



The Loombreaker

www.loombreaker.org.uk

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Welcome to Manchester 2002

Corporate Wealth, Common Poverty

Few Manchester folk can have failed to get involved in some aspect with the recent international spectacular - whether it be donning the shell suit and becoming a volunteer, watching the aerial view of our city on telly during the marathon, or whether they were one of the lucky people to be able to afford to actually be a spectator in the all new stadium. And even if sport's not your thing, there's been a pile of cultural, music and festival stuff happening to coincide with the Games. There is no doubt that the Games have brought some jobs, some investment, and a general buzz to East Manchester and the city as a whole, and Loombreaker doesn't want to be considered a spoil sport. But beneath the new glossy surface the council has painted over Manchester, the cracks are still visible if you look.

How Much?

The Games have cost us a fortune – and the spending of our money has all been done behind closed doors. Unaccountable representatives of commercial organisations held power, and the 'new

money' claimed to have been generated by the Bid committee was largely pre-existing central government funding for urban regeneration.

McJobs

And what type of jobs are being created for the people in East Manchester? Asda Walmart, a key players and new business in the area, is notorious for putting small local shops out of business and hindering trade union organising. It would have been interesting to see a study on whether regeneration funding could have gone into improving local businesses, and re-investing profits in the area, rather than supporting this US-based giant. Such a study has not been carried out or, if it has, has not been made public or open to discussion by East Manchester residents.

Corporate Takeover

It's no secret that the Games were used as a ploy to attract multinationals and other powerful corporations to the city. The NorthWest Business Club which ran throughout the period aimed to do just this, and blatantly described Manchester as



Adapted logo by UHC

some kind of 'sweatshop' using the fact that workers here are paid lower than anywhere else in the country, as an enticement. And do the people of Manchester really want crappy jobs working in call centres, or unethical jobs working in biotechnology?

The Games could have been a lever for more responsible corporate behaviour. However, when such a suggestion was made – it was met with the response that corporate social responsibility "fits uneasily with the Business Club objectives."

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Blitzing through the Corporate Shite....

Blitz festival hit the streets of Manchester with an explosion of artful propaganda, actions and info, to offer an alternative vision to the Corporatised Commonwealth Games frenzy.

Blitz was organised by the Northern Arts Tactical Offensive, in collaboration with UHC arts collective, BEyondTV, i-contact, Fanclub, a Spacehijacker and many other individuals. NATO aims to bring together people working on social, cultural & political issues & to promote art that is spontaneous, conscious & public. The Blitz highlighted all that is street-level, independent and potentially illegal from the dissenting inhabitants of Manchester and dissolved the corporate spectacle.

AgITATE Art Exhibition

Brazenly located in the middle of a budding mall "Great Northern", this exhibition in the



belly of the beast took over unused warehouse space and transformed it into the most beautifully presented and ideologically challenging collection of art work Manchester has seen. A curating team led by UHC, kept it all sailing the thin line between propaganda and art, enough to attract the most action-orientated activists and impress the least thoughtful critic on their way to the Virgin gym. Starting from the premise that the third world war

will be fought in our heads, through images, on the airwaves (etc), the exhibition housed work from local graffiti artists to a "live sound installation" (read- "pirate radio station"). It will be on the web soon- link on Nato website. Over 2000 people visited in a week – many taking away radical and anarchist books. Simultaneously, The Body Politic, a radical feminist art exhibit, curated by Angel, ran the whole week in the Green Room.

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The Loombreaker is Manchester's monthly direct action round-up. Inside this issue:
 Manchester Anarchist Youth ♦ animal rights ♦ Skate Attack ♦ Marpie against Orange ♦ Rubbish Vale ♦ GM Free Lymm

Blitz...continued from page 1...

Music and Film

Live outdoor music took over Great Northern Square, in Manchester's monied heartland. The ramshackle stage, was so incongruous with the shimmering reflective aluminium surrounding that the whole event amounted to an action on consumer hell. The punk bands swearing loudly, the installation skate ramp under the "no skating" sign and the graffiti wall made it feel like a subcultural spectacle at times, but the real problem was the rain, as ever. Not to be thwarted, Blitz went on to 4 interactive & film events, hosted by BEyONdTV and i-contact.

March for Capitalism?

