Is drawing the line between art and design simply a question of its placement? Is the status of an object defined by its presentation in a gallery, on a shelf or in a living room? These questions not only concern the distinction between two forms of media or genres, rather they further inquire into the disciplinary determination of physical and institutional spaces and into the possibility of autonomy in art itself. When one assumes that art is only distinguished from other disciplines based on *where* it is to be seen, the explosive power of a discussion about the blurring of the boundaries between artistic value and use value since Marcel Duchamp becomes understandable, since the claim of criticality of art itself appears to be threatened.

A look back at the history of art shows that design and art can not be understood as two strictly separate categories, rather it shows these two categories with various references to each other, which were constantly being negotiated anew. In aesthetic theory of the Renaissance, the term *disegno* was a central paradigm concerning the composition and finding of form preceding all other classifications of architecture, sculpture and painting – this notion continued into the 19th century and was embodied in the ideal of the Gesamtkunstwerk, encompassing all forms of art.[2] With the *Art Nouveau,* the *Arts and Crafts Movement* or the avant-garde movements of the first half of 20th century *(De Stijl, Bauhaus, Wiener Werkstätte)*, a relationship between the autonomous sphere of art and the mass-produced culture of industrial design was still being affirmed, with an euphoric faith in progress in regards to the technological and political implications of "applied" art, as a form of collective production. At the same time, Duchamp demonstrated with his readymade that an object could gain exchange value without being of value economically, when it was transformed into "something else" (art). He presented a new form of sculpture that challenged its own status and suggested its use by the viewer.

It might not surprise then that the discussion about a specific separation between (usable/functional) design and (unusable/autonomous) art arose in the context of Minimal Art beginning in 1965. Thereby the play with a boundary that was principally established by being called into question goes beyond the use of industrially manufactured, replaceable and multi-functional materials by artists like Donald Judd, Robert Morris or Dan Flavin. The geometric forms distributed within the space – supposedly neutral, objective and non-illusionist – finally turned into quasi-functional "décor" of the *White Cube*. Precisely with the desired shift away from artistic composition of the object to the emphasis of its relationship to space, to the viewer and to the particular exhibition situation, hence the material arrangement becomes the functional background for the subjective bodily experience. Just like a piece of furniture, the "work" is not seen from the "outside" anymore; rather it is experienced as part of the body and as a base for it.

Beyond an analysis of the conditions of perception and cognitive faculty, the resistance to "internal" meaning in Minimal Art led to a representational critique on a meta-level. With the minimization of the "art content", which is a continuation of Duchamp's denial of authorship, the actual "crux" of Minimal Art – as Hal Foster has shown – lies in the fact that "the formalist autonomy of art is at once achieved and broken up". Hence Minimalism ultimately introduces a reflection „on the contextual conditions of art [...] in order to expand its parameters." [3] The aim towards an absolute objectification of art induces the loss of its specificity. What was criticized by Minimal Art opponents like Michael Fried as "theatrical" and by Clement Greenberg as an expression of "non-art",[4] anticipates, through the focus on the space and function of art, the establishment of institutional critique in the 1970s. The exhibition of the "real" structures, the mechanisms of production, the presentation and reception of art as well as the break with the illusions of autonomy, originality or transcendence, this "practice-based" or "problem-solving" aspiration represents, according to Foster, the ultimate fulfillment of the avant-garde goal to reconcile art and life and to dissolve the boundaries between the to of them, as defined by Peter Bürger.[5] While critical approaches and aesthetic strategies of artists like Michael Asher, Hans Haacke, Andrea Fraser or Louise Lawler seem to undermine every possibility of commercialization and appear to be diametrically

opposed to any form of "commissioned art", with closer examination it becomes clear that, for practices of institutional critique, the proximity to design is constitutive.

Helmut Draxler has indicated that precisely the formal questions of institutional critique (and Concept Art) can not be understood without the reference to strategies used in design.[6] The use of forms of layout and display forms for the representation of information, the work with graphic design, publication design and exhibition design becomes central to these practices. When Roberta Smith claims "[a]rtists can do whatever they want in their art; [...] Design involves a kind of selflessness and a complex awareness of the givens: the human body and its needs, social space, the laws of gravity, the means of production and the demands of the marketplace"[7], through her reinterpretation of the "non-functionality" of art as pure arbitrariness that does not appear to require any special skills or experiences, she questions the claim of its criticality and at the same time, she dis-regards that artists since the 1980s and 90s have indeed been engaged with the "complex conditions" concern-ing the production of art. Terms such as "service", "commission", "analysis", "proposal" and "realization" have since become a commonplace in positions of the fine arts as well as in design. Both work with the same ideas of searching, sorting, arranging and combining information. Both create depending on expectations, materials, technique, budget and possibilities of realization. The play with different spaces, functions and styles carrying different connotations thereby appears in both disciplines. Since the medium can easily be changed at any time and various contexts can be expanded, redefined or relocated, the individual specialization in "fine" or "applied" arts is replaced by a demand for criticality and reflexivity of the method itself.[8] Keywords or phrases like "aesthetics of production" or "referentialism" that, for now, are used in the context of contemporary art, also represent a renewed affirmation of art's connection to design.

Utopia presents a further paradigm of connection or a kind of primary category in this context.[9] At the borders of architecture, urban planning, collective action and participatory intervention, various artistic forms are understood as means and tools for the realization of technological, ecological and social re-conceptions of society. While the avant-garde claims of improving the world or of "forming" the future continue to live on in design, -visual means for the communication of planning and presentation play a larger role in fine arts: models, prototypes and sketches represent a transgression of the traditional concept of the artwork, as well as the creative process, a tendency to openness and the ability to negotiate a concept. Within the exhibition space the facilitating medium and the finished product can thereby no longer clearly be differenctiated clearly. Through an abstraction of and dissolution from reality, while simultaneously referring to it – hence by visual representation – the model obtains "artistic value". Since its meaning remains potentially undetermined and by putting its own status and function up for renegotiation, the object can therefore be understood as a sculp-tural position.

