# Beyond Allegories

*Ann Demeester, Carolien Gehrels, Hans van Houwelingen, Jonas Staal*

Editorial – August 19, 2014

**_Open!_ published the texts and videos developed on the occasion of the _Beyond Allegories_ debate that took place in the City Council of Amsterdam on May 9, 2014. In _Beyond Allegories_ politicians and artists discussed proposals on the role of art within governance, political mobilisation and action.**

The following propositions were developed on the occasion of the *Beyond Allegories* debate, for which 250 artists, politicians, union representatives, university professors, dramatists, representatives from refugee organisations and NGOs, journalists and students gathered together for seven hours in Amsterdam's City Council to discuss the role of art within governance, political mobilisation and action. This debate was organised by Ann Demeester (De Hallen | Frans Hals Museum), Carolien Gehrels (until recently Alderman for Art & Culture, PvdA / Labor Party Amsterdam) and the artists Hans van Houwelingen and Jonas Staal in an effort to forge new progressive alliances. The texts will be part of the DVD -book *Beyond Allegories*, a collection of the resolutions and videos that resulted from the project, which will be published later this year. The videos are also published on this site, as well as a critical essay on the project by writer E.C. Feiss.

E.C. Feiss, On Beyond Allegories *[www.onlineopen.org/on-beyond-allegories]*

Salima Belhaj & Wunderbaum, Plea for a Free Zone *[www.onlineopen.org/plea-for-a-free-zone]*

Mariko Peters, Metahaven & Jonas Staal, Towards an Extra-Parliamentary Democracy! *[www.onlineopen.org/towards-an-extra-parliamentary-democracy]*

Yoonis Osman Nuur & Ahmet Öğüt, Political Representation Beyond Citizenship *[www.onlineopen.org/political-representation-beyond-citizenship]*

Dirk Poot & Foundland, Mapping the Deep State *[www.onlineopen.org/mapping-the-deep-state]*

Carolien Gehrels & Hans van Houwelingen, The Creative City: A Blessing for Administration but a Curse for the Arts *[www.onlineopen.org/the-creative-city-a-blessing-for-administration-but-a-curse-for-the-arts]*

Ron Meyer & Matthijs de Bruijne, De Democratisering van de Kunst *[www.onlineopen.org/de-democratisering-van-de-kunst]*

Ron Meyer & Matthijs de Bruijne, Democratising the Arts *[www.onlineopen.org/de-democratisering-van-de-kunst]*

**Ann Demeester** is director of Frans Hals Museum | De Hallen, Haarlem.

**Carolien Gehrels** has been an alderman for the Labor Party (PvdA) in Amsterdam from 2006 to May 2014. In her eight years as an alderman, she was responsible for, among others, economic affairs and art and culture. In 2009 she gave the well-known Boekman lecture *Kunstbeleid in een postideologische? samenleving* [Art policy in a post-ideological? society], in which she pleaded for a larger involvement of politics with the arts. At the time she stated this about art: "We may also govern in this area. We may also have an opinion. And we may even judge." See further: www.pvdaamsterdam.nl.

**Hans van Houwelingen** studied at the Minerva Art Academy in Groningen and at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam. His work manifests itself internationally in the form of interventions in public space, exhibitions, lectures and publications, in which he investigates the relations between art, politics and ideology. He publishes regularly in newspapers and magazines. The monograph *STIFF – Hans van Houwelingen vs. Public Art* (2004) offers an overview of his projects and texts and an extensive reflection on his work. The publication *Update* (2008) describes the permanent update of the Lorentzmonument in Arnhem during the exhibition *Sonsbeek 2008* and *Undone* (2011) presents nine critical reflections on three recent works. See further: www.hansvanhouwelingen.nl.

**Jonas Staal** is a visual artist whose work deals with the relation between art, propaganda, and democracy. He is the founder of the artistic and political organization New World Summit, which develops parliaments for stateless political organizations, and the New World Academy (together with BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht), an educational platform for art and politics. His most recent publications include *Nosso Lar, Brasília* (Capacete & Jap Sam Books, 2014) on the relation between spiritism and modernism in Brazilian architecture. He currently finalizes his PhD research entitled *To Make a World: Art as Emancipatory Propaganda* at the PhDArts program at Leiden University.

## Crosslinks

On Beyond Allegories: www.onlineopen.org/on-beyond-allegories
Plea for a Free Zone: www.onlineopen.org/plea-for-a-free-zone
Towards an Extra-Parliamentary Democracy!: www.onlineopen.org/towards-an-extra-parliamentary-democracy
Political Representation Beyond Citizenship: www.onlineopen.org/political-representation-beyond-citizenship
Mapping the Deep State: www.onlineopen.org/mapping-the-deep-state
The Creative City: A Blessing for Administration but a Curse for the Arts : www.onlineopen.org/the-creative-city-a-blessing-for-administration-but-a-curse-for-the-arts
De Democratisering van de Kunst: www.onlineopen.org/de-democratisering-van-de-kunst
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## Tags

Activism, Aesthetics, Democracy

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