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LA FONDATION DISTORTION MANIFESTO

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MISSION

The mission of the Distortion Foundation is to own and conduct the Copenhagen Distortion celebration and the Distortion Secretariat: Nus/Nus ApS.

**The mission statement of the Copenhagen Distortion celebration is:
"Celebrating Copenhagen Street Life and Modern Party Culture" encouraging the key human values "Dynamic, Generous, Fun."**

The Foundation must encourage the core human values that Copenhagen Distortion were built upon, it can therefore initiate or support projects that are not directly related to the main celebration.

Copenhagen Distortion must also promote Copenhagen as an exciting and modern - yet cozy and humane - city.

INTRODUCTION

This manifesto is based on the traditions set by the Copenhagen Distortion festival in the period 1998-2011, under the Human Office (holding) & Animal Communication (ApS) – which established Copenhagen Distortion (1998), Nus/Nus ApS (2008) and Fonden Distortion København (2011).

The Copenhagen Distortion celebration must have its own artistic mission and strategy, which should agree with – or even potentially disagree with – this manifesto. The artistic mission and the strategy are to be renewed at least every 2 years by the Nus/Nus Secretariat.

This text was written in November 2011 and March 2012 by Thomas Fleurquin - free of mind and of any mood, exempt of any religious view or political agenda.

STREET LIFE

In its commitment to "Street Life", Copenhagen Distortion must keep its focus on the street as a democratic space open to all. The celebration must strive to remain a colourful tribute to Copenhagen, its residents, shops, bars, galleries, institutions, also the public transports, the Copenhagen Police, the fire department and any other entity that plays a role in Copenhagen's identity at street level. The festival must engage and interact with as many local actors as possible (public transports, shops, residents, bars, galleries, magazines, offices, institutions etc...) and try to bring high-profile and no-profile personalities together, to strengthen the feeling of belonging to a sympathetic and well-functioning community: Copenhagen.

Two slogans have played a strong role in the early Distortion street party history (1998-2006):
> **"Time to get personal!"** (celebrating individuality / personal expression AND giving importance to each single person).
> **"Alle kan være med!"** (a tribute to Copenhagen's heritage of democracy and tolerance)

Copenhagen Distortion has always focused on mobile events, like bus parties, boat parties, parades - always trying out new locations and breaking as many conventions as possible, for the sake of excitement and for building up an electric out-of-control atmosphere.

Distortion celebrations in the streets of Copenhagen must always remain a lively carnival of modern big-city culture with an anything-goes attitude.

PARTY CULTURE

To celebrate Modern Party Culture, Copenhagen Distortion should stay in tune with the newest developments in contemporary dance music, club culture, and any other social activity or behavior, from music to fashion, new media, social art or new technologies. "party culture" may be seen as broadly as "modern live entertainment" or even simply "having a good time".

In contrast to the Street part of the festival, the Party Culture programme should be strongly curated, with innovation as its primary criterion. Distortion's Night events must focus on new names that bring music or party culture further in their evolution. This implies that the Distortion team has a strong command of the current arts & culture agenda – a natural understanding of what is new – and a sincere commitment to "the party scene". Distortion should always be arranged by passionate amateurs, even if they turn semi-pro along the way.

An important attitude in shaping Distortion's identity has been: "As soon as it's called culture, it's not culture anymore". This could translate as: "Oh baby I Like it Raw".

DISTORTION VALUES: DYNAMIC, GENEROUS, FUN

By being "**Dynamic**", Distortion must remain "ultra-contemporary", which includes being highly responsive to modern social patterns, but also to stay mobile, physically and socially. It also means to keep an enthusiastic approach for anything unexpected - and to have the ability to respond positively in any situation. Therefore, "Dynamic" should not only mean to have a sharp sensibility towards the newest social / artistic evolutions, but also to "embrace randomness". **"Anything goes" is the spirit. The opposite of "Dynamic" is "static".**

By "**Generous**", Distortion understands being motivated by passion or the desire to share. This is a key value to Distortion: to put focus on people who do things by passion - with genuine enthusiasm - as opposed to being motivated by personal gain. **The opposite of "Generous" is "small-minded".**

With "**Fun**", Distortion means to keep a light-hearted approach. The one single most important attribute to Distortion's identity, is that it should make arts & culture fun and unpretentious. Behind the Distortion anarchy and madness, lies a serious commitment to the development of new art forms and the creation of poetic moments. But the goal is to use arts & culture to feel free, not to be taken seriously – or worse: to be used/abused for social demarcation. Remember Copenhagen Distortion was originally built with a cut-the-crap attitude. **The opposite of "fun" is "boring".**

CONCLUSION + BLESSING FROM THE KING

Making a manifesto about "the laws of Distortion" is a contradiction, since Distortion was built impulsively, has evolved organically, and came to prominence without any written rules, structure or strategy. Copenhagen Distortion was born out of "orchestrated chaos" – this manifesto and the Foundation must allow future generations to keep the project wild and unpredictable.

My main motivation on this project has been to create "magic moments", where guests feel **"touched by the magic finger of freedom"**. These poetic moments where time stands still, where images and sounds become blurred - is where the name Distortion comes from (a distortion is an alteration of sounds, images, time, space). Moments where people forget who they are and where they are. Striving to share such moments should be Distortion's only unbreakable rule.

Frederik of Denmark just walked past and smiled at me as I wrote the final touches to this text (I was just sitting on some stairs, waiting for a friend) - the smile goes through my body, down my fingers and onto this manifesto: the Foundation is blessed at birth by the king!

Thomas Fleurquin
Copenhagen, November 2011 / March 2012
Fonden Distortion København