

**Interview** with Lucien Förstner from the winter 2014 issue of Künstlerscheiße Zeitschrift

**SZNAJBERG: ECOCAPITAL SCULPTURES (1999-2014):** *15 years of Kinetic, Temporally-based*

*Narrowcasted rarely perceptible. His decade Site-Specific, multimedia sculptures, and maquettes.*

*Always with the primary medium of capital.*



The essence of the Sznajberg's series: Adaptation to climate change with regard to the evolution of business, technology and society. Almost never seen, but to spectators who did see them— had no idea it was just art...*Which suited the artist just fine.*

Before **The Space In Between** and his Panorama-Sabotage/RoguePano work-- if people knew Sznajberg's VJing and videos from '90s they probably wouldn't call him an artist at all, even most of the people who worked on the sculptures written about below, decade later still don't know. Sznajberg said ; "For a decade and a half, most of the people involved in the [sculptures] were unaware they were art. Which certainly made it easier to execute!"

Whether it was or wasn't art, **Sznajberg's body of work from the 1999-2014 period was replete with moderately impactful Eco-Capital Sculptures.** Some of these sculptures were completely conceptual, most were site-specific and/or time-based. Usually they'd incorporate a healthy dose of AgitProp.

The main medium throughout the entire series was **capital**; startup capital, budgets, plans and pitches, investment funds, and other corporate interests. The theme of the entire series was the evolution of sustainable business. Sometimes, the artist says, the audiences were purposefully minuscule, narrow-casted, but more than two dozen times, hundreds, to literally, tens of thousands would experience them over a weekend... and more often they would involve a multitude of medias all orchestrated together. Other sculptures highlighted experimental technologies. Some were primarily kinetic, while a few times these works remained little more than notes on paper (the artist's *maquettes*). Some of the works the artist recalls as having the greatest impact, remained maquettes or works-in-progress.

In an interview with Lucien Förstner in the December edition of Künstlerscheiße Zeitschrift , Sznajberg said; "Some of these works, like **Electric Timmies** [2008] for example, even though mostly conceptual, had the perfect reaction from the ideal spectator ...the only one I needed to reach. So by the end of 2010 there were EV chargers installed in 4 Tim Hortons in Ontario and 4 in British Columbia ...all using *my chargers*." Though he readily admits; "not all of the sculptures were successful, at all ..enough were, so I had the opportunity to continue working on these sculptures for fifteen years.

To the layperson the sculptures were merely *startups*. Others have dismissed them as rich people's 'toy money' and the piece critics claim is "more performance-art than sculpture" could also be called consulting. The more progressive of these laypeople would now call the sculptures Cleantech startups, Greenbiz consulting, or, for the really savvy; consulting for the [LOHAS market](#). They'll say it isn't art at all. And the artist is OK with this.

## The Sculptures

From 1999-2013 Sznajberg worked on 16 pieces-- six site-specific and/or temporally based, six virtual sculptures, four kinetic, and an inordinate amount of maquettes. While causing no media avalanche, the works did result in more than 15 mainstream media events-- from reviews of the works and appearances on CBC News, multiple articles in the Toronto Star, the Gazette, Time Magazine, and countless blogs, tweets etc... While Sznajberg's isn't a story like Elon Musk; "the Leonardo and/or PT Barnum of green business art," as Sznajberg, "just being a fly on the wall at some of these changes in human tech evolution, sometimes even getting to be a fly on the scale!".

**Förstner:** Look, they're not Art.

**Sznajberg:** Fair enough.

**Förstner:** You're not even putting up a fight?

**Sznajberg:** No point. The only people I'd ever really care to convince they're art would be the patrons, which ironically went the other way around, at first the capital showed up, patrons who liked the ideas in my movies... But I observed how capital is a medium I can work with, like clay, or circuitry conventional kinetic sculptures ...and as that grew-- it was organic, and more of the medium would flow, so I didn't have that Art argument, and never again applied for a Council grant. The patrons knew-- they knew I was an experimental climate change filmmaker, and whether they humored me or believed in the work, they knew where I was coming from. Anyway it's in the past, now there's so many TSIB pics if you google me, my cover's kinda blown. So if you want to ask me how I'm working the eco ethos into my art now; that's a fun conversation, or questions about specific pieces, I'm game. I mean no offence, but *defending* my past work, that's boring.

**Förstner:** OK, I look forward to seeing how you incorporate these two. But first, why would you even call these "sculptures"? Why call them "Art?"

**Sznajberg:** That kind of question puts me into defending my work. You really want to make this interview that dull? Ok, it's your dime... So, first off I know it's art because that's all I know how to do. Nine semesters of arts plastique then 7 semesters film. Sixteen semesters! Anything I have done in the following 28 years has all come from that education.

I admit the *form* of the sculptures was a little out there; As always a new medium requires different tools and will have a different "feel" but that's what art's become in the time between "Étant donnés: 1° la chute d'eau / 2° le gaz d'éclairage" and NyanCats. New mediums, new feels, and new immersions.

Now the different tools-- One often has to learn new skill-sets for different mediums. Not unlike draughtsmanship, carving knives for clay, chisels for rocks, welding, casting, editing... Capital as a medium has many tools-- though a lot more XL spreadsheets and calendars.

Using the tools to express an idea, whatever tools for that medium and for the type of spectators who will work in that capital field-- even if they're less funky than a gallery crowd, and more conservative than VJ tools or lost-wax-- From idea, to making it real, to real-ize it, I called that art. Maybe not capital-A Art, but definitely lower-case art. Kinda like me, I'm more of an artist than an Artist.

You know, it was also a happy accident that led to the first sculpture; We were in the middle of wrapping up an experimental documentary project and due to a few 'unfortunate events' ended up with an eco e-commerce site.

I saw how building the site was similar to the process I had for sculpting, both additive, subtractive especially kinetic. Most importantly there was a constant striving for the content to be harmonious with these weird formal constraints and spectator expectations That's why I called them sculptures

Mostly I can tell you this, Lucien, I know it was art, because I remember this time I found myself freaking out from the stress mid-project-- a sculpture eventually 15,000 people got to experience. ...Probably a month before show-time, I remember sneaking away from the support team I watched blossom from a duo to a 70 employee production, and walking around the King and Bay block, smoking a hash-joint I kept telling myself this is art! ...all this stress, the half-dozen executives and ....*sales-people*, all of this is for the art! ...to realize a vision ...and we realized them, and to get people to experience them. This is for that.

**Förstner:** You said, Formal considerations. What are the Formal qualities of Capital?

**Sznajberg:** Well first off, it's fungible and slippery as fuck. Whatever your vision is you're going to have to plan it as closely as possible, but as soon as you get the capital, you gotta track every cent as it turns into operations. Next, there's the expectation with capital that it will generate revenues. So as opposed to a Council Grant proposal, when an artists is 'mining' capital they have to be able to shapeshift, as well as strive to make solid returns. In the business world you can't change people's minds if you don't generate proper returns. But first and foremost, a stone or an arrow is capital for a caveman, right? I found it was a way to tool up ideas.

**Förstner:** So how does this apply to the form of ecoCapital Sculptures? What is the form of a capital based sculpture?

**Sznajberg:** Proformas... narratives (Business Plans) standards... organizing all these elements to create new forms... site selection, market analyses... Don't worry about the pro forma projections rosy outlooks they all are. All anyone wants to really see is that you took everything into account with regard to all the costs, and unexpected costs. Which if you ever organized a film shoot, or a rave... it's not that different just much more detailed.

The 'parole' has to match the business langue not with their jargon, approaches have to look exactly like a business with things like flyers, ads, PR and reports, and it has to sound like it; with elevator pitches and back-of-the-envelopes for the initial green light. And most importantly, the artist must see the whole picture and break it down for the operations team and to execute.

