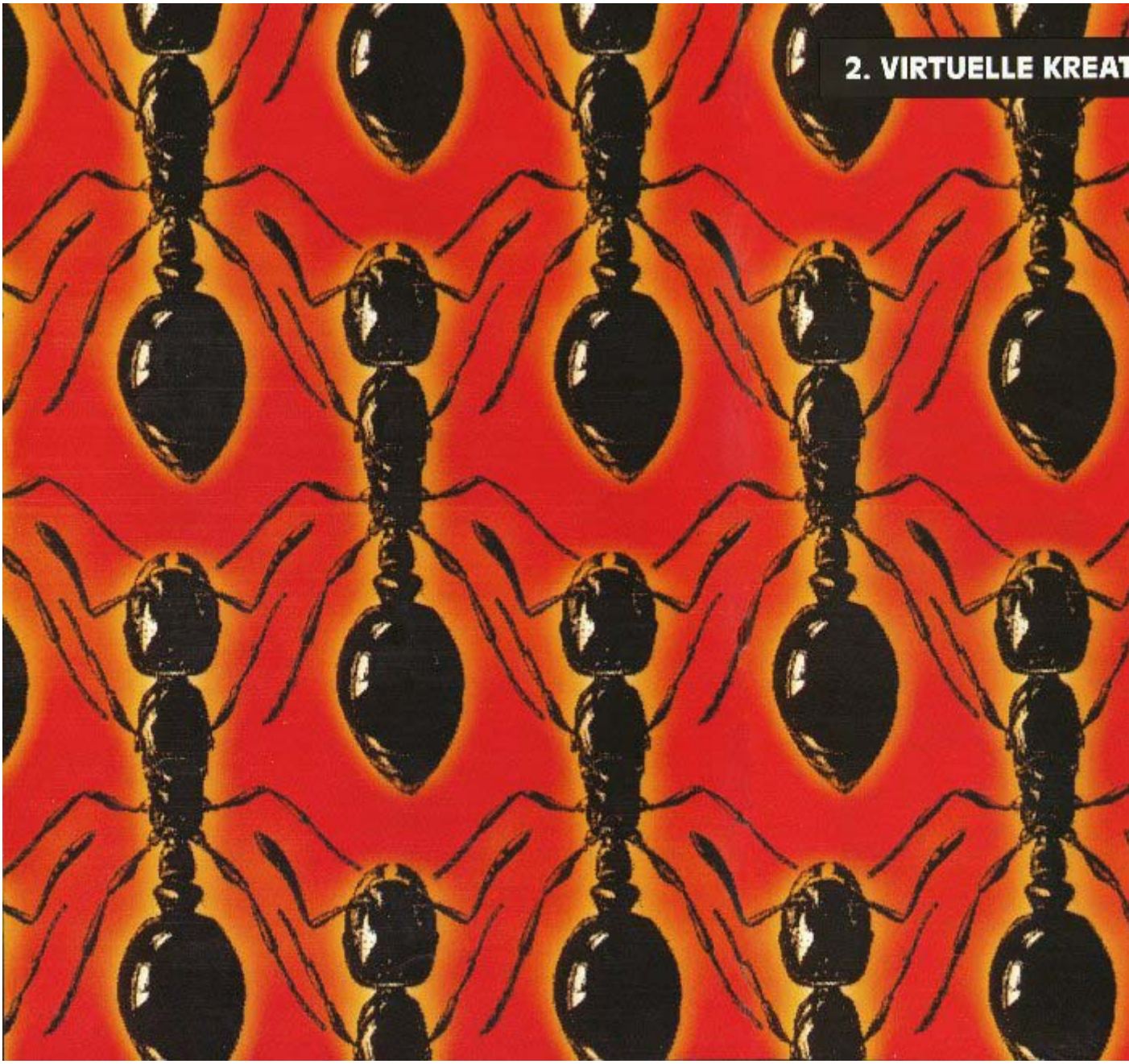
ANTS
PETER KOGLER



ANTS: COMPUTER: BRAIN

Black ants surrounded by sun-yellow on juicered ground: Peter Kogier's curtain, woven in a kind of Gobelin technique, hangs in two parts from the ceiling down to the half-landing. The artist designed the continuous pattern of metre-long ants at the computer, the weaving-mill then produced the design, which was stored on disc.

Peter Kogler is by no means a techno-artist; his computer graphics are based on conventional materials scanned into the computer, stored and used as a module. Kogler is simply the user of the apparatus, the computer is his technical aid which prepares selected symbols for the real medium and for further uses. Kogler's image are destined and selected to be copied and reproduced further. Their aptitude for printing technology is outstanding, the poster-like, drastic language easy to read and to pass on, even in small formats (for instance, the exorbitantly high reproduction rate and consequent distribution of his ant work at documenta in Kassel, in electronic as well as print media). Besides the expressiveness of Kogler's works, the significance of content has also played an increasing role in the last few years. Material staging is becoming more important, the possibility of a sensual feel for space (tapestries, curtains, architectural carrier-constructions). In the concentration on the motifs of the human brain and the ant, Kogler is referring to structural analogies between the ant state, the human brain and the computer (highly developed communication, discipline, effectiveness and conformity, firmly fixed work demarcation between the individual parts of the system, which can only exist as a complete whole).

The ant, scanned in by Kogler years ago and repeatedly cloned, is a queen of the guest ants (formicoximis intidulus). The ant was selected purely by visual criteria, neither its status or species being decisive. Through repetition and constantly new reproductions of his modules, Kogler is building structures; inaccessible labyrinths, cords, bands, lines or ordinary patterns symbolizing the human brain, and the statebuilding insect become symbols in which the unique, the individual is subordinated to an order that strictly serves the organism as a whole.

"In the complete society there is neither emotion nor pity. Valuable space cannot be wasted on those who have outlived their usefulness."

"The sexless worker is the true source of freedom in every society."

"Perhaps with time we will become as functional as those we emulate. We will develop faces without facial expressions: only the eyes and mouth; just enough to keep the rest of the body alive. No muscles to smile with or look darkly or in any way betray what is going on beneath the surface."

The living prototype of the computer was developed by nature long before the primate family gave rise to the brain animal, man. This prototype is no more and no less than the termite hill, one of the first experiments in social order (…) We all know of course that the insect, compared to humans, shows none of what we could call intelligence. But why should we feel proud because of that? (…) A computer is a mechanism programmed with hundreds of thousands of tiny units of information. It works by ordering these units into logical base patterns sifts through them, and puts them together in different combinations. (…) Is not a smoothly functioning society like a form of logic? I would argue that the inhabitants of those termite hills, as they make their way along their hidden pathways, have organized themselves into a form of undeniable logic, hundreds of thousands of tiny information units, each one a part of the whole.

Judith Fischer

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