miller and Bettie Ringma travelled from Washington D.C. to the Amsterdam gallery Art Something (see figure 17). The exhibition gave an overview of art from the New York underground, which included punk and its affiliated nightclub CBGB as well. Miller and Ringa argued that it was one of the first 'punk art shows' to include different artists working with all sorts of media, such as collage, assemblage, xerography and photography. Artists who experimented with the border between art and daily life were invited to show their work. Miller and Ringma used the term 'punk art' to gain attention and create hype around the show.[77] But not only did the topic of the show create hype: the works on display were also exciting for the audience. For instance, an electric saw hung from the ceiling while someone went around dancing. The show was considered a success. *American Punk Art* became the first example in the Netherlands of creating a place for punk to be shown as form of art, which was a deliberately controversial move. *American Punk Art*

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[77] Jonker, *No Future Nu*, 194-202.

for the first time uncovered a sore point in the Netherlands, namely punk as hype, which will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

A year later, on the 20th of December, the Stads Kunst Guerrilla organized the Terroristcongres in Paradiso, Amsterdam. The entrance was covered with car wrecks, and the great hall was literally a 'war zone', made from the debris from another renovation outdoors. The toilets, which had featured fluorescent lights to reduce drug use, were now littered with elephant faeces from Amsterdam's zoo. A wheelbarrow that had carried in the mess was thrown into nothingness, with no indication about clearing up. There was a curtain made out of chicken legs and a tower measuring four by four metres called the Toren van Babbel (which refers to the Tower of Babel, 'babbel' means chattering). On the bar a couple was making love. Punk bands played the whole night. Paradiso became a playground for punks gathering in the capital from all over the Netherlands, and punk artists were present as well. For example, graffiti artist Dr. Rat hand painted an old Citroën car that had been placed rather randomly in the concert hall (see figure 16). The exhibition was about disruption and bringing music and art together, but not in a harmonious way. Rather, total artistic freedom and shock value were most important. This exhibition was not the only 'punk-oriented' one, in the sense that it created artistic freedom and was experimental in its chaotic nature. The idea that anyone could be an artist was still aspirational. *Haagse Post* editor Ton van Dijk, who gave a lecture on nonviolence for punks in attendance, held another punk-oriented exhibition the same year. At the end of the speech, Van Dijk emptied a rifle on a screen behind him, to also mock the idea of nonviolence. Another example of an experimental exhibition attended by punks occurred only another year later. In 1981, artist Jeroen Henneman dressed himself in a blonde wig and leopard print like Jane. His colleague Willem van Malsen swung towards Henneman from the balcony like Tarzan and ended up crashing through the glass-burned windows.[78] The happiness and softness of the hippie era was very clearly redeemed for hardness, shock and ridicule, all made possible by the attenders themselves.[79]

Those memorable moments, however, would not have happened if Paradiso had not been supported by subsidies from the ministry of Cultuur, Recreatie & Maatschappelijk Werk (Culture, Recreation & Social Work). This Dutch art policy became serious only during the 1960s democratization wave, which led to a revision of principles in the fields of culture and art. It was deemed that the government should stimulate not only a minority of 'high art' for those with a cultivated taste, but also smaller art initiatives that appealed to multiple layers of the population. Paradiso has had an important place in Amsterdam from the 1960s until now, as it has housed many new forms of youth culture, including music, art and lectures. Experimentation, rebellion and debating

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[78] Kees Bruin and Benjo Maso, "Kunstenaarsfeesten in Paradiso: een sociologische rapportage," *Sociologische Gids* 29, no. 6 (1982): 517.

[79] Annemarie de Wildt, "Sensatie willen wij," *Ons Amsterdam*, no. 4, April 2018, https://www.onsamsterdam.nl/tijdschrift/jaargang-2018/56-tijdschrift/tijdschrift-jaargang-2018/3722-nummer-4-april-2018?showall=&start=1.

were celebrated, and punk found its home there as well. The art policy from CRM also entailed certain goals, which led to decisions about which initiatives were subsidized. Its main goal included closing the gap between art and society and stimulating social cohesion.[80] The ministry was led by Piet Engels, who was specifically committed to "a de-recognition of the arts, a relationship between initial and post-initial skills, urban education, but also for an extension of the concept of culture. Art is ought to be part of a welfare policty."[81] The ministry of CRM used art for social change, welfare and cohesion, focussing on younger generations and subcultures that now had a place of their own. In 1982, the ministry of CRM was dismantled and their tasks were divided over new ministries.[82] From the moment the subsidy of the CRM was communicated, anything could be art and anyone could make art, thus Dutch painter Reinier Lucassen and poet Gerrit Komrij.[83] Lucassen and Komrij denoted as well that due to this policy, art became too much of a political tool to stimulate education and cohesion, instead of looking at the real quality of art itself.[84]

The organized culture policy of the Dutch state, from which Paradiso also profited, was at one point a reason for a group of punks to avoid Paradiso. Others simply thought that Paradiso became too expensive, and alternative spaces for art, music and lectures focusing on DIY were initiated. In 1979, the artist-led space W139 was squatted in Amsterdam's greasy Warmoesstraat 139. It strived (and still does) for risky art, experimentation and complete independence. It promotes a for-us-by-us mentality, which is linked to a strong DIY (punk) attitude. Former director Gijs Frieling argues, "W139 started as anti-establishment space and evolved to a professional, non-institutional platform for contemporary art from all over the world."[85] Also in the centre of Amsterdam were two heavily graffiti sprayed houses called the Vraknrijk (which was squatted in 1982) en the Slangenpand (squatted in 1999). Both were housed at the Spuistraat (see cover image for an impression of this street) and were meant as centres for creativity, free living and discussion about the city. Of course, W139, the Vrankrijk and the Slangenpand were not the only initiatives in the Netherlands that were set up from squatted spaces and had a non-institutional and anti-establishment attitude. In Nijmegen was the Paraplufabriek, in Eindhoven De Fabriek and in Den Bosch a space called V2. Utrecht had Tivoli, a larger concert hall that hosted punk parties, which now and then led to arson and riots. The artists from art collective V2, named after the squatted building at the Vughterstraat 23, worked closely together with (as well as squatted) foundation and art collective Aorta in Amsterdam.

V2, founded by Alex Adriaansens and Joke Brouwer, was known for its awareness of art

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[80] Ibid.

[81] Ministerie van Cultuur, Recreatie en Maatschappelijk Werk, *Nota Kunstbeleid* (Rijswijk:Ministerie van CRM, 1972): 20.

[82] The ministry of CRM was dismantled due to rising costs and too much extension of the concept of culture and art.

[83] This was also stimulated by the Beeldende Kunstenaars Regeling (Visual Art Regulation), which existed from 1956 – 1987. Artists could get an income in exchange for their work. It was a financial aid for vulnerable groups in society.

[84] Max van der Kamp and Dorine Ottevanger, *Cultuur + Educatie 6: Cultuureducatie en sociale cohesie. Een verkennend onderzoek* (Utrecht:Cultuur Netwerk Nederland, 2003): 22.

