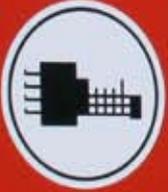




HEIDI WOOD
 1903 - 2014

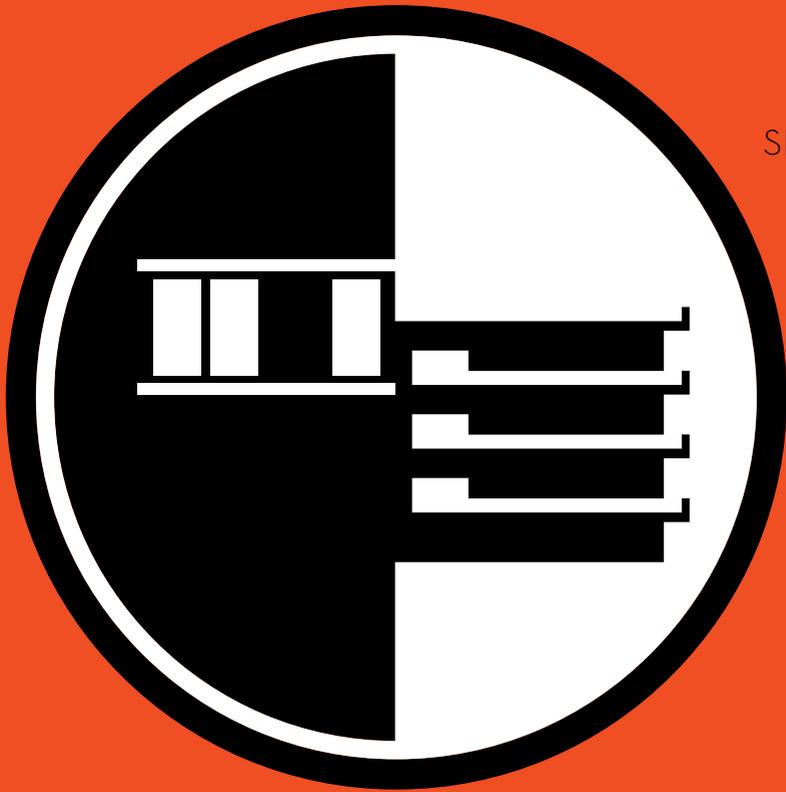



MUSEE NATIONAL
 FERNAND LEGER, BOY

MUSEE STATION
 ET DE L'ENRICHISSEMENT

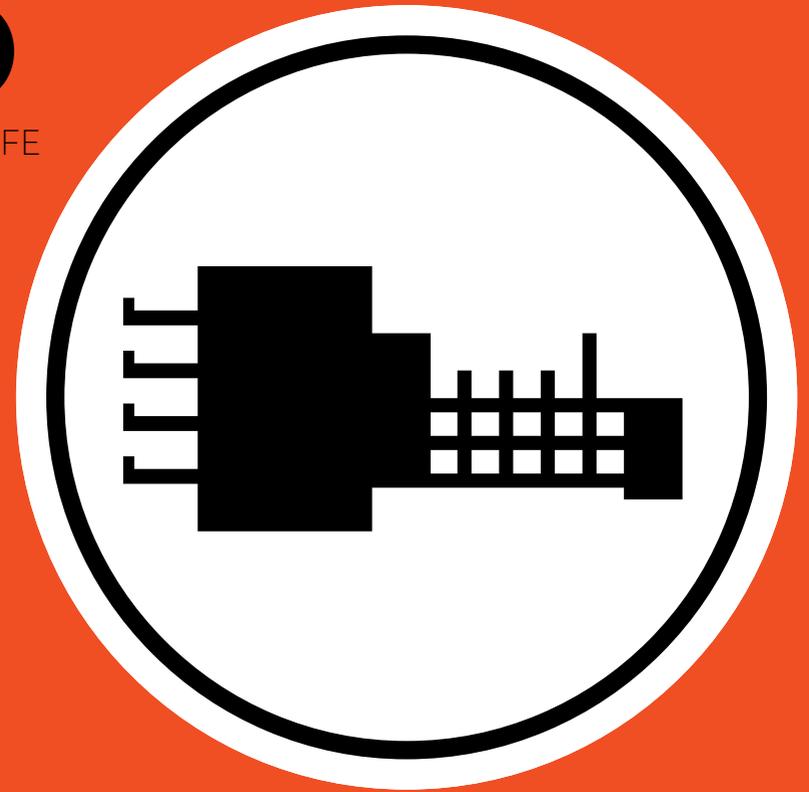
HEIDI WOOD

SETTING FOR AN ORDINARY LIFE



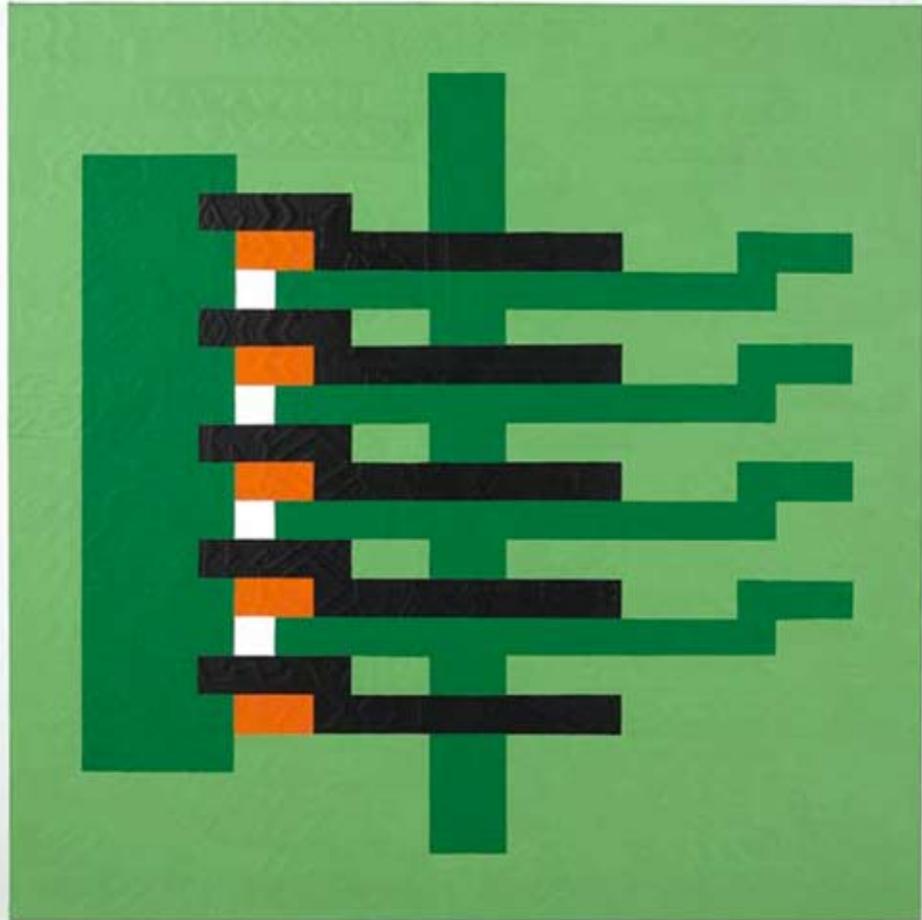
THE PROJECTS

**MUSÉE NATIONAL
FERNAND LÉGER, BIOT**



HOUSE

**MUSÉE D'HISTOIRE
ET DE CÉRAMIQUE BIOTOISES**

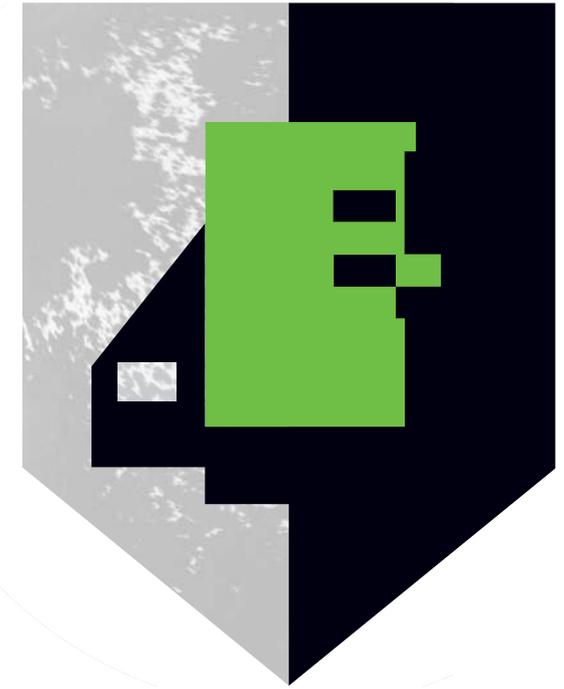


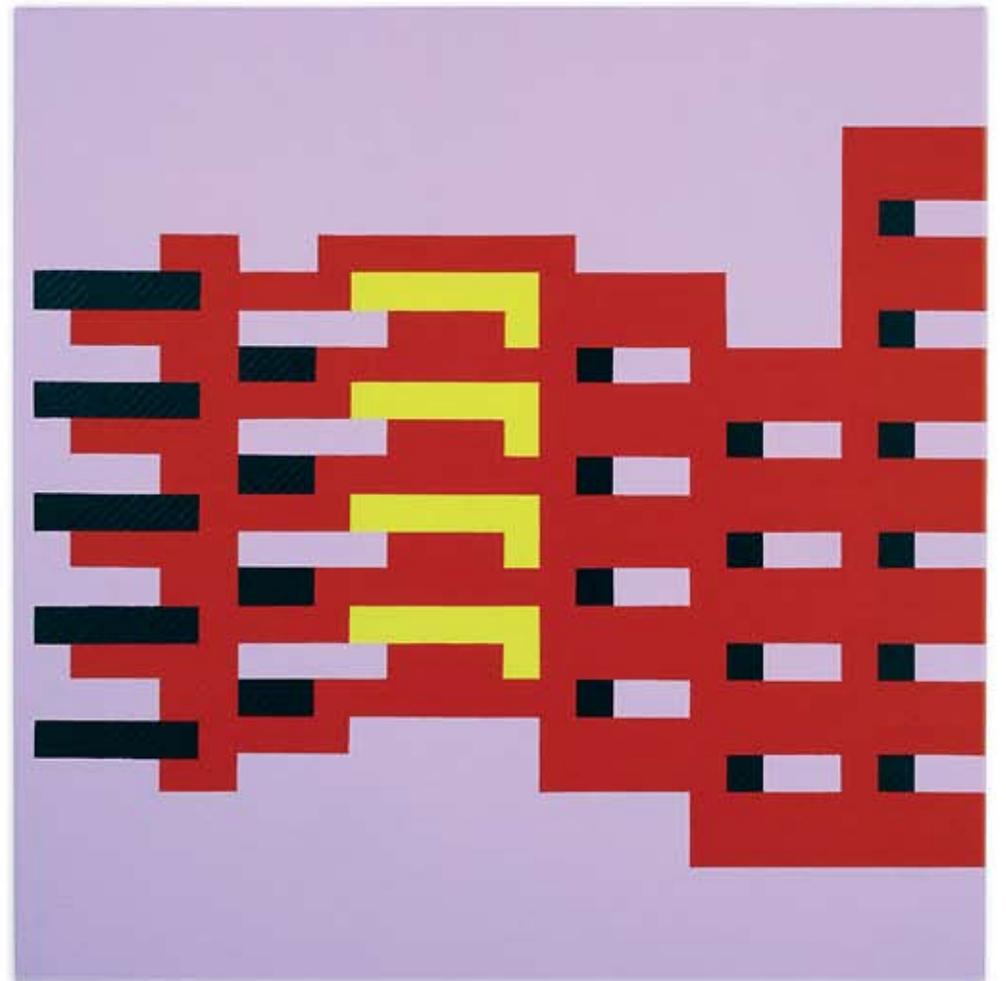
In my work, the departure point is always the context. In this case, it was an invitation to dialogue with the modern master Fernand Léger. As a modernist passionate about progress and technology, Léger placed cities at the heart of his work. I arrive many years later. Modernist optimism - the idea that artists of the avant-garde were leading the way towards a glorious future - is a balloon that