

fabrics interseason DÖBLING REFORM: batter and biobourgeoisie

On the "DÖBLING REFORM: batter and bio-bourgeoisie" exhibition by ____fabrics interseason (Wally Salner & Johannes Schweiger, Vienna), Grazer Kunstverein 2007

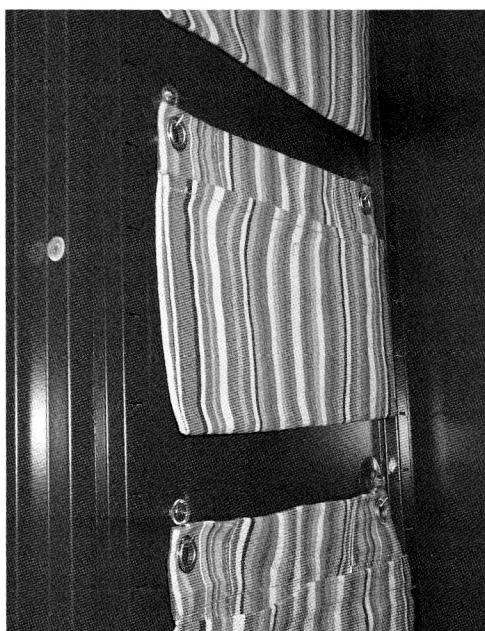
Lockers are found in dressing rooms, sports clubs, factories, in the army or on campuses. The locker, to paraphrase Max Weber, is a threshold between the household and the firm. When considered as a model, it forms an interface between the realms of the private and the public, which in bourgeois society are viewed as antipodes. Via the locker hinge, the subject moves from one realm into another, following the logic that simultaneously establishes and demands the duality of the social.

Ferrari with swing doors of tropical hard wood. Whereas the olive-wood veneer lends the brown locker an intentionally "pimped" appearance, like in a parlor draped in half silk, the combination of cork-ladding and ultramarine blue evokes holiday memories. Yet these impressions are subjective. Each individual will interpret the attributes of the modified lockers differently. What is important is that they have lost their qualitative clarity and affiliation.

A second look reveals interventions in the lockers' interiors. Inside the locker with the cork-clad door are three storage pockets made of deck chair material. Installed inside the locker with the olive-wood door is an exclusive system of pull out coat-hangers underneath a hat rack also made of olive-wood. The purple violet locker is lined with mirrors. Instead of a hat rack, four custom-made cotton-satin shelf nets swing freely within the multiplied space. Is it a boudoir for nomadic living? The fir green cabinet invokes associations with antechambers.

A floor mat has been fitted to its bottom, identified in the list of materials as "natural coconut brush, 24mm", pleasantly complemented by a lower shelf of bronze-tinted glass.

The treatment of the lockers admits two kinds of theoretical approaches: On the one hand, their dual function as placeholders as well as users of the private is emphasized. One can



Both fashion and interiors form "environments" through which everyday concepts of life and of various possibilities of action are communicated. Both represent fields of debate that both supply the construction of identity with contexts, tools and means, as well as channel these into pre-coded paths determined by varying intentions.

The "surface: tapisserie N°1, black" patch rug hints at this connection. It winds through the corridor both under and between the lockers and fills half of the second exhibition room: It is made out of numerous fabric remnants that accumulated during the course of textile production. Sorted according to color, these remnants were turned over to a carpet weaver. The patterns and rhythm of the hues have been directly informed by the volume and type of "fabric" remnants used. The rug forms an interior moment that can be read as a direct translation of work in the field of fashion, and it simultaneously forms the "underground" upon which the "CABINETS" of the exhibition stand.

Pragmatic analogies between the chosen artistic strategies of ____fabrics interseason can be found in both fields, fashion and art.

