

Press Release  
September 2009

## ***Take on me (take me on)*** **An alternative production factory** **17/10 – 25/10/2009**

During the Dutch Design Week 2009, from 17 to 25 October, the Van Abbemuseum presents *Take on me (take me on)*, a live-exhibition project curated by Freek Lomme and Hadas Zemer. It features four groups of "artistic designers", individuals or agencies whose ways of working fall outside the usual, conservative definitions of "art" and "design". Each group will create their own production line in one of the four corners of the original part of the museum and gradually extend their working process throughout the building. Together with visitors, they will each work on the development of a product that seeks to respond to certain urgent questions today: 'What kind of wealth would we like to acquire? What is it that we see when we look deep into our own personal value system? What are our authentic desires and how much do consumer products satisfy us?' The live exhibition will also accommodate various other activities during the week that will mix with these production centres. These include public discussions, lectures, film screenings, debates, and the production of a daily newspaper. The aftermath of the project, together with all relevant documentation in word and image, will remain on display until 8 November 2009.

### **Take on me (take me on)**

Governments often tell us: 'Society, that's you!' But how is our society created? Sometimes our culture and our perception of the world seem only constructed out of the imperatives of commerce, sales and turnover: 'I shop, therefore I am' becomes our motto. At the same time, this materialistic equation appears to lack meaning and we can experience a sudden gap between our own idea of our urgent needs and the values or solutions that are presented to us.

The credit crunch has anyway begun to discredit the mechanism of supply and demand, though no one is yet offering an alternative. As a result, we are forced to think about our material as well as our immaterial situation almost from scratch: What is it that we really want? What is true wealth? Can we answer these questions, fundamentally for ourselves as individuals? And how do we keep our spirits up when our finances are down? In fact, how do we define the meaning of life?

*Take on me (take me on)* investigates the ways in which we relate an idea of our deepest authenticity – our true self as defined by the standards and values we feel to be our own – to society's principles of supply and demand. What values do we value the most in all this? Economic value? Cultural value? Personal satisfaction? Individual uplifting? Peace and quiet?

### **Come and join us**

The four groups on assignment to *Take on me (take me on)* are: Acclair, Conditional Design, Metahaven, and

Orgacom. They will develop their own production methods while interacting with each other and, above all, with the public - creating their work in a concerted effort with their visitors on an alternative and collaborative factory floor in the museum.

In this way questions about the methods of production that are often hidden from consumers come into view. We are the ones defining our own living environment, aren't we? Why is something produced? What does production – particularly artistic production – have to offer us? And how does it fit in with our own personal frame of reference?



Metahaven, *Stadstaat (Forest of Posters)*, 2009

Each design project enters into a specific question that tries to address the visitors' fundamental needs and

# TAKE ON ME TAKE ME ON

Een alternatieve productiefabriek  
An alternative production factory

17 - 25 oktober 2009 

vanabbemuseum

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values. The designers' products may be either goods or services. Visitors may determine and change the value of the creative 'product' by responding to the presentation or to the designers' work. Therefore *Take on me (take me on)* is dependent on active engagement and productive involvement from its visitors. Come and 'take me on' for yourselves.



Acclair, *The Acclair Brain Experience*, 2004-2009

## Participants

### Acclair

What does our brain tell us about our authentic self? To measure is to know, which is just what Acclair does: they define what art and culture means to you, in a professional, competent and impressively scientific way.

### Conditional Design

The act of designing is based on rules. Conditional Design has created a manifesto of explicit rules for design processes. The project invites visitors to use the designers as a vehicle for wall paintings, in accordance with several specific rules.

### Metahaven

Image is identity. Image is politics. Image is a choice. Metahaven presents a graphic jungle in which specific choices must be made in order to avoid getting lost.

### Orgacom

A combination of organisation and communication, Orgacom focuses on the conception and realisation of new roles for art in trade, industry, and non-profit organisations. Together with local amateur groups, they will create an interdisciplinary production floor, bridging low and high culture.

### There's more than the factory...

Besides projects being carried out by the four groups, during *Take on me (take me on)* various closely-related activities occur in the rooms in-between. In the artists' bar, an informal environment, all workers and visitors can meet, rest, and inspire one another. Under the name *designLAB*, students of the Rietveld Academy design department occupy a second room. From their research camp they will investigate the dynamics of the Dutch Design Week.

In yet another room, *de Daily Whatever* is being edited and produced by graphic designer Eric de Haas. As its

name promises, this focuses on daily *Take on me (take me on)* proceedings, presenting articles, columns, commentaries and impressions. News is gathered on the spot. Visitors are invited to submit their own materials as well.