[85] Gijs Frieling, "Desire and Relevance: Curating for the Many at W139," *Manifesta Journal* no. 10 (2009/2010): 27-30.

history and theory, which they nevertheless challenged. Adriaansens and Brouwer called it a multi-media centre in which almost anything was possible. V2 rebelled against conceptual art, which according to them was too theoretical and philosophical. Important critical thinkers and (musical) artists who were connected to V2 from the beginning on were Stelarc, Orlan, Symbiotica, Dick Raaijmakers, Michel Waisvisz, Francisco López, Brian Massumi, Manuel de Landa, Paul Virilio, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Knowbotic Research and Rem Koolhaas. V2 also did not want to be associated with the art group Fluxus, although they were interested in the same kind of topics such as critical thinking and experimentation, because this group preserved and sold their self-made posters afterwards. This was seen as a form of commercialization, instead of pure communication and freedom. The art shown at V2 was about immediate impact, transience, participation and interaction, instead of being unique or theoretically substantiated. Conserving the artworks was not important either. Bands were also invited to play at evening hours, such as Sonic Youth. Meant to be the exact opposite of a museum, V2 also took their arts on the streets by creating manifesto posters (e.g., the Manifesto for Unstable Media). Artists were not limited by space. The boundaries between the public and the artist faded, and an eclectic program of different disciplines emerged. DIY was important for V2 as well, since it experimented with amateur artists and bands, installations and performances, and self-claimed spaces. In 1994, V2 moved from their squatted building in Den Bosch to settle in Rotterdam, where it now focuses on modern media such as virtual reality, 3D printing techniques and the possibilities of the World Wide Web. DIY is still inserted in the form of experimentation; however, V2 nowadays is a more organized, theoretical and research-focused institute. It is now called 'V2: Institute of Instable Media'.[86]

Another place that found an artistic destination is the Paraplufabriek, which now houses experimental initiatives like Expoplu. The former factory building was bought in 1995. Since then it has been committed to 'provide affordable housing for young people and the purpose of accommodating socio-cultural activities. In this way, a pleasant and creative home-work situation is realized in a democratic way.'[87] Semi-commercial small businesses are also located in the building.[88] It is significant to stress that V2 and the Paraplufabriek are no longer temporary spaces or *brief outrageous spectacles*; rather, they have become more structural over time. Of course, experimentation is still the foundation, but they have also become a small institute hosting expert meetings (V2) and a visionary educational organization (Expoplu).[89]

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[86] Jonker, *No Future Nu,* 209.
[87] Official website Expoplu, "Over Expoplu," accessed October 20, 2018, https://expoplu.nl/over-expoplu/.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.

Recent exhibitions and ways of displaying

As discussed above, Paradiso was one of several homes for punk art and music. It has helped shape punk in the Netherlands, but in turn punk also shaped Paradiso's legacy and how the audience today remembers this 'pop temple' as an experimental place. In 2018, Paradiso celebrated its 50th anniversary, which included an exhibition about its history at the Amsterdam Museum. In this exhibition, called *50 Years Paradiso,* punk got its own space. It was covered with sloppily hung flyers, loud music and even a re-created bathroom with fluorescent light to bring the visitor back to the late 1970s and 1980s (see figure 18). This exhibition made punk into an experience, seen not only be through documenting photographs from an outside or viewer's perspective, but also literally heard and felt in artificial rooms. With spaces like the artificial bathroom and a 'breakneck-tempo' song playing in the background, the Amsterdam Museum tends to immerse the visitor in this specific era, instead of keeping an observing distance. The exhibition responds to the sentiment of the both the museum's and Paradiso's visitors by recreating spaces that simulate a greasy feeling of drugs, sex and graffiti slogans, all of which show the sense of freedom Paradiso would have had at the time.[90] This is a different starting point than, for instance, the earlier discussed exhibition *American Punk Art* in 1979. The most important difference is the fact that punk was very current at the time of the latter exhibition, while the *50 Years Paradiso* looks back nostalgically at the 1970s and 1980s.

Another small initiative that tended to immerse the visitor in the 1970s and 1980s punk scene is Jeroen Vermandere's *Tapes* exhibition from 2017. Vermandere (1988) organized it together with Amsterdam art institute De Appel on the basis of his own personal (and still growing) collection of music cassette tapes. Vermandere amassed a large collection of DIY cassette tapes from the 1980s, including some very rare editions. These music groups or solo companies used homemade instruments, vacuum cleaners, and synthesizers, often operating according to a predetermined script. They are all home recorded, with the minimal amount of technical recording equipment. Besides the music, which included obscure punk bands such as Lulkick Larry en de Gestoorde Jongens, the aesthetics of the covers are DIY utterances as well. They are hand painted, folded and cut and pasted by band members, close friends and amateurs. Each of them is a 'miniature artwork'. This exhibition immersed the visitor by allowing only two people at the same time in the small exhibition space and no photography, since one could ask questions, rewind the songs and even touch the cassette tapes. Together, both curator and visitor are able to explore the tapes up close.[91] Nonetheless, the cassette tapes are located again at an art institute, where they probably would not have ended up in other circumstances. Besides this artificial setting, De Appel stated, "with each tape he *searches* for the makers, relatives and listeners and

[90] Amanda Kuyper, "Popmagie herleeft in foto's op expositie over Paradiso," *NRC Handelsblad*, March 28, 2018, https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2018/03/28/popmagie-herleeft-in-fotos-a1597482.

[91] Anna van Leeuwen, "De liefde van de kunstenaar is aanstekelijk: ga mee in de wereld van de 'hometapers," *De Volkskrant,* December 1, 2017, https://www.volkskrant.nl/cultuur-media/de-liefde-van-de-kunstenaar-is-aanstekelijk-ga-mee-in-de-wereld-van-de-hometapers-~b47a4e60/.

builds up a *collection of stories* that give the cassette, the music and the makers a colourful and soundful *history*."[92] Also, Vermandere could not have attended the stage performances of those bands given his age, so he rather looks for answers *after* collecting them. For this reason, De Volkskrant called him a 'collector-detective'. Besides attracting visitors who are personally passionate about the music and covers, Vermandere also wants to share the 'true history' behind them.[93] His starting point is actually to *build up* a 'soundful' history around the sometimes difficult to trace creators, which almost seems like an act of archiving. Like *50 Years Paradiso*, the exhibition responds to the visitor's (nostalgic) memory of this certain time. With this in mind, Vermandere also digitalized all of his cassette tapes in order to remember the 1980s DIY attitude evermore.[94]

Another exhibition that considers the personal involvement of the visitor is Brussels' Millennium Iconoclast Museum of Art's exhibition *Get Up Stand Up!* from 2018. From anti-America, to unemployment to environmental protests, it showed hundreds of flyers and protest banners, focusing particularly on aesthetics as thematic guideline. All of those flyers were very important for punk, as well as being a means to communicate in a cheap and fast way. Besides flyers as a medium, themes that concerned punk were on show, such as squatting and police brutality. There was little textual explanation about the flyers to distract the visitor, such as names, dates or origin. Rather they were shown in their 'natural environment': draped army nets, stones, bricks, barbed wire and stacked-up pallets (see figure 21). The power of the image was the main concern of this exhibition, and each could speak to the visitors in itself: "Protest, no matter how loud, makes no visual impression. It must be accompanied with images that remain in your head. For that reason, posters are of an invaluable asset: it is impossible to look next to them."[95] Also, the title of the exhibition directly and actively spoke to the visitor individually. The underlying idea was that visitors needed no more background information; instead, they were allowed to travel back to a period of 'No Future' and the deprived city. Thereafter, the MIMA underscored their goal in involving the viewer by providing pen and paper for them to create their own flyers in their last room. This act, too, was organized and framed. The visitor was able to 'do-it-themselves', although the original context would of course never be the same as in the 1970s and 1980s.

