

FOSSIL FREE CULTURE NL

ANNUAL REPORT
2019



FOREWORD

We are very pleased to present the second annual report of Fossil Free Culture NL, outlining our activities in this year and our motivations. In 2019 we solidified efforts and firmly contributed towards ending artwashing in the cultural sector.

In 2019, we started our new art campaign Fossil Free Museumplein (Museum Square), the goals of which we aim to accomplish by the end of 2020. Our new focus in this became the Concertgebouw (The Royal Concert Hall), the last institution on Amsterdam's Museum Square receiving fossil fuel sponsorship. We deliberately didn't incorporate the name of this institution in the art campaign's name, to connect it to the city of Amsterdam. When our goal is accomplished, we can then call Amsterdam the first city in the world with a Fossil Free Museumplein, which will set the tone for many other cities to follow suit and will inspire audiences and the many volunteers that work with us.

We started 2019 with an art performance in January announcing the new art campaign outside the Concertgebouw. This performance gave us a taste of how the Concertgebouw as a cultural institution was different from our previous target

The Van Gogh Museum; that the most important challenge would relate to the visiting public, which is mostly comprised of the Dutch cultural elite.

This played a very important role in the development and production of our new 'Art Storm' entitled Dissonance timed with the opening of the cultural season in 2019. Dissonance consisted of three consecutive art performances at the Concertgebouw, that strategically escalated and culminated in a powerful and beautiful 'weather event' created by the flinging of musical scores from the concert hall's balcony at the end of "A Night at the Opera". We noticed that we received more support from the musicians than from the audience, in terms of posts on social media supporting our artistic actions.

The 'Art Storm' initiated a series of email exchanges between the director of the Concertgebouw, Simon Reinink, in which he pushed for a coffee meeting with Fossil Free Culture NL Foundation board's chairwoman. This email exchange gave us the inspiration to execute one last artistic intervention in 2019, during the month of December at the Concertgebouw Café, named 'Waiting for Simon'.

By focussing our activities on such an important cultural institution as the Concertgebouw, we are crumbling beyond repair the cultural pillar that sustains the fossil fuel power within our society. We strongly believe that our ambitious goal for 2020 is becoming a reality.

And we will persist.

FOSSIL FREE CULTURE NL

We are a collective of artists, activists and performers working at the intersection of art and activism. Through the creation of disobedient art performances in cultural institutions that accept fossil fuel funding, we aim to erode the public image of fossil fuel corporations.

Our goal is to establish oil and gas sponsorship as morally unacceptable for cultural institutions; parallel to tobacco but far exceeding its toxicity – undermining not only individual human health but degrading the collective future of all life on Earth.

Vision

We envision a fossil free future based on the equality of all species and beings. We believe art has an essential role to play in realising this future, by sculpting its image into people's minds.

Mission

Our mission is to terminally erode the fossil fuel industry's social license to operate. We believe that eradicating fossil fuel sponsorship from the cultural sector is a necessary step towards making space for, and concretely starting to build, a fossil free future.

We, as artists and activists, believe we have a core role to play in exposing the catastrophic social and ecological impacts of fossil fuel corporations' operations and their culpability for the global climate crisis, and therefore consider it our duty to liberate the arts from the influence of profoundly unethical corporations. We are committed to use our skills as artists and our determination as activists to create persistent and audacious artistic performances challenging these toxic relationships at the very heart of the cultural sector inside the prestigious institutions that still accept fossil fuel sponsorship.

Background

Fossil Free Culture NL was founded in 2016 by a group of artists, activists, researchers and cultural workers committed to cutting the ties between fossil fuel companies and public cultural institutions.

In the three years to date, we have succeeded in cutting the financial ties between the Van Gogh Museum and Royal Dutch Shell and creating five disobedient art performances and interventions inside the Concertgebouw; all of which challenged these institutions' acceptance of Shell sponsorship. At the same time, we worked to invigorate discussion in the Netherlands and beyond on the subject of unethical sponsorship, specifically on the concept of 'artwashing'.

RESULTS 2019

During 2019 we managed to solidly establish our presence at the Concertgebouw with five art performances and interventions, which initiated a reaction from its director Simon Reinink. This shows us that our work is having a compelling effect within the institution.

Disobedient art is the core of our work. However, we also engage in other side activities that aim at:

1 – Creating a vibrant community of artists, cultural workers and activists willing to participate in the disobedient performances and other events. With this in mind we open up our celebrations to the artistic community and the general public. In this way our celebrations not only centre around making our volunteers feel recognized for the work they do, but they also become a source of exchange experiences, fostering inspiration and cultural networking.

2 – Building a support network in the arts and cultural sector in the Netherlands and abroad. In 2019 we established a solid presence in the cultural sector. We increased our public appearances significantly during 2019 in relation to 2018. This has generated a stronger affirmation of Fossil Free Culture NL within the cultural sector

and, consequently, a growth in the number of volunteers with a creative professional background, making Fossil Free Culture NL stronger and bigger with more capacity.