**Förstner:** Lee, can you tell where these sculptures came from? What was the inspiration?

**Sznajberg:** The sculptures all came out of [tEc: "the Earth changes!"](#) The series of experimental-documentaries I made from the end of '93 to '99 about solutions to climate change. The first three were experimental documentaries and the final version was made for schoolkids

**Förstner:** You were a VJ back then, in Montreal?

**Sznajberg:** Yeah, VJed parties with AphexTwin, Orbital, many early raves as VJ Ali Mixx, then I was Shnaiberg with GodSpeedYou!BlackEmperor for the Hotel2Tango years, and after 2001 I dropped the Ali and became vj littleCatalyst ...Before that I did tons of found-footage collage.

**Förstner:** Recycling!

**Sznajberg:** Heh. But yeah, the Earth changes were very mashupy documentaries **the Earth changes** (tEc III; 1997 90m) made it to the screen at the FCNM film festival, and an early supporter showed it to Woody Harrelson who after watching it allegedly said; "This movie should be in every Blockbusters in America"

...but that was when I realized I had to reshoot it all once more; it was too intense and made people fearful, even though I was trying to highlight the solutions to climate change. So I did another the Earth changes! (tEc IV; 1999, 3x35m), and in order to not be too intense, I cut this version for a high school class. It ended up being used in college and university classes across Canada and some US States, and even won an award at the EarthVision'98 film festival in Santa Cruz before the final edit was even finished.

The new version garnered positive feedback from many institutions and 'Green Teachers' guides. But the greatest feedback I got came from a writer for a magazine (who eventually became, unwittingly Patron #1 for the sculptures, this guy would send me emails that ranged from late-night alcohol-fueled praise for **the Earth changes**, and battle calls to stop climate change... to requests for contact information for various people/techs in the videos for magazine article. At one point he interviewed the head of Digital Renaissance, the "the king of convergence video," (this is back in 1998) and showed him tEc. The King flipped-out over the documentary. His idea was to make a TV series based on it, where the viewer will be able to click for added content. I loved this since many interviews were 2 hours long while the clip in the doc was less than 5 minutes. He also suggested that the viewer could be able to click-and-buy the myriad of solutions highlighted in the series.

He suggested we find a producer that we like, and then he'll work us into one of the networks he was already working with. I should have known better, but I signed with a production company who turned out to be swindlers. Happy accident, though, "Shady art swindlers #1" is why all the sculptures happened, in a way, so I ought to thank them.

**Förstner:** How did TV producers lead to sculptures??

**Sznajberg:** Well they snuck a clause into our contract that said they get 50% of the gross from any revenues generated on the internet. There was no way I could raise the needed funds to build this "convergence website" if some people who did nothing but 'produce' the show, get a larger cut than the actual operating costs! I left without the rights to touch my own series for 18 months.

But PN1 and I incorporated two companies, a production company and Earthchange Technologies Inc for B2B and B2C fulfillment for the show, and they couldn't touch that. So this legal bind mixed with the annoyance of 9 years of interviews with everyone saying; "*business really has to go green if we're going to make it,*" mixed with late 90's exuberance for the coming "New Economy" ... and the Shady Art Swindlers (#1) led to the happy accident of the sculptures!

**Förstner:** Literal sculptures?

**Sznajberg:** Well yeah, kinda. early on I was saying this-- and much to PN1's chagrin, I told Patron #1 this B2B/B2C online e-commerce seemed to me to be a gant sculpture, virtual, and hopefully functional. He really just wanted to make an Earthchange TV shows (albeit 'convergence' tv shows), but that had to wait, at least a year and a half. PN1 and I looked at our convergence plan, split the series off from the internet side, and started to build a green e-commerce store. Three months later, we were looking at a cheque for \$500,000 to develop the first sculpture.

Here's something I wrote down, little rules:

- i. It better not be about the money. But never say that to anybody.
- ii. Watch all the money like a hawk, though.
- iii. Don't ever skim or take kickbacks.
- iv. SHOES!!! (\$250 shoes you get ignored, \$750, they listen to you a little more, John Lobb shoes they understand you, Berluti's they question nothing..
- v. Don't tell anyone on the crew it's art. Play it as straight as possible.
- vi. After proving oneself incredible to a potential patron, you can tell them they're really sculptures.
- vii. Artists are emotional and not everyone will understand you, at least at first. Play Poker with people. Practice poker face till perfect.
- viii. **Get.It.In.Writing.**

**Förstner:** Sculptures??

**Sznajberg:** So, **PlanetDIY.com (1999)** was the first sculpture, a virtual green store offering everything from organic cotton and soap to solar panels and electric scooters.... Just before getting the cheque for the startup capita; I had mentioned to our future investor (Who I call Patron #2 or PN2) that I really believed business can be an art; that business most often applies the first aesthetic—functionality, and often visual aesthetics, but that none I see had really encompassed the social aesthetic, to help people evolve... and until one does cover all the aesthetics, it can be an art, but not a masterpieces."

....*Papering* aside, that's when we got the capital. One side note-- about business/art masterpieces, I firmly believe Elon Musk has created a masterpiece with the Tesla S, he changed people's minds about electric vehicles. We'll see many more business/art masterpieces in the 21st century. I also know that none of my ecocapital sculptures were masterpieces. Try as I did, I always remained an 'outsider artist' especially when working with capital (as a VJ in the '90s, and then doing eco-mashups, I'm used to being an outsider artist so) I didn't mind at all; got to play, big time. ...and got to see small ways in which the sculptures were able to push the envelope, if just a little--

**Förstner:** just a little catalyst?

**Sznajberg:** heh. Good one!

**Förstner:** And why do you call these sculptures?

**Sznajberg:** Well a little like Joseph Bueys' Gesamtkunstwerks, they used all available objects to create a cohesive 'vision' but also—I've always been a formalist. My videos (aside from the Earthchange series) were pure formalism, and these two sculptures were formalist. As opposed to 'content' the 'form' focuses on the work's style, techniques and media used, and how the elements of design are implemented. Letting the capital dictate the formal qualities, and the fact that some were kinetic and others temporally based or kinetic, they all work as sculptures. Also, as capital is a stressful medium I'd often have to escape the boardrooms, take a walk around the block and ...remind myself how if this wasn't art...

Hopefully you get it, Lucien, but like I told the Canada arts council once-- I don't need them to understand (especially since when working with Capital the last thing I need to do is beg the Council for funding).

**Förstner:** Thanks. Would you tell us about the sculptures, already?

**Sznajberg:** Sure! As you alluded, there were about 16 sculptures which were exhibited live, and through various media. I'm probably forgetting a few of the smaller sketches and maquettes but in general, they were as follows:

## 1. **PlanetDIY (Virtual Sculpture)**

PlanetDIY was the product of the split between Earthchange Production (ECP) and Earthchange Technologies (ECT). We had to split our company into two because of the aforementioned ShadyArtSwindler#1, and ECT was incorporated on it's own for the online activities. To raise the capital for building the site the focus became more selling than telling, and we started PlanetDIY.com: a green e-commerce site. More honestly, we made a browser-sized jpeg illustrating what the site will look like once it goes live. With that, an amazing list of green products and distributors, and a slick new business-plan we got the \$500k.

The next thing we did was start looking for a team to build the site. We met a few companies, but while looking for them we caught the eye of Richard Salswinsky, as it happened he had recently bought Canadian magazines SHFT and Vice and was building a web content/e-commerce platforms for each magazine, he wanted us to become his "Greenies" for the cultural trifecta of street/geek/eco.

Next thing my partner and I knew we're being wined and dined in New York City and being asked to move there and launch from New York. Certainly an intriguing proposition but it seemed a little scary; They were going to buy into our company but not pay anything, only build up the backend. We'd have to pay for all the content, as well as running the shop. And what they were costing-out at close to \$1M to build, we had associates in Montreal willing to build for us for 1/8th that amount. It didn't make sense. And something made me weary after we already got burned once. So we didn't close that deal.

