

# curated by

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9.9. – 8.10. 2022    Wien  
Vienna

**Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman**

***Artist Project Group: Bernhard Garnicnig, Lukas Heistingner, Andrea Steves***

Artists: Eglė Budvytytė, Juan Blanco (memeclawworldwide), Mateusz Dworczyk (memeclawworldwide), Bernhard Garnicnig (Artist Project Group), Lukas Heistingner (Artist Project Group), Lucie Kolb, Ramona Kortyka (memeclawworldwide), Jens Van Lathem (Bureau of Analogies/TWIIID), Mary Maggic, Scott William Raby (Bureau of Analogies/f.eks), Tobias Van Royen (Bureau of Analogies/TWIIID), Jennifer Merlyn Scherler (memeclawworldwide), Miriam Simun, Andrea Steves (Artist Project Group), Franz West

*“What Can Artists Do Now?”*

The curatorial collective Artist Project Group (Bernhard Garnicnig, Lukas Heistingner, and Andrea Steves) interrogates phenomena of capitalism through curatorial and artistic methods, in an attempt to build platforms for resilient aesthetic and artistic practices. In our project for curated\_by with Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman and within the framing of Kelet, we continue to investigate the capitalist overproduction of meaning, including the recuperation of crisis phenomena into the market, and ask „What Can Artists Do Now?”

Following the workshop „Artists Have The Answers?“ and the online festival „What Would Artists Do?“, the exhibition integrates recently developed works – developed from the vantage point of the Artist-as-Consultant and/or offered as services – into the context of a fine-art gallery. The exhibition troubles notions of audience, participant, material, and impact. In presenting what these artists are doing now, the works connect to a multitude of current crises –both acute and wide-ranging – that are inherent in capitalism and continuously producing its resultant conditions and intensifications. The works hook together and present an overall landscape of the present phenomenon and epiphenomenon of capitalism.

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The Cybernetics-based model of business consultancy services is one of the most pervasive yet invisible global exports from the incipient Western Cold War information industry. Today, consultative industry continues its expansion into increasingly differentiated services, with its methods and services pervasively influencing decision making processes that govern public life.

In the 90s, artists started to critically affirm their transforming role as service providers to institutions, yet their collective movement towards self-regulating their practice was often sidelined by discourses of critique and politics, putting an end to emancipatory initiatives to improve working conditions of artists. Artist Project Group is interested in replacing the concept of innovation with practices of maintenance, that is, maintaining practices through crisis by developing projects in which artists extend their performative knowledge practices as services to institutions, organizations and businesses.

Artists are purported to hold an important role in a changing society, yet their expertise is often undervalued, and their practices are rarely integrated with the processes where change happens. The constant expansion of capitalism continues even through war and crisis, an expansion that doesn't exist *outside of or separate from* crisis and war, but rather intensifies through these periods: profiting and strengthening from them, feeding into them with weapons, solutions, technologies; that is, moving and shapeshifting into the gashes opened by war. Part of our position is acknowledging how artists can intervene in these ongoing logics.

Through the included works, which manifest in a range of forms and interventions in institutions, Artist Project Group attempts to sketch the outlines for resilient artist practices. This conceptualization of resilience is broadly applicable, from economic fluctuations to institutional structures within the art market to the critical self-valuation of artists' work during times of severe crisis. What Can Artists Do Now? That is, how can artistic practices be maintained, become resilient, or set the conditions for resistance and transformation?