We have been invited to share our experience and knowledge in talks, presentations and workshops by important institutions in the city and abroad, including at Broadcasting From Babylon for master students from DAS Theatre at [Framer Framed](#); at The Progress Bar organized by [Sonic Acts](#) at the OT301; and at the Articulate Climatic Justice Symposium at the [Plato Gallery](#) in Ostrava. In this way we have collaborated with progressive cultural institutions to generate public debate on the subject of unethical fossil fuel sponsorship and artwashing.

3 – Shifting the public opinion about oil-sponsorship in the arts by generating media attention. In 2019, [Het Parool](#), [NOS](#) and [AT5](#) among others, published articles about the performances of Fossil Free Culture NL. Art magazine [Metropolis M](#) widely covered our first action at the Concertgebouw further igniting the public debate around unethical oil and gas sponsorship of our cultural heritage. The [Financieele Dagblad](#) published a long article where we were mentioned, brutally stating that the Netherlands

is avoiding the debate about ‘wrong money’ in art. This clearly shows that the debate we initiated is broadening up and reaching other sectors within society.

4 – Supporting other activist organizations and groups to have a strong aesthetic impact in their messaging. Among other activities that we undertook for grassroots groups, we were invited to design the main banners for the Bloc for Radical Climate Justice at Amsterdam’s 30,000 strong climate march in 2019 and the front banner for the Block Against Climate Racism at Amsterdam’s march against racism soon after.

In the following pages, we will further outline the work we undertook in 2019.



WRITING ON THE WALL

January 20th, 2019
Het Concertgebouw
Performance

Three performers from Fossil Free Culture NL covered in a oil like substance and helped by assistants walk towards Het Concertgebouw entrance and printed their bodies on its glass façade. As the oil-stained future becomes evermore visible, bodies on the frontlines are already paying the ultimate price, in heat waves and high-tides, in fires and floods and devastating droughts. So it's way past time that privileges were revoked for those that caused this catastrophe.

This performance marked Het Concertgebouw as a new target of Fossil Free Culture NL.







DISSONANCE ACT I SEASON OPENING

September 14th, 2019
Het Concertgebouw
Performance

During the Opening Night of Het Concertgebouw Orchestra's new season, Fossil Free Culture NL makes clear that there is little to celebrate on a dying planet. Solemn, near motionless performers carrying trays with glasses of black champagne, demonstrate the dissonance between the Concertgebouw's public image and its complicity in the global crimes by Royal Dutch Shell through its acceptance of their dirty money.

This was the first performance of the 'Art Storm' Dissonance.







DISSONANCE ACT 2 AFTERTHOUGHT

September 22nd, 2019
The Concertgebouw
Performance

Fossil Free Culture NL took the stage and asked the Concertgebouw: What will be your role in history? At the end of a Sunday concert, six performers took to the stage and unrolled enormous banners on which a poem of award-winning poet Hannah van Binsbergen stood. Fossil Free Culture NL called for the Concertgebouw to stop accepting Shell as a member of their business club. This performance was an act of solidarity with the global Climate Strike on September 27 when millions around the world walked out of their workplaces and homes to join young climate strikers on the streets to demand an end to the fossil fuel age and climate justice for everyone.

This was the second performance of the 'Art Storm' Dissonance.



We made way
for a world
without
U.S.

It will be like
none of this
has
happened.



DISSONANCE ACT 3 TEMPEST

October 1st, 2019
The Concertgebouw
Performance

Ten performers from Fossil Free Culture NL whipped up a storm of 10,000 musical scores from the balconies drifting down into the Main Hall in an orchestrated act of artistic disobedience. Each sheet of paper was imprinted with an impossible and unplayable music score composed by Annelies Jonkers, reminding the Concertgebouw that there will be no music or anyone to listen to it on a dead planet. One of the prestigious venue's sponsors, Royal Dutch Shell, is directly responsible for the climate catastrophe.

This was the third and last performance of the 'Art Storm' Dissonance.



ZWEERS

BRUCKNER

MAHLER

DEBUSSY

GOUNOD

SWEELING

WAGNER



WAITING FOR SIMON

During December of 2019
The Concertgebouw Café
Artistic intervention

Following the Fossil Free Culture NL Art Storm Dissonance, the director of the Concertgebouw Simon Reinink initiated a email exchange, inviting the Fossil Free Culture NL Foundation board member Merel Willemsen for a coffee. This inspired the artists of the group to create a fiction on the social media platform Facebook. On each day of the month a photographer took a picture of a cup of coffee at the Concertgebouw Café and published it on Facebook with a message for Simon, implying each day waiting for him to decide on how to stop artwashing in this institution. The photographic narrative created a crescendo of frustration and disappointment that culminated in the last day of 2019 with a promise that the group would be back and will keep coming back until the ties are cut with Royal Dutch Shell.