In keeping with the Blitz idea of undermining (with irony) 'glossy' manchester and confusing the tourists, the traditional protest was turned on its head with a march for capitalism. It began (after Skate Attack (see over) pleasantly with cucumber sandwiches and G and T's in the park. An impeccably dressed, if slightly creased, rabble rallied round a 3-headed corporate monster. Despite us being for once on the same side, the police forced a 'route' upon us. Saturday shoppers and tourists reacted interestingly to the placards "Bomb Other Countries", "The environment can kiss my ass" and others. Some people boo-ed because they saw through our heavy irony, others because they didn't, some joined in because they were drunk, and others were genuinely bemused- with many mutterings of "Bombs not Bread?" to be heard. The three-headed monster was escorted out of town by the police, despite the fact that he encouraged shoppers to buy more and praised the Officers' commitment to the public good. Meanwhile the rest of the crowd went off with FanClub to monopolise the queue at WHSmiths with monopoly boards.



Spoof Tourist Guide

As if the tourists were not confused enough already, an alternative guide to the city appeared for the Games, an exact replica of the Council tourist guide, it gave the other side to the city council spin and directed people to the Blitz events. It laid out some of the less media-worthy details around the Games- ie. the costly last minute makeovers, cuts in leisure services in under-resourced communities to finance the new sports facilities and a critique of capitalism as a whole, using Manchester as an example of how it has all gone a little wrong and just ain't cutting it for da people.

The council cottoned on in the end and began throwing their weight around as usual, threatening to sue places that displayed it for libel. However, "volunteers" in the Games purple shell suits with yellow vomity shoulder splats made sure that distribution was not adversely effected. Curiously adapted logos also began appearing all over the city's billboards, city sweepers, vans and buses, as well as paint bombs and graffiti.

Double Strawberry Gotchyal

Finally the Biotech promotion event of the NorthWest Business club was seriously disrupted. First some noisy animal rights activists protesting about animal testing were dragged out. Then the Vice President of Biogen (Denmark) the world's oldest biotechnology company was struck in the face by a double strawberry gateaux by Agent Sara Lee. Finally AstraZeneca's keynote

speaker was interrupted several times by before finally admitting that indeed his company did profit from people's misery. Meanwhile some GM carrots and others outside the event made sure all the delegates at the Biotech Breakfast were fully aware that some Manchester residents were less than happy at the prospect of their city being a base for the dodgy biotech industry. More info from www.nato.uk.net

Corporate Wealth Games continued from front page...

Corruption

One of the stadium's funders, Sport England has put £165 million of Lottery funds towards Games facilities, and running costs. Lottery money is not supposed to subsidise private companies, such as Man City football club, (who has now got the stadium - for free!), but effectively this is what is happening, as the stadium moves out of public hands and into private. An extra £20 million needed to stop the games collapsing had to come directly from Sport England's budget for grassroots and community-based sporting initiatives. It meant these initiatives losing out to fund a grand spectacular. And what happened to Gorton Tub - a prime example of local resources being cut to fund the Games spectacular.

The Corporate sponsors aren't exactly acting in the 'Spirit of Friendship' either. One of the official partners, United Utilities, has been pushing a proposal to sell off a well-used community sporting facility - Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club - and replace it with a business park. People living in the area who use the land for recreational activities have strongly opposed the development plans.

Maybelline Manchester

Police resources are being used to stop fly-posting and graffiti to make Manchester look pretty. Council departments are being 'persuaded' to spend their budgets on Games merchandise (much of which incidentally, is made in sweatshops - see www.nosweat.org.uk)

The make-over of East Manchester and the rest of the city centre is also ridiculous to anyone who lives here. Covering over abandoned buildings and unsightly building sites, (including our beloved Free Trade Hall) with huge adverts, painting out graffiti and flyposters, spending millions on footpaths and fencing in the poorer parts of East Manchester, is like giving someone a facelift while ignoring the cancer inside. A council estate in Newton Heath, which suffered years of neglect, was hidden from view with huge hoardings. Local residents, affronted at being seen as an eyesore, took them down, painting on them "what's the matter with us? Don't you want to see us?"

Rumour has it that problem kids in the area were given a free summer holiday, paid for by the council, to keep them out of the way of the Games and the ripe-pickings of tourists and posh cars.