Besides the above exhibitions, which focus primarily on immersing the public and appealing to ones memory of the past, other museums or art institutes focus on the aesthetics of punk from a distant perspective: the visitor is an outsider of the punk subculture. An example of this approach is the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, which organized a slightly grubby exhibition called *God Save the Queen* in 2012. The title obviously refers to a famous Sex Pistol song (see figure 19). *God Save the Queen* showed

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[92] Official website De Appel, "Jeroen Vermandere – Tapes," accessed December 1, https://deappel.nl/nl/events/jeroen-vermandere-tapes.
[93] Van Leeuwen, De liefde van de kunstenaar, accessed December 2, 2018
[94] Ibid.
[95] Introductory text at the exhibition *Get Up Stand Up!* from 2018, room 1.

punk as a social movement, but above all it attempted to show punk as a form of visual art. The exhibition did so by incorporating artists such as René Daniels (1950), Rob Scholte (1958) and Hugo Kaagman. Those artists are known for their transgressive stance, recycling of daily objects, humorous images and experimentation.[96] Their work was hung behind wires and on white walls to focus on the works in themselves. The exhibition itself provided a historical overview of the punk scene in the 1970s and '80s in the Netherlands. Nonetheless, at the opening on the 9th of May there was supposed to be a punk festival, including bands. Also, the museum gave free entrance to anyone dressed as a 'punk' (think mohawks, shredded T-shirts and safety pins).[97] Again, the museum played on the nostalgic memory of the visitor. However, the exhibition in itself provided a distant overview (which will be discussed more elaborately in Chapter 3).

The same approach was taken by the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, which organized the exhibition *Amsterdam the Magic Center* in 2018. The exhibition focuses around the counterculture of the 1960s, and the Provo movement (the precursor of punk in the Netherlands) is clearly present in the form of flyers and posters against squatting violence and housing shortages. The flyers, zines and posters are a priority of the exhibition, and thus they are nicely conserved behind glass. All of those objects are provided with a (short) background text about the artists and their motives, the same as any painting in the museum.[98] *Amsterdam the Magic Center* is thereafter based on the relationship between The Stedelijk Museum and rebellious artists. A good example is artist Martinus Boezem (1934), who hung a piece of bedding outside the museum's windows to let in fresh air (art) during the exhibition *Op Losse Schroeven* in 1969. The bedding was rehung 49 years later in the exhibition *Amsterdam the Magic Center*, taking into account weather conditions.[99] The latter exhibition does not include punk specifically as a 'theme', since that arose later in the late 1970s, so it dealt with objects not intended to be placed on a white wall in the first place, such as flyers, pamphlets and posters.

As collectors and conservators of modern art, the Centraal Museum and Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam focus strongly on collecting artworks from artists, but they provide background on the social history of that time as well. This focus on the aesthetics of punk, in combination with explanations of it as a social movement from a clear and distant, outsider, perspective, is a recognizable tactic in museums outside the Netherlands as well. For instance, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York organized a major exhibition called *PUNK: Chaos to Couture* in 2013. The exhibition focused

[96] Official website Centraal Museum Utrecht, "Exhibition God Save the Queen," accessed September 21, 2018, https://centraalmuseum.nl/bezoeken/tentoonstellingen/god-save-the-queen/.
[97] Robert van Gijssel, "No punk," De Volkskrant, May 21, 2012, https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/no-punk~b8dae7b3/.
[98] Official website Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, "Amsterdam magisch centrum. Kunst en tegencultuur 1967–1970," October 21, 2018, https://www.stedelijk.nl/nl/tentoonstellingen/amsterdam-magisch-centrum.
[99] Karolien Knols, "Na bijna 50 jaar wappert er weer beddengoed uit de ramen van het Stedelijk," *De Volkskrant,* July 3, 2018, https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/na-bijna-50-jaar-wappert-er-weer-beddengoed-uit-de-ramen-van-het-stedelijk~b3c8015a/.

on punk as a style and on how it became a source of inspiration for well-known fashion designers (see figure 20). Some of the shredded and painted DIY T-shirts in this exhibition were loaned from 'actual punks' from the 1970s and 1980's, but the clothing was placed on faceless and stiff mannequins.[100] This made it even more obvious that those are not the 'real' owners of those clothes, but rather presenters of it. Designer Zandra Rhodes, whose collections were worn by punk musician Siouxsie Sioux, cheered the exhibition for exact this reason: "I love how they've taken this punk aesthetic, and *they've taken it completely out of context*!"[101] The curators of *PUNK: Chaos to Couture* also came up with the idea of a simulated dirty bathroom like *50 Years Paradiso*, based on the ones at CBGB in New York (although there is a significant difference: it is not possible to enter it).[102] In both *PUNK: Chaos to Couture* as well as the exhibition at the Centraal Museum, punk as a movement and style is portrayed from a distant view instead of one allowing visitors to actually immerse themselves in the punk culture.

The exhibitions discussed above (*50 Years Paradiso, Tapes, Get Up! Stand Up!, God save the Queen, Amsterdam the Magic Center* and *PUNK: Chaos to Couture*) show two separate ways of displaying, namely: 1) taking the visitor back to the 1970s and 1980s DIY culture and 2) providing a distant historical overview. Important facets used to achieve the first are artificial rooms, music playing in the background, props and the ability to reproduce flyers and posters inside the museum. The curators of those exhibitions attempted to blur the present and history, as if it could still *feel like* 1977. The other exhibitions discussed provide a more distant and historical overview. They do so by placing wires, clear walls, faceless mannequins and background texts on their walls. The distant exhibitions take punk out of their context, while the others imitate a feeling of an actual historical epoch.

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[100] Faran Krentcil, "Fashionably Loud: Inside The Met's Punk Fashion Exhibit," ELLE, May 6, 2013, https://www.elle.com/fashion/news/a23061/met-punk-exhibit/.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Official website The Met, "PUNK: Chaos to Couture," accessed October 27, 2018, https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2013/punk/gallery-views.

3. RECEPTION AND PERCEPTION

Written on the walls of deprived cities, the slogan 'No future' was cheered in times of uncertainty. Because there was no will to think about the future, but rather a call for a moment in time, the objects were not meant to last forever. However, those objects denoted punk as cultural movement and stood for a certain era as well; namely, the end of 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. Museums understood this importance, but what about the movement itself? In this chapter, the reception of punk at the museums mentioned above and other statements that enter the discussion of 'no future' inside the museum will be discussed. In other words, how are we aware of punk and how is it aware of itself – since punk, as a subculture is an *ideological construct*, as Greil Marcus argues.

Anti-institute

Punks are self-chosen outsiders who suddenly became interesting to museums. The flyers, posters and pamphlets that were once made from a DIY baseline are placed behind non-reflecting, conserving glass. Hebdige mentions that the most daily, and mass, objects appropriated by punk, such as safety pins, become a *symbol* of the era of the late 1970s and 1980s to identify the movement itself. This small object becomes truly representative of a time that was disruptive and different.[103] Perhaps you could even call it a direct witness of this time, which is now used as a museum's teller of truth. Lecturer in museology Andromache Gazi underscores the importance of truth for museums and exhibitions: "People come to museums to see the 'real thing', to experience aspects of the past (…)".[104] In the case of punk, the 'real things' are considered to be the safety pins, painted T-shirts, shredded jeans and copied flyers. However, all of those objects were used in the late 1970s and 1980s as cheap alternatives for fashion and art. As said before, punks came from poor situations and used simply what was available. Safety pins and flyers were mass-produced, such as the large amount of copied zines that are available at the Institute for Social History in Amsterdam. Those object were not meant to be authentic, but rather cheap and communicative. Nevertheless, this is exactly what the museum now sees as the 'real thing', or even authenticity, of punk.

