

recession indicator

Klasse Rosefeldt

A.01.18, Jahresausstellung 2025

15-Channel Video Installation, Colour, Sound

On a feeling of slump

In a recent, pretty fictional joint board meeting of major cultural institutions across Europe—held in an estate of questionable provenance—it has been decided: the scaled-down is the new all-in. Whether it's pavilions for an exploding number of biennales that must be funded by private investors (or rely on unpaid internship work), multi-fragmented fair booth concepts designed to cram the maximum possible into the smallest square meters, or cutting funding for projects that won't generate revenue—this downturn does not allow for risky business or huge LED walls. And if it does, someone will have to provide the cash. What might be a blessing in this chain of events is that with the absence of large-scale video installations, the awe toward the medium—toward the projection screen—fades into a more critical, dissecting stance. We begin recognizing the artwork's odd similarity to everyday formats upon which we think, act, and decide.

And on another feeling of crunch

We're currently in an ebb, symptomatic of being caught inside a tide of crisis. We're moving backwards—cutting things, unwinding things, undoing our own fundamentals. Like through X-ray, ours and the institution's spines become visible. Or perhaps the lack thereof. Recession.

The class

Like every year, we've encountered a struggle with the colossus locally known as *storage*. Unconscious of our actions we've managed to amass artifacts, ephemera, and tools over the last 365 days that exceed the capacity of this strange repository. We thought we had cleaned sufficiently last July. We are not that messy, are we? One small or heavy thing after another, we've transferred the baggage from one room to the next—an odyssey of Tetris, played by 15 players with 4 keys and 4 codes. One day we managed to clear out the biggest of our studios, the ballroom, and set out to work there for this very exhibition. We even went on a trip, spent our money, and made our brains work—syncing and splurging. Our final concept was a grand gesture in itself, almost monumental. As we finally got up to begin installation, we encountered our first brush against storage: our tables. The modular objects we have met at, scribbled on, and eaten from were standing in an edition of 20 pieces in our great project space. *Frustration and Disillusionment* would be the anthology of critical theory by us, forthcoming this summer. Just hide everything under the tables. So that's what we are doing. The ratio of meaning to size feels as if it is fading away. Go big or go home? Never. I would prefer not to go home. Can I stay?

On slowdown tables

Or should I say: can we stay? Looking at you, head resting on your arms, gazing toward the plexi screen in multifold, I want to stay put—to continue seeing you seeing all this. At what point does an audience become a mass? Surely in this room "the masses" do not converge, but it is a place to start spreading stories, naturally leaving the underground, emerging to be carried further. Doubtless it is, and never has been, about the singular story, but about the

combination of theirs. Through this combination, a vector of commodification could be redirected elsewhere, just to hold on to what values produce besides monetary ones. What has been produced in this room? Artworks, certainly, yet along the process of this production can be asserted, in tiny fractions, an infinite amount of steps of different production: narratives, teams, struggles, conversations, helping hands, dinners, smokes, music, singing, reading, writing, text. But it all started around these tables, hence your being able to trace all these steps. It is kind of obvious, isn't it? What I am looking at—this chain of glowing things (the screens)—like a chain of light. Like an indicator of direction at an airport or harbor, like a chain of glowing lights at the horizon, wind turbines mimicking Nausicaä's angry Ohmus.

Through Stagflation, a new structure

The Parisian Arcades come back to life, and screens are rigged on top of them. They are assembled parallel to how their projected content has been produced. To compensate for a lack of infrastructure, ad hoc solutions can and will be found throughout. Stacking, stretching, gaffer taping, and balancing are the indicators of curiosity and interest in one's surroundings per se. Next to one another, on tabletops. The skeleton of the structure resembles an improvised Enzo Mari, continuously growing and growing, outreaching the proportion of a working table by multitudes. So the Passage turned into a mall of LCD/LED over the millennium, and we're staring at and reproducing that. It is. Its circulation and production inside bubbles like these. If there's a danger, it lies not in technique itself, but in the spectacle which holds it. When process becomes product, and polish replaces presence, we lose the inner necessity of the image. Imagination is not infinite, yet in a constellation of minds it reaches further fields. We become an operator, not a conjurer.

Béla Juttner
Casper von Bülow
Chiara Ines Zanzi
Emma Johanna Kleiner
Gonçalo Botelho
Hanne Kaunicnik
Ioanna Loup
Jonas Marosczyk
Keya Singh
Maria Zaikina
Nicolas Maximilian
Quirin Brunhuber
Santiago Archila Salcedo
Yuchen Ye