In the age of the "cultural logic of the late capitalist museum",[10] it can not be denied that the same structure producing the capitalist system is producing the ideal space of art. Precisely because of the conscious play found in an interdisciplinary use of visual culture, with all the possibilities of contextualization and attribu-tions of meaning, with of citations and imitations, this space can nevertheless still be used as an "imaginative space".[11] The association of art with the issues and problems of design therefore goes far beyond the artistic positions connected to the term "designArt"[12] of the late 1990s[12] or design objects that can be found at art markets and in museums.

In the exhibition TWILIGHT ZONE the displayed works by international artists of different generations, explore the numerous and riskily overlapping fields of art and design. Practical and contemplative, multi-functional and multi-perspective, modular and eclectic, their strategies are borrowed from, and in turn applied in both disciplines. Unusual as well as commercially available materials are recycled, their recognizability is ma-

nipulated, their functions are altered. They are exposed through the use of various media and the functional spaces inbetween are explored in narrative ways. Forms of presentation are questioned and the beauty of the abstract form or the surface is defended. The ambiguity of the definition of the exhibited objects is what determines the power of their reflexivity, which in most cases goes far beyond the simple gesture of the re-positioning from one space/context into another one and challenges the postulate, with a calculated ironic distance, that aesthetic phenomena can be experienced entirely free of the connotations of usability.

[1]   This citation originates from Alex Coles in regards to "Untitled (Pleasure Boat)" (2005) from Jorge Pardo. Coles observes that Pardo's "Speedboat" does not only represent the fact that the "white cube" is just as permeated with economic criteria as a commercial exhibition space, rather it poses a whole row of other questions concerning the mixing of art and design. See Alex Coles, "Introduction//Beyond Designart", in: Alex Coles (Ed.), *Design and Art*, London/Cambridge 2007, pp. 10-15, here: 11.

[2]   See Matteo Burioni (Ed.), *Giorgio Vasari. Einführung in die Künste der Architektur, Bildhauerei und Malerei. Die künstlerischen Techniken der Renaissance als Medien des disegno*, Berlin: 2006; Roger Fornoff, *Die Sehnsucht nach dem Gesamtkunstwerk. Studien zu einer ästhetischen Konzeption der Moderne,* Hildesheim/Zürich/New York 2004.

[3]   Hal Foster, "The Crux of Minimalism", in: Hal Foster, The Return of the Real, Cambridge/London 1996, pp. 35-70, here: 54, 57.

[4]   See Clement Greenberg, "Recentness of Sculpture" (1967), in: John O'Brian (Ed.), The Collected Essays and Criticism, Vol. 4: Modernism with a Vengeance 1957-1969, Chicago/London 1993, pp. 250-256; Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967), in: Gregory Battcock (Ed.), Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology, New York 1968, pp. 116-147.

[5]   See Peter Bürger, Theorie der Avantgarde, Frankfurt am Main 1974., Engl. translation: Minneapolis 1984.

[6]   See Helmut Draxler, "Letting Loos(e). Institutional Critique and Design", in: Alexander Alberro/Sabeth Buchmann (Eds.), Art After Conceptual Art, Vienna/Cambridge/London 2006, pp. 151-160. Furthermore, Buchman illustrated that conceptualism has led to a relativization and reevaluation of the notion of production in the arts. See Sabeth Buchmann, *Denken gegen das Denken*. Produktion, Technologie, Subjektivität bei Sol LeWitt, Hélio Oiticica und Yvonne Rainer, Berlin 2007.

[7]   Roberta Smith, "Designers for a Day: Sculptors Take a Turn", in: *The New York Times*, Sept. 10/2004, URL: www.nytimes.com /2004/09/10/arts/design/10SMIT.html (12.04.2009).

[8]   See Barbara Steiner, "Interdisciplinary Work: Between Disassociation and Dissolution – a Dilemma", in: Gerald Bast/Krüger & Pardeller/Monika Pessler (Eds.), *UNDISZIPLINIERT / UNDISCIPLINED. Das Phänomen Raum in Kunst, Architektur und Design / The Phenomenon of Space in Art, Architecture and Design*, Vienna 2008, pp. 134-143.

[9]   The discussion about the political aspirations of design is also associated with the notion of utopia. See Paul Rand, "Politics of Design" (1981), in: *Graphis Annual*, Zürich: 1981, pp. 233, reprinted in: Alex Coles (Ed.), *Design and Art*, London/Cambridge 2007, pp. 34-37.

[10]   See Rosalind Krauss, "The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum", in: *October*, 54/1990, pp. 3-17.

[11]   Julie Thompson Klein describes the superiority of interdisciplinarity as follows: "Interdisciplinarity is a means of solving problems or answering questions that cannot be satisfactory addressed using single methods or approaches." See Julie Thompson Klein, *Interdisciplinarity. History, Theory and Practice,* Detroit 1990, p.196.

[12]   In this context usually the following artists are named among others: Angela Bulloch, Liam Gillick, M/M, Jorge Pardo, Tobias Rehberger, Studio van Lieshout, Pae White, Andrea Zittel and Heimo Zobernig, among others, are named. See Alex Coles, *DesignArt. On Arts Romance with Design*, London 2005.