

Statement

When going out on my walkabouts in Brooklyn this summer, I would just bring the most useful and personal things, my camera, a sketch book, a water bottle. These hikes were for a while almost daily occurrences. I kept finding new areas of Brooklyn and queens were I hadn't been before. Sometimes my imagination would run wild. Lonely on a deserted street in Red Hook I imagined myself throwing my water bottle at an abandoned car. In the air the water bottle took on the shape of a Molotov cocktail, slamming into the car and setting it on fire. An abrupt interruption to the quiet (yes, New York can actually be quiet) urban tranquility. As the summer progressed the homemade incendiary device named after former soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov kept its place in my mind. I pondered how easy it would be to make and carry around in the open. No one would react, no one would know. If it could be discretely thrown, nobody would really know who threw it. Out of the sea of people on broadway at lunchtime it could Be anyone.

The basic concept of a Molotov, a bottle with explosive or highly flammable liquids in it, also lead me to think about flying. Every time I have been on a flight the last couple of years the thought has struck me of how easy it would be to bring some dangerous liquids on board in a bottle. Shortly after I had my fire bomb fantasies in Brooklyn the liquid explosive terror plot showed up in the headlines. As most terror plots that get "unfoiled," this one seemed slightly exaggerated as well, but it highlighted what I was thinking.

When I got back to Cranbrook I started researching the cocktail and decided that I wanted to do a project about it. After a while I also started working on a design for a script typeface, a basic version of the lowercase characters can be seen in this piece. As work progressed I mixed some power struggles into the work, religion, death, violence, the burning tree club* , etc.

This year I am interested in working more with narrative. I have always had an interest in history, so I might use historical events as a starting point in my research. I want to give the viewer options when interpreting my work. This piece can be seen as a selection of cut out frames (micro narratives)? From a comic book, with which the viewer can create their own version of the story.

The cocktail of a thousand hammers, refers to an ultimate weapon in different ways, one huge firebomb made of a 1000 molotovs, one single perfect hit with a Molotov, or maybe a holy cocktail from above, fire and brimstone.

*a men's only country club in Maryland where presidents/generals/politicians meet (to. Creating their agenda and their plans in secret?) and play golf.

Jan Nygren / Nov 1, 2006