has burst. The exceptional has been replaced by the banal. I decided to work not on cities but on their peripheries. Not on urban buzz but rather, on domestic tranquility. The exhibition is called *Setting for an Ordinary Life*. It is my two-part homage to suburbia and its architecture: *The Projects* at the Fernand Léger Museum and *House* at the Biot Museum of History and Ceramics. In both parts, I wanted to highlight the opposition between standardized architecture and the lives behind those doors.

Extract from the interview with Diana Gay, curator at Musée national Fernand Léger

Heidi Wood

Setting for an Ordinary Life 3, 2013
Acrylic on upholstery fabric, 100 × 100 cm





Setting for an Ordinary Life 1, 2013
Acrylic on upholstery fabric, 100 × 100 cm

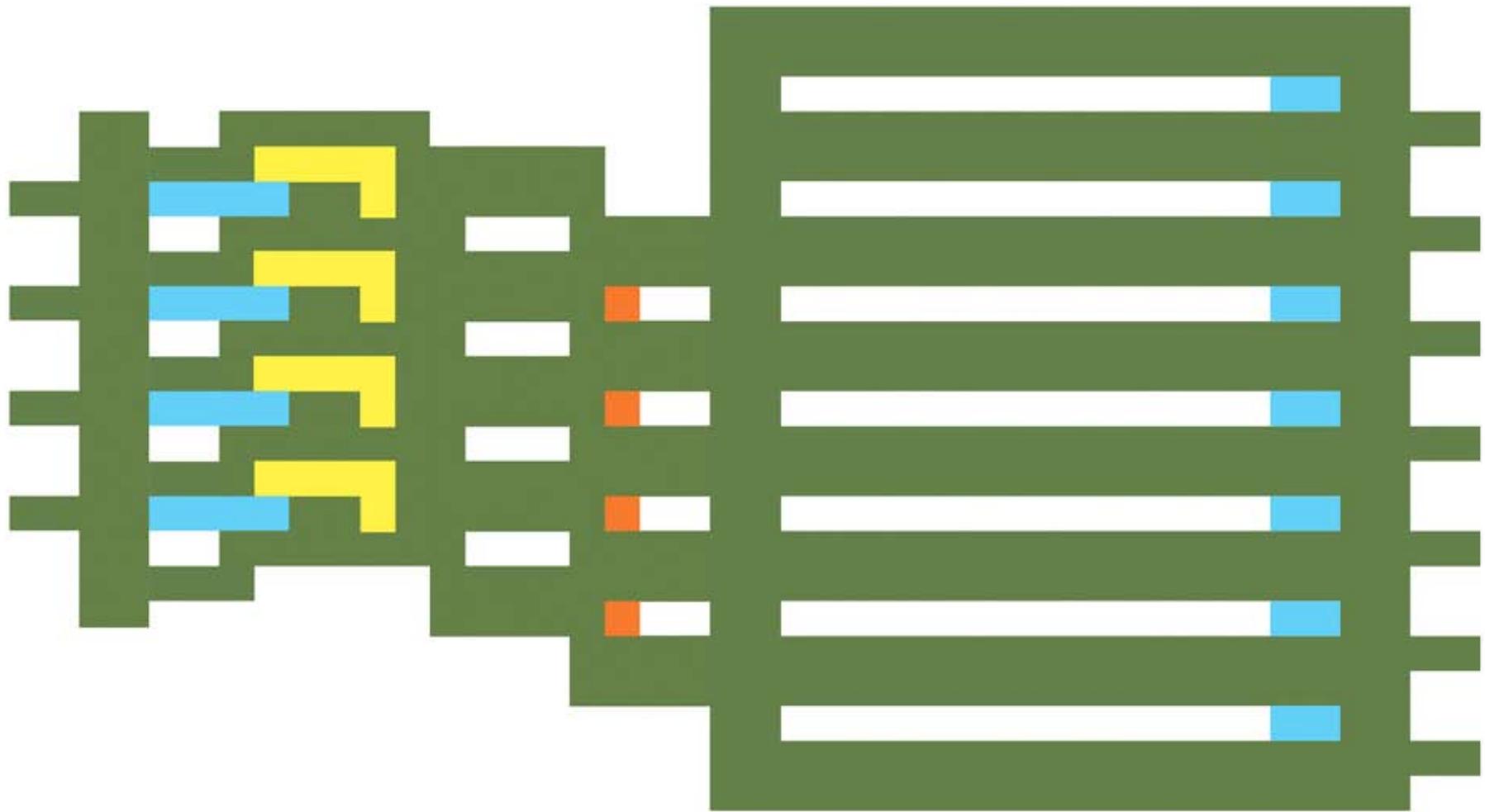




Souvenir Plate (Architecture) 8, 2013
Porcelain plate, ceramic paint, 27 cm in diameter



