Press Kit
Spring program 2018

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Press Contact

KW Institute for Contemporary Art
Katja Zeidler
Tel. +49 30 243459 41
press@kw-berlin.de

KW Institute for Contemporary Art
KUNST-WERKE BERLIN e. V.
Auguststr. 69
10117 Berlin
kw-berlin.de

facebook.com/KWInstituteforContemporaryArt
instagram.com/kwimplement contemporaryart/
KW Institute for Contemporary Art announces Winter and Spring program 2018.

KW Institute for Contemporary Art is thrilled to announce its winter and spring program of 2018, which turns its attention towards the body and its relationships to politics, technology, and architecture. After the presentation of the installation Super-8 Trilogy by Ericka Beckman, KW continues its program with two comprehensive solo exhibitions by Judith Hopf and Trix & Robert Haussmann as well as the inauguration of K, (K-Komma) by P. Krishnamurthy, within the residency format A Year with ... and this years’ point of departure for a series of projects on location throughout Berlin in the summer, while the 10th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art is taking over the premises of KW (9.6. – 9.9.2018).

Judith Hopf
Stepping Stairs
February 10–April 15, 2018
Press preview: February 9, 2018, 11 am

Since the 1990s, the Berlin-based artist Judith Hopf (born 1969 in Karlsruhe, DE) has mastered an independent artistic language that unswervingly manages to stake out new ground, be it in the form of sculpture, film, drawing, performance or stage design. Her iconic works are deeply rooted in the use of everyday materials, like brick, concrete, glass, packaging, and easily graspable manufacturing processes, employing them to investigate the social dynamics of our built environment and their influence on behavior, power dynamics, and social codes.

For her exhibition Stepping Stairs at KW, Hopf continues her engagement with the material bricks. The stone-masoned brick works occupy a curious intermediary position that fluctuates between sculpture and (exhibition-) architecture, both dividing and augmenting the exhibition space. The brick works will be presented alongside older works, including a reworked constellation of her laptop sculptures. Abstract figures in different everyday poses appear to be seamlessly merged with the laptops they balance on their waists and knees. Shaped by what appears to be an over-use of technology, the sculptures assume a hybrid form situated somewhere between laptop and human being.

Alongside the sculptural works, the exhibition at KW will include a new short film as well as an ambitious commission for the facade in KW’s courtyard. In these commissioned works, two historic artists have served as sources of inspiration: the American architect and architectural theorist John Hejduk (1929–2000), and the German artist, and former colleague of Hopf, Annette Wehrmann (1961–2010). Wehrmann’s installation of Serpentine Streamer will be on
view alongside an audio recording of her reading of the texts on the third floor at KW from February 10 until March 11, 2018.

A comprehensive reader will be published with Verlag Walther König, featuring contributions by Hopf as well as by central companions of her work. The exhibition is curated by Anna Gritz.

**Trix & Robert Haussmann**  
*The Log-O-Rithmic Slide Rule: A Retrospective*  
February 10–April 29, 2018  
**Press preview:** February 9, 2018, 11 am

The architect and designer duo Trix (born 1933 in Chur, CH) & Robert Haussmann (born 1931 in Zurich, CH) may be counted among the most important Swiss architects of the twentieth century. They have realized about 650 projects in their lifetime including the legendary Da Capo Bar, Shopville in Zurich’s main railway station, the boutique Weinberg, the famous bar Kronenhalle and numerous successful experiments in artistic and handcrafted furniture. Since founding their ‘Allgemeine Entwurfsanstalt’ (General Design Institute) in 1967, Trix & Robert Haussmann have been pioneers in breaking with the premises of modern, canonical orders and concepts, reinterpreting playfully the linguistic dogmas of architecture theories.

Evading the dictum ‘form follows function’, their designs pursue a ‘manierismo critico’ (a ‘critical Mannerism’), permitting them to merge the old and the new, to generate dissent and work with ambiguity, contradiction, and chance. The dedicated and thoughtful challenging of aesthetic conventions of Trix & Robert Haussmann was ahead of its time and is providing a very important contribution to the contemporary discourses on art and architecture.

Trix & Robert Haussmann will occupy the first and second floor of KW. This show will be the first significant survey of their work in Europe and showcases highlights of their personal archive, the main works of the collection at the Museum für Gestaltung in Zurich, works of the estate by Peter Röthlisberger and actual compartments of interior design. The exhibition is curated by Fredi Fischli and Niels Olsen and is accompanied by interventions by Inside Outside / Petra Blaise, Liam Gillick, and Karl Holmqvist. The exhibition will travel to Nottingham Contemporary later this year.

**K, A Year with P. Krishnamurthy**  
February 4–December 16, 2018  
**Venue:** K, Ebersstraße 3, 10827 Berlin-Schöneberg  
**Opening:** February 3, 2018, 4–7 pm

