thomas kilpper works & projects 1999-2022



Water on Fire, 2022 Wiesbaden Kunsthalle

Due to the systematic purchase of drinking water sources by large corporations like Nestlé and Coco-Cola, the enormous growth of the world's population, increasing industrialisation and climate change, the demand for water has risen dramatically. Global shortages are growing and conflicts over water resources are increasing. Water activists around the world are facing increasing attacks.

Mafia-like criminal gangs earn a few dollars and become the stooges of these corporations, be it dam- or well-builders, who try to intimidate people and ruthlessly enforce their interests.

Kilpper presents his large-format woodcut "Atlantic Footprints" from 2017 as a kind of background noise and confronts this large print with watercolours and ink images on the complex subject and contested

resource of water. The project **Water on Fire** was created in collaboration with Kaj Osteroth and Xiaopeng Zhou and curated by Miya Yoshida.









Fragments from Cologne, 2020

Nagel-Draxler Gallery, Cologne

In his exhibition *Fragments of Cologne (Köln Fragmente),* Thomas Kilpper takes a look at the German history of fascination with, and exploitation and persecution of the foreign, using the example of the history of the Rhineland from the post-war period to the present. The solemn greeting of the one millionth migrant worker Armando Rodrigues de Sá on September 10, 1964 by the German employer's association is contrasted by the pictures of the striking Ford employees, anti-Turkish newspaper headlines and the racist NSU terror-attacks. Chapters are also dedicated to Cologne as an epicenter of art, the collapse of the city archive and the struggle to preserve the Hambacher Forest. A spectacular, labyrinthine course made of wooden panels, into which the motifs are cut, fills the entire gallery space. These images appear iconographic or like tableau vivants. Their materiality and density make it difficult for the viewer to distance oneself from these subjects.

The birch wood panels, that Kilpper uses, are recycled material from his floor work *Traces of War* for the exhibition *MISSING*. The Tower of the Blue Horses, which took place in spring 2017 in Munich's Pinakothek der Moderne and which thematized the lost painting by Franz Marc, that was once defamed as "degenerated". Kilpper drove a modern 60-ton Leopard II tank of the Bundeswehr over the wood, so that its chain pattern got imprinted in it, which is contrasted with war-glorifying quotes from Marc's field letters. For *Köln Fragmente* he used the backside of the already ,charged' panels and reworked them once again. Now both sides constitute the work with strong interweaving content - therefore they are both - where possible - visible in the exhibition.









"ist es vielleicht doch dem VS zu verdanken, dass das Zschäpe-Trio die Synagogen nicht angegriffen hat ...?



VS-





Black Lives Matter and other Victims of Violence in Berlin, 2020

Stadtmuseum Berlin, Nikolaikirche

For the exhibition "Features, 10 Perspectives on Berlin", ten artists were invited to explore the history of recent Berlin. The starting point were two historical friezes and relief sculptures in the centre of the city next to Alexanderplatz. Both friezes reflect the history of Berlin. How can contemporary art reflect history today?

Thomas Kilpper's wood-cut is largely dedicated to the sombre fact of right-wing violence and commemorates people who have fallen victim to this violence in Berlin in the last four or five decades. Kilpper's

work also illuminates a small part of the history of demonstrations in Berlin in recent years - from demonstrations against the Vietnam War with Rudi Dutschke, against the visit of the Persian Shah on 2 June 67, when Benno Ohnesorg was shot by a policeman and Klaus-Jürgen Rattay, who was run over and fatally injured by a public bus after a squat was evicted and violent police action rushed him into moving traffic. In addition to the ,frame' of names of victims and Black Lives Matter demonstrators on Alexanderplatz, the protagonists are, among many others from left to right:

Hussam Fadl (1987-2016), Klaus Jürgen Rattay (1962-81), Ingeborg Drewitz (1923-1986), Beate Fischer (1962-1994), Gretchen Dutschke (*1942) and Rudi Dutschke (1940-1979), George Floyd (1973-2020), Yangjie Li (1990-2016), Anne Helm (*1986), Idil Baydar (*1975), Martina Renner (*1967), Benno Ohnesorg (1940-1967), Shopping bags as a student art-project with the portraits of the Shah of Persia, Enver Şimşek (1961-2000), Oury Jalloh (1968-2005)



KOMPLEX-

AUFLÖSEN!



What We Can Learn From You - What You Can Learn From Us, 2019

Katedralskole Bergen, commissioned by Hordaland Fylkeskommune

For the Katedralskole in Bergen, Kilpper was commissioned to create a work of art in the entrance area of the new building. The architects had to incorporate the old transformer for the electricity supply in Kong Oskarsgate into their new building and designed it as a ,,black box". Kilpper's proposal was to realise a woodcut in two of these black walls with portraits of different personalities - among them pedagogues, philosophers - with progressive and emancipatory ways of thinking. Among the protagonists are Anna Sethne, Heinrich Pestalozzi, Helga Eng, Friedrich Fröbel, Elizabeth Stephansen, Jean Paul Sartre, Hannah Arendt, Rosa Luxemburg and many others. The dialectical question *What We Can Learn From You - What You Can Learn From Us?* runs through the entire picture as a basic prerequisite for productive learning.







What We Can Learn From You - What You Can Learn From Us, 2019

A Dream of Community, Museum Kode, Bergen

The exhibition A Dream of Community at the Kode Museum was organised on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Graphic Society in Norway. Accordingly, Kilpper wanted to celebrate the diverse possibilities of printmaking. He papered his large-format wood prints on the walls and presented various prints in glass frames of esteemed artist colleagues on top of them. In a sense, the question could be raised, is he appropriating the work of other artists and making it part of his installation or is it the other way around: is he taking himself back, stepping into the background and letting the "real" art (in the frame) take place on and in front of his wood print? For the wall work, Kilpper uses thin and robust paper made of hemp, which can be removed from the wall without damage at the end of the exhibition. For about three years, Kilpper has been developing a special printing process that allows him to create "page-correct", positive prints even though his printing block was also cut page-positive. In 2017, in the woodcut work for the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, he decided for the first time to cut a woodcut sideways-correct, rather than mirror-positive, as he had done in the past. In his installation, original prints by Albrecht Dürer, Paul Gauguin, Utagawa Hiroshige (from the museum's collection) were presented alongside wonderful works by Stephan Dillemuth, Sunah Choi, Gerd Arntz, Laure Prouvost, Mattias Härenstam, Caroline and Annette Kierulf, Mike Kelley, Hito Steyerl and many others.

