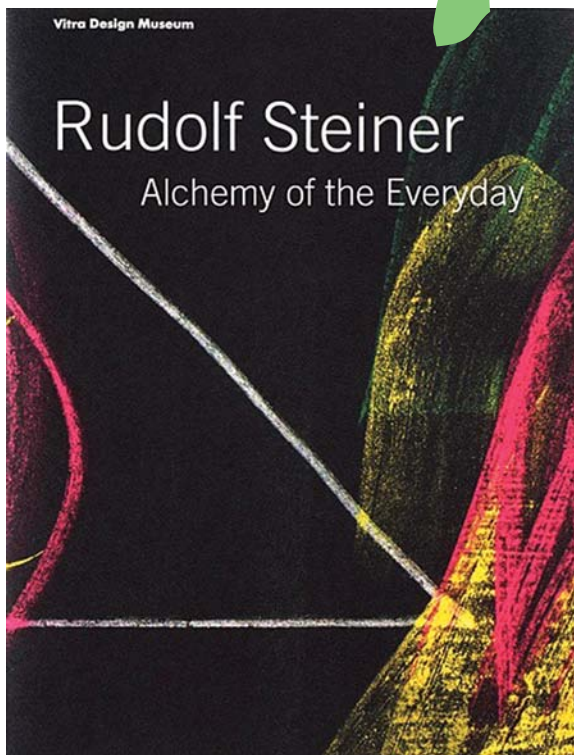


## Rudolf Steiner and Contemporary Art

*Markus Brüderlin and Ulrike Groos, eds.  
Cologne: DuMont Buchverlag, 2010, for  
Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, 224 pages.*

Rudolf Steiner's work and his influence on art



## Rudolf Steiner—Alchemy of the Everyday

*Mateo Kreis and Julia Althaus, eds.  
Weil-am-Rhein: Vitra Design Museum, 2010,  
336 pages.  
Review by David Adams*

These two books are significant exhibition catalogs documenting and elaborating on two large, related, current exhibitions in Germany that represent an unprecedented public presentation and reconsideration of Rudolf Steiner's work and his influence on art and society today. Both are large-format, hardbound publications in English with extensive color illustrations, and the contributions by multiple authors are concerned with Rudolf Steiner's work and anthroposophical art from both anthroposophical and non-anthroposophical perspectives.

These exhibitions and publications build on a number of previous publications and sometimes associated exhibitions—primarily in German-speaking countries (all as yet untranslated)—that have risen like a wave since the contemporary art world's discovery of Steiner's black-board drawings in the Goetheanum archives in 1991 by artists (and pupils of Joseph Beuys) Johannes Stüttgen and Walter Dahn. With assistance from Walter Kugler of the Steiner archives in Dornach, these publications and exhibitions have been gradually rehabilitating Rudolf Steiner's reputation for contemporary art.



Tony Cragg *Distant Cousins* 2006, painted steel

For the amount of effort, time, and money that clearly went into these new projects, the results are both exhilarating and, at times, disappointing. Particularly, *Rudolf Steiner and Contemporary Art*, while raising many intriguing questions, too often lacks adequate or accurate insight into (or, in some cases, even acquaintance

with) many aspects of Rudolf Steiner's work and thought – particularly in many of the contributions by non-anthroposophists.

The catalog, *Rudolf Steiner and Contemporary Art*, presents—through photographs, interviews, and essays—the work of seventeen contemporary artists, and the exhibition includes examples of their artworks as well as artworks, objects, and images by Rudolf Steiner and other anthroposophists (with 118 illustrations). It features two essays: one an overview by the curators Markus Brüderlin and Ulrike Grosse, and another by author Julia Voss titled “The Steiner Machine: How the Attempt to Reform Natural Science Led to a New Concept of the Humanities.” The latter essay is almost entirely about Steiner's involvement with the sciences—his relationships with Ernst Haeckel and Goethe—and has very little to say about the humanities, other than indicating the possibility of scientifically investigating moral ideas. Finally, there are apparently unedited, brief statements from twelve “prominent” persons, primarily German—including academics, artists, and businesspeople—on the rather general question, “Where Is Spirit Today?” The selection of writers is mystifying: Some are clearly atheists (or at least agnostics) and little interested in “spirit,” let alone Steiner's work. I liked best the essay by Konrad Schily, a former Green Party member of the German parliament and cofounder of the anthroposophically inspired Witten-Herdecke University. Schily emphasizes how Steiner's thought allows us to recognize the spirit working in nature rather than relying on simplified, spiritless mechanical systems and technology.