As it turned out they were actually only interested in showcasing their e-commerce backend technology to sell it while the market is hot, and ended up selling Vice back to the three founders, and SHFT to their founders, both for \$1. While this was great for Vice, who already had stores in NYC, London and Toronto, and free magazines distributed worldwide, it was the death of SHFT and surely would have been the death of PlanetDIY. Just as we were starting to build our site, and get the rights to products, we got involved in another possible merger, with what I considered to be the best green website in 1998, Envirolink. Envirolink had recently started a green e-commerce site. They were up and running, and while they weren't selling exciting products yet, they had a following. And they wanted us to merge with them and move to Pittsburgh where they were based. By this point though, my head was spinning—all we had was a jpeg, a URL, a few unsigned opportunities for dealerships/distribution, and a massive list of products we'd like to sell, but here we were (we also had a lot of capital). Getting involved in all these Merger/Acquisition deals, and yet not really doing anything, it was driving me mad. Also they didn't care much about my favorite products (see #2). So we never ended up building the PlanetDIY.com site. As the parent company Earthchange Technologies we decided the 1998 dot com world was just too virtual for us, and we decided to pivot.

## 2. **SWAP (Silent Wicked Ass Power) Earthchange Technologies Inc. (Kinetic sculpture)**

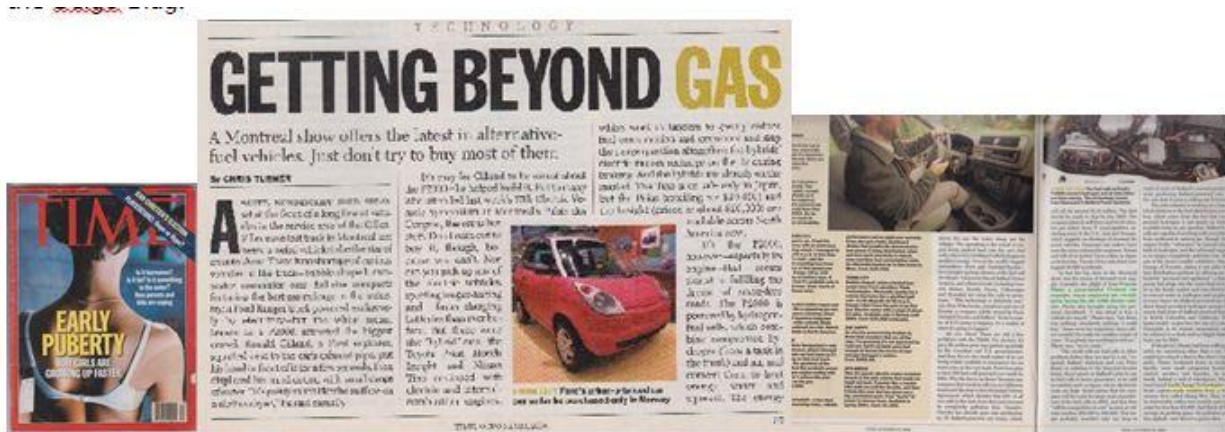


One thing that rubbed me the wrong way in most of these dealings is that they didn't get it. They liked how we looked on paper (and they loved the Senior Manager I hired to help us steer the ship) and once they knew during due diligence, who my original patron was, the PN2 who dropped \$500k on a crazy artist, they really wanted to get into bed with us. But they never got it. I could see the non-reactions to a few products we already had a tentative OK to sell. Including these beautiful purple, green, and gold solar tiles (for building integrated PV), and most importantly the OK to distribute these powerful electric scooters, ATVs, trikes and motorcycles from a company owned by a woman who has been a friend of ever since (the bikes are very popular in Europe and Central/South America). The fact that these M&A type companies were more interested in the dot-com bubble than the products, made me wary. Our Sr. manager agreed, coming from the Shmatta industry he really didn't understand e-commerce, and implored us to just pick one product, start selling it, and then branch out to other logical products and very brandable merch that fit our niche. I instantly chose the SWAP e-bikes—officially it stood for the Shang Wei (Rising Sun) Air Preserver, but I called it Silent Wicked-Ass Power!

Next thing I knew we were in Khaosiuung ROC, getting a deal with the Kungs, the family who own Shang Wei, and bringing back a half dozen scooters, a trike, and an electric ATV. On the way back we stopped off in California and worked out a second deal with a company started by Bill Badsy an Australian cigarette boat champion. He made what we called "stand up" scooters, electric Razor-like scooters of various sizes and powers (the fastest one we sold could do 'wheelies' and get up to 35kmh! When we returned to Montreal we got a space in The Belgo Building (next to all the art galleries) and set up an open office. The office was designed with lanes painted on the floor to take the vehicles for a spin. We had quite a few people from the government including the Ministre de L'efficacite Electriques who tried all our vehicles but the wheelie-scooter.

As luck would have it, EVS17: the Electric Vehicle Symposium was taking place that fall in the Palais du Congres in Montreal. Not only did we get a booth, but we made walls of live wheatgrass around the booth, and suspended some of the scooters in the booth in ways that one of them had its wheels spinning indoors the whole weekend. While this event didn't generate many sales, and didn't help with our case with the Minister of Transportation (who eventually told us our turn signals are 4cm too close-together to get certified), it did impress a reporter from Time Magazine who wrote about us in early 2000, in an article about how electric vehicles are ready, there just aren't any you can buy yet--- he ended his article by describing us, our bikes, and how at least there is one electric vehicle that you can buy right now. At this point the Ministre des Arts et Lettres even gave me a subsidized loft to work on the sculptures outside of the Belgo Bldg.





Sadly we did not have enough capital to stay alive for 5 years, but From the Time Magazine article and meetings with government agencies and many entrepreneurs, several got the bug. It was just a small-influence but also three years later the Ministry of Transportation decided one can ride these scooters without a license or registration or even insurance!



### 3. **Project Soleil** (Site Specific)



After ECT, I spent the next five months or so cleaning up the whole mess, paid every last creditor, and then went to Patron Number 2 to let him know that I cleaned it all up. Now when Patron Number 1 and I were worried about ECT's sr. manager potentially being a time-bomb (before the shit hit the fan), I went back to PN2, and said how we were afraid about this guy might be a loose cannon--he was brilliant, but also a little mad, and suggested maybe we should look deeper into this guy before giving the keys to our castle. Since PN2's employees handle more than a billion dollars, they said don't worry about it (especially when it's small enough to be a nice write-off if need be). So when the whole mess happened, in their eyes, I did try to stop it. So I go to his office to let him know it's all been cleaned up, and he asks me what I plan on doing now? So I told him it was a good time, I think, to go back and follow the Grateful Dead. Or maybe go tree-planting. Then when he pressed for a serious answer I told him how I'm a little gun shy to trust anyone, and that I do trust him, so if he wanted he could rent my brain, and he said "Ok! Let's do it!" and I smiled, and said "Sure! Let's do it!" And a week later I had a list of locations, he picked me up and we went scouting locations for Project Soleil.

See PN2, he has a foundation whose directors I kept meeting in a number of sustainability circles, back when I was shooting **the Earth changes** videos. They'd tell me to apply to their foundation for funding, and I was game, but when I looked at how much paperwork (more than a Council grant), I decided to just write a note on a loose-leaf page, wrap it around a copy of my video, with an elastic band, and pretend I'm a bike courier with an oddly packaged letter to PN2 himself. A couple of weeks later his assistant called to set up a meeting. He enjoyed the Earth changes and made a small investment to shoot the scholastic version of the video, and a second small investment (\$5k each time) to make copies and get to an environmental teacher's convention. We stayed in touch throughout the shoot/post. Before I had fully completed the post or returned to Montreal I found out that there was a ticket flying me back to California as a finalist in the EarthVision98 Film Festival. This is when PN1 came along and wanted to invest funds to start a proper production company, PN2 volunteered to "Mentor" me through the process of an investor relation. I'm sure a lot of why he wanted to mentor was because he gives me \$10k and I win an award in California, but also because PN1's last name is the same as his father's last name. And when #2 heard the name, he instantly asked if PN1 is his father's son. And as you can imagine it's the kind of name that

when #2 finally met PN1 he ran to show him off to his Treasurer and such “He’s J.R.’s son!” (anyway, PN1 is an amazing kind-hearted guy, brilliant writer, producer, all around fantastic fella, not just the son of a “Titan” (J.R. is in all those “Titan of Canadian Business” books). And not only did #2 help me with the paperwork from a Titan’s son (the only time I consider PN1 that, was with those contracts, so scary), but then after the Earthchange Productions/ Earthange Technologies Inc. split, he decided to toss us some startup capital—the \$500k becoming Patron #2

**Förstner:** How did this lead to a real-estate development?

**Sznajberg:** All along these four years that #2 was mentoring me or helping with the movies, he’d tell me how he would love it if there was a place, like a building, or complex, that would have an organic bakery, and an organic fruit and vegetable store, and a few green shops, and maybe some apartments on top. While the final Project Soleil architectural designs were considerably bigger than the seed idea, this was the kernel of Projet Soleil.

