

# Fucking Good Art

## Side by Side

08-02-2016

### Introduction

Yes, we write. Since we started *Fucking Good Art*, writing has become part of our art practice. In the first years we developed our skills writing short art critiques. We were inspired by the fierce and funny short art critiques Michael Bulka wrote for his *FGA Chicago*. The small booklet, *What Happened to Art Criticism*, by James Elkins served as our reference. It was learning by doing, parallel to our 'normal' art practice. We decided to write in a non-academic way, different from what we read in art magazines and theoretical publications. We were artists that also took the role of artists-as-art critics, artists-as-writers, or even artists-as-journalist, maybe. Not so much later, *Fucking Good Art* became a travelling magazine and our writing became our material. It took the form of conversation pieces and fictional dialogues. At this point we are artists-as-researchers, and we publish the things we find urgent to publish. We are interested in oral history, anthropology, investigating and documenting, counter and sub cultures, self-organization and anarchism. The bubble, the existing despicable art system of winners and losers, will eventually burst. And we hope that ultimately we will find ways for a more sustainable art world.

The text we are contributing is called *Side by Side*, and started in February 2013, during our three month residency at the Embassy of Foreign Artists in Geneva. The reason for starting an online parallel diary or blog post was the wish to publish in a more direct way about our ongoing research on Art and Anarchism. To open up the editorial studio, so to say. We felt that this research would take a while to lead to a new issue of *Fucking Good Art*. We also wanted to experiment with juxtaposing our individual perspectives more prominently than we did before. *Side by Side* means there is a Nienke side and a Rob side to the story. When

we found this title fit for our project, we had to smile and think of the book sculpture *Gilbert & George* published in 1971.

In April 2015 we did a second version of *Side by Side* during our one month residency in the small watchmakers city of Le Locle in the Swiss Jura, known as one of the birthplaces of Anarchism and the anti-authoritarian labour movement. Bakunin and Kropotkin came here, and historical journals like *Bulletin de la Fédération jurassienne* issued by James Guillaume, and *Le Révolté*, founded by Kropotkin, were made here. We narrowed our research down to focus on the *Bulletin* as a case study, a material history of a journal and its whereabouts, a story that we can easily relate to from our experiences as small independent publishers.

This time we decided to diffuse *Side by Side* as an analogue blog post, through our existing social network. In our network we contacted friends, curators and artists who run art spaces, who we thought would be interested to be partners in our project. Fifteen agreed to be recipients—and in a way distributors—including *Cabinet du livre d'artiste* (Rennes), *CAN* (Neuchatel), *Cité des Arts* (Paris), *Die Diele* (Zurich), *EOFA* (Geneva), *Jubilee Warehouse* (Penryn, Cornwall), *Kunst Werke* (Berlin, Germany), *MOTTO* (Berlin), *Musée des beaux-arts* (Le Locle), *Nomas Foundation* (Rome), *OOR* (Zurich), *Printroom* (Rotterdam), *Studio's Plantage Doklaan* (Amsterdam), *Smooth Space* (Buckfastleigh), and *Soundart Radio* (Dartington). We invented a nice and easy format for how the paper blog could be printed out and displayed, but each of the hosts (partners) had the freedom to present it in their space as they saw fit. Almost every day we emailed a short text, and their commitment was to print it out and stick it up on the wall.

Now with the invitation by the editors of the online magazine *We Write Right?*, we made edits and adapted our entries to make the content more condensed. In the near future we will publish a paper version. Enjoy reading!

## Rob's Side

### 2 April, Thursday, Le Locle

Yesterday evening we arrived - after 8 hours driving - at Luxor Factory, our residency for one month. The house is UNESCO cultural heritage. In the workshop under the house Luxor watches were made. Next door is Angelus... watch brands everywhere: Rolex, Tissot, Mont Blanc...

Crossing the border between France and Switzerland you go through two holes in the Jura Mountains. High above the tunnel is the Col des Roches canyon, in between hangs the Swiss flag. It's like a *rite de passage* and reminded me of an experience we had on our traveling-residency for our Italian Issue in 2011:

One day our guide was Elvino Politi, an archaeologist and director of Gruppo Archeologico di Terra d'Otranto. He wanted to show us how, in Apulia, for thousands of years, a long series of conquests and influences have led to artistic innovation. We followed part of a pre-Christian pilgrimage route. In a small church, not bigger than a big shed, there was a ritual stone with a hole. There was nothing else in the space. The ritual for boys to become a man was to lie on the floor and crawl through the quite narrow hole, arms stretched, headfirst. Once they had performed this task they were re-born and could marry - I was scared to get stuck in the massive stone, like Winnie the Pooh in the Rabbit's hole, and crawled out backwards.

