



LISA KIRK

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# VIVA LA REVOLUCIÓN!

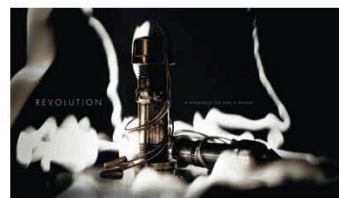
Rebellious tendencies have been prevailing in New York for some time. It began in a hotel bar, continued in a laboratory, and finally spread to a museum and the streets of the city. Now Germany threatens to be pulled into the wake of the uprising...

text YORCA SCHMIDT-ZUNKER



It was one of these evenings, sometime in 2005 during the infamous George W. Bush era, when a politically and socially disillusioned artist sat in a hotel bar in New York and was suddenly approached by an attractive gentleman in a tuxedo. The initial small talk quickly developed into an intense conversation, and when the stranger outed himself as a perfumer, he kicked off a creative avalanche in Lisa Kirk. She grabbed a pen, wrote her phone number on the baffled entrepreneur's dress shirt and took leave with the words: »I have a spectacular idea for a fragrance. Call me!« The very next day, inspired by the perfumer's call, who showed himself interested in cooperating, Lisa Kirk began with the concept for a fragrance that would revolutionize the market in the truest sense of the word: a fragrance that was meant less as a product but rather the projected matter of an artistic process focusing on a reckoning with the Bush administration and the Iraq war. An essence that would protest against existing conditions and call to ultimate resistance. That would demonstrate the absurdity of consumerism and the manic desire for label and luxury goods. Or, as Kirk put it: »If we can't start a real revolution, at least we can create a fragrance that symbolizes rebellion.« Kirk is known for her uncompromising, socially critical projects. Her work deals primarily with the contradictions of our modern consumer society as well as the aestheticization of radical political interpretations, but to transfer these approaches to a perfume, to translate them to liquid matter, posed entirely new problems for Lisa Kirk. Paradoxically, the solution was to raise a question. And that question was: how does revolution smell? Lisa Kirk began to search the world for answers to this question. She contacted Central and South American revolutionaries, spoke with Black Panthers, and approached members of militant left-wing underground groups, with historians and French philosophers. The results of her survey can be summarized as an extremely vile but not particularly pleasant blend of sweat, blood, tear gas, burnt rubber, rotting meat, and urine. The next step was the olfactory implementation of this wild

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The solution was to raise a question. And that question was: how does revolution smell?

cocktail, for which Kirk didn't rely on her bar acquaintance but the perfumer Patricia Choux. This process wasn't for the squeamish. Lisa Kirk would proceed as radically as her reputation called for. Therefore, her directions for mixing the ingredients occasionally demanded: »Let's put some pussy inside!« A few months later, Revolution celebrated its premiere in the New York art space Participant Inc., models disguised with ski masks, terror-style, sprayed large amounts of the fragrance on the assembled guests, whose reactions oscillated between outright horror and great amusement. The magazine Artforum wrote that the scent itself was at home »somewhere between patchouli and body odor«. Ulrich Lang, a German native and perfume and art consultant who advised Lisa Kirk during the realization of Revolution, described it as »extremely smoky, avant-garde, and experimental«. A scent that is not pleasing or fit for the masses, but absolutely wearable. And that defined itself as a pure art project. About a year later, in October 2007, Lisa Kirk created a follow-up to the revolution project. At the PS 1 Contemporary Art Center, an offshoot of MoMA, she installed an imaginary perfume laboratory that appeared like a terrorist hideout and had been completely turned on its head as a metaphor for the political, social, and cultural status quo. Eventually, in 2008, a further continuation of the revolution cycle followed: in the form of proper packaging for the rebellious essence. For this purpose, Kirk hired the New York-based Goldsmith Jelena Behrend. Together, they created a bottle that was modeled after a pipe bomb and produced three prototypes made of sterling silver, gold, and platinum. The bottles were manufactured by Participant Inc. upon requests from willing luxury revolutionaries – for the low, low price of \$4,000 to \$40,000, depending on the version. Thus, Kirk succeeded with a brilliant and ambivalent sleight of hand: she intentionally launched a product that served as an example of consumer criticism and exaggerated it in such a way that it reduced society's notorious demand for luxuries to absurdity – and turned it into a success.

To respond to the demands of marketing, Kirk conceived a sensational commercial together with the photographer Gabriel Jeffrey. Filmed in the style of a Calvin Klein spot, a female and a male sniper who have accidentally been assigned the same target find each other. At the end of the highly aesthetic, brilliantly cut mini movie that is accompanied by elegiac music, the female sniper pulls the mask from her face and opens her right hand. In it, the deceptively real pipe bomb bottle, followed by the message »Revolution – a fragrance for women and men.« After he saw the clip, Ulrich Lang proposed that the artist should take the final, logical step and commercialize the fragrance once and for all. »Lisa agreed, so we got back into contact with Patricia Choux«, says Lang. The perfumer now produced a more inexpensive variation of Revolution, bottled in small 12ml laboratory vials. In the progressive concept store »Project No. 8« on 29th Street, Kirk and Lang found the ideal distribution partner, especially since the trendy hotel Ace, which is affiliated with the store, offered to show the Revolution clip as video-on-demand in their rooms. At this point, the revolution had finally arrived in New York. Now Germany will also have an opportunity to sniff the smell of rebellion. Starting in September of this year, Quarter 206 in Berlin will become the exclusive distributor of »Revolution«. For those who want to know what's inside, the perfume owes its burnt note to birch resin and tar, ambergris and musk are responsible for the animal, sweaty nuance, and veneer gives it a smoky touch. Not necessarily a fragrance that Herr Westermarck or Herr Wolff would wear, but they don't necessarily burn with the spirit of revolution, either. Maybe other leading lights will soon try their hand at insurrection. And will profess their – at least olfactory – allegiance to the good old slogan: »Long live the revolution!«

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# Der Gestank der Revolution

Ein Parfüm einer New Yorker Künstlerin macht in Berlin Furore – es riecht nach Urin, Schweiß und Asche

Von Thorsten Schmitz

**Berlin** – Boadicea war eine mutige Frau. Im Jahr 60 n. Chr. führte die britannische Königin einen Aufstand gegen die Römer an. Mehr als 50 000 Kämpfer plünderten und brandschatzten römische Siedlungen. Es muss schrecklich gerochen haben. Boadicea hatte den Aufstand angezettelt, weil die Römer eine Frau als Stammesführerin des keltischen Stammes der Icener ablehnten.

Boadicea war eine Revolutionärin, wenn man so will.

1950 Jahre später steht ein silberner Flakon in der Parfümerie des Departmentstores Quartier 206, der den Namen der Kriegskönigin trägt. Öffnet man das 100-Milliliter-Fläschchen, riecht es nach Agarholz und Jasmin. Der Duft heißt „Intricate“, was soviel wie „verwickelt“ bedeutet. Verwickelt in diesem Fall mag der Preis sein.

Das Fläschchen kostet 520 Euro.

Ein paar Schritte von dem sündhaft teuren Boadicea entfernt wird ein Film gezeigt, knapp zwei Minuten lang. Es ist das Werbevideo zu einem neuen Parfüm, das „Revolution“ heißt. Der Film zeigt keine Schlacht, sondern ein Attentat in New York. Wer nach Revolution riechen möchte, muss nach Berlin kommen. Das Quartier 206 auf der Friedrichstraße ist der einzige Ort in Deutschland, an dem es den Duft zu kaufen gibt.

Ist dieses das richtige Wort: Duft?

## Ein Flakon in Rohrbombenform

Das Video zeigt eine (schöne) Frau und einen (schönen) Mann, zwei Scharfschützen auf der Flucht. Sie tragen schwarze Röhrenjeans, schwarze Designerboots und schwarze enge Lederjacken. Kommen sie gerade von einem Shooting mit Karl Lagerfeld? Haben sie die Zeche geprellt im Grill Royal in Berlin-Mitte? Ach so, es sind zwei Aktivisten auf der Flucht. Gerade haben sie versucht, jemanden zu töten (Revolution!). Als sie kurz innehalten und ihre Tarnmasken vom Gesicht ziehen, steckt sie ihrem Kampfgenosse eine Rohrbombe in die Hand. Ein Selbstmordattentäter! Aber nein, die Rohrbombe ist in Wahrheit ein Parfümflakon, der nur die Form einer Rohrbombe hat, inklusive Zündschnüre. „A fragrance for men & women“, wird eingeblendet, kurz bevor der Clip endet.

