

INSIDEOUT
#3 CargoCult

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The third artistic position in the series INSIDEOUT reveals a site-specific installation by the artist collective CargoCult on show in the Kunsthalle's display window that moves beyond it to conquer the digital space.



Former US Depot Gießen, 2021, office chair, green screen fabric
Photo: CargoCult

The work *Sleeping Beauty Encyclopedia: Display/Centerfold* p. 25-26, 2017-21 by the artist collective CargoCult in the display window of the Kunsthalle Gießen is curated by Dr. Julia Wirxel and forms the final exhibition of the three-part series INSIDEOUT. During the lockdown, INSIDEOUT has been bringing contemporary artistic positions into the exterior space via the display window setting each month since the first of February, thus making them visible to visitors. The director of the Kunsthalle Gießen, Dr. Nadia Ismail, invited the curators Gesine Borchardt and Dr. Julia Wirxel to occupy the space.

CargoCult examines the history and the present, the aesthetics of the institution, the individual exhibition space and location, and the city, in a relaxed, easy-going and charming manner. The artists' collective works with a site-specific approach based on multiple layers of perception and penetration according to an intuitive, spontaneous and 'woke' principle. This means that they adopt an intersectional method and heighten awareness of unjust structures. Likewise, they include other forms of being such as animals and plants and operate in a radically inclusive way. CargoCult develops artistic concepts such as social sculpture, emancipatory practice and sensory-conceptual approaches by conducting on-site artistic research.

It was during their research stay in Giessen that the artists met demonstrators who they then incorporated into their photographs. They visited a refugee shelter in Giessen and researched the site's military history. While on the grounds, they placed green screen fabric that, in image and film technology, simulates a gap that can be replaced with any background. Two flags that will be presented at Berliner Platz in front of the town hall will be produced especially for the exhibition INSIDEOUT. They form a bracket between the inside and the outside and between real and virtual space. An oversized QR code is emblazoned on the motif of a flag, it can be scanned with a smartphone, thus the artwork expands into the digital space. Here, the effect of the green screen is applied whereby the invisible is only made visible through the scan. As a direct connection, the second flag features the phrase *WE SEE GHOSTS*, inspired by the hip hop duo *Kids See Ghosts*, (Kid Cudi / Kanye West) and their album of the same name. By means of the word *We*, CargoCult elevates this ability to see ghosts to a universally binding asset, the *We* excludes no one and therefore has a unifying character. The raising of the artistically designed flags becomes a performance in itself and can be viewed online.



CARGOCULT

WE SEE GHOSTS

The collective is expanding their encyclopaedia *Sleeping Beauty* for the Kunsthalle Gießen's display window, in part applying it directly to the glass. As a site-specific reference to the architecture of the building, the individual bricks serve as a scale for the singularly designed sheets that then combine to form an installation. For the viewer, especially those waiting at the bus stop outside the window, there is the *Bonanza Shop*, where by using the QR-code they can purchase jumpers, medals and a small edition of the *Sleeping Beauty Encyclopedia: Display/Centerfold p. 25-26* as an edition.



CargoCult, squatter__wish__neon, 2020, Sweater
Photo: Rasmus Bell

Within this artistic work, *Sleeping Beauty*, to which the encyclopaedia refers by name, is linked to yet a further fairy tale: that of *Snow White*. Comprising both colour and black-and-white copies, jumpers, an office chair, mirrors and various fabrics, the installation counteracts the superficial beauty of the fairytale characters and reinforces the complexity and inherent explosiveness of the historically transmitted stories. At the same time, the concept of *INSIDEOUT* becomes perfectly realised, because following on from the perception and recording of the place, it is in turn reflected back into the place by the artists via the window. The medals exponentiate this exchange in particular. Differences and details are perceived in CargoCult's works without hierarchisation and are rendered artistically transformed in order to intensify the endurance of ambivalences and the pleasure of wakefulness.

CargoCult was preceded by the exhibitions with *Raphaella Vogel* in February and *Veit Laurent Kurz* in March, both curated by *Gesine Borchardt*.

CargoCult formed in Berlin in 2012 as an artists' collective within a governmental employment scheme aimed at integrating unemployed people, it was comprised mainly of women with a background of migration. With temporary collaborators, CargoCult adopts a position that merges the world of art with fashion, mass media and real-social borders and margins. Entirely devoid of leftist escapism and romantic at most in an ironic tradition, CargoCult stimulates discussion within its own global space. CargoCult researches in and around the respective site of action and exhibition, develops site-specific entanglements and explores utopian-visionary practices with the means of art, e.g. with its own encyclopaedia, sections of which are intended to be taken away.

Dr Julia Wirxel is a curator and an author of texts on 20th and 21st century art. She wrote her doctoral thesis on idylls in contemporary art. She has worked as a curator at the Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, the Kunsthalle Münster and was director of the Kunstverein Schwerin. She has curated various exhibitions in Basel, Reykjavík, Seville and Berlin, where she has regularly worked for the Städtische Galerie Berlin-Lichtenberg and most recently for the Kunstverein am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz addressing questions of postcolonialism (*Blinde Winkel*, 2020). She is currently working on an exhibition exploring the boundaries of painting.