



## Jury report DA4GA 2011

### **Lionel Billiet + Kluyver Centre for Genomics of Industrial Fermentation**

#### *Concrete Lichen*

*Concrete Lichen* is an investigation into positioning Lichen, a symbiotic organism (green alga and fungus), on concrete surfaces as a new 'coating' material for (concrete) buildings. The project also involves a participatory event during which a concrete wall in Leiden is "*lichened*".

Up until now no other use of Lichen as ornamental-organic element of architecture is known; researching the applicability of the symbiotic organism will also benefit the public as it can serve as a sensor for air pollution. Lichens are extremely sensitive to air pollution. Architecture on which a lichen design will not grow runs the risk to become known as a sick building – a syndrome that up until now was more associated with the inner health of buildings.

Interestingly, the architecture will also become a 'data-visualization' medium with the lichen functioning as pollution indicator.

*Concrete Lichen* has artistic, scientific and societal potential, as it may prove to the wider public that lichen are useful and beautiful organisms of which urban humanity can benefit. *Though maybe even more than the public, architects and planners need to be convinced to use more sustainable alternatives for slick, shiny and bling surfaces and facades that constitute our daily urban view.*

*Billiet and the Kluyver Centre have a lot of scientific competence*, as Billiet himself also is bio-engineer. Though it might be good to inform the project with more information from the architectural world – materials expertise – to further research and contextualise the applicability of lichens. Connecting the organisations of FoAm and RotoR of which Billiet is part with the Kluyver Centre will benefit the link between art, science and technology.

The jury was unanimous about *Concrete Lichen* and wishes the project partners a lot of endurance, as lichen grow extremely slow.