Fragrance heißt auch „Wohlgeruch“. Ein dehnbarer Begriff. Denn der Duft von Revolution – stinkt zum Himmel. Die 12-Milliliter-Flasche kostet 55 Euro. Sie findet reißenden Absatz, vor allem bei

Männern. Die Verkäuferin sagt, sie möge den Geruch. Er habe „etwas Animalisches“. Und sei „doch sehr sexy“. Für wen der Duft sei? „Für Sie offenbar nicht, man muss sich ja selbst riechen können.“

Die New Yorker Konzeptkünstlerin Lisa Kirk hatte die Idee zu dem Parfüm in den Rohrbomben. Im terrorverängstigten New York hat man Kirks Ironie schon

missverstanden. Im Mai musste ein Gebäude in Manhattan evakuiert werden, weil Passanten die Flakons im Schaufenster einer Galerie für echt gehalten und die Anti-Terror-Polizei gerufen hatten. Lisa Kirk sagt, sie sei genervt gewesen von den Bush-Jahren 2001 bis 2009, so dass sie nur noch an Aufstand, Protest, Revolution gedacht habe. Bush habe Terrorängste

*Stinkt zum Himmel: Die Künstlerin Lisa Kirk will ihr Parfüm „Revolution“ als ironischen Anschlag auf George W. Bush verstanden wissen.*

Foto: oh



geschürt und gleichzeitig die Meinungsfreiheit beschnitten, Revolutionen (also: Demonstrationen, Anti-Bush-T-Shirts) seien unmöglich gewesen: „Da habe ich eben ein Parfüm kreieren lassen. Wenn man schon keine Revolution anstacheln kann, dann soll man sie wenigstens riechen können“.

Wie riecht Revolution? Diese Frage hat Kirk ehemaligen Revolutionären, Globalisierungsgegnern und Hausbesetzern gestellt. Die Recherche ergab: Sie riecht nach Blut, verwesenden Körpern, brennenden Reifen, Tränengas, Urin, Asche, und Schweiß, vor allem danach.

Das Parfüm, das sich Globalisierungsgegner eher nicht leisten werden, kann man in New York in den Originalflakons kaufen. Die Platinausführung kostet 36 000 Euro, die Goldflasche 21 000 Euro und die Silberversion 2700 Euro. Bislang hat noch keiner die Platinbombe erstanden, die Silberversion fand einige Käufer. Grundsätzlich kann man im Quartier 206 auch das Original ordern. Lisa Kirk aber lacht und sagt: „Wir haben noch nicht herausgefunden, wie wir Rohrbombenflakons verschicken können, ohne festgenommen zu werden.“ Das 12-Milliliter-Fläschchen ist die Tarnversion der eigentlichen Rohrbombe. Und damit man weiß, mit was man sich da eintupft, zeigt das Etikett die Skizze einer Rohrbombe.

## Es riecht nach Stinktier

Zögernd nimmt man den Flakon in die Hand, öffnet den Deckel, holt einmal tief Luft, atmet wieder aus. Und dann wieder ein, die Nase am Flaschenhals.

Es beißt metallisch stechend, und man wähnt sich inmitten brennender Reifen, aber um einen herum ziehen Schlittenhunde einen Weihnachtsmann und wackeln mit dem Kopf. Eine Marketingmitarbeiterin des Kaufhauses regt an, Revolution auf die Haut zu sprühen. Man will jetzt kein Feigling sein und sprüht. Und verzieht das Gesicht. Riechen so Stinktierre, wenn sie sich angegriffen fühlen? Die Mitarbeiterin sagt: „Einfach mal nicht drauf achten, einfach mal sacken lassen.“

Zurück im Büro sagt eine Kollegin: „Aber Parfüm soll das jetzt nicht sein, oder?“ Fünf Minuten später reißt sie alle Fenster auf.

Und Lisa Kirk? Trägt sie Revolution?

„Um ehrlich zu sein: nein. Aber ich hab's mal aufgesprüht, als ich in einem Gerichtsverfahren als Geschworene eingesetzt wurde. Nach einer Stunde habe ich so nach Urin gerochen, dass ich gehofft habe, dass die nicht denken, dass ich mir in die Hose gemacht habe.“

## LISA KIRK - REVOLUTION



### Lisa Kirk - Revolution

How does revolution smell? This was the question New York artist Lisa Kirk put to a number of anonymous journalists, activists, fundamentalists, radicals and rebels. People, who are at the heart of the action, people who live and fight there. The result was an olfactory vision of Revolution, a perfumed interpretation and thus a piece of conceptual art that, in its birth year 2008, was sold only in strictly limited editions of platinum, gold or silver replica pipe bombs.

Revolution Pipe Bomb caused quite a stir, but with prices from 4000-50000 Dollars, the revolutionary fragrance was for most people only a dream. Ulrich Lang, who had initially introduced Lisa Kirk to the perfumer Patricia Choux intervened: Thankfully he was able, to convince the artist to make the original fragrance available in another packaging to a wider audience. For this edition Kirk chose to present the fragrance in a 12ml chemical transport vile reminiscent of a miniature Molotov cocktail.

Now revolution is available to the masses. But is it also suitable for the masses? A fragrance based on the memories of the smell of tear gas, blood, urine, smoke and burned rubber.

See other products by Lisa Kirk | Parfumeur: Patricia Choux | Bloglink

### Fragrance composition:

Topnote: [Birch Tar](#), [Ambergris](#), [Leather](#), [Musk](#), [Vetiver](#), [Woods](#), [Civet](#)



0



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## A Whiff of Revolution: New York artist Lisa Kirk bottles the smell of war

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Posted on July 5, 2012 by MADPERFUMISTA

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John Singer Sargent's "Fumée d'ambre gris" (1880)





Revolution by Lisa Kirk (2009)

The combination of art with politics is a subject that has always interested me. A few weeks ago, I traveled to Kassel, Germany to see the once-every-five year exhibition called documenta 13. The artist and curator Arnold Bode created Documenta in 1955 as a means of addressing the recent trauma experienced in Europe, and looked towards the dialog between art objects as a form of healing and reconciliation. It's no wonder then that in one of the first rooms I walked into

In the beginning, there was Le Labo...

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People, Places, and Bling!

at the exhibition, I saw a display of [Lee Miller](#)'s photographs of Hitler's Berlin apartment after the fall of Germany. The photos showed the Fuhrer had bad taste in interior design, but most famously Miller is photographed taking a bath in Hitler's tub. In addition to the photograph, Miller took away with her a powder compact and a perfume bottle that belonged to Eva Braun, the mistress of Hitler, and both objects are displayed in the exhibition.

A perfume bottle from the lady friend of one of the most notorious figures in modern memory. Security guards in the museum stopped me from taking any photos, but it's cube shaped bottle made of thick crystal about 8 inches in height, done in the minimal style of Art Deco. Once an object to be displayed on a woman's vanity, the bottle is a highly charged artifact of war.

The association of perfume with violence and war is brought to the fore with a scent created by the contemporary visual artist, [Lisa Kirk](#). Kirk's art practice centers on the appropriation of radical political signifiers by corporations to sell consumer products, thereby usurping the symbolic power of these signs in the support of capitalism. (One of the examples to come to mind is a Nike television ad that features the Beatles' classic song, "Revolution.") Kirk created a perfume called "Revolution Pipe Bomb" after interviewing radical political activists (all anonymously, of course) regarding their scented memories of revolutionary events. With jewelry designer Jelena Behrend, Kirk came up with a vessel for the perfume in the shape of a pipe bomb, produced in limited quantities in platinum, gold, and silver. A facsimile of the original scent was later created with [Ulrich Lang](#) and is sold in a 12 ml bottle (available on [indiescents.com](#)), called simply "Revolution." Both the limited edition perfume-filled sculptures and individual bottles were featured in Kirk's 2009 exhibition at her gallery, [Invisible-Exports](#).

Here is the commercial created for Revolution:

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Scentrist  
Scents of Self  
smellythoughts  
The Scented Hound  
This Blog Really Stinks  
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[Lisa Kirk's Revolution Commercial](#) from [lisa kirk](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Straight from the bottle, "Revolution" smells like gasoline, eventually mellowing out on the skin to the acrid smell of gunpowder, burning rubber, and smoke. It's not exactly something I would wear everyday, but in using scent as a medium, Kirk pushes the boundaries of what defines art, and highlights the power of smell in conjuring personal memory as well as mass cultural and historical experiences. Lisa Kirk's work is eerily prescient of the Arab Spring revolutions that began in 2010. "Revolution" is hope in a bottle.

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## 3 thoughts on “A Whiff of Revolution: New York artist Lisa Kirk bottles the smell of war”



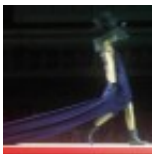
VANEEESA BLAYLOCK says:  
July 12, 2012 at 5:46 am

Reblogged this on I Rez Therefore I Am and commented:

**KASSEL, 5 July** – Trilby Minotaur has taken us up in some of dOCUMENTA (13)'s helicopters and Milena Berman has taken us stomping through its muddy fields. Today perfumista Katherine Chan gives us the smell of dOCUMENTA (13) in her essay on perfume.

