

**Opening**

June 5, 2009, 7 pm

Duration of exhibition

June 6 – August 30, 2009

Tuesday – Sunday

10 am – 6 pm

Kunsthau Graz

Curator

Diedrich Diederichsen

Artists

Saâdane Afif (FR)
Cory Arcangel (US)
Art & Language with
The Red Krayola (UK/US)
Sam Durant (US)
Kim Gordon,
Jutta Koether (US/DE)
Renée Green (US)
Stefan Hablützel (CH)
Mike Kelley (US)
Klara Lidén (SE)
Lucy McKenzie (UK)
Dave Muller (US)
Albert Oehlen (DE)
Katrin Plavcak (AT)
Mathias Poledna (AT)
Uwe Schinn (DE)
Nico Vascellari (IT)

Rock – Paper – Scissors

Pop Music as Subject of Visual Art

Pop music counts as a low, popular form of art, while visual art ranks among the high arts. That relationship has changed profoundly in the last 50 years. Pop music is a hybrid originally spawned by the parallelism of sound and image found in TV programmes, fanzines and record covers. The hyper-inclusive attraction-logic of pop music is different from normal music. At its heart is a feeling of direct involvement with people rather than musical values. These can function as sex objects or the embodiment of new lifestyles. For art, this form of expression is as much a subject as a rival event. *Rock – Paper – Scissors* brings together artists whose methods and formulations use pop music's body politics, knowledge industry and relationship with the world for their own purposes.

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English

Foyer

Uwe Schinn

*1971 Frankfurt am Main (D)
lives and works in Cologne (D)

The Message is the best-known piece of an early hip-hop group called *Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five*. Except that Grandmaster Flash (Joseph Saddler off stage) had nothing, absolutely nothing to do with the recording. Flash is a DJ, and record company Sugar Hill, the very first hip hop label of them all, could not tolerate music for raps coming from other records already produced, and so hired in a studio band to accompany the raps of the *Furious Five*. Grandmaster Flash can only be heard at all on just one of the many discs appearing under his name around this time. The fact that "The Message" is an evergreen that became one of the most important pieces in hip-hop history must be a sore point for him. It was not only the first socially critical rap, for which *Furious Five* member Melle Mel was largely responsible. It was also the first piece of pop music to effectively tackle the devastating social policies of the Reagan era. Uwe Schinn explores the way the DJ, who co-invented the revolutionary technique of scratching, ultimately ran aground on the (still calamitous) state of copyright law. In addition, the large-scale installation evokes two further elements – fire escapes in US cities and loudspeaker towers at major pop concerts. Balconies are applied to them that range from shabbiest at the bottom to glossiest at the top. An unmistakable feature at the heart of the work is the noise broadcast round the room via Amp Gizmo and Fender amplifiers, constituting a reference to the now rather outworn technique of scratching.

Notice-and-take-down attacks the music industry's Internet procedure whereby a

program constantly scans the Internet for illegally distributed and purchased music, and on detection, prosecutes. The seven chrome-plated bowling balls of stainless steel – all the same size and weight and distributed around the room – display quotations, two of them from John Kennedy, president of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, which represents the interests of the recording industry in protecting copyright. As a result of the digital dissemination of music, the Internet is visibly ousting – legally or illegally – traditional audio media such as vinyl, tape or CDs. Music titles are often downloaded singly, so that the complexity, intimacy and identity of albums you can hold in your hand and put on the shelf become less important. Does Schinn consider the bowling balls, which are scratched like special editions of signed discs, the optimum three-dimensional medium?

The Message, 2009

Plywood, steel, car paint, Fender amplifier, desk, plastic, microphone set-up; c. 7 × 7m
Courtesy Galerie Kai Hoelzner

Notice-and-take-down, 2009

7 chrome-plated bowling balls; stainless steel; diam. 27 cm
Courtesy Galerie Kai Hoelzner

A second, landscape-format picture shows a brain that McKenzie puts, again almost life-size, in an almost identical position on the stepladder, though the hair and shoes are darker. The background is likewise sky-blue, and bits of wall can be recognised, showing the framed section is attached to a wall. It is not hastily airbrushed on but done from a template with a fine pen, as with a modern fresco. Lucy McKenzie's work makes much of allusions to past eras in art, particularly Socialist Realism or Scottish Art Nouveau artists around 1900 (the Glasgow Four), for whom art had a particular social relevance.