## Spin-off programme

*Take on me (take me on)* also comprises the extensive spin-off programme **TAKE A SEAT**, including discussions, lectures, and film debates.

Saturday 17 October, 14:00

TAKE ON ME (TAKE ME ON) opens up!

Sunday 18 October, 14:00

TAKE A SEAT with **Onomatopee**

Presentation and public talk on humour and design: what can humour tell us and how can this be implemented in design? In association with the Onomatopee project *Laughter forbidden!*

Tuesday 20 October

TAKE A SEAT with **Orgacom** (14:00) and **Conditional Design** (15:30).

Wednesday 21 October

TAKE A SEAT with **Metahaven** (14:00) and **Acclair** (15:30)

These two pairs of participating designers present their method, what's in it for them, and share insights from their creative process.

Thursday 22 October, 14:00

Morf Academy, with **Premsele** and **Morf Magazine**  
Premsele, Dutch Platform for Design and Fashion and the Van Abbemuseum organize a discussion between designer Piet Parra and an audience of students, including readers of the designers' magazine Morf.

Friday 23 October, 14:00

TAKE A SEAT with **Onomatopee**

Discussion with theorists addressing the question of what the technocratic, neoliberal design industry will have to offer us after the economic crisis. In association with the Onomatopee project *Design Mass*.

Saturday 24 October, 14:00

TAKE A SEAT with **MU**

Film screening and debate based on *Objectified* a film by Gary Hustwit (*Helvetica*) about our relationships with fabricated objects.

## Van Abbemuseum and design

For the Van Abbemuseum, this exhibition marks a new interest in the disciplinary edges of art and design. The museum is led to this step by the constantly evolving practice of artists and the development of new fields in design. Contemporary artists are usually seeking to push boundaries and for some the concept of autonomous art

has become a cage. They look to mix their works and ideas with other fields, such as science, sociology and music as well as design. At the same time, a few designers are stretching the limits of working to commission and producing solutions for commerce. Having strayed into other disciplines through exhibition projects such as *Forms of Resistance*, *Be(com)ing Dutch* and *Heartland*, it is time for the Van Abbemuseum to contribute more actively to the lively design scene in Eindhoven, especially during the Dutch Design Week. With the examples of Lissitzky, Rodchenko, Lily van der Stokker, John K ormeling or Chto Delat in the collection, the step from autonomous art to art in relation with design has already been made. *Take on me (take me on)* represents a first, experimental step to consider how actors from the design field could make sense in this museum. It will be followed by other initiatives in the years to come as the museum works to complement and provoke design in this city and question its place in the world.

#### Curators

Freek Lomme  
Hadas Zemer

#### Partners

Premsele  
MU  
Onomatopee

The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven is one of the first public museums for contemporary art to be established in Europe. The museum's collection of around 2700 works of art includes key works and archives by Lissitzky, Picasso, Kokoschka, Chagall, Beuys, McCarthy, Dani els and K ormeling. The museum has an experimental approach towards art's role in society. Openness, hospitality and knowledge exchange are important. We challenge ourselves and our visitors to think about art and its place in the world, covering a range of subjects, including the role of the collection as a cultural 'memory' and the museum as a public site. International collaboration and exchange have made the Van Abbemuseum a place for creative cross-fertilisation and a source of surprise, inspiration and imagination for its visitors and participants.

#### Van Abbemuseum

Bilderdijklaan 10  
Eindhoven

#### Special opening hours during the Dutch Design Week 2009

17-18-23 and 24 Oct	11.00 -19.00
19-20-21 and 25 Oct	11.00 -17.00
22 Oct	11.00 -21.00

#### Normal opening hours

Tues. -Sun., 11.00-17.00

Thurs., 11.00-21.00

On Thursdays the museum remains open until 21.00 and from 17.00 admission is free.

#### Admission

Adults: € 8.50

Groups ▶15 / 65+: € 6.00

Students / CJP cardholders: € 4.00

Thursday evenings, 17.00-21.00: free admission (until 31/12/09)

Dutch Design Week passe-partout: € 21.00 (entree Van Abbemuseum, Design Academy, DDA, Designhuis and Bobino gadget)

For further information visit: [www.vanabbemuseum.nl](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl) and [www.dutchdesignweek.nl](http://www.dutchdesignweek.nl).

#### Note to Editors

Further information and images can be downloaded via: [www.vanabbemuseum.nl/pers](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl/pers).

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