In 1945 fashion and war photographer Lee Miller had the opportunity to visit Hitler's Berlin apartment where she famously took a bath in his tub. While there Miller also stole a bottle of perfume from the late Eva Braun. At dOCUMENTA (13) an exhibit shows Miller's photographs, the perfume bottle, and Braun's powder compact that Miller also took. In Byzantine artworld fashion, 2012 museum security guards would not allow Chan to take a photograph of the perfume bottle that Miller stole from Braun in 1945. Perhaps it's for the best as it gives Chan the opportunity to let her mind roam across ideas of perfume and war and bring us to New York artist Lisa Kirk's 2009 perfume project "Revolution."

Reply



MADPERFUMISTA says:  
July 13, 2012 at 12:51 pm

Thanks so much for the reblogging!

Reply



VANEEESA BLAYLOCK says:  
July 13, 2012 at 1:20 pm

You're welcome, and thank YOU, it's really a nice post!

Reply

Leave a Reply

# Scents & Sensibility



Gunpowder, grass, jasmine, pine, pollution, and patchouli are some of the **odors** wafting around galleries, museums, and studios these days as artists incorporate **scent** into the esthetic experience

**BY BARBARA POLLACK**

A

VISITOR STEPPING INTO

Koo Jeong A's installation for the Dia Art Foundation at the Hispanic Society of America may be overwhelmed by an unexpected assault on the senses. Like a cedar closet, the almost empty gallery has its own distinct aroma, in this case an olfactory artwork, entitled *Before the Rain*, which is meant to capture the atmosphere of an Asian city on a steamy day. Over a three-month period, the Korean artist worked with perfumer Bruno Jovanovic of International Flavors & Fragrances, a leading company in the design of synthetic scents, who distilled her memories and impressions into an amalgam of smells—dry woods, minerals, fern, musk, tars, and lichens—to summon the sensation the artist remembered.

**Visitors to EXPO 2010 in Shanghai last year lined up to experience**

**Federico Díaz's**

***LacrimAu* (left). One person at a time entered a glass cube and sat in a chair facing a golden teardrop (opposite), donning a headband with sensors that read his or her brain waves and translated them into a personal "golden fragrance," blended in an automatic pipette station.**

"I was compelled to create a scent that evokes the almost violent atmospheric tension that exists before a thunderous rainstorm," says Jovanovic, who views the piece as a true collaboration. "The whole work was about dissecting the entire experience and then re-creating it in a nebulous form."

The philosopher Immanuel Kant believed that the sense of sight is superior to all the other senses. A number of artists today, like Koo Jeong A, would disagree with him. They are incorporating the sense of smell into the esthetic experience. Smoke and pollution, as well as patchouli and pine, have become part of their palettes. Although scent is a fragile and ephemeral medium, it is making an impact in museum shows and at symposia as a new trend in art.

"Working with the sense of smell is probably the hardest material, because it is very subjective and it changes from person to person," says Yasmin Raymond, curator at Dia, who oversaw the development of *Before the Rain*. "Koo Jeong A had a very specific concept about this smell, but she had to

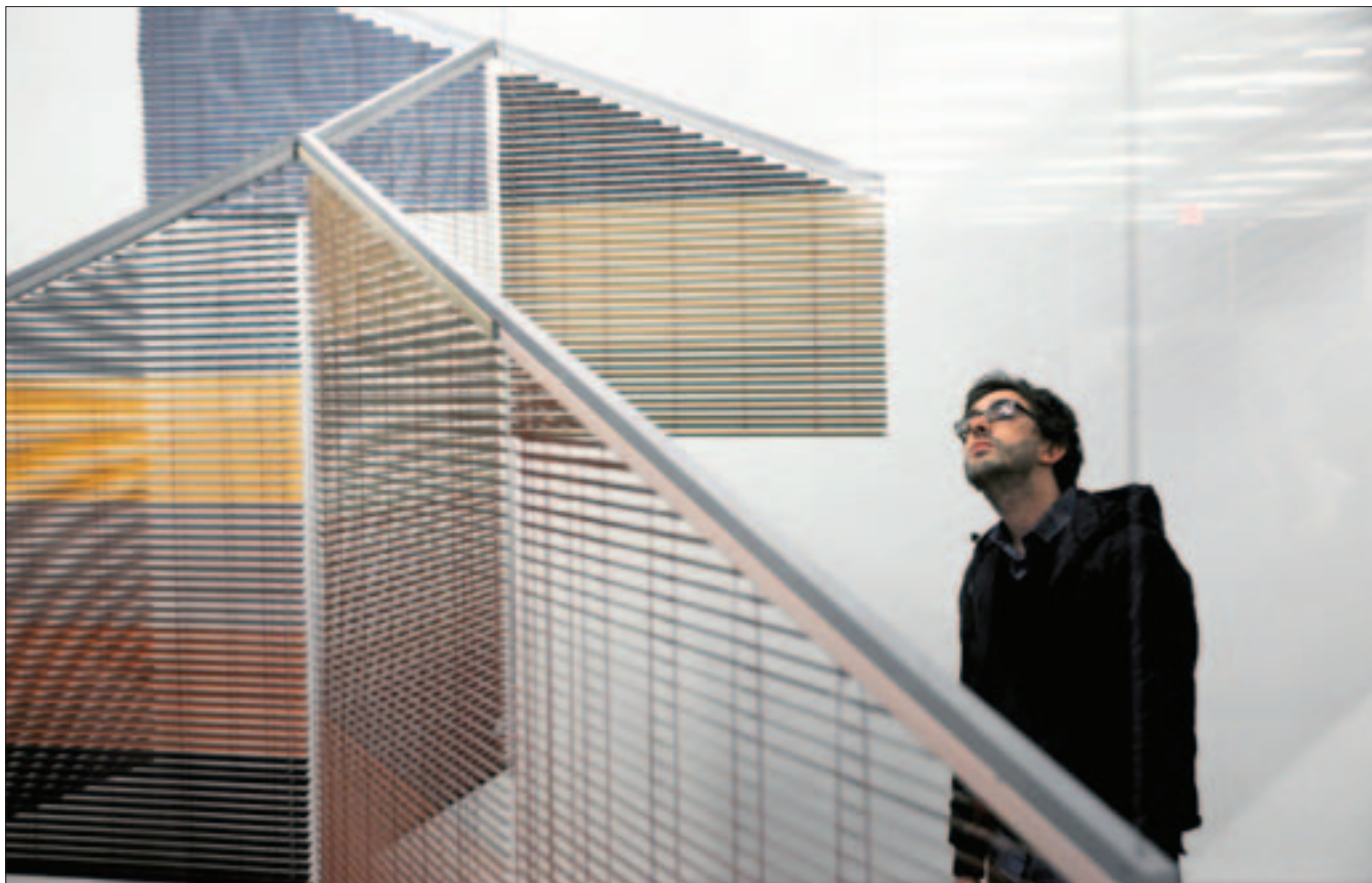
*Barbara Pollack is a contributing editor of ARTnews.*



find a way of articulating through language what that was to a perfumer, who conceived the chemical composition. It was really the hardest thing I had ever done as a curator.”

Contrasting this collaboration with the more

Belgian artist Peter De Cupere exhibited his *Olfactory Tree*, a latex sculpture of a life-size tree trunk embedded with scents of the forest, at the Pocketroom art space in Antwerp, while Japanese artist Maki Ueda presented



**Haegue Yang's *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements—Voice and Wind*, from her exhibition at the New Museum in New York in 2009. Its components include aluminum Venetian blinds, industrial electric fans, and scent atomizers. Visitors are free to interpret the unspecified odors for themselves.**

traditional artist-fabricator relationship, Raymond explains, “Usually you are working with things you can see and touch. In this case, we were working solely with language, and a very subjective language at that.”

### **A number of other recent projects**

have asked museum and gallery visitors to use their noses as well as their eyes. Shown two years ago at the New Museum in New York, Haegue Yang's *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements—Voice and Wind* incorporates Venetian blinds, electric fans, and scent atomizers to create the sensation of entering various unspecified locations. Made originally for the Korean Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2009, the installation offers an intimate and subjective experience, with each visitor free to interpret the odors.

her *Olfactoscope*, an aromatic journey evoking a landscape of cherry blossoms and fields of grass, in a small empty room at the Dutch consulate in Osaka.

Czech artist and architect Federico Díaz had a surprise hit at EXPO 2010 in Shanghai last year with his installation *LacrimAu*, which featured a golden teardrop about 30 inches high, housed in a glass cube. One person at a time could enter the cube, sit down, and don a headband with sensors that read his or her brain waves and translated them into a personalized scent.

New York artist Kiki Smith has created her own fragrance, Kiki, in collaboration with the French fragrance designer Christophe Laudamiel. The limited edition of 4,000 sells for \$175 a bottle.

In September the Stedelijk Museum in



Amsterdam held a one-day symposium, called “do it—smell it,” on olfactory developments in contemporary art, with contributions from Caro Verbeek, an art historian specializing in art and the senses, and Jim

sign in New York announced that it was establishing the Center of Olfactory Art, appointing former *New York Times* scent critic Chandler Burr as its director. Burr will also organize “The Art of Scent, 1889-2011,” the



PABLO MASON/COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK/COLLECTION MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, SAN DIEGO

Drobnick, an authority in the field of smell and contemporary culture and author of *The Smell Culture Reader*.

