

the Partisan café, Bergen

1.

the Partisan café is an educational/performative/artistic practice as a coffee house in the Museum of Burning Questions – a Para-Museum realised in collaboration with the artist Isa Rosenberger – and one performative platform of the *freethought* infrastructure project.

Located in the occupied historic fire station of Bergen the Partisan café is host as much as guest. It is a shared space and a contact zone. As educators and café workers we think about radical hospitality. As guests of the resident firefighters we think about reciprocities and commonalities.

2.

the Partisan café borrows its name directly from “the Partisan coffee house” – a space for gatherings, conversation and debate in London Soho in the late 1950s, organised by the New Left. Our use of the name is not nostalgic but an actualisation: With burning questions of today, we relate to it and appropriate it.

the Partisan café is related to a choice: partisan instead of participant. As “participation” has become a main engine of neoliberal transformation, formulating and taking up dissident stances is necessary. Rather than interacting within prescribed situations, we choose to build situated knowledges and actions.

We understand pop-up coffee shops as an emblem of gentrification processes. In the Partisan café, we will take the economisation of the commons and the privatization of the public sphere as a main focus of our practice. the Partisan café creates blockages to make economies and relations visible and negotiable.

We consider our educational work – as much as our artistic, performative and/or curatorial actions – as an organic intellectual practice. We work actively against the unacceptable choice between either marginalisation or neoliberalisation of education in the cultural field. We practice our educational work differently.

3.

We welcome everyone who comes into the Partisan café. There will be coffee, tea, water, beer and wine. We don't serve food but if we cook our own lunch, we share what remains.

the Partisan café is open Thursday to Tuesday, 10:00-18:00. Evenings are occasionally open for projects, events, needs and desires.

The café is run by seven educators/performers/café workers. Six of us are contracted to work 37.5 hours a week (four of these hours are deliberately unplanned). In preparation, we spend two weeks together dedicated to self-organisation, self-education and group improvisation.

We continually discuss the politics and experiment with the atmosphere of the space – e.g. in terms of labour divisions and the performance of inclusions and exclusions. We seek feminist, anti-normative, anti-racist, anti-fascist, anti-nationalist, queer and decolonial approaches to radical hospitality and ask: What is a counter-atmosphere?

4.

the Partisan café is also a radio station. In collaboration with local radio projects, conversations and debates will be broadcast from the Partisan café to the online radio public. International newspapers and periodicals will be available for reading alone and together. Wifi will also be provided.

The authorship of the Partisan café and its programme is shared between all the people involved in making it possible.

5.

A *freethought* programme in the Partisan café, titled 'Spectres of Infrastructure', will explore the political, urban and cultural dimensions of our infrastructural condition. Curated by Louis Moreno in collaboration with Brandon Labelle and us, it will follow four strands: Invisible Republic, Shadow Citizenry, Dancing Tables and Acoustic Spectres.

Another dimension of the Partisan café is a programme based on our investigations and desires in collaboration with local actors and regular guests. We relate to the topic of infrastructure and situate it in local and transnational discussions. The ongoing programme is open for suggestions and will include readings, debates, movie screenings and music nights.

We invite everyone to assemble and dance with the tables

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Jenny Moore and Nora Sternfeld
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