

URBAN GARDEN GLOSSARY

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LANDMARKS & PEBBLES

This glossary is a palimpsest intended to be continuously revised and complemented. Without any intention to practicality and truly committed to the principle of serendipity the glossary involves a wide-ranging assemblage of ideas, projects and existing works from various fields: film and photography, video and TV, social media and philosophy. This ambiguity is neither coincidental nor meaningless: the values and methods of these approaches and initiatives deliberately oscillate between artistic creativity and alternative models of social organisation, designed to challenge established conceptions of art in public space and political activism and explore the in-between.

By questioning lifestyles, social organisation, political ideals and cultural values this collection represent a snapshot of contemporary avantgardening in the city. YouTube videos, toolkits and gimmicks – all these interventions acquire and hence reinvent urban space. However ephemeral and temporal, they strive on the somehow contagious spirit of DIY and self-organization; committed to live up to the original promise of the city ...

For anyone interested in contemporary urban practices this glossary provides a list of inspirations in alphabetical order to further explore the beach beneath the pavement. These examples are not the only pebbles on the beach ...

A

ANIMALS IN THE CITY



B

BEACH UNDER THE PAVEMENT (FILMSTILL ‚DIE STRÄNDE VON AGNÈS‘)



C

CRISIS? WHAT CRISIS?



LP cover Supertramp,
Crisis? What Crisis?, 1975

E

ENERGY FROM YOUR FOOTPRINTS

Paving slabs harvest kinetic energy in high footfall environments converting it into electricity.
(www.pavegensystems.co.uk)

F

FUTURE FARMERS

Artists, local residents, scientists, activists working together – self-organized, often precarious, interactive, ... Remember:

From the 1960s through most of the 1990s, the Left considered environmentalism to be 'soft politics'. While the bold action of Greenpeace and the extremes of 'eco-terrorism' had to be acknowledged, for the most part those who supposedly cared more for the earth and its creatures/creations than for people's revolutions were perceived as acting from a kind of political suburbia. Today, sparked by indisputable proof of human agency in climate change, the environment is in the centre foreground. It has become the radical edge. (Lucy Lippard, *Beyond the Beauty Strip*)

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. (Margaret Mead)

A revolution doesn't happen when a society adopts new tools, it happens when a society adopts new behaviours. (Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody. The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*)

abbeygardens.org
avantgardening.org.uk
urbanacker.net
rosarose-garten.net
greenmaps
Myvillages.org

G

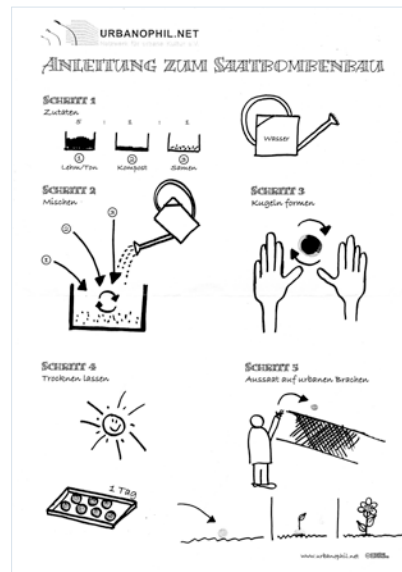
GREENAID: SEEDBOMBS FOR CHANGE

(<http://thecommonstudio.com/index.php?/project/greenaid>)



SEEDBOMBS

Made from a mixture of clay, compost, and seeds, "seedbombs" are becoming an increasingly popular means combating the many forgotten grey spaces we encounter everyday—from sidewalk cracks to vacant lots and parking medians. They can be thrown anonymously into these derelict urban sites to temporarily reclaim and transform them into places worth looking at and caring for. The Greenaid dispensary simply makes these guerilla gardening efforts more accessible to all by appropriating the existing distribution system of the quarter operated candy machine. Using just the loose coins in your pocket, you can make a small but meaningful contribution to the beautification of your city!



