#ZAPGAMES2023

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ZAP GAMES

11TH - 24TH NOVEMBER 2023

TWO WEEKS OF AFFINITY GROUP ACTIONS AGAINST THE ADVERTISING MACHINE

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WELCOME TO THE ZAP GAMES 2023.

Soon Black Friday will return - an annual consumerism feeding-frenzy forced on us by retail capitalism, squashed between other sprees such as ‘Amazon Prime Day’ and Christmas.

No matter that we’re in a cost of living crisis, that the world is drowning in plastic pollution and our houses overflowing with eletronic waste - the message from the advertisers is clear: ***“Keep Buying”***

This November 2023, we invite you to take creative action against the outdoor advertising industry - and their world. We want to reduce the noise of consumerism and the endless incitement that buying more things will make us happy. Let’s reclaim our public spaces in favour of human connection.



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Z.A.P (Zone Anti-Publicité) is french for Anti-Advertising Zone. It is a framework for taking action against the outdoor advertising industry originating in the streets of Belgium in 2020.



Photo: advertising posters taped together to create a 400 metre walkway

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HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

1. Look through this guide for inspiration for new ideas.
2. Form an ‘affinity group’ with 1 or more friends + comrades.
3. Take action against corporate outdoor advertising spaces (billboards, digital ad screens, etc) however you like.
4. Report your action at www.subvertisers-international.net/ZAP
5. Attend the celebration Awards Ceremony in person on Saturday 25 October 2023 in London if you can.



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Everyone is invited to take part in the Games however you wish. Your action could be as simple as using stickers and tape to interrupt marketing slogans on posters, turning off the lights of an advertising billboard, re-purposing an ad stand with greenery and nature, or removing the posters from hundreds of ad sites to reduce the volume of commercial consumerism in our lives.

Remember to photograph your action and submit it at www.subvertisers-international.net/ZAPGames



Photo: Reveremd Billy of the 'Church of Stop Shopping' performs an exorcism on a digital advertising screen in Brixton, South London. October 2023

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ACTION CATEGORIES

ACTION CATEGORIES

1. MOST BEAUTIFUL
2. BIG
3. SCULPTURE
4. SURPRISE
5. DIGITAL SCREENS
6. GREATEST NUMBER OF PANELS
7. POLITICAL DÉTOURNEMENT
8. MOST FAMILY FRIENDLY

Have you always dreamed of exhibiting your latest artistic creations in public space? This is a call for artists to beautify the streets! Photography, drawings, paintings, poems, collages ...let your imagination run wild.





"Bus stops are far more interesting and useful places to have art than in museums."
— > Banksy, 2001

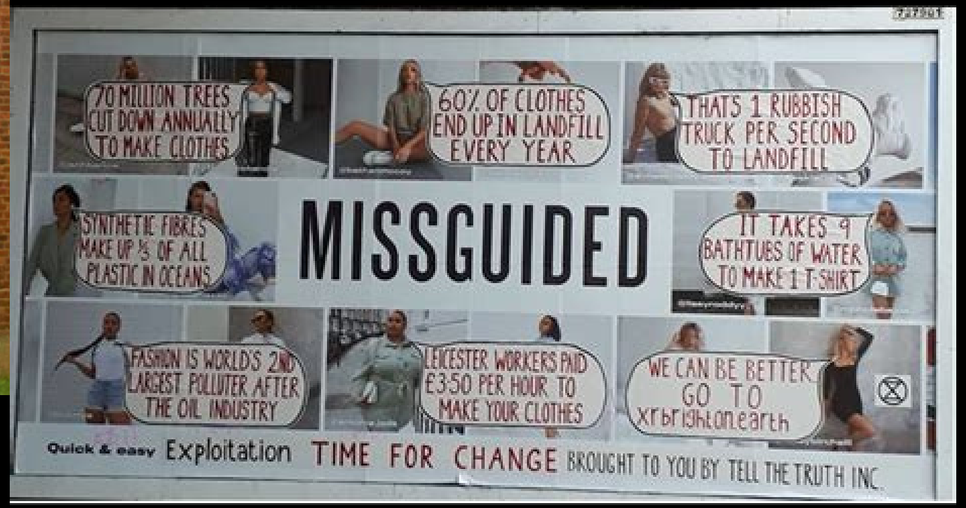
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For those that suffer from delusions of grandeur, there is no shortage of over-sized advertisements, billboards, tarpaulins and energy-hungry giant screens in our cities to satisfy your desire for large-scale actions.