Ohne Titel / Untitled, 2002

Synthetic polymer and oil on canvas; 200 × 300 cm
Museum of Modern Art, New York. Fund for the Twenty-First Century

Ohne Titel / Untitled, 2002

Synthetic polymer and oil on canvas; 300 × 200 cm
Museum of Modern Art, New York. Fund for the Twenty-First Century

Albert Oehlen

* 1954 in Krefeld (DE)
lives in Cologne (DE) and La Palma (ES)

In his new large-format triptych done specially for the exhibition, Albert Oehlen quotes the early Frank Zappa's *Help, I'm a Rock*. All his life as a painter, Oehlen has been involved with music, as a musician, producer of records and related objects, and a label operator. However, his perspective differs from that of many other artists who cross-refer to music. Whereas for the latter, art is often a place of peace and quiet, offering the detachment to look at the tumult of pop music, Oehlen is obviously also interested in bringing the tumult itself into the pictures. In an interview with Max Dax, editor of *Spex*, the magazine for popular culture, Albert Oehlen thought recently that he always wanted to do "large colourful things that speak directly to you," in a rather pop musical way. That is why in recent times he has often integrated obtrusive trashy advertising motifs into his paintings in order to generate an "edgy mood". Yet he is not suggesting contemporary rock aesthetics should be adopted, hence the cry for *Help*. On the 50th anniversary of the first Elvis single, Oehlen said a few years ago: "Rock means to me *Radiohead*, *Smashing Pumpkins*, *Nickelback*, *Tote Hosen* and the *Stones*. *The Melvins* can't undo the damage. The bottom line is, it would have been better if rock had never existed." Thus for Oehlen Elvis survives only via a diversion through Andy Warhol.

Rock, 2009

Oil on canvas; 3-part, 2 parts @ 280 × 230 cm and 1 part @ 105 × 350 cm
Owned by the artist

Untitled, 2006

Oil and print on cotton; 221.5 × 221.5 cm
Owned by the artist

calibrated to: pictures of those who are like me or like I want to be, pictures of the community (*Tonight At The Pleasure Dome*); pictures of what I admire, stars and sex objects (*She's So Hot She Makes Me Sexist*); and finally pictures of places of yearning, locations and scenarios I fantasize about (*Revolution of the Entomopter*). In each case, Plavcak complexifies these calibrations without ruining them – or indeed rescuing them.

Tonight At The Pleasure Dome, 2009

Oil on cotton; 180 × 300 cm
Courtesy Galerie Mezzanin, Vienna

She's So Hot She Makes Me Sexist, 2009

Oil on cotton; 200 × 200 cm
Courtesy Galerie Mezzanin, Vienna

Revolution of the Entomopter, 2009

Oil on cotton; 250 × 300 cm
Courtesy Galerie Mezzanin, Vienna

Dave Muller

*1964 in San Francisco (USA)
lives in Los Angeles (US)

Dave Muller spends \$ 3,000 a month on discs. His work is the soundtrack of his life – in a way, a kind of self-portrait in notes, sounds and musical history, but especially in bizarre covers, rarities and paraphernalia from junk stalls. At the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, he installed a radio station of his own, for which he strung together music for 399 days without repeating a single track.

Here at the Kunsthaus Graz, Dave Muller answers artist Richard Prince's question about the three most important record covers in musical history. His answer is four black-and-white drawings, three cover pictures and a suitable envelope for them. No. 3 shows a cover inspired by Piet Mondrian (who did his last pictures much impressed by boogie-woogie in New York) produced by art-punk band *Hose*. This disc was the first publication by the Def-Jam label and the only disc on

which its founder, influential American producer Rick Rubin, can himself be heard. This knowledge is so special and beautiful that it justifies the often despised expertise of nerds: Rick Rubin, one of the two most influential hip-hop producers and the man responsible for Johnny Cash's late work, did a Mondrian-inspired cover in his art-punk youth!