A small reading and study station was also installed in the middle of the room. The expansive formats of the woodcuts condense here comparable to a laboratory situation - into a hand format and miniature cosmos: artists' books with woodcuts by Frans Masareel, Clément Moreau and others.



A Dream of Community, Museum Kode, Bergen



A Dream of Community, Museum Kode, Bergen Four Apocalyptic Riders (after Albrecht Dürer), 2015 from the project Contemporary Footprints at the National Gallery Oslo

X







The Heritage of Politics Vs The Politics of Heritage, 2019, Edinburgh

Keziah Philipps

Kilpper presented the first exhibition in the newly redeveloped building at Castle Mills, that Edinburgh Printmakers opened in 2019. He was working four weeks on the site and developed a new floor-cut. The entire gallery space was laid out with rubber flooring, the same material that was used for several generations on the very site when it was part of the North British Rubber Mill factory. Kilpper carved images into the floor that were related to the site, it's history and various social functions during different periods of times, portraits of people who have lived and worked there but also who will work there in the future now transformed into a place of artistic production with Edinburgh Printmakers and their print workshops.

This project was realized at a time when political change (Brexit)has been discussed and prepared for implementation. The rubber production at this site in Edinburgh was strongly influenced by the fact of saving a lot of money as the factory owners did not need to pay the British license to Goodyear while producing in Scotland - and while the UK will leave the European Union new social and economic questions will arise once more. And do the Scottish people further on want to belong to the UK, Europe or is independency their new goal...

Solo Exhibition Project with Edinburgh Printmakers featuring Caspar Pauli, Kim Vermeulen, Yi-Chieh Chiu and







Entwurzelt - Uprooted, 2018

Körnerpark Gallery, Berlin Neukölln

Social cohesion and solidarity seem to have become more fragile today than ever before. Societies around the world are confronted with nationalist tendencies. The exhibition **Uprooted** asks: What does the loss of homeland mean to refugees? Is the social uprooting, which fleeing follows, countered by the people in the places of arrival, or is it even intensified? Can uprooting also open up new opportunities? At the heart of the exhibition is an uprooted maple tree that fell during a storm in the summer 2017 in front of the gallery in Körnerpark. In this expansive installation, the artist integrates new woodcuts, portraits of people who were exposed to racist violence or who resisted it. In addition to clearly right-wing extremist attacks and assaults, he directs special attention to cases in which racism is suspected to be a motif of crime, such as the murders of Burak Bektas and Luke Holland that have happened in the same borough as the gallery a few years ago.



During the exhibition a weekly workshop for social groups of the local community was organised to make woodcuts and prints which were then shown as part of the exhibition alongside Kilpper's work.







The State Is Not a Work Of Art, 2018

Tallinn Art Hall

Katarina Gregos curated the groupshow **The State Is Not A Work Of Art** at Tallinn Art Hall. The focus of the exhibition was examining on nationalistic far-right tendencies and developments in Europe. Kilpper was showing parts of his charcoal drawing series **BurnOut** (2015-2017). The series consists of about 95 drawings of refugee homes that got set on fire by right-wing nationalists in Germany in 2014-2016. The artist was using media images from internet with the dates and names of cities of the incidents and charcoal sticks as his medium that also is a result of fire; each drawing is measuring about 50×70 cm.





Atlantic Footprints, 2017

Haugesund Museum of Fine Art featuring: Élise Allée, Emma Brown, Nicolai Diesen, Anna Kristin Ferking, Paul Fox, Anthony Morton and Yi Yang

Kilpper developed this project in collaboration with a group of art-students from the Academy of Art, Bergen University. The works are displayed on two floors. The main part of the artwork – the woodcut in the parquet flooring – is a permanent installation in the Museum.











A Lighthouse for Lampedusa!, 2017

As part of the exhibition **"Luther and the Avantgarde"** at the Karlskirche, Kassel. Steel, plastic foil from dingy boats used by refugees to cross the Mediterranean, LED lamps

Since 2007 Kilpper is working on the project **A Lighthouse for Lampedusa!** On the southernmost Italian island, a lighthouse shall be erected, which on the one hand will give visible orientation from afar and which on its ground floor shall house a cultural centre for the people living on Lampedusa. A place of exchange and learning from each other, which sends out a symbolic ,welcome sign': The project calls for a fundamental change towards a humanitarian approach in European refugee policy. The realization would be an exemplary signal: Lampedusa is not hiding and tries to tackle the challenges of migration self-confidently.

For this exhibition Kilpper transforms the church tower of the Karlskirche into a lighthouse. He clads the tower with material from refugee boats that successfully landed in Sicily weaving in the material of the inflatable boats into galvanized construction steel mats.

MELILLA, LAMPEDUSA, LESBOS IS HERE - LEGAL ESCAPE ROU-TES TO EUROPE! is printed as a demand on the same material. The Karlskirche, founded by protestant Hugenots who fled France in the 18th century, once again becomes a shelter for people on the run. The lamp of the "lighthouse" shines day and night over the period of three months parallel to the international art exhibition Documenta.







ARRIVAL Unknown place in South Sicily LANDING DATE 11/2007 DEPARTURE Egypt

Boat carrying unknown number of people mainly of Arabic background

Inventories of Migration

An archive of found objects, (2014-ongoing) - presented inside Karlskirche, Kassel, 2017

This project was born out of a desire to pay attention to these objects and preserve them. Although most of the items are ordinary everyday objects, the artists consider them unique. This is due to their context, the place of their discovery and their past history. There is a great quality inherent in all of them: their holders' will to survive. All objects were packed into a small daypack and taken on the dangerous crossing because they were meant to be a help in the existential quest to leave poverty, hunger, violence, rape and war behind once and for all.

Many objects in this collection have been laying on the shores of Sicily: Pozzallo, Siracusa and Lampedusa for months or even years. The reason is that the stranded boats get confiscated by the Italian state and subsequently rot. Along with many personal belongings the state, and thus Europe, leaves them neglected. In this respect many objects of our collection reveal something about Europe through their poor condition: namely how Europe is dealing with the phenomenon of migration.

