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## SUPERFLEX

### *If Value, Then Copy*

**Exhibition Dates:** 25 October – 22 November

**Opening reception:** Friday 24 October

#### **Bjornstjerne Christiansen, Rasmus**

**Nielsen, Jakob Fenger** form the Copenhagen based art collective SUPERFLEX. They have worked together for fifteen years. The focus of SUPERFLEX's exhibition at ARTSPACE, *If Value, Then Copy* is on copyright issues. Exploring concepts around branding, ownership of products, images and ideas, their ongoing practice in this area includes projects such as *Guaraná Power*. For this project SUPERFLEX worked with farmers in the Brazilian Amazon to create a drink called *Guaraná Power*, this involved the formation of a new brand that closely followed and yet subtly challenged the leading brand, whose monopoly on the market was impinging on the rights and conditions of the local farmers.



SUPERFLEX are committed to questioning dominant world power relationships and developing economically viable structures for specific communities. Their strategy includes what they describe as tools:

"The work of SUPERFLEX is about social-economic practice. Unlike many visual artists, we don't offer criticisms or critiques, we propose real solutions to real problems." Says Bjornstjerne, who is in Auckland till the end of October. "Our fundamental premise is that there is too much ownership in terms of intellectual property, trademark and copyright laws, and this excess of power needs to be challenged."

SUPERFLEX's exhibition *If Value, Then Copy* at ARTSPACE includes two ongoing projects concerned with copyright issues - COPY LIGHT and FREE BEER. Images and their ownership are at the centre of COPY LIGHT. Photo transparencies of a myriad of well-known lamp designs will be remade into new lamps through a production line installed in the gallery. These hanging lamps will fill the gallery over time, gradually illuminating the space.

FREE BEER operates as a symbol for free culture, a beer whose recipe and brand are available to anyone who wants to brew, adapt and distribute it. FREE BEER is free in the truest sense of the word; it was created by applying modern free software/open source methods to a traditional real-world product, beer. The recipe for FREE BEER is published under a Creative Commons license making it accessible to all. This project has developed over time in collaboration with numerous microbreweries throughout the world, the recipe has changed and transformed over time, with local variations. In the words of the Brazilian Minister of Culture, Gilberto Gil: "It's not just free beer, it's good beer!"

For the exhibition at ARTSPACE FREE BEER (version 4.1: Code name ARTSPACE), a variant of the FREE BEER (4.0) recipe has been brewed by the Steam Brewing Company, it will be available for market price during the show. Local artist Simon Cuming will brew a batch of FREE BEER in the gallery during the opening.

Bjornstjerne Reuter Christiansen, a member of Superflex is currently in Auckland as part of a residency at Elam School of Fine arts, The University of Auckland.

Selected exhibitions include *27th Sao Paulo Biennial* (2006), *Supershow / I was paid to go there*, Kunsthalle Basel (2005), *Self-organise / Guaraná Power*, Redcat Gallery, Los Angeles (2004), *Utopia Station*, 50th Venice Biennale (2003), *SUPERFLEX tools + counter-strike*, Rooseum, Malmö (2002), upcoming shows are: *Prospect 1*, New Orleans and a solo show at the South London gallery.

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