

OLIVER RESSLER

capitalists

sustainabl

Sustainable Propaganda

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A project by Oliver Ressler

Nürnberger Kunstverein, Nuremberg 20.5. – 11.6.2000

Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 28.7. – 13.8.2000

Ausstellungsraum Konstantin Adamopoulos & mak – Museum für Angewandte

Kunst/digital craft, Frankfurt/Main, 16.8. – 27.8.2000

Kunstabüro 1060, Vienna, 6. – 24.9.2000

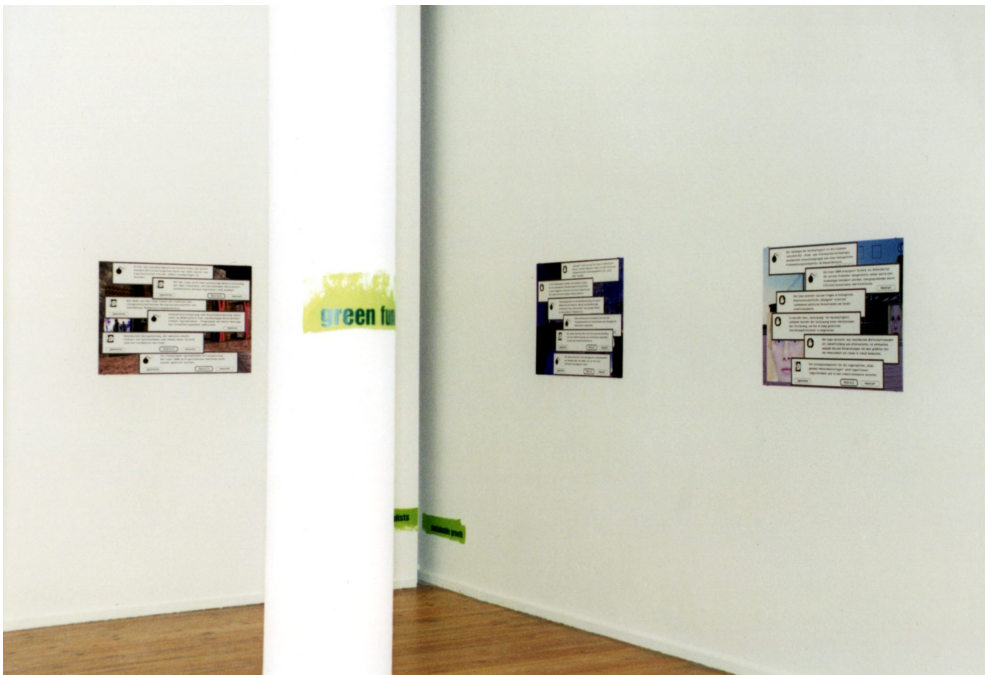


"Sustainable Propaganda" (solo show), Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2000



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The project "Sustainable Propaganda" (Nachhaltige Propaganda) confronts "sustainable development", the main theme of the world fair in Hannover, Germany (June 1 to October 31, 2000). Under the motto "Human – Nature – Technology" the Expo 2000 propagates that threatening environmental, developmental and population problems can be solved by technology. Although science and technology are indeed named as "causes" of the ecological crisis, at the same time they are considered part of the solution.



"Sustainable Propaganda" (solo show), Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2000

Since the 1992 Rio Summit at the latest, the ecological question has been articulated almost exclusively in terms of the world-wide debate on sustainable development. The discourse flows from questions of modernization, down-sizing, efficiency, population control and future technologies. Utopian ideas are replaced by the technocratic management of nature. The sustainability debate is marked by an exclusion of the dimension of domination; the ecological relations are separated from relations of domination (i.e. between "North" and "South").



