

## Art the new weapon of choice

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### An artist has provoked the public and art world with a new project that comes dangerously close to crossing moral boundaries

We all own a share of the world's 'evil' says a provocative artist so the question is whether we can bear having it hanging over our sofas in the form of a three-metre-long piece of art.

Artist Kristian von Hornsleth has started a company selling shares in the arms industry as pieces of art with proceeds going to charity.

For 20,000 kroner, investors will receive an authentic Hornsleth piece to grace their walls and a slice of the international arms industry, not to mention a bloody conscience.

Hornsleth's intention is to get people to reflect on their stance on weapons, something that in his opinion is long overdue.

'It just goes to show how absurd we are, and it shows how absurd the world is for making weapons that can wipe out the planet five thousand times over, and then we use the tax money from weapons companies to make hospitals and educate doctors to repair the damage done by those very weapons,' he told Politiken newspaper.

The paradoxical nature of the project is clear: 'The idea may seem ridiculous, but it mirrors what is happening on a grander scale. We donate to charitable causes, but much of that money is from industries you would not want to know about.'

He said that a 'moral dilemma' arose for those who involved themselves in such transactions. 'They'll need to consider whether they can handle blood on their hands while saving the world.'

Creating provocative art is nothing new to Hornsleth. His interactive art caused a ruckus two years ago when he offered 300 Ugandan villagers a goat or pig in exchange for changing their name to Hornsleth under the auspices of the slogan 'We want to help you, but we want to own you'.

The project attracted immense criticism that accused him of overstepping the boundaries of art.

However, this time Hornsleth reiterated that his new project was first and foremost an art project.

As Torben Sangil, an art critic and expert at the University of Copenhagen, said: 'There are no boundaries for what you can call art, but the question is whether the project is good as art.'

'If more people are killed in the world because of Hornsleth's project, it would be very problematic. And here, a moral boundary is crossed concerning what is right or wrong, but not whether it is art or not.'

The exhibition opened earlier this week at Gallery Poulsen in Copenhagen with 100 shares of his project and company, Hornsleth Arms Investment Corporation, up for sale.

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