

Andy Boot

C C

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The letter C has a pleasant and simple form—basically a round shape or circle, opened