I read that a *rite de passage* has three stages. In the first phase, you withdraw from your current status and prepare to move from one place or status to another. In the second phase you are on the threshold. You have left one place or state but have not yet entered or joined the next. In the third phase you have completed the rite and assumed

## Nienke's Side

### 2 April, Thursday, Le Locle

We arrived in Le Locle in the middle of a watch maker's running contest: *L'Horlogère—Course à pied et nordic walking à travers la Ville du Locle*, that blocked the neighbourhood around the house we were trying to reach.

We're here in search of the traces of early anarchism, and especially the publishing that came with it. We'll focus on the famous *Bulletin de la Fédération jurassienne*, one of the first international anarchist newspapers, published here between 1872 and 1878. We want to know how these issues were made and distributed and by whom, and find out more about the archives they are kept in - which is almost like a second life cycle of distribution, keeping everything available. Last year when we spent some time in the wonderful CIRA archive, we were struck by how familiar these old pamphlets and bulletins seemed - in what we can maybe call their 'material life'-to simple zine-making artists.\*

\* *Centre International de Recherches sur l'Anarchisme is a library of materials relevant to anarchist theory in all languages based in Lausanne, Switzerland. Founded in 1957 in Geneva by the Italian anarchist, artist, author, and interpreter Pietro Ferrua, it is now run by historian Marianne Enckell.*

your “new” identity, and you re-enter society with your new “you”. In our case, I don't know yet what we have become. If you go to the cradle of anarchism, you don't automatically become an anarchist!

### 3 April, Friday, Le Locle

Today we woke up in a white world. It started snowing yesterday evening. We are at 945 meters, and it is -30 Celsius. I google ‘Art and Anarchism’ and find, ‘The form of government that is most suitable to the artist is no government at all,’ Oscar Wilde. I would like to say, it's impossible for an artist not to be an anarchist.

### 3 April 2015, Le Locle

I just rediscovered a wonderfully detailed story in Peter Kropotkin's *Memoirs of a revolutionist* (pp 225-226, see [theanarchistlibrary.org](http://theanarchistlibrary.org)). He describes an afternoon in 1872 at a small printing office here in the Jura:

*>> The separation between leaders and workers which I had noticed at Geneva in the Temple Unique did not exist in the Jura Mountains. There were a number of men who were more intelligent, and especially more active than the others; but that was all. James Guillaume, one of the most intelligent and broadly educated men I ever met, was a proofreader and the manager of a small printing office. His earnings in this capacity were so small that he had to give his nights to translating novels from German into French, for which he was paid eight francs — one dollar and sixty cents — for sixteen pages!*

*When I came to Neuchatel, he told me that unfortunately he could not give even as much as a couple of hours for a friendly chat. The printing office was just issuing that afternoon the first number of a local paper, and in addition to his usual duties of proofreader and co-editor, he had to write the addresses of a thousand persons to whom the first three numbers were to be sent, and to put on the wrappers himself.*

*I offered to aid him in writing the addresses, but that was not practicable because they were either kept in memory, or written on scraps of paper in an unreadable hand. “Well, then,” said I, “I will come in the afternoon to the office and put on the wrappers, and you will give me the time which you may thus save.”*

*We understood each other. Guillaume warmly shook my hand, and that was the beginning of a standing friendship. We spent all the afternoon in the office, he writing the addresses, I fastening the wrappers, and a French communard, who was a compositor, chatting with us all the while as he rapidly set up a novel, intermingling his conversation with the sentences which he was putting in type and which he read aloud.*

*“The fight in the streets,” he would say, “became very sharp” ... “Dear Mary, I love you” ... “The workers were furious and fought like lions at Montmartre” ... “and he fell on his knees before her” ... “and that lasted for four days. We knew that Gallifet was shooting all prisoners, — the more terrible still was the fight,” — and so on he went, rapidly lifting*

#### 4 April, Saturday, Ornans

We see a road sign *Pays de Courbet, Pays d'Artiste*. Our vision has already been influenced by John Berger's text *Courbet and the Jura* (1978). Driving through the countryside we see what he means, when he writes about how Courbet paints the landscape; about the folds, the predominance of the colour green, dark paint in dark paint. The principal events are rocks, streams of water and the eye of a hunter. In the first paragraph, John Berger writes, 'Explanations, analyses, interpretations, are no more than frames or lenses to help the spectator focus his attention more sharply on the work. The only justification for criticism is that it allows us to see more clearly.'