Letter to Richard (One-Four), 2008

Ink on paper; 27.94 × 34.29 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Blum and Poe, Los Angeles

Lucy McKenzie

*1977 Glasgow (UK)
lives and works in Glasgow (UK)

The artist writes *Brain* in large letters in the sky. With her distinctive short hairstyle, and wearing plain overalls and looking at her template, it seems to be the artist herself standing on the stepladder. Her androgynous look draws attention to the controversial gender politics of painting, an art where men especially tend to predominate. Lucy McKenzie wears – partly to identify herself as an artist – working clothes she designed herself. The large-format picture is about the world of the male music nerd, whose nature is made clear in the second picture level casually overlaid on it. An outsize penis, a very long, agile tongue and a state of mind as a speech bubble overlay the very precisely executed person on the stepladder still working on the lettering, which develops from a linear profile of a face. What she is painstakingly painting here is the logo of the German label Brain, which is regarded as a pioneer of electronic music and Krautrock in the 70s. In the 90s, it was a cult reference in the cosmos of a trivia-obsessed pop music culture dominated by nerds. McKenzie links a feminist critique of pop music with a commentary on a male-dominated art world.

Space02

Kim Gordon, Jutta Koether

Kim Gordon

* 1953 in Rochester (US),
lives in New York (US) and
Northampton (US)

Jutta Koether

* 1958 in Cologne (DE)
lives in New York (US)

Three acoustic booths obtainable in the trade as “complete solutions” in the three colours used here form the spatial element of an installation that suggests hermetically sealed, intimate studio situations. In each booth, a brief video runs that shows the artists in apparently private closed spaces doing their stuff. There are next to no members of the public in the shots. The quality of the films comes across to some extent like a spontaneous, barely choreographed shot. The experimental space seems protected, the musical commotion introverted.

For Kim Gordon, a band member of *Sonic Youth* and *Free Kitten* (with Julie Cafritz), and painter, performance artist, critic, musician and writer Jutta Koether, working from different author positions and in crossover is important. Here they stage and cite works of others: Julie Cafritz, who reproduces a song by her *Pussy Galore* band from 1987 solo in the studio, the *Noise Nomads*, whose screeching amplifiers make you want to bang your head till you drop, and *Twodeadsluts Onegoodfuck*, who churn out a semi-naked noise-punk performance in a farmyard barn.

What do you expect from an artist, a performance, or a sound respectively? Is there a boundary between the supposedly private (as on YouTube), a public performance and restaging in an art venue? Who, what and where is the public for each of these?

Sacred Body Practice, 2009

Installation consisting of 3 acoustic booths (Auralex Max Wall 1141VB The Complete Solution), 3 videos (colour, sound); dimensions variable
Complete Solution 1, Purple: Julie Cafritz. Basement. Round Hill Rd., Northampton, MA, February 2009; camera: Phillip Virus
Complete Solution 2, Charcoal Gray: Noise Nomads. VFW Hall Western, MA, 2-28-08
Complete Solution 3, Burgundy: Twodeadsluts Onegoodfuck. Somewhere at a farm barn in Oregon, October 2006
Editing of DVDs: Andrew Kesin
Courtesy of the artists

Saâdane Afif

*1970 Vendôme (F)
lives and works in Berlin (D) and Paris (F)

Lyrics on the wall, guitar bodies with amplifiers attached to them, signed posters and a listening station make up the work of this French artist, whose conceptual installations always involve pop music in a very analytical sense.

Saâdan Afif commissions people (musicians, writers, song writers) to respond to one of his works in defined formats of pop music. The aim is to get a product that on the one hand constitutes a response to Afif's work and on the other hand possibly develops as the basis for a continuative work by others, so that the end of the interpretative division of labour chain is a

new beginning. Music thus produced may then for example reappear in the broadcasts of a radio station that has temporarily hosted Afif on a channel that can be received by a gallery installation. In his works, pop music, art and poetry continually and habitually go beyond the systems and techniques of the genre. What is involved is the transmittal of works that are changed, interpreted and re-interpreted by being transmitted.

