

Opening Friday, 21 June 2013, 6-9pm



Reinhard Mende, 04439_05, Vertreterempfang in Falstaff, Rundgang Minister Mozambique 16.03.1978

“Double Bound Economies” begins with a photo archive from the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The photographer of the archive is Reinhard Mende. Produced as commissioned works, these photographs document and dramatize the situation of productions in Volkseigene Betriebe (VEBs; people-owned enterprises) and the Internationale Leipziger Messe from 1967 to 1990.

The trade fair in Leipzig was then the most important site of trade between the East and the West, and so these photographs in particular mark an economic space that had two sets of ties: socialist ones, in terms of its production, and capitalist ones, in terms of its presentation. They included ties to the countries of the former Non-Socialist economic region, such as the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Sweden, and France, as well as countries that since the mid-1970s had been involved in revolutionary struggles for liberation, such as Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia.

From that starting point, “Double Bound Economies” moves toward contemporary artistic and spatial positions, historical and theoretical analyses, and the production of an interview project with contemporary witnesses. The various forms of practice, both in terms of reading the archive and of the sometimes independent actions of the artists, raises the following core question: What forms of articulation are available to us to grasp the contradictions of the mutual involvements of socialism and capitalism in the form of design and visual production and to make them useful for current problems?

“Double Bound Economies” is centered on collective practice as a method of bringing things up-to-date, both in relation to the presentation of the archive and in the spirit of a curatorial method. Artists, theorists, scholars, and former participants were invited to view, comment on, or select from the archive. This collective work method resulted in a polyphonic dramatization of the archive while also reporting on a nonlinear approach to the GDR.

„Double Bound Economies“ is directed by the curatorial team of Estelle Blaschke, Armin Linke, and Doreen Mende. It consists of a traveling exhibition (architecture: Kuehn Malvezzi), a publication (Spector Books, Leipzig) and a website that will make the archive accessible to the public for the long term (www.doubleboundeconomies.net).

After exhibiting „Double Bound Economies“ in Leipzig (Halle 14 - Center for Contemporary Art), Geneva (Centre de la photographie) und Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), the exhibition can now be seen at Galerie Thomas Fischer, Berlin from 22 June to 3 August 2013.

Contributors to the exhibition at Galerie Thomas Fischer

Tekle Belete, b. 1928, photographer (ET); KP Brehmer, 1938-1997, artist (D); Seiichi Furuya, b. 1950, photographer (J/AT); Reinhard Mende, 1930-2012, photographer (D); Olaf Nicolai b. 1962, artist (D); Allan Sekula, b. 1951, artist/theorist (USA) and Noël Burch, b. 1932 critic/filmmaker (USA); The Otolith Group, artists/theorists (GB).

Further contributors to „Double Bound Economies“:

Bettina Allamoda, b. 1964, artist (D); Peter Herbert Beyer, b. 1933, designer (D); Fabian Bechtle, b. 1980, artist (D); Hans-Otto Bräutigam, b. 1931, diplomat (D); Haile Gabriel Dagne, b. 1941, diplomat (ET); Paola de Martin, b. 1965, design historian (CH); Harun Farocki, b. 1944, artist (D); Mark Fisher, b. 1968, theorist (UK); Laure Giletti, b. 1986, graphic designer (F); Sven Johne, b. 1976, artist (D); Matthias Judt, b. 1962, economic historian (D); Kiluanji Kia Henda, b. 1978, artist (AO); Helgard Hirschfeld, b. 1949, archivist (D); Valeria Malito, b. 1984, design student (IT) and Katja Saar, b. 1984, design student (D); Kuehn Malvezzi, architects (D, IT); Katrin Mayer, b. 1974, artist (D); Kerstin Stakemeier, b. 1975, art historian (D); Philip Ursprung, b. 1963, art historian (CH); Thomas Weski, b. 1953, curator (D); Malte Wandel, b. 1982, artist (D); Christopher Williams, b. 1956, artist (USA, D).

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