Pity this museum doesn't have the famous works *The Artist's Studio: A Real Allegory of a Seven Year Phase in my Artistic and Moral Life*, *The Origin of the World*, and *A Burial at Ornans*. Where else would they be than in Paris? There are works worth seeing like the beautiful Self-portrait with Black Dog, and two seascapes painted from memory when he was in prison. Maybe what impressed me most was the cast of his right hand by Dominique Emilien Fasanino, made in skin coloured plaster. To my surprise, he had a robust farmers hand. Accompanying this, his perfect white death mask, made by his friend Louis Niquet. Both made on 1st of January 1878.

Paul Signac said, 'The anarchist painter is not he who does anarchist paintings but he who without caring for money, without desire for recompense, struggles with all his individuality against bourgeois conventions.' I think the anarchist and painter Gustav Courbet would have agreed. He was sentenced to prison for his affiliation with the com-

the type from the case.

*It was late in the evening when Guillaume took off his working blouse, and we went out for a friendly chat for a couple of hours; then he had to resume his work as editor of the Bulletin of the Jura Federation.<<*

#### 4 April, Saturday, Le Locle/Ornans

Everything is closed for Easter and nobody is around. Does it make sense to be here? In Amsterdam, students occupy part of the university. It sounds like they're re-inventing anarchism. All kinds of people join to share theory and experience a practice being developed. Jacques Rancière came to speak with the occupiers in het Maagdenhuis. He was quoted as saying, 'Everything important that happens is local. We cannot hope to engage with the rest of the world. Each place has its own local struggle, and there is no specific place for emancipation.' <http://rethinkuva.org/blog/category/articles/>).

Is this like the 1870's, when prominent political thinkers came here to meet the watchmaker's anti-authoritarian delegation? According to Engels they were just: '*a few dozen people in the Jura whose whole following amounts to scarcely 200 workers.*'<sup>1</sup>

The story is that in the 1870's, 'anarchism was born here in the Jura', and that it had to do with this specific practice of the watchmakers that functioned around a network of roughly 150 kinds of specialised craftsmen with independent workshops producing the 150 different parts needed to make a watch. Marx described Le Locle, Chaux-de-Fonds and St. Imier as 'huge factory-towns', in *Das Kapital*, where he analysed the division of labour. He wrote, 'The division of labour within the society brings into contact independent commodity-producers, who acknowledge no other authority but that of competition, of the coercion exerted by the pressure of their mutual interests'.

Kropotkin, on the other hand, wrote, 'The egalitarian relations which I found in the Jura Mountains, the independence of thought and expres-

munards and the destruction of the Vendôme column during the Paris Commune. Because he had to pay 10.000 franc per year for 33 years for the rebuilding he went into exile in Switzerland, where he drank himself to death in a small village – here you can find the grave of Charlie Chaplin. Courbet never paid a cent. We visited his grave in Ornans. Nothing fancy, just a rock and white marble oval plaque with his name and 'Painter'. They forgot to put 'Anarchist'. The cemetery lies high up in the hills above the village, from where you can see the rock face that appears in *A Burial at Ornans*.

sion which I saw developing in the workers, (...) when I came away from the mountains, after a week's stay with the watchmakers, my views upon socialism were settled. I was an anarchist.'

So if it's true what people say, that utopias aren't fantasies, but spring from people's real, daily experience, what in the watch-making practice of those days made them insist so much on egalitarian organisation and what did they propose exactly?

*1 Letter from Engels to Theodore Cuno Written: January 24, 1872; Source: Marx and Engels Correspondence, International Publishers (1968).*

### 5 April, Easter Sunday, Le Locle

At night we watched a talk that anarchist anthropologist David Graeber just gave in the occupied Maagdenhuis, and a conversation between Graeber and Brian Eno. Graeber: 'As a general principle: We have to organise ourselves as a reflection of the society we'd like to create.'



**6 April, Monday, Le Locle**

Second Easter day. Surfing the Internet, I find a text with the title *Bakunin und die Uhrmacher*. Bakunin came to Le Locle in 1869 for a short period of time. I also find Bakunin's seven points for human happiness:

1. Fight for freedom until the bitter end... meaning death.
2. Love and friendship.
3. Art and science.
4. Smoking.
5. Drinking.
6. Eating.
7. Sleeping.

I also find in Zurich a football club was founded in 1979 called FC Bakunin.