**Förstner:** Now you’re in the Großes Geld. How you say, the big bucks?

**Sznajberg:** Funny story, especially when you think that when I made the first movies I was literally an “artist on welfare” ...Still got them into festivals, got full page reviews... but on welfare. And then a billionaire gets a little excited about my movies, and then a lot excited about my movie’s biggest fan’s dad, then tosses us money (LESSON # IX WHEN THEY OFFER ‘A MILLION’ DON’T SAY “Oh, I can do it for \$500k!!! TAKE THE \$1M!!!) in that context, I still find this a funny story: So, #2 picks me up in his car, as previously mentioned, to go scouting some locations I preselected, and here’s the funny part (I guess in a 1% way) he tells me how he just got Pink Floyd and U2! He’s as excited as a kid with the rarest baseball card... he explains, with previous acquisition, the Rolling Stones, it’s his hat trick (he fronts the money for any tours they do and collects 50% of the revenues). I thought it was a strange turn of events for me anyway ...So we look at a number of sites that all had some potential, and I saved the best for last, the Seville Theatre, which had been derelict forever. It was for sale with the adjoining buildings. We both said this was the best spot.

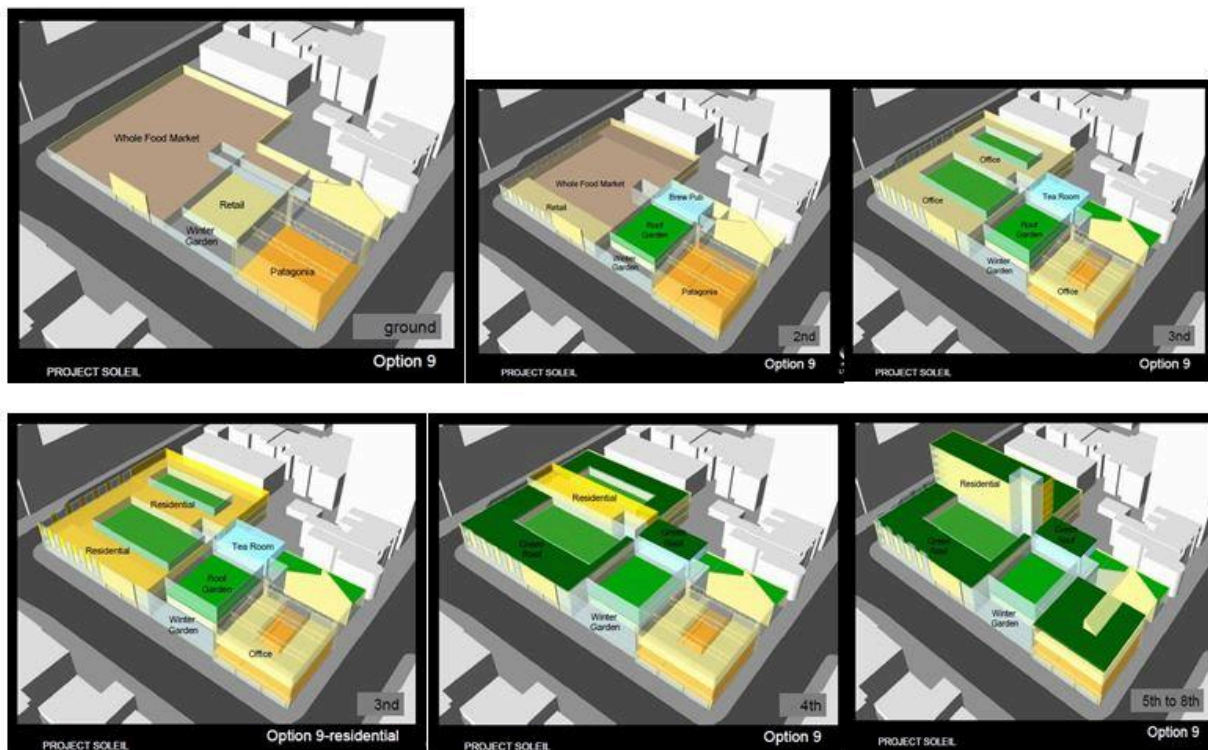
Then we were suggested an architecture firm, L’OEUF, by #2’s aunt (who is a big player in the architectural world, CCA stuff....) and those L’Oeuf guys were brilliant! Of course when they got onboard (same with the Property Manager for all the #2 families real estate) they said we have to do a whole ‘proper process’ before selecting a site m ...had to make all these circles on these massive city maps, as we looked over solar exposure and other aspects-- and everyone suggested a few alternate sites before everyone *eventually* agreed The Seville was the best site for us.

**Förstner:** How did it go from a cafe and little grocery store to condos and eco-art galleries?

**Sznajberg:** As the design, and the business case were being developed, it came to the point where we really have to build it out more to make it cost effective, so we ended up purchasing the whole block, next to the old Forum.



description of final design, Beyond LEED! They'd have to make a new metal after platinum—because; retractable greenhouses, natural ventilation, ingenious passive solar....



**Förstner:** Were people really interested in a project like this in 2001?

**Sznajberg:** We had Patagonia really interested in the Seville side of the project, including the piece de resistance for them; a climbing wall. The wall was the back wall of The Seville, but we discovered it was actually the back wall of a church which sat on the property in the early 19th century. Wholefoods, was also interested in making the site their Montreal flagship, MEC was looking at doing a satellite store, if Patagonia didn't do it, and we were talking with Molsons about them making a brew-pub in the basement (with the rest of the church wall), and creating a "John's original blend" brand for the brew pub, which would be 100% organic. They liked the idea at first, but then said people might ask; "Well, what's in my usual Molsons??" but even without them, we knew we could find a brewmeister to make an organic brew pub a reality. There were going to be shops, tea rooms, office space, indoor green spaces, green roofs galore, and an eight floor condo in the back. Each condo was designed with retractable glass around the balcony that turns into greenhouses for all the tenants.

**Förstner:** We like to say "Wie schnell es zu komplizierten Komplexitäten kommt."

**Sznajberg:** Boy did it! The coolest thing we did, was to get our final design, we had a charette—an IDP, an integrated design party. The original meaning of charette is a wheelbarrow. In olden days a king would throw all the designers and all the architects into a basement and lock them in there until they produced a wheelbarrow of designs for him to look at. And the idea of integrating the design means that you don't have to backtrack each time you add a green technology (for example if you add an intensive-green roof, which can be really heavy, you might have structural engineers saying "hold on! Now I have to re-do part of my design." This can happen with every aspect of design, so if you bring them all together (and ply them with great food and drinks) the design can work together really well. So Danny, the head of L'OEUF got us a \$40k grant from the CMHC which we spent on bringing in the world's experts on passive solar design, natural ventilation, living walls... The CMHC, in return for the 40 grand, got the rights to promote a 60 page report on the IDP process and results of our charette, [it's still on their website 15 years later!](#)

Unfortunately Project Soleil's parent company's parent company merged with another mega corporation, and for a short while PN2 lost a couple of hundred million dollars. This led to a corporate shakedown and major housecleaning of our parent co. And while this was in the throes, the cleanup crew spotted this little green side-project, run by some strange artist, which had, by this time, run up a \$19M tab, and they mothballed the project. (Lesson # 4 when a patron says "you don't want to be in our office, it's too stuffy" Say oh no, I do! Get in there so everyone in the org knows that it's PN2's project, and don't think it's my baby. )

Aside from the CMHC, there were a number of positive effects from this sculpture (a few innovations ended up getting built by L'OEUF in affordable housing projects), and one of the best effect of Project Soleil ended up happening in Toronto. We were just a tiny straw in some massive Toronto green projects but we were the straw that broke the condos back!