In February, KW inaugurates K,—a “workshop for exhibition-making” founded by designer, curator, writer, and educator P. Krishnamurthy in Berlin-Schöneberg. Established as part of the residency format *A Year with ...*, K, proposes a space for production, presentation and pedagogy. This initiative extends and rethinks his previous project, P!, an exhibition space, gallery, and "Mom-and-Pop-Kunsthalle" located in New York from 2012–17. Framed by the work of the East German graphic designer Klaus Wittkugel (1910–85), K, will invite local and international artists, designers, and curators to actively consider the exhibition form anew through installations, talks, and pedagogical interventions. The presentation Klaus Wittkugel, Widerspiegelung, Konstruktion [Klaus Wittkugel, Reflection, Construction] includes original photographs from the 1930s, alongside posters, book covers, and printed ephemera from the 1950s and 60s. A contemporary slide show of Wittkugel's exhibition design and architectural graphics complements these materials. This rotating selection seeks to make his work accessible for interested audiences and researchers.
The public program starts with a conversation between noted design historian and professor \textbf{Jeremy ‘Kai’ Aynsley} and P. Krishnamurthy around the ideological tensions and resonances between East and West German design of the postwar period. The event takes place on February 3, 2018 at 4 pm prior to the opening of \textit{K.}. 
Judith Hopf  
**Stepping Stairs**  
February 10 – April 15, 2018

Opening: February 9, 2018, 7 pm

Since the 1990s, Berlin-based artist Judith Hopf has mastered an independent artistic language that unswervingly manages to stake out new ground, be it in the form of sculpture, film, drawing, performance, or stage design. Her iconic works are deeply rooted in the use of everyday materials, such as brick, concrete, glass, or packaging, and easily graspable manufacturing processes, employing them to investigate the social dynamics of our built environment and their influence on behavior, power dynamics, and social codes.

The exhibition *Stepping Stairs* confronts the faceless creations of modern life by taking a closer look at the objects that so elegantly shape our daily routine, whilst responding to the effect that advances in economics and technology have had on our bodies and mental compositions. The title *Stepping Stairs* derives from a text written by Hopf in which she recalls the moments where life feels like climbing upstairs against the flow of a descending escalator. In the exhibition, Hopf references two likeminded artists and inspirations: the American architect and architectural theorist John Hejduk (1929–2000), and the German artist, and former colleague of Hopf, Annette Wehrmann (1961–2010), identifying in both of their works an appeal to “chatter away against automatic knowledge in general and against greyness in particular”. For Hejduk, this is especially relevant in his *Berlin Masque* building complex in Berlin-Kreuzberg, with its grey walls and olive-green steel balconies and sunshades, while in Wehrmann’s case, Hopf sees this in her colorful and unruly “serpentine streamer”.

The exhibition compiles a survey of Hopf’s practice by bringing together new commissions alongside older bodies of work. Upon entering, the visitor is greeted by a reworked group of Hopf’s laptop sculptures *Untitled (Laptop Men)* (2018) scattered across the lower ground floor. Abstract figures, like line drawings but made of sheet metal, are positioned in different everyday poses and appear to be seamlessly merged with the laptops they balance on their waists and knees. Shaped by what appears to be an over-use of technology, the sculptures assume a hybrid form situated somewhere between laptop and human being. Hopf makes a humorous reference to the way we depend on our devices and the growing tendency to perceive them as part of our bodies.

The lingering gray bodies are framed by Hopf’s *Untitled (Email Lines)* (2016), three colored LED light chains suspended from the ceiling. They present a physical manifestation of the seemingly endless back and forth conversations that we carry around dematerialized on our devices. *Untitled (Email Lines)* questions how communication can be defined nowadays, especially in regards to the relationship between work and leisure, since both are widely pursued through the same device.

The video *Lily’s Laptop* (2013) plays in a loop, a homage to the 1911 film *Le Bateau de Léontine* (*Betty’s Boat*) by Roméo Bosetti. The film shows the au pair Lily flooding the modernist home of her employers. To determine whether her laptop is able to swim, she turns on the faucets and leaves the household under water until all belongings are washed away in a slapstick-like gesture.

For her installation in the main hall of KW, Hopf continues her recent fascination with bricks. The masoned brick works occupy a curious intermediary position that fluctuates between sculpture...
and (exhibition-) architecture, both dividing and augmenting the exhibition space. Lower and higher walls structure the hall and are interspersed with objects made from bricks. One encounters oversized brick hands (*Hand 1, 2, 3, 4*, 2016–17) that appear to be signaling emphatic yet ambiguous messages to the visitor, brick balls (*Ball in Remembrance of Annette Wehrmann*, 2016), and a new series of giant brick pears (*Birnen*, 2018). In the older works, industrially fired bricks were formed into cubes, and then shapes were hewn out of them. For the new series of pears, the cubes have been industrially cut into pear shapes. In each process, there appears to be a curious reversal at play, which turns a geometrical abstract form in the tradition of minimal art into an illusionary shape that mimics anthropomorphic traits. Her sculptures resist the sleekness of the newest production methods and make easy circulation and distribution impossible through their laborious production method and sheer weight. Here, process has to be understood as a political stance against the demand for acceleration, a gesture that is often mirrored in the anthropomorphic attitudes and laconic expressions of her hybridized objects.

Two films are housed in Hopf’s unique floating cinemas, black tent-like cloth structures hanging in the exhibition space, and which the audience must plunge into to enter. For the film *Türen* (2007, together with Henrik Olesen) Hopf and Olesen restaged a scene from Luis Buñuel’s film *Le Fantôme de la liberté* (*The Phantom of Liberty*, 1974) in which different doors open on to a variety of little vignettes that take place behind them. Here, in a choreography of comedic gold, a series of chance meetings take place in a corridor where people from different backgrounds meet for brief absurdist encounters before they disappear again behind their respective doors.