Punk is undeniably part of recent social history and thus interesting for museums, because culture is part of their exhibitions and future purchases. To not include counterculture is to leave a gap in history. But just like Dada, punk is a problematic case, because both have trouble with the idea of the institute. This is the problem for Joseph Corré, who together with his mother Vivienne Westwood burnt £5million of punk memorabilia, as described in the introduction. They did so to "stop punk from

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[103] Hebdige, *Subculture*, 3.
[104] Andromache Gazi, "Exhibition Ethics - An Overview of Major Issues," *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, 12, no. 1 (2014): 7.

becoming a *fucking* museum piece".[105] Dick Hebdige explains where the shoe pinches: "We are interested in subculture – in the expressive forms and rituals of those subordinate groups – the teddy boys and mods and rockers, the skinheads and the punks – who are *alternately* dismissed, denounced and canonized; treated at different times as threats to public order and as harmless buffoons."[106] The dismissed are welcomed and commercialized, which was already discussed thoroughly in zines. Terrie Hessels of Dutch punk band The Ex discusses the problem of commercialism, and becoming accepted or even mainstream, as well in a 1980 edition of the zine *Ratrace* from Amstelveen:

"It may be important to know where you are performing [as a band or artist] as Paradiso keep an eye on more popular bands like Mecano [a punk band], who will play for a thousand guilders. They pay close attention to where such a band goes. The concept of punk is important to keep their moves in mind, so that you do not end up in this commercial world."[107]

Hessels argues that it is the responsibility of the musician or artists where to play or exhibit. For example, Raymond Pattibon knows where his art exhibitions are held, and the punks who lent their T-Shirts to the Metropolitan Museum of Art were aware of this as well. However, with many objects the creator is not that easy to find, such as with the cassette tapes of Jeroen Vermandere.

Ds. B. Rezillo (real name unknown) argued in *De Pedaalemmer* in 1979 that commercialism would ruin punk. Instead, he called for staying creative as the most important continuation: "Kids surprise yourself! Be creative and *stay* creative!"[108] The zine *Armageddon* underscored this strongly in an edition of July 1980: "Commerce ruined punk, being creative is a necessity!!!!!!"[109] This creativity was indeed a necessity to communicate, instead of becoming a form of 'art' inside the museum space. The editors of Utrecht zine *Destructief Jong Nederland* (DJN) wrote a 13- point manifesto to improve life and society in 1982, which considers art as well (see figure 22): "Quality control by civil servants is out of the question. The government must not subsidize individual artists, but must create extensive facilities that make it possible to celebrate the urge to be creative to the fullest. The artist does not exist."[110] The previously described Rondos also rejected this idea of 'punk art' in the late 1970s, because art seemed to be only about appearance, seriousness and commerce. The rejection of punk in the museum as form of art was underscored by music editor Robert van Gijssel in *The Volkskrant* in 2012, who criticizes the earlier described exhibition *God Save the Queen* at Centraal Museum Utrecht:

[105] Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett, "Joe Corré's £5m punk bonfire is a futile gesture," *The Guardian,* 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/21/joe-corre-punk-bonfire-malcolm-mclaren.
[106] Hebdige, *Subculture*, 2.
[107] Author unknown, *Ratrace Zine* (October 1980): 8.
[108] Ds. B. Rezilo, "Introduction," *De Pedaalemmer* no. 4 (1979): 2.
[109] Author unknown, *Armageddon Zine* (July 1980): 5.
[110] Author unknown, *Desturctief Jong Nederland Zine* (1982): 1-6.

"Punk does not belong in a museum, this becomes evident at the punk exhibition *God Save The Queen* in the Centraal Museum in Utrecht. The punk message is not completely understood. The sprayed mohawks, panther prints and carrier bicycles with sheepdogs were invited, dirty noise had to be heard, and now there should be room for important punk things such as 'protest' and 'emotion'. A part of the program around these keywords was therefore put on the agenda in the block diagram: punk within the lines of the institute."[111]

Van Gijssel ironically describes the exhibition as a nostalgic throwback, which would be completely at odds with what is supposed to be the disruptive nature of punk in the first place. What becomes clear with the statement above is that the actions of punk are inherently connected to the images of punk: they cannot be separated, even. Diana Ozon agrees with this point when she argues that the provocative visual images it showed did not make the earlier described 1979 exhibition *American Punk Art* in gallery Art Something punk. She called the electric saw hanging from the ceiling dangerous and foolish, rather than experimental. According to Ozon, punk is rooted in social engagement and action, not provocation in itself.[112] This is Van Gijssel's main point as well: playing punk or showing up in a mohawk in a museum has nothing to do with punk originally. According to Van Gijssel and Ozon, punk relies on action *together* with its appearance.

This statement can be found as well in professor Kevin Dunn's essay *"If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk": Walter Benjamin's Progressive Cultural Production and DIY Punk Record Labels* (2012), in which Dunn cites philosopher Walter Benjamin in relation to the punk music market. Dunn particularly uses Benjamin's essay *The Author as Producer* (1934), in which Benjamin argues that "focusing solely, or even primarily, on the content of the producer's message fundamentally misses the point."[113] Benjamin argues that it is less important what the artist says, than the techniques used to prove his or her argument. Dunn concludes from Benjamin's argument that it is the practices that make punk, not the leather jacket or provocative images inside a gallery space.[114] Dunn adds that "because progressive cultural politics is not achieved through content but via *position*, *being* DIY and independent is far more effective than *talking* about being DIY and independent. It is a form of cultural production that can turn passive consumers into producers in their own right."[115] This is exactly what Ozon and Van Gijssel pointed out as well: it is not about the visual content of the exhibition, but about *position* and *being*.

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[111] Van Gijssel, No punk, *De Volkskrant*
[112] Jonker, *No Punk Nu,* 203.
[113] Kevin Dunn, "If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk": Walter Benjamin's Progressive Cultural Production and DIY Punk Record Labels," *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, 24, no. 2 (2012): 233.
[114] Walter Benjamin, *The Author as Producer, Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Volume Two: 1927–1934*. (Cambridge:Harvard University Press, 1999): 774.
[115] Dunn, *If It Ain't Cheap*, 234.

Punk sells

Punk at museums is questioned, rejected and mocked. However, one might recognize that many artists are fine with showing their art in institutes. Previously cited artist Raymond Pettibon has had major solo exhibitions, including gritty Black Flag flyers. In 2017, Hugo Kaagman displayed a large sum of Delft blue graffiti and sculptural artworks in Het Noordbrabants Museum. In the exhibition *De Jaren 80* (translated The 1980s), his artworks were neatly placed on pedestals, while a static mannequin in police clothing attempted to stir things up.[116] Also, once-squatted V2 and the Paraplufabriek are now small-organized institutes with neutral white walls. A small description on their website tell us about their disruptive past. We have seen that exhibitions like Terroristcongress at Paradiso, which was organized during the peak of the punk movement in the Netherlands, were organized as a form of rebellion and freedom, but Paradiso was and still is an institute in the sense of supply and demand. The institutionalized circuit could ultimately not be avoided completely. So what does it look like, then, if punks sell themselves? Kevin Dunn argues that this situation is no novelty, actually, in the punk music industry:

"Punk offered a new market of youth consumption from which they could turn a profit. (…) Now punk was a commercial product that could be (and in many cases was) packaged and sold by major record labels. Many bands could not resist the allure of a hefty pay check or the promise of reaching a larger audience. But the signing spree also played havoc on the small record labels that had helped create and nurture nascent punk scenes across the United Kingdom."[117]

Punk became both a commercial and popular medium. For some, like The Ex band member Terrie Hessels, the market was something to be careful about, but for others it was an attractive offer. Punk does sell to the public, which art critic Raphael Rubinstein underscored in his article *Portrait of the Artist as Young Punk: Pettibon* (2009) by putting forward the importance of *souvenirs of time*:

"It's the fate of every radical art movement to leave behind a *market in printed ephemera*. Will the handbills of the California punk scene one day become as important as those flyers and exhibition announcements produced by Dadaists, Surrealists, Situationists et al., material now deemed suitable for display in the vitrines of great museums? What is it, apart from their connection to the activities of important artists that makes these dated, sometimes tattered souvenirs of obscure, long-gone events so

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[116] Hugo Kaagman, "Tentoonstellingen," *Hugo Kaagman Official Website*, accessed October 30, 2018, http://www.kaagman.nl/index%20fp.htm
[117] Ibid.

prized? Perhaps in some way the fragile, fugitive qualities of such printed matter are emblematic of the fleeting nature of the very phenomena they document."[118]