We want to present these objects respectfully in order to reverse the paradigm of neglect imposed by European states. There is also nothing sensational about them, but through them we can discover and reflect on questions of human life and its fragility. At the same time this project aims to develop an awareness of and a longing for the culture of hospitality in our interconnected and globalized world and to release resilient societal forces for social justice and against global inequalities.

Since 2014 in collaboration with Italian artist Massimo Ricciardo. Thomas Kilpper is collecting and archiving lost and abandoned objects from refugees and migrants. Objects mostly left behind on refugee boats after arriving on the coasts of southern Europe.















Inventories of Migration, 2014 at **Dispossession,** Palazzo Doná, part of the official program of collateral events at the Venice Biennale









Traces of War, 2017 Pinakothek der Moderne Munich

At the invitation of the Graphic Department of the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Kilpper develops a new expansive floor-cut for the group exhibition **MISSING – The Tower of the Blue Horses by Franz** Marc.

In this work Kilpper deals critically with the popular artist Franz Marc's enthusiasm for war. In addition to quotations from Marc's ,,Letters from the Field", a modern tank from the "Leopard" series of the German Army - according to the biblical motto swords to ploughshares - dug its martial trace into the wooden floor. The tank as the artists chisel: Kilpper questions Franz Marc's attitude to war and peace for today and indirectly answers the question about the whereabouts of the missing painting The Tower of the Blue Horses: crushed by weapons.





"13. 4. 1915

... August's Tod ist eine unersetzliche Lücke für mein Leben. Seine Kunst strahlt zwar nicht weit zu mir herüber, - aber der Mensch!! ... Das Schicksal abenteuert wirklich sehr bedenklich mit seinem teuren Menschenmaterial. Eine derartige Sterbelust und Opferdrarig hat doch









Europe under construction, 2016 Group exhibition, Kunsthaus Dresden

Curated by Christiane Mennicke-Schwarz this exhibition focused on social issues of Migration: Kilpper presents an installation with prints from the project **State of Control**, charcoal drawings from the "Burnout" series, photographs of new border fences in southern Europe, drypoint etchings in engine hoods, parts of the collection Inventories of Escape, of found objects from refugee boats after they have reached Sicily and Lampedusa. In addition the sculpture project A Lighthouse for Lampedusa! was shown in a central square in the city.





another world is necessary!, 2016

Vila Flores, Porto Alegre

At the invitation of the Goethe Institute, Porto Alegre and as part of the artistic research project **'Synskmaskinen'** by Danish artist Frans Jacobi, together with three art students, Kilpper realised a site-specific woodcut directly in the floor of the cultural centre Vila Flores in Porto Alegre, Brasil - the floor piece is still existing. At the performance "Another World is Necessary" of the artist collective etcetera and Frans Jacobi in the centre of Porto Alegre the artists were using some of Kilpper's prints from the same project.











My Woodcut-print on fabric from 2016 *"another world is necessary!"* was shown at the group exhibitions *"O Pod-er A Multipliçao" - "The Power of Reproduction"*, at the Museo Arte do Rio Grande do Sul in Porto Alegre, Brasil in 2018 and at Leipziger Baumwollspinnerei, Leipzig, Germany in 2019.







A Lighthouse for Lampedusa!, 2016

here Museum Bozar, Bruxelles and Parc de Tuilleries, Louvre, Paris

steel, plastic materials from dingy boats used by refugees to cross the Mediterranean, photographs

 $5m \times 6{,}60m \times 4m,$ here Museum Bozar, Bruxelles and Parc de Tuilleries, Louvre, Paris 2016

BOZAR, Brüssel, 2016 (oben), FIAC, Galerie Nagel-Draxler, Jardin des Tuileries, Paris, 2016 (unten)

Nicht das Ende vom Lied Not The End of the Song, 2016 Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin

For the exhibition 'Das Ende vom Lied' (The End Of The Song) at the occasion of 50 years of expatriation from the GDR by the artist Wolf Biermann, a linocut was created depicting protagonists of the political and cultural conflicts of the two German states and beyond. A fictitious gathering of contradicting forces that never would have happened. The musician with a guitar could be Biermann but remains unnamed. From top left: Angela Merkel, Charlotte Pauly, Manfred Krug, Karl Heinz Kurras (West Berlin police officer, was unmasked as a Stasi agent in 2009, shot during an anti-Shah demonstration Benno Ohnesorg on 2.6.1967, but was acquitted by West German courts), Wolfgang Neuss, Wolfgang Heise, Fritz Cremer (next to Karl Marx Sculpture), Sabina Grzimmek, Anna Seghers, Wolfgang Thierse, Jurek Becker, Jakob Moneta, Katrin Hattenhauer, Stefan Hermlin, Gorbachev, Nicolas Berggruen, Günter Kunert, Angelika Domröse, Stephan Heym, Gregor Gysi, Egon Bahr, Hans Eckart Wenzel, Herman Kant, Bettina Wegner, Marianne Birthler, Bert Brecht, Erich Honnecker, Bärbel Bohley, Thomas Kilpper (holds his picture with Günter Guillaume and Willy Brandt, which he cut into the floor of the Ministry for State Security in 2009), Eva Maria Hagen, Jürgen Fuchs, Helmut Schmidt, Allen Ginsburg, David Bowie, Barbara Honigmann, Christa Wolf, Rudolf Bahro, Margot Honnecker, Albert Nolden, Heinrich Böll, painting by Susanne Kandt Horn held by her daughter Riccarda Horn, Rolf Henrich, Katja Havemann, Robert Havemann, Helga Novak, Hans Eissler, Ernst Busch, Heiner Müller, Joan Baez, Sarah Kirsch, Peter Hacks, Volker Braun, Helene Weigel, Nina Hagen, Rudi Dutschke and Baby Sommer.