Petite couronne 2, 2013
Printed road sign, 85 cm in diameter

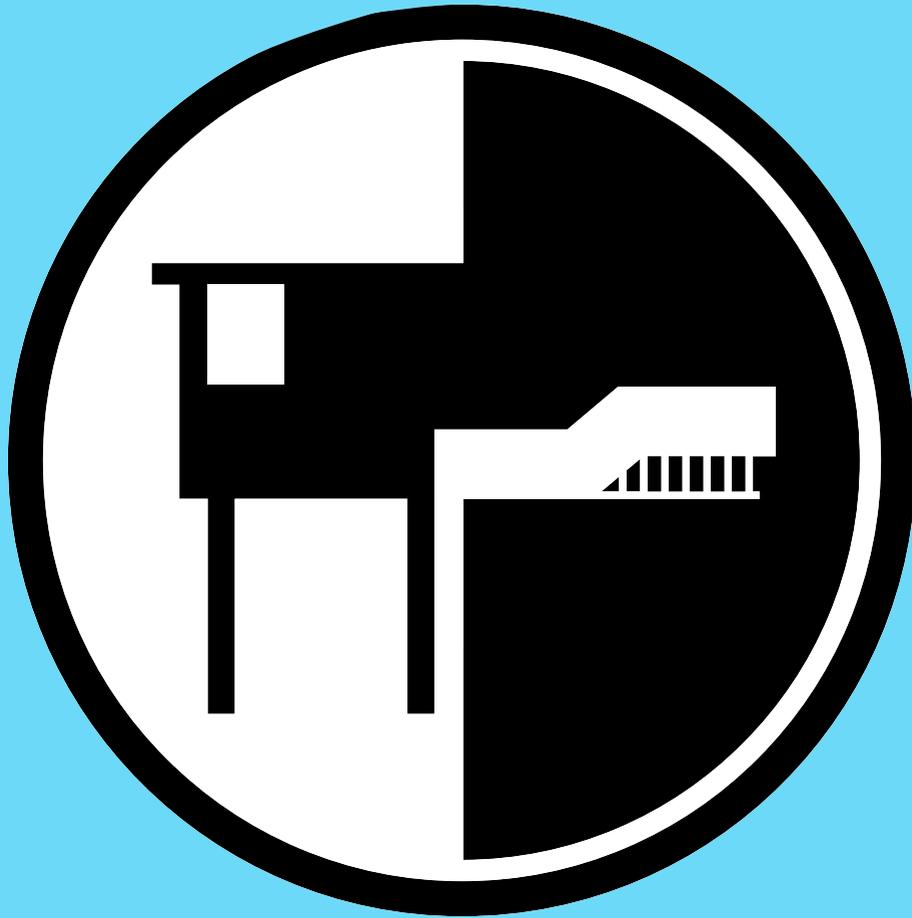




PAINTING FOR THE MASSES?

A work of art today must withstand comparison to any manufactured object. The artist-painting is false and outdated. Only the object-painting is capable of resisting the comparison and holding up over time.

Fernand Léger



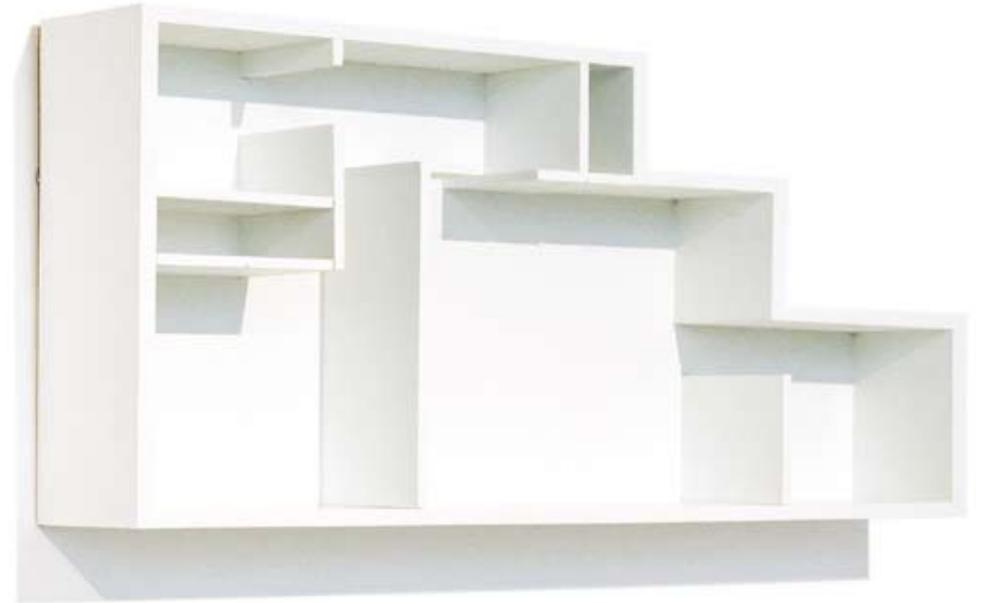
According to English ethnologists at the end of the nineteenth century such as Alfred Cort Haddon, the development of decoration since pre-historic times marks the beginning of the cultural history of forms, thus linking from the outset art and the decorative.¹ In autumn 2013, the *Musée national Fernand Léger* and the *Musée d'histoire et de céramique biotoises* invite Australian artist Heidi Wood to continue this dialogue between fine art and applied arts, in connection with the pertinent distinction Léger made between easel painting and ornamental painting. The result is the two-part exhibition, *Setting for an Ordinary Life*.

Experimenting with images on all surfaces, Heidi Wood draws together two notions of time (universal and contextual) as a traveller and artist in residence. “I explore the use of pictograms in the simulation and evocation of an idealized world. I continue to design repertoires of forms in response to a given context. But the forms are no longer presented via series of photographs to (potentially) become paintings. The physical artwork has disappeared. I now prefer to make ephemeral environments.” Pursuing her visual infiltration of reality in a dizzying, self-promoting

¹ Guitemie Maldonado, “Chapitre 1 / Archéologie du terme” in *Le cercle et l’amibe. Le biomorphisme dans l’art des années 1930*, Paris, INHA/CTHS (“Les Essais de l’INHA”), 2006 [on-line], put on-line December 7 2010, consulted August 10 2013, <http://inha.revues.org/2876>.