Simultaneously, museums have begun to turn their attention to the perfume industry, for the first time examining perfumes as works of art on a par with couturier gowns and other museum-worthy design objects. In March 2010, Parsons The New School for Design and the Museum of Modern Art, in partnership with International Flavors & Fragrances, Coty Inc., and *Seed*, a science magazine, presented a symposium, “Head-space: On Scent as Design,” which brought together such diverse participants in this field as scent artist Sissel Tolaas, neurobiologist Leslie Vosshall, and architect Toshiko Mori, as well as perfume designers.

In December the Museum of Arts and De-

sign in New York announced that it was establishing the Center of Olfactory Art, appointing former *New York Times* scent critic Chandler Burr as its director. Burr will also organize “The Art of Scent, 1889-2011,” the

first museum exhibition devoted to perfume as art, which will open this fall. “We are establishing the idea that olfactory art is as important as any other aspect of design,” says museum director Holly Hotchner. “Scent is a really important part of people’s lives and obviously a multibillion dollar industry, yet 99 percent of the population never thinks about how it is designed.”

“I hate the word ‘perfume,’” Burr says. “It’s somewhat better in French: ‘*parfum*.’ Perfume in Anglo-Saxon culture means something that is generally very much feminine—powdery, sweet stuff. It is not a word that we use well. Americans use the word ‘cologne’ to denote the masculine. It’s gendered.” But Burr’s focus for his upcoming exhibition will be on designer fragrances.

“Most people don’t understand that when

**Ernesto Neto's *Mother body emotional densities, for alive temple time baby son* installed in the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, in 2007. Pendulous lycra sacs are filled with aromatic turmeric, cloves, cumin, ginger, and pepper.**

Alberto Morillas makes a perfume called “Pleasures” and it comes out under the brand of Estée Lauder, and they have Elizabeth Hurley or Gwyneth Paltrow in the ad, and it is sold, that it is a commercial product that is

to understand this. I have no frame for this.”

Verbeek has identified many 20th-century works with an olfactory component. Marcel Duchamp, for example, filled a room with burnt coffee at an early Surrealism exhibition



**LEFT** Clara Ursitti's *I-BO-OK?* installed in the University of Edinburgh's Talbot Rice Gallery, 2009. Three laptops converse about their body-odor problem, using texts Ursitti picked up from an online chatroom.

**RIGHT** Chrysanne Stathacos's project *The Wish Machine* makes use of refabricated vending machines to distribute vials of essential oils associated with good thoughts.

also a work of art,” he says. “What interests me is helping people understand that these are actually works of art, that they are beautiful and esthetically important and meet all the criteria for art, equal in terms to painting, sculpture, music, architecture, and film.”

In contrast, Verbeek is not looking at the fragrance industry but at the history of art in the 20th century to find artworks that include an olfactory component. Her master's thesis, completed at the University of Amsterdam in 2002, was inspired by Ernesto Neto's *We Fishing the Time* (*densidades e buracos de mihoca*), 1999, at the 2001 Venice Biennale. “I smelled it way before I saw it, and I had no idea that this was part of a work of art, so once I was in the room, I was really surprised,” she recalls. “I thought, I am an art historian, but I don't know how to deal with this. I don't know how

in Paris. The Stedelijk Museum owns Ed Kienholz's *The Beanery* (1965), which smells of alcohol, smoke, and even the artist's own urine to evoke the feeling of being in a bar.

“In the 1960s, when performance art and installation art emerged, this gave a chance to a lot of artists to use more senses, and in the 1990s you see technological developments, like synthetic smells,” Verbeek says, citing as a breakthrough the Canadian artist Clara Ursitti's collaborations with scent expert George Dodd, whose London-based company, Kiotech International, developed a diagnostic “nose,” a machine that could measure aromatic molecules, in 1998.

“Smell is one of our senses and an incredibly important one, so it is silly that artists haven't used it for a longer time or that art historians haven't paid more attention to it,”



LEFT: TALBOT RICE GALLERY, EDINBURGH; RIGHT: COURTESY GALLERIE HEIKE STRELOW, FRANKFURT



says Verbeek, who is currently working with artists Sue Corke and Hagen Betzwieser on a “postcard from the moon.” It contains the scent of the moon’s surface, which, according to astronauts the pair interviewed at NASA,

According to Nalls, the experience of growing up in 1960s Washington, D.C., a city of monuments and mass demonstrations, was behind her wish to create a more universal experience, less culturally bounded than the



smells of gunpowder and heavy metals. The moon scent, developed by flavorist Steve Pearce, will be distributed by the Stedelijk later this year. “Smell has a big effect on visitors to the museum, because smell is linked to memory. Smell enhances the sense of reality, and smell enhances emotions,” says Verbeek.

**The fact that smell can reach** audiences beyond the museum has attracted the interest of several artists. In 2000 New York artist Gayil Nalls created the *World Sensorium*, a scent sculpture blended from iconic aromas from every country in the world—eucalyptus from Australia, jasmine from China, tobacco from Cuba, and pine from the United States—and distributed on printed cards that were showered down on Times Square revelers at midnight on the night of the millennium.

statues and events that colored her childhood. She was also inspired by Joseph Beuys’s 1980 Cooper Union lectures about “social sculpture.” To make her own social sculpture, she spent years asking officials from around the world to choose a scent to represent their countries, an effort supported by UNESCO. She then mixed the world fragrance herself, in her laboratory-like studio, based on the populations of the various countries.

Chrysanne Stathacos has reached over 50,000 participants with *The Wish Machine*, a project that makes use of refabricated vending machines to distribute vials of essential oils associated with basic hopes and desires: lavender for happiness, clove for lust, mint for communication, basil for money, hyacinth for peace, and rosemary for home. Stathacos’s machines were inspired by wishing trees in India (trees

**Gayil Nalls (top right, in her studio) blended odors representative of several countries for her olfactory sculpture *World Sensorium*. She infused multicolored cards with the scent and showered them down on revelers celebrating the millennium in Times Square.**

on which people hang offerings in hope of having wishes fulfilled) and originally commissioned by Creative Time in 1997 for Grand Central Station. She has since brought them to public venues in India, Germany, Canada,

applying it to a wall of the company's home base in Antwerp. Visitors can smell it through a small hole in a glass box cover.

Nalls's *World Sensorium* is part of the exhibition "Objects of Devotion and Desire" at the



**Peter De Cupere collected the sweat of dancers wearing plastic suits during a 15-minute performance. He applied the concentrated essence, enclosed in a glass box, to a wall at the dance company's home base, in Antwerp. Visitors can smell it through a hole in the glass.**

Switzerland, and throughout the United States.

"People can stop and smell and maybe dream for a second or have a brief moment outside the busy city," Stathacos says of the piece. "It becomes this effect of going to another place, maybe a memory of a garden or of someone bringing you flowers, maybe a memory of healing." For this reason, *The Wish Machine* has often been included in exhibitions on AIDS and recovery.

"What is so wonderful about this kind of project is that it is so ephemeral; it really defies market pressures," says Stathacos, who usually shows her work at kunsthallen and alternative art spaces. Her point of view is shared by most of the artists working in the medium of scent, who rarely have gallery representation. De Cupere, whose *Olfactory Tree* was shown at a noncommercial art space and is priced at €40,000, usually works on commission. A recent project involved collecting sweat from dancers performing with the choreographer Jan Fabre and distilling it, then

Bertha & Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery at Hunter College (through April 30). The first edition of 18 bottles sells for \$3,500 a bottle.

Nalls objects strongly to the use of synthetic scents. She, like many other olfactory artists, uses only natural fragrances and essential oils. "I call it 'rewilding the mind,'" she says, hoping that her projects will familiarize people who are used to "grape" chewing gum and "alpine-scented" candles with what the world really smells like.

New York activist-artist Lisa Kirk was seeking to evoke a social experience when she developed a perfume called "Revolution" for her 2008 exhibition at Participant Inc. on the Lower East Side. Kirk contacted witnesses to political upheavals, including Central American revolutionaries and ex-Black Panthers, and asked them, "What does revolution smell like?" The answer: dried blood, smoke, burning tires, gasoline, and urine. Kirk relied on perfumer Patricia Choux to create the scent and jeweler Jelena Berhrend

to design containers that looked like pipe bombs, fabricated in silver, gold, and platinum, and priced from \$3,750 to \$47,750 per bottle.

"If we can't start a revolution, at least we

sive. She cites as an example the New York collaborative Lovett/Codagnone's 2003 installation and performance *ASK\**, at the Laura Mars Group in Berlin and *TRANS>area* in New York. The team infused a room with the smells



can create a fragrance that symbolizes rebellion," says Kirk. The project was shown in 2008 at MoMA PS1, complete with an installation of a laboratory, hanging upside down, from the ceiling. Since then, with the assistance of scent designer Ulrich Lang, Kirk has brought out a less expensive variation of "Revolution" that has been marketed throughout Europe.