Blue Time vs. Suspense, 2007

Various materials: 3 guitars, 3 amplifiers, cables, 3 song lyrics on holographic film, signed poster 1/20, 3 unsigned posters, 1 CD player, 1 audio CD (*Blue Time vs. Suspense* by Vale Poher), 1 set of earphones, 1 amplifier for the earphones, 1 controller for 4 spots, cables, wood, paint; dimensions variable
Private collection, Belgium
Courtesy Xavier Hufkens, Brussels

Mathias Poledna

* 1965 Vienna (AT)

lives and works in Los Angeles (US)

You enter the rehearsal room and are taken back three decades, to the time around 1980, somewhere in New York or London. The scene is enormously condensed, and turns out to be a re-staging of fashions, dispositions and small stylistic details of the immediate post-punk era. We are shown an imaginary band (all actors), who in age, dress and hairdos match bands of the time. Mathias Poledna asked Mayo Thompson (*Red Krayola*, then as now), Tom Watson (*Slovenly* at the time) and George Hurley (*Minutemen*) in 2001 to record their own reduced musical structures in the style of the period, small mechanical scraps of music such as you hear in rehearsal rooms, so they could be reproduced for the film by the band of actors. This staging of history deprives the performance of any spontaneity and leads to a synthesis of the material. But in contrast, the staged rehearsal speaks of “actualité”

in the sense of contemporariness, the present day, the aspect that has enormous importance in pop music, i.e. “being new” and “being there”.

The work is about a point in pop history after which the apparently mechanical, “natural” attributes of “being new” became deliberately actuated material for producers. Appearance, attitudes and visual elements of presentation were now highly nuanced components of the way pop music was staged. Poledna more or less freezes the moment when pop music became aware of itself, its performative details and their controllability. That was the innocent beginning of irony, pop theory and lavish exploitation.

Actualité, 2001/02

16 mm film, colour, sound; 8:58 min
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Meyer Kainer, Vienna; Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne; Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles
Photo: enlargement of a 16 mm single image

Cory Arcangel

* 1978 in Buffalo, NY (US)

lives in New York, NY (US)

Cory Arcangel filtered out all the piano-playing cats he could find on YouTube, isolated the notes they made in the individual images and entered them in a database. A piece of video software he wrote himself subsequently enabled him to string the notes together so as to make up one of Arnold Schoenberg's *Three Piano Pieces*, Opus 11. These *Three Piano Pieces* marked Schoenberg's adoption of an atonal approach.

Around 500 cats and approximately 5,000 notes produced by them are the basis of this work, which constitutes a development of Arcangel's newly recorded YouTube version of a Bach Goldberg variation played by Glenn Gould.

Cory Arcangel sees Arnold Schoenberg as

Mike Kelley

*1954 Detroit (US)

lives and works in Los Angeles (US)

Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. It's noisy on this merry-go-round of high spots. Welcome to a world of vacuous, extreme, sexualised hedonism. The bouncy castles – normally places of childish exuberance – are stylised into female torsos, mutating through their vaginal apertures into uteral nuclei of life that have shed every pretence of innocence. Yet the work is certainly to some extent ambivalent. This monumental, sarcastic presence is for one thing a caricature of the omnipresent imperative that we should have as much fun as possible. Then again, a productive disruption of the tranquillity and satisfaction of institutional aloofness survives of its graphicness and massiveness. Pop music and the consumer culture enveloping it feature simultaneously as a dystopic menace, Adorno's notorious “chalybeate bath of fun” and place of maximum regression, and yet also as a tribute to the energies that are released in this culture, asserting themselves and condensing into grotesque, bizarre voices protesting against the smugness of high culture. The installation has to hold its own not only against the room that contains it – it tackles, head on, a cultural order that leaves us only with two options: the lofty detachment of high culture, or being swamped by mass culture.

