

Every product of formal design embodies the utopia of a space, in which it can appear in an ideal way. This abstractly planned space is always a political space at the same time, which implies certain ways of ordering, certain values and relationships among people. The exhibition “Provisorisches Yoga” is interested in these spaces. It questions the link between the built environment and the ideas and programs formulated through it. What kind of connection is there between living space and society? What kind of relationship is created by designers between their products and the lives of the users? Different concepts of surroundings, surface and furnishings are evolved by the artists in engaging with these questions.

The title of the exhibition “Provisorisches Yoga” is the result of an attempt to combine two contradictory modern figures of thought, as they appeared in the ornament debate in the early 20th century. Whereas Adolf Loos wrote that the evolution of culture is “synonymous with the removal of ornament from utilitarian objects”, Sigfried Kracauer conversely emphasized the potential of ornament for individual Spielraum (a term used by Karl Krauss, lit. scope) and improvisation, contrary to the totalitarian logic of modern architecture and its economic inscriptions. A field opens up on this basis, which is ultimately devoted to the question of the place and the function of art in society: What does the ideal relationship between design and society, between form and form of living look like? This perspective also draws the gaze to the aspect of authority in creating, which became visible in the 20th century as the ambivalence of Modernism between emancipation and control.

The exhibition asks about the scopes within a defined set of movements, forms and their promises. This theme also centers around the body and its movement in built environments and their programs. The focus is on the possibility of arranging social space, societal living and its renewal as a choreography based on moments of both stabilization and dissolution. We understand the ambivalence of the title like the possibility of an unforeseen movement within a gymnastic exercise, or also as a playful supplement to the given planning stage of an architecture, in short: as the possibility of situative agency and of change within defined contexts.

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