

# Participator 3.0

Rise of the machines

Final project proposal

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*What can be the main reason for a participant to contribute to a project? Is the outcome of the project important to stimulate the participant to collaborate?*

The proposal for my final project is based on my fascination towards open participation projects and the urge to contribute to a project. Seeing visual and graphical material presented next to each other from participants with different ages, education and cultural background without exploiting them.

Artists have increasingly sought to create situations and events that invite spectators to become an active participant, in dialogue both with their context and with each other. This aspect of contribution is visible by engaging the viewer being consumer and producer, giving the viewer the power to kill or sustain/feed a project.

In my previous projects I focused my research on different aspects of open participation. In my first project I focused on the experiences of the participants on the transition of analog and digital cover artwork for audio files. During the presentation of the installation a missing factor of participating was revealed: the importance of a clear trigger for the participants to start designing a record cover.

This important trigger-moment is further explored within my second project “Everyone can make a page”. I developed my research on the free choice of participating without a direct personal invitation, forcing the installation itself to be the trigger. The trigger to participate was real-time visible feedback from the printing process for the user generated page



*image 1: Motion printed picture “Everyone can make a page”*



*image 2: Setting up the installation “Everyone can make a page”  
in the shopping window at Wolfart projectspaces.*

For the third project I focused on a different angle of participation: protest and hidden identities. This resulted in a protest parade against banning the “Dance Parade” through the Rotterdam city center. With this project the solidary participants were protesting with a different identity, by wearing a mask based on the outlook of the major from Rotterdam. The outcome of the research is that the success of a protest is determined by the contact with journalists. This contact can generate visibility in the news and thereby awareness in society.



*image 3:*

*Protester with identity of the Rotterdam mayor  
Ahmed Aboutaleb during the protest "'One truck, one parade'*

An ongoing project next to these three projects is the "Rotterdam is Hard-fanzine". This project is created outside the thematic projects, but a valuable source of information on my research to the aspect of contribution. The fanzine is an open participation medium for artwork, drawing and photographs. Every received submission is published in the fanzine. The trigger for participating to the fanzine is the guarantee of the work being published. Every contributor gets a hard copy of the fanzine. New participants are introduced to the project by word of mouth. This long term project revealed that once the low-entry participation-message is spread, the creation of the fanzine could continue with new content from other participants.

The main interests within my work is a mixture of different sources, strange combinations: looking at visual material from different people, out of the normal context, reused or remixed with something completely different. All projects resulted into an analogue, hardcopy publication.

The participants who contributed to the project remain anonymous in the publication. They are anonymous for the fact that the work of the participant itself is more interesting than the author. Future participants need to be driven by the fact of liking the collective outcome and not by the people who were involved. A contextual external example is Postsecret: an ongoing community mail art project created by Frank Warren, in which people mail their secrets anonymously on a homemade postcard.



*image 4:*

*Previous editions of "Rotterdam is Hard"*

For my final project I want to start with research on the history of mail art, intrinsic/extrinsic motivation to participate and authorship. My main focus within this research will be on participatory projects and self-publishing. Looking at how other projects are structured to stimulate participation I want to learn about the relationship between the authors and publishers, old and new structures. With this research I can develop my own vision on participation, publishing and translate this into my final project outcome.

As already stated before contribution is visible by engaging the viewer being consumer and producer, giving the viewer the power to kill or sustain/feed a project. Filtering information in a digital highway or relatively slow analog way. Exploring the static aspect of material objects versus temporary unstable digital information. For example when a project is published as a digital file or analog object does this matter for the motivation of the participant? And what is the difference in experience within the process of making a digital file or an analog object?

From my previous projects I learned that the key element is participation. With my research on and experience from the previous projects I can develop my ideas on a higher level. For my final project there must be a clear trigger for the contributor to participate.

The possible outcome of this final project based on the research can be in the form of an installation using analog and digital tools. A printer, computers, paper and long stabler are needed. The participants can produce and consume a fanzine with this installation. This can be achieved by learning through the process of creating and viewing the outcome. All the participants will have a finished fanzine that they can take home after working with the installation. These final outcomes can be used as a source for recreation and inspiration by other participants.

My project succeeds when people that I don't know start to participate and create without my interference. My project has to be understandable and usable for the participants.

## References

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Simon Reynolds 02-02-2009. How the fanzine refused to die

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## Projects

Web canvas

Web canvas is a world wide participation painting where anyone can paint and watch others paint.

<http://webcanvas.com>

Drawn Together

An interactive installation project, exploring creative crowd sourcing in hand drawn music videos.

Interactive software

<http://pixelist.info/drawn-together>

Star Wars Uncut

Uncut movie project made by fans using the internet as a tool for crowd sourcing user content.

<http://www.starwarsuncut.com>

### One frame of fame

A music video project of C-Mon & Kypski made by users who recreated a single frame recorded with a webcam.

<http://oneframeoffame.com>

### Learning to love you more

Series of non-web presentations comprised of work made by the general public in response to assignments given by artists

<http://www.learningtoloveyoumore.com/>

### Indirect Collaboration

Blog about collective creativity on the web

<http://indirectcollaboration.blogspot.com/>

### Postsecret

Ongoing community mail art project in which people mail their secrets anonymously on a homemade postcard.

<http://www.postsecret.com>