OTHER ACTIVITIES

Public Presentations and Talks

Fossil Free Culture BE, Brussel
 Art Gallery Platostrava, Czech Republic
 Amsterdam Alternative OT301, Amsterdam
 Progress Bar, Amsterdam
 Fair Future Generators, Amsterdam
 De 99 Van Amsterdam, Amsterdam

Workshops

DAS Theatre - Citizenship and Cultural Production, Amsterdam
 University of the Arts ArtEZ, Arnhem

Collaborations

Fossilvrij Nederland
 Fossilvrij Onderwijs
 Code Rood
 Block
 Kick Out Zwaart Piet
 Shell Must Fall
 Wij Stoppen Steenkool

We increasingly collaborate with international partners:

BP or not BP? (UK)
 Culture Unstained (UK)
 Libérons le Louvre (FR)
 Art not Oil (UK)
 Stopp oljesponsing av Norsk Kulturliv (NO)



ORGANISATION

Core team and network

A core team of five women make up Fossil Free Culture NL. We identify as an intersectional, queer, feminist collective that come from migrant and non-conformative sexual backgrounds. We are committed to working towards climate justice.

Additionally, we work with a network of 150 volunteers, formed by activists, artists, cultural workers and anyone else willing to participate in our art performances and artistic interventions. In 2019 we started a shift in our organisation and created a team of regular volunteers that identify as women that take on specific tasks liberating the workload of the core team.

The team works in a studio in Amsterdam. In the beginning of 2019, we moved to a new bigger space that offers us the possibility to host larger gatherings (of up to 50 people); store materials; and carry out the execution, production and rehearsal of our performances. With this new space we are not dependent on other organisations to host our activities.

Fossil Free Culture Foundation

The Fossil Free Culture Foundation was established on 22 December 2017 with

the aim of supporting the work of the group. The statutory name is Stichting Fossil Free Culture NL and its statutory seat is in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The Fossil Free Culture NL Foundation is a non-profit organisation that governs and ensures accountability of the collective.

Board

We established the Fossil Free Culture NL Foundation in December 2017 to support the activities of the collective. The board is composed of:

Merel Willemsen – Chairwoman
Independent art historian, researcher and curator.

Liset Meddens – Secretary
Director Fossielvrij NL.

Hugo Suidgeest – Treasurer
Independent accountant.

CONTACT

For more information send us an email to:
contact@fossilfreeculture.nl

Visit:
www.fossilfreeculture.nl

Follow us on social media:

Facebook
www.facebook.com/FossilFreeCultureNL/
Twitter
<https://twitter.com/FFcultureNL>
Instagram
www.instagram.com/fossilfreeculturenl/
Flickr
www.flickr.com/photos/147373518@N08/
YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUWKm2sBz0lp_K

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2019

Compilation statement

Dear members of the board,

In accordance with your assignment, I have compiled the annual accounts of your foundation. The first part is the balance sheet, which holds assets, debts and equity. The second part is the profit and loss account, where you can find incoming funds, costs, and net result.

The financial statements have been prepared to the best of my knowledge and ability. However, the final result also depends on the accuracy of the documents supplied. In addition, the nature, size and precision of these financial statements are not comparable to an accountants- or assessment statement (accountants- resp. beoordelingsverklaring). The financial statements have been compiled in accordance with current laws and regulations.

Regards,
on behalf of Hermes Boekhouding,
Maarten Blaauboer

Balance sheet

31-12-19

Assets

Inventory	€	495,-
BTW debit	€	2.793,-
Bank account	€	1.201,-
Cash	€	54,-
Total assets	€	4.543,-

Debts & equity

Creditors	€	166,-
BTW credit	€	500,-
Equity	€	3.877,-
Total debt & equity	€	4.543,-

Income sheet

31-12-19

Income

Donations	€	1.153,-
Subsidies	€	19.000,-
Lecture & Workshops	€	200,-
Revenue	€	20.353,-

Expenses

Materials	€	262,-
Outsourced work	€	20.665,-
Write-off inventory	€	148,-
Transport costs	€	560,-
Office rent	€	2.835,-
Promotion	€	1.160,-
Food & drinks	€	1.905,-
Various small expenses	€	888,-
Education	€	0,-
Bookkeeper	€	138,-
Bank- and transaction costs	€	168,-
Communication costs	€	211,-
General office costs	€	379,-
Shipping costs	€	0,-
Small inventory	€	1.828,-
Inspiration	€	2.172,-
Juridical costs	€	0,-
Total expenses	€	33.319,-

Profit

Revenue	€	20.353,-
Expenses	€	33.319,-
	€	(12.966,-)