Lang has worked on many collaborations with artists, using Antwerp-based art dealer Roger Szmulewicz to market his fragrance, "Anvers," and commissioning Erik Swain, Katy Grannan, and Matt Licari to design the packaging. In 2005 he also worked with Daniel Bozhkov (represented by Andrew Kreps Gallery in New York) on the fragrance "Eau d'Ernest" for the Istanbul Biennial.

"Using the form of fragrance to express an idea is a challenge," says Lia Gangitano, director of Participant Inc., who has worked on several scent-based projects and finds in them the potential to make something transgres-

of aphrodisiacs and body odors while they read passages from Dominique Laporte's *History of Shit* and the screenplay for Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Salo (120 Days of Sodom)*.

Currently Gangitano is developing a "trans fragrance" with Justin Bond, the Radical Faerie performance artist best known as Kiki, of Kiki and Herb, to accompany Bond's upcoming exhibition of paintings this fall. "He is looking for something less binary than the usual unisex perfume," says the curator. "Right now I do think there are issues at play in contemporary art that involve immediacy and intimacy—and what could be more so than putting a scent on your body."

"I think what these artists are after is not making a sculpture but making an environment," says Yasmit Raymond, summing up her experience with olfactory art. "The work, when it smells, enters the realm of a human being, the living. This life component enters into it—which is very different from looking at a Monet." ■

**"Revolution," created by Lisa Kirk in collaboration with perfumer Patricia Choux, blends the odors of smoke, gasoline, tear gas, burnt rubber, blood, and urine. The original edition, *Revolution Pipe Bomb*, 2008, is encased in a canister made of precious metals, produced in collaboration with jewelry designer Jelena Behrend. An "affordable facsimile" comes in a bottle.**

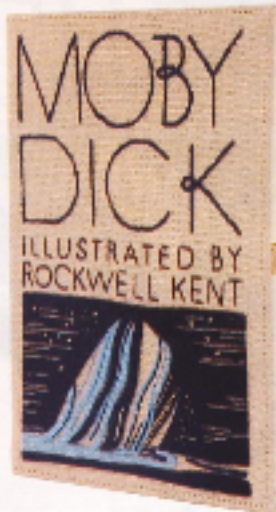


# Mogelpackung



Natalie Portman (29)

Kein Wunder, dass gerade Natalie Portman zu den ersten in Hollywood mit Buch-Clutch gehört – schließlich ist die Schauspielerin als Harvard-Medizinstudentin ein echter Bücherwurm. Unter dem Motto „Du kannst ein Buch nicht nach dem Cover beurteilen“ hat die fantastische Designerin Olympia Le-Tan ihre unklassischer als Vorlage für exklusive Clutches genommen. Die 21 verschiedenen Taschen sind handbestickt, und jedes Modell ist auf 15 Stück limitiert. Eins ist schon ins Archiv genommen, die zweite wird bestimmt nicht.



**FASHION ZUM GIPSCHLAGEN**  
Du kannst jedes Buch einzeln eine ausgefallene Clutch aus Olympia Le-Tan, je um 1015 Euro ([www.olympia2005.com](http://www.olympia2005.com))

## Neue Shopping-Versuchung

Die coolen Stücke des Berliner Designers Kilian Kerner gibt's nun auch online unter [www.kiliankerner.de](http://www.kiliankerner.de).



## Revolutionärer Duft?

Wer den schlagigen Wunsch nach Schweiß-, Benzin- und Fräsen-Gesamtheit verspürt, erwacht sich das neue Parfüm „Revolution“ von Ulrich Laro und Künstlerin Lisa Sals. Der Flakon ist aus Gold und einer Granatgranate nachempfunden. Künstlich blauen müssen 2.000 Euro für den skurrilen Gegenstand hinbleiben. Aber auch die günstige Variante in einer einfachen Glasflasche ist der Hammer in den USA. Sie ist in Deutsch und im Berliner Southside Quarter 206 für 55 Euro zu haben. Die Künstlerin will mit ihrem Werk auf die glorreiche Zeit von Gewalt aufmerksam machen. Das wird Cl... erhand die zirkulären Aromen strenger der Barikaden als Parfüm tragen will – würde er unwahrscheinlich...

## Hochprozentige Co-Op



Absolut Vodka hat zusammen mit deutschen Designern wie Sabrina Dehoff eine Accessoire-Kollektion herausgebracht. Wer sich eine exklusive Flasche plus Armband sichern will, muss schnell sein: Die Teile sind auf 3 Stück pro Künstler limitiert, um 500 Euro ([www.verypoolish.com](http://www.verypoolish.com)).





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23.11.2010  
DER DUFT BRENNENDER BARRIKADEN FINDET IN EINER EXKLUSIVEN BOUTIQUE IN BERLIN-MITTE REISSENDEN ABSATZ

## Das 30000-Euro-Tränengas-Parfüm

Von Jonas Rest

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Ein Geruch von Tränengas, Benzin, Rauch, verbranntem Gummi, Blut, Schweiß und verfaultem Fleisch: Diese Duftnote verspricht die Parfümcreation "Revolution". Verkauft wird sie außerhalb Manhattans in einer der exklusivsten Boutiquen in Berlin-Mitte, dem Departmentstore Quartier 206. Die Ausführung in einem Platin-Flakon, der einer Rohrbombe nachempfunden ist, kostet 33000 Euro. Noch verkauft sich im Quartier 206 allerdings die Discounter-Ausführung des metallisch-stechenden Duftes am besten: eine schlichte 12-ml-Laborflasche, bei der die Rohrbombe nur auf dem Etikett abgebildet ist. Sie kostet 55 Euro - und findet seit wenigen Wochen reißenden Absatz, sagt eine Sprecherin. Entwickelt hat das Parfüm die New Yorker Konzept-Künstlerin Lisa Kirk - zu der Zeit, als George W. Bush regierte und Menschen schon verhaftet wurden, so Kirk, wenn sie ein Anti-Kriegs-Shirt trugen. Die Überlegung der Künstlerin: Wenn schon keine Revolution in Aussicht ist, wieso nicht wenigstens den Geruch verkaufen? Um herauszufinden, wie die Revolution duftet, recherchierte sie ein ganzes Jahr lang. Interviewte Revolutionäre, Journalisten, ehemalige Aktivisten. Deren Erinnerungen kondensierte sie einer Duft-Installation, die auch Parfümeure begeisterte. Ulrich Lang, ein Duftdesigner, der zuvor im Marketing von L'Oréal arbeitete, überzeugte die Künstlerin eine kommerzielle Version produzieren zu lassen. Für Lisa Kirk, deren Kunst sich ohnehin um die Widersprüche der Konsumgesellschaft dreht, war das bloß eine konsequente Weiterentwicklung ihres Projekts. Mit einem Hochglanz-Werbespot wird der Revolutionsduft nun im Quartier 206 an die exklusive Klientel gebracht. Das Video zeigt zwei schwarz gekleidet Scharfschützen in Sturmhauben-Masken, einen Mann und eine Frau, die durch die Straßenschluchten Sohos rennen. Sie bleiben stehen, nehmen ihre Sturmhauben ab. Dann reicht sie ihm den wie eine Rohrbombe geformten Parfüm-Flakon; eingeleuchtet wird der Slogan: Revolution, ein Duft für Männer und Frauen. Die Künstlerin will mit dem Spot die Glorifizierung von Gewalt in der US-amerikanischen Kultur thematisieren. Wenn es mit dem Verkauf so weitergeht, werden sie im Quartier 206 vielleicht im Weihnachtsgeschäft bald die Weiterentwicklungen der Revolutions-Linie führen. Lisa Kirk hat sie in New York bereits präsentiert: Kerzen in Dynamit-Form in drei Duftvariationen: Französische Revolution (Duftnote: Brot, schmelzendes Kerzenwachs, Schweiß, Parfüm), 1968 (Marihuana, Tränengas, Patschuli) und "Bagdad" (verbrannte elektrische Kabel, Staub, Sand). ----- Foto: Parfüm Revolution: stechender Geruch.

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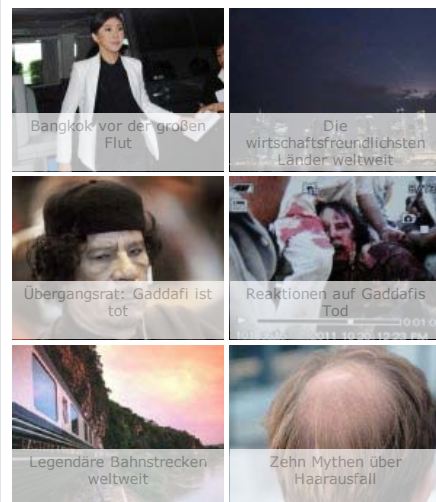
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5 March 2008

### **REVOLUTION PIPE BOMB**

#### **LAUNCH**

Thursday, March 13, 2008

7-10pm

PARTICIPANT INC

253 East Houston Street

New York NY 10002

Lisa Kirk and Jelena Behrend

#### ***Revolution Pipe Bomb***

Limited edition fragrance, 2008

Edition of 3 (3AP), platinum

Edition of 5 (3AP), 14K gold

Edition of 20 (3AP), sterling silver



On Thursday, March 13, from 7-10pm, PARTICIPANT INC will launch ***Revolution Pipe Bomb***, a collaborative limited edition by Lisa Kirk and Jelena Behrend, designed exclusively for PARTICIPANT INC. Fashioned in sterling silver, 14k gold, and platinum, ***Revolution Pipe Bomb*** is a hand-crafted precious metal decanter designed for this special edition of the fragrance, *Revolution*.