Flucht & Migration - unterschiedliche Perspektiven - Flight & Migration - different perspectives, 2016

Galerie für Landschaftskunst, Halle Süd, Bad Tölz

The show is part of an exhibition series 'Hall - Politics - The Tölzer Pump Hall - a large-scale modernist construction is challenged'. In the previous year, the hall was caught up in topical local and global politics – the discussion was about using this hall and the adjacent hotel as housing for refugees. In fact the Hotel Jodquellenhof became a refugee home. Thomas Kilpper decided to work with this situation. He sought contact to social workers in the former hotel opposite and invited an art therapist to host a workshop with and for the new residents in the former hotel. Over a period of three months, they were painting and drawing in the large hall together. The resulting images were then shown in a temporary architectural structure encompassing the entire hall, together with work by the artist Holger Wüst, and Kilpper's own.

For this exhibition Kilpper produced **BurnOut**, a new series of charcoal drawings using media images of refugee homes in Germany that were set on fire by right-wing nationalists.

















BurnOut, 2015-17,

a series of charcoal drawings consisting of about 95 drawings of refugee homes that got set on fire by right-wing nationalists in Germany in 2014-2016. Kilpper searched the internet and used found media images - most of them are from local newspapers that have covered the arsons. The dates and names of the cities of the incidents are added and part of the work. Using charcoal sticks as medium seemed appropriate as it also is a result of fire; the drawings are all varying between approximately 40-55 cm \times 60-75 cm.
































Contemporary Footprints, 2015 National Gallery, Oslo

Within the framework of the exhibition 'Five Centuries of Woodcuts', together with a group of five students from the Bergen Academy of Art (KHiB), Kilpper realized a new floor-cut in wooden panels with references to Norway, Oslo and the museum itself. He subsequently took prints on paper and fabrics and created an all over installation with them.





"Hi Mr. Schiller, Can Art Unify Society? -Yes Mr. Snowden, Beauty Paves The Way To Freedom ... ", 2014

comissioned by Kunstverein Griffelkunst, Hamburg

A fictitious ,conversation' between Edward Snowden and Friedrich Schiller, starring alongside the two protagonists George Orwell, Alexei Gaskarov (environmental activist and political prisoner of Putin's regime in Moscow), Simone de Beauvoir, Mr Skull, Gordon Matta-Clark, Charlotte Moormann (with Cello), Maria Lassnig and Louise Bourgeois. Once again Schiller develops here the connection between art and social freedom... A year later in 2015 this woodcut was integrated into a floor-cut at the National Gallery in Oslo.





THOMAS KILPPER -

Kunsthaus Hamburg, in cooperation with Kunstverein Griffelkunst

Half of the floor-piece from the Danish Pavilion of the Venice Biennale was placed vertically at right angles to form a free-standing image in the room. The other half was pilled up to a stake. This installation has been supplemented with numerous prints from projects of the past 15 years.

150 Years of Printmaking, 2014



MEGAfon, 2013 Rosa-Luxemburg Square, Berlin

MEGAfon, a sculpture made from engine hoods of cars, is a reference to the eventful history of Rosa-Luxemburg Square in Berlin as a site experiencing political demonstrations from the Weimar Republic to the present day. In the tradition of emancipatory struggles, the sculpture could be used by everyone - like a "Speakers' Corner". To speak clearly and loudly through **MEGAfon**, requires courage, determination, and physical effort, since it is not equipped with an electronic amplifier. The work raises the question of who has a say in our society, who makes him-, her- or themselves heard? In the hundredth year since the Volksbühne Theatre was set up at this location, it offers a stage and platform for those who want to express themselves publicly, for self-promoters as well as for politically active people. During the 10-week exhibition, Kilpper curated a programme inviting eight artists to do a performances with, on and around the megaphone.







resist! oder let it be, 2013

Nagel-Draxler Gallery, Berlin

Parallel to the *MEGAfon* project, the exhibition **"resist! or let it be"** was shown at Nagel Draxler Gallery in the immediate vicinity with drypoint etchings on engine hoods and a huge airbag. The motifs and images are from various contexts of current social disputes about human rights, artistic work and emancipation. The oversized airbag hanging right at the entrance of the gallery. Entering the art world it metaphorically indicates both an immediate danger of injury as well as protection in extreme distress.







There is no Interruption..., 2013 30th Graphic Biennale Ljubliana, Slowenia

ofTivoli Park.



In relation to the title - "Interruption" - of the 30th Graphic Biennale in Ljubljana and in reference to the archeological findings of the oldest more than 5000 years old - human-made wheel in the world close by Ljubljana five years ago, a floor-cut with paterns of circles is realized in the parquet flooring of a romantic empty building right in the middle

Several banners of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Ljubljana were used and printed over with the wood-cut - incorporating the museums recent history of exhibitions in the very work. For the first time the print was exhibited straight above the matrix so visitors found themselves right between the negative and the positive...





Open Printshop, 2013

Cattle Yard, Hong Kong

At the invitation of the artist collective **'Hong Kong - Open Printshop'** in 2013, together with two young artists from Hong Kong, Kilpper realised a comprehensive site-specific printing project. Ten Chinese wooden pallets (each 250×125 cm) served as diary-like printing blocks. The motifs related to the social and political situation in Hong Kong and China. The installation with the pallets and prints on paper and fabrics was shown in the historical 'Cattle Yard'.







GET RID OF 'EM – Venetian Prints, 2012

Kunsthal Charlottenburg, Kopenhagen

After about two hundred thousand people had walked over this floor piece during the Venice Biennale, it got printed and exhibited at *dispari&dispari project* in Reggio Emilia. Later it was then shown in Norway at Kunsthalle Bergen, Ludwigforum Aachen, Kunsthalle Charlottenborg in Copenhagen and in Graz and Vienna.









CÓMO PUEDE SUPERARSE EL ESTADO DE NEGLENCIA? - How Can We Overcome The State Of Neglect?, 2011 MDELL, Medellín, Colombia

In the Theatre Pablo Tobón Uribe in collaboration with the Museum of Antioquia Kilpper realized a floor cut as part of the exhibition *"Encuentro Internacional de Medellín, MDE I I"* in Medellín, Colombia.

For the first time Kilpper made a floor cut as an artistic intervention, which then could remain in its place. The theatre provided him with a significant place: its orchestra pit, a movable wooden floor right between the audience and the stage. Together with a team of three young Colombian artists he cut an image with a lot of references to the social and cultural situation of the country. Portraits of the most diverse and contrasting personalities which in one way or another had a significant impact on Colombia and Latin America, but which, due to the hostile camps, can practically never be seen in the same picture. As a contrast these frequently murdered figures are surrounded by various tropical plants and fruits: pure fertility.