In her new film *OUT* (2018), we are faced with the question: How can one type of architecture enter another? Both films, like much of Hopf’s work, defy the conformity demanded by the need for perpetual progress, calling for resistance both through overt malleability and bulkiness as well as through the transferral of overly human qualities like stupor, embarrassment, stupidity, and exhaustion onto the objects she creates.

At its very end, the exhibition spills out into the KW courtyard in the shape of a permanent commission for the left side of the building’s façade. A cheekily anthropomorphized face can be recognized in the Hejduk-like sunshades, paired with a long red tongue and a blonde mop of hair that reaches into the courtyard like a ray of sunshine. Her gesture to animate the inanimate imbues it with the potential for purpose and agency.

As part of the supporting program, an installation of Annette Wehrmann’s *Serpentine Streamers* and an audio recording of the artist reading the texts will be presented on KW’s 3rd floor. Wehrmann typed her texts, which unite everyday observations with philosophical and aesthetic inquiries, onto serpentine streamers. In her performances, she creates visual poetry in space, reflecting on art in a social context.

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive reader edited by Anna Gritz and co-published with Koenig Books. The publication includes texts and contributions by Kathy Acker, Madeleine Bernstorff, Sabeth Buchmann, Maurin Dietrich, Anna Gritz, John Hejduk, Judith Hopf, Monika Rinck, Avital Ronell, and Annette Wehrmann.

**Biography**

Judith Hopf (born 1969) lives and works in Berlin. She is a professor of fine art at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. She had solo exhibitions at Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2017); Museion, Bolzano, IT (2016); Studio Voltaire, London (2013), and Malmö Konsthall, SE (2012), among others. Her work has been featured in group exhibitions at La Biennale de Montréal (2016); the 8th Liverpool Biennial (2014); SculptureCenter, New York (2014); the Hammer
Museum, Los Angeles (2014); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel (2012); Kunsthall Oslo (2010); Kunsthalle Bern, CH (2009); Tate Modern, London (2008); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2005), among others. Hopf had film screenings at the Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (2016); Berlinale, International Film Festival, Berlin (2014); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2013); the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, DE (2006), and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2005).

Public program

The Berlin Sessions
Annette Wehrmann: Luftschlangen (Serpentine Streamers)
March 9, 2018, 7 pm
3rd floor
The installation of Annette Wehrmann’s Serpentine Streamers closes with a reading of her writing by Judith Hopf combined with a screening of selected films by Wehrmann.

Gegen-Orte
March 12, 2018, 11 am–1 pm
3rd floor
Departing from Annette Wehrmann’s work Ort des Gegen, pupils of the school Heinz-Brandt-Schule designed societal counter-concepts—some rather utopistic, others funnily pragmatic. On March 12, their first encounters will be brought together in an open workshop and discussed with other visitors.

Sculpture Moderne—an animated Screening
April 5, 2018, 7 pm
The film screening Sculpture Moderne brings together films by Judith Hopf with early, mostly colored films featuring the actress and colorist Julienne Mathieu in the role of a complicit presenter. The program is selected by Madeleine Bernstorff, and is accompanied by a live soundtrack by artist Julian Göthe.

Ariana Reines: Telephone
Miss St’s Hieroglyphic Suffering
Adapted by Rosa Aiello, Luzie Meyer, Elif Saydam, Mark von Schlegell
April 14–15, 2018, 8 pm
3rd floor
Ariana Reines’ Telephone is a theatrical triptych inspired by Avital Ronell’s The Telephone Book. an epic piece that, like Ronell’s book, operates like a switchboard, connecting people and places across time and space.
New Commission

Judith Hopf:  
*Stepping Stairs* (2018)

Mural on KW’s courtyard façade, left staircase

For her solo exhibition *Stepping Stairs* (February 10–April 15, 2018), Judith Hopf (born 1969 in Karlsruhe, DE) conceives KW Institute for Contemporary Art’s façade as a component of the exhibition and consistently incorporates the building’s architectural structure into her work. She repurposed the façade behind Dan Graham’s *Café Bravo* as her canvas, on which she sketched a mask of architectural elements. Hopf refers here to the American architect and architecture theorist John Hejduk (1929-2000). For Hopf, he functions as an historical point of reference and an inspiration as well as a timeless interlocutor.

Following Hejduk’s reflections on large-scale, structural transformation along the site of the former Berlin Wall in southern Friedrichstadt, Hopf graphically implements parts of his never fully realized designs, entitled *Berlin Masque*, on the KW façade. He understood *Berlin Masque* as a kind of contemporary mask comprised of already built, anthropomorphic structures around the windows and balconies of buildings, which they decorate, distort, and dress. In keeping with Hejduk’s mobilized, geometric architectures, buildings are enabled as sources of material that fold from two- to three-dimensions and back again.

The commission is supported and donated by OUTSET Germany_Switzerland.
Annette Wehrmann: *Luftschlangen* (Serpentine Streamers)  
February 10 – March 11, 2018

*Luftschlangen* (Serpentine Streamers) by Annette Wehrmann (1961–2010) is presented as part of the accompanying program for the exhibition *Stepping Stairs* by Judith Hopf (February 10 – April 15, 2018) at KW Institute for Contemporary Art for the first time since the death of the artist as a spatial arrangement. For this occasion, a replica of her texts—typed on serpentine streamers—was produced by KW in collaboration with Ort des Gegen e. V. The presentation is accompanied by audio and film material of readings of the Serpentine Streamer Texts by Annette Wehrmann.