Sex, Drugs, and Rock and Roll

Party Palace, 2009

Installation of various materials; dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

Admission only to those aged 18+

Katrin Plavcak

*1970 in Gütersloh (DE)

lives in Vienna (AT) and Berlin (DE)

Like some of her colleagues represented in the exhibition, Katrin Plavcak is an all-round talent. As a painter with extensive band experience – her current band is called *Erste Stufe Haifisch* – her contribution to the exhibition is the three large-format pictures here.

Tonight At The Pleasure Dome shows people reacting to music, screaming, laughing and swamped by noise. We become stars on the stage looking down at a bemused public below. The faces seem to cite various styles of caricature, from Hogarth and Daumier to Deix. The happy partying people with their choir of pseudo-individuals turn out to be a compilation of clearly definable representational styles.

Supraphon is the largest Czech record label and the only label in the former Iron Curtain countries to have survived the political and economic upheavals of the 90s. It features here on an outside record cover that shows the Venus of Willendorf riding a fragile Pegasus. The title – *She's So Hot She Makes Me Sexist* – is borrowed from the new HBO series *Flight of the Conchords*, another caricature, this time of the Indie rock industry, in which a New Zealand band in New York plays itself. At the same time, the typical argument trotted out by defenders of the supposed naturalness of cultural effects is highlighted – the whole structural conservatism of rock.

The Revolution of the Entomopter shows the mini flying robot developed by Robert C. Michelson as pioneering technology for exploring Mars but also for spying. In Plavcak, they have already landed on Mars and are having a trial insurrection, getting entangled in images of an earlier surrealism.

Katrin Plavcak's paintings home in on three visual settings that pop music is

Space01

Admission only to those aged 18+

Klara Lidén

* 1979 Stockholm (SE)
lives in Berlin (D)

Klara Lidén dances, leaps and moves hand over hand from bar to bar. She undresses, liberating herself from everything that hampers her in her boisterous dancing (life). She allows her body free rein, and in spontaneous choreography flips to *Paralyzed*, a grotesque piece of a Texan eccentric who called himself *The Legendary Stardust Cowboy*. On the battered, grimy commuter train in Stockholm that leaves marks on her body, the other passengers remain calm and seem rather unimpressed by her performance. But they are the ones who sit there quasi-paralysed and incapable of action, waiting for their stop as usual. Lidén succeeds with simple resources where music videos and dance theatre often fail – translating a song into a performance.

Paralyzed, 2003

Video: colour, sound; 3 min
Private collection

Renée Green

*1959 Cleveland (US)
lives in New York (US) and
San Francisco (US)

Renée Green uses an iPod Touch as a medium for making a sculpture out of music, sound and film in the exhibition space, while at the same time giving the work an ostensibly private, intimate framework. Ten years ago, she used journalistic material to produce a documentary essay about her brother Derrick Leon Green, who succeeded the legendary singer and charismatic Max Cavalera as front man of the Brazilian metal band

Sepultura. She called the video *Megahertz*, *Megastar*, *Brother*, *Brazil*, in which we learn about concert dates, reviews of the band's participation at various music festivals or the singer's tour diary by leafing through sundry music magazines. At the same time, we hear *Sepultura* as if in a broadcast, interlarded with excerpts from interviews. How is pop history written? How are musicians dramatised and heroicised if they trigger off a music revolt in a country such as Brazil?

In the associated banners, Green traces the link between Brazilian pop music history and political and art movements. The links with the Tropicalismo movement and the *Musica Populeira Brasileira*, which especially in the 70s came out against the dictatorship, are particularly numerous, mainly through figures such as artist Hélio Oiticica, musicians Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil, the Brazilian film-maker Glauber Rocha. Green therewith continues a series of banners that she has recently used to contextualise her works.

Relations: Brasil +, 2009

iPod Touch with video (*Megahertz*, *Megastar*, *Brother*, *Brazil*, 2000), 2 banners;
iPod Touch: 11 × 6 cm, video: Mpeg-4, 14 min, colour and sound, banner: 300 × 100 cm
Courtesy the artist and Free Agent Media

a turning point in composed music, the point when it finally parted company with any kind of mass culture. One might think his compositions are as remote from pop music as it is possible to be, and yet he exercises great influence on a whole host of contemporary pop musicians, particularly in the electronic field. The everyday aesthetics of YouTube documenting cute cats on musical instruments represents the maximum popularisation of something inherently not popularisable – and a caricature of it. What Arcangel distils from it is a new quality. It is in fact what one scandalized member of the audience originally called Schoenberg's compositions – pure *katzenmusik* (caterwauling).