While the floor was shown and still is to be seen in the theatre, the entire print on fabric and prints of floor sections were shown on the facade and in the Museum of Antioquia in the exhibition "MDELL".





After War Krauts, 2010 ongoing

Kilpper is making and continuing this series of small drawings since 2010.The starting point is the portraits of the photographer Paul Swiridoff (1914-2002). Kilpper encountered these photographs already in his youth, as his father owned several opulent volumes of Swiridoff's photographs, in which he created a unique photographic monument to the (West) German post-war elite: Nearly 300 portraits from politics, business and culture are reproduced on full pages. Predominantly men, hardly any women. In the accompanying texts the Nazi biographies of the protagonists are concealed, ignored. Using the simplest artistic means, Kilpper alienates and dissects these

portraits of the powerful, which in the process experience strange to bizarre forms of deconstruction and decomposition. Photography as a means of transmitting the representation of power is undermined and counteracted. Kilpper's **After War Krauts** series, with so far over 250 sheets, is a tense, Dada-like historical tableau of West German postwar history.







































Learning from Maghreb – How to Get Rid of Undesirable Presidents?, 2011

Museum Marino Marini, Florence

Sculpture Workshop with 12 artists in collaboration with Villa Romana, the German Cultural Centre in Florence.

The workshop included 14 days of discussion and artistic practice in the heart of Florence. In the entrance area of the Museum Marino Marini - a former medieval church of the architect Leon Battista Alberti - a small temporary public library with books on the theory & practice of social resistance was built expanding over three floors. The installation, made of recycled wood, was created in a shanty aesthetic that stuck to the listed renaissance building like a giant birds nest between the two old columns.





Pavilion for Revolutionary Free Speech, 2011

part of the Groupshow "Speech Matters" - Danish Pavilion, 54th Biennale di Venezia, Giardini,

Katerina Gregos, curator of **Speech Matters** suggested to make use of the garden area of the Danish pavilion. Kilppers aim is to build sort of a romatic place and an open structure among the trees that invites the visitors to sit down and relax, but at the same time the work turns out to be loaded with highly controversial content.

As a response to the fact that the Venice Biennale with its national pavilions is celebrated as a state event - politicians and ministers officially show up to open the exhibition - Kilpper depicts nationalistic, right wing politicians and other public figures and cuts their portraits into the wooden floor. He floors them and puts the ordinary hierarchy upside down. Most of them have gained considerable influence on European policy in recent years. They include Marine Le Pen (F), Alessandra Mussolini (I), Silvio Berlusconi (I), Victor Orban (U), Geert Wilders (NL), Thilo Sarrazin (D), Bart de Wever (B), Siv Jensen (N), Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Pia Kjersgaard (DK). Alongside the portraits runs the mirrored question *HOW TO GET RID OF EM*, *WITHOUT FIGHTING FOR EMANCIPATION?...* A printed flyer as a hand out with short texts about the portrayed people and their social position was available for the visitors.

A megaphone made from car scrap gives visitors the opportunity to speak out loud and free, like at a "Speakers Corner". A discursive 2 days workshop with lectures, discussions and performances - on different artistic and social issues round out Kilpper's contribution.













Workshop with lecture: "Beyond Revolution" with Gáspar M.Támás, Hungary, on the current situation in Hungary in relation to the new media laws of the Orbàn government.

4





Anemonevej Surprises, 2010

Tumult Festival for Contemporary Art - Nakskov, Lolland, Denmark

> "…because in the history of mankind, destruction sooner or later finds his answer in an act of creation…" Eduardo Galeano

Nakskov, a small town in southern Denmark: More than 100 social housing units in four blocks are planned for demolition. The reason for the vacancy is an increased migration of the younger population from rural areas to the urban cities, mainly to Copenhagen. Well-equipped housing for 300 people is being destroyed here, while at the same time refugees are turned away instead of being welcomed and accommodated. It could happen right here in the existing houses, giving them the chance to start a new life.

The district of Lolland is also facing a gigantic motorway project: the construction of a direct road connection between Germany and Denmark.

Anemonevej Surprises anticipates the upcoming destruction and questions it. It is a sculptural approach in stone, concrete and wood. The cuts in the found substance were deeper than in Kilpper's previous projects. The interaction of destruction and construction revealed its creative potential in this project - conceived as "work-in-progress" with numerous local and art historical references.

The complete apartment block was cut open after the intervention and ,as full of holes as a Swiss cheese'. 24 apartments and 100 rooms were directly connected and accessible without having to use the staircase.









Why does it not work out? The text was cut into the wall and refers to the failure of the housing and living concept in Nakskov, Denmark.



























State of Control, 2009

Former Ministry for State Security (Stasi HQ), Berlin Neuer Berliner Kunstverein n.b.k., Berlin

Twenty years after Neuer Berliner Kur GDR Ministry for S at the same time at In this floor cut Kilp function, its forms a biography. This large-scale inte storical retrospective repression, from the history of Germany and imprints in the injustice. A catalogue - *State* September 2009.

Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, in cooperation with Neuer Berliner Kunstverein Kilpper realized a project at the former GDR Ministry for State Security (MfS). Additional works were shown at the same time at Neuer Berliner Kunstverein.

In this floor cut Kilpper again engages with the site - its history, its function, its forms and materials - merging with elements of his

This large-scale intervention at the former ,Stasi-HQ' offers a historical retrospective on various state concepts of surveillance and repression, from the Nazi period to the digital present. The divided history of Germany can be read in this building and in the cut motifs and imprints in the floor. It is also one of resistance against systems of

A catalogue - State of Control - was published with n.b.k. in

















A Lighthouse for Lampedusa! since 2008 - ongoing

dispari&dispari project, Reggio Emilia, 2008 Villa Romana, Florence, 2009 Transient Spaces, Lanificio Naples & NGBK Berlin, 2010

In 2007 Kilpper got invited to a solo show in Italy and developed the idea to build - in collaboration with architects, African migrants and local people - a lighthouse with an adjacent cultural centre on the ground floor on the most southern Italian island of Lampedusa. To introduce the idea he built a model with simple building materials. It was first shown in 2008 at dispari&dispari project space in Reggio Emilia.

