



Death by Walking

- a sacrificial stepping on the cultural catwalk

A project by Stahl Stenslie

Project description

A live performance where the performer wears a custom built inflatable neckstrap attached to an airpump built into a pair of high heel shoes. When the performer is walking or moving the air pump will slowly inflate the neckstrap and gradually strangle the user. The performer walks around slowly on a catwalk until suffocation and unconsciousness occurs.

The project is a part of the *Suicide Fashion* collection (*S.U.F.I.*) that develops different kinds of clothing used to commit suicide. All the prêt-à-porter models of the project are fully functioning. The suits are icons of our post digital era, and the result of a long cultural development. In this decade of the post-catastrophe it has become possible to think of suicide as a phenomenon of fashion. Not the regular Parisian one, but the fashion carved out of a political, cultural and religious promoted need to sacrifice oneself. The suits manifest - but also problematize this issue.



The project is inspired by the increasing instrumentalizing of the suicide as tool and weapon within cultural, religious and regional conflicts. Suicide bombing is both one of the most extreme tendencies of the last years as well as a sign of the apocalyptic mood that has marked this decade. The suicide bombers are the logo of the Palestine-Israelian conflict, the Tamile Tigers, Al Qaida, Irak resistance and more. They fashion a fashion for self sacrifice, much like the Colombine killings fashioned the copy cat behaviour of more than one high school drop out. Beyond putting a spotlight at how suicide is used as political and cultural weapon, the project also focus on the aesthetical effects it creates. Dying is beautiful. Manifestations of this are the aesthetization of death and sacrificial behaviour. With this wear-once fashion you look good as long as you look. Giving a new meaning to fashion victims. *S.U.F.I.* is therefore about phenomenon's like: -New human ideals in the Third Millenium -Sociocultural aspects of the so-called "global culture" -Geo-political conflicts -Transparent Technologies - like smart clothing -The consequences of mixing technology, existensialism and belief Suicide might be the strongest ways to communicate your message. Suicide bombers are the F-16s of the poor. And a much more intelligent weapon. In *Death by Walking* this is manifested as the senseless catwalk. Until unconsciousness and possibly death tears the artist away from the audience.