Beggars have been cleaned off the streets with draconian policing. One street dweller, asked a passing cop for a fag, was arrested for begging and locked up for 48 hours. Statutory sentences of one month, for begging on the streets are being enforced, and even worse, shops are being encouraged to display outrageous posters saying things like "Homeless? Or just a Habit?", and "£15 will buy beggars a bag of smack".

Our old 'friends' the Greater Manchester Police have bought a new spotter plane, to complement their 2 helicopters, so they can spy on us better and for longer. Plus there's a ton more CCTV now, complete with a new control centre with an 18 metre!!! screen which can show up to 180 images or only 6 in extreme close up.

This is not the real Manchester. This is some corporate-controlled, heartless, empty glossy shell, with Big Brother, Orwellian state creeping ever closer. Yes, let's have international sporting events, but let's have some genuine common wealth, not corporate wealth.

More detailed report on the Corporate Wealth Games is on the Loombreaker website

No sweat!

The air of smug corporatism that is the Commonwealth Games was momentarily punctuated with cries for sanity. A 50 strong procession of anti-sweatshop campaigners marched from All Saints park to the Peace Gardens in St Peters Square, via the City Centre shopping area. The message was clear: the Commonwealth Games are not as friendly as they look - around the world children and adults are working under slave-like conditions to make the sports wear for the companies sponsoring the games. Not very sporting. An assortment of banners and chanting (Corporate Wealth Games... What's disgusting? Union Busting! What's outrageous? Sweatshop wages!) made shoppers, question their consciences, and the procession paused outside Gap in St. Ann's Sq to highlight connection between sweatshops and our highstreets.

In the evening, there was a night of karaoke, comedy and live music to raise money for Dita Sari, a determined campaigner with FNPBI, the biggest free trade union federation in Indonesia

More info - nosweat.org.uk

Skate Attack + Critical Mass

Cyclists and skaters teamed up for Manchester's first critical mass for months during Blitz festival. Bikes brought up the rear behind a gang of skate kids setting the pace taking over the city's streets for the afternoon. Small but effective demo and a partnership we want to repeat. (Although the problem of skaters preferring pavements to roads needs to be negotiated...)

The next critical mass is on Friday Sept 27th to celebrate World Car Free Day & the 10th anniversary of the 1st critical mass. Meet at 5.30pm outside Central Library. Bring bicycles, tricycles, skateboards, rollerblades.... whatever you have with wheels WITHOUT an engine. manc_criticalmass@yahoo.com, www.critical-mass.org

A-malze-Ing!

On 20th July, 80-100 people attended a public meeting and rally in Lymm, Cheshire against a field of genetically modified maize sown as part of the governments farm scale trials. A colourful parade marched through the village accompanied by samba music, & people in white suits - looked really cool!

People then visited the test site, around 30-40 demonstrators went onto the field and began to "modify" the mutant crop, kicking it, stamping on it, whacking it with placards...anything until it made that satisfying snapping noise.

Nine people were arrested in total and held in custody for over 12 hours, eventually they were all charged with criminal damage. After appearing at Warrington magistrates court, the case was adjourned until 6th September. More info from 0775 903193

The battle of Manchester Airport starts again

Last month the Government published its plans for a massive expansion at every airport in the country (plus some new ones) including at Manchester. They intend to 'consult' on these proposals until 30th Nov. Environmental groups must decide how to respond. What this would mean for Manchester is the construction of more taxiways and a 4th terminal by 2015, and then possibly a 3rd runway, built during the decade from 2020; plus new roads, more noise and air pollution, climate change emissions and general environmental damage. So far, Friends of the Earth, CPRE, Transport2000 have got together to form a national campaign against airport growth, called AirportWatch (www.airportwatch.org.uk). This campaign aims to fight 2 battles: nationally, challenging the arguments behind the 'need' for this growth and then regionally & locally, to support the communities around airports as they fight back against this assault on their quality of life.

Want to get involved? If we can defeat the arguments being used to justify airport growth nationally, then we can protect not just the community and the area around Manchester Airport, but at every other site in the country too. If you want to come to a planning meeting for the Manchester campaign, contact info@airportwatch.org.uk 020 7248 2223

Squeeze Orange out of Marple!