H

HETEROTOPIAS

(Michel Foucault, *Of Other Spaces*, 1967)

“Third principle. The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible. Thus it is that the theater brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another; thus it is that the cinema is a very odd rectangular room, at the end of which, on a two-dimensional screen, one sees the projection of a three-dimensional space, but perhaps the oldest example of these heterotopias that take the form of contradictory sites is the garden. We must not forget that in the Orient the garden, an astonishing creation that is now a thousand years old, had very deep and seemingly superimposed meanings. The traditional garden of the Persians was a sacred space that was supposed to bring together inside its rectangle four parts representing the four parts of the world, with a space still more sacred than the others that were like an umbilicus, the navel of the world at its center (the basin and water fountain were there); and all the vegetation of the garden was supposed to come together in this space, in this sort of microcosm. As for carpets, they were originally reproductions of gardens (the garden is a rug onto which the whole world comes to enact its symbolic perfection, and the rug is a sort of garden that can move across space). The garden is the smallest parcel of the world and then it is the totality of the world. The garden has been a sort of happy, universalizing heterotopia since the beginnings of antiquity (our modern zoological gardens spring from that source).”

I

INTERCULTURAL GARDENS

The very first intercultural garden in Berlin is located in the district Treptow-Köpenick. People from Kazakhstan and Vietnam, from Russia, Egypt and Hungary, from India and Afghanistan, the Ukraine, Bosnia and Germany jointly cultivate an area of 4000 square meters. (<http://www.stiftung-interkultur.de/garden-portraits/berlin-koepenick-wuhlegarten>)

L

LEBENSREFORM

Lebensreform ("life reform") was a social movement in late 19th century and early 20th century Germany and Switzerland that propagated a back-to-nature lifestyle, emphasizing among others health food/raw food/organic food, nudism, sexual liberation, alternative medicine, and religious reform and at the same time abstention from alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and vaccines.



M

MORE MOVEMENTS

Movements can be broadly defined as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which 'ordinary' people make collective claims on others. Beyond the established channels and protocols of parliament, political parties and advocacy groups they constitute a vehicle for people's participation in public politics.

- » Monte verità is a hill in Ascona on the shores of Lake Maggiore which was inhabited, from 1900, by a community of intellectuals and artists committed to a new and healthier way of life.
- » In 1893, 18 vegetarians founded an orchard colony: The vegetarian fruit-growing colony Eden Oranienburg. The first vegetarian colony in Germany developed alternatives for a healthy life existing in harmony with nature. The grounds of the present-day cooperative are home to the Eden Café, a kindergarten and the Eden music workshop. (<http://www.eden-eg.de/>)
- » Tarnac 9: The Tarnac Nine are nine alleged anarchist saboteurs arrested in the village of Tarnac, France in November 2008 in relation to a series of instances of direct action. The French police entered Tarnac with helicopters and dogs and dragged the suspects from their beds. Around twenty people were arrested on November 11, 2008, and nine of those were charged with "criminal association for the purposes of terrorist activity".

N

NEIGHBOURHOOD GLOBAL

Nabuur.com is an online volunteering platform that links Neighbours (online volunteers) with Villages (local communities) in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Connected through Nabuur.com, Neighbours and local communities learn about each other, share ideas and find solutions to local issues.

O

ONLINE GAMES: PLAY OILIGARCHY!

Now you can be the protagonist of the petroleum era: explore and drill around the world, corrupt politicians, stop alternative energies and increase the oil addiction. Be sure to have fun before the resources begin to deplete. Go to: www.molleindustria.org

See also: Games for Change, serious games, social impact games

P

PARK(ING) DAY BATTLE 2009, BERLIN/FRIEDRICHSTRASSE



Park(ing) Day: PARKground to PARK!

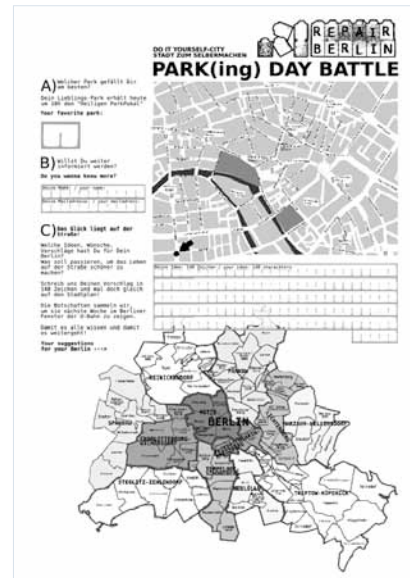
Parks can be a secular paradise. Traditional gardening or land art, for leisure or play, whether Alhambra or Babylon, Park Fiction

in Hamburg, Disneyland in Florida or the Tiergarten in Berlin: Parks hold the promise of a joyful life beyond work and daily routine.