In regards to fashion as well as interior design, their artistic investigations lead to practices such as folding, disassembly, re-assembly, critical decoration, confrontation of incompatible materials, their non-intended usage, or inversion and upending. Take for example their "Zimmerbrunnen: Wellness" piece (2004): It is a rectangular basin, tessellated in bathroom tiles. There is an ashtray in the middle, also tiled, which features a circular drain like that of a common washbasin. Yet in this case the drain acts as a fountainhead for the "wet cell instrument" that has been converted into a living room fountain. In the field of fashion, this is comparable to e.g. ____fabrics interseason's use of inverse pockets, which renders visible a functional, normally hidden aspect of clothing. In physical inversion (reversal) a practical function is simultaneously transformed into an aesthetic function. In the field of fashion, formal inversions such as reversals, exaggeration of features, the transformation of functions into non-functions, and the handling of accessories and other formal practices, can communicate and render readable the play with gender-specific characteristics and their roles.

It is precisely these politics of not just formal interventions, displacements and additions – to be considered in the context of "pimping" – that strategically correspond with one of the wallpapers installed in the exhibition ("Paradise, black", circa 1950) by the architect, Austrian Werkbund co-founder, and later representative of "Accidentism", Josef Frank.

imagine a subject furnishing her world within her specified niche in an equally excessive and compensational manner. This approach corresponds perhaps to the paradox of the impossibility of living rightly in the false. Viewed from the perspective of pure aesthetic production, these precisely composed interventions can exhibit the characteristic symbolism: To what extent has the collaboration with architect Gassner, who deals with the erosion of forms of usage, led to a questioning of the represented dichotomy of private and public spheres?

How does the positioning of the "CABINETS" created and developed for the exhibition by ____fabrics interseason in collaboration with Robert Gassner relate to their initial characteristic symbolism? To what extent has the collaboration with architect Gassner, who deals with the erosion of forms of usage, led to a questioning of the represented dichotomy of private and public spheres?

Initially, one is struck by the fact that the lockers are not placed inconspicuously and functionally. Already at the entrance hall of the Kunstverein, a narrow corridor, the space is occupied by five lockers. Another locker is found directly beyond the next passage. The lockers are distributed throughout the room in various ways, some are diagonally positioned. Their formal individualization is conspicuous: one characteristic is their differing lacquering. Each locker has its own color. The detailed list of materials and finishes informs us that we are dealing with the standard RAL colors of purple violet, ultramarine blue, fir green, sepia brown, light ivory, and sulphur yellow.

Further differences can be noted in the choice of base frames or distinct key rings. Some of the latter are equipped with driftwood, partly with a glossy varnish and marked by beaver bites. In the case of two lockers the welded sheet metal doors have been replaced by veneered wooden doors. A door masked with sheets of cork has been hinged in the ultramarine blue locker; its edges are also fitted with pine inserts. The sepia brown locker features a door completely veneered with olive-wood. The process reminds one of the "Pimp My Ride" series, in which rapper Xzibit and his crew might as well fit a

On the other hand, one can also see that the schizophrasia anchored in bourgeois consciousness is being attacked through the work on the figure of the locker. Each bricolage can contain a subversive moment. The question of how one relates to the surfaces and their properties is also a debate with the respective consciousness that they communicate. It is in the nature of art to shift standards and codes and the realities they represent through formal interventions and placements – to import them into a play of critical reflection, as well as to enable views onto alternative ideas.

Here, we can find a common thread connecting the various fields of practice of ____fabrics interseason, who are both artists and a fashion label.

While their work in the field of fashion is mainly directed to clothing and diverse – printed or event-oriented – formats of mediation and promotion of their collections, their practices localized within the context of art powerfully refer to the interior and its associated contexts of design, furnishing, and interior design.

Accidentism means i.g. the integration of "wrong" planning stages. This method takes a permanent reaction to given contexts as its starting point. As opposed to a frantically gesturing avant-garde, Accidentism is a multifaceted and open planning and building process, which enables situational action and achieves transformations, as well as changes in direction, through additions rather than "correcting" everything from anew. Accidentism is hence directly linked to the artistic approaches taken with the lockers. The wallpaper has itself become a field of amendment for additions. Almost unnoticeably, individual motifs of ____fabrics interseason's decor, rich in natural stylizations, have been additionally collaged with the given pattern – a minimal intervention that slightly reverses the seriality of the pattern as a precondition of industrial wallpaper production.