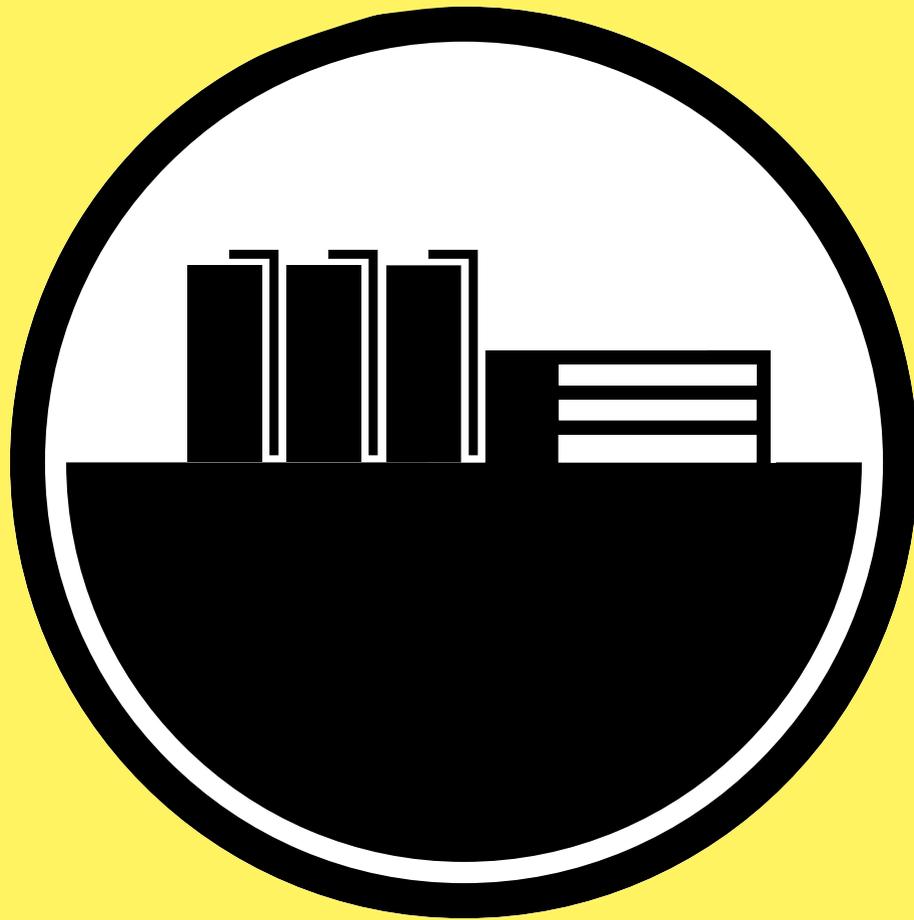
marketing campaign, Heidi Wood undermines the functionality of objects by exploiting their visual potential (street sign, billboard, flag shield, pencil case, souvenir plate, etc.) With the series *Serving Suggestions* begun in 2001 (abstract paintings in modernist interior settings), the artist acknowledges that the artwork, reduced to an image, has been stripped of its aura, as foreseen by Walter Benjamin in 1935.² Her advertising-inspired photographs thus turn the viewer into a consumer.

In *Biot*, Heidi Wood sets up a dialogue between her pictographic landscapes and Fernand Léger's progressive aesthetic in close relation to the town where the painter practiced ceramics from 1949 to 1955. An urban theme runs through these three elements, as this was essential to Léger's work. Indeed, from the 1920's he was enthusiastic about the architectural and social innovations developed and practiced by friends such as Le Corbusier or Robert Mallet-Stevens. Lucid, he nonetheless advocated painting's integration into architecture and wanted artists to reclaim the visual impact of advertising. During the aviation salon in Paris in 1912, along with Marcel Duchamp and Constantin Brancusi, he acknowledged the competition of the industrial object (a propeller, in this case). While Duchamp stopped painting in favor of a conceptualization of the artistic act, Fernand Léger opted for a strategy of integrating painting into total art projects in architecture, cinema or theater. Convinced that art is a means not an end, he discovered the working class during the First World War that he spent at the front alongside miners, tradesmen and road workers. This shift in perspective made him aware that the near-abstraction he had reached in his cubist-inspired series *Contrastes de formes* distanced him from the man in the street. During



Social Housing Display Case 2, 2013
Painted high-density fiberboard, 50 × 105 × 18 cm
Made by Lycée professionnel Pasteur, Nice

² Walter Benjamin, *L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproductibilité technique*, Paris, Allia, 2003.



the famous debates at the *Maison du peuple* in 1936 during which he opposed defenders of socialist realism such as Aragon, he advocated the necessity of art education for all and refused the instrumentalization of art for popularity-seeking or individualistic purposes: «If our artworks have not permeated the masses, I repeat, it is the fault of the current social order and not because these artworks lack humanity.»³ From then on, he illustrated his concept of *nouveau réalisme* by focusing on the everyday object rather than the romantic subject, which had been rife since the Italian Renaissance. In 1923 - 24, he maintained "Beauty is everywhere, in the order of your saucepans, on the white wall of your kitchen, perhaps more so than in your 18th century living room or in official museums".⁴ With his theory of contrasts, he laid claim to the beauty of the pure means available to the painter (line, form, color).

With her project *Sister Suburbs* begun in 2011, Heidi Wood takes stock of this progressive history of 20th century art in light of today's suburban environment, often scorned as less patrimonial than the city center. Her homage to suburbia invites us to change the way we look at the constructed environment, its visual codes and also its contradictions. Halfway between irony and political stance, she questions the social function at the heart of the avant-garde utopia. Influenced by the constructivist aesthetic of Malevich and the Bauhaus, she questions the capacity of non-figurative art to merge with everyday life. What relationship can the painter really establish with her fellow citizens? Does she see the systematic appropriation of geometric abstraction's *topos* by design and visual communication as the victory or bankruptcy of modernism? What is the artist's place in today's global economy of goods and services? As Nicolas Bourriaud

³ Fernand Léger, « Le nouveau réalisme continue », *Fonctions de la peinture*, Paris, Gallimard coll. Folio Essais, 2009, p. 197.

⁴ Fernand Léger, « L'esthétique de la machine, l'objet fabriqué, l'artisan et l'artiste », *ibid*, p. 88.

says, (...) «the abstract glossary allows us to apprehend a visible (architectural, social or economic) reality that capitalism has turned into abstract painting».⁵

A service provider to her own creative undertaking, Heidi Wood provides an answer by examining the signs generated by the regions she visits. The renewed way of seeing she offers us questions the values underlying our era and consequently the way we look at it. As such, Heidi Wood clearly incarnates the still relevant utopia of 20th century avant-gardes: our awareness will change the world.

In the two-part exhibition *Setting for an Ordinary Life*, Heidi Wood presents us with an uplifting *mise en abyme*. Viewers become actors, despite themselves, in a reality show. From inside a museum, they are asked to admire the domestic environment in which they live. All-over painting renders the space concrete by putting *homo erectus* (back) in its center. At the *Musée national Fernand Léger* the exhibition *The Projects* thus immerses the visitor in a total artwork by recreating a standardized apartment in a housing project. Between high art, applied arts and popular taste, the artist is amused by the ambiguous status of her own works that she makes herself or gets others to make for her. Road signs printed with floral motifs are hung on blocks of color painted on walls that evoke the clichés of anonymous suburban architecture. White sculptures based on floor plans from social housing are used as display cabinets for souvenir plates representing electrical towers.