I first met Annette Wehrmann at a group show in Stephan Balkenhol's studio on a side street ("Am Nobisteich") near Reeperbahn in Hamburg in 1990. Annette had installed a hip-high wall of variously colored liquids in milk-white jugs that snaked through the hall.

Two years later, I was one of a dozen people at an empty apartment on St. Pauli watching an intimate reading performance by Annette that started in the bathroom there. She had typed out her texts on bright new year’s party streamers. For her later performances, she would hang these serpentine streamers in a space and read aloud from them, standing on a ladder if she had to. But this time, she climbed out of a bathtub filled to the brim with water, wearing an oxide red one-piece and grabbed one of the coiled strips she had hung throughout the place ahead of time. Dripping like crazy, this drenched Annette started reading her streamer texts aloud, making her way through the apartment, leaving puddles behind everywhere she went. The performance turned out to be a penetrating affair (not only in a spatial sense). The place wasn't heated, and it was cold, which heightened the tension. It was an imposing and lush show. After that, Annette stuck in my memory as an artist obsessed with her work, an artist with a serious, compelling, and also self-ironic edge. This mixture of mental alertness and emotional intensity really impressed me. We became friends over the years.

Annette took visual poetry to a new dimension. The unexpected turns the texts took even had an optical counterpart in the recurrent twisting and tugging on the spiral media they were printed on, which was prone to tangle and snag. Whether she ever repeated the bathtub performance is beyond my knowledge.

The *Serpentine Streamers* come from a cropped A4 zine that Annette copied and ring bound herself in editions of three to five. She gave one such zine to her friend Ambrus Erzsébet (now Erzsébet Ambrus-Möhle) for her birthday. A text in Neid magazine (no. 4) was printed with a blurb supplying procedural information: TAPE LOOPS treats serpentine streamers as a storage medium for random perceptions & mental connections, slivers of contextual sense & nonsense. The result is a rhizomatic growth of interchangeable associations, in short, a brain.”

A study of Annette’s texts uncovers how she perceived and read the city. She repeatedly delineates its limitations as habitat and examines the correlation between thinking and individual behavior, between influences exerted by the media and the “city” machine. She conveys the scope of the friction and how that friction works on people—and finds that normative behavior is frequently both product and substance of conformity mechanisms and their consequences. Annette was a master of feeling those things out. Roaming public space, she held a magnifying
glass up to the humanoids she encountered there. She counters “the wrong thinking” among people around her in her texts, observes herself playing off others, slings reflections around, using them as a weapon, and sketches out life on the 1990’s St. Pauli art scene in the process. Poetic, dramatic descriptions of landscapes, mental states, and physical conditions crop up in between. Annette’s texts, which have lost none of their currency, can be read as a hunt for the “anti site,” although never explicitly stated.

Her work with the principle of inversion—reversing projections, reflecting thoughts, mirroring the mirror of the self—didn’t restrict itself to her texts alone. The military watchtower she transformed into a mirror pavilion for the 2001 National Garden Expo in Potsdam evidenced the same technique. She worked on altering habits, expectations, and power dynamics in many forms. Annette would rather chain sentences together with commas than write a period—in defiance of the admonition “get to the point already!” On a purely formal level, she went way beyond the point where she should either have gotten to the point or written a period. [Period and point are the same word in German. Trans.] Annette used dashes where others would start a new paragraph. She abbreviated people’s names with the first letters of their first and/or last names. I can recognize some, others not, and then sometimes the whole thing feels like a confusion ploy. The minute I let myself believe I’ve cracked the code, everything turns out different again. Allusions and figments of Annette’s imagination seem to blend, fictional characters intermix with real-life people. Even for someone directly implicated, it’s not always possible to follow, since one first letter can stand for more than one person. Annette taught a seminar on journal writing at the HFBK [art school, trans.] in Hamburg, and worked out her own techniques prior to that. Her texts would definitely have “done well” at slams. She wrote as if she were speaking: a talking blues of unspeakable power. At times her picture of humanity can start to feel one-sided.

She professes to know exactly what others are thinking in her texts. That’s most likely a hyperbolic distortion technique meant to draw out sharply defined positions.

I’m still struck by her unconventional take on people, their interconnections, and consequent social orders today. We had a lot of laughs together. And yes, sneers were also involved. She wasn’t just a great artist, she was a radiant personality.

On more than one occasion, I suggested to Annette that she do a book or publication of her texts with Textem Verlag, which was looking for writers. She vacillated for weeks and then refused, saying she hadn’t gotten far enough as an artist to think of making it as an author. Publishing the texts would give her a false public image. Too bad she thought like that. Annette was a loving woman who could be intractable and obstinate at times. But those qualities made her stand out. She criticized her own ranks, contradicted the contradiction. Annette Wehrmann had a profound sadness and an immense rage inside her—she could get so devastatingly annoyed over typical and/or sorry states of affairs—the injustices and progressions of flat out wrongs within wrongs, keyword “aggressive sleeping.”

Text: Carsten Klook
Translation: Carrie Roseland

With special thanks to Erzsébet Ambrus-Möhle, Sophie Boysen, Isabelle Demin, and Chinh Nguyen Thi

Made possible with the support of Ort des Gegen e. V. / Estate Annette Wehrmann
Distinctions are commonly made between different forms of memory. Memory-of-knowing-how, for example, allows us to mechanically reel off a poem learned by heart. Referred to by Henri Bergson as ‘habit memory’¹, it repeats the past without grasping it as such. Using previously acquired skills to solve present tasks, it functions largely automatically.

