

FEATURE ARTICLES

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Mar/Apr 2014 issue:

**How Are You Today?
AGNES interviewed by
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Marker 2014: Gulf
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excerpt

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The Joy of Marginality
by Adrian Piper

BALCONISM

Text / Constant Dullaart

A new "-ism" calls for sovereign expression in the 21st century, acronyms, typos, leetspeak, and kaomoji included.



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We are all outside on teh balcony now. Standing on a platform made out of a tweet into corporate versions of public space. We are not stored in a cloud, opaque or translucent to whomever. We publish, we get read. ok. Private publishing does not exist, we now know we always get read (hi). To select what we want to have read, and by whom, is our greatest challenge rly. For now and teh future. If you tolerate this, your children will be normalized. Outside, on the street, status updates in the air, checking into another spatial analogy of information exchange. Sometimes hard to reach, through tutorials, encryptions and principles. It is generous to be outdoors, watched by a thousand eyes recording us for the future, our actions to be interpreted as an office job. We need a private veranda above ground, a place for a breath of fresh air, out of sight for the casual onlooker, but great for public announcements. The balcony is both public and private, online and offline. It is a space and a movement at the same time. You can be seen or remain unnoticed, inside and outside. Slippers are ok on the balcony. Freedom through encryption, rather than openness. The most important thing is: you must choose to be seen. We are already seen and recorded on the streets and in trains, in email, chatz, supermarketz and restaurantz, without a choice. Remaining unseen, by making a clearer choice where to be seen. We are in the brave new now, get ready to choose your balcony, to escape the warm enclosure of the social web, to address, to talk to the people outside your algorithm bubble. U will not get arrested on the balcony, you

and yours should have the right to anonymity on the balcony, although this might seem technically complicated. The balcony is a gallery, balustrade, porch and stoop. The balcony is part of the Ecuadorian embassy. Itz masturbating on the balcony when your local dictator passes by. AFK, IRL, BRB and TTYS. The balcony is the Piratebay memo announcing they will keep up their services by way of drones, or just Piratbyran completely. Publishing in a 403, publishing inside the referring link, and as error on a server. Balconism is IRC, TOR and OTR. Bal-Kony 2012. Balcony is Speedshows, online performances, Telecomix, Anonymous, Occupy and maybe even Google automated cars (def. not glass tho btw). Balconization, not Balkanization. The balcony-scene creates community rather than commodity. Nothing is to be taken seriously. Every win fails eventually. Proud of web culture, and what was built with pun, fun, wires, solder, thoughts and visions of equality. Nothing is sacred on the balcony. It is lit by screens, fueled by open networks, and strengthened by retweetz. On the balcony the ambitions are high, identities can be copied, and reality manipulated. Hope is given and inspiration created, initiative promoted and development developed. Know your meme, and meme what you know. I can haz balcony. Balconism is a soapbox in the park. The balcony is connected: stand on a balcony and you will see others. The balcony is connecting: you do not have to be afraid on the balcony, we are behind you, we are the masses, you can feel the warmth from the inside, breathing down your neck. Where privacy ceases to feel private, try to make it private. Choose your audience, demand to know to whom you speak if not in public, or know when you are talking to an algorithm. When you can, stay anonymous out of principle, and fun. And when you are in public, understand in which context and at what time you will and could be seen. Speak out on the balcony, free from the storefront, free from the single white space, but leaning into people's offices, bedrooms and coffee tables, leaning into virtually everywhere. On the balcony, contemporary art reclaims its communicative sovereignty through constant reminders of a freedom once had on the internet. Orz to the open internet builders and warriors. Learn how to do, then challenge how it is done. Encrypt. Encrypt well and beautifully. Art with too much theory is called Auditorium, and kitsch is called Living Room. Inspired by home-brew technologies and open network communications, create art in the spirit of the internet, resisting territories, be it institutional and commercial art hierarchies or commercial information hierarchies. The internet is every medium. Head from the information super highway to the balcony that is everywhere through the right VPN. The pool is always closed.

Constant Dullaart is a former resident of the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, living and working mostly in Berlin. His work often deals with the effects and affects of contemporary communication and mass media, both online and offline.
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