On the invitation-card to the exhibition, ____fabrics interseason allude to Adolf Loos: "thus: with loss, ornament is the grammar of the batter, the coating of the winner schizel – four, eggs, breadcrumbs." The architect and architectural critic Loos is well known for his fierce polemic against the mixture of art and architecture. In his text "Dwelling for the rich" a rich client is criticized for wearing slippers in the wrong room: "But Mr. Architect! Have you already forgotten? You designed these shoes yourself!" – "Of course," the architect retorts, "but for the bedroom. With those two obnoxious blotches you're destroying the whole atmosphere." Loos' critique, as illustrated in this text, shows how ideas about "right" living and dwelling can become compulsive-obsessive when they fall victim to the sphere of aestheticization, when the imperative of being "chic" dictates every other need.

Taking this discussion as a background we can now turn to another room in the exhibition. Two rows of picture frames, approx. 120 cm in height, are mounted along the walls, their lower edges flush with the floor. These "MODULES", in the objects are called, contain raffia surfaces hand-woven in Madagascar, with various color and surface treatments. Each row follows the wall to form 90 degree angles in the corners, thus forming two L-shapes of different length, which allude to a room in the form of an open-ended rectangle. A single light bulb suspended from the ceiling, and in obvious reference to the volume that has been created, intensifies the aspect of an imaginary delimited room. The low mounting of the frames evokes associations with continuous paneling of the kind one often finds covering the lower third of restaurant or dining room walls. The context conveyed to the "MODULES" by this installation creates a tense ambivalence about their legitimacy as autonomous color-surface paintings, which again brings to a head the above-cited Loosian conflict between architecture and art, function and ornament.

Who are the subjects that find themselves in the middle of this balancing act? Does the sculpture in the corner, secured by wires and hanging from the ceiling, offer a clue to the answer? It is entitled "ACROPOLIS, modern shagging – separate bedrooms". On the one hand, its mounting recalls a loft bed. This impression is further intensified by the "bedroom" reference in the title. Is it supposed to offer a shelter and love nest for a (young) bohemian? On the other hand, it is impossible to take a place on this bed. It is already filled by a model-like construction, assembled out of countless brightly painted cardboard rolls of various proportions. The rolls are mounted vertically, like pillars, between egg carton panels which they support as a kind of roof. It is a construction that recalls images of the ruins of Acropolis – or a quickly cleaned student's room in which everything has been shifted to the loft bed. On the surface, the piece mixes a handicraft aesthetic using cheap material of household garbage (empty rolls of toilet paper and paper

The color scheme defined by the lockers is further declined in the "MODULES" with the colors of pailander/rosewood, oak brown, pure yellow, a bluish violet, pure blue, brilliant black, ruby red, pink, pure white and moss-green. Either stained or colored by hand, and subsequently polished or lacquered according to method, the "modules" present diverse appearances and effects of color which, with their eccentric surface-industrial material precision, recall architects like Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. They can also be localized in the ambivalent sphere of the modern avant-garde which, along with its proclaimed purisms, almost always incorporates obsessive-subjective and eccentric-aesthetic aspects.

The "MODULES" are exclusive and commissioned pieces – they have been made to order. In contrast, the so-called "SHADES" offer a strategic alternative. Measuring about 170 cm in width and 165 cm in height, they are constructed of wood and glass and have been clearly "handcrafted" as "home-improvement" measures. In the spruce frame construction, two aluminum tracks have been mounted to form continuous parallel lines. In these tracks, three or four 3 mm-thick segments of sheet glass cut to a width of about 30 cm have been mounted in each frame. The perpendicular segments can be slid along the tracks to form various relations of overlay. Placed in front of the windows, various combinations of color and light arise through the semi-transparent sheet glass painted in green, blue, violet, yellow, and pink. In turn, the glass-like hues correspond to the color-range of the lockers and "modules", and show them as translucent, fragile objects. Their playful character seems to correspond to the do-it-yourself effect of the crudely constructed "Shades", which have furthermore been elevated to window height by simple wooden frames. Using limited resources, they demonstrate how one can construct high glass surfaces at and for the home. They pay tribute to the fact that "...social housing schemes accommodate the most glamorous existences of our large cities. The works of fabrics interseason suggest a model or blueprint for a good life on the threshold of the political and the border to the uneconomic. In all cases, this life arises from a tenuous balancing act between the bourgeoisie and the non-bourgeois, public politics and personal ethics."