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For visual artists, an invitation to re-visit the ordinary design of the banal advertising billboard: experimental sculpture, DIY, brutalist practices and other de-constructivisms are all welcome here.

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1. MOST BEAUTIFUL
2. BIG
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4. **SURPRISE**
5. DIGITAL SCREENS
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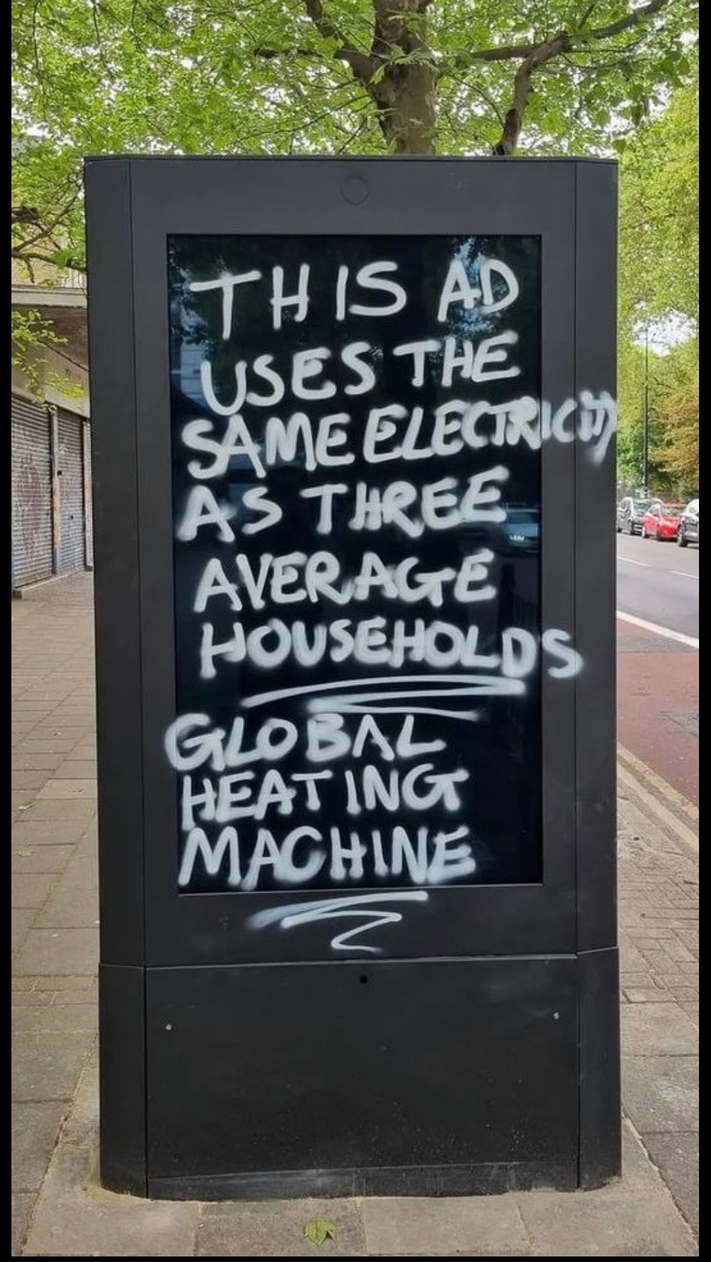


Surprise us! Make us laugh! Make us dream! May the everyday advertising billboard become a source of wonder, intrigue and adventure! Jokes, crosswords, shopping lists, challenges, declarations of love, grandmother's recipes, astrological predictions are all welcome in this wild card category.

