

# DANCEFLOOR

by Christoph Hinterhuber

Capitalism has developed into a system that dramatically accelerates the production of signs (slogans) and meanings. Signs are carriers of meaning that can assume a cultural economic value. It is no longer the material relations of production – the focus of Karl Marx’s criticism of political economy – that are the primary medium of politico-economic hegemony. In the light of the exorbitant production of signs and meanings, which blur the distinctions between political, economic and cultural spheres, Christoph Hinterhuber uses his six-part work “DANCEFLOOR” to ask us what democracy, with all this propaganda, we live or would like to live in.

Our experiential reality increasingly consists of signs, to which meanings and values are attached in accordance with capitalist logic. By experiential reality we mean the reality subjects are confronted with, which they grapple with and act in, from which their projections, fears and expectations are derived and on the basis of which they reflect, identify or shape themselves. And Christoph Hinterhuber accordingly asks us what future we wish to live in if we continue to think in terms of patterns.

Hinterhuber’s “DANCEFLOOR” is the political stage on which we perform, and if we combine the individual neon slogans we very quickly see how capitalism perpetuates signification practices, with the result that the production of signs and the related assignation of meaning has become one of the central value-added practices of the millennium. But with “GEGEN ALLES AGAINST EVERYTHING” Hinterhuber also makes us aware of the resistance we can offer to the endless routine.

The strategy of “GEGEN ALLES AGAINST EVERYTHING” indicates the possibility of not becoming or having to remain corrupt. It is a practice of refusal, of not participating, of desertion. The literary figure of the New York clerk Bartleby created by Herman Melville stands for this form of resistance. Every time his boss tells him to perform certain tasks, Bartleby merely says, “I would prefer not to”.

This counter-practice can doubtless represent a point of transition to an emancipatory political agenda. If the practice of negation can be articulated, it can suspend everyday domination and thus open up a field for politics. But, and this is the decisive point, it is not politics per se. In itself “GEGEN ALLES AGAINST EVERYTHING” is “empty”. The practice of refusal can only be considered political if it constitutes something or generates something new. In other words, as long as “GEGEN ALLES AGAINST EVERYTHING” is only articulated in isolation and not networked, it actually consolidates the object of criticism.

Florian Waldvogel