Three Piano Pieces Op. 11, I, 2009

Single-channel video: colour, sound;
dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and Team Gallery, New York

Sam Durant

* 1961 in Seattle (US)
lives and works in Los Angeles (US)

The sculpture follows an installation by Sam Durant from 1999 called *Proposal for a Monument in Friendship Park, Jacksonville*, which suggested setting up a memorial to Southern Rock in Friendship Park, Jacksonville. In the 60s, the park was the venue for numerous Sunday afternoon jam sessions, and is considered the birthplace of Southern Rock, whose notable exponents include the *Allman Brothers Band* and *Lynyrd Skynyrd*. The histories of both bands are overshadowed by accidents and dubious political statements. Members of the *Allman Brothers* died in motorcycle accidents, while more than half the *Lynyrd Skynyrd* group lost their lives in a plane crash. The band is notable for its Southern patriotism, which in for example "Sweet Home Alabama" goes head on against Neil Young's anti-racist song "Southern Man".

But Durant plays on the ambiguity of the

word rock – the heaviness, and pre-civilised and tellurian aspects are combined with a critique of the political atavism of Southern Rock, while on the other hand he ponders on the aesthetics of the sublime in the depth and boundlessness of stone. Particularly 70s' rock often explored elements of that kind, in an equally fascinating and dubious attachment to the prehistoric and planetary. Durant dedicates a piece of garden architecture to these contradictions and the fascination they have. Gardens here are places for both contemplation and play, but are at the same time places for memorials – aspects of reception that are a long way from the hyperactivity and quest for identification that distinguish the rock public.

And that is where the landscape architecture of Isamu Noguchi and the Zen garden at the Ryonaji Temple in Kyoto come in. In the rock garden set up at the exhibition, a sound track specially composed by Takeshi Kagami comes out of the fibre-glass rocks. Peace, harmony, disharmony and chaos are produced by the individual soundtracks, which clash as in extemporised guitar-playing. The waste bin in the middle locates the groups of stones to an urban environment, providing a stable hub for the informal flow of the set-up.

Southern Rock Garden Beginning-less/Endless Primordial Connection to a Floating World with Consciousness of Sheer Invisible Mass (Ton mit Takeshi Kagami) 2000

Southern Rock Garden Beginning-less/Endless Primordial Connection to a Floating World with Consciousness of Sheer Invisible Mass (sound by Takeshi Kagami), 2000
14 fibreglass rocks, 1 fibreglass waste bin,
1 audio rack W/system, 2 CB loudspeakers, 1 plastic template; size variable
Courtesy Galerie Praz-Delavallade, Paris/Berlin

Stefan Hablützel

* 1964 in Bern (CH)

lives in Düsseldorf (DE)

Stefan Hablützel effectively gives us an exhibition within an exhibition. In the one-room show, completely traditional pictures hang on the wall, with smart new glass and frames. In the middle is a sculpture on a pedestal. Everything seems laid out and structured in the normal way. Only at the second glance do various levels appear, the various cross-references with which the artist works. It is not the sound that interests him about pop music but the collective experience – what's OK and what's not OK. There is also a cross-reference to contemporary art, which to him is inconceivable without pop music. Like many young people at the time, in the 1980s Stefan Hablützel read and hoarded magazines, gleaning his musical knowledge from *Spex* or *The Face*, and kept up with contemporary art developments via the *Wolkenkratzer Art Journal*. These publications now serve as a store for his paintings to draw on. He detaches individual pages from them (preferably those that advertise sound recordings) and, building on these, develops a second, very delicate painterly level. This process may look spontaneous, but it isn't. In fact, the delicately constructed compositions generally take shape on screen like digital sketches, slowly, step by step and with much thought. Only at the end are they painted, airbrushed or drawn in ink manually on to the earmarked magazine pages. Art historical citations are of critical importance here, whether as direct overlays or as freely associated structure. Likewise the sculpture in the middle is not left to itself and the room. A dismantled chair in its individual parts, a dismembered picture frame and a performance by Peter Gabriel (1974) interrupt the order of things, creating a sense of detachment that is continued systematically here in the room, beginning with the pictures.