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ACTION CATEGORIES

1. MOST BEAUTIFUL
2. BIG
3. SCULPTURE
4. MASSIVE
5. **DIGITAL SCREENS**
6. GREATEST NUMBER OF PANELS
7. POLITICAL DÉTOURNEMENT
8. MOST FAMILY FRIENDLY



For digital enthusiasts and other computing geniuses, come and infiltrate the wonderful world of digital advertising and treat yourself to a lively broadcast space: an LED screen in full colour and too much light 24 hours a day.

For the less tech minded, any re-purposing + intervention of these collosal wastes of energy are also welcome.

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Love metrics? Gotta catch ‘em all?
There is a special prize for the sheer number of advertising panels hacked.

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Consider the billboard as a practical means of public dissemination; make it your own in order to raise awareness of the struggles that are close to your heart. Inspire us to think, question and come together to create a progressive, equitable and sustainable world.

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ACTION CATEGORIES

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4. MASSIVE
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6. GREATEST NUMBER OF PANELS
7. POLITICAL DÉTOURNEMENT
8. **MOST FAMILY FRIENDLY**



The kids are revolting!

An award for the most family-friendly
or intergenerational intervention.


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SUBMISSIONS

Please head to www.subvertisers-international.net/action/zap-games/ to submit your actiomn report.

- NAME OF THE PIECE
- LOCATION
- SHORT DESCRIPTION
- AT LEAST ONE PHOTO OF THE WORK

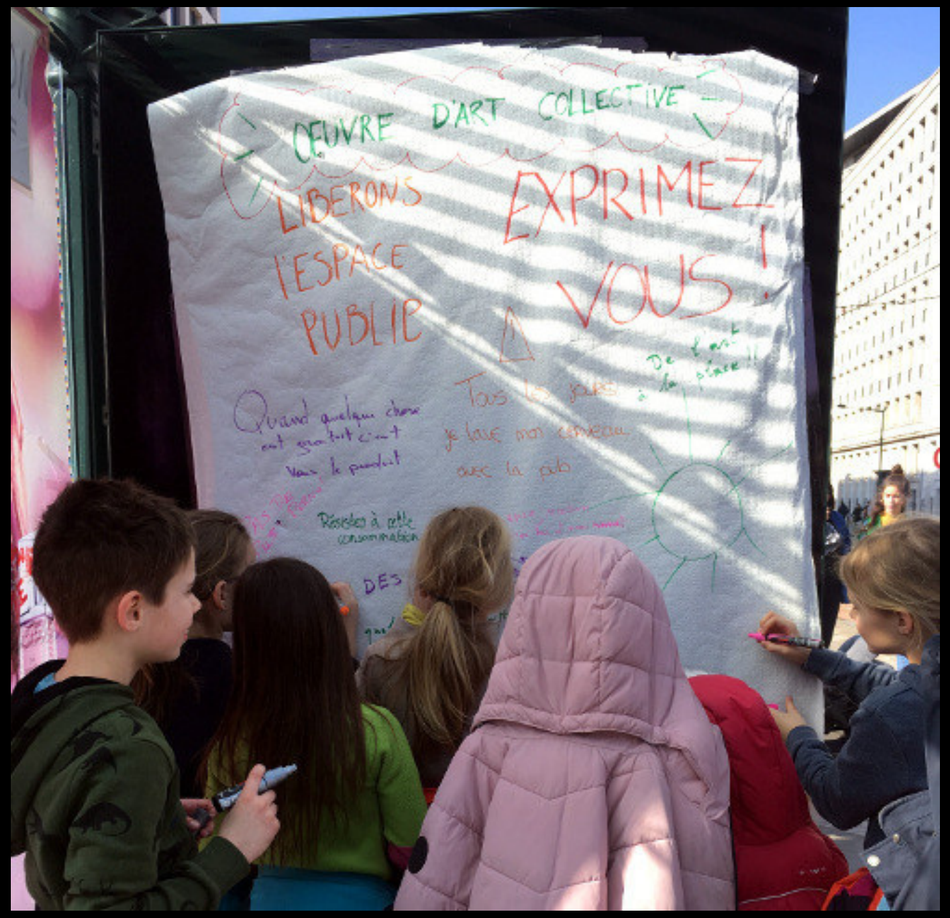
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About the Subvertisers International