In their foreword and introduction the curators present the project's primary concepts. They describe their exhibition as “the uninhibited juxtaposition” of works



Katarina Grosse *Pigmento Para Plantas y Globos* 2008  
installation: acrylics on balloons, earth, wall, floor



Katarina Grosse *Holey Residue* 2006  
installation: acrylics on wall, floor, soil, and canvasses

by Rudolf Steiner with those of selected contemporary artists. Anthroposophy is called “the twentieth century's most influential reform movement,” but the editors also twice insist that “Steiner is not the exclusive property of the Anthroposophists!” Probably the most concise statement of their intentions is the following:

...it is not a question of tracing direct influences [from Steiner to contemporary artists], to say nothing of pater-  
ternity. This would be pointless, for in contradistinction to so-called “Anthroposophical art” which at times codifies Steiner's ideas about art and work directly in a confining doctrine, the artists who are participating in this exhibition follow their own paths, and are oriented toward developments in modern art, not esoteric tendencies...(p. 17)

The art exhibited is “art created independently of the anthroposophical context, and without regard to Steiner's prescriptions.” (p. 17) Indeed, the work of almost none of these artists looks anything like the visual art typically produced within the anthroposophical movement; such art generally seems to be regarded here as a kind of embarrassment within the context of contemporary art. The hope is that “the independent methods of contemporary art may help to excavate some of Rudolf Steiner's ideas



Carsten Nicolai *fades* 2006, video and sound installation



in unconventional ways—to de-monumentalize Steiner creatively, so to speak, in order to come to terms with that which is contemporary in his ideas.” (p. 19) Thus, both curators and artists feel free to “pick and choose” a few select aspects of anthroposophy that seem to resonate with current tendencies in contemporary art. As they write, most often “his work is simply exploited like a quarry, from which one procures whatever is usable.” Most interesting to contemporary artists seem to be the very idea of investigating the spirit scientifically; the “somatic theory of spirit” (whereby matter and spirit, outer and inner always interpenetrate); his self-contained, interconnected, holistic



Olafur Elisasson Berlin *Color Sphere* 2006, installation: stainless steel, color-effect filter glass, bulb, wire, dimmer

worldview (“the Steiner cosmos”); his idea of the inside-out transformation principle of inversion (curiously translated as “eversion”); and the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total, mixed-media work of art (like the Goetheanum).

The editors also raise the question whether we can consider Rudolf Steiner to be an artist. They generally answer this question affirmatively, pointing to several aspects of his work, including the “artistic aspect of his thinking (p. 20).” They note

that he has been called a process artist as well as one of the first conceptual artists, and a “lecture artist,” a category of conceptual art. They appreciate his “organic and holistic” architecture and furniture designs. His ideas are generally considered “as part of modernist avant-gardism,” especially for its influence on such major early modern artists as Vasily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian. Thus, he contributed to the historical development of abstraction and the overcoming of mimesis and symbolism in the visual arts (especially through architectural ornament). His blackboard drawings created intriguing precedents for the recognized blackboard drawings of Joseph Beuys.

Both the exhibition curators and artists alike frequently criticize the attitudes of anthroposophists and anthroposophical artists toward Steiner’s work. According to them, anthroposophists “maintain Steiner under ‘lock and key’... and maintain defensive postures in relation to all critical approaches.” (p. 29) The curators argue that “Steiner’s painterly-philosophical art might well have taken an entirely different direction. ... [T]oday, his ideas can be realized in such free, experimental, and dynamic installations far more fully than in anthroposophical watercolors” (p. 17) —a statement I tend to agree with. They claim that a large part of Steiner’s knowledge “can only be accepted on faith, not examined objectively.” (p. 21) Yet they see Steiner “as an indispensable provider of impulses for modernity” (p. 32) and someone who offers hope for recognizing the repressed ethical and occult aspects of modernism “to complete modernity in the twenty-first century.” (p. 330)