**7 April, Tuesday, Fribourg**

The reason for us to be here in the Jura is to follow one particular material trace of early anarchism, the *Bulletin de la Federation Jurassienne*. It was one of the first anarchist newspapers. We meet (again) with historian Florian Eitel at his desk at the university in Fribourg. He is finishing his PhD on anarchism in Saint-Imier, focusing on the early days of anarchism and their embrace of the new technological possibilities of that time, in order to build up a global network in expectation of the upcoming, worldwide social revolution. On our way back in the car we discuss how to continue our research, how to develop a visual narrative, and how to film the Bulletin in all the archives we visit. We need a cinematic solution for this and want to explore and reconnect to the

**6 April, Easter Monday, Le Locle**

The clock on the two churches in the watchmaker town Le Locle are not synchronised. One starts on the 4th beat of the first.

The first watchmaker came to the Jura in the 17th century, and he asked farmers to produce parts for him during the winter months. In the 19th century Le Locle, St Imier and La Chaux-de-Fonds' populations exploded around the watch industry, and the cities were full of independent specialised workshops, while later bigger factories started to dominate the production, turning the watchmakers into factory workers. They disagreed with the conditions and there were strikes and upheavals. *When was what, exactly?* The ways of working, the discontents, the alternatives?

The watch industry still attracts people to Le Locle, and the highly skilled international workforce often commutes to combine Swiss salaries with French housing and food prices. The daily traffic jam seems oddly out of place on the mountain roads.

Someone from Neuchatel said there is a joke, 'When you see a young person in Le Locle, you can make a wish!'

**7 April, Tuesday, Fribourg**

Meeting in the university in Fribourg with historian Florian Eitel. He is doing a PhD on Anarchism in the valley of St Imier in the second half of the 19th century, and he analyses this early anarchism in the light of globalisation and new technologies. We spoke with him when we were here in 2013, and we invited him to Rotterdam for a talk about his research in WORM's Parallel University.

We discuss our plan to narrow down and focus on the *Bulletin de la Federation Jurassienne*, the making and distribution of it, and this second layer of the archives, of how the bulletin traveled through time. Back in Le Locle around midnight, to find the air smelling like a forest in the rain.

film essays of Chris Marker, Alain Resnais and others. In particular Alain Resnais' film *Toute la Mémoire du Monde* is interesting to watch. This film, on the French National Library, evokes questions on the limits of archiving knowledge.

### 8 April, Wednesday, Le Locle / Neuchatel

We meet with Arthur de Pury, Marie Villemin and Julian Thompson from the CAN Neuchatel. It has been more than a year since we were in residence at CAN. We asked them, "Does it make sense to have an art space here? Are you noticed? Is there an audience?" Their answer was mind blowing, "We don't do this only for an audience, we do this for ourselves." Wow, these people are Zen. In the art world, 'audience' and 'visibility' is all that counts, and these guys ignore it really. They must have a strong internal motivation. Maybe for them art is a personal quest in the Aristotelian sense?

Is art still a form of resistance to conventions, as I wrote about Courbet? Here in this hidden corner of the Jura art world, where the anarchists Bakunin and Kropotkin found refuge, art can be a journey of self-discovery, altering your perspective and your life. It is about inward spiritual migration, the experience, and the transformation you undergo when you are confronted with a new reality. Maybe here you can maintain some kind of space of autonomy in the face of the market, and art can be a field for play and experiment. Being an artist or curator, can it be a way of (bohemian) life?

### 8 April, Wednesday, Le Locle

In *Anarchy and Art, from the Paris Commune to the Fall of the Berlin Wall*, Allen Antliff writes on the so-called 'Proudhon-Zola debate'. Zola and Proudhon — although both in admiration — were fighting over the work of the anarchist painter Gustave Courbet. What is revolutionary art?

On page 27, Antliff quotes from Proudhon's public defense of Courbet *Du principe de l'art*, 'The task of art, I say, is to warn us, to praise us, to teach us, to make us blush by confronting us with a mirror of our own conscience.' Zola answered in a lengthy book review that Proudhon's defense resulted in an 'impoverished definition of art'. (p.29) 'For Zola on the other hand, the locus of freedom was the autonomous individual, independent of all rules and all social obligations.'

(...) 'Zola defined a work of art as "*a fragment of creation seen through a temperament*" (Zola's emphasis) For him, the *fragment* was secondary to *temperament* and the index of temperament was style. Equating the exercise of temperament with freedom, Zola turned stylistic originality into an anarchist act. Here, the politics of art imploded into the art object as the artist strove to assert personal freedom through stylistic innovation. The contrast with Proudhon's artist, who could not approach a condition of freedom except through social critique, seemed unequivocal.'