Punk as an ultimately creative movement left behind an enormous, mass, oeuvre of objects available for the market, which is exactly what made Corré set much of the Sex Pistols memorabilia on fire. The once so creative outburst has become a symbol of time and has become commoditised. The safety pin is perhaps just as iconic as Marcel Duchamp's urinal. Interestingly, Rubinstein notes that this happened not only to punk but to Dadaists, Surrealists and the Situationist International as well. Radicalism has become institutionalized – which is not a new phenomenon apparently. Rubinstein also hints at something more interesting: the reason *why* punk memorabilia are prized; namely, that the objects embody the rapid temper of the movement. Flyers *stand for* punk in its disruptiveness, instead of being a direct *portrait of punk*. The mainstream is not shocked anymore, but rather will "*assimilate* astonishing quantities of revolutionary themes, indeed, can propagate them without calling its own existence seriously into question," as Walter Benjamin argued in the *Author as Producer*.[119]

But punk sells too. For example, the gallery Art Something organized selling exhibitions with the graffiti art of Diana Ozon only two years after she strongly criticized them for organizing *American Punk Art*.[120] And is it not true for as well for Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren's shop Sex that punk fashion was commercialized, and thus put in the mainstream? Gallery Anus also sold stencilled T-shirts for a small amount of money. Even in the late 1970s and 80s it was thus not unusual to make exceptions on the very first principles of timelessness, anti-commercialism and disruption.

This ambiguous relation between the DIY, rebellious attitude and the commodity product is not rare, argues music critic Simon Reynolds in *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past* (2010). The subtitle refers to the idea that music genres like punk (but also ska and rock and roll) have become addicted to their own feeling of nostalgia and consequently begin performing again.[121] Punk is retro, and retro is popular by the masses.[122] There is almost no band without a reunion, even though it might at first seem unlikely that tumultuous bands like the Sex Pistols would have one. Their work is now collected in chic boxes. As Reynolds states, "musicians make 'record collector rock', full of references to a *richer past*."[123] Reynolds problematizes the 'museumification' of cultures such as punk, which is aggravated by an eternal ruminating on the past and bittersweet feelings of nostalgia. Reynolds also underlines that bands like the Sex Pistols agreed to reunions on no fewer than three different occasions:

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[118] Raphael Rubinstein, "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Punk: Pettibon," *Art in America Magazine*, February 25, 2009, https://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazines/raymond-pettibon/.
[119] Benjamin, *Author as Producer*, 776.
[120] Jonker, *No Future Nu*, 203.
[121] Simon Reynolds, *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past* (London:Faber&Faber, 2012): 22.
[122] *Retro* means the imitative of a style or fashion from the recent past (source: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/retro).
[123] Reynolds, *Retromania*, 50.

1996-2001, 2002-2003 and 2007-2008 — and the remaining members would do so again. [124] Not only would they do this out of nostalgia, but if they were offered 'Rolling Stones money.'[125] In the last decade, memories and feelings of nostalgia became the foremost reasons to put punk in the spotlight again.[126]

[124] Sam Moore, "Steve Jones discusses possibility of another Sex Pistols reunion," *NME,* January 14, 2017, https://www.nme.com/news/music/steve-jones-sex-pistols-reunion-1944764#9dCueCVmvbRX0MKa.99.
[125] Rolling Stones money implies $10 million per show on their recent 12-city tour (source: http://time.com/money/5050974/how-much-the-rolling-stones-make-per-night/).
[126] Reynolds, *Retromania*, 50.

CONCLUSION

Punk started in the late 1970s and 1980s as a means to bring immediate action and change. In deprived cities with crime difficulties and increasing unemployment, punk created a playground. This playground can be recognized in the form of art, music and fashion. In most of the literature on the topic, England and America are seen as the cradle of punk. However, punk was not limited to those regions; indeed, it spread rapidly throughout Europe. For the Netherlands, this process began in 1977 with a concert by the Sex Pistols at Paradiso and an appearance on national television by singer Iggy Pop, who turned the stage upside down. The word was out and dissatisfied or unemployed adolescents followed the example. This new generation felt a strong dissatisfaction against the psychedelic hippies of the 1960s and early 1970s. But above all, the Cold War, unemployment, housing-shortages and crime were feared. In times when young people felt uncertain about their future and were wondering whether jobs would still be available for them, they felt attracted to a subculture that was subversive and disruptive in its attitude towards society.

This punk subculture had a distinctive style, the roots of which can be traced back to art history movements from the 20th century such as Dada and the Situationist International. It also shared artistic strategies with both Pop Art and Fluxus. Dick Hebdige argues that punk appropriated and transformed recent art history subversively into its very own *brief outrageous spectacle*. Punk should therefore be seen as a unique expression, instead of as a mutation of its historical predecessors. Greil Marcus argues that this aspect is nothing to be surprised about; rather, it is logical. New cultures rewrite the past and put forward new heroes. This process can be seen as well with the idea of do-it-yourself as a formative attitude of punk. *Do-it-yourself* as a term was coined in the late 1970s and 1980s with punk; however, Dada and the Situationist International had already used comparable techniques, including collage, assemblage and photomontage. Fluxus and Pop Art also brought in humour, coincidence and a challenging of the elite conceptions of art. As Marcus correctly argues, punk rewrote the past rather than copying it. Punk differs as well from Dadaism, the Situationist International, Fluxus and Pop Art because it also rebelled against philosophy, theory, celebrities and art, calling itself "self-consciously proletarian" in the earliest years. Do-it-yourself as a fundamental attitude includes the democratic intention that "anyone can be an artist or musician", no matter their age, experience or background. Anyone could make raw music, self-fabricated clothing, collage zines, hasty graffiti or pamphlets. Do-it-yourself as baseline was cheap, speedy and eloquent.

Punk was seen on the Dutch streets, on television and in galleries. The most important practices in the Netherlands were creating zines, graffiti, (squatted) stages, illustration and art collectives. This is not solely something new; from 1977–1980 exhibitions had already been initiated, ranging from shows in smaller galleries like Gallery Anus and Art Something to ones in the form of large warzones in Paradiso. But the mainstream museums also paid extra attention to culture overall, as

punk could not be ignored as a being significant counterculture that carried a radical stylistic change. Andromache Gazi argues that visitors go to museums to see the 'real thing' in stories told of the past. Museums dealt differently with punk's disruptiveness, namely by 1) focusing on the involvement of the visitor and 2) assuming a more distant perspective. Both approaches try to do justice to punk as a movement and style.

In the last chapter I have shown the problems of doing justice to the perception and reception of punk as style pleading for transience. Several zines discussed the issues of punk hollowing out by encouraging their readers to stay creative to keep the engine running. However, the work of punk artists and punk-themed exhibitions could be visited in museums. These were often strongly critiqued; for instance, Robert van Gijssel argued that the exhibition *God Save the Queen* in 2012 had nothing to do with punk. Artist Diana Ozon also mocked the exhibition *American Punk Art* in 1979, which was supposed to give room to American punk artists. Those exhibitions were not considered punk solely because they displayed punk art and organized radical performances, since punk is rooted in social engagement and action. It might look as if punk was 'hijacked' by mainstream museums, but people who had been involved with punk see its success in the mainstream as well. Bands reunite (some on doing so for millions of dollars and audiences), and fancy collector boxes with their music are released. This is all due to the bittersweet feeling of nostalgia, as retro has become popular. It is no longer radical to show or listen to punk; instead there is a market for it. However, this situation is not at all a novelty. During its peak in the late 1970s and 1980s, punk was already becoming a medium for mainstream sales — for instance, with Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren's store Sex, which lasted until 1976.