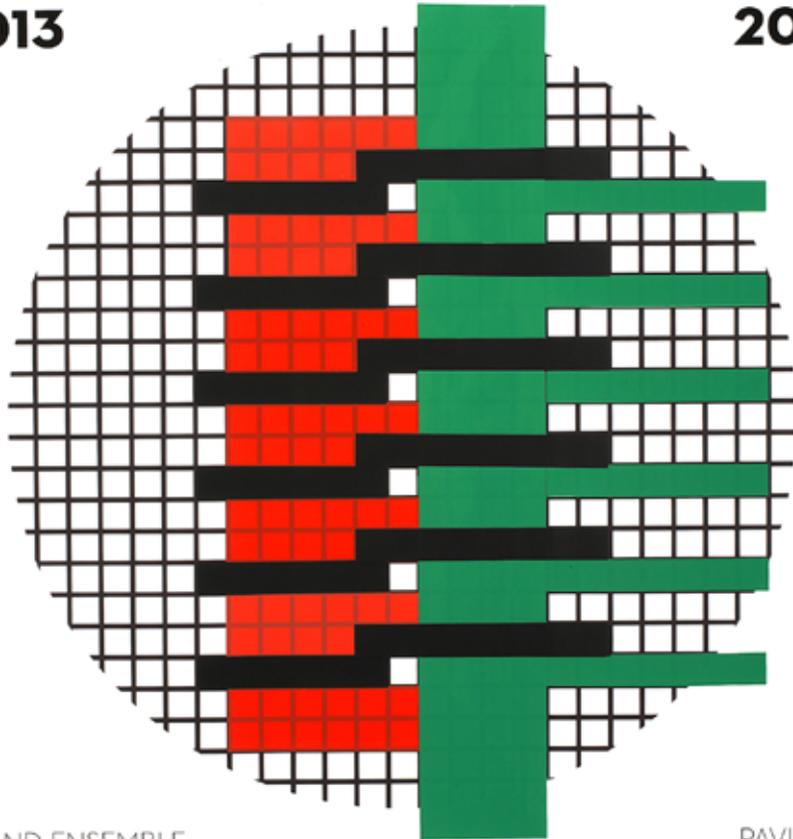
⁵ Nicolas Bourriaud, *Sarah Morris. Mechanical Ballet*, digital catalogue of the exhibition held at the *Musée national Fernand Léger* (November 17 2012 - March 4 2013), [on-line], p. 5, consulted August 13 2013, <http://www.musees-nationaux-alpesmaritimes.fr/library/Sarah%20Morris/SarahMorris2MN2012BD.pdf>

9
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2013

HEIDI WOOD

DÉCOR D'UNE VIE ORDINAIRE

3
FÉV
2014



GRAND ENSEMBLE
**MUSÉE NATIONAL
FERNAND LÉGER,
BIOT**

PAVILLON
**MUSÉE D'HISTOIRE
ET DE CÉRAMIQUE
BIOTOISES**

www.musee-fernandleger.fr www.musee-de-biot.fr

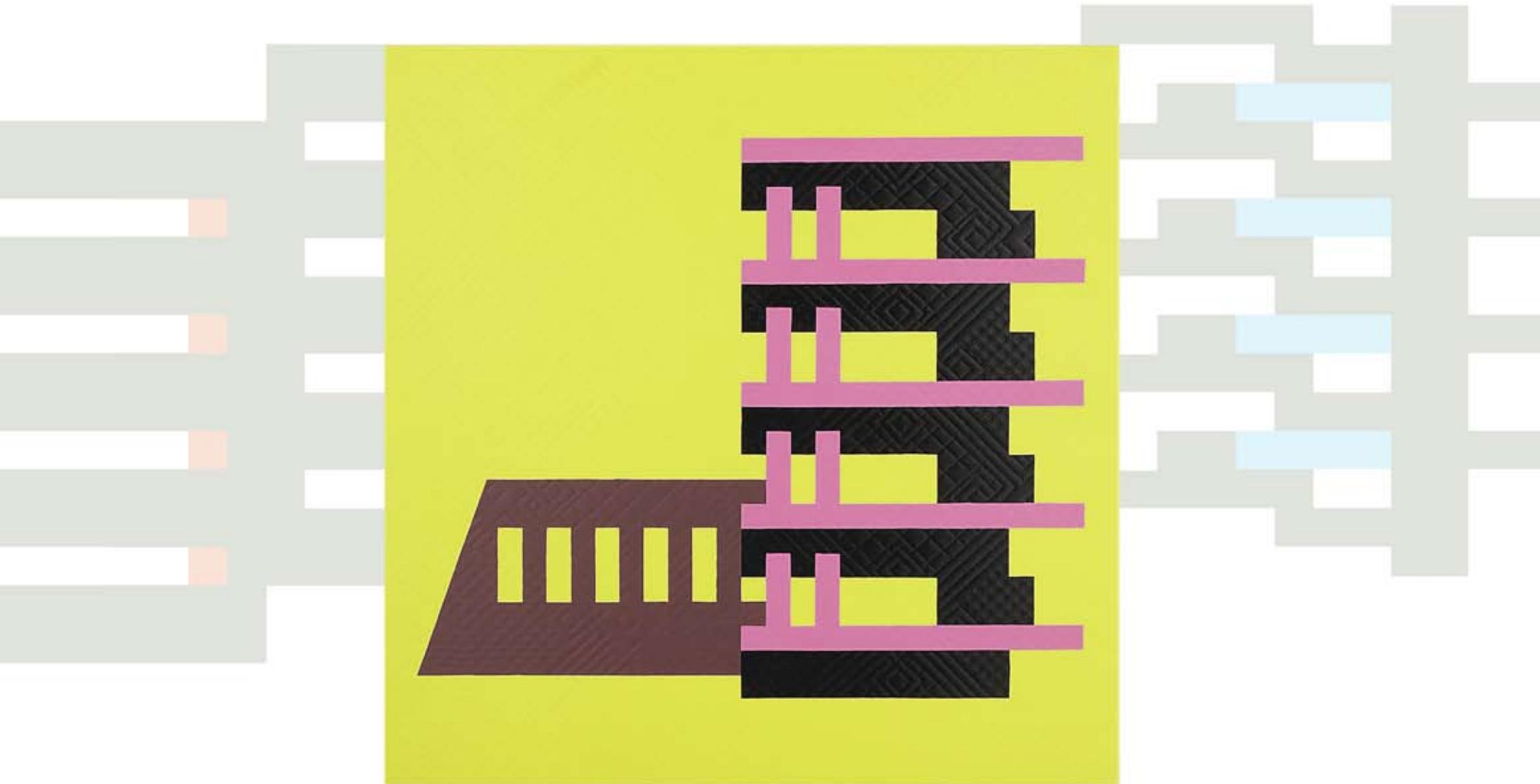


At the *Musée d'histoire et de céramique biotoises*, the exhibition *House* is a lively dialogue between the collections that describe daily life in this beautiful hilltop village in Provence and Heidi Wood's industrial aesthetic. Reinforced by a roadside trail of posters through Biot of five posters with floral or architectural motifs on blocks of color, these exhibitions interact dynamically with two urban realities on the Côte d'Azur: *The Projects* at the *Musée Léger* looks at the dialogue between painting and low-budget architecture while *House* at the *Musée d'histoire et de céramique* explores the connection between applied arts and everyday objects.

For Fernand Léger and Heidi Wood, painting's strength is as a means of visual education capable of countering mankind's alienation by mankind. Their strategy of distancing themselves from reality allows them to look at it more intensely - benevolently but without romanticism. Beyond the canvas, can painting be inhabited? Does our standardized habitat indicate that a learned art form has finally reached the masses? In attempting an answer, Heidi Wood takes her turn at enriching the cultural history of forms.