Far and near and low and louder, 2009

Installation consisting of sculpture, floor sculpture and 8 paper works; sculpture with pedestal: synthetic resin, paper, metal, paint, wood, 65 × 40 × 40 cm; floor sculpture: wood, metal, mixed media, approx. 75 × 80 × 55 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Dennis Kimmerich

8 paper works, inter alia:

Untitled (Plugs), 2009

Varnish, watercolour, coffee, ink on magazine page; 30 × 23 cm
Courtesy Galerie Dennis Kimmerich

Untitled (Shop), 2009

Varnish, watercolour, airbrush paint, Indian ink on magazine page; 30 × 23 cm
Courtesy Galerie Dennis Kimmerich

Untitled (it gives), 2008

Varnish, Indian ink on magazine page; 30 × 23 cm
Courtesy Galerie Dennis Kimmerich

Art & Language with The Red Krayola

Michael Baldwin

*1945 in Chipping Norton (UK)

Mel Ramsden

* 1944 in Ilkeston (UK)

Charles Harrison

*1942 in Chesham (UK)

Art & Language has been challenging the traditional concept of art since 1966 by denying any individualistic view of art and taking Marxist and linguistic analyses as their starting point. How far can art objects be replaced by linguistic concepts?

In the early 80s, and then again in recent years, *Art & Language* wrote lyrics for *The Red Krayola* band. Back in 1976, they worked with the only permanent member of the band, Mayo Thompson, on an album that appeared under the *Art & Language* name. The Karaoke Bar that *Art & Language* have installed draws on that album, *Corrected Slogans* (1976), and *Kangaroo?* (1981), one of the joint albums they did with *The Red Krayola*. The public are invited to pick up the microphone and sing along themselves as part of the installation, following the text shown. The musical cue makes it clear that karaoke is

not so much a musical experience as a social one. In the age of SingStar and Guitar Hero, karaoke already seems to belong to a history in which making music together in public premises enters the private sphere of a new domestic music; where one normally dreams of occupying the privileged position of a star within the virtual opportunities of one's own home, one unexpectedly finds oneself in a position of having to advocate in song the controversial ideas of *Art & Language*, for example that one should not talk to sociologists. Contextualised by cover pages of the periodical published by *Art & Language*, questions of narrator position and legitimation for talking publicly are thematised.

Karaoke Bar, 2005

DVD in a loop, poster, table, chairs; text and music by Art & Language and The Red Krayola from *Corrected Slogans*, 1976 (Drag City Records) and *Kangaroo?*, 1981 (Drag City Records); 10 posters by Art & Language, 1977; silkscreen on paper, each poster 108 × 80 cm, edition of 40
Courtesy of the artists

Nico Vascellari

*1976 Vittorio Veneto (IT)

lives and works in Vittorio Veneto (IT) and New York (US)

Nico Vascellari founded the *Lago Morto* band in April 2009, naming it after a little lake in the Veneto in northern Italy and casting it according to criteria he set personally. The basic condition was that all the members recruited should come from Vittorio Veneto (pop. 30,000) and should go on tour together round the town. From 10th – 24th May 2009, *Lago Morto* played in every conceivable venue in the town, whether osteria, pizzeria, club or bar. You could hear the fast, hardcore punk sound at a different place every night, and – unlike the effort involved in traditional touring – after the show, everyone simply went home. Every show was recorded

and documented. The film, audio and photographic material thereby generated is the starting point for the installation at the Kunsthaus Graz.

As a singer and co-founder of the four-member punk band *With Love*, Nico Vascellari has been active in the music business since 1995. He is also active internationally as a noise musician, and has worked with many of the well-known names of noise-music.

Lago Morto, 2009

Installation: videos, collage, photocopies, sound; dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Monitor, Rom