Who owns the city?

PARK(ing) Day is an annual, one-day global event where artists, activists and citizens collaborate to temporarily transform metered parking spots into "PARK(ing)" spaces: temporary public parks. Originally invented by REBAR, an interdisciplinary studio operating at the intersection of art, design and activism, *PARK(ing) Day* is an open source invention, which means anyone can participate.

PARK(ing) Day is art in public space as practicyl – a friendly and practical critique of city planning which neglects the demands and desires of people opposed to consumption and retail interests of corporates, car lobbyists and investors.



[Park(ing) Day cont.]

A sustainable urban policy strives on the creativity of its inhabitants and guests. Climate change and demographic change, urban segregation and gentrification, just to name a few of current problems we confront in our daily (and future) lives, to illustrate that we fundamentally need to re-think our concept of urban citizenship, of ecologic justice, mobility and public space. Spaces of playful encounter with strangers, Moments of friendly irritation and casual chat, that opens-up new perspectives for enlivening the city.

R

RE-GREENING URBAN SPACE



(Above) Dear thieves, please allow these beautiful flowers and plants to stand here, so that we can all rejoice it. Thanks. Mar Ann's

(Above) WonderBeauty. Also on Facebook

S

SESAME STREET

GARDEN COOPERATION [02:41]

(<http://www.youtube.com/user/SesameStreet#p/u/511/gR34PJ0I3K8>)



(Chorus)
Co-operation ... makes it happen
Co-operation ... working together

Dig it! (Refrain)

Muppet In Shades: I saw these crazy dudes
and they went out on the street they were
cleanin' out the empty lot and makin' it neat! I
said, "Man is this cool, what you tryin' to do?"

They said, "Makin' a garden for me and for
you."

They said, Hey man, join us! Come on, let's
go! Together we can make a pretty garden
grow.

Girl: I'll dig a hole

Guy: And I'll plant a seed

Together: And we can add the water. That all
growin' things need.

(Chorus)

**(Scene changes to the front of a building,
with 2 other Muppet guys)**

Muppet In Shades: Now we friends were on
the corner Hangin' out, I said, "Hey, you can
hang around these garbage cans some other
day!"

They said, "Man is this cool! What you tryin'
to do?"

I said, "Make a street garden, for me and for
you!"

I said, "Hey cats, join us, Ccome on, let's go!
We'll all co-operate and make a garden grow.

You dig a hole, and I'll plant a seed, and we
will add the water, that all growing things
need!"

(Chorus)

**(Back to the garden, where the plants have
begun to grow)**

Muppet In Shades: Now we watch our
garden grow, and we come back every day.

And the people in our neighborhood, come
'round and say:

2 Friends: "Hey man, this is cool! Tell us what
we can do to keep this pretty garden here for
me and for you!"

Everybody Else: We all say, "Hey, join us!
Come on, dig the scene. We'll all co-operate,
and keep our garden green!

Girl: You trim the leaves

Guy: And you pull the weeds

Girl: And I will add the water

That all growing things need!

(Chorus)

W

WIKIWOODS

(<http://www.wikiwoods.org>)

Become active: plant trees with volunteers.

WikiWoods is an initiative getting involved in the process of helping forests and woods to grow and flourish in a natural way - worldwide. The use of an internet platform similar to the Wikipedia platform helps to make it possible for volunteers, experts and sponsors to meet on the web and work together on local projects. Through the platform, everyone who wishes can get involved in climate defense, get active on a local level and contribute to the global protection of environment. This way CO₂ emissions are reduced by a growing number of trees, biodiversity is supported, environmental awareness is increased and also the local climate is influenced in a positive way.