Since then the project was presented with different models in several cities in Europe as in Florence, Naples, Berlin, Rotterdam, Mechelen (Belgium), Heiden & Luzern (Switzerland), Poznan, Bruxelles, Paris and Kassel.

The second stage – finding ways to realise the tower on Lampedusa – will start as soon as the project gets local and international support. This project ties in with a history of magnificent lighthouse constructions that have already been built, for example in Alexandria in 300 B.C. – mentioned as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Let us once more build a 'wonder' of welcome – this time on the other side of the sea.







Mental Map - Lampedusa, 2011, pencil and charcoal drawing on paper, ca 300cm × 150cm, alongside the project **A Lighthouse For Lampedusa!** this drawing was made for the exhibition project **Declining Democracy** at Strozzina, Centre for Contemporary Arts, Florence and **Wir Flüchtlinge,** Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe


Disguise, London, 2008

Drawing and scribbling on press releases and invitation cards from gallerie exhibitions the artist has visited, Kilpper reveals a partial profile tracking his movements – in contrast to the efforts to hide. But are these traces the relevant ones or another form to disguise? And what about the "authenticity" of drawings after Bridget Riley, Merlin Carpenter, Jim Shaw, Thomas Erdelmeier or Mike Kelley? Is Kilpper camouflaging himself as a bohemian, messing up with his colleagues? In his exhibition project **disguise** there seems to be little truth.

The Royal Air Force operation "window" marks the starting point for

Kilpper's installation **disguise**. During WW2 British bombers dropped millions of aluminium strips to disguise themselves and deceive the German Luftwaffe and disturb their radio connections. Wonderfully glimmering clouds of aluminium foil in the sky starkly contrasted the subsequent inferno in Dresden, Hamburg or Stuttgart. "Thank you for the aluminium"... – with an ironic approach Kilpper takes the foil, brings it back to London and spreads it all over the gallery floor. With a few examples he demonstrates what we can do with it today: wrapping our roasted chicken to keep it hot, wrapping the safety tags in the dressing room of a superstore to avoid them triggering the alarm or falsifying 50€ notes.

2500 years ago, Sun Tsu already described "disguise" as an essential method of war conduct – creating false traces or concealing them completely. Spray bandage allegedly used by leftwing activists in Germany to avoid leaving their fingerprints. Or in recent days, when the Colombian Army in breach of the regulations of the Geneva conventions disguised themselves as members of the Red Cross and deceived the rebels to liberate Ingrid Betancourt.







basically the world should stay as it is... - die welt sollte zunächst so bleiben, wie sie ist..., 2008

Kunsthalle Mainz

Three cornerstones mark Kilpper's approach to this installation: the space, the working conditions / social environment at Kunsthalle Mainz and his biography:

The newly opened Kunsthalle Mainz - a public-private-partnership initiated by the local public utility company - is a wonderfully designed space with high-end architecture and professional working conditions for all but the artists: an artist fee initially was not part of the institutions consideration. The installation comprises three parts: a) - Kilpper brought his torn off studio wall from Berlin - a modern ruin, contrasting the fancy architecture of the space b) - fake drawings after Otto Dix, Sonja Delaunay and Kurt Schwitters, classicly framed and hung with museum standards c) - horizontally installed drawings from the series drain your brain, (2008) to be viewed either laying backwards on one of three skateboards or with mirrors on wheels. they highlight and refer to the space's horizontal dominance downsizing its already relatively small headroom and at the same time they are a test setting for perception: no distance and no overview to the work is given - instead viewing the installation asks the visitor for a submissive gesture.

























von der fettecke zur revolution - from the corner of fat to the revolution, 2007

Kunstraum Düsseldorf

For thirteen years Kilpper has lived in Dusseldorf.

In 1979 he came from Numberg to the Dusseldorf academy. With this change he hoped to work in a more open minded artistic climate. But the then political realities: new nuclear power plants, military coup in Turkey, Apartheid... and in particular the acute and rising danger of a nuclear war in Europe made him to focus more on direct political engagement.

For the exhibition *,from the corner of fat to the revolution*' in the Dusseldorf Kunstraum Kilpper realized a 400sqm installation, commemorating and recuring the developments of these years. He takes material, that he held in his hands for more than eight years when he made his livings as part of a collective with clearing out and removals.

In this project he has used hundreds of old furnitures, deconstructed, rebuilt, beaten apart, nailed together and than reassembled to a metaphorical labyrinthic installation. Here speaks as well sublime fury against the existing conditions as the realisation of an aesthetical change, here speaks a grumpy-ironical outline of social interior design as a kind of rubbish-IKEA.









Pigisback, 2006

Pump House Gallery, London

Pigisback is a participatory and site-related project: In the Second World War, in Battersea Park - where the Pump House Gallery is today - pigs were kept and vegetables grown in order to counter the food scarcity.

In collaboration with young people from the district Kilpper created a

power station. After its closure, it served as the location for numerous films such as Hitchcock's Sabotage, Monty Python's The Meaning of Life or Kubrick's Full Metal Jacket.

In the gallery on the ground floor is a kitchen set up where the vegetables are cooked and offered as a free tasting to the visitors. In the









How Many Pints Must an Elephant Drink to Forget...?, 2006

Momentum, 4th Nordic Festival of Contemporary Art, Moss, Norway (in collaboration with Endre Aalrust)

The installation *How Many Pints Must an Elephant Drink to Forget...?* is focusing on the current economic and cultural changes in the town of Moss. Peterson & Son - the next-door neighbour to Momentums exhibition hall - is a globally operating paper manufacturer and the biggest employer of the town. Its logo shows a treetrunk carrying elephant.

Since more than hundred years Peterson & Son is responsible for the notorious ,Moss-smell' and for the ups and downs in the lifes of thousands of employees. Recent changes are most significant: the company was sold to young investors and the shares are rising when employees are getting dismissed.

Can art and culture save Moss? was the motto of a bunch of public panel discussions - before the backdrop of bleak social perspectives with rising unemployment within the production sector. The installation was made by sponsored materials from the paper factory and from "Moss is good"-T-shirts issued by the city and Momentum.