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towels, etc.) with a prominent archetype of the cradle of modern western bourgeois culture. If you want to lie down on this bed, you must either have the abilities of a fakir and have the flexibility of an escape artist who knows how to adroitly wind through them like a snake. The Acropolis, even as socio-cultural handicraft, makes for an uncomfortable berth. It seems to simultaneously embody the contradiction between tradition and new forms of living, and expound the problems of their inescapable mutual relation. In their exhibition text

____fabrics interseason makes reference to the "bobo". The term stands for "bohemian-bourgeoisie" and refers to the fact that the bohemians of the first half of the 20th century, and such self-proclaimed social groups who laid a foundation for the discourse we call modernity, mostly came from the ranks of the bourgeoisie. The question is whether one can redefine oneself so easily. To what extent do many aesthetic, as well as political, attempts to start a new life get caught up in their own origins and acquired views of the world? Vladimir Mayakovsky wrote of such an attempt: two men and a woman live in a relationship and share an apartment. The attempt fails due to the consciousness of the protagonists and ends in "separate bedrooms". The sculpture hence shows something of the conflict of dissonance always arising in a particular context that generated it in the first place, and that this context cannot be simply abandoned without ensuing difficulties. Fortunately, another patch rug lies directly beneath the sculpture. It is rolled up in such a way that one can recline on it and command a reverse view of the exhibition's scenery from underneath the bed (the Acropolis sculpture being outside of one's field of vision). The ensemble is amended and suggestively protected by a further "SHADE" (see above), this time containing unpainted glass panels. In the light of the conflict described previously, this situation can perhaps be read as a way out, as a model for a self-realized space that at least offers an experimental niche made necessary by a life in a balancing act between personal utopia and bourgeois reality.

Sören Gammel

List of Works:

ROOM 1 (in collaboration with Robert Gassner)

Cabinet N°3, 1 compartment, powder-coating: entirely RAL 4007 PURPLE VIOLET. Execution: quality thin sheet, spot-welded, mounted on legs, smooth swappable floor, flush door with internally mounted hinges, reinforced profile on closing side covering entire length of door, door with ventilation slots and label frame, lockable with cylinder lock, 2 keys. Removable interior: 4 shelf nets RS, 100% cotton, 100% satin, 2 mm mirror. Dimensions: H 1800 x W 300 x D 500 mm.

Cabinet N°4, 1 compartment, powder-coating: entirely RAL 5002 ULTRAMARINE BLUE. Execution: quality thin sheet, spot-welded, mounted on legs, smooth swappable floor, flush door with internally mounted hinges, reinforced profile on closing side covering entire length of door, door with ventilation slots and label frame, lockable with cylinder lock, 2 keys. Removable interior: one hat rack RAL 6009 FIR GREEN, one lower shelf of toned glass, bronze, base frame of square profile, 30 x 30 mm welded and leveled, with height-adjustable legs. Seat slats of hardwood, untreated beech, sanded. Key ring with driftwood, partly coated with glossy varnish. Dimensions: H 1800 x W 300 x D 500 mm.

Cabinet N°5, 1 compartment with supporting seat, powder-coating: locker RAL 6009 FIR GREEN, base frame RAL 6009 FIR GREEN. Execution: quality thin sheet, spot-welded, floor of natural coconut brush 24mm, flush door with internally mounted hinges, reinforced profile on closing side covering entire length of door, door with ventilation slots and label frame, lockable with cylinder lock, 2 keys. Removable interior: one hat rack RAL 6009 FIR GREEN, one lower shelf of toned glass, bronze, base frame of square profile, 30 x 30 mm welded and leveled, with height-adjustable legs. Seat slats of hardwood, untreated beech, sanded. Key ring with driftwood, partly coated with glossy varnish. Dimensions: H 2050 x W 300 x T 500/780 mm.