It is with particular respect that I recall all those grey days in Berlin that often lasted for weeks. How that greyness stretched itself over the city! Looking up through umbrellas with cheerful printed designs, the view immediately grew dull and the books in the library, contents included, shifted inexorably into some unimagined distance.

I think it can only be because of memory-of-knowing-how that we made it through the grey days in cities in general—and through the greyness of Berlin in particular—that we made it through again and again. Because the streets switched directions too, rushing towards us a whole lot faster. Bicycles became utterly useless. Just looking at them knocked the air out of their tyres. What’s more, ticket prices increased and coins no longer fit in the slots of vending machines.

On such days, while gradually learning to go against the flow up and down the city’s limited number of automatic escalators, I began to realize that memory-of-knowing-how might also explain the puzzling appearance of all the brand-new architecture. These buildings were characterized by their unerring attempts to look as similar as possible, like buildings that were already 250 years old. I began to understand: the way they functioned was also largely automatic. They simply repeated the past without grasping it as such. Their functions were to be inscribed into the bodies of their inhabitants in such a way that they wouldn’t even need to become aware of them. They claimed they were somehow just inherently there.

So I realized—it was a matter of praising habit! Even if only to better adjust the intervals on the up and down escalators! On one of these grey days in Berlin, these praiseworthy days on which I believed I had learned to get around town a little more easily, with Hubot-like² automatism, this thing appeared as if emerging from the second row, elbowing its way into the foreground at last, hissing at me the way dealers do, Psssst! This was remarkable if only because it had been there thirty years, in the same spot. And I already knew it. But for the last twenty years it had never stepped out towards me, but had somehow occupied a quiet place in the background. At first, it hadn’t stuck me as a house in the sense of a residential or office building. More like a

¹ Henri Bergson, Materie und Gedächtnis. Eine Abhandlung über die Beziehung zwischen Körper und Geist (Hamburg: Verlag Felix Meiner, 2001)
² Hubot stands for humanoid robot.
combination of memories of various different kinds of functional architecture—a tower/factory/house. But suddenly, like a sports team sent out to play in a new formation, its constituent parts caught my eye. In this new arrangement, the elements recalled their symbolic past, marking themselves out as bygone, as remnants of something, as a strange mimicry, a different species of architecture. Suddenly, I became attentive to the way the olive-green steel balconies and sunshades on the building’s façade chattered away against automatic knowledge in general and against greyeness in particular:

- Fower/Hactory/Touse
- Hower/Tactory/ouse
- Tower/Factory/House
- Fower/Hactory/Touse
- etc.

When it rained, the water ran off the olive-green sunshades that resembled half-closed eyelids, making it look like the architecture was crying, as if the house were watching a dramatic film at the cinema and the cast consisted of us, the inhabitants and passers-by. In terms of colour, the house was even greyer than all of the other buildings I knew in the city. It seems possible that this greyer greyeness was a trick within a trick, a form of patient and sustained resistance to the familiar and habitual. Slowly, like a song that becomes an earworm, it permeated the familiar, making the city’s old new buildings whistle its blues …

Another form of human recollection is what Bergson calls ‘pure memory’\(^3\). It preserves lived experience in the form of memory images. These images can represent experience, but at the same time the experience is recognized as past. When the images are recognized as past events, it becomes clear that learned content is not innate wisdom or a part of nature, but that it is acquired, ‘free’ knowledge that can be worked with and varied.

Annette Wehrmann had the wonderful idea of recalling her experiences in urban space and recording them in the manner of a journal. Using a typewriter, she then copied these experiences and memories onto colourful paper streamers. Much as streamers are used to decorate a room or mark the high point of a party, her notes were unrolled, festooned and draped. The streamers, chaotically strewn across the whole room, were stretched three-dimensionally through the space from all four walls. The result was a bright and merry tangle of paper streamers as a three-dimensional thing in space. This thing—let’s call it a network of paper streamers—was like a depiction of a brain. This brain was interwoven with many different, non-linear texts that obeyed no focus, school of knowledge or optimization, and the way they were presented also meant they knew no beginning or end. Entirely free of hierarchy, Wehrmann’s sensitive and sharply observed memory texts simply appeared in the room. ‘Better’ memories mingled indiscriminately and anarchically with those that were perhaps less ‘good’. The artist herself then set up a ladder among the jumble and chaos of the suspended streamers, reaching in and choosing a random spot at which to start calmly reading out her notes. Climbing up and down the ladder at breakneck speed, she followed individual lines of text as far as possible among the confusion of paper streamers. When one text became too chaotically entangled with others, she would literally break the flow, tearing off the streamer she had been following at the knot. In this way, she created a radical new beginning, starting not at the actual start of the text, but where it now began. For me, this performance was a breathtaking demonstration of how a possible relationship between body, text and memory can be portrayed and rendered legible. It could be just a hunch on my part, but I have a vague feeling that Annette Wehrmann and John Hejduk were both appealing, from different sides, for something with which I would unreservedly concur.

