



## TIME(LESS) SIGNS

### Otto Neurath and Reflections in Austrian Contemporary Art

Private view: Tuesday 30 September 2014, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Exhibition continues until 9 January 2015

#### Participating artists:

Bernhard Cella, Ilse Chlan, Hazem El Mestikawy, Nikolaus Gansterer, Wilfried Gerstel, Christoph Hinterhuber, Barbara Höller, Christian Hutzinger, Martin Kaltenbrunner et al., Karl-Heinz Klopff, Matthias Klos, Lena Knilli, Clemens Kogler / Karo Szmit, Richard Kriesche, Gert Linke, open3.at, Bernd Oppl, Olaf Osten, Hermann Josef Painitz, Waltraud Palme, Andrea Ressi, Christian Rupp, Sito Schwarzenberger, Niko Wahl, Michael Wegerer, Peter Weibel, Jun Yang and Anthony Burrill (UK)

Curators: Maria Christine Holter (A) und Christopher Burke (UK)

#### How do artists relate to today's visual language?

Signs, icons and ideograms determine our daily communication; pictographic guidance systems dominate public space. Much of what we understand as visual language originates in Otto Neurath's *Vienna Method of Pictorial Statistics*, later known as ISOTYPE (International System of Typographic Picture Education).



#### Otto Neurath:

***“The common citizen should without limitation be able to obtain information about all matters of interest...”***



Together with graphic designers Gerd Arntz and Marie Reidemeister, the Austrian social economist and Vienna Circle philosopher Otto Neurath (1882 Vienna – 1945 Oxford) developed the *Wiener Methode der Bildstatistik* (Vienna Method of Pictorial Statistics). Now commonly known as **pictograms**, this method included highly simplified symbols for humans, animals and objects of all sorts. During the 1920s *Red Vienna*, as it was known, was led by a social democratic government. In this context pictograms were conceived to help people of every social background understand political and economic data more easily. Following the rise of fascism in Austria, Neurath and members of his team were driven into exile – first to the Netherlands, and in 1941 to the United Kingdom.

This multi-media exhibition, curated by Maria Christine Holter and Christopher Burke, features over **30 contributions from renowned contemporary Austria-based artists**, whose work is either directly or indirectly inspired by Neurath. The exhibition presents various artistic strategies for using pictograms and pictorial statistics to visualise political, social, global or purely individual agendas.

Waltraud Palme's 'Sign:Table' uses Neurath's pictorial language in order to question how we understand and see signs; Jun Yang's animations visually chart the stages and mechanisms of revolutions; Lena Knilli's 'Endowment' examines the organic, social and cultural 'codes' which form the individual; while Martin Kaltenbrunner's 'Reactable' is an electronic musical instrument transforming sound, rhythm and music into a visual experience.

Original works by Neurath – such as Isotype charts and objects from *The Otto & Marie Neurath Isotype Collection* at the University of Reading (UK) – will feature alongside contemporary pieces.

[www.zeitlose-zeichen.at](http://www.zeitlose-zeichen.at)    [www.isotyperevisited.org](http://www.isotyperevisited.org)

### **Exhibition Events:**

Tuesday 14 October, 7pm, ACF London

#### **The ,Wiener Methode der Bildstatistik' (ISOTYPE) – between art and design**

Christopher Burke, co-editor of the book *Isotype: design and contexts, 1925 – 1971* (2013), will talk about the pictorial language developed by Otto Neurath and his colleagues. As co-founder of the Vienna Circle, Otto Neurath had many talents but he never claimed to be an artist. He employed German artist Gerd Arntz to depict objects with powerful graphic simplicity in pictograms. Such images have entered popular graphic culture due to their ubiquity on public information signs, while their use in art develops new kinds of meaning.

Thursday 13 November, 7pm, ACF London

#### **Helping to fight Hitler and his gang - films by Otto Neurath & Paul Rotha**

This special lecture / screening by Günther Sander will present two rarely seen films produced by Otto Neurath and British filmmaker Paul Rotha: *A Few Ounces a Day* (1941) and *Land of Promise* (1945 / 46). Sander is senior scholar at the Vienna Circle Institute (University of Vienna). He is currently directing a research project on The Politics of Logical Empiricism and has written a biography of Otto Neurath (*Otto Neurath. Eine politische Biographie*), which will be presented at the ACF London.

Wednesday 3 December, ACF London

5pm: **Curator Guided Tour**

7pm: **Neurath Reloaded: Information Design Now**

Erwin K. Bauer, head of the acclaimed Vienna based design office ,buro bauer' and lecturer at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna will be in conversation with UK based artist Anthony Burrill and Austrian artist Michael Wegerer, both of whom have artworks presented in the exhibition. The exhibition curator, Maria C. Holter, will moderate the discussion.

Venue:  
Austrian Cultural Forum London  
28 Rutland Gate  
London SW7 1PQ  
[www.acflondon.org](http://www.acflondon.org)

For press images and further information please contact Vanessa Fewster  
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**Catalogue:**

ZEIT(LOSE) ZEICHEN: Gegenwartskunst in Referenz zu Otto Neurath / TIME(LESS)  
SIGNS: Contemporary Art in Reference to Otto Neurath; with essays by Maria Christine  
Holter and Christopher Burke et. al., German / Engl.; Künstlerhaus Wien, Maria C. Holter,  
Barbara Höller (ed.), Künstlerhaus k/haus: Vienna 2013, ISBN 978-3-900354-39-8;  
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