

I EINDHOVEN

CITY OF DREAMS: A TRUE STORY IN III PARTS
BY JANE HARDJONO

A NIGHTMARE FOR SOME

I had been asked many times why I wanted to leave Melbourne. Why would I want to leave my job and the whole career I had built there? And what about my brilliant friends and awesome family? When

I decided to leave Australia four years ago, I was ready to say a permanent goodbye to the advertising industry and do something completely different. I wanted to know whether, as a single girl, I could be really independent. I wanted to stop working for 'the man', be my own boss and become a freelance writer. My destination was Amsterdam. On the way I met a lovely young Dutchman and took a detour via Eindhoven. I never left.

DREAMERS: MY KIND OF PEOPLE

In Australia, I never belonged to a tribe as such. I was more of a friend collector. From the minute I arrived in Eindhoven I knew I would not take on an instant friendship group. It was going to take effort to continue my careful curation of friendships. Five months after arriving, I married the lovely young Dutchman. Beyond his friends and family, I met some inter-national people through my work. When I took up some volunteer work at the Temporary Art Centre (TAC) I started to meet locals interested in the arts and culture; people actively exploring their personal

philosophies. I formed a network made up of bona fide Eindhovenaars and other Dutchies, as well as some English, Germans and South Africans.

A DREAM COME TRUE

A couple of years ago I was out with two very good friends – Dutch girls I had befriended via TAC. Over dinner we all said we would like to do something entrepreneurial, or maybe try some individual projects. We all joked that we should stop dreaming and just do our own things, leave our jobs. Hey, we could share an office!

Since April this year I have been sharing an office in Eindhoven with these very two girls. And I am a freelance writer. I saw one of my office-mates get married and she will soon become a mother. I feel so privileged to be a witness to such important milestones in her life. What is interesting to me is when you get to a certain age, people do not want more friends. But these Dutch girls chose me; now they form part of my immediate community and they encourage me to be my best self, the way any other friend would do – whether I would be in Melbourne, Paris or even New York. However, in this version of girl-meets-boy-and-they-live-happily-ever-after, all the girl's dreams come true ... in Eindhoven.



Jane Hardjono (35) said goodbye to Australia to become a writer. While travelling she met her husband and stayed in Eindhoven where she started The Dossier, documenting the pursuit of culture and the creative sector in Eindhoven. Jane's motto is: "Embrace wherever you are." Check www.thedossier.nl