The ***Revolution Pipe Bomb*** launch event will comprise a scripted environment that unveils this special limited edition. Conceived as the end result of several years of research and related works by Kirk that address the marketing of transgressive practices, ***Revolution Pipe Bomb*** is a luxury fragrance, produced in collaboration with Symrise Perfumers. Through research gathered from interviews with anonymous journalists, activists, and political radicals, *Revolution* fragrance was developed based on the memory of the smell of revolution. The final solution contains the odor of smoke, gasoline, tear gas, burnt rubber, and decaying flesh.

For this special limited edition, Kirk joined with Jelena Behrend to imagine a precious metal pipe bomb to contain a vile of this faintly aggressive fragrance. Elevating a makeshift device to a valued commodity, this bold and meticulously sculpted object, removed from the register of everyday violence, is held in reserve for the smell of *Revolution*.

Samples and related packaging will be featured in a sculptural display unit reminiscent of Kirk's recent smoking *Revolution* perfume laboratory, installed



upside down at PS1 Contemporary Art Center this fall. Related “marketing items,” including a silk-screened bandana (to be worn as face mask) depicting an exploded view of the *Revolution Pipe Bomb* will be featured, as well as other photographic elements derived from the *Revolution* project.

Through the generosity of artists, PARTICIPANT INC co-produces limited edition artworks specifically intended to support the organization. A portion of the purchase of the editions is tax-deductible, and contributes directly to our program. Other PARTICIPANT editions include Lovett/Codagnone, Tony Oursler, and Shellburne Thurber.

**Jelena Behrend** was born in Belgrade, Serbia. She moved to the United States in 1988 and apprenticed for Hungarian master jeweler Gabor Nagy in Los Angeles, and in 1994, opened her own jewelry studio in LA. Her edgy, meticulously sculpted works of art have been featured in numerous magazines, movies, music videos, and have amassed an impressive list of celebrity enthusiasts including Lenny Kravitz, Madonna, Queen Nor, Jennifer Lopez, Emma Thompson, Pink, Iman, Hillary Clinton, Courtney Cox, and Drew Barrymore. In 1996, Behrend headed to New York, working in her private studio downtown for clients such as Barney’s New York, Barney’s Beverly Hills, and Barney’s Tokyo. Two years later, she opened Jelena Behrend Studio on the Lower East Side. Behrend has conceptualized and created collections for Donna Karan, Geraldine Laybourne and Oprah Winfrey, Neiman Marcus, and Kenneth Cole. Recent works have appeared on the covers of *Numéro*, *Rolling Stone*, and in the pages of the *New York Times Style* magazine, *Vogue*, and *Interview*.

**Lisa Kirk** received her BFA from the School of Visual Arts and her MFA from the University of California. Her solo exhibitions and projects have been held at PS1 Contemporary Art Center (a MoMA Affiliate); Galeria Comercial, Puerto Rico; Participant Inc, NY; and MOT International, London. She has also contributed to North Drive Press, NY; Creative Time, NY; and Charlie, NY. Her curated projects include *LEGION*, *Bonds of Love*, *The Outlaw Series*, and *You*. Reviews include *Artforum*, *L’uomo Vogue*, *Plan B*, *The Guardian*, *Time Out London/New York*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *New York Magazine*, and *Art Review*.

Beverages generously provided by Christiania Vodka and Grolsch.



PARTICIPANT INC’s exhibitions are made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.

This program is supported, in part, by funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

PARTICIPANT INC receives generous support from the Harriett Ames Charitable Trust, Bloomberg, Brown Foundation, Foundation 20 21, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and numerous individuals.

PARTICIPANT INC is located at 253 East Houston Street, between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets on the Lower East Side. Subway: F/V to Second Avenue, Allen Street exit.  
[www.participantinc.org](http://www.participantinc.org)

In 1899, Norwegian-American economist and sociologist Thorstein Veblen published his Theory of The Leisure Class, a description and critique of the rise of the *nouveau riche*, the leisure class, the child of the Industrial Revolution. Veblen establishes a historical link to the past of nobility and clergy, suggesting an aspect of human nature to class division of work and idea of the image of wealth. Lisa Kirk, artist-curator-cultural-archeologist, indirectly unearths this concept from within our own culture of excess, greed, and war - our new leisure class - bringing attention to our symptoms of consumerism.<sup>1</sup> Kirk's artwork falls under the catch-phrase criticism of rampant consumerism, the result of complicating Veblen's *conspicuous consumption* with the idealism of revolt (think idealisms and failures of '68, the Zapatistas, the 2002 film *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*), the creation of art objects, and the critique of our market driven art world.<sup>2</sup>

Kirk presents us with pop-trash, the detritus of our culture, glamorized as overly desirable commodity. *Revolution!* is an extensive and ongoing investigation that uses an archaeological approach to the present to expose our nature as simply consumers of objects and ideas. Kirk has pulled the vocabulary of reference for her project *Revolution!* from war, popular entertainment, middle-class America and the sentiment of nostalgia for revolt. *Revolution!* is chuck-full of cultural symbols, whose meanings have been complicated by the artist to not only be about violence and the appeal of something different. These objects purposefully address our own desires for wealth and happiness. These are the true objects revealed to us as they are, not as we *see* them. Think about it, do we truly know what we see, or even what we want? The AK-47 is not a gun, it is a shiny perfume bottle; it is money, power, and social status.

"Humanity the most savage of all species" announces Kirk's shiny gold billboard. Shot up by a corrections officer with bullets designed for prisoner riot control, this piece could double as a subtitle to this exhibition as it suggests that the artist has an underlying motive. This is a deeply personal exhibition essentially about us, not necessarily intended for us - perhaps more for the entertainment of the artist - but we are all implicated with the seductive physical texture and inferred value of her objects. What we are seeing is a collection of fetish objects from a virtual revolution in which our desires have become our weapons and our weapons our desires. The *Urban Decay* brand makeup-on-linen paintings have been shot up as well, this time by the artist with a paint ball gun. They were then burned. These minimal pieces are a mix of the politics of body image and violence; a nod to Art History's Niki de Saint Phalle's shooting paintings, Yves Klien's fire paintings, and the destruction of the beautiful art object. Yet these pieces are somehow *still* beautiful. This is a cookie cutter revolution ready for consumption. This is an invitation appealing to the most revolutionary within us all with a shiny *bling-bling* smoking cash register and glittering cast AK 47's.<sup>3</sup>

---

1 I think that the term *nouveau riche* is dated in 80's excess and our current millennium and post 9/11 excess demands its own term.

2 *Conspicuous consumption* is defined as the lavish spending on goods and services, which are acquired mainly for the purpose of displaying wealth, with the goal of attaining or maintaining social status.

3 *Bling-bling* is the imaginary sound light makes bouncing off of a diamond. Referring to predominance for excess also to a lifestyle built around excess spending and ostentation associated with rap and hip-hop culture internationally.

FEBRUARY  
2008  
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## L'UOMO / About

*Da Vienna a Venezia, da New York all'Islanda le ultime mostre offrono una rilettura dell'eredità di questi popoli. E, nella nostra società, si diffonde una voglia iconoclasta*

## The INVASION of today's barbarians

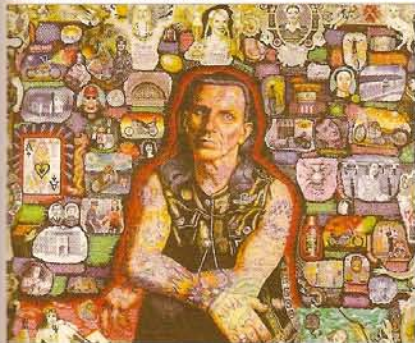
di Caroline Corbetta

**I**nvasioni, vandalismo, degenerazione culturale. Nell'immaginario comune il termine "barbaro" evoca queste ed altre apocalittiche suggestioni. Al cinema lo ha recentemente ribadito il cineasta canadese Denys Arcand che, dopo "Le invasioni barbariche" del 2003, affresco del caos contemporaneo, ha sfornato recentemente "L'età barbarica" dove dà oramai per assodata la crisi: i barbari hanno vinto. La dissoluzione della civiltà occidentale con i suoi valori illuministi è compiuta. L'unico rifugio possibile è nella fantasia. Intanto a

**My friends' accomplishments make me sick**



un art-world dominato dalle regole di mercato oggi si manifesta come una forza agitatrice e selvaggia che, però, dal sistema prende il meglio che esso può offrire e a sua volta lo rivitalizza con nuove energie. Un po' come fecero i veri barbari con l'Impero Romano. Oggi i nuovi barbari dell'arte arrivano dalla strada, dalle periferie turbolente delle grandi città. Come il giovane francese Cyprien Gaillard che eleva a soggetto artistico i casermoni popolari o mette in scena azioni di land-art in cui invade di fumo idilliaci paesaggi dando corpo, così, a oscure minacce ("Real Remnants of Fictive Wars"); oppure arrivano dalle province più re-



Venezia, una nutritissima mostra propone una rilettura dell'eredità barbarica, oltre gli stereotipi. A Palazzo Grassi fino al 20 luglio l'esposizione "Roma e i barbari. La nascita di un nuovo mondo" oppone alla visione popolare che vede nelle orde distruttrici la causa di un lunghissimo periodo di decadenza dell'Impero d'occidente, le prove (quasi duemila manufatti) di un fecondo incontro-scontro culturale che ha dato origine a nuove forme estetiche e culturali ([www.palazzograssi.it](http://www.palazzograssi.it)).