**Förstner:** How did that happen?

**Sznajberg:** See, what happened was that I spent a number of Sundays getting together with a very frustrated N. N is a corporate real estate genius and takes care of PN2's entire family's buildings (including the Mies van der Rohe on Park Ave) he can walk into any building and size up the value of it on the 'back of an envelope.' But he couldn't understand the green architects, and didn't have the time to get all the nuances the L'OEUF guys were painstakingly detailing. So to assuage the tensions, I'd meet with N in his office on Sundays and explain the technologies in his terms (or lay terms he could then put into his jargon) and when I got to explain things to N, like why we would spent so much more on a geothermal



heat exchanger as opposed to conventional heaters and get him to jot down the math on the long term costs, he became an ardent supporter.

That's when the weird thing happened. I got a call one day from a fellow JJ, Jamie James. JJ, living in Montreal, had been trying to convince LDZ-- Leo Del Zotto, his father-in-law, a huge Toronto developer to go green for ages (he's one of the three Del Zotto brothers, the owners of Tridel). As soon as he saw the CMHC report he started telling LDZ about it, and since S was so high profile LDZ was listening. JJ asked us if we could meet on a weekend with LDZ to explain the Project Soleil in more details, so for two Sundays we met at N's office, and N and I fielded any and all questions from LDZ. This was, like I said, the straws that broke, and soon thereafter Tridel had their first green charette. Then a green-ish condo, and since then, they've built a number of LEED condos, one Platinum even...

Sad part LDZ wanted to pay for all the ProjectSoleil build-out and be 50/50 partners. But this was after bridges were burnt by pyro-lee, and I begged JJ to call N but I guess the fact that I was a little battered from the fallout made them weary. LDZ wanted to do pretty much the same deal S ended up doing 10 years later, only maxed out space and 100% vanilla.....LDZ was willing to pay for us to make what would have been 2006's greenest building in North America. S ended up making about \$85M off the vanilla deal, a nice profit. Would have been nice if he kept his promise to me that "if this ever makes any money you'll get a point or two," but without lawyers and a war chest you can't fight billionaires.

Ironically Revenue Canada froze my accounts because of the electric scooters they say I sold... I ended up with 10 years with no bank account, no ID... As I say Capital can be a very toxic medium. (((before this should mention the corporate takeover of PS post Vivendi, hanging out backstage on Halloween at the Staples Arena with the Patagonia guy, #2, is fiance and the Rolling Stones... and post shakedown the corporation's \$40k book made to sell "Pantagonia" (they misspelled the name when trying to sell people already sold) on an idea they already bought into), (((also need to add the part about the EHSP store from ProjectSoleil that #2 told me I could take with me))))

**Förstner:** So you got to take some intellectual property as your "parachute?"

**Sznajberg;** Yeah, no severance but at least I could run with an idea...

4. The 2nd shady art swindler, Toronto, and EHSP, **The Environmental Home Store Project:** One day someone working on the 'aesthetic' sides of project soleil comes in all excited as he met the owner of some Eco Art gallery in Toronto. He was blown away by this guy, can call him Whitey though I prefer calling him Shady Art Swindler #2. The thing is I knew him from Summer Camp in the 80s, He was a few years older, so I didn't know him all that well, mostly knew he was a huge stoner. I talked with him. We wanted an eco art gallery in the Project Soleil, so it's seemed ideal. But here's the thing-- working with #2., I was innately aware of how people wet-dream about the bulge in his wallet. This is a guy who collects rock bands like kids collected hockey cards, and makes all the Four Seasons hotel staff run up to with kisses even to my butt "Good morning Mr. Schnaiberg! How are you today?" (totally freaking me out when I was just looking for a coffee and newspaper... but because they saw me and S together for a few days and knew he was paying for our rooms as well as the 120 rooms for the Rolling Stones entourage) ...so basically I saw that it was best to keep S's name out of it. My friends who knew me for years had no idea about S being involved in ECP, ECT, ProjecSoleil... and throughout the time of buying up the properties in particular but even afterwards, I kept his name out of it---

I tracked down a reporter once and got her to not write about it till we're ready to launch but promised her an exclusive if she complies... I knew and so I was careful when working with people on PS. Even

Patagonia, I cold-called them and described the project but not the owner. It was so innovative that the Vice President called me back that day!) PN2's name wasn't necessary during introductions. I did catch the vibe when sussing out Shady Art Swindler#2, that my aesthetics guy spilled the beans on PN2's secret identity. And so I did what I had to do with people when thinking about ETC and PS01-- figure out their net worth. You can't just ask to see their financial statements, but every player wants to look like they got it going on, even if their nerves are all jello on the inside and they're not all that together... so you gotta sniff it out. [[First time I did it was with the senior manager we hired. I realized he played rich, but there were some lies, and worse. When telling #2 I thought there may be trouble with him one of #2's questions was how much is he worth, and I instantly realize he's worth around \$1M but that's mostly in his property he's renting out on Salt Spring Island and if he was held by his ankles and shaken till everything falls out of his pockets]] I thought at the time, I read before how it's rude to look at people's auras without their consent, but looking at their money-auras was more for protection ....A tough lesson I didn't remember from the first time, but this time in Toronto with EHSP I think, I learned the hard way. But we did make a nice maquette!

### The Environmental Home Store project (Maquette)



Make this story short. Eco Art gallery guys. We looked at him for Project Soleil but I thought he didn't have the cash to open one here. But after Soleil was "Mothballed" I got afraid and a little desperate to do it again that I believed him that we would start a partnership. And I left Montreal with nothing in writing but the idea I developed for about 4,000 feet in Project Soleil. It didn't have a name yet but became the Environmental Home Store. And when I moved to Toronto SAS#2 was supposed to invest some seed capital so we could get the ball rolling. Like I mentioned I didn't have anything in writing, and also I didn't know the guy well enough. Had I known his reputation in Toronto I wouldn't have joined forced. It did get me to Toronto, but aside from that almost nothing else came of it--- Except for our printer (he printed our brochures got so into it he started "Village Energy")

### 5. Exuberant Pantaphobia (Virtual)

Left SAS#2. Was homeless in TO, Well, homeless for about 24 hours, and then got my shit together, EI let me extend EI if I take a 3D animation course, and while studying Maya 3D, I got fearless with small web stuff and made my own blog. I started Exuberant Pantaphobia which built a niche reputation (great

info and snarky attitude!) (((NEEDS SHIT-TONS OF MORE DETAILS HERE before the friendblogs (working at the recycling plant in Toronto. When people say Oh That's good! (it isn't good work) I'd say "Meh, It'll be good for the narrative." )) Tree Hugger Groovy Green Worldchanging.... (Even got to be a little catalyst once more for Mother Nature Network eventually-- funny part of the story, UK VJ frineds invited me to see them VJing for Def Lepperd. At the show I met the VJ for the Allman Brothers who invited me back the next night for his show. At that Allman's show, got to meet and have a long chat with Chuck Leavell. First I was telling him his eco work is inspiring, then about S and the good eco work he does, and how I'm working on a blog. He asked what those are and I told him about all the great green blogs—TH World Changing... oddly enough this was about 6 months before he started Mother Nature News)

But first I got contacted by this cool mover/shaker I knew in NYC who introduced me to A., a woman who was starting TMRW. He was helping her put her idea together, and showed her the ExPan Pages, and she hired me on the spot.