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\(^3\) Henri Bergson, Materie und Gedächtnis. Eine Abhandlung über die Beziehung zwischen Körper und Geist (Hamburg: Verlag Felix Meiner, 2001)
Alife, Alife, Alife, Alife …
(repeated continuously)
No nit not
Nit no not
Nit nit folly bololey
Alife my larder
Alife my larder

I can’t forsake you
Or forsqueak you
Alife my larder
Alife my larder

Not nit not
Nit no not
Nit nit folly bololey

Burlybunch, the water mole
Hellyplop and fingerhole Not a wossit, bundy, see For jangle and bojangle
Trip trip pip pippy pippy pip pip landerim

Alife my larder
Alife my larder

Translated by Nicholas Grindell

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KW Institute for Contemporary Art is pleased to present the first major survey of the work of Trix and Robert Haussmann, showcasing an array of projects that span over half a century of production and research.

The architect and designer duo Trix (born 1933 in Chur, CH) and Robert Haussmann (born 1931 in Zurich, CH) can be counted among the most important Swiss architects of the twentieth century. Their multifaceted practice ranges from architecture to product design, furniture, and textiles—each of which make use of creative plays on form, function, and language. They have realized about 650 projects in their lifetime including the legendary Da Capo Bar and Shopville in Zurich’s main railway station, the Boutique Weinberg, the famous Kronenhalle Bar, and numerous successful experiments in artistic and handcrafted furniture. Since founding their “Allgemeine Entwurfsanstalt” (General Design Institute) in 1967, Trix and Robert Haussmann were amongst the first to break with the premises of modern canonical orders and concepts, playfully reinterpreting the linguistic dogmas of architecture theories.

Evading the dictum “form follows function”, their designs pursue a manierismo critico (a critical Mannerism), letting them merge old and new, generate dissent, and work with ambiguity, contradiction, and chance. Their dedicated and thoughtful challenging of aesthetic conventions was ahead of its time and provides an important contribution to contemporary discourse on art and architecture.

The exhibition occupies the first and second floor of KW. It showcases key highlights from their personal archive, works from the collection of the Museum für Gestaltung in Zurich, works from the estate by Peter Röthlisberger, and actual interior design compartments. Early collaborative pieces from 1967 are presented on the first floor—the same year that Trix and Robert Haussmann founded the office that would later be called “Allgemeine Entwurfsanstalt Zürich”. In the intervention Chair Fun, an exhibition initiated by the Swiss Werkbund, they pursued the principles of functionalism ad absurdum. For the exhibition—a variety of stool-objects made by a diverse array of artists and designers—they designed a luminous “Anti-Chair” made of neon lights, which threatens to collapse with the addition of the slightest weight.

In the following years, they developed numerous interior designs reflecting their unique flair, informed by citations from architecture history and the use of illusionist techniques. These techniques were consolidated in their 1981 exhibition Trix and Robert Haussmann: Manierismo critico at Studio Marconi in Milan, where they presented their concept of critical Mannerism, directed against architecture’s stiff classicism. To that end, Trix and Robert Haussmann designed a series of so-called Lehrstücke (Didactics), of which a selection is presented on the second floor at KW. These Lehrstücke convey Hausmann’s architectural doctrines in the form of a subversive manifesto. With the evocative title Lehrstück II: Störung der Form durch die Funktion (Didactic II: The Function’s Disturbance of the Form) the stump of a classical column becomes a functional shelf. Lehrstück VII: Ironisch-kritisches Objekt zum Begriff Multifunktion (Didactic VII: Ironic-critical Object on the Notion of Multifunction) is at once a stool and a guitar.
To combat the conformist impoverishment of expression in their time, the duo developed an experimental design instrument called *The Log-O-Rithmic Slide Rule*, first shown as part of the exhibition at Studio Marconi in 1980. Like a slide-ruler, this “concept-slider” makes use of the combinatorial potential of moving two scales against one another. In Trix and Robert Haussmann’s adaptation of the instrument, however, words—predominately adjectives used in architectural discourse—replace numerals, which, through endless combinations, produce imaginative architectures, languages, and images. The Oulipo-inspired concept-slider was intended to expand on prevailing notions of stylistic diversity with the use of randomly combined pairs of words.

For Trix and Robert Haussmann, conceptual works are always tools in the design process for concrete projects. Therefore, in addition to architectural designs and models, the exhibition also presents realized projects like the arcades of *Boutique Weinberg*, sculptural objects that find themselves between art and design, as well as mirror-objects, like the *Knopfspiegel* (1987), that confound one’s perception of the exhibition space through illusionistic distortions.

Throughout the exhibition, interventions by designer Inside Outside / Petra Blaise and artists Liam Gillick and Karl Holmqvist seek to respond to the Haussmanns’ oeuvre. Blaise presents her golden drapery *Jubilee in Gold* (2017), which structures the room as exhibition architecture, taking up the Haussmanns’ mannerist strategy of alienation with its opulent design. As an artistic application of *The Log-O-Rithmic Slide Rule*, Karl Holmqvist presents the work *Untitled (A LOG-O-RITHMIC SLIDE RULE EXERCISE...)* (2012) as wallpaper spanning both floors, which reflects on the erotic potential of the subversive recombination in Trix and Robert Haussmann’s work. In reference to Robert Haussmann’s illustrated short story, *The Liberation of the Stool*, Liam Gillick describes a stool that is depressed because it would rather be a table. The stool succumbs to societal constraints until it decides to “transform” with the help of a design therapist. The story concludes with a romantic “orgy” between different pieces of furniture.