The selection of mostly younger contemporary artists for the exhibition is notably slanted toward German-speaking and central European artists (who admittedly would be more likely to know something about Steiner). The interviewers of these artists struggle through repeated questions to get each of the artists to acknowledge some debt to or influence from Steiner in their artwork, but most are having none of it and clearly distance themselves from any significant direct influence by Steiner. From the many colored illustrations of installations, video art, sculptures, paintings, etc. by these artists, the reader can more or less judge this for him- or herself. Also included is Joseph Beuys’s important 1984 interview in the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, here finally translated into English. In it I think he too much plays the role of the enigmatic, revolutionary “art celebrity,” often being purposely mysterious, obfuscatory, epigrammatic, and provocative, presumably to attract more controversy and interest in such



Manuel Graf *Buchtipp 2* 2010, installation: various materials, video on monitor

a large public forum. Beuys discusses his own spiritual experiences and also refers repeatedly to anthroposophy (not always positively). The interview includes his famous proclamation: “The Mysteries take place in the central railway station, not in the Goetheanum.”

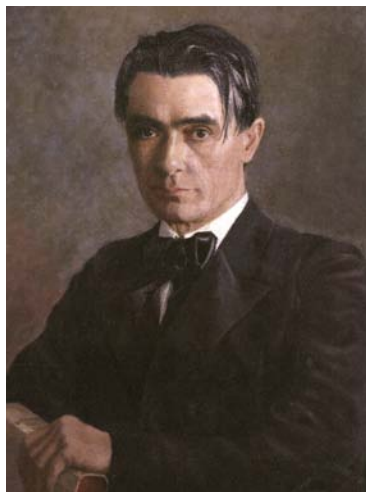
It seems to me that with a wider and deeper acquaintance with Steiner’s artwork, and particularly with his statements about the future of the visual arts, the editors could have more effectively made a case for affinities and analogies between Steiner’s work and contemporary art of our “postmodernist” era.

Although the text is marred by a fair number of missing or unusually translated words, awkward phrasings, and grammatical errors, these are small quibbles. At least now English readers can begin to participate in these lively dialogues taking place within the art world. Both exhibitions are on view from May 12 to November 21, 2010, at Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg; from February 5 to May 22, 2011, at Kunstmuseum Stuttgart; from June 22 to September 25 at MAK Vienna; and from October 15, 2011, to March 18, 2012, at the Vitra Design Museum Weil am Rhein, with additional showings in Prague and elsewhere in the future.

*Rudolf Steiner: The Alchemy of the Everyday*, a more satisfying volume, is concerned with a much wider range of Steiner’s thought and work and includes a far higher percentage of anthroposophical authors. The unique exhibition at the Vitra Design Museum that it catalogs includes 45 pieces of furniture, 46 models, 18 sculptures, over 200 original drawings, a specially made large model of the Goetheanum, and full-size replicas of two little-known, metal “color experience chambers” designed by Steiner in 1913—

as well as comparative works by Kandinsky, Feininger, Gaudi, Mendelsohn, Wright, Beuys, Eliasson, and others.

In their foreword the editors describe their project as “the first retrospective look at Steiner’s work outside the anthroposophical context.” As justification for it they cite the nearness of the museum to Dornach (20 kilometers), the museum’s own collection of anthroposophical furni-



D. Huschka *Portrait of Rudolf Steiner* 1906 oil on canvas

Rudolf Steiner, executed by Max Benzinger *Color Chamber Models* ca. 1911-1913, scale ca. 1:20, painted sheet metal



ture, its interest in distinctive features of anthroposophical aesthetics, and Steiner’s historical and contemporary importance to the world of art and design. They attempt “a nuanced judgement [*sic*] of Steiner by putting his creative work in the limelight and positioning it in a historical context and in the history of its influence.” (p. 17) They argue that Steiner’s impact is “not as one-dimensionally anthroposophic as posterity and his followers have portrayed.... Even Steiner is part of Modernism....” (p. 18)

This book tackles Steiner’s work in four general sections. In the first, “Context: Rudolf Steiner and His Time,” Walter Kugler writes about Steiner’s work in the environment of the emerging early-modern age. He covers his associative economic and sociological principles and the international interest shown in his first book about the threefold social organism; the development of his monistic philosophy and of the idea of spiritual research to complement ordinary scientific research; and concludes with a discussion of Rudolf Steiner’s contacts with a number of significant early-modern writers and painters.

