

ARTSPACE^{NZ}

SUPERFLEX

If value, then copy

25 October - 22 November 2008

SUPERFLEX is an art collective based in Copenhagen, Denmark whose projects seek to intercede in the commercial and political structures that organize our lives. The group, Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, Rasmus Nielsen and Jakob Fenger, work on a global scale with different communities to create tools and mechanisms which challenge dominant systems of power and develop viable local economies.

SUPERFLEX wears the seamless language of commercialism and uses the corporate company model as a mode of working and realizing its projects. The collective does not directly protest against or reject current economic and political systems, but promotes instead a subversive engagement within them - an engaged autonomy. SUPERFLEX takes on the commercial model, but only to a certain extent: it is the same, but different. Not entirely driven by profit or exhibiting the sleekly efficient business practices of other corporates, the collective has a more subtle and ambiguous methodology. It develops long-term projects and commitments with specific communities as well as instigating fleeting activities that act as a catalyst for debate and transformation. In this way and because of its ability to draw attention to a range of issues, SUPERFLEX employs the language and systems of art as an agent for social and economic change.

The SUPERFLEX exhibition at ARTSPACE seeks to challenge the excessive ownership and control of ideas and visual culture through copyright, trademarks and intellectual property legislation. What happens to the value of an invention, object, concept or design when it is copied? Is this value enhanced and furthered or simply dissolved?

Lawyer and founder of the Creative Commons Lawrence Lessig says: "There has never been a time in history when more of our "culture" was as "owned" as it is now. And yet there has never been a time when the concentration of power to control the uses of culture has been as unquestioningly accepted as it is now."

The SUPERFLEX projects at ARTSPACE question the function and outcome of controlling intellectual property, but also offer ways to free up the system and escape its strictures. These projects occupy the space between an original and a copy; an in-between mode of working that has the potential to disrupt convention. A sense of humour is also an important part of this approach, and it may be that this sensibility yields the most political agency where the collective understands the capacity to change things through the lightness of play.

Copy Light

Copy Light consists of a workshop where a series of famous and popular lamp designs are fabricated and hung in the main gallery. Images representing iconic lamps such as the PH5, the VP globe and the Bubble, are photocopied onto transparencies and attached to a basic cubic lighting structure. These new lights are constructed and hung in ARTSPACE's main gallery gradually filling and illuminating the space over the span of the exhibition. Copy Light

is seeking the borders between a copy and its original. Through this manufacturing process a copy of a copy turns into something new: an original lamp that communicates the problems of the current copyright system.

IF VALUE, THEN COPY / MËNA HE UARA, TÄRUHIA

This modification of the intellectual property premise and mantra "If value, then right" can be screenprinted onto t-shirts in both Mäori and English languages. Referencing the illegal knock-off t-shirt and economies of fake goods, this project suggests that intellectual and visual forms be freely used and made available across cultural domains.

Both COPY LIGHT and the statement "If value, then copy" was developed within the context of COPYSHOP (www.copy-shop.org), an ongoing project initiated by Copenhagen Brains and SUPERFLEX in 2005. The Mäori translation of the statement was made by Kotuku Dibble, programme leader of Mäori media studies at Manukau Institute of Technology.

Students from Elam School of Fine Arts will be participating in both the Copy Light and If Value then Copy workshops, discussing the projects with visitors and manufacturing lamps and screenprinted t-shirts.

T-shirts bought at ARTSPACE are \$25.

You may bring your own t-shirt to be screenprinted free of charge.

Screenprinting takes place throughout the week. Please enquire at the ARTSPACE office for more information.

FREE BEER

Think FREE BEER as in Freedom of Speech, not free beer. FREE BEER is a project initially developed by SUPERFLEX and students at the Copenhagen IT University. The project applies modern free software and open source methods to a traditional "real-world" product, beer. The recipe and visual identity for FREE BEER is published under a Creative Commons license making it accessible to all who would like to brew and make money on it.

SUPERFLEX has further developed this project in collaboration with numerous microbreweries throughout the world, including Japan, Germany, the UK, and Brazil. Through this process the recipe has changed and progressed as it meets local conditions and variations.

Importantly, the FREE BEER project specifically engages with the commercial economy of beer production and distribution. FREE BEER not only draws attention to the possibilities of working outside intellectual property legalities, but provides a viable economic means of generating profit from a free idea that is not shackled by restrictive legislations.

For the exhibition at ARTSPACE, SUPERFLEX is presenting FREE BEER (version 4.1: Code name ARTSPACE) brewed by the Steam Brewing Company. Local artist Simon Cuming has also brewed a batch of unique FREE BEER in the gallery beginning the process on opening night. This batch of beer modifies the 4.1 recipe initiating the possibility of producing a 4.2 version and continuing the free evolution of the original idea.

In this regard, ARTSPACE will also seek to explore the potential of FREE BEER as an economic model for funding artistic production within the framework of the gallery.

The FREE BEER initiative has gained extensive international recognition and more information about the project can be found at www.freebeer.org.

FREE BEER (version 4.1: Code name ARTSPACE)

Available for private and commercial purchase:

\$2 per bottle

\$40 case of 24

Cash only

Please enquire at ARTSPACE office for more information (through main gallery)

Closing Party: Saturday 22 November, 3pm

Copy Light Lamps will be auctioned at the closing party along with more FREE BEER!

Beer Quiz Night: Tuesday 18 November at D.O.C, 352 Karangahape Rd

A chance to win a Brewcraft start-up kit and other beer related prizes!

SUPERFLEX member Bjørnstjerne Reuter Christiansen comes to Auckland and ARTSPACE as part of a residency at Elam School of Fine Arts, The University of Auckland. Selected SUPERFLEX exhibitions include 27th Sao Paulo Biennial (2006), Supershow / I was paid to go there, Kunsthalle Basel (2005), Self-organise / Guarana 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.