**Biographies**

**Trix Haussmann-Högl** (born 1933 in Chur, CH as Beatrix Ursula Högl) is an architect BSA SIA. She studied at ETH Zurich and completed her postgraduate studies at the ORL Institute of ETH Zurich. Since 1967 she runs an office with Robert Haussmann. Until 2002 Trix Haussmann taught at ETH Zurich. **Robert Haussmann** (born 1931 in Zurich) is an architect BSA SIA. After studying in Zurich and Amsterdam he founded his office which he has been operating in an office partnership with Trix Haussmann since 1967. Until 1996 he was Professor of Architectural Design at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart. **Trix and Robert Haussmann** have been working internationally for more than three decades and are involved in the design, construction, conversion and expansion of furniture, textiles and appliances.

The curators **Fredi Fischli** (born 1986) and **Niels Olsen** (born 1989) studied art history at the University of Zurich and Basel. After collecting individual experiences working for museums and galleries in their home country and abroad, they initiated a series of artists’ books which are published under the name STUDIOLO for Patrick Frey in Zurich. Since 2014, they are the heads of *gta Exhibitions* at the Institute for history and theory of architecture, located at the ETH Zurich. Both curators are contributing editors of the art magazine *Kaleidoscope*. Their curatorial interest focuses on moments of adaptation and new interoperation of artistic predecessors and pioneers within the field of contemporary art. Recently, Fischli and Olsen have curated numerous shows together, such as Albert Oehlen / John Sparagana (2013), a touring exhibition with Japanese pop art pioneer Keiichi Tanaami at Schinkel Pavillon in Berlin and at Kaleidoscope Press in Milan (2013), an overview of the sculptures from the 1980’s by Ashley Bickerton (2014), a retrospective of Friedrich Kuhn at Herald St in London (2012/13), as well as a comprehensive exhibition on the Swiss architecture and design duo Trix & Robert Haussmann (2012).
Public program

Walk-through with the curators Fredi Fischli and Niels Olsen
February 10, 2018, 2 pm
Starting point at the counter desk
Included in the ticket

ARCH+ features 71: Trix & Robert Haussmann – Störung der Form durch die Funktion
February 10, 2018, 4 pm
Studio, 1st floor, front building
On the occasion of ARCH+ features 71, Fredi Fischli and Niels Olsen talk to the curator Oliver Elser and architect and author Oda Pälmke about the work of Trix & Robert Haussmann.

The Berlin Sessions: Claudia Skoda on art and fashion in West Berlin
February 28, 2018, 7 pm
Berlinische Galerie, Eberhard-Roters-Saal, Alte Jakobstraße 124–128, 10969 Berlin
For The Berlin Sessions, Claudia Skoda talks about her work as a designer, the interfaces to fine arts and her life in Berlin during the German (pre-) reunification time.

The Liberation of the Stool
A Reading by Liam Gillick
April 29, 2018, 4 pm
KW courtyard
KW Institute for Contemporary Art is pleased to inaugurate K—a "workshop for exhibition-making" founded by designer, curator, writer, and educator P. Krishnamurthy. Established as part of the residency format A Year with ..., K, proposes a space for production, presentation, and pedagogy. This initiative extends and rethinks his previous project, P!, an exhibition space, gallery, and "Mom-and-Pop- Kunsthalle" located in New York from 2012–17.

As Krishnamurthy has suggested in other contexts, the new venue proffers a particular proposition: that curating, design, and other artistic pursuits in our present times must eschew the promotion of perfect products, instead presenting the creative process itself, with its plurality of positive outcomes and periodic faux pas that perhaps can make even everyday things bumpier—or some kind of cacophonous, cryptic, confusing kaka like that.

As an exhibition-maker and graphic designer, Krishnamurthy has played with a broad set of ideas, including identity and its constructions, typographic micro-narration, self-referential modes of display, idiosyncratically-ordered curatorial systems, and institutional models alongside issues such as design’s relationship to historical and contemporary power structures. K, represents both taking stock and building anew: the workshop space functions as a site for reflection upon existing models of interdisciplinary creative practice. During 2018, the space hosts a single, continuous residency and exhibition. As part of this program, K, invites outside participants—artists, curators, designers, and others whose names (or pseudonyms) begin with the letter “K”—to trans-form this ongoing presentation in dialogue with Krishnamurthy. K, will also collaborate with art schools and educational programs to test emerging ideas in situ. Through these activities, the program renders visible the process of thinking and creating within a bounded space and period.

The program’s yearlong trajectory opens in February with an exploration of the work of East German graphic designer and exhibition-maker Klaus Wittkugel (1910–85). Wittkugel, a leading design figure of his day, communicated Socialist ideals and aspirations through his posters, book covers, and propaganda exhibitions in the service of the former GDR. His approach employed modernist abstraction and self-reflexive photomontage, while adapting its formal palette to a given commission. Wittkugel was also an influential professor of graphic design, teaching for over forty years at the art academy in Berlin-Weissensee. The presentation at K, features printed materials, photographs, and spatial designs, installed in an associative manner. Emerging out of Krishnamurthy’s extensive research on Wittkugel, as well
as a 2016 exhibition at Pl! this display opens his body of work—with its embedded questions around the role of political ideology within design—to contemporary critical perspectives and future research. A significant, controversial, and multidisciplinary figure whose work is still under-recognized, Wittkugel represents one starting point from which to explore interwoven questions around abstraction, typography, political language, and historical narrative in parallel.

Kainotophobia: fear of change, resistance to something due to fear.