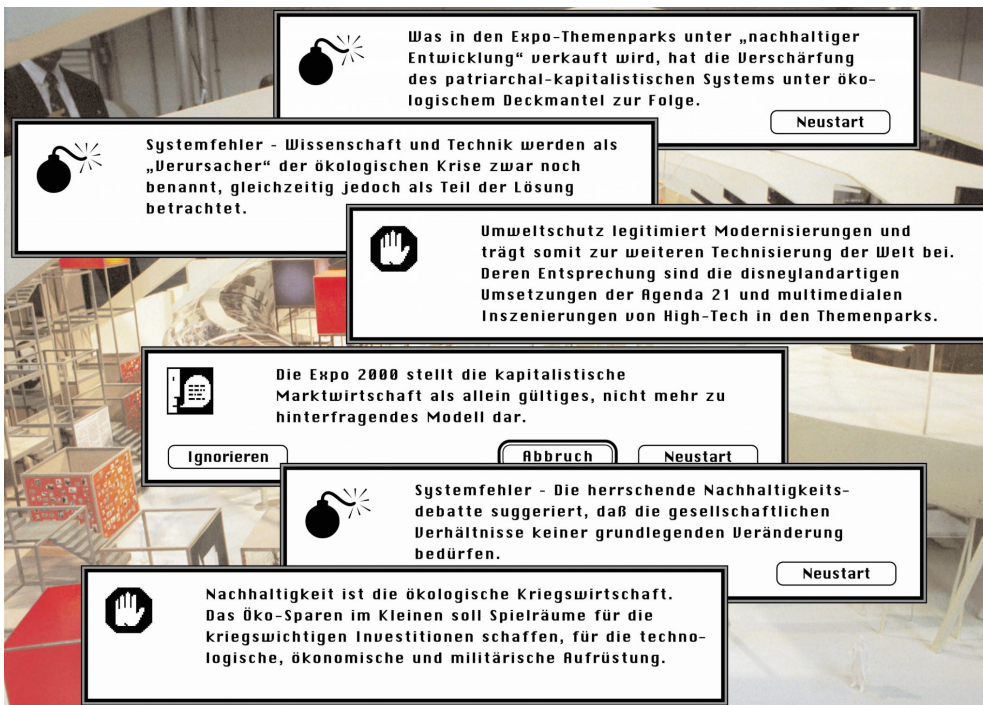
"Sustainable Propaganda" (solo show), Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2000

In a gigantic self-display of capitalist power, the Expo 2000 attempts to prove the future viability of the system. For the first time in the world fair's history, the central exhibition area in Hannover is not the exclusive presentation platform. So-called world-wide projects in various cities and countries show "solutions" to ecological and economic problems. The Expo offers itself as a symbolic battlefield to make other social developments and designs visible.



"Sustainable Propaganda" (solo show), Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2000

In the project "Sustainable Propaganda", the ideologies displayed in the Expo theme parks will be analyzed and alternative models of thought and action presented. The models for a sustainable future are thus exposed as domination strategies. In this aspect the project ties in with my project "100 Years of the Greenhouse Effect" which I carried out in 1996 in Salzburg's Kunstverein.



"Sustainable Propaganda", digital print, 2000

The project "Sustainable Propaganda" consists of diverse elements:

Computer produced visual material of the Disney-like settings in the theme parks forms the starting point for a series of digital prints. The Expo's future designs are overlapped by a number of commentaries based on a leftist analysis of hegemonic concepts of sustainability. The commentaries are designed as dialogue boxes in the print series which inform the computer user about problems. In the project "Sustainable Propaganda" these "error messages" point out the flawed programming of the content of the Expo 2000 and the inherent systematic errors of the concept of sustainability.



"Sustainable Propaganda", digital print, 2000

In the video “Sustainable Propaganda” the drafts for an ecologically sustainable reformed global capitalism are criticized in additional facets. Jörg Bergstedt (author of the book “Agenda, Expo, Sponsoring”, 1998), Sonya Schneider, Kai Kaschinski from the magazine Alaska and mamba – working group for feminist Expo critique, present their points of criticism in the conversations recorded for the video. In the second part of the video, writer Christoph Spehr explains an alternative concept for development which was discussed in the 1990s in connection with BUKO under the motto, “Winding down the North!” and places it in contrast to the future scenarios of the Expo planners.



“Sustainable Propaganda”, video still, 2000

The installation is supplemented with catchwords from the “sustainable development” discourse that are set upon a “green wash”.

“Nachhaltige Propaganda” is not an Expo project!

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Nachhaltige Propaganda

Sustainable Propaganda

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"Sustainable Propaganda", book cover