This is followed by Wolfgang Zumdick’s essay, “The Central Core of Anthroposophy,” a competent survey of Steiner’s life in the world of ideas of his time. He begins by discussing parallels with Spinoza, Steiner’s researches into Goethe and Schopenhauer, his efforts to disprove the limitations of Kant’s epistemology, and his expansion of Haeckel’s recapitulation theory



Margarete Landsberg, Illustration in *Bilder Courier*, Berlin, April 11, 1925: Peter Hille (standing), Rudolf Steiner (second from right) and (probably) Stefan Zweig (right)





Poster for a Eurythmy Performance in First Goetheanum 1919 pastel, pencil, calk, and watercolor on paper



Share issued by Die Kommende Tag AG, 1920



Ahriman's Realm, scene from *The Guardian of the Threshold* by Rudolf Steiner, 1992 production at the Goetheanum.

of evolution. The connection to the arts is succinctly drawn:

If thinking is understood not only as an abstract idea, but experienced as a living, creative energy that creates and supports forms, then the analogy with art and artistic work immediately suggests itself. Steiner did in fact draw this analogy: it is as important to learn to think in colours and forms as it is to recognize concepts and thoughts 'as creators of forms, as designers.'" (p. 39)

Zumdick briefly sketches Steiner's description of the panorama of cosmic and human evolution and notes his "radically libertarian image of the human being" before moving on to Steiner's contributions to "a fundamental reform of all aspects of human existence" that expanded rapidly in many fields after the First World War. Zumdick concludes with a section subtitled "The Spirit Living in Forms," in which he depicts how the hidden beings and streams of energy behind the visible world can be known through Steiner's meditation practices and manifested in various artistic activities.

The first section concludes with an interesting study by Julia Althaus on Steiner's avant-garde stagecraft, which begins by noting that the environment of "the Dornach colony" itself has a stage-set like quality. Af-

ter a brief review of the early modernist reform of theater design and performance by artists such as Georg Fuchs, Adolphe Appia, Peter Behrens, Henry van de Velde, Oskar Schlemmer, Walter Gropius, and Max Reinhardt, Althaus considers Steiner's "decidedly traditional" division between audience and stage in both Goetheanums (which could be disputed) along with his progressive "unification of poetry, music and movement under the name of eurythmics [*sic*]" in his Mystery Dramas. Her highest praise is reserved for his innovations in scenery and "wide-diffusion" lighting for the scenes in the spiritual worlds, finding similarities both to Reinhardt and Expressionist films. She finds his contribution to overcoming realism in drama in accord with his own teachings about color and spiritual experience. Finally she even refers to Steiner's unfulfilled project with Jan Stuten for a new colored "light-play-art" as an alternative to cinema.

The second general section is titled "Metamorphoses: Paths to a New Style of Building." It begins with architectural historian Wolfgang Pehnt's review of Steiner's likely early architectural experiences in Vienna and Prague, proceeding through each of his developing design efforts, from the interior decoration for the 1907 Munich Congress to the first Goetheanum. Pehnt sees Steiner as expressing the continual metamorphic transfor-



Moving *The Representative of Humanity* to the second Goetheanum on a wooden ramp, 1927

mation and motion of the organic world (as described by Goethe) and developing Dornach as “one of the most distinctive residential colonies of its time, during a period in which such settlements proliferated, motivated by artistic, social or reformist ideals.” (p. 115) In the new concrete architecture of the second Goetheanum “the eye no longer follows the path of transformation through details—plinths, capital, and architraves—but through the continuous changes and directional shifts in the actual substance of the building.”

Next, curator Markus Bröderlin turns to a theme also covered in the *Contemporary Art* catalog, “the modern principle of inside out” or inversion, which “describes the co-existence of the spiritual and the material worlds.” (p. 121) He notes that the increasingly sculptural approach of much contemporary architecture indicates a desire for an organic dissolution of the barrier between inside and outside, a new spiritual dimension, although he rightly cautions that this may be a purely formalistic similarity to Steiner’s design. “The point of origin for Steiner’s concept of inversion is Goethe’s theory of metamorphosis,” he announces, but also relates this idea to understanding complex relationships between subject and object, interior and exterior. Bröderlin raises the still-intriguing question of whether the second Goetheanum is an inversion of the first one, and makes some further speculations that suggest he isn’t very familiar with Steiner’s ideas of the “transparent wall” and the design logic of the Boile House. But at times he does come to impressive appreciations of the Goetheanum:

