

The Space Hijackers

The Space Hijackers describe themselves as a group of 'Anarchitects' launched in 1999. Their aims are "to fight the oppressive encroachment onto public spaces by institutions, corporations and urban planners; to change the way that ownership and usage of space are perceived; and to put the users of public spaces on a more level playing field."

The group primarily stage events, though sometimes surreptitiously alter spaces as in the project 'Guerilla Benching', which reintroduced public seating to areas denuded of it by planners or vandals. Here, they present video and photographic documentation of some of their projects, as well as information and artefacts used in staging them. At the rear of the space is a recreation of part of their office, complete with press cuttings, maps detailing the location of every event, and of every Starbucks branch in central London.

Their first event was to hold a free party on a Circle line carriage on the London Underground; the third and final Circle Line Party was attended by over 2,000 people and featured portable PA systems, disco lighting, free drinks for all commuters, and pole dancing. Since then the group have staged a fake "Half Price Sale" in NikeTown, mobilising 30 agents dressed in T-shirts proclaiming 'Everything in Store Half Price Today'; organised a cricket match between MPs and Hijackers on Parliament Square outside the House of Commons; a series of 'anarchist vs capitalist' cricket matches in the City; posed as arms traders to disrupt armament fairs; held a street party for the Metropolitan Police. Their history can be seen on the archive of their website - www.spacehijackers.org.

From their secret HQ, the 300+ "special agents", who have joined the organisation online, plan and co-ordinate events around the world. In service of such events, they often develop cunningly designed equipment – often disguised in businessmen's briefcases – to carry out events by stealth.