Tra stereotipi e nuove ricerche, l'idea del barbaro come "altro", straniero che irrompe in una realtà già resa fragile da cause endogene, nel tormentato presente spaventa e affascina come non mai. Certamente nel mondo dell'arte si nota una diffusione di atteggiamenti "barbarici": stanno cioè aumentando i gesti anticonvenzionali se non addirittura iconoclastici da parte degli artisti. Quella che dovrebbe essere la vocazione dell'arte - ovvero mettere in discussione lo status quo - in

**I nuovi "vandalì" arrivano dalla strada e dalle periferie delle grandi città e irrompono in realtà tormentate. Come il francese Cyprien Gaillard, che eleva a soggetto artistico i casermoni popolari**



mote "dell'Impero", come il vichingo Ragnar Kjartansson che porta l'energia primigenia della sua terra, l'Islanda (di cui sarà il rappresentante ufficiale alla Biennale di Venezia 2009), in una serie di performances furiose e irresistibili ([www.ragnarkjartansson.com](http://www.ragnarkjartansson.com)). Da New York sta mettendo a punto la sua "calata" sul mondo dell'arte Ivano Attori, meglio noto come Dumbo, il famigerato writer milanese. Il quale tenta il salto dalla strada alla galleria con un'energia sediziosa e metaforica da vero "barbaro romantico" che sa prendere le distanze dalla violenza reale: «Sono attratto dal caos», spiega Ivano, «dai riot, dagli scontri allo stadio: mi ricordano le battaglie medioevali, armature e cavalli, sassi e molotov, giovani contro giovani, preparazione e tecnica. Questo

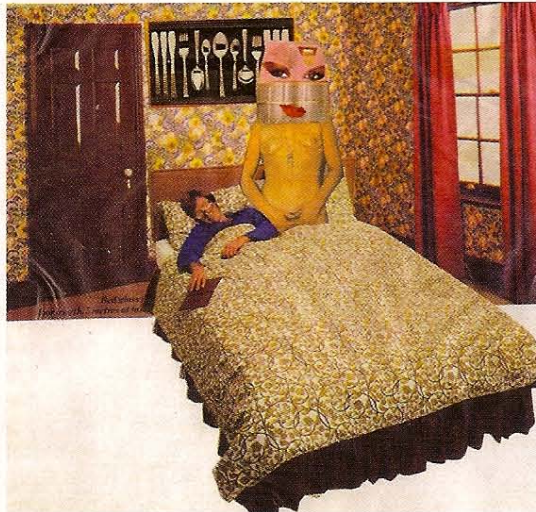


# /About

in fondo è l'essere umano da sempre. Partecipare sarebbe una sciocchezza, un errore, ma non guardare mi risulterebbe difficile». Sempre a New York Lisa Kirk, dallo spazio no-profit Participant Inc., sfida le convenzioni estetiche – ancora ben salde nell'immaginario collettivo dopo oltre un secolo di provocazioni avanguardistiche – lanciando il suo

culture diverse possano nascondere linguaggi originali. Al centro di una delle due gallerie Gagosian di Londra, fino al 23 del mese, si erge un enorme cuore trafitto e sanguinante composto da una miriade di pulsanti e coloratissime lampadine. Si tratta di "Sacrificial Heart", scultura rotante, alta circa 3 metri e caratterizzata da un decorativismo estremo che

artisti (di successo) disincantati e pure strafottenti (www.gagosian.com). Intriganti paralleli tra la cultura contemporanea e quella punk (tra i neo-barbari più celebri del XX secolo) vengono tracciati nella mostra "Punk – no one is innocent. Style Rebellion, Art Attack and Social Subversion" alla Kunsthal di Vienna (www.kunsthalle-wien.at) dal 16.05 al 7.09. Analogamente a "Eclipse. Art in a Dark Age" al Moderna Museet di Stoccolma, dal 31.05 al 24.08 (www.modernamuseet.se), la mostra racconta le inquietudini, ma anche le speranze di questo presente neo-barbarico. Un sentimento apocalittico diffuso anche in letteratura, come racconta Francesco Muzioli nel suo libro "Le scritture della catastrofe" (Meltèmi editore). Le invenzioni (o, sarebbe meglio dire, descrizioni?) di mondi distopici, scenari in cui le cose potrebbero andare molto



**In molti campi questa neo-cultura privilegia un decorativismo che mescola liberamente iconografia occidentale e stilemi orientali, descrivendo scenari distopici e suggestioni apocalittiche. Per qualcuno tale contesto segna la fine di un'epoca. Per altri ne annuncia l'inizio**

profumo "Revolution!". Una fragranza "sovversiva" che sa di fumo, benzina, gas lacrimogeno, gomma bruciata e di altri aromi della guerriglia urbana (www.participantinc.org). Per un vero outsider come il "Pittore Apocalittico e Romantico" Joe Coleman, che ha avuto i suoi primi riconoscimenti da importanti istituzioni europee come il Palais de Tokyo di Parigi e il KW di Berlino solo dopo i cinquant'anni (www.joecoleman.com), c'è un giovane poco più che trentenne che da Calcutta, via Londra, ha stracciato ogni record d'asta per un quasi-esordiente: Raqib Shaw. Due storie e due modi di fare arte agli antipodi ma entrambi caratterizzati da un decorativismo che mischia in libertà iconografia occidentale e stilemi orientali, dimostrando come dall'incontro di

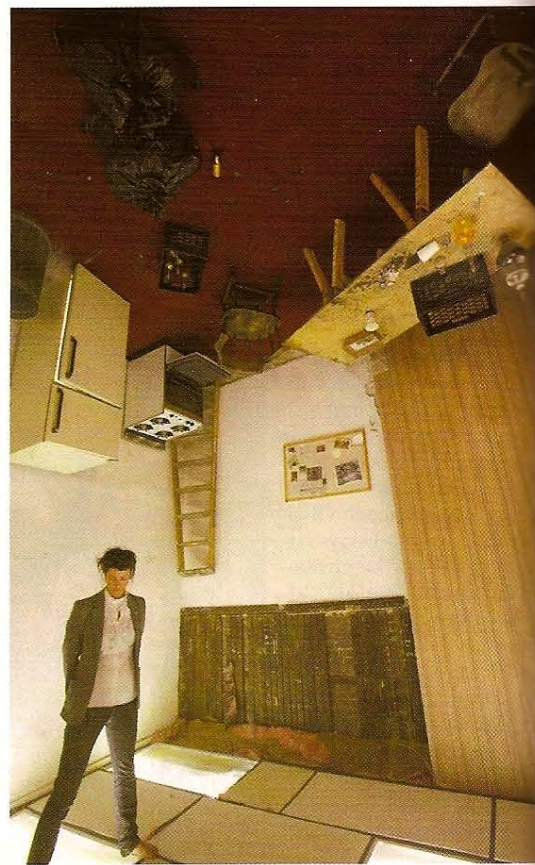
richiama anche antichi rituali pagani, firmato dal duo britannico Tim Noble & Sue Webster, gli stessi che



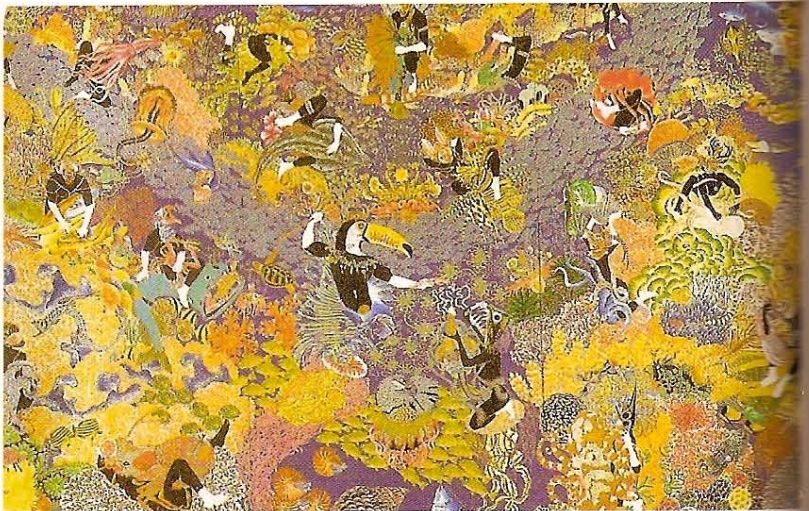
negli anni Novanta si autorappresentarono ironicamente con le sembianze di due primati nella scultura "New Barbarians". Appropriandosi dell'attitudine punk, i due hanno incarnato un nuovo modo di essere

peggio, sembrano prevalere sulle narrazioni utopiche. Per qualcuno è la fine di un'epoca, per altri un nuovo inizio. (in alto, da sinistra e in senso orario. Dalla mostra "Punk – no one is innocent. Style Rebellion, Art Attack and Social

Subversion", opera senza titolo di Linder, 1978, courtesy Stuart Shave Modern Art, London. Lisa Kirk, "Time Suspended", 2007, l'artista nell'installazione del progetto "Revolution perfume", photo Matthew Septimus and Ps1 MOMA.



