

**CATALOGUE TEXT FOR THE OPEN STUDIOS 2007, RIJNSAKADEMIE, AMSTERDAM  
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No less than freedom itself is at stake in Nicoline van Harskamp's artwork. She envisages the space of art as the most radically egalitarian possible: a space she fills not with objects of aesthetic sublimity, but ephemera, artifacts, and actions of a political sublime.

Although her vision may be utopian, it is neither fantastical, nor singular, nor totalizing, but instead is driven by a passion for the real. Her process involves intensive research: an excavation and taxonomy of power (governmental and private) and resistance (individual and collective). Her production is a dissemination of information and ideas, always more interrogative than declarative. Her chosen forms—pamphlets, digital videos, photography, sound installations, and public debates and performances—document not only her investigative and discursive process but also its multiplicity and resistance to commodification.

Van Harskamp's past projects have examined security guards and law enforcement officers in London and Istanbul, surveillance and discipline in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, and self-government in the Danish autonomous community Christiania. Most recently, van Harskamp presented her investigations into anti-Statist political traditions, from far left to far right. She has staged debates among amateur ideologues, re-written those debates into scripts, and then staged the scripts as a drama. She also has created a series of 15 booklets from the scripts. Inversions of both the political pamphlets and Platonic dialogues they recall, they offer no definite solution or blueprint for society. Indeed, the arguments among these untrained theorists points to the difficulty of a world without government.

Perhaps such freedom is an impossible dream, but it is too often repeated that "Politics is the art of the possible." Nicoline van Harskamp shows us that Art should be the politics of the impossible.