Diana Gay

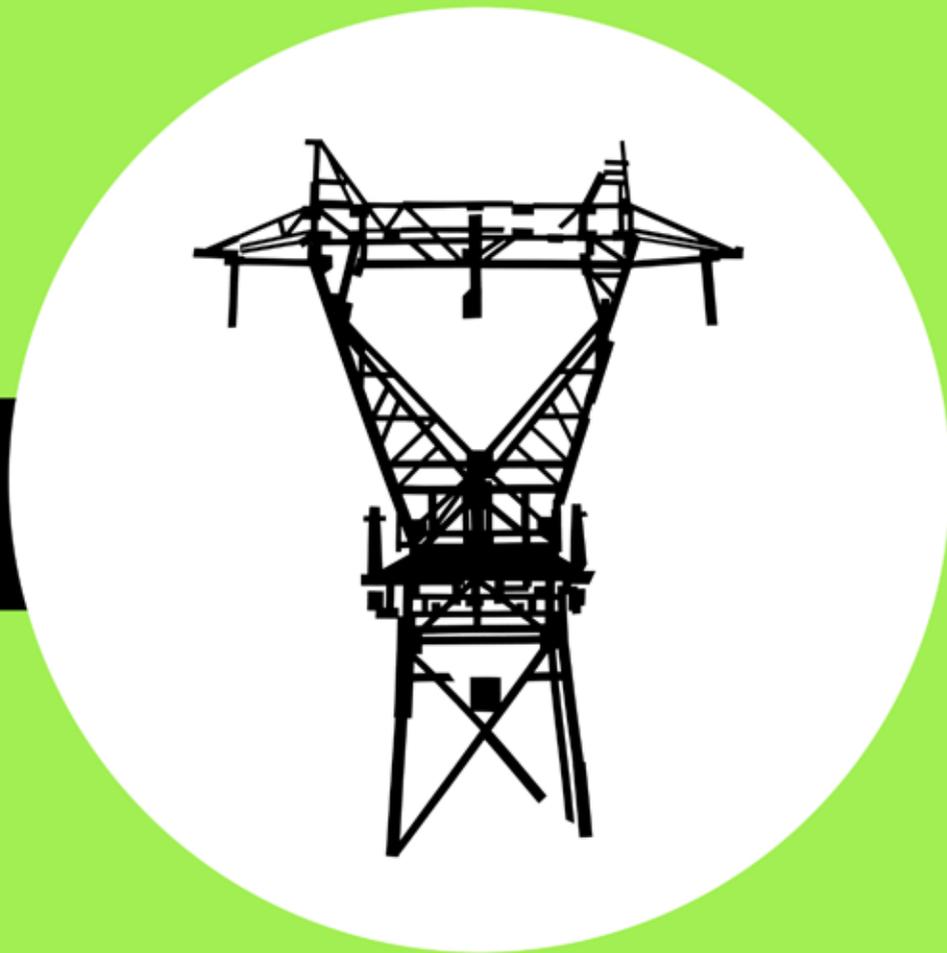
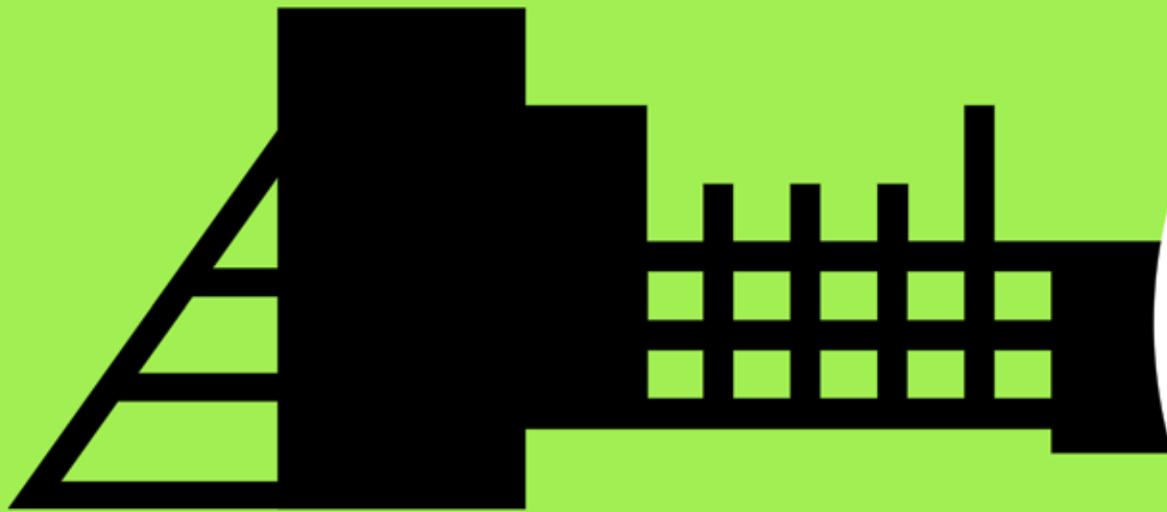
Text written for the exhibition *Setting for an Ordinary Life: The Projects* at the Musée national Fernand Léger, Biot and *House* at the Musée d'histoire et de céramique biotoises (November 9 2013 - February 3 2014).



Setting for an Ordinary Life 2, 2013
Acrylic on upholstery fabric, 100 × 100 cm



Setting for an Ordinary Life 4 and 5, 2013
Acrylic on upholstery fabric, 100 × 100 cm



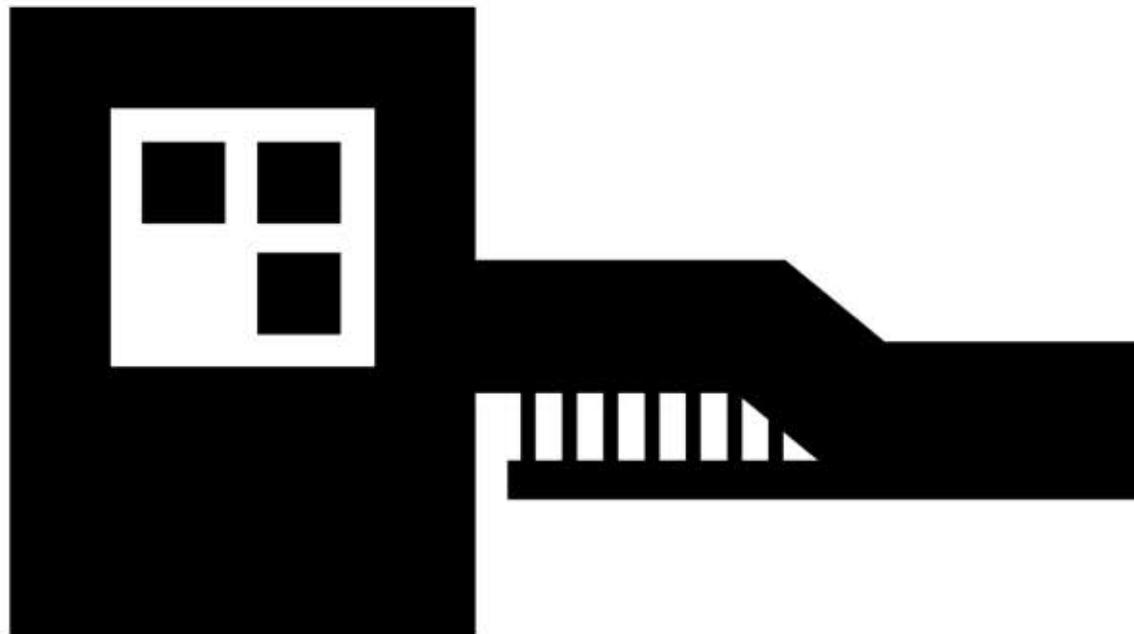
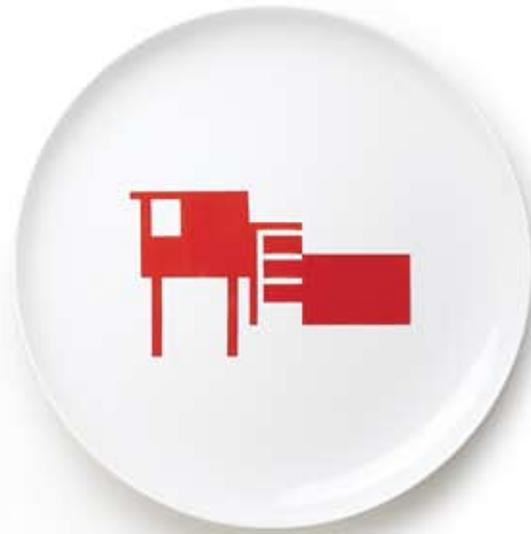
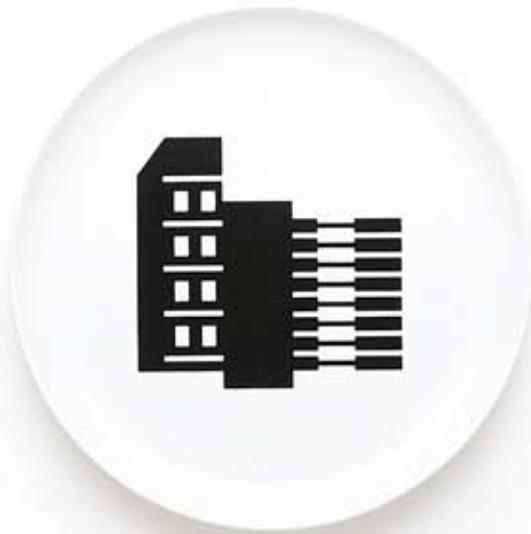
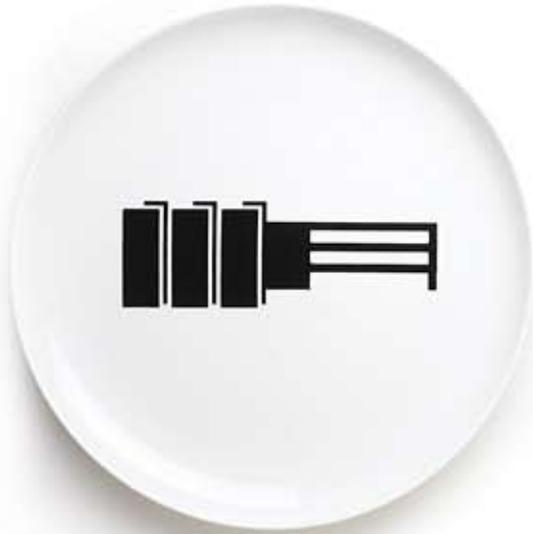