To conclude this thesis, I will answer the main question: 'How can (mainstream) art institutes such as museums do justice to disruptive styles such as punk?' In approaching punk, both in distance and intimacy, museums fail to do justice to punk as a disruptive movement and style to begin with. This is because a museum or art institute is an artificial setting for punk (or any object really) in any way. Andromache Gazi argues that visitors would prefer to see the 'real thing', however this seems not feasible in terms of placing the disruption and radicalism of punk in a static institute. Furthermore, punk did not concern itself with authenticity; rather, it openly called for reproduction in zines, with do-it-yourself as its fundamental, democratic baseline. Like the *50 Years Paradiso* and *Tapes* exhibitions discussed earlier, *Get Up! Stand Up!* attempted to create a 'natural environment' for its posters, flyers, pamphlets and posters in a rather artificial, organized place. This is what Simon Reynolds would describe as an "addiction to its own past", in which people would like to relive a richer past. Exhibitions like *Tapes* or *50 Years Paradiso* encouraged visitors to (still) believe this myth of authenticity and DIY. And also the curators of the exhibition *God Save the Queen* could not neglect this urge to relive a richer past, namely by inviting mohawked, saftety-pinned punks. Authenticity and the DIY attitude and visuals are transformed in some sort of myth, with safety pins and flyers as its shrines or as the so-called 'real thing'. Museums and institutes such as the Amsterdam Museum, the MIMA and De Appel

intervene in this urge for the richer past by fabricating like punk from 1977 would still be vital. I would, then, like to argue that a distant approach does most justice to punk as a disruptive style and movement, because it breaks with this myth of reliving the 1970s and 1980s as addictive sensation, as it were. I agree with designer Zandra Rhodes' cheerfulness about the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition *PUNK: Chaos to Couture* described earlier: "I love how the curators have taken punk *out of its context*." By taking punk out of its context, namely (re)placing it into large, distant exhibitions, it can rehabilitate from the addictive mystification.

FIGURES

Cover: Punk party at squatted building at the Spuistraat, April 30' 1986; photographer unknown.

Fig. 1. William LaForce Jr., CBGB 1977, NY Daily News Archive via Getty
Images

Fig. 2. Photographer unknown, Jello Biafra
and supporters, 1979
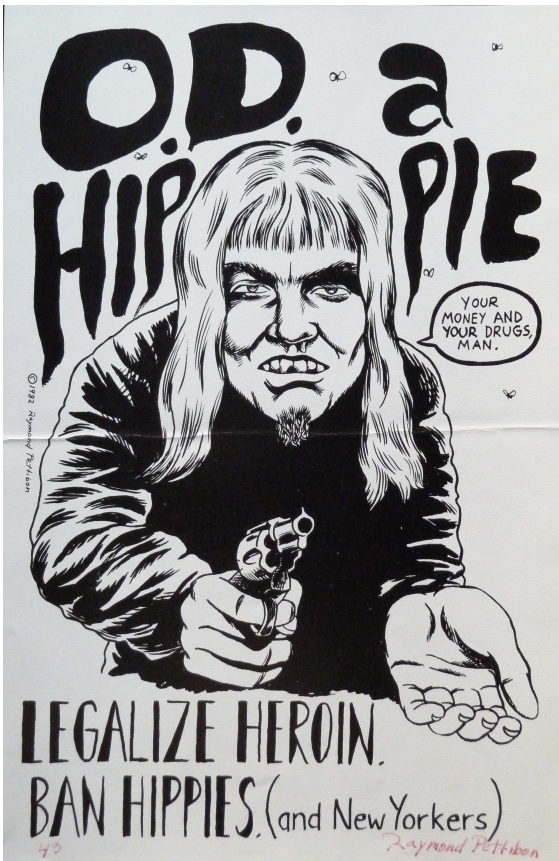
Fig. 3. Raymond Pettibon, *OD a Hippie*,
ink on paper, 1982
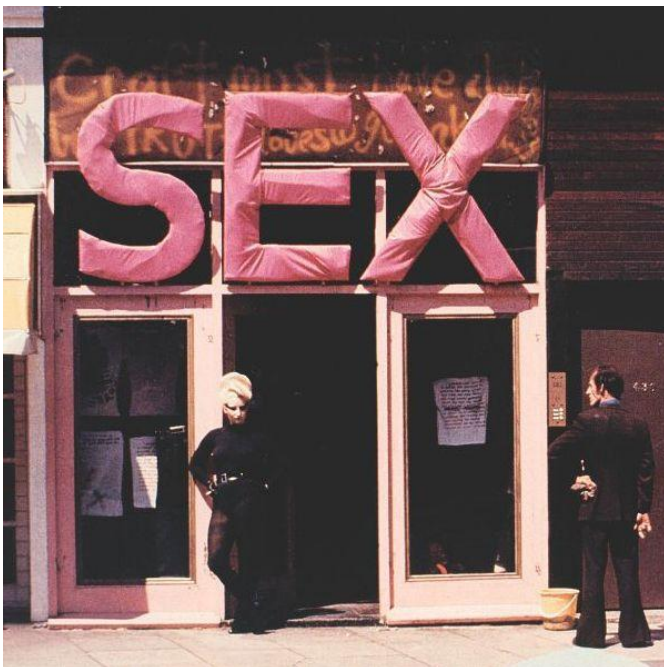
Fig. 4. Photographer unknown, from adult
magazine called *Gallery International*, 1976

Fig. 5. Hannah Höch, *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauchkulturepoche Deutschlands*, 1919, collage, 144 x 90 cm, Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlijn

Fig. 6. Malcolm Garrett & Linder Sterling, Buzzcocks, *Orgasm Addict*, 1977
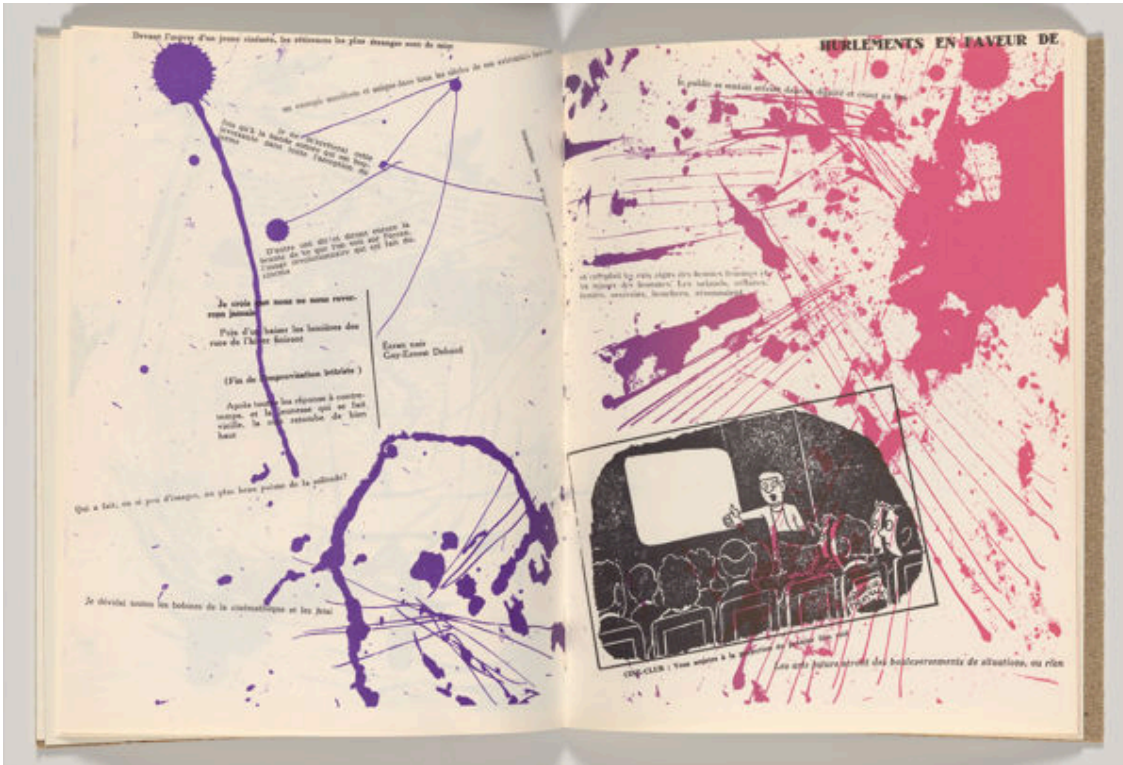
Fig. 7. Guy Debord & Asger Jorn, *Memoires*, 1959, illustrated book, 29.7 x 21 cm