6. **TMRW > To Make a Real World. Organic Fast Food in New York City.** This was not my sculpture. I didn't own it. It was the first time I did what I consider a barnacle on another team's project. TMRW was a little over the top for a startup. I already had a little experience with startups and this didn't look lean, but A. was some sort of heiress and I had no idea that she was using her own personal trust to fund this, and that they were going to pitch it to her family for actual funding. Had I known this at the time I would have been more concerned about the names involved in the project Rem Koolhaas designed the flagship, MBDC did all the eco-overseeing. My role was just sourcing the materials. For everything. They wanted the greenest chairs and tables, and packing materials, and efficient kitchen. It was a dream job for me, I found such amazing stuff that the MBDC guys even mentioned it a number of times, and how even they don't know so many of these products (to be fair, they're the C2C certifiers so they're more focused on building the standards, and verifying them than building dream organic fast food chains). A. loved my work so much, it just so happened that she led me to my next gig when meeting some people who just moved to The City after Hurricane Katrina. They run some major rock festival, and when they heard about TMRW they mentioned their desire to green the festival. She said; "You've got to get this Canadian kid!!"

7. **The Greening of the Roo & Rock** 80,000 people, site-specific & kinetic  
So I got a call one day from Rich one of the three owners of Bonnaroo. They said they want to green their festival, and the next thing I knew I was on a plane to Manchester TN (Pop. 10,000, except for one week when it becomes, after Nashville and Chattanooga, it's the 3rd largest city in TN) where I met the 40 different department heads, and started working on greening their needs.  
When I started, they used 75,000 gallons diesel>biodiesel>grid-tied solar also petroleum>electric vehicles (esp. carts gators...), petroplastic>bioplastic>onsite composting. Fair food>local fare. It took 3 years working with them and took them another 3 years after that to implement the whole plan I drew out for them. Even brought the TVA's (Tennessee Valley Authority) green team to Bonnaroo. (((Planet Roo)))

From the Roo lots of attention (even 3 pages and the front page of The Gazette...) got to green many more festivals, including NYC's River2River Festival, and Montreal's Osheaga/HeavyMTL/Picnique Electronique (used over 100K gallons of diesel, wanted to go Biodiesel, I said WTF? This is Montreal. Get an auger and dig cables. Go carbon free! **12 years later this one fixing of an operating budget has saved over 14,000 tons of CO2 from being emitted!**)

8. **Green Living Magazine /Green Living Show (virtual and site specific)**



Green Living Magazine.. Articles, but even more importantly giving info to the editorial board before they hired the writers....always the guys to add stuff— “Lee, we wanted to do a story about XXX” Me: “Oh! You gotta include this thing and this... here’s their urls and the name of the person to interview...” They told me they want to do a show, the Green Living Show 400 booths.... so I opened all sales yr 1 created a list for them of 1500 potential green vendors, taught the sales team what it was they’re closing, listed speakers, created show’s greening plan— a modular green plan, which ended up being used even by Zahara Stroud’s Hollywood Goes Green... Got asked to talk with CBC Newswatch about our screening process. Laurie eek, but led to MdeP Patron #3 (**ironically the first big TSIB sale is on his wall**)

#### 9. **Re:charge the Electric Timmies. (kinetic)**

After the first Green Living Show I knew I had to march into Laurie’s office with a solid argument for a raise and promotion. I had to have more power in this company in order to get things done without the delays and teeth-pulling. I noticed simple experiments like seeing how wearing dress shoes to the office let people hear me more clearly, but I knew that I needed the power of a role to get things done more effortlessly. But Laurie, shrewd as ever opened the meeting by telling me that she’s cutting my hours in half for the summer. So I had no room for my demands. The one good thing is that she has already discussed this with MdeP and he told her that if I have free time, he wants it. So I had the opportunity to work with MdeP who eventually became my 2nd patron (Timmies, Green Toronto Awards, Green Energy Centre, and the M&L Fund). MdeP had told Laurie months earlier that he loved having me around and I was like his own private Harvard Environment-PhD, so I was pleased to work with him. At first we kicked the can... I helped him with various research and letter writing, and as well looking at potential green startup ventures. One of these was with his daughter-in-law a great idea for a community green café/store/centre... ((((((((((but also she came to my place once, and realized how I’ve been working in a corporate environment but on entry level salary, and always almost broke, and running on fumes, and she said: “this is crazy we have everything but we have nothing... and you have everything while you have nothing. This makes no sense” and I assume she said something to “Mike” I never heard anyone else call him that—because the next day he called me into his office. He said it’s come to his attention that I haven’t billed him for the work I’ve done for him all summer, and then handed me a cheque for \$5k and said that he’s is also going to go down to the accountants and look at what everyone is getting paid at Green Living and make sure my salary is made appropriate. Laurie balked, and he suggested I just work with him. I moved into his little office (tucked away from the InvestEco floor and the GreenLiving floors, just him and I) and we looked at what we want to do. Our first inquiry was in Electric Vehicle chargers. We knew that they will be ubiquitous in the future and there are certainly a few best-in-class chargers, and companies that are professional and nimble enough to change and so I sketched out the landscape, and showed him who I felt were the best ones.



This is how Coulomb ended up in Tim Hortons (even though most people will call it their ChargePoints). You see, Coulomb seemed leaps and bounds beyond many of the competitors. I liked that they weren't religious about the charging technologies allowing for most EVs to get a charge, and also their marketing approach was the most doable. So we decided to call and see if we could get the rights for Canada. I didn't know it at the time but this call was the art this time, like a well-rehearsed performance) I had the pleasure of chatting with Scott Saffian, their VP and we totally hit it off. Having been in and out of EVs for about 9 years, I knew the shop talk. He kept on saying how nice it is to speak with someone who "gets it," since usually he has to educate people who call him. Then he asked me:

-What do think of our BestBuy Rollout?

-Look, I think it's amazing that a mainstream retail box has bought into EVs. Love it! But it's not going to last.

-Why'd you say that?

-Well they're installing your chargers to promote their foray into EVs but it's a bad choice for a vehicle. They're launching with a \$17,000 electric motorcycle. And I see 3 problems with that; one is that most people walking into a Best Buy don't have a motorcycle license. And there's no way for them to test drive them and no one has ridden one yet so they'll want that. And most importantly Best Buy is where you go for cheap speakers, memory sticks... it's not where you go to drop seventeen grand. But I'll tell you what you do in Canada! (see the goals was to make him think that we are his guys in Canada.

-What's that?

-There's this place in Canada called Tim Hortons. It's coffee and donuts, and personally I think the coffee taste like swill. But Canadians love it. They say; "I gotta go get my Timmies" and Scott, Tim Hortons line the Highway from coast-to-coast! It doesn't matter what gas station dominates the highway stop, there's always also a Tim Hortons.

-Tim H-o-r?

-H-o-r-t-o-n-s

....about a year and a half later I noticed on LinkedIn that he got a new gig at GM's ecomagination and I sent him a little note congratulating him.

-Hi Scott, I don't know if you remember me but I Just wanted to congratulate you....

-LEE!!! Of Course! And thanks!.....

A few years later back in Montreal I was talking with someone about chargers and said how I'm sure in the future there will be chargers at Tim Hortons. Just for a lark I typed it into Google. And there it was; Tim Hortons launching their charger network in Ontario (they now have them in Ontario and BC though one day it probably will be every Tim Hortons). Looking at the charger I knew what it was. I was so touched. Ironically back in 2009, way before the call to Coulomb I wrote a piece in ExPan about how Tim Hortons will eventually be a big player in EV charging and will deploy chargers in their donut shops.... Prescient, or just an instigator? Not sure...

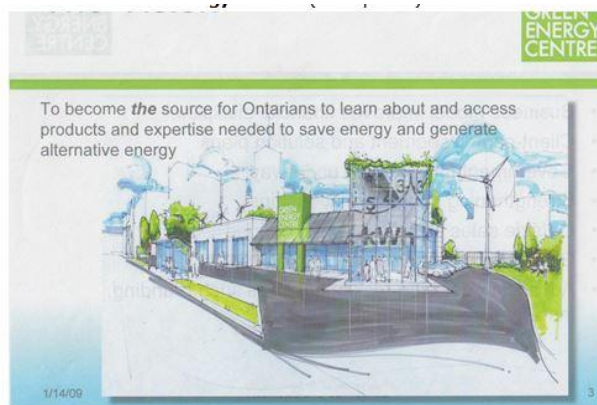
#### 10. **A Greener Festival**

After winning a few awards for Roo at AGF, and becoming friends with them, keen kids from the UK who are trying to change the whole festival landscape... coordinated the auditors coast to coast in Canada and the US.... Finding keen greeners that I knew or extended network, to go to each individual festival... worked with AGF in assisting the forms and structure.... What was the point of this one? Wasn't my sculpture... but I got to play with and see the ripple effect of all the work at Roo....

