

'Off-key', not on pitch or not in tune; a crooked way of playing became a theme in certain jazz practice or Bossanova. While simple classical harmony, folk music, and many popular music progressions stay fixed in one key, Bebop harmony for example can switch from one key family to another at any time. The term informed this exhibition dealing with the staging of meaning and its deviation, the possibilities of the illicit in different spheres of custom, and the disruption, contamination or the perversion of systems taken for granted. Associated with mostly already existing artistic projects desired in the exhibition, a possible concept comes in sight - off-key.

As an exhibition, Off-Key assumes the 'outside' position art has come to occupy in society, something that happened within the same movement that appropriated art for the needs of lifestyle industry or for the process of democratic legitimisation. The marginalisation of the long-term cumulative influence art had as a zone of free thinking and speculative imagination may be the reason that today the intentional space of exhibitions, instead of being a construction wherein art operates and brings to bear its distinct "otherness" and "uselessness"¹, became more and more a project 'beyond art', contextualised within an 'extended' notion of culture that demands from visual arts to 'communicate' in a global traffic next to documents, television and other 'media'. But about what kind of communication or knowledge transmission can we talk in the end? Is art meant to mean something? Or does it require some kind of proper explanation? In this exhibition we deal with works that eschew to account for their existence towards the practical demands of the contemporary socio-political realm. Within a context of hyper-capitalism that reduces every experience to a commodity you have to pay for, these artworks are assembled in a state of denial. Hovering between the physical and the conceptual, their possible significance creates and elaborates temporal worlds withdrawn from the network of continuous mediation, installing a 'distance' and

an effective 'difference' that transgresses mere communication.

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¹ See also Pavel Buchler and Charles Esche, *We Are Not There Yet*, in: *Whatever Happened to Social Democracy*, Rooseum Malmö. 2005