Castor to half pipes!, 2005

3rd Sculpture Biennale Münster, Ahaus

The recent history of Ahaus and the district of Münster is dominated by the debate over nuclear energy. In Ahaus is the so-called "central fuel interim storage" in Germany, a nuclear waste storage. Since 1992 in a huge hall so called "Castor containers" with high-level radioactive waste are deposed. Hardly a conflict has so much social and explosive hazard potential for humans and the environment, such as the use of nuclear energy.

The sculpture **Castor to half pipes!** was planned centrally located in the public park of Ahaus for 5 years to be installed as a usable halfpipe. An independent jury of the sculpture biennale nominated this work. However, the conservative mayor of the city was not giving a goahead, so that the sculpture was banished to the outskirts and situated in front of the career guidance center "BOZ". After a few months, the sculpture was destroyed by arson.





AGENDA 2010, 2005

Café Moskau - Karl-Marx-Allee, Berlin

The installation AGENDA 2010 at Café Moskau on Karl-Marx-Alley was a collaboration with artist Michael Dreher (Frankfurt/Main). Close to the site where the former GDR-government held it's parades this exhibition claims the urgent need for a fundamental renewal of socio-economic models.

On the one hand we have Karl Marx, iconic founding figure of the communist idea. On the other hand we have the West's three most powerful currencies, the Yen, the Euro and the Dollar - as fueling engines of capitalism. Both counterparts in the installation come under attack by moths and hundred living mice. Karl Marx - made from different sorts of grains - gets eaten, the t-shirts perforated and full of holes - none of the systems stay unharmed.











ulrike meinhof, 2004

meerrettich gallery / pavilion at Volksbühne theatre / Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, Berlin

Under various names the now Rosa Luxembourg Square played for 100 years various roles as a stage of political and cultural clashes and rallys. Numerous demonstrations, after the murder of Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht, during the "Republic of Weimar" but also NS-activities during the facism started here. In 1928 the Communist Party tried to build a Lenin statue on the site. However, the former Berlin Senate rejected the project. Only a few years later the Nazis built a monument to commemorate Horst Wessel a facist who got killed in Berlin.

With his project *ulrike meinhof* Kilpper wants to highlight the specific politicization of this place and extend it into the present. He would

like to critically question the stylizations and made clichés and create new aesthetic fractures and contradictions. With the sculpture he takes to the eponymous Johann Kresnik's production at the Volksbühne in 1993.

Ulrike Meinhof stands like no other figure in the postwar West German left for a long road of political confrontation with the powers of the German State. She would have been 70 years old in 2004.

After her death, the brain of Ulrike Meinhof was removed and studied over a quarter century for "scientific purposes" in German universities and laboratories - without the consent of her relatives. In 1973 when Meinhof was held in solitary confinement in the so called "dead wing" of the Cologne prison, the prosecutor wanted to make an operation against her will in her brain that

could only be prevented by international public criticism. The "brain robbery" after her death shows the recurrence of this experiment - pathologizing Ulrike Meinhof and her political reflections. Against that backdrop the artist presents texts and essays Ulrike Meinhof has written from 1960 to 1976. The exhibition visitors can read in a sitting area inside the installation, inside her head so to say.







Al Hissan – The Jenin Horse, 2003

An Art-Project in Public Space Under Conditions of Occupation, Jenin, Westbank / Palestine with Goethe Institute Ramallah

In 2002 Kilpper started to develop the idea for a project in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict somehow has a lot to do with German history: without the Shoa and the killing of millions of jewish people in Europe it might be easier to find solutions in this conflict. Of course doing a project with one side does not mean to side against the other! When the artist arrived in the occupied territories curfews, bans on travel, checkpoints, tanks and soldiers on the one hand and fear of terrorism on the other shaped the everyday life there. When public space is turned into a no-go-area public life and the society collapses. Therefore he decided to locate the project as much as possible in the public sphere. *Al Hissan – The Jenin Horse* tried to examine to what extend art can open up opportunities and reanimate the public space for cultural activity within a military conflict.

By invitation of the Goethe Institute Ramallah, Kilpper led a four week long workshop with Palestinian youths in Jenin. Together they decided to build a larger-than-life-sized horse out of scrounged metal from destroyed houses and cars. The horse - in Arab culture a symbol for freedom - was subsequently towed through the streets of Jenin and, at a later point, almost 200 km away through the occupied territories of the West Bank to Ramallah. Some months later the Palestinian authorities installed the sculpture in the centre of Jenin at the entrance to the refugee camp.











drowning hercules, 2001 Riddell House – St. Thomas' Hospital, London

drowning hercules was realised at *Riddell House* - the former home of the nurses at St. Thomas' Hospital opposite Houses of Parliament due to get demolished. After two large-scale floor pieces during that I mostly moved bent and on my knees - I metaphorically wanted to return to an upright position. Built-in cupboards, drawers, beds, doors, parquet flooring... the wood of the house was removed and used to build a proper tree in the former nurses' swimming pool. The wood now furniture - once more was transformed, now back to its original form before the entire compound got destroyed.

In 1768 on the very site the first purpose-built circus in the world: *Philip Astley's Royal Amphitheatre of the Arts* was founded. Like *»Her-cules Building«*, Wiliam Blake's house a stone throw away, my project was named after the ,,strong man'' of Astley's circus. The exhibition was accompanied by a video by Hector Hazard which documents the process of the developing work and a booklet of letters and texts from the former nurses about their time living in the building.







The Ring, 2000

Orbit-House, London - a project by South London Gallery

For ten months, *The Ring* was created on the 10th floor of the empty Orbit House in the centre of London, a 400sqm, room-filling woodcut in parquet flooring. Originally a church built in the 18th century stood here. It was converted into a boxing ring in the 1920s. German bombs, however, destroyed the octagonal building. After the 2nd World War the Orbit-House was built on behalf of the British Secretary of Defense. For several decades it housed the printing office of the British Army and until finally the Oriental Collection of the British Library moved in. As part of the collection of the British Library, the building housed the oldest known woodcut, the Diamond Sutra from China. Now Kilpper had the opportunity to realize his "print shop" and his woodcut in the same building. Gradually, portraits of various personalities associated with the site appeared on the façade of the building, which came to life. Boxers, politicians, artists, intellectuals, pop stars. Similar to a squatter's flag, the total print on the façade blew during the exhibition.









don't look back, 1998

Camp King, former US military base Oberursel near Frankfurt/Main

At *don't look back* Kilpper was confronted with a huge space and a monstrous history: In World War II, the place was the central prison and interrogation camp of the NS Air Force. After 1945, Camp King was used by the US Secret Service to interrogate leading Nazis, it was here that it was decided who would be tried or integrated into American services, and it was here that the West German Secret Service was founded, headed by the former Nazi general Reinhard Gehlen.