Cabinet N°6, 1 compartment, powder-coating: entirely RAL 8014 SEPIA BROWN. Execution: quality thin sheet, spot-welded, mounted on legs, smooth swappable floor, flush door veneered with olive wood, with internally mounted hinges, reinforced profile on closing side covering entire length of door, door with ventilation slots and label frame, mirror on interior side, lockable with cylinder lock, 2 keys. Interior furnishings: shut slats covering entire height of locker, with 50 mm, shelf slats with 4 x 4 steel supports, shelves of white melamine glass, seat-base frame of square profile, 30 x 30 mm welded and leveled, with height-adjustable legs. Seat slats of handwoven, beech, sanded. Key ring with snuffie bit, stainless steel. Dimensions: H 1800 x W 300 x D 500 mm.

Cabinet N°7, 1 compartment with supporting seat, powder-coating: locker RAL 1015 LIGHT WOOD, base frame RAL 1015 LIGHT WOOD. Execution: quality thin sheet, spot-welded, smooth swappable floor, flush door with internally mounted hinges, reinforced profile on closing side covering entire length of door, door with ventilation slots and label frame, mirror on interior side, lockable with cylinder lock, 2 keys. Interior furnishings: shut slats covering entire height of locker, with 50 mm, shelf slats with 4 x 4 steel supports, shelves of white melamine glass, seat-base frame of square profile, 30 x 30 mm welded and leveled, with height-adjustable legs. Seat slats of handwoven, beech, sanded. Key ring with snuffie bit, stainless steel. Dimensions: H 2050 x W 300 x D 500/780 mm.

Wallpaper "paradise, svart"
Design by Josef Frank (* 15 July 1889 in Baden near Vienna, † 18 January 1967 in Stockholm)
Execution: patch rug, hand-woven, diverse fabrics & materials. Dimensions approx. W 2300 x L 10000 mm, repeat 950 mm, variable.

Surface: tapisserie N°1, black
Execution: patch rug, hand-woven, diverse fabrics & materials. Dimensions approx. W 2300 x L 10000 mm, repeat 950 mm, variable.

ROOM 2

Cabinet N°1, 1 compartment, powder-coating: entirely RAL 1016 SULPHUR YELLOW. Execution: quality thin sheet, spot-welded, supported by legs, smooth swappable floor, flush door with internally mounted hinges, reinforced profile on closing side covering entire length of door, door with ventilation slots and label frame, lockable with cylinder lock, 2 keys. Removable interior: one hat rack, solid oak, partly matt-finished. Removable shelf, solid oak, partly coated with matt varnish. Dimensions: H 1800 x W 300 x D 500 mm.

"Shades N°1", colored
Dimensions: H 1700 x W 1650 x D 580 mm
Execution: frame of solid spruce profiles, aluminum tracks, 3mm sheet glass, diverse colors.

ROOM 3

"Shades N°2", colored
Dimensions: H 1700 x W 1650 x D 580 mm
Execution: frame of solid spruce profiles, aluminum tracks, 3mm sheet glass, diverse window colors.

"Shades N°3", clear
Dimensions: H 1700 x W 1650 x D 580 mm
Execution: frame of solid spruce profiles, aluminum tracks, 3mm sheet glass.

Model "Acropolis, modern shagging – separate bedrooms"
Execution: patch rug, hand-woven, diverse fabrics, materials. Dimensions: W 2300 x L 10000 mm.

Surface: tapisserie N°1, colored
Execution: patch rug, hand-woven, various fabrics, materials. Dimensions: W 2300 x L 10000 mm.

ROOM 4

MODULE N°1
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #110 PALLAS/ROSE WOOD, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°2
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #111 PURE YELLOW, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°4
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #111 PURE YELLOW, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°5
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #111 PURE YELLOW, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°6
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #110 PALLAS/ROSE WOOD, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°7
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #110 PALLAS/ROSE WOOD, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°8
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #110 PALLAS/ROSE WOOD, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°9
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #110 PALLAS/ROSE WOOD, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°10
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #110 PALLAS/ROSE WOOD, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

MODULE N°11
Execution: Raffia - rabana/matasse, country of origin Madagascar, dimensions 120 x 75 cm, hand-woven, hand-stained with Schimex #110 PALLAS/ROSE WOOD, polished. Lindenwood frame, rough, sanded, with supporting frame.

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