

These days, it is both brave and precarious to invoke the visual organisation of the world as the preserve of art. Yet this is nothing less than the central concern of Claudia Kugler's artistic practice. Art as an institution has long tried to get as far away from such an aspiration as it possibly can. Nonetheless, it remains a socially distinct and socially protected space of freedom and experimentation. Yet, this privileged status comes at the cost of a growing irrelevance to the individual and collective realities of life. This structure is largely due to the mechanisms of free market economies and their agents. How exactly this came to be is a complex process with innumerable participants and cannot be reduced to a few pivotal moments. Rather it should be measured in terms of its effects. Of course the numerous proclaimed and attempted assassinations of art from within the field of art itself have played a role in the current situation. The Productivists in post-revolutionary Russia thus aimed for a total abolition of bourgeois art in favour of a comprehensive form of design that would penetrate all areas of life in accordance with the demands of the new communist society. If this were a proactively affirmative form of desperation, the members of the Situationist International some thirty years later were well aware of their impotence in the face of the mechanisms of modern capitalist society, against which they primarily developed disruptive and guerilla concepts of negativity. It would take until the late eighties and early nineties until affirmative strategies informed by decidedly critical artistic perspectives could again become veritable options. By then, the conditions had definitely changed. It was not the products of artistic practices which influenced the structure of the economy, but rather commercial aesthetics and business strategies which increasingly found their way into post-conceptual art, whose residual potential in this symbiosis primarily resides in adopting the position of an ironic commentator.

Through her work, Claudia Kugler has found a way out of this misery. Free of commissions and immediate necessity, she creates designs from a decidedly artistic perspective which sees them as a practice of the possible. Her models and proposals always carry the potential of expanding themselves beyond their material substrates and formal restrictions, proclaiming the lived environment for itself. She thus establishes a practice which aims to produce concrete alterities from a progressive, forward looking perspective.

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