Fig. 8. Jamie Reid, *Union Jack (Red, White, and Blue),* 1997, screenprint, edition of 12, 101.6 x 73.66 cm

er is iets uit engeland over gewaaid en dat is punk de n ederlanders met al hun nuch terheid brengen de punk al snel terug tot tot een ande re mode en een aardige muzie k zoals van de hippietijd a lleen nog blowen en makrobio ten over zijn zal er van de punk niete anders over blijv en dan een nieuwe dans de p oco daarom moeten we wat do en door de agressieve inste lling van punk zijn er mogelij kheden in engeland is voor

hele groepen jongeren een n ieuw leven begonnen een nie uw gezicht een nieuwe houdi ng hiervan is in nederland geen sprake de interlektuel en hebben punk aangegrepen om de verveling te verdrijve n en de werkende jongeren h ebben het hippieoverblijfsel blowen pas ontdekt welaan w at is punk voor mij een beet je eerlijkheid in een rotzoo i ikschrijf dana zing zoals ik wil zonder met iemand re kening te houden

K A A S K P

FILOSOFIE?

P

zoals je ziet bestaat mijn d agtaak eruit ingezonden stu kken naar dag-en weekbladen te eturen niet alleen voor mijn plezier maar ook uit ov ertuiging dat ik de enige p unkfilosoof ben mijn ingezon den stukken worden echter s teeds geweigerd waarom is v oor mij een raadsel zien de m ensen dan niet hoe in glijpen d punk gaat worden

zelfs de volkskrant neemt m ijn stukken niet op hoewel i k daar invloed heb (ik heb een seksuele relatie met ee r zakelijknatuurlijk ik ben dan ook zeer verheugd met h et aanbod van kaaskop om voo rhen te schrijven want punk is het enige belangrijke wat in deze wereld aan de gang is ja gooi die neutronen bom maar ik geef niet om brandp lekjes

henk de groot

Fig. 9. Zines *Oppose* (1980), *Ratrace* (1981), from the IISG archive

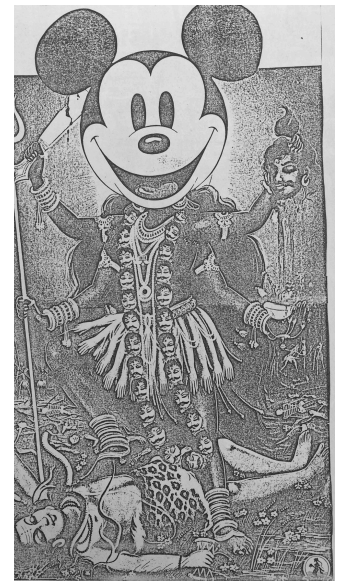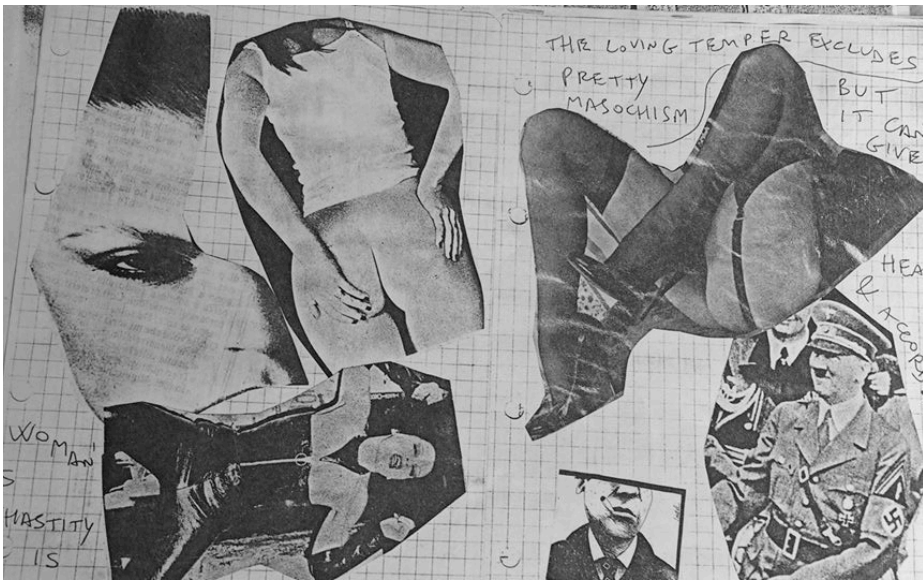Fig. 9. Zine *Attack* (1977), from the IISG archive

Fig. 9. Zines *The (Other) Paper* (1983), *Argamgeddon* (1982), from the IISG archive
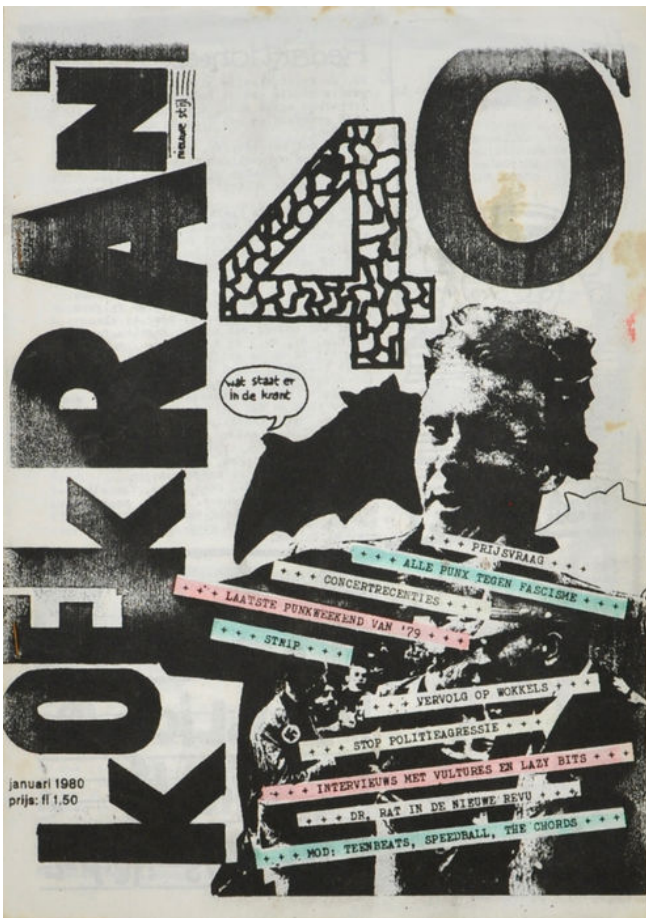

Fig. 10. Peter Pontiac, *Gaga*, 1980

Fig. 11. Top: Koekrant, no. 30, 1984
Bottom: no. 40, 1980

Fig. 12. Left: Hugo Kaagman in front of his graffiti, Waterlooplein, Amsterdam, 1979;
photographer unknown.
Right: Hugo Kaagman, *Delft Blue*, 2016