The building’s exterior is not a fixed, crystalline structure, but immaterial and light-like, inverting ‘in the most mysterious astral manner’ the soul’s inner world into the exterior world, like a glove opening its interior to form an extensive surface. (p. 127)



Rudolf Steiner & Herman Ranzenberger  
*Armchair for Duldeck House* ca. 1917

In the final chapter of this second section anthroposophist Reinhold Fäth presents an overview of the basic principles of Steiner’s approach to design under the title “Goetheanum Style and Aesthetic Individualism.” He first presents the “apparent paradox” in Steiner’s aesthetics that every work of art is an individual expression with “its own aesthetics,” while at the same time arguing that it is “both possible and necessary to create a common new style ‘related to the most generally human.’” Noting that Steiner was concerned with how designed form “unconsciously affects the human spirit and psyche,” Fäth describes Steiner’s design approach as “in essence, a spiritual functionalism that assumes that spirit and matter are interdependent.” (p. 133) He notes

that Steiner connected human morality to the state of the everyday environment, which must have shocked Theosophists who thought of the material world as mere *maya*. As Steiner said in 1909,

...the mores, habits, psychological propensities and relationships between good and evil which belong to a particular time are all dependent on the quality of the things they pass by from morning to night, that they are surrounded by from morning to night.

Steiner’s study of the relationship of past ages and art led him to conclude that “the development of a new spiritual and social culture must be linked to the development of a new style in art—or rather, to new forms in architectural design.” (p. 134) Fäth then describes the chief principles of the anthroposophical style as awareness of the soul forces within manufactured forms and objects; use of environmental color; the “inclining gesture” of related or tilting forms of doors, windows, and some furniture designs; the organic principle of interrelationship of all parts like organs within a living body



Rudolf Steiner & Herman Ranzenberger *Bed and Chest of Drawers for Duldeck House* ca. 1917



(including the idea of metamorphosis); living surfaces like open windows to the spiritual world; emphasis on the upper, “head” end of designs; and organic, flowing surfaces and proportions that seem like visible music.

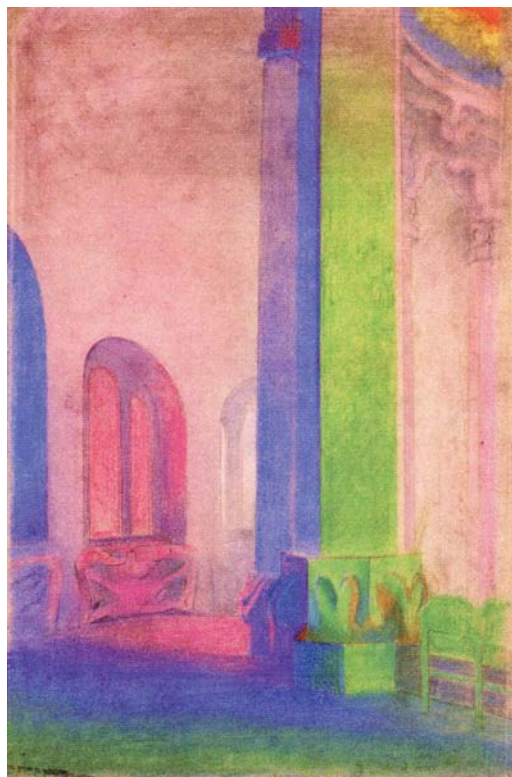
The third section titled “Aesthetics” begins with anthroposophical architect Peter van der Ree’s essay on Steiner’s organic architecture. At the start van der Ree claims, “The concept of metamorphosis is the germ cell of Rudolf Steiner’s sculpture and architecture.” (p. 185) “Steiner maintained that a work of architecture should be an aesthetic expression of its function.” In contrast to the International Style that dominated 20th-century architecture, organic builders “always seek to develop a design out of the individual building task and local situation.” Van der Ree briefly compares Steiner’s architecture to that of other “organic architects,” including Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Antonio Gaudi, Hugo Haring, and Hans Scharoun. He finishes by noting that while “avant-garde architecture in the new millennium” has been dominated by dynamic, flowing, sculptural forms that seem organic, these have mainly arisen out of the new possibilities of computerized CAD design software rather than organic living ideas. The danger with designing in a free, virtual space is that one neglects gravity, material qualities, and natural laws.

Finally we reach what conceptually I consider to be the “heart” of the book, curator Mateo Kries’s essay, “Furniture Mutations or Design as Natural History,” which tries to place anthroposophical furniture in the context of modern design. Although design of furniture and interiors was a matter of some importance to Steiner, it has proven to be far less so to later anthroposophists, especially after the 1930s. This topic is pretty much under the radar in the United States as an important aspect of Steiner’s work, although it is somewhat more visible in Europe (especially since the recent books in German by Reinhold Fäth, *Rudolf Steiner Design* [2005] and *Dornach Design* [2011]). The Vitra Museum, which after all is pri-

marily a design museum, has been collecting examples of furniture by Steiner and other anthroposophists, as has director Alexander von Vegesack, who has been in touch with Fäth for years. By contrast, in the U.S. the work of one of the greatest anthroposophical furniture designers, Fritz Westhoff, has been shamefully neglected and even destroyed. Along with the exhibition, the museum has produced a miniature of one of Oswald Dubach’s 1930s chairs that is for sale in its shop (or online).

Kries includes a 10-page portfolio titled “Dornach 2010—Photographic Research,” with photographs of the interior furnishings of various houses in Dornach, featur-

ing much wooden furniture with rounded or beveled corners. He comments: “Design innovations since the mid-1920s—steel furniture, new plastics, Alessi objects, the entire seduction machinery of the contemporary design world—seem to be banned from the anthroposophical world.” (p. 202) He refers to Dornach as “something like a ‘Galapagos island of design’ where ‘fossils from that revolutionary phase between 1910 and 1925 have been preserved.’ Yet the strange thing is that much of this design seems to relate more to a contemporary trend of architects and designers creating ‘crystalline shapes, plant-like chairs and cave-like rooms’ than to ‘the Cartesian-rectangular spatial grids of Modernism.’” The “strangely punched and warped surfaces” of much of Steiner’s furniture and



Wilfrid Norton *Interior of the First Goetheanum before 1923*, pencil and pastel on paper

buildings seem to reflect a more recent paradigm shift in science toward a view that “the entire world of molecules is in motion” and that nature “always evades geometrical organization and rationalization.” So this leads Kries to consider what lies behind Steiner’s designs and how these might relate to the history of 20th-century design.

“In developing his creative formal language,” writes Kries, “Steiner does not focus—as did, say, the Cubists or Antonio Gaudi—on a visual section of nature (e.g., the motif of the crystal or that of the plant), but aims to make visible the universal laws that are at work within them.” (p. 204) Steiner felt we needed not just reduced, abstract,



*Zodiac Clock* ca. 1920s, anthroposophical style

“sclerotic” modernist forms that only consider a person’s physical needs, but “a design that takes into account man’s ‘occult physiology,’ reflected in his spiritual and emotional needs.” At last, someone in the art world has clearly recognized

Steiner’s real aims and achievement! However, he doesn’t yet quite gather that Steiner’s faceted forms were not “borrowings from the ‘mineral world’” but rather suggestions of how the *etheric world* works inward from the periphery, and that in forms such as those of the Boiler House Steiner was not trying to imitate the plant world but rather the functions of the structure’s use. Kries adds that, although Steiner did emphasize skilled craftsmanship, manual production, and use of wood, it is doubtful that he rejected other industrial materials as vehemently as his successors. This, he surmises, is primarily what led to the isolation of anthroposophical design from official design history. Kries continues to try to find some parallels to anthroposophical design in the immediate postwar world, but can really only connect to the new designs that began to appear in the 1990s—“flowing, seemingly biomorphic shapes” and immaterial qualities, even if these are developed from computerized technologies, exactly calculated metamorphoses, and chaos-theory research. The difference in Steiner’s design is that it is always linked to theories and worldviews rather than pragmatic technical means. Yet, Kries asks, must we not humanize cutting-edge technologies?

In the fourth and final section, “Practice,” Philip Ursprung leads off with a provocative comparison between art and society in the work of Steiner, Joseph Beuys, and Olafur Eliasson. He sees in Eliasson’s contemporary mixture of artistic studio and scientific research laboratory an example that might provide some idea of how Steiner may

have produced his prolific body of work. He asks,

Doesn’t Steiner seem so contemporary to us precisely because he was a restless communicator, a catalyser of change and an initiator of processes, rather than a creator of individual objects?

He sees similar qualities in both Beuys and Eliasson, although Steiner’s effect on art is less than his effect on society through the institutions he founded. Although Ursprung covers only the most basic levels of similarity among the three men, he finds such commonalities as use of design to give coherence to a discontinuous world, a synthetic rather than analytic approach, pragmatic intervention and implementation rather than abstract conceptuality, “no fear whatsoever of vast dimensions,” emphasis

on process and catalyzation rather than finished product, a constant oscillation between abstract and concrete, and use of art to play a mediating role between science, religion, and everyday life. In fact, Steiner’s field of action ranges both more widely and more deeply than that of the other two.

The concluding essay by Manuel Gogos, “Anthroposophy as a Cultural Medium,” explores the wide range of Steiner’s social reform ideas, which “in terms of their diversity, substance and sustainability” were unique. “In Germany, Austria and Switzerland,” he writes, “finding an alternative subculture *not* charged with Rudolf Steiner’s intuition can prove difficult...” He

opines that “Steiner’s originality lay precisely in the cross-disciplinary synthesis of disconnected fields.... Steiner



*Wardrobe* 1920s, anthroposophical style



*Oswald Dubach Chair and Table for Perotti House* 1930s, Dornach



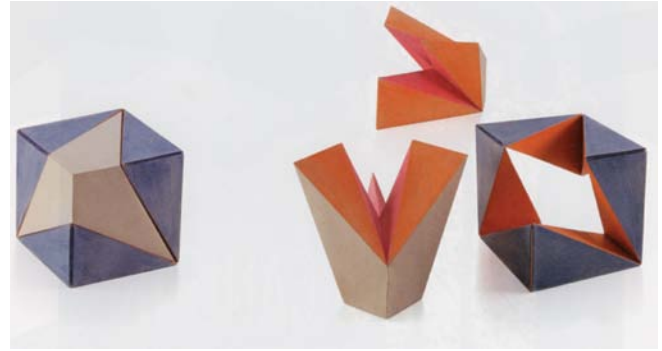


Dornach Interior, 2010

was the diagnostician of a diseased civilization.” (p. 273) However, despite the social acceptance (in the German-speaking world) of many of Steiner’s practical ventures, this “is by no means evidence of the acceptance of the school of thought behind it,” which is still in a “state of intellectual quarantine.” Gogos then considers various manifestations of anthroposophy, such as threefold social theory, eurythmy, biodynamic agriculture, Steiner’s prediction of mad cow disease, and even Bircher muesli. He goes on to consider anthroposophical medicine, the history of Weleda going back to 1920, Waldorf education, and even the influence of Steiner’s ideas on the foundation of the German Green Party. He concludes that Steiner is “the secret forefather of the New Age.”

The final pages present a year-by-year illustrated biography of key events from Steiner’s life, followed by a dense bibliography. Throughout these essays, and in generous “portfolio” sections between each of the four large sections, are many illustrations, primarily in color, including some interesting juxtapositions between anthroposophical artwork and documents and those by other innovative artists, designers, and public figures—408 illustrations in all.

These two catalogs both present interesting facts, translations, and quotations that have not previously



Paul Schatz *Invertible Cube* 1930s, cardboard

appeared in English. Apparently given free access to the Goetheanum and the Rudolf Steiner archives, the editors have assembled images of all kinds of anthroposophical documents, photographs, and artifacts either not previously published or quite difficult to find. We read, for example, of Albert Einstein’s reaction to attending a lecture by Steiner in 1911 in Prague, of the approximately 2,400 members of the German Theosophical Society when the Anthroposophical Society was first formed, and of the date Steiner terminated the rental of his Berlin apartment shortly after the Hitler-Ludendorff putsch of 1923 in Munich.

The two publications are already having an impact in German-speaking countries, particularly as 2011 is the 150th anniversary of Rudolf Steiner’s birth. For example, the popular exhibition and travel magazine *Vernissage* has recently published a special issue highlighting a series of public commemorative events and retracing key locations along the path of Rudolf Steiner’s life visitable with a rail ticket on the “Rudolf Steiner Express” (with an online English edition at <http://rudolf-steiner-2011.com/vernissage.html>). Although the *Alchemy* catalog in particular is clearly one of the most important books on Steiner to appear in English, it remains to be seen what its impact on the English-speaking world will be, both due to its focus on German-speaking cultures and its hefty price (\$349.99 on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), although I bought a copy online from the Vitra Design Museum shop for “only” \$145).

Jasper Morrison *Wingnut Chair* 1984