Three pages later (p. 34, we are now in the middle of the Paris Commune, reading about Courbet's close involvement in it), 'The Federation of Artists had been formed on April 13 at Courbet's instigation. Its first act was to issue a manifesto declaring complete freedom of expression, an end to government interference in the arts, and equality amongst



(analogue blog at CAN)

### 9 April, Thursday, La Chaux-de-Fonds



the membership. Complete freedom of expression: for Courbet, there was no conflict between Zola's advocacy of freedom through style and Proudhon's advocacy of freedom through critique—an anarchist future could accommodate both.'

### 9 April, Thursday, La Chaux-de-Fonds

In the morning, we were interviewed for the local newspaper, *L'Impartial*. Lea, the journalist, said that here in the Jura most people are 'anti-bling-bling'. They "like to think they're egalitarian". In Lausanne, wealth is exposed. Here it is a taboo. Egalitarianism in the cities of one of the ultimate status symbols: the watch. This afternoon we worked in the public library of La Chaux-de-Fonds, studying the facsimile of the *Bulletin*. I do my usual going-back-and-forth between finding *everything super interesting*, and thoroughly doubting the relevance this micro-exploration.

### 10 April, Friday, Le Locle, Chaux-de-Fonds and Lausanne

Lunch and library in La Chaux-de-Fonds, then to CIRA, where we meet artist Noyce Ng and anthropologist Daisy Bisenieks from Hong Kong. We all film Marianne Enckel telling the story of the Fédération jurasienne and the anarchist watchmakers. Next week we will come back to speak more specifically about the Bulletin.

**11 April, Saturday, Le Locle**

I receive on average maybe 4 e-flux mails a day. This represents around 4000 \$. The e-flux from a few days ago had a list of '10 LA Art Power Couples you need to know.' Two couples I like to mention who I find not totally repulsive: Stefan Simchowitz + former Aussie model Rosi Riedl, and Tobey Maguire + Jennifer Meyer. They seem OK. Has the art world become a playground for the super rich, and institutes with too much authority and status?

What would be the anarchist artist response?

1. Fighting the system?

No... that is stupid and useless!

2. Not fighting the system = doing your own thing, minding your own business.

3. Building a new one?

... engaged withdrawal as Paolo Virno suggests.

4. Squatting an empty system!

I have quite some experience with squatting, but on what can we squat?

**12 April, Sunday, Lausanne****11 April, Saturday, Le Locle, Chaux-de-Fonds**

We meet up with Daisy and Royce to exchange files, so we both have footage from 2 cameras and two microphones now: Mutual Aid.

**14 April, Tuesday, lake of Luzern**

Our method of working at the moment is that we find stuff out as we go along. It is not so different from how we did it over the last 10 years, but for our investigation on the Bulletin we are using a camera as flashlight or as a pen in our hands, meaning that the camera makes things visible and, image after image, the story is written. This writing with the camera is called *caméra-stylo*. We were looking for this intersection between the pen and the camera, between text and image. Alexandre Astruc developed the concept of the *caméra-stylo* around 1948, in which film was regarded as a form of audiovisual language and the filmmaker, therefore, as a kind of writer in light.

Simultaneously we are writing and constantly changing our script for the video piece we are making, and our new FGA on art and anarchism. As a reference to this method we have Jean Rouch and Roberto Rossellini. Jean Rouch used the camera as a *caméra-stylo*, and experienced that a camera can be very efficient and a really good catalyst for going into a subject. Our experience over the last 10 years with FGA is that the microphone and a sound recorder can have the same effect, when we have conversations with the people we meet. It even makes everything more concentrated or focused. *Paisà* by Rossellini was made in 1946, about the invasion of the allied forces in Italy. The script writes itself as the troops move along.

**13 April, Monday, Lake of Luzern**

We stay with friends for a few days, close to Zurich. It is summer suddenly. We work a bit in their vegetable garden. *Il faut cultiver son jardin*. For the rest we read, plan, plot, enjoy, chat.

In the bookshelves there are many treasures. I just found the collected writings of self-proclaimed anarchist Barnet Newman!

**14 April, Tuesday, Zurich**

Meeting in the Sozialarchiv in Zürich, seeing another copy of the *Bulletin*, finding out how it came there from Frankfurt.

**15 April, Wednesday, Zurich**

In the evening a small concert in OOR, one of the places where this blog is up. OOR is a 20 m2 shop with records and books, 12 chairs and a desk. It is a collective of seven people. All seven people have their own space in the shop, and they all propose events like concerts, readings, presentations or discussions. If nobody is against it, and if two people are available that day for organising and hosting it, the event will take place. That way there is very often something going on, and nobody feels that too much is asked of them.

