

Prof. Stefan Koppelkamm
Semester Project | Summer 2016

Visual food for thought. To design political posters

For the graphic designer and lawyer Klaus Staeck it was a matter of personal concern to design political posters. It was a way to express his protest against the injustice and inequity of the world and a way to mingle in political debates.

A couple of years ago a similar motivation put forth the poster competition »Mut zur Wut« (www.mutzur-wut.com) which gave designers a platform to express their anger (Wut) about political issues. In view of all the »Wutbürger« (angry citizens) who daily express their anger and frustration against immigrants it can be doubted that anger is a good advisor in political discussions.

Staeck decided for an ironical provocation, that appealed to the intelligence of his audience. Visually he preferred simple and unequivocal messages – this made him extremely successful.

In this project we will try to find out what it needs to make a good poster and how designers succeed to hit the right spot between a visual language which is too clear-cut (boring) and one that is too complicated (not understandable).

Guy Bonsiepe, designer, theorist and teacher at the famous Ulm School of Design, had transferred the concept of rhetorics, the antique art of public speech, to the analysis of the images of advertising. Bonsiepe claimed that the efficacy of a visual message is based on »the intelligent deviation from our normal language«.

We will try to develop intelligent strategies of visual and verbal communication that enable us to react on social and political issues that concern us all. Not angry assaults nor »agitation and propaganda« but thought-provoking impulses, which may also reach those people who do not share our values and opinions.

Programme

We will explore the broad scope of visual communication in the public space between commercial advertising and street art. We will look at outstanding posters and discuss their visual quality and efficacy. We will talk to graphic designers like Gunter Rambow and Alex Jordan and we will meet Niklaus Troxler in his current exhibition in the Bröhan Museum.

Die Reichen
müssen noch
reicher
werden

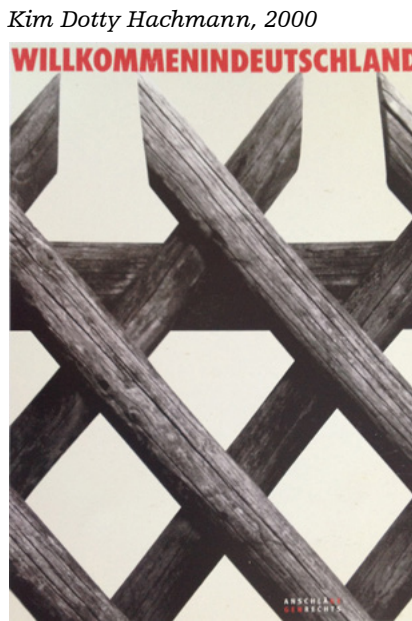
Wählt
christdemokratisch



Shigeo Fukuda, 1975



Beate Kameke, 2000



Kim Dotty Hachmann, 2000

Workshop on the countryside

We will start with a warming-up-workshop in our house in the countryside, we will participate in the »Mut zur Wut« competition (Deadline: 10 May) and will finally define themes, we want to comment on with our visual means. Our final aim is to display the results of the project in the public space.

First meeting

Tuesday, 12 April, 14:00

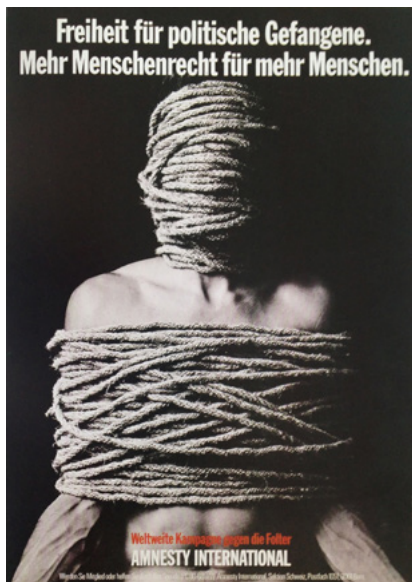
Second meeting

Wednesday, 13 April, 14:00

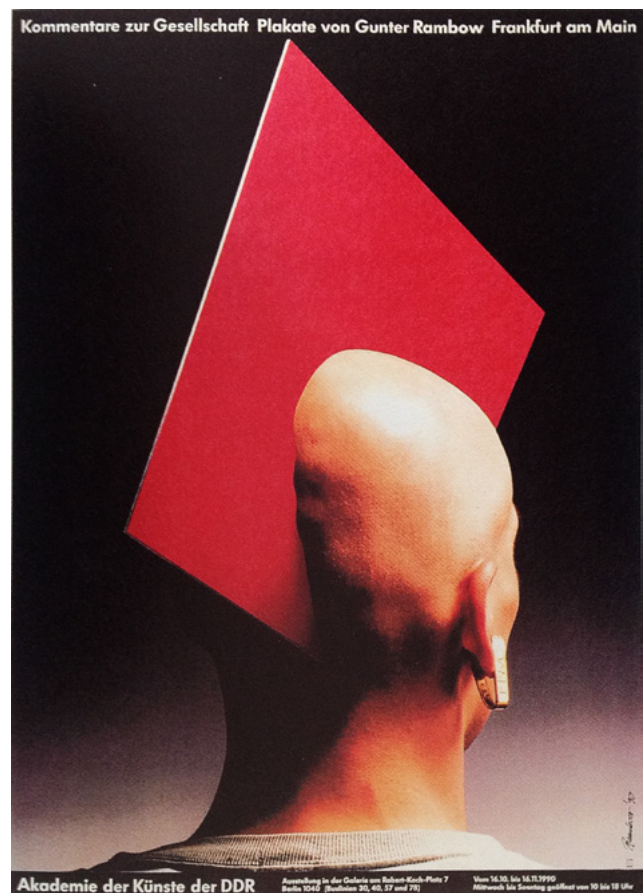
Lecture by Gunter Rambow

Alex Jordan, Nous travaillons ensemble, North-South. Comment on the border between the US and Mexico.

Tomi Ungerer, 1967



Beat Knoblauch, 1973



Gunter Rambow, 1990