Launching in Amsterdam!
Participatory urban re-planning.

Throughout the 20th century, new artistic movements have sought to challenge and break from traditional notions of art. This constant blurring of boundaries now means that any act or work done by an artist may be regarded as an object of art.

Today, the distinction between art and non-art is almost impossible to make, and any classification is subjective.

Since the 1920s, radical artistic experiments have sought to destroy the boundaries between art and everyday life. Old industrial buildings, city streets, the Internet and mass media are increasingly replacing museums and galleries as the ideal forums and exhibition grounds for modern art.

"Partizaning" is not just the name of our website. It is also a term to define a new phenomenon and strategy at the intersection of street art and social activism. We have devised this term in Russia, where we demonstrate in a revolutionary tradition how unauthorized statements or un-official interventions or actions can become key drivers of social and cultural change.

The aim of our project is to reflect and promote the idea of art-based, DIY activism aimed at rethinking and restructuring the urban environment, societies and communities around the world.

Today, urban activists have begun to use the language of art as a tool to change their daily reality: from DIY city repair to struggling for new forms of state representation.

Unsanctioned interventions in cities, combined with mass media connectivity, have become an effective, transformative tactic to help re-frame a new vision for the future.

Partizaning is based in Moscow, and documents examples of art-based activism, interventions, and urban re-planning from around the world.

Welcome Back, Putin! will showcase work by Russia's leading contemporary activist artists – from Feb. 26-Mar. 4 – as part of the Verkleinzings Festival in Amsterdam. www.debalne.nl

We believe that increasingly shared sociopolitical realities and dissatisfaction can be strategically addressed using art-based "partizaning" tactics.

Our website explores the role of art as a practical tool for inclusive city regeneration and social activism.

It evolves out of the cultural, political and social crisis facing contemporary Russia. We provide documentation and analysis of the role of art in reshaping public spaces, cities and human interactions – globally.

The Partizaning website in Russia was launched in November 2011 by a group of artists and art historians interested in the role art plays in public spaces, cities and the study of human relationships. Apart from the website, we organize projects, events, and publish an occasional newsletter.

On March 4, 2012 – the day of the Russian Presidential Election – we will launch the International, English language edition of the site. Join Partizaning founder and social artist - Make – at Welcome Back, Putin! where he will present and discuss Partizaning at 5PM.

In June 2010, Make began to distribute maps of his favorite bike routes in Moscow. The map was available online for citizens to print, mark their cycling routes, and then drop off at local galleries.

The name of the project reflected Make's frustration at the cycling situation in the city. It also embodies his idea to promote minimal use of resources, and to maximize the few available opportunities he had in order to do so.

The map has since catalyzed a lot of support, and the project was introduced as part of a vision for Moscow 2020 at the Global Day of Action 10/10/10.

We Are Doing It Right
Author: Krill KhD

"Guerrilla movements are the manifestation of people’s feelings of opposition towards troops and administrations; against alien occupiers whom they do not consider of their own."

I would like to discuss the “invisibility” that partizans are supposed to possess.

Russia has known periods of heroic activism, in its struggles against occupiers – the French in the 19th and Fascists in the 20th century. My grandmother’s family were activists. They hid Jews in a cellar which was just over a meter high, underneath the floor of their flat; saving them from concentration camps. She herself lived there for 6 months at the age of 14.

Unfortunately, apart from these activists (or partizans) who truly deserve honor and respect, there is a more prominent phenomenon, well-known in contemporary urban life. So-called “guerrilla marketing” – where illegal, unsolicited advertisements and messages by street artists are placed on the walls and pavements of our cities.

These are two different meanings of partizaning, representing two streams of thought between which today’s activists – urban re-planners, artists, and those who want to re-do the city – must strike a balance.

Guerrilla advertisers hide under the cover of night, placing their messages on the streets and avenues of our cities. They have to hide from authorities. Just like those who have stayed for many years in their cozy luxury apartments in the center of Moscow or behind 5m high walled suburban residences, traveling to their prestigious jobs, going out to trendy, modern restaurants, and clubs in their expensive cars – have to hide.

They hide from politically conscious citizens, who are enraged by their extravagance, careless attitude towards their environment.

All the above hide from their own consciences, knowing they are at fault for ruining the city – ashamed at their blatant individualism. They have lost their right to live in the city.

They are correct in hiding.

Average men are also guilty before the city, comfortable with the situation; they stay at home, in front of their computer monitors, looking out only for themselves and their immediate near and dear – arranging gifts under a fir tree.

The people who are really harming the city are not the street artists – it is those inhabitants that are hiding and separating themselves from the city.

These are the people who pollute the air and block pedestrian zones with their personal vehicles; who deface the city with tasteless advertisements; who uncontrollably buy things, pandering to their desires – only to throw them away once they go out of fashion, or if they have a minor flaw – adding to the massive amounts of trash being produced by our consumer-driven urban civilization.

"If I am not able to cope with the conflict situations arising from my activities, they are worthless. It means that they are unfair, and I have no internal confidence that would protect me from the citizens who are not satisfied with what I have been doing."

I suggest partizans be guided by this, rather than hiding behind guerrilla activities or imitating those who are ashamed of what they have been doing.

We (street artists) have nothing to be ashamed of. We are doing it right.

Read the full text online – www.partizaning.org

USE/LESS
A DIY art + mapping project to promote cycling in Moscow.

www.pixelchannel.ru