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GISS did create artwork, but got cold feet

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Rotterdam, 23 September. The tale of the artist and the secret service had to end error. And now the secret service at any time can come take her artwork, a book, to complete.

By our editor Sandra Smalenburg

American [Jill Magid](#) (1973) book, *Becoming Tarden*, commissioned by the General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD). It contains encrypted but sensitive information about agents of the AIVD. The book includes one copy, which is in London's Tate Modern in room, safe in a glass case.

The AIVD, which Magid had approached four years ago itself, will store the book in its own archive. Magid believes that the AIVD does not adhere to the agreements and says come and get it. In a letter she invited the service to *Becoming Tarden* confiscate the Tate. The museum staff is trained and the necessary official forms are ready. The title of the exhibition, *Authority to Remove*, refers to it.

"Humanly face"

Magid in 2005 was assigned to the AIVD "give human face" a bit. They proposed to create a collective portrait of a spy. She started working for the AIVD as a consultant, was screened, and made three years of interviews with a total of eighteen secret agents. The results of her research, written portraits were shown in early 2008 a successful exhibition at the Hague art center Stroom.

The problems started when Magid hinted last year that she was a novel about her experiences in writing. At a crisis meeting she was told in The Hague that the AIVD forbade her to publish the book on your own. It was threatened that her artwork and computer were confiscated. And lawsuits would be filed because of revealing state secrets.

"Until then, we had, as agreed, cooperated in an open manner," Magid said from her hometown of New York. "But suddenly the AIVD had changed the rules."

Script

The manuscript Magid had submitted to the service, she was drafted back broken in August 2008. "About 45 per cent of the text had been white. They had not just deleted potentially sensitive information, but also censored my personal thoughts and feelings. All logic was gone. My book had become totally unreadable. "

It was the then deputy AIVD director Theo Bot, who finally suggested to set the book than just once on display behind glass, as an art object.

The exhibition in London Magid indicates that call literally hearing. And all on her terms.

final chapter

In a letter Magid wrote last month to the AIVD, the artist announced that the exhibition is the final chapter of cooperation. "The book is a reminder of our relationship," she writes. "I had dreamed of publishing my first novel. You're the only reader. Grab it. Dress it. Keep it in your building and seal the rear glass. I'll allow it. "

AIVD spokesperson Miranda Havinga is to pick the service definitely plan the book. The AIVD considers Magids action not as a provocation, says Havinga. "We knew what was her way of working. There are clear agreements on the limits within which they can operate. We trust that these are respected. "

Bureaucracy

"It was never my intention to upset the AIVD," said Magid. "My method is to work with the system, to stick to the rules, but to make a point within those limits on how such an organization works. This exhibition tells a lot about the bureaucracy of the AIVD. That cost me a novel. And that is a great loss. "

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