Raqib Shaw, "The Garden of Earthly Delights III", 2003. Tim Noble & Sue Webster, "Sacrificial heart", 2007, courtesy dell'artista. Gagosian Gallery. In apertura, dall'alto. Ivano Atzori, "My friend's accomplishments make me sick", 2007, courtesy dell'artista. Joe Coleman, "Indian Larry's Wilde Ride", 2005. Ragnar Kjartansson, "Holy Grail", 2002, performance presso Studio Alaska, Reykjavík.





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Teems Like Smell Spirit

By [Marisa Olson](#) on Tuesday, April 1st, 2008 at 10:53 am.



Who hasn't had the synaesthetic experience of a scent triggering a memory? Some argue that the sense of smell is among our body's strongest, and yet--"smellivision" aspirations aside--media culture revolves so much more around our eyes and ears. At present, New York's Lower East Side (a piquant sensorium, to be sure) is home to two olfactorily-driven projects. At nonprofit art space [Cuchifritos](#) through April 26th is a group show entitled, "[If There Ever Was](#)," featuring seven "extinct and impossible smells" that have been "re-created" by Koan-Jeff Baysa, Bertrand Duchaufour, Christoph Hornetz, Christophe Laudamiel, Patricia Millns, Steven Pearce, David Pybus, and Geza Schön. Some of these creators call themselves artists while some work as scientists, engineers, or others with a vested interest in "olfactory images." For instance, botanist James Wong created a hyperreal scent equivalent to a bouquet of extinct flowers, calling attention to art's ability to invoke the absent, fantastical, or what cannot otherwise be said or seen. Neighboring nonprofit [Participant, Inc](#) is also supporting artists' exploration of the interface between sight and smell with Lisa Kirk and Jelena Behrend's [Revolution Pipe Bomb](#) project. The work was initially conceived as a fragrance by Kirk, who then approached Behrend to produce it as a special limited edition in the form of "a precious metal pipe bomb to contain a vile of [a] faintly aggressive fragrance." The perfume's core elements were determined after interviews with war journalists, activists, and others who've been on the frontlines of revolutions. It bears hints of "smoke, gasoline, tear gas, burnt rubber, and decaying flesh." Doesn't that make you wish this website was scratch-and-sniff? In all seriousness, this project explores the important subject of the commodification and marketing of violence and like Wong's imagined bouquet, makes the issue "more real than real" by addressing it in the realm of the senses. If you're in New York, follow your nose downtown. - Marisa Olson

*Lisa Kirk and Jelena Behrend, Revolution Pipe Bomb, 2007*

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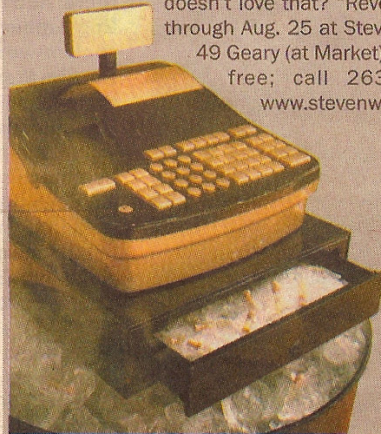
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### WHAT DO WE WANT?

The cash register appears to be on fire. One wall is covered in loud tabloid newsprint. And yet, the voluptuous perfume bottles appear very much at home. At Lisa Kirk's exhibit, "**Revolution**," the artist also shows some paintings made by taking a blowtorch to cosmetics. You're starting to get the picture. Kirk's observance that this country is ludicrously obsessed with gold-plating absolutely everything is actually pretty elegant itself. Her work makes us understand not only that we are knee-jerk branders, but that we're fucking good at it. The perfume is real, and was developed as part of a previous project of Kirk's during which she asked people, possibly with a straight face, what revolution should smell like. She also mocks cops, and who doesn't love that? "Revolution" continues through Aug. 25 at Steven Wolf Fine Arts, 49 Geary (at Market), S.F. Admission is free; call 263-3677 or visit [www.stevenwolffinearts.com](http://www.stevenwolffinearts.com).

— *HIYA SWANHUYSER*







## VISUAL ART

### Lisa Kirk: "Revolution!"

Placing activist before artist for more than alphabetical reasons, Lisa Kirk brings a potent political intent and much-needed sense of acute irreverence to the art world. She's protested against the Iraq War by performing pole dances dressed as Rosie the Riveter and, in another recent project, made comparisons between recent museum curatorial processes and the tricks of P.T. Barnum. (More than one successful veteran artist I've interviewed would applaud that idea.) For "Revolution!," Kirk turns a gallery space into a retail environment, where she'll sell the titular perfume, a scent composed of ingredients suggested by living revolutionaries. Intricately decorated oil barrels and paintings created with



makeup and a blowtorch are some of the other goods Kirk will have on offer for consumers and browsers. (Huston)

Through Aug. 25  
 5:30 p.m. reception  
 Steven Wolf Fine Arts  
 49 Geary, suite 411, SF  
 (415) 263-3677  
[www.stevenwolffinearts.com](http://www.stevenwolffinearts.com)



# SECRET

BECAUSE LIFE IS LONGER THAN YOU THINK

Issue 4

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## LISA KIRK LEADS THE WAY TO REVOLUTION ONE PERFUME RIOT AT A TIME

Words: Bengala

Images: Installation views courtesy of MOT

Web: [www.lisakirkprojects.com](http://www.lisakirkprojects.com)

Web: [www.motinternational.org](http://www.motinternational.org)

Ask the average New York art kid about Lisa Kirk and they'll talk about rumors of blown-up museums and perfume riots. Sometimes the words feminist and curator come up. Press them, and most admit to never having seen her work in person, but know that she's cool.

This conundrum may or may not drive Kirk crazy, but it makes sense. Most of her work is a critique of the art world. Since 2000, she's thrown acclaimed art exhibitions in her mother's apartment, broken windows as public art, exploded a red velvet cake replica of the Whitney, curated an illegal art show with over 50 artists in public spaces, and more recently created a fragrance designed after the smell of revolution.

Now, she's started Legion, a non-space dedicated to site-specific projects. She's had a show in London's MOT International, where she propagated more mistruths about herself and smashed Molotov cocktails against the gallery's walls.

**What exactly do you want to accomplish with REVOLUTION?**

REVOLUTION is meant to be a critical response to contemporary cultural apathy and our general lack of political motivation; further, it is an attempt to engage the viewer and the collector in reactionary action. Americans will never participate in any revolution because the government won't allow us - specifically all of this fear-based media, government surveillance, the

Patriot Act. That's what my show in London is about.

**But revolution has never really been "allowed" to just happen.**

True, but in the past one didn't need to get a permit to speak-out on issues, let alone wear an opinionated tee shirt without being arrested for being a terrorist.

**And the centerpiece of this project is the fragrance, REVOLUTION, which comes in Molotov cocktail form?**

The bottles are recycled wine bottles, gilt gold or platinum. They're actually painted 14k gold, then fired and a side effect is that they become tempered. They're really hard to break. While installing at the London gallery, I set off and they were bouncing back at me. I point my finger caught on fire and would've blown out.

**When people buy the Molotov cocktails, they agree to smash them at your request. Correct?**  
The work is not complete until it is destroyed. We have created a fictional terrorist group that the gallery or collector a ransom note (based on the Jean Benet Ramesy note) that describes what they are required to do in order to complete the piece.

**You also exhibited your slogan as a proper artwork.**

Each one of the signs is unique; the text screened on aluminum or gold-aluminum blasted with a shotgun. They were actually used by a prison guard, my sister's boyfriend, right?

**We both agree that revolution is almost an impossibility at this point, so is failure built into the body of work?**

It's more about pointing failure out, not necessarily about its own failure. I think the work is actually more successful than most things in my life....