The history that took place on this floor Kilpper carved into the floor, cutting the ,skin', the parquet. He inscribed himself in this place and ,occupied' it in order to approach its history and to intervene in the process of its transformation - from military terrain, via vacancy and

demolition to new construction and civilian use. The wood cuts were printed on high-tech fabrics and papers, which are used for digital prints from advertising on facades. The oldest printing technique meets the newest.

In 2002, a concrete casting of the entire floor-piece was made and installed outside in public space where the basketball hall had previously stood. The mirrored text, "Where may I find my grey tones back again?" - a metaphor for the loss of intermediate tones by war and fascism, and ironic allusion to the black-and-white contrast of the woodcut - has thus experienced an additional realisation that was not planned at the beginning of the project.











Mental Map #3 - Düsseldorf, Charcoal on Paper, ca 190cm x 150cm, 1996



Mental Map #9 - Berlin, Charcoal on Paper, ca 300cm x 180cm, 1996



Mental Map #6 - Stuttgart, Charcoal on Paper, ca 170cm x 150cm, 1996

Mental Map #5 - Nürnberg, Charcoal on Paper, ca 170cm x 150cm, 1996





after the butcher - showroom for contemporary art and social issues 2006 - ongoing, Berlin

Since 2006 Thomas Kilpper is - and since 2015 together with Berlin based artist Ina Wudtke they are running the exhibition space **after the buchter**, with more than 80 exhibitions so far, featuring among others: Laure Prouvost, Creischer & Siekmann, Endre Aalrust, Henrik Olesen, Axel Wieder, Manfred Pernice, Thomas Bayrle, Stephan Dillemuth, Laura Horelli and many others.



MILIEU

KATHARINA AIGNER, MARIA EICHHORN, MARILYN GREEN, SISKA K. JØRGENSEN, TITRE PROVISOIRE, STEPHANIE TAYLOR, MIRJAM THOMANN, JENNI TISCHER, a performance by KATHARINA AIGNER and a lecture by MARINA VISHMIDT.

25 May - 28 July 2018 Opening:Thursday, 24 May 2018, 7 p.m.

Here, our milieu is that of the exhibition. We are interested in the specifications this exhibition milieu makes, the actions it enables and the connections it creates. What dynamics are created between inside and outside? Where do these boundaries run and how does the interpenetration of body, material and environment take effect in the exhibition space? Georges Canguilheim writes "The relationship established between the living being and the environment is like a debate (Auseinandersetzung) to which the living being brings its own norms of assessment of situations, in which it dominates the environment and adapts to it". We observe ourselves trying to react, to take control of the environment for a moment, to set it in motion and to redefine it.





Entanglements / Verstrickungen Michaela Meise, Forensic Architecture & Die Gesellschaft der Freund*innen von Halit & Initiative 6. April, Tomás Saraceno

Opening: Friday, 28th September, from 7pm Exhibition: 29th September -11th November 2018

In Entanglements / Verstrickungen, *after the butcher* presents three artistic positions that deal with issues that were already a concern of historical modernism in confronting capitalism. How can art engage in society? Can it implement pioneering new ideas that change the current situation in a positive way?....



Thomas Kilpper *Teaching Projects*



Reduced Wood-Cut Course, Bergen 2017

A group of ten students developing large scale prints. Each student is carving one or two boards (ca 24×36 cm each) but image-wise they get "linked" to each other in one way or the other - text, lines, motives... We carved and printed each board two times, the first colour was bright, the second darker, with more wood cut away. In total three motives where done, each approx. in the size of 150×250 cm large. We printed with the purpose built roler / cylinder on the floor. We printed on fabric and on paper.





















Printing in Public Space, Bergen 2017

Workshop at KMD to print and mark our paths between the different school buildings in the centre of Bergen at a time of transition, shortly before KMD moved to its new premises in Møllendal.











Polar Graphics II, 2019

A two week workshop held together with artists Stephan Dillemuth and Sveinung Unneland for students of the art faculty, KMD of Bergen University, to draw, carve, cut and print, even in 3D, - make your own charcoal - fish your own fish and discuss... at a remote former farm in the small village of Sagfjordbotn in Nordland. The results of the workshop were presented at the "Open Gallery" in front of the KMD and at the student run gallery "Joy Forum", two initiatives by Sveinung Unneland.











Reduced Wood-Cut Course, Bergen 2019

At the new printshop at the Faculty of Art, KMD of the University Bergen we are able to print large scale prints in the size of approx. 150 x 250cm. Once more we printed on fabric and on paper.







FLOOR CUTS - INTERVENTIONS IN WOOD OR LINOLEUM, 2013

Summer Academy of Fine Arts in Salzburg, Head of Printmaking Class

Kilpper and his students got access to a vacant but listed old building in Hallein next to Salzburg. The entire group made use of the floor coverings - wooden boards, parquet, linoleum and, for the first time, stone tiles – cutting various images into the ground, applying ink with rollers and printing it on paper and textiles. and presenting the results in an exhibition to the public.























Nuremberg, Academy of Art Guest Professor 2010/2011

With help of the Academies administration it was possible to get a vacant fairly large building complex with three houses in the city of Nuremberg that formerly had been used as a refugee home and that was scheduled to get demolished.

35 students took part to use the building for 3 months as a place to experiment and as the main working ground. From the start it was the idea that the efforts would be brought together and bundled in a group exhibition.

After some quiet weeks at the beginning in the end the place became a busy hub for all kind of artistic interventions, sculptures, performances, drawings, carvings...The students seemed to be super happy about this opportunity as they extensively made use of it and worked hard and with so much fun.



























