
FFF: Still Fucking for the Forest



Interview of the group behind FFF including Tommy, Natty, Tabea, Leona and Dan. Moderated by Kaj Derks and Tau Pibernat.

Ruuta and Kaj, from Mašta crew, had already met up with the activist group Fuck For Forest a couple of years ago and put out an introductory article that was published in issue #7 of Masta Magazine. This time, Tau and Kaj went over to their headquarters in Friedrichshain, Berlin to see how things are developing for them and to go deeper into their philosophy and the way they run their almost 10 year old Ecoporn Non Profit Organisation. Their headquarters recently received multiple visits from journalists and media after the release in mid June of a film where they played the main roles, "Fuck For Forest". As well as themselves, their walls look like a wild extract of an expressionist scrapbook of ideas and many of them sit around dressed for the part of this clown-sex-torn-tights world. They are open and welcoming and are happy to see the Mašta issues we bring them. The conversation was long and deep; here, some of the relevant excerpts to our topic.

About creative Activism

Mašta: What is creative Activism for you?

FFF: I think people should just dare to do all the things they talk about.

FFF: Creative activism is maybe more like combining artistic expression with activism in a way that it has a more abstract feel and touches elements of philosophy in a more expressional way, so the values behind it are maybe dedicated for people to wonder instead of just saying what's right. This is how I see the separation between just political and creative activism.

How to get funds and reach people

Mašta: Are you still able to get funds from the internet?

FFF: Yes, but it's not so easy at the moment. It has become more difficult since the internet provides so much free porn material, and this is great, I love it, it kills the music industry and the porn industry and they are struggling in it and it forces people to take different approaches to the subject and it also makes us have to think differently, so we are all trying to get into more conscious ways of spreading the word and get people into the idea behind it. It's not so simple, to show dick or pussy to get people's attention.

Mašta: But isn't your case different because people supporting FFF are not only supporting the group but also supporting a cause?

FFF: Yes this is what we need to make more clear now, people who pay for us through FFF are looking for different erotic material and a lot of people are also supporting only for the philosophy behind it and aren't so interested in the erotic material, they just like the expressive part of FFF so that's what we have to get more people to interested in, the ideas and what we try to represent. Usually pornography is not very expressional and has very little idea behind it and if we were able to target the normal porn consumer we'd have also the chance to affect them in a different way about life, about values and sexuality. So many people say, "hey, are you not afraid of just getting the normal perverts?" and I say yes, bring them, because they are the people we want to affect. It would be stupid to just affect the people who already get it. It was also about the ecological part of it: many people who go to ecological websites are already interested in ecology. So how do we create an alternative that takes the people in who need information about an alternative way of thinking to maybe change their values?

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Recent actions and topics

FFF: In June 2013 we will be at the Annual Meeting of the Human Rights Commission in Geneva. The idea of equal rights is ridiculous: how are rights equal between women and men if women are not allowed to be topless in public? It's important to take away sexuality from the naked body. When you take off your shirt as a girl you feel really fast that boys around you think, “oh, a naked girl, I can fuck her!” and that's really irritating. By making it more normal to be naked people will understand that it is not actually connected to sex.

Mašta: So how do you do it, just go somewhere and get topless?

FFF: Leona last summer was actually walking topless in most places in Berlin all the time. I don't like to get all the time so much attention from people. I just do that sometimes but most of the time I just talk to people because mostly they don't know that it is forbidden, they don't wonder about it.

FFF: Another case for control over women's bodies is the burka. Why do they make policies to get clothes off people at one point and at another point to get their clothes on? When are the clothes too much off? “This clothing item cannot be there, but, no, that body part you cannot show!” This is expressing the same issues but with different body parts, because body is body. It's just about the culture and the mentality of the culture, when it comes to what parts of the body are not allowed to be shown.

Mašta: Is there a particular thing you want the world to be changed into?

FFF: For every person to be able and made able to live with nature and not against it.

Learning to be activists

Mašta: What do you recommend to other groups?

FFF: People should not be afraid of expressing themselves, even if their actions are not perfectly thought through, their ideas should still reach out.

FFF: We like to use this slogan for creative stops, "Better stupid than nothing". If you work against the establishment of society, you have to be strong in your philosophy, to have faith in yourself, decide that you actually want to follow it and be strong about it. It's good to know that I am working with something that is important for many people, but still, I started this because it was important for me. It sounds egocentric but it isn't, because if I develop myself then I make it possible to help people. It's a difficult subject for them and therefore it's important to mobilise a group that feels safe together to allow them to go and start an action themselves.

Mašta: Anything else?

FFF: Never lie, just stay true to yourself and don't make any compromise to manipulate people, because you want people to think by themselves and if you manipulate them into thinking what you think then they don't really understand anyway.

FFF: If you are able to manipulate people by using the right kind of marketing techniques it's not valid anyway: you just reprogram one system with another, but they are not really understanding. The only person you can really influence is yourself ...

