

Fossil Free Culture NL

Portfolio







BEYOND INSANITY

September, 2016
The Van Gogh Museum
Performance

Four men dressed as hospital patients wander inside the museum. At the background, a large screen displayed the title of the temporary exhibition: “On the Verge of Insanity: Van Gogh and His Illness”.

The four patients embodied some of the diseases diagnosed to that Vincent van Gogh in the years after his death. They evoked the global disease caused by Shell’s activities; all suffer from oil intoxication.







DROP THE SHELL

From Prestige to Disgrace

May, 2017

The Van Gogh Museum

Performance

Seven muses silently stood on the glass staircase in the entrance of the museum. They simultaneously sipped an indigestible oily amuse-bouche from a scallop shell and slowly let this fluid drip from their mouths to stain their crisp white dresses.

One of them recited a paragraph from Vincent van Gogh himself —from a letter to his brother — on the subject of courage in the face of danger, talking about the rising waters, and finding the strength to struggle to survive.





[SP]OILED LANDSCAPES

September, 2017
The Van Gogh Museum
Performance

[Sp]oiled Landscapes is an unsolicited performance that countered the temporary exhibition “In the Forest”.

The exhibition celebrated the beauty of ‘unspoiled landscapes’ by Van Gogh, Rousseau and Corot, while the museum accepted sponsorship from a company that pollutes and destroys environmental landscapes around the world.

Twenty performers enacted an oil-soaked, dried-up forest. They whispered the culprit’s name, crescendo to a windstorm: “Shell spoils landscapes... Shell spoils landscapes...”







SHELL'S DIRTY HANDS

May 3, 2017
The Van Gogh Museum
Performance

A mournful line of black-clad performers walked towards the entrance of The Van Gogh Museum. One by one, they placed their oil-black handprints on the glass facade to make Shell's dirty grip on our culture visible.

The museum easily removed these marks from its façade, while Shell's enduring stains on the planet still remain present.

This performance marked the start of the 'Art Storm' series of three performances .







SHELLS EVERYWHERE

May 15, 2018
The Van Gogh Museum
Intervention

Fossil Free Culture NL installed four hundred eleven scallop shells in the Van Gogh Museum. Each one marked with a hand-painted 'carbon-black' stain. Four hundred eleven shells symbolised the average concentration of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere that day, which in April 2018 topped 411 parts per million; 61 more than our planet and our life support systems can sustain. A dark stain is spreading on our future.

By hiding these stained shells inside the museum, Fossil Free Culture NL denounced Shell's responsibility in causing climate change, and the complicit role of the Van Gogh Museum for sanitising Shell's public image.







END THE FOSSIL FUEL AGE NOW

June 9, 2018

The Van Gogh Museum

Typographic installation, performance

A female performer positioned herself on the monumental staircase of the Van Gogh Museum's main building, ready to declaim the collective's newly penned manifesto. As her words rang out, others hung long paper banners from the balustrades one by one. Only after the declamation was complete, was the full text legible: END THE FOSSIL FUEL AGE NOW.

The typographic work of artists such as Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer inspired the presentation of the manifesto. At the same time, a 'banner drop' technique was applied to reveal the work.

This performance marked the closure of the "Art Storm" series, which led to the termination of Shell sponsorship by the Van Gogh Museum.





THE CLOSING PARTY

September, 2018
The Van Gogh Museum
Performative finissage of the 'Drop Shell' art campaign

In August 2018, the Van Gogh Museum ended Shell sponsorship. We celebrated this victory in front of the museum with a performative party and the following statement:

"Two years ago, in this museum, on this day, Fossil Free Culture NL gave their first un-announced performance: 'On the Verge of Insanity, Van Gogh Museum and its illness'. Today, we are gathered to celebrate that the museum has been cured! It has purged itself of its toxic parasite Royal Dutch Shell!

We Fossil Free Culture call here and now on every cultural institution that accepts fossil fuel sponsorship to immediately cut ties with this catastrophic industry. We call for courage -from artists, cultural workers, and institutions alike- to work together, and boot the fossil fuel industry out of the arts.

It's time to take an ethical stand and choose for the right side of history. Today, we celebrate this victory; tomorrow, we continue to fight for our future. Together we will win!"





THE CALLING CARD

November, 2018

Intervention across the Netherlands

We delivered our calling card to every cultural institution in the country that still accepts fossil fuel sponsorship:

Groninger Museum

Drents Museum

Het Concertgebouw Amsterdam

Rijksmuseum Boerhaave

NEMO Science Museum





DIY DISOBEDIENT KIT

December, 2019

Mixed media

The DIY Disobedience KIT was created for This Art Fair 2018 and is a collection of residues from Fossil Free Culture NL's Art Storm, three performances created in the spring of 2018; the disobedient weather event that finally ousted Shell from their prized perch at the Van Gogh Museum in August of the same year.

These performances were translated into objects that call on all people to take up their responsibility and make effective use of the lever of DIY disobedience to avert climate collapse. The objects transfer the possibility of future disobedient performances to their respective owners and are thereby augmenting the impact of our performances.







WRITING ON THE WALL

January, 2019
Het Concertgebouw
Performance

A group of performers walked towards Het Concertgebouw. A few minutes later, they gently pressed three oil-drenched bodies against the glass façade of the building.

The oily body prints left behind after the performance ended, reminded of the twisted bodies depicted in Francis Bacon's triptychs. They refer to the bodies on the frontline already paying the ultimate price for climate change.

This performance was a pre-announcement of the upcoming #FossilFreeMuseumplein art campaign.