Every 'organisation' has characteristics of a play-field, I think, with (un) written rules. If you have never invented such rules you probably just copied the ones you see around you.

David Graeber in *Fragments of an anarchist anthropology*, '(...) if one compares the historical schools of Marxism, and anarchism, one can see we are dealing with a fundamentally different sort of project. Marxist schools have authors. Just as Marxism sprang from the mind of Marx, so we have Leninists, Maoists, Trotskyites, Gramscians, Althusserians... (...)

Now consider the different schools of anarchism. There are Anarcho-Syndicalists, Anarcho-Communists, Insurrectionists, Cooperativists, Individualists, Platformists... None are named after some Great Thinker; instead, they are invariably named either after some kind of practice, or most often, organizational principle. (...) Anarchists like to distinguish themselves by what they do, and how they organize themselves to go about doing it.'

**18 April, Saturday, Le Locle**

Yesterday, after a long talk with Marianne at CIRA, we drove through the mountains back to Le Locle in storm and rain. The roads leading up here are deserted and from a distance the city is a little patch of lights surrounded by pitch black mountains.

A young employee of Cartier watches tells me Cartier has 1400 employees working in Le Locle. So where are they, and the watchmakers of Montblanc, Tissot, Zenith, Zodiac, Audemars Piguet and Ulysse Nardin? The city is deserted.

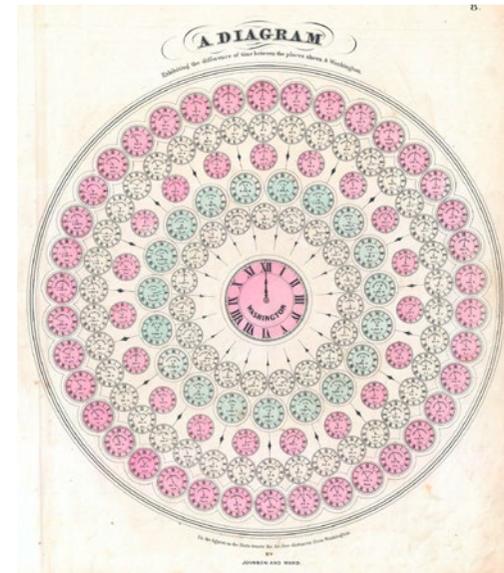
Today we started to record a 24 hour document of the bell tower clocks of Le Locle.

### **19 April, Sunday, Le Locle**

A walk to the top of the canyon that separates France from Switzerland, Col des Roches. We find big animal droppings here and there, shiny and fresh.

The train in Le Locle whistles like an old fashioned steam train. Why is that? It doesn't, I think, in Geneva or Zürich... Is it folklore? We photograph the time schedule of the departures at the station, film the clock. The station in Le Locle was opened in 1857. When was standard time introduced here and local solar time abandoned for central time? In October 1884 at the International Meridian Conference in Washington, D.C., Greenwich was determined as the prime meridian for international use. In the Netherlands all station clocks were set on Amsterdam time in 1866. Only in 1892 they decided to set train time to Greenwich time, which is 00:19:32:13 later than Amsterdam time. It took till 1909 until all local 'civil times' in the Netherlands were standardised by law. Local time and train time co-existed.

Middle European time was introduced in 1940 in the Netherlands, Belgium and France by the nazis, and kept after the war.



*'the difference of time between the places shown & Washington'*

### 20 April, Thursday, Le Locle

Writing for a daily Blog gives too much stress.  
grrrr...

### 21 April, Tuesday, Bern

Remember Bakunin's seven points for human happiness?  
Because I am reading Bakunin's Confessions, I suddenly understand his hedonistic approach to life in a totally different light and context.

### 20 April, Monday, Le Locle

Update on the student protests in Amsterdam: the head of the board stepped back. Some students are still in custody. In London students simply get huge fines.

The Neuchatel joke 'if you see a young person in Le Locle you can make a wish' is nonsense—I see more young people here than in Neuchatel now that the schools started again.

We went to the school for watchmakers school. The classrooms are like workshops, full of tools and machines, concentrated students and the typical mix of chaos and order.