Image of sex differentiated from other media

Mašta: Many times media is considered to be manipulative specifically through sexual imagery, so how do you separate yourselves while also using sexual imagery from a manipulative point of view?

FFF: I think by rather asking questions than giving answers.

FFF: We really love sex and wanted people to see sex in a different way. It was not just making money for ecology, but also personal development, giving people the possibility to envision a not so product-made relationship to bodies and sexuality. So that was one part of it, and happily sex gets attention, so we were just lucky that we could both touch the purpose of sexual education and get attention for ecology. Both of the subjects are something we honestly care about. We didn't use sex for manipulation, but for self development and as a practical way to direct attention to two really important issues at the same time.

Mašta: So in a way you are reclaiming the use of body imagery of any kind, say sexual or otherwise, that the media has been selling totally as a commodity; you

are reclaiming it as a personal, honest expression and at the same time getting the message through.

FFF: Yeah, sex is great, but the way the media portrays it much of the time leads to a corrupted energy towards sexuality because it has a wrong intention behind it. It's playing with people's subconscious needs and not being honest to them. It actually plays on some people's sexual problems to get something out of them. I think it's sad that not more people try to heal and rather just use the confusion and continue playing on it to make you do what they want and what society wants also.

Sexist

Mašta: How do you react to the media or criticism saying that it's sexist or empty?

FFF: I say, this is not sexist at all. All the girls that are here do it because they like it. Nobody tells them: "get on your knees and give me a blow job!"

FFF: Nobody forces them to do it! Only the boys are forced! (the two of them laugh). We usually don't care about what the media thinks. If they think it's sexist, let them think it's sexist, it's their own decision.

FFF: You can't really judge from just the image.

Multiplying your actions

Mašta: So you try to mobilize other people to also take over your actions?

FFF: We are the core that keeps it running, but anyone can be FFF, it's up to people. We wanted it to be a kind of free expression where people could express their point of view about gender, about sexuality, about suppression, more like a research platform for people to share ideas about it. So we are trying to animate people.

Message

Mašta: Do you struggle to get your message through? Or do you care more for attention?

FFF: As FFF is often expressional, we move into the border line between abstract expression, political ideas and many times we create confusion. Many

people get our point also. We don't do it in a way that everyone gets it totally; much of the time people are confused, but this confusion is positive because it creates discussion. If people had a really clear idea they wouldn't talk about it, and often the discussion is more important than the performance we did.

FFF: About that performance we did in Norway, people were wondering, "what is the connection between nature about fucking on stage?" but it became a really big discussion on magazines and other media. Two years later the Nobel Peace Prize Foundation in Norway made a big exhibition about freedom of expression and they told us that they would be really honoured if they were allowed to show the video of that sex performance in a part of the exhibition called "using the body as an expression" and also if we were there. The feeling we got from those people who worked with the issue was really serious and it seemed like the action reached a deeper sense in society, it was a big gift and a very inspiring experience.

Mašta: Is it necessarily sex that you have to communicate your message through?

FFF: No, for sure not. Sex is a good way for me, because I really love sex, I see it as a gift to humanity for us to learn about the values of life and it a good way for me to communicate, but it's not the only thing. It's just my subject. I have a deep interest in this subject because I see the influence in the structure of society, sexuality and the psychological interest around it, and that also goes into gender issues,... It says more about us as a person and our identity and applicable to so many parts of society that it's not just sexual anymore, it's sexual psychology. I didn't know this when I started with FFF but after working with it for almost 10 years I see how much it influences society and if you study sexual anthropology from culture to culture you can see it there too.

What have you learned

Mašta: Can you name a couple of things that you've learned and what are you doing differently than before?

FFF: It taught me to be more patient, to have more sympathy and that humans need time to understand something. Maybe in the beginning I was a little bit too punky in my attitudes about people. I learned to accept, FFF taught me to not be judgemental towards people. It's easy to judge people on their attitude or their look, but things are deeper inside the human consciousness.

Sexual suppression you don't see so much before you start to challenge it and you go into depth. Only then you can see how much the problems still penetrate the more open minded parts of society. Also when people think they are very free with sexuality and their bodies, it's still an illusionary state. We still struggle so hard in the relationship to our bodies, "How do I feel?", "Am I right?" and your relationship to others.

Future projects

Mašta: Are you still the group that saves the forest?

FFF: We are still an action group that saves the forest! That's the main focus. We just spent four months in Mexico looking for ecological projects and me and Leona will actually move to South America soon because we've started to grow up a little bit and we want to keep FFF here for the young blood that keeps running the fundamental sexual part and we will go over there to spend more time developing educational centres in central and south America and we will also focus on sexual education.

In the last years we supported six different external ecological projects that we don't have the pulse on so I personally don't see them growing. For me it's important to see ecological development so I want to focus on the nature part. Even if I buy a piece of land, and the situation of the country changes and a paramilitary group pushes us away because there are resources that they want, you understand that you have no rights. Without human consciousness on the planet you have no rights so the values and morals of our society have to change. So making the world more connected to nature for example is the most important part of FFF in the longer term.



Visuals by:

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