Residents, in Marple, Stockport have been successful in preventing the construction of a mobile phone mast in a popular beauty spot overlooking the peak forest canal as local people sabotaged the early stages of construction. People living near the site, only learned of Orange's plans to construct a 15-meter high mobile communications mast and access road, as work commenced on Marple Ridge. It was decided that action was needed to stop the erection of the mast after concern was expressed about possible health risks posed by the radiation from such devices. Questions were also raised over whether proper planning procedures had been followed, as local people alleged that legally required notices informing them of the mast, were deliberately covered up.

Work was delayed when a local blocked the road with his car forcing contractors to dump tons of concrete into a nearby field before it set solid in the vehicle. Regular blockades were held and gatherings took place on site discussing ideas for action. Finally, contractors decided that they had enough and abandoned the site when the masts concrete base and a construction vehicle were severely damaged.

Anyone interested in helping to squeeze another drop or two out of Orange if they return to the site can contact Squeezeorangeoutofmarple@hotmail.com

The Loombreaker

DIARY

August

22-26 Sustain up North! Pontefract, Yorkshire - Northern Green Gathering - workshops, exhibitions, theatre, stalls, camping, music - powered by wind & sun www.ngg.org.uk 0113 231 9090

24-30 - Hatfield Moor Peat Action Camp (see article) **25th** Hatfield Moor Trespass (also see article)

26 Day of action Against Zoos and Safari Parks - Captive Animals Protection Society 01384 456 682

September

1st Love Music Hate Racism Carnival, organised by the Anti-Nazi League - Platt Fields Park or join the march from Albert Square at 11am www.anl.org.uk

7th - Beyond TV event (see article)

15-27th Car Free Fortnight -includes Critical Mass cycle ride (see article)

17th 8pm Talk & video with Rod Coronado, Native American animal rights and environment activist, and recent US political prisoner. Free & all welcome. At The Briton's Protection pub (upstairs)

28th National Stop War demo called by Stop the War Coalition, and Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Muslim Assoc. of GB. Contact CND for transport from Manc 0161 273 8283

WWW.LOOMBREAKER.ORG.UK
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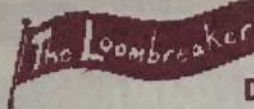
Manchester Anarchist Youth have landed!

Some time in July, a group of 5 or so like-minded young people met in Café Pop to drink tea and make plans to spread anarchy across the city! In the month since, we've been out spreading the word, leaving our 'calling cards' (you might have seen our stickers dotted about the city centre), and drinking more tea. Future plans include subvertising, organising a punk gig to raise money for exciting actions and anything & everything else people are up for...

Manchester Anarchist Youth is part of the national Anarchist Youth Network www.anarchistyouth.net. you can call the Manchester group on 07816 420 391 or email mancanarchistyouth@yahoo.com. Look out for the punk gig in the near future plus our own website coming soon (and general anarchy on the streets...)

Go On BeOnTV

BEyOnD TV is back on track, with an evening of film, poetry and sundry socio-political satire at the Green Room on Saturday 7th September, 8-11pm at the Green Room, Whitworth St. West



North - West SHAC Day of Action

Enthusiastic and determined, 15 activists met up in Manchester to participate in national anti-WorldCom (a company involved in animal cruelty) day. The activists easily gained entry to the "secure" building and invaded the WorldCom office. Work came to a halt as staff took leaflets and listened to us. Bemused workers from other offices were informed about WorldCom's involvement in horrendous animal cruelty. Many pledged support for the campaign and wished us good luck in closing Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS).

We then decided to pay a visit to Marsh, insurance providers to HLS. Again activists stormed the building and whilst flustered security guards called the police, activists locked themselves in to a nearby conference room!! For the next hour a megaphone was leaned out of the window and the busy street came to a standstill as people were constantly informed of Marsh's support of HLS. Police tried to arrange a meeting between us and the manager of Marsh, but they were too ashamed to speak to us. Eventually police burst through the door and we were escorted off the premises.

Manchester Animal Protection (M.A.P.) have also been keeping themselves and the animal abusers at HLS busy recently in a renewed effort to close down HLS. In February, Brian Cass, managing director of HLS announced they would be listing on the American Nasdaq under the new name "Life Sciences Research" to avoid the attentions of activists which devalue their shares. But they underestimated the strength of the SHAC USA campaign and 6 months later they are still not listed on the NASDAQ and have no market maker for their shares - currently valued at less 1p. Despite HLS spin in the media, they are finished as a company.