#### 11. **Bill Clinton, John Travolta and a planeload of Scientologists.**

Working on GLS I got to meet Dr. D. again. She was the Director of Muchmusic when I got a gig at MM doing mashups and scratching video for and Election Special (and using their studio to cut tEc III at night). While working together again at GLS she got me to ghostwrite 'Canadian talking points' for Al Gore and Robert Kennedy Jr., and we had a great time being able to work with her again. After GLS she was hired by the Clinton Giustra Foundation to run their Canadian launch. Dr. D called me to see if I'd like to green their event. By this point this was pretty boilerplate, (((((one funny alberta organic vs rowe)))) one interesting opportunity came when D got the message that Mr. Travolta wanted to know why we're offsetting his plane's emissions, and how, and can we write up a quick paragraph about it. I know he flew his plane to this environmental event in Toronto with Katie Holmes and Suri and Tom Cruise, and I don't know for certain but I suspect he might have read the paragraph about how the planes emissions will be offset with half a wind turbine being built by his carbon-offsetters.

## 12. GEC - The Green Energy Centre. (Site Specific)



If it slows the meter, or turns your meter backwards, we got it! A full EE/RE store. Perfect timing just before the Feed In Tariff.... MdeP asked me about his idea for a lightbulb store-- my answer was maybe for a franchisable kiosk but not a store--- for a store we need more, and then had the idea about an Energy Efficiency store. He loved it and we set out to get this done. Looking for locations, small team, everyone was into it. Made a killer list of products to carry in the store, and even looked for a green-oriented retail expert to help us run it.... The Investeco guys were checking us out, excited about the project... then one day someone said "this is great... but who's going to lead it?" and that's when I realized I wasn't even in the running to lead my baby. That's when the CMS showed up (Corporate Middle-schmuck Paul Nathanielsz) he worked for cellular companies and had no idea about how energy efficiency works, he just knew there was money there. It was 2008 and the economy was tanking and CMS had the brilliant idea to just focus on B2B, the opposite of our goal of having a showroom and being both for B2B and B2C. His new approach was to reinvent the wheel and not only do what most engineering companies were already pushing, but actually hire them and just tack on a little profit for us. I knew this was going to be a tough sell, and even tougher when the salesman doesn't know the difference between a geothermal heat pump and a solar thermal system. I also knew that as soon as CMS showed up there was a target on my back. He didn't fully understand but he did hate the fact that this was my baby and that I knew the material better than he. He got MdeP to start ponying up \$400K a quarter for him to earn his \$30k a quarter and hire a bunch of VP types (who eventually hated him and ran away leveraging MdeP away from him.) I went out for breakfast with MdeP and told him that I feel this target on my back. He said "you will always be OK don't worry." And also added a story about a guy he hired once but hated and his #2 guy told him "yes he's an asshole. But he's the asshole we need." I didn't agree with him but I understood. And the next month I was kicked out of my own company. With no severance or anything....

13. DISCOVERY CHANNEL **new energy week, climate change week**, book...

This would barely fit as a sculpture. Except for Cch week—See, old partner PN1 called me up. Help. He was making a movie about plastic. He always like the Earth changes more for the movies than the ecoCapital. After tEc he started 12 years of producing TV episodes for Discovery Channel. When he started working there, pitching green stories and driving a Prius they would chastise him; “This isn’t an eco-channel. It’s a science and technology channel.” They’d remind him... but then this call, just after An Inconvenient Truth came out, now they wanted shows—New Energy Week and then a few months later Climate Change Week. Problem was PN1 was on a sabbatical making the award winning movie Addicted to Plastic. He had been 100% plastic in terms of his research for a few years, so we’d get together and do these all-nighters picking stories for him to pitch. And we got to really ‘green’ their content (not all that capital intensive, it probably doesn’t fit here though they did end up shooting about 20 episodes at \$10k each so it was redirecting some of their operating capital to the light side). The reaction to Climate Change Week was so positive they published a book, a compendium (it’s interesting to see how many things in that book were from the the Earth changes, and sadly, still novel to most viewers).

14. **FTM – Forward Thinking Motors (Kinetic)**



At the time I thought this was going to be my last sculpture... here’s how this happened: called an old friend from EVS17, the owner of NetGian the #1 EV\EV motor manufacturer for DIY EV conversions. He told me hey lee we have this new technology—it’s the EMIS (Engine Motor Interface) it can convert any truck into a hybrid! Do you want the rights for Canada? I mulled it over for a while, found a few people willing to pony up some capital (when I began it was easy to get \$500k but now we worked hard to raise \$20k which I didn’t think was enough, but enough to start, so we pulled the trigger, incorporated FTM and started to work on a conversions. Had some key partners (I thought) one who owned a garage and had a fleet of airport limousines, a clean tech entrepreneur and a green investor.... My biggest mistake was since people were only investing \$5k each, I gave each one 5% of the company—I should have given them all more since before we were done, one started a green limo company behind my back (and started working with my contacts for his new co) one started a festival greening company, using my ideas and my contacts to start, and the third partner took my ideas and started a new company (clean cook stoves, which he wanted to do, but when he went to China to start selling them, he went with a stove that I showed him). Everyone had vested interests and not for FTM’s success. In the end after 6 months we had three different technologies to sell, sold two EV kits (one for a guy converting an F-150 and another making an electric Miata), attempted to turn one limousine into a hybrid, and got a third tech which was a

Performance Exhaust system that put more oxygen into the chambers before combustion leading to a 12% increase in fuel efficiency. We converted two limousines with this tech, costing \$600 per-vehicle... they both saved over \$200 in gas in the first month alone. With no real team, and running on fumes, weeks after we installed the first two prototypes, I was looking at having no rent or food money, and most importantly my mother passed away and I felt awful that I didn't have the funds to go back to Montreal to see her more than I did, before she died. She was happy to see the progress and the pictures of the prototypes, but I felt awful and realized that my dad would be 80 years old, and living alone in Montreal. 2 of 3 partners were based in Montreal and said come home and we can continue the work from here, but with all the vested interests nothing ever happened again on FTM.

#### 15. **The Toronto Green Awards**

MdeP a spin off of the Green Living Shows.... Asked me who would I give awards to? I made a list....MdeP gave it to Tyler Hamilton who I met a number of times before but must have seemed too eager, I'm a big fan of his, TH looked over it, made some changes, and then MdeP told him to send it past me. He did (kind of implying it was his list) and I didn't say hey that's my list!!" just acknowledged some of his changes and asked him where was one I really loved that he removed from the list. We worked on it a little. I never went to the awards ceremony.... Not that it matters but a week later Tyler linkedin requested me and following my tweets....

#### 16. **Planetstove**

Dylan, new stove design.... Wrote shot and edited an Indiegogo campaign for him, My new Pal Tyler wrote about it in his weekly column on cleantech in the Toronto Star... which lead to more than ½ the \$\$ they raised....raised enough funds for him to go back to China and distribute a hundred new stoves....

#### 17. **M&L Fund (Virtual)**

MdeP called me in Montreal. He had been pushing it on me for some time but made one last pitch to start a cleantech fund with him looking at some of the companies I've been watching.

First 6 months!!! Then I said let's pull out and wait? "Stop being so emotional we're in this for the long term" ....the next 18 months... saw a loss of \$270k. And by this point I had totally lost track What do you mean by that?

