

Projectfile – EXHIBITION 01.2020

KITSCH & CAMP (paintings)

Camp is a collective name for cultural expressions that consciously use kitschy elements. Camp is embracing mass culture with artistic ulterior motives. From the 1960's onwards, the notion of 'camp' became known to wider groups, for example through Susan Sontag's Notes on Camp (1964) essay and the use of camp elements in Pop art and post-modern art. The ironic embrace of mass culture is characteristic of both camp and postmodernism. Where modernism created an ivory tower of incomprehensible "higher" art and popular cultural expressions were considered inferior, postmodernism questioned a (overly sharp) boundary between high and low culture. Fooling with folk culture was a logical consequence. Because these popular expressions were embraced with the necessary artistic / philosophical intentions, we can speak of Camp.

In Tapiaco's approach, the link is made between the subject of Kitsch & Camp and its formal language based on an indefinite form between circle and square and the name Rounded Square was given no geometric significance. It developed from an initial abstracting of figures, landscapes, objects and observations from nature and gradually evolved into a basic element within successive series with the same number of themes. It was the common thread in his work and became his trademark. It became a symbol of universal communication for him because this form was used in a variety of ways in all cultures and throughout human history on all continents for its simplicity.

With the Kitsch & Camp series Tapiaco makes an essential question about the experience of art in general: What is Kitsch and what is art? And when does Kitsch become art? Another tricky issue is the issue of authenticity and authorship. Can you use the work of others for your own inspiration and use it for other purposes? What is the meaning of a signature and what does it cover? Can an artist put his signature on work made by others? By Colleagues? Pupils? Staff members? Freelance artists? Craftsmen? Subcontractors etc?

The exhibited paintings are work from others, nothing is wrong with the method of the technique; only the question is if it is art or Kitsch. And if it has become art now after the action of Tapiaco? With the serial of Puzzles the approach is a bit different. Puzzles are in itself kitschy objects regardless of the theme which makes it possible to use any subject.

Nevertheless the question remains the same, is it art now after the invention of Tapiaco?