### 21 April, Tuesday, Le Locle

For a good recording we need to go everywhere twice. We're on a strict time-schedule, just like the city. We need to make it back to the Col-des-Roches in time to film the traffic jam of the commuting horlogiers from

I am reading the Dutch version Bakoenin's Biecht published by privé-domein with an introduction by Arthur Lehning, the Dutch Bakunin expert. He published the whole oeuvre of Bakunin, and became world famous - Lehning I mean. Bakunin was already a legend:

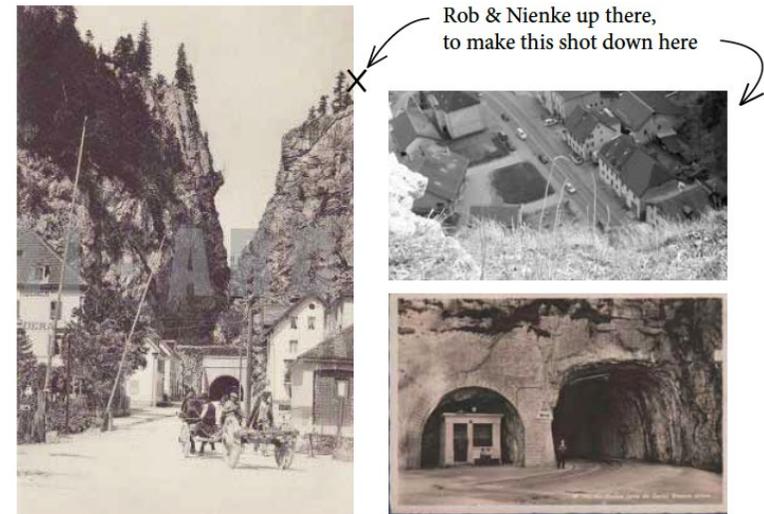
Bakunin had been jailed in Petersburg for 8 years. Finally he was given the choice by Tsar Alexander II to be exiled or to stay and rot in the dungeon. For 5 years he was in exile in Siberia (Tomsk) before he escaped on an American boat to Yokohama. From Japan he went to San Francisco, London, Italy, and finally came to the Jura in 1968. The 8 years in jail almost killed him. He had scurvy, his teeth fell out, he had haemorrhoids, and he was getting crazy. Reading this I just now realized what a wreck he must have been when he came to the Jura to start the International Workers Association based on his ideas regarding atheism, federalism, and collectivism. His motto: modernization (or renewal) can only stem from destruction. And where did Picasso get his idea? "Every act of creation is first an act of destruction."

Artists don't consider themselves *Arbeiterinnen*; they are intellectuals and part of the bourgeoisie... Art is about Culture not Work!!!

above. Rush hour is always on time. There are two roads to France, and one goes through this canyon. If we want to film it from above as well as from street level, we'll have to walk up there one day, and post in France in front of the tunnel on the next.

The contrast is huge between being up in the forest and down at the road. Born in the delta, I don't get used to these vertical layers with their own micro-cosmos. Snow on the tops, flowers in the valley, daily traffic jam below, forest with wildlife up above.

Today 'up' here it's not so quiet either - they're cutting trees. Probably the noise has chased away 2 chamois. They jump onto the pathway just in front of us, and then down the mountain, where they stand still for a long moment. We look at them. They look at us.



(image col de roche)

## 22 April, Wednesday, Le Locle, public library La Chaux-de-Fonds

Yesterday we visited the Union archives in Bern, where the Schwitzguebel archives are, or what is left of them. On the way back we meet Marianne T. at a gas station by a highway junction. She is a social anthropologist who brought 10 kg of cheese for us to hand over to Belle, who will deliver it in GB to Kate. Kate runs Feral Trade, a Trading goods along

**23 April, Tuesday, Saint-Imier**

Reading bits and pieces of *Barnett Newman Selected Writings and Interviews*.

There are quite some publications on art and labour, and one of the most prominent authors/thinkers is maybe Pascal Gielen, who writes that the globalized art scene is an ideal production entity for economic exploitation. And from what I read of Newman, it supports what I already wrote: artists are somewhere in-between intellectuals and workers. Art is

social networks since 2003' ([www.feraltrade.org/cgi-bin/courier/courier.pl](http://www.feraltrade.org/cgi-bin/courier/courier.pl)). Feral trade is 'a grocery business and underground freight network forging new 'wild' trade routes across hybrid territories of business, art and social interaction'.

Today once more to the public library in La Chaux-de-Fonds to read a bit more in the facsimile and film the books being brought back to the shelves. The librarian is a specialist of Utopian Science fiction, and an archivist at heart - I think.



(The hitchhiking cheese with thermometer is in our cupboard.)

**23 April, Wednesday, Le Locle, St Imier, Neuchatel**

Record *L'homme machine* in Neuchatel, a short trip to St Imier's archive, and at L'espace Noir, there is this little poster:

'Hey, what about my mail?'

'Sorry, not possible any longer'.

about culture, not about work!

