

## The Ephemeral of Peace

The flyer is exemplary for the merging of women's and peace activities around 1980 and can be described as almost paradigmatic for the time and for the movement's subject: From the paper quality to the fact that there are two color variants, to the design, perhaps also the indistinguishability of the front and the back, its high information content compared to the text length, the use of language.

Women's movement and peace activist Hermi Hirsch is responsible for the content. Her Beisl, a pub in downtown Vienna, was a meeting place for left-wing artists and the headquarters of the association she initiated. By mentioning her name, it fulfilled a police requirement at the time. It does not necessarily mean that the flyer was designed and drawn by Hermi Hirsch. As part of the G 14 - Women for Peace Vienna collection of the STICHWORT collection on autonomous Austrian women's groups, the flyer exists three times – twice red, once green.

At first glance, one page of the flyer appears to be a collage: a photo, handwritten text, cutouts, and drawings are grouped into nine blocks. Only upon closer inspection does the information fall into place.

First of all, let's focus on the graphic elements: there is no element that is not designed by pencil. The first thing that stands out is the ornamentation in the subtitle above, flowery vines, reminiscent of peace songs. The highlighting in the handwriting is accomplished through coloring the letters and hatching. Through drawing a deckle edge, the photo becomes even more of a photo, so to speak, and it aligns itself with the look, in which there are no corners and edges. Speech bubbles, each in a different form, serve to comment. The question, no, the exclamation "Where!" also added in the manuscript, is answered by a building copied from somewhere. The whole page does not require a typewriter.

First the title: "Peace is not a weak word" shall be our heading. Of course, it is a quotation. Whether it refers to the motto of the poetry forum of the Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt or its publication from 1981 as a recent event, or more generally to a familiar slogan, remains to be seen. And please, this is very important: The asterisk after women is not an early flash of queer practice, but simply an annotation that takes us to the ultra-short bio of the three women that are featured. This brings us back to the photo. It is also available as an original at STICHWORT, and in 2011, it came with the AUF Photo Archive. For years, we puzzled over the identity of the three, which we only established when we found this flyer in the collection.

On the other side of the page, we finally spot a women's sign, a women's sign with an attribute, as we call it – a fist crumpling a rocket like paper – and now there are also typewritten elements. On this page, the language catches our eye: Fight for Peace it says in words and images. A kind of info block on peace – partly from the repertoire of the women's movement, partly from the peace movement – it anticipates plausible slogans of the Demonstration for Disarmament and Peace, which is announced at the end of the page.

The whole flyer contains three announcements, namely for the Demonstration for Disarmament and Peace on October 22, 1981, the Viennese Peace Festival two days later on October 24, and then, decidedly appealing to women, the concert on November 8 in the Simmering shopping center.

In any case, the flyer intended to address women, generally those with a women's movement background, but not only them. Likewise, the concert in the EKZ was probably for a broader audience, too. Otherwise we would read the reference "for women only," which was used very often in those years. The flyer's creator could rely on certain prior knowledge of the readers: about what a Schneewittchenfrau, a Snow White woman, is – it is about the all woman band "Schneewittchen" – the demo starting point at Stafa did not need an explanation either, in contrast to the EKZ Simmering, which had opened a few days prior; the conspicuous department store on Mariahilfer Straße, where the street broadens towards the Westbahnhof, was often the assembly point for demonstrations. The amendment, "Women bring your children," points to something that was largely taken for granted, but that was also part of a common practice of the peace movement. Children and peace, that belongs together, that associatively contains future and responsibility.



Foto / photo: Jakob Dietrich

## ENTRÜSTET EUCH! [DISARM YOURSLEVES, GET OUTRAGED!], 2022

Sekretariat für Geister, Archivpolitiken und Lücken / Secretariat for Ghosts, Archival Politics and Gaps

In Zusammenarbeit mit / In collaboration with Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski, Lina Dokuzović, Margit Hauser und/and Sassy Splitz

In Kooperation mit / In cooperation with STICHWORT, Archiv der Frauen- und Lesbenbewegung

Fotografie / Photography Julia Gaisbacher

Das Projekt wurde für die Ausstellung AGGRESSIVE PEACE im Kunstraum Memphis in Linz entwickelt (14. Mai - 8. Juni 2022).

The project was developed for the exhibition AGGRESSIVE PEACE at Kunstraum Memphis in Linz (May 14 - June 8, 2022).