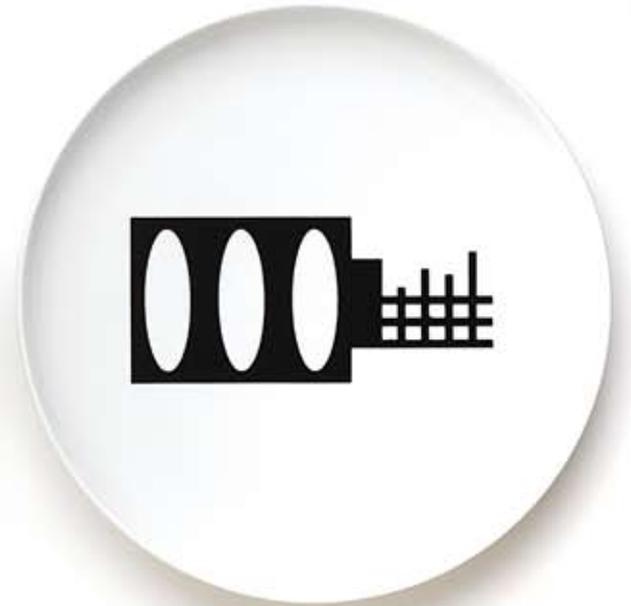
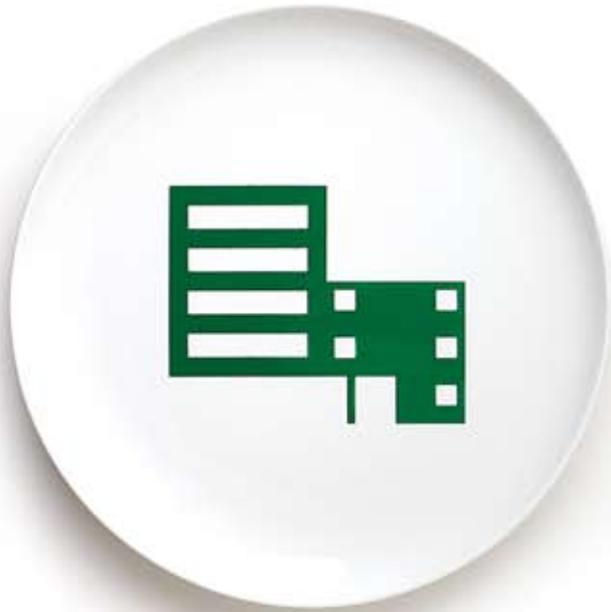
For many years, I have been interested in the use of pictograms in the creation of visual identity in the industry of tourism. This project shines a positive light on the often-scorned outer suburban zones. The modern architecture found there aspired to teaching people a new way of living together. Today, in France, it is a synonym for social tension. In this exhibition, I pay homage to a dystopia.

Heidi Wood

Extract from the interview with Pierre Palvadeau, President of the Musée d'histoire et de céramique biotoises

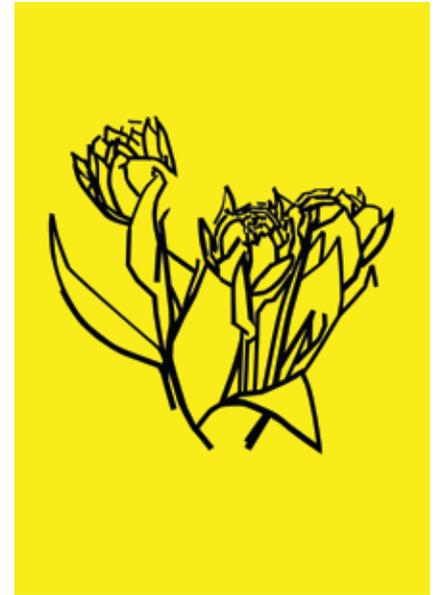
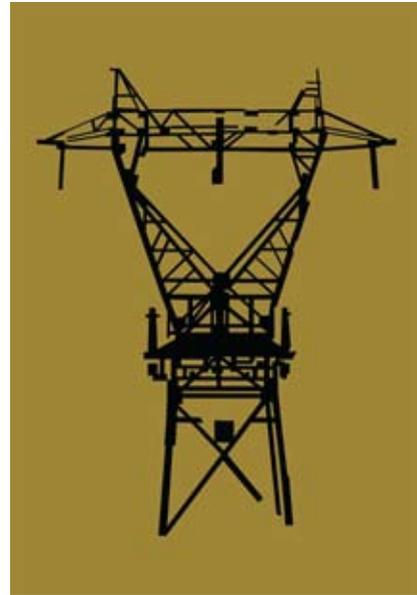
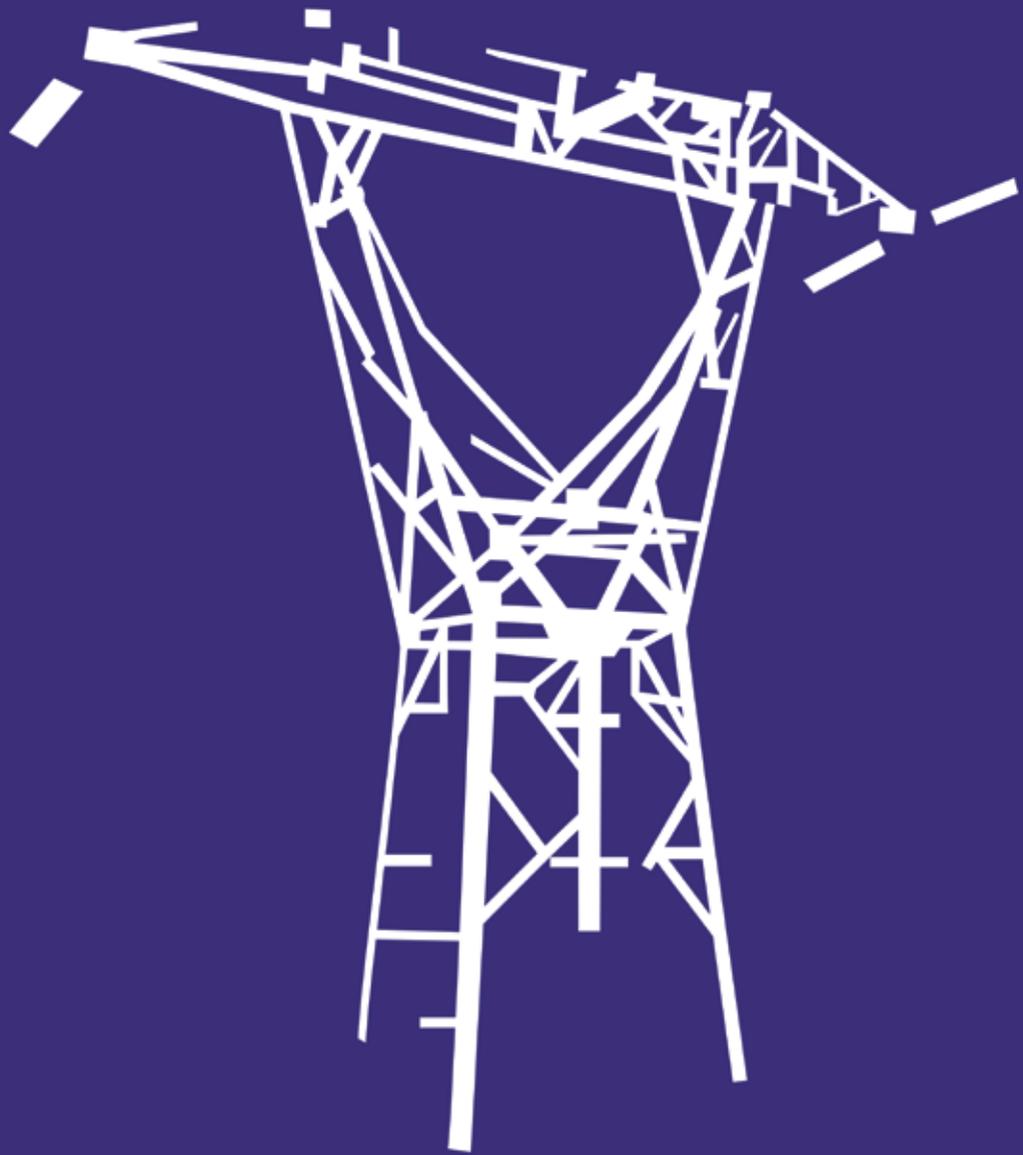