Fig. 13. Hugo Kaagman, *Art-O-Maat*, 1977; photo
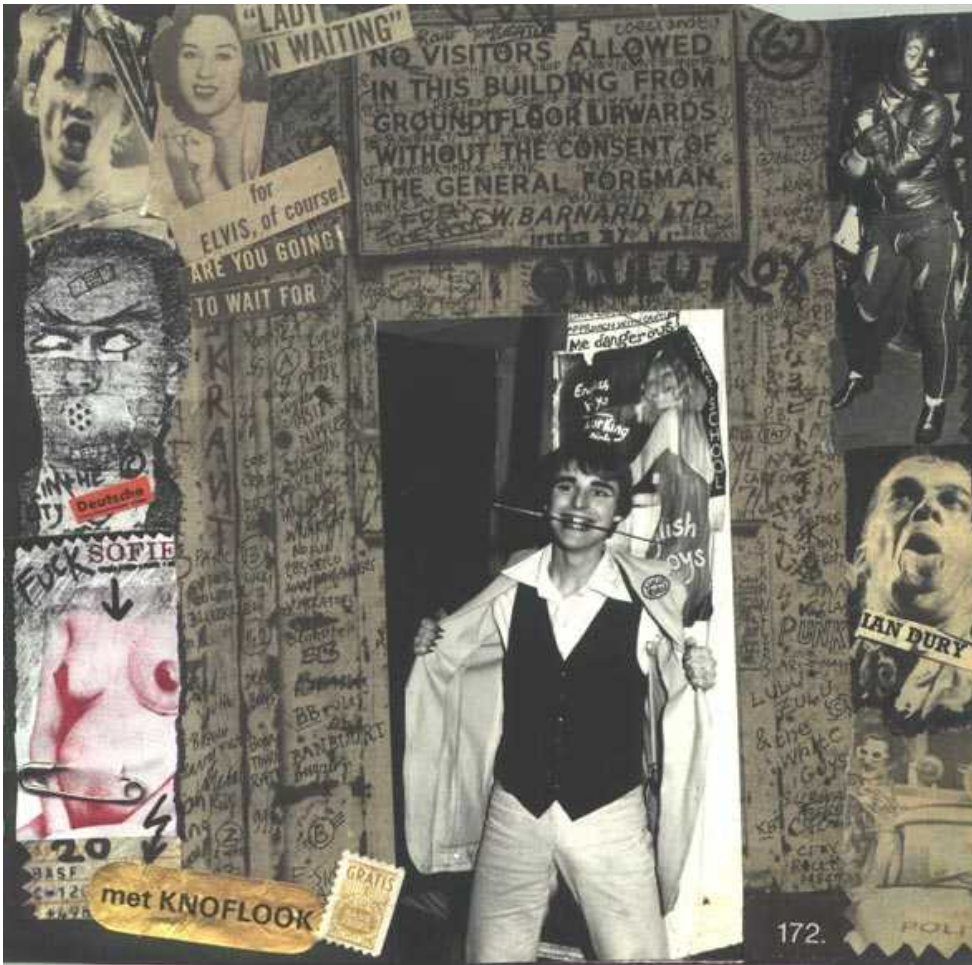from the official website of Hugo Kaagman

Fig. 14 Dr. Rat, Image for the Koekrant, 1982; photo from the official
website of Diana Ozon

Fig. 15. Left: T-Shirt available to buy from the official website of H&M
Right: Keith Brymer Jones Punk Range, God Save The Tea Bucket Mug

Fig. 16. Terroristcongress with painted car by Dr. Rat at Paradiso, 1980;
photo by Paradiso

Fig. 17. Marc Miller and Bettie Ringma: *American Punk Art* invitation, June 1–23, 1979

Fig. 18. Amsterdam Museum, *Paradiso 50 Years* exhibit, 2018; photo by author

Fig. 19. Centraal Museum Utrecht, *God Save the Queen* exhibition, 2012; photo by
Dominiek Ruyters

Fig. 20. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *PUNK: Chaos to Couture*, 2013; photo by The Metropolitan museum of art

Fig. 21. The Millenional Iconoclast Museum of Art, *Get Up Stand Up*! installation, 2018; photo by The Millenional Iconoclast Museum of Art

Punt 10 Cultuur

Kunst is prachtig, maar het bestaat niet. Het maken van toneel, schilderijtjes, muziek is gewoon werk, dat even (of even weinig) creatief is als het uitvinden van een electronische swibbel. Daar zit niets hogers bij.
Het is bij kunst alleen veel moeilijker te beoordelen of iemand het kàn dan bijvoorbeeld bij de fabricage van swibbels. Kwaliteitscontrôle door ambtenaren is uit den boze. De overheid moet niet individuele kunstenaars subsidieren, maar moet uitgebreide faciliteiten creëren, die het een ieder mogelijk maken hun scheppingsdrift bot te vieren. Te denken valt aan zaalruimte, atelierruimte, drukkerijen, enzovoort. Door de basisuitkering kan de BKR opgeheven worden. De 'kunstenaar' bestaat niet.

De overheid dient de kunstuitleen te stimuleren, en i.p.v. enkele grote musea meerdere kleinere galeries te openen. Beroepssport wordt als een soort toneel behandeld, met dus géén extra subsidies of andere materiële of financiële steun.
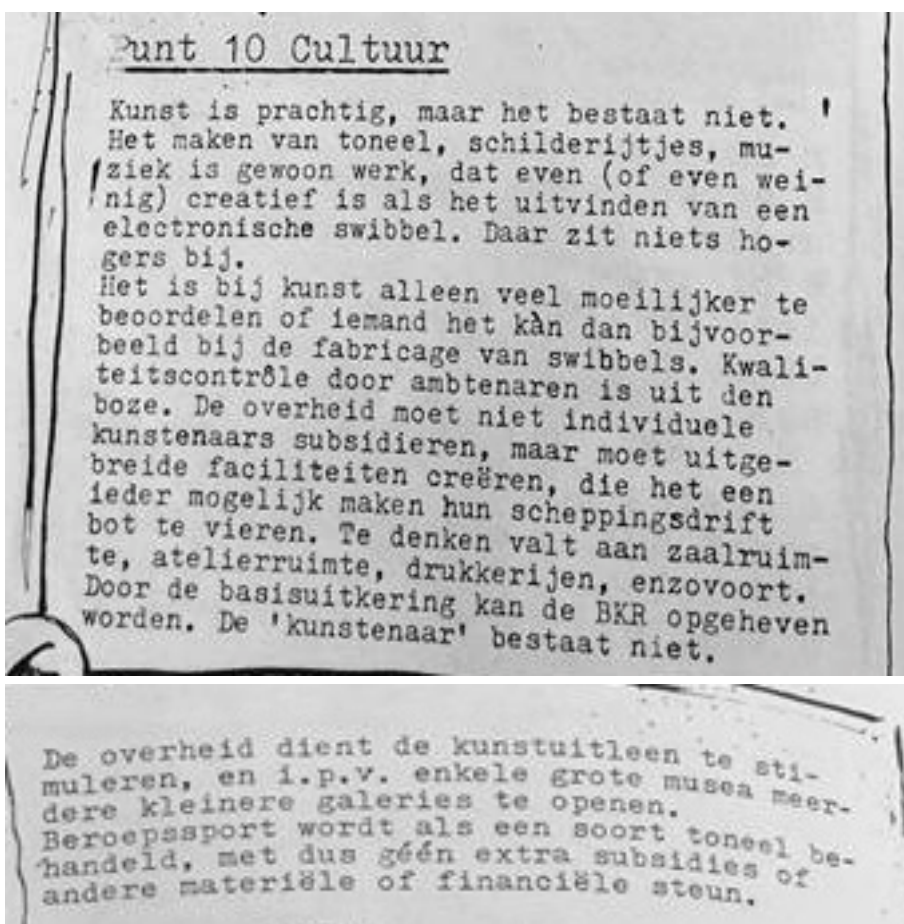
Fig. 21. *Destructief Jong Nederland* zine, 1982, from the IISG archives, pages 1–6; photo by author

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