The content. I got totally lost in the content. I forgot I was doing a piece. He asked if I wanted to quit but I felt obliged to make this work so worked for free for the next 6 months, restructured the fund, went from 27 securities to 11, reinvested it into companies I enjoyed, got **3,500 shares of Tesla at \$22 SolarCity for \$11 4,500 shares of Daqo for \$6** and a host of other clean tech companies who showed great promise. After 6 months I battled it back to the original investment (\$400k) and then made a bad move. Thought Tesla had a ceiling around \$45 and read too much about how many people were shorting them so decided to sell it at \$54 which wasn't bad, but as far as I was concerned this was a grave mistake and I tried to buy it back but they said let's wait to see how it is at the end of the week, but it was already over \$100..... I took this too emotionally and retired from the fund.

Oddly enough they never sold a few of the stocks, I didn't ask which, but at least 4 more of the ten; \$ADA-ES, \$SCTY, \$DQ \$JKS went up >500% from when we bought them. Of course even though these were long term investments I didn't have anything in writing about getting rewarded for this, not even for the 6 months free labor, though to be fair, I never reminded him. I was never looking to get wealthy, I just wanted to be involved....



Oddly enough II: as I was retiring from M&L I told MdeP that it's too stressful, and the only fund I would work like this for, would be a 100% "carbonivore" fund. (if it takes CO2 out of the air, let's invest!) I drew up a maquette of what a fund like this would be like, and the companies in which we could invest. It floated around for a while. Never got much traction. Then a few years later MdeP was sending it out to the investment community. It got the attention of **Margaret Atwood**. She ended up using it as the final example in her article about "[It's not the climate it's everything changes](#)," and then she asked if they can [reprint the maquette as the articles appendix](#)! It ended up in The Guardian, HuffPo, Wired.... In my opinion this was a great way to end the series! (incidentally Ms. Atwood says Electric Timmies is her favorite of my sculptures, adding the byline "Saving the worlds, one Tim Hortons at a time">") Oh I ought to add that

GF: But you did well then, for an artist?

Sz: Um, not really, yeah sure I was making like 40K, as an artist that's probably above average. But at the end of the day, I made people about \$80M in profit over the decade and ended up near-homeless, dumpster diving for food, and wearing threadbare shoes in the thick of winter. (Return to Montreal and revenge of Revenue Quebec/ECT) ...As an artist I got to see some great ideas turned into reality. As someone who realistically has to eat, at least once a day, and have a warm-ish home in wintertime, I'd say I really ought to get things in writing. But it might not be what I needed, anyway. That's the thing about getting lost in the content. **By L&M fund, I realized fully that I forgot that these sculptures were sculptures--** I was back in Montreal, and for some strange reason renting a painter's studio—and a few people from the old scene hired me to do videos for them, and I started to remember I'm an artist and the ecoCapital sculptures were just pieces. I don't know when it took over but I was becoming the roles I was playing, if that makes any sense. I also instantly realized why so many people with whom I worked on these projects often looked like their translators were broken when we had to talk about things. It all made sense, and what a blast I had, making these just-a-little-ahead-of-the-curve ideas into various kinds of realities.

### **ADDENDUM III One more happy accident – how rules 1&3 led to TSIB and Sznajberg's return to pure formalism (at last!)**

So I took Addendum II Rule 1 (Never skim, no kickback and it's not about the money!) too seriously. I mean all these projects were about investing capital to make profits. So we wanted to have these projects succeed. And when it came to greening operating budgets, it was about lowering their bottom lines, but even with startups it wasn't about the exit plans. But too seriously in the sense that I never asked to get anything in writing along the way. I just felt like it was not why I was doing this.

When I moved back to 514 in 2010 FTM, briefly it looked like they were both happening. FTM was really not a team (my own fault) and it imploded, M&L Fund was running but I was already feeling it as soon as I returned. I remembered that this was all the content, no longer the medium. ..plus I was now meeting so many young and eager new green entrepreneurs. Well schooled, and not trying to keep a giant part of who they were in a bottle.

And naturally as soon as I returned home, a number of people were like: you're back, wanna do a video for our band? So while I was running the clean tech fund, I was also hanging out with unknown musicians and making cheap and dirty videos. I knew that certainly wasn't what I was going to get back into doing (I VJ'd for GSYBE. I certainly don't need to do that again) ...but collaging and match-cuts and playing with

the purely 'formal' aspects, even if video, was so refreshing.

After two years of fantastic growth, the M&L Fund had had 3 quarters in a row and the securities we had had more than halved in value. I was eating myself up about this (we're going long, you have to sit back) but also doing videos...then they said why If I no longer like doing this, why not pull the plug? We have no \$ to keep paying you (\$1K/month) and I said no, let me do 6 months, no pay but let me right this. They told me multiple times I didn't have to "battle it back" but I felt like I owed it to deP. He put this capital in, because he believed in me. I really went to town, this when I restructured the fund, battled it back completely, and bought into most of the companies mentioned above.

I subsidized this part of the fund by doing more videos. Not only was making videos for bands not-at-all-what-I-want-to-be-doing; but the pay was awful. And I had formally retired from the fund. As much as I enjoyed it—it was so stressful. And I knew that I couldn't just find another patron who would get me. And I didn't think I wanted to do any more ecoCapital sculptures anyway. Eventually I found myself needing to find work.

And even if I did want to, I hadn't worked out of Montreal in a decade, my whole network was outside of the city, plus I have the accent of someone who hadn't spoken much French in 15 years... So back in Montreal the only job I could find was at a call center. Desperate times call for taking a drastic paycut

And a big kick to the ego but walking down to my "orientation" at the new job (my first job interview since I graduated university) I kept thinking *I knew I should have taken a left turn at Albuquerque....* Why is this happening?? I wasn't poor-me-ing it, but walking to the first day orientation, I was kinda was playing some of my greatest hits in my head; I called CEOs, flew on a Gulfstream.. ghost wrote for Al Gore, Robert F Kennedy and John Travolta... blah blah.. Why? I kept asking: why? ...I also thought about the money I saw pass by over 15 years, saw my patrons make millions, tens of millions from the work-- and I saw many people carve out little empires where they could tithe from contracts, kickbacks, I also thought about had I put some in my pocket too. Alos, I thought how I never once asked for a raise even when I was instrumental in taking visions into corporate level operations... And what if i insisted on getting the commissions I was told I was going to get.

And here's the fuck-up thing—I get to the orientation and they tell us all the things you can't do in a cubicle (I.E. eat, use your smartphone, read books....). In 46 years having never been in a cubicle I had no idea what they were talking about. It was explained to me that most of the job is "down time" which they said means lots of random times when you're just waiting for a call, for a few minutes usually and they stressed how smart phones and reading school books lead to missed calls, and how no one is happy when they answer the phone and are greeting with someone talking with a mouth full of food. So no food, books, wihi... Then they added the four sweetest words I had heard in the longest time; Oh, but you can doodle." To me it felt like the ceiling opened to the sky with beams of light pouring on me and I knew right away--- I'm going to do The Space In Between!!! Knew right away this was why

(last class before dropping out of art school--- the need for drawing like I dunno, Mike L Angelo or someone... I definitely needed better draftsmanship. I was painting representational works and needed to raise my representational skills. So took one drawing class but ....The Prof walked in, kicked a roll of paper across the length of the room, raise a pub pitcher  
Started, I thought as, a one-off in 1988 I was going to Film School

but then in .... 1992 When I first started painting TSIB always new I need 500-1000 hours with a pencil



and paper. But in '92 when I brought them back for VJing I thought who has time for that??  
(VJ>tEc>ecoCapitalS) TSIB was always on the back burner. Then those five sweet words!! I knew they would think it's just doodles if they happen to see me in my cubicle drawing them, I knew it could slip under the radar.

Funny thing—if I got the percentages promised I wouldn't have had to get this job. I may have not even remembered that it was just art and been so caught up I probably would have kept the one TSIB on the wall and never remembered just how much I love doing them, nor just how far they would go... I had no idea before how amazing they'd look on canvases once done properly. Nor how Mindblowing they become with mirrors... nor the plans for kinetic pieces (like G. Sarcone squished in to TSIBs) and 3D animations and eventually the TSIBophone!!