



WHY WE LOVE SQUATS and WHY WE WILL DEFEND THEM



EUROPEAN ACTION COALITION
FOR THE RIGHT TO HOUSING AND TO THE CITY

The amplification of authoritarian governance around the globe is frighteningly accelerating. We are facing restrictions of so-called civil-rights, the extension of police apparatus, the criminalization of social movements and solidarity, austerity policies which hit the margins of society the hardest, alongside hate campaigns against everyone not conforming and obeying the capitalist system concerted by governments and corporate media. Not to mention the scapegoating of refugees and migrants, increasing racial and religious discrimination and the resurgence of nationalist rhetoric and fascist spirit.

Free social spaces like squats and occupations are especially targeted but also collective project houses, social centers, neighborhood community spaces and even cooperative shops and bars. It seems to be an attempt to erase every approach which denies the logic of capitalist monetization of our entire lives.

In our coalition there are currently two squats facing high pressure of eviction:

ROZBRAT in Poznań, with its 25 years of living resistance, is the oldest existing squat in Poland. Rozbrat is a socio-political center and place for art without censorship that promotes self-organization and cooperation - without donations, subsidies, sponsors, outside of the system, aiming at propagating independence from the state. For the past 25 years, Rozbrat serves as an organizing space for the local struggle (anarchist federation, tenants' movement, workers' movement, art, printing matter, social feminism, environmental issues, anti-war activities, social campaigns, anti-deportation initiatives). One of the main slogans of Poznań's movement is: "Solidarity is a crime that we will never stop committing", on a local and international level. Rozbrat's future is uncertain since in 2009 there was a first attempt to privatize this land and build private apartments. On May 15, 2019, the bailiff set an estimated value of the land and, for the second time, opened the way to an auction and a possible forced eviction of Rozbrat. The date of the auction has not been announced yet, but that can happen at any time.

NOTARA 26 is the first refugee housing squat in Athens/Greece established in September 2015. Since then, it gave shelter for thousands of people. It became a model for a squatting movement (20 buildings at its peak hosting 2800 people at the same time. You might have heard of "city plaza") in solidarity with people who had to escape their homelands, forsaken by a failed state and being just a pawn in the hands of the powerful in their geostrategic games. The new Greek government announced in fascist vocabulary that it will "clean" the neighborhood of Exarcheia, the resistant territory where Notara 26 is based, erase solidarity structures and political collectives, and evict all the squats. At the end of August, they attacked 4 squats and imprisoned 150 refugees in state concentration camps.

Free social spaces have always been important for social movements. To gather, to discuss, to hang out, to prepare political resistance we all need these physical places. They are breeding sites for solidarity and mutual aid as well as safe-spaces for alternative ways of living. They cultivate the soil for counter-culture, keeping alive the idea of non-commercialized forms of social exchange and operate as possibility spaces for nonconformist collective subjectivization and consolidation of the movements. Further, they are labs for new approaches of living and so prefigurations of actually existing utopias. Spaces which we desperately need in these dark times.

On September 14, Rozbrat is mobilizing a demonstration in Poznan to both show society's not only social solidarity but also to pressure the authorities to drop the eviction. The same day the !NO PASARAN! network of squats and political collectives is calling for a demonstration against state repression in Athens. **We support these callings and all further actions of resistance in order to defend alternative spaces like squats – in Poznan, Athens and all around the globe!**

All for One, One For All!



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