Newman asked himself to what extent, if any, we have a civic existence. He writes about a new union of artists, thinkers, students etc., who understand the higher principles of civilization:

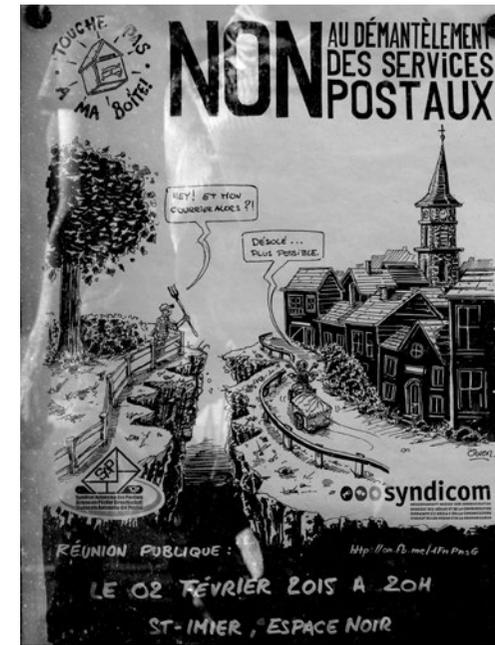
'Though it is true that the artist labours and suffers like a worker, in his nature he is profoundly opposed to the principle of the worker. The worker creates for use, but the artist definitely does not. It is only the slave psychology of masses chains, given expression in the Marxian parties, that insists that art must be useful. The worker recognizes the true creative artist as his enemy, because the artist is free and insists upon freedom. It is therefore a contradiction of his own nature for any artist to hope for anything more from the worker than from the politician.'

## 27 April, Monday, Le Locle

Reading Ad Reinhardt's The Next Revolution in Art.

The first thing I copy down, 'Art-as-art is always a battle cry, polemic, picket sign, sit-in, sit-down, civil disobedience, passive resistance, crusade, fiery cross, and non-violent protest.' I don't really agree with all of this. The second passage I find really relevant for our search for an alternative to today's capitalist art world, and new forms of making art in a more ecological and Do-It-Together (DIT) way:

'The artist-as-artist's first enemy is the philistine artist, the all-too-human or subhuman or superhuman artist inside or outside or beside himself, the socially useful and usable artist, the artist-jobber and sales artist... the artist who lives off, on, in, for or from his art. The artist-as-artist's second enemy is the art dealer who deals in art, the private col-



## 26 April, Sunday, Geneva > Le Locle

In the house of friends we wake up amidst a meeting of 15 people preparing for building an eco village.

lector who collects art, in other words, the public profiteer who profits from art. The artist-as-artist's third enemy is the utilitarian, acquisitive, exploiting society in which any tendency to do anything for its own transcendental sake cannot be tolerated." Comment: Very surprising! I totally agree.



### 30 April, Thursday, Zurich

The world must be mediated by art, right? Is there another way to make sense of it? And as artists we are always looking for *something hidden*. But does it help us to connect with that hidden something all the time? Well, it works for me sometimes, but I must say that I have my subject(s). There is a slow process of understanding what you find interesting and what not; I am not interested any more in art-art. For more than 10 years our atelier is the world! And I don't regret this decision for one minute. So after more than 25 years of making art it means my interest has become clearer and visible and other things will stay hidden for the simple fact that I don't care.

Tolstoy said that 'Art is a means of union among men, joining them together in the same feeling.' There is a place for everybody in the art world, and you don't have to like it all. That 'thing' we call art can be a great conversation piece.

Rob Hamelijnc

Text #6 in "We Write, Right?" a project by gold extra

### 28 April, Tuesday, Le Locle > Bern

*L'ecole de horlogerie*. A teacher tells me it is all a myth. "These so-called watchmaker-farmers, they produced (puts one little screw on the table) for instance just one part like this! Then they went to town to sell it. They would have 3 chickens and 2 cows, and just survive with the combination!"

Off to Bern. Meetings at SGB Archiv and the Atom Uhr, where Swiss time 'is produced'.

### 30 April, Thursday, Le Locle > Zurich

Pack up and leave. It's always the same. You stay somewhere for a limited period, and time accelerates.

Tomorrow is May 1st. I would like to see how Mayday is celebrated in Le Locle.

We have an appointment at the school of *Horlogiers* to film in the class which specialises in being all-round: the restoration class. Wonderful, but last-minute and unfortunately very short.

We say goodbye and drive down, from 1000 metres to 430-->Zurich. People do walk faster here.

Nienke Terpsma