MAP demonstrate at the lab every Monday and take part in regular protests against HLS suppliers & customers. We meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month at Town Hall Tavern, Tib Lane, 7.30pm. Tel 07932 547785

Rubbish Vale

Local people in Reddish are organising in opposition to Reddish Vale Golf Club over er... a load of rubbish. The club have a planning application granted back in 1965 to tip up to 100,000 tonnes of waste into Reddish Vale. They are looking to make £15-30,000 contracting the permit out, which would mean about 15,000 wagon loads of waste will trundle past a local school over the next two and a half years. According to a local activist toxins previously leaked into a brook in the Vale back in the '60's after tipping by a rogue contractor, and the brook is still thought to be poisoned. The local campaign, which even has the support of the local MP, is looking to take the golf club to task over their ill-considered money grabbing ways. Ring 07850 787182 to get involved.

Compost Chaos

An action camp is happening at Hatfield Moor in late August along with a mass trespass on the 25th. For the camp there will be lots of different actions and talks & tours of the site from naturalists, activists, archaeologists. The aim is to stop multinational Scott's from ripping up the ecologically sensitive peat bog and turning it into growbags (see loombreaker's 26 & 27). Meet at Tyrham Hall Hotel, on the A614 south of Lindholme Prison, 12 noon. Transport for the mass trespass will also be going from the "Sustain Up North" festival (aka Northern Green Gathering) near Ackworth in West Yorkshire. For more information call 0778 778 2259 or email info@peatalert.org.uk.

Young Asians Sentenced to Years in Jail

"We see the sentences that have been handed out so far in Burnley and Bradford as a clear attempt to intimidate anyone from putting up a clear defence," Asad Rehman, of a defence campaign in Burnley.

Judges are handing out vicious sentences against young Asians charged as a result of the riots in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford last year. One youth was jailed for 18 months in July merely for walking around a mainly Asian area in Burnley holding a stick as a gang of white men were trying to invade it. He was not even accused of using the stick against anyone, was 17 at the time with no previous convictions. Another defendant was jailed for 2 years 3 months. A further 26 people from Burnley are due in court on 2 September. They are planning to plead not guilty, basing their defence on the fact that the police in Burnley failed to prevent a mob of whites racially abusing Asians, attacking property and marching into a mainly Asian area.

Outrageous sentences in Bradford include Mohammed Munir, 4 yrs 9 mths for throwing 2 stones; & Istifur Iqbal, 11 mths for picking up but not throwing 2 stones.

As Loombreaker goes to press we don't yet have prisoners addresses. However a support group for the Bradford prisoners can be contacted through info@fairjusticecampaign.co.uk or see www.fairjusticecampaign.co.uk

Coalition to Stop War?

Despite the many thousands of anti-war demonstrators marching in London earlier this year and last year, the war goes on. If everyone took action like earlier this month when two people managed to get onto a Trident sub, then maybe things would be different. Look at www.geocities.com/kk_abacus/ for more info. Next Stop the War demo is 28th September in London (see diary)

..IT'S THE EDITORIAL - LISTEN TO THIS!



The Loombreakers were Lancashire weavers who, in 1826, smashed the machines that were destroying their livelihoods and communities. The Loombreaker comes from the Free Information Network tradition, spreading news the mainstream media won't print.

Pick it up FREE from:

- 8th Day Cafe, Oxford Road & Old Birley Street
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- Café Pop, Oldham Street, Piccadilly
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- Withington Wholefoods, Wilmslow Road

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loombreaker@nematode.freeseerve.co.uk
<http://www.loombreaker.org.uk/>

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Interested in taking action?

Call us on 0161 226 6814, or look at the loombreaker website for upcoming meetings and events.

Roy Goodwin = Fascist Scum

Greater Manchester No Platform recently leafleted Newton Heath to let local residents know that a fascist politician was living in their neighbourhood. Roy Goodwin was a candidate for the British National Party in the May local elections in Oldham, although he lives in Manchester.

No Platform is a network of anti-fascist groups who believe that physical and ideological confrontation is necessary to stop fascist groups organising.

To find out more contact manchester@noplatform.org.uk or ring 07986071153. <http://noplatform.antifa.net/>