From this cold-weather kickoff with the classic communism of Klaus Wittkugel, K, careens forward on a seemingly-chaotic yet calmly-calibrated course. Over the calendar year, the space compounds collaborators, commingling their individual conceptions of exhibition-making. Rather than crystallizing completely from the start, this cast catalyzes a cycle of crescendoing experimentation with contrasting formats and approaches. Comprising both calculated and casual additions, subtractions, and multiplications—of artworks, objects, ideas, and displays — the presentation accumulates. And so K, collects itself, one komma-delimited character at a time.

Public program

Klaus Wittkugel,
Wiederspiegelung, Konstruktion
Exhibition opening: Saturday, February 3, 2018, 5–7 pm

We begin our “Wanderjahr” with Klaus Wittkugel: a curious and controversial artistic figure of postwar modernism who deserves a closer look. As a pre-eminent graphic designer, exhibition-maker, and teacher in former East Germany, Wittkugel (1910–1985) imprinted Socialist messages upon multiple generations of ‘workers and farmers.’ His traces remain across contemporary Berlin, such as the signage systems for Kino International and Café Moskau on Karl-Marx-Allee or the identity for the former Palast der Republik. The subtitle of his comprehensive 1979 monograph reads Photography, Graphic Design, Poster, Exhibition, Marks—suggesting Wittkugel’s extensive range of graphic media. Working in the service of the GDR’s official agencies, Wittkugel nevertheless inflected these commissions with an individual aesthetic of self-reflexive photography and typographic construction. His work allows us to open up questions about the tension between the political and the personal within design and other themes.

The presentation Klaus Wittkugel, Wiederspiegelung, Konstruktion [Klaus Wittkugel, Reflection, Construction] includes original photographs from the 1930s, alongside posters, book covers, and printed ephemera from the 1950s and 60s. A contemporary slide show of Wittkugel’s exhibition design and architectural graphics complements these materials. This rotating selection seeks to make his work accessible for interested audiences and researchers. Wittkugel’s work remains in the space until early May, while other invited curators, artists, and designers add a diverse set of works to the installation in parallel.

With thanks to the Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Art Collection; Steffen Tschesno, Berlin.

Jeremy ‘Kai’ Aynsley,
A Kindred Juxtaposition
Saturday, February 3, 2018, 4–5 pm

Our first program is a conversation between noted design historian and professor Jeremy ‘Kai’ Aynsley and the curator of K, — P. Krishnamurthy — around the ideological tensions and resonances between East and West German design of the postwar period. Together with the presentation of Klaus Wittkugel, this discussion looks backward to look forward, setting the stage for the year to come.
Jeremy ‘Kai’ Aynsley is Professor of Design History at the University of Brighton (GB), where he leads the Centre for Design History. He is also currently the Chair of the Design History Society and a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Design History* (OUP). Jeremy Aynsley’s research, writing and curating has focused on modernism and design in the 20th century. Publications include *Graphic Design in Germany, 1890-1945* (2000) and *Designing Modern Germany* (2008). He curated the exhibition *Julius Klinger: Posters for a Modern Age* at the Wolfsonian—FIU, Miami Beach (US) that runs until April 2018. His most recent research focuses on graphic design in East and West Germany in the 1950s and 60s.
**Bob’s Pogo Bar**

*Bob’s Pogo Bar* is an installation by artist and designer [Robert Wilhite](born in 1946 in Santa Ana, US), which aims to reintroduce the format of a bar that existed in the late 1990’s in the basement of KW Institute for Contemporary Art. The original Pogo Bar was a club that welcomed a variety of writers, artists, gallerists and musicians who—around the turn of the millennium—started to discover the district Berlin-Mitte as a possible place for cultural exchange and production.

Within the framework of the artistic program, *Bob’s Pogo Bar* transforms the basement into an installation, a salon or a potential theatre. Every Thursday night an artist takes over *Bob’s Pogo Bar*, hosting an evening that can evolve out of their own practice or expand it into a night of drinks, music or performance. The bar follows the format of *Bob’s Your Uncle*, a bar that was held at Kunstverein in Amsterdam from 2014 to 2016, where it hosted over 50 evenings.

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*Lichtspiele*

Kat Anderson

*Episodes of Horror: Gudo: A Wounded Spectacle*

February 1, 2018, 8.30 pm

Dardan Zhegrova

*Lucky Pierre: Crush at the other table*

February 15, 2018, 9 pm – midnight

André Harris, Ricarda Messner, Mark Stroemich, Marshall Vincent Garrett, Zeit+Geist, Nicolas Hue, Michelle Phillips, Paul Kramer, i.ruuu, Sophie Douala, and Fabio M. Silva

*ROM*.COM: a 90’s Trauma workshop (*Read only memory)*

February 22, 2018, 9 pm–2 am

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*Lichtspiele*

Kat Anderson

*Episodes of Horror: Gestures*

March 1, 2018, 8.30 pm

Adam Shaw

March 15, 2018

Samantha Bohatsch

March 22, 2018

RSVP at bobspogobar@kw-berlin.de
The exhibition *Stepping Stairs* by Judith Hopf is kindly supported by Hauptstadtkulturfonds (Capital Cultural Fund) and Stiftung Kunstfonds. The permanent commission is supported and donated by OUTSET Germany_Switzerland.

The exhibition *The Log-O-Rithmic Slide Rule: A Retrospective* by Trix & Robert Haussmann is supported by Pro Helvetia, Herald St, London, and Stiftung Kunstsammlung Teo Jakob.

The presentation of Klaus Wittkugel is made possible with the support of Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Art Collection; Steffen Tschesno, Berlin.

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