

June 2005

Dear ALL,

As a curatorial collective, the Commons Service Group has mandated itself to create a space for research, debate, production and dissemination on the significance of the **General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)** for contemporary art and cultural production. Through various "aesthetic manoeuvres" we aim to open a public debate.

The attached timeline sets out the curatorial engagement of the Commons Service Group, and the various modalities of our project. A series of inserts has been created in collaboration with artists: **Lara Almárcegui** (Netherlands), **Etienne Cliquet** (France), **Maura Doyle** (Canada), **Claude Lévêque** (France), **Chris Lloyd** (Canada), **public works** (UK), **Antje Schiffers** (Germany), and **YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES** (Korea). These inserts are circulating in the May/June issue of an international selection of free contemporary art publications: **L'Art Même** (Belgium), **Fucking Good Art** (Netherlands), **Hors d'Oeuvre** (France), **Nero** (Italy), **Variant** (UK), **multitudes.samizdat.net** (France), **republicart.net** and **eipcp.net** (EU), **samplesize.ca** (Canada).

For the next phase of the project, the Commons Service Group is going to Venice during the professional opening of the Biennale (June 7-15). Artist/architecture collective **public works** have designed a portable kiosk via which we will establish "GATS Free Zones".

Our motivation to address the GATS arose because little information has circulated within the art and cultural sphere about these ongoing WTO negotiations that jeopardise each country's ability to maintain its own cultural policies. GATS trade regulations reduce art and culture to purely economic terms within the nomenclature "Recreational, cultural and sporting services". Our aim is to raise awareness and open debate within the professional art field. To learn more about the GATS and culture, consult the on-line information kit that we have created at:  
**[www.ecoledumagasin.com/csg/gats.html](http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/csg/gats.html)**

The Commons Service Group declares **ART A "GATS FREE ZONE"**. For an ongoing presentation of this project as it unfolds, or to join discussion in our blog, check out the Commons Service Group web site at: **[www.ecoledumagasin.com/csg/](http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/csg/)**

We hope to see you in Venice, or visit us on-line.  
Sincerely,

Heather Anderson, Jerome Grand, Julia Maier  
Commons Service Group  
Serving art, artists, and audiences

**Commons Service Group**  
Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain  
Site Bouchayer-Viallet, 155, cours Berriat  
38028 Grenoble, cedex 1 France  
<http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/csg/>  
[commonsservicegroup@gmail.com](mailto:commonsservicegroup@gmail.com)  
Tel: +33 (0)4 76 21 66 73