Souvenir Plate (Architecture) 4 - 7, 2013
Porcelain plates, ceramic paint, 27 cm in diameter



Souvenir Plate (Architecture) 4 - 7, 2013
Porcelain plates, ceramic paint, 27 cm in diameter





HEIDI WOOD

Born in London in 1967, Lives in Paris

Represented by Galerie Anne Barrault, Paris

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (selection)

- 2013 • Musée national Fernand Léger, Musée d'histoire et de céramique biotoises, Biot, *Setting for an Ordinary Life*
FRAC Poitou Charentes, Angoulême, *Apparitions collectives*
Galerie Anne Barrault, Paris, *Petite couronne*
- 2012 • Les Réservoirs, Limay, *Banlieues (Suburbias)*
- 2011 • Maison des arts plastiques Rosa Bonheur, Chevilly-Larue, *Vacances d'hiver (Winter Vacation)*
Artothèque de Caen, *Musées du monde (Museums of the World)*
La Graineterie, Houilles, et Balades en Yvelines, *Cosmic*
- 2010 • Galerie municipale de Vitry-sur-Seine, *Partie de chasse (Open Season)*
- 2009 • CAC Meymac, Abbaye Saint-André, *Vous êtes ici (You Are Here)*
Image Imatge, Orthez, *Mount Isa*
Esac, Pau, *Dans l'univers de Beckmann-N'Thépé*
- 2008 • Galerie Anne Barrault, Paris, *Date limite de consommation (Use-By Date)*
- 2007 • ESAD Amiens, *Visitors' Center*

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (selection)

- 2013 • Les abattoirs, Toulouse, *Les Pléiades (30 ans des FRAC)*
- 2012 • MAM Galerie, Rouen, *La fureur de l'éternuement*
- 2011 • FRAC Ile-de-France, Domaine de Renty, *Round and Round and Round (part 2)*
Art dans les chapelles, Pays de Pontivy (Notre-Dame du Moustoir)
Artothèque de Limousin, Royère de Vassivière, *Home Sweet Home*
- 2010 • Exposition/résidence 777, Château de Kerpaul, Loctudy
Villa des Tourelles, Nanterre, *Les autres œuvres*
Galerie du Cloître, ERBA, Rennes, *Extension du domaine de la réalité*
- 2009 • FKSE Studio, Budapest, *Free Your Mind*
CAC Meymac, 1979-2009. *Pas nécessaire et pourtant indispensable*
FRAC Poitou Charentes, 008. *Collection, nouvelles connexions*
- 2008 • Artothèque de Caen, *Ville en vues*
FRAC Poitou Charentes, *Pièces à vivre*
- 2006 • FRAC Haute-Normandie, *Welcome Home*
Galerie Anne Barrault, Paris, *Grandes vacances*
- 2005 • Abbaye Saint-André centre d'art contemporain, Meymac, *Le canard était toujours vivant*
Centre photographique d'Ile-de-France, Pontault Combault, *Trois et trois font...*
Parker's Box, New York, *iamfive*

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

FNAC, FRAC Poitou-Charentes, FRAC Ile-de-France, FRAC Haute-Normandie,
Artothèques de Limoges, Caen, Pau, Pessac, Artbank Australia

GRANTS, COMMISSIONS AND RESIDENCIES

- 2013 • **Public art project**, Internat d'excellence de Montpellier
Public art project, Pôle biologie-sante, Université de Limoges
- 2010 • **Public art project**, vélodrome de Bourges
- 2009 • Résidence au Künstlerhaus am Deich, Brême
Résidence au CAC Meymac, Abbaye Saint-André
- 2008 • **Public art project**, INSEP (livraison 2013)
- 2007 • **Public art project**, Vitry-sur-Seine, Opération Logis Transport
First catalogue grant Centre national des arts plastiques
Residency, Santa Fe Art Institute, Joan Mitchell Foundation
- 2006 • Residency, Budapest Galéria, Budapest, Culturesfrance and the City of Paris
- 2005 • Residency, Centre Photographique d'Ile-de-France, Pontault-Combault
Production grant, Direction des Affaires Culturelles de la Ville de Paris
- 2004 • Residency, 18th Street Art Center, Los Angeles, Australia Council for the Arts
Production grant, DRAC Ile-de-France
First exhibition grant, Centre national des arts plastiques (Fiacre)

EDUCATION

- 1992-95 • Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris, DNSAP, atelier de Claude Viallat
- 1985-87 • Victoria College, Prahlan, Melbourne, Bachelor of Arts, Printmaking

BIBLIOGRAPHY (selection)

- Diana Gay, « Une peinture populaire ? », catalogue *Setting for an Ordinary Life*, 2013
- Karim Ghaddab, *Banlieues (Suburbias)*, 2012
- Jacinto Lageira, "Connected by Images", catalogue *Vacances d'hiver (Winter Vacation)*, 2011
- Anthony Gardner, catalogue *Partie de chasse (Open Season)*, 2010
- Didier Arnaudet, *Art Press* n° 355, avril 2009
- Frank Lamy, catalogue *Heidi Wood 2001 - 2007*
- Philippe Coubetergues, catalogue *Heidi Wood 2001 -2007*
- Philippe Coubetergues, catalogue *Heidi Wood dans le Xème*, 2006
- Stephen Wright, catalogue *Los Angeles Diaries*, 2005
- Raya Baudinet, *Art Press* n° 292, juillet 2003
- Alexandre Bohn, *Art Press* n°285, décembre 2002
- Judicaël Lavrador, catalogue *Heidi Wood à la Planète Magique*, 2003
- Fabienne Fulchéri, Suzie Attiwill, catalogue *La maison de banlieue (The House in the Suburbs)*, 2002
- Philippe Coubetergues, "Tu vois le tableau" catalogue *IUFM* de Paris, 2002
- Frank Lamy, "Proposition d'accompagnement", catalogue *Serving Suggestions*, 2001



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This on-line catalogue documents the exhibition

Heidi Wood

Setting for an Ordinary Life

Musée national Fernand Léger, Biot (**The Projects**)

Musée d'histoire et de céramique biotoises (**House**)

November 9 2013 - February 3 2014.

Head curator : Maurice Fréchuret

Curator (The Projects): Diana Gay

Curator (House): Pierre Palvadeau

Exhibition organized by the 20th Century Museums in the Alpes-Maritimes

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Photographs: Benoît Jeanneton (reproductions)

Fabien Harbonville et Muriel Couton (exhibition views)

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