Formed in 2017, ***The Subvertisers' International*** is an international movement of individuals and organisations concerned with how advertising affects society. Founded in 2017, we are local and national groups of activists, artists, NGOs, not-for-profits, teachers, parents, scientists and doctors.

It is made up of over 18 active groups in Belgium, France, Germnay, UK, Spain, Portugal, Argentina, USA and Australia. For a list of member groups see: https://subvertisers-international.net/about/members/



The Subvertisers' International politically supports all its members in using non-violent tactics implemented in order to challenge the advertising system. It does not take legal responsibility for actions of its local members..

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About the ZAP Games

The ZAP Games began in Belgium in 2020 as an initiative of the Bruxelles Sans Pub, Liège Sans Pub and Namur Sans Pub.

In the third round of the ZAP Games in November 2022, groups from the world participated in actions in their own towns and cities.

In 2023, Belgium will continue to host their original ZAP Games.

For Belgium action reports see:
www.zapgames.net

The Subvertisers International will publicise all actions happening outside of Belgium at:
https://subvertisers-international.net/action/zap-games/

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What do we mean by consumerism?

Consumerism has several definitions, including:

“the situation when too much attention is given to buying and owning things, often things that are not really necessary.”

It has been a key feature of capitalist economies for over 100 years - but accelerated in the 1980s. Beyond what’s needed to lift us out of poor living standards, the notion that a constant acquisition of material items will improve our wellbeing has been debunked for its environmental impacts and its false promise of fulfillment.



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What is ‘détournement’?

‘Détournement’ is french for ‘re-routing’ or ‘hijacking’. It is a term popularised by the Situationist International in the 1950s onwards (from whom the Subvertisers International borrow our name).

It has been used by the anti-advertising movement for decades and defined as:

"turning expressions of the capitalist system and its media culture against itself as when slogans and logos are turned against their advertisers or the political status quo.”



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History: Who were the Situationist International?

Founded in 1957 - 1972, the Situationist International believed that authentic human desire is inevitably in conflict with capitalist society, that increasing worker pay did not decrease worker exploitation. They believed in workers' councils, and fought to create spaces and situations where people could interact without the burden of 'spectacle' and commodities.

Their critique of the effects of consumerism and alienation under capitalism, both at work and in Everyday Life, has been borne out. Key situationists Raoul Vaneigem and Guy Debord presaged social media, artificial intelligence, and the smartphone, positing that a profound state of alienation was coming and that people would one day treat even themselves as commodities. Debord critiqued a media culture that provided cover for the oppressive nature of capitalism, and infiltrated the most basic aspects of living.

Above text adapted from the Anarchist Review of Books, Spring 2023 https://www.anarchistreviewofbooks.org/about-this-issue-arb-5-winter-spring-2023/



The Situationist International wanted genuine joy in a world drowning in advertising jingles, big-screen car crashes, and illusions of a better life though a better façade, a world where objects were protected over human life.

"We must abolish the pseudo-needs and false desires which the system manufactures daily in order to preserve its power."

- Guy Debord

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Enjoy the ZAP Games and share your actions with the Subvertisers International on X / Twitter:

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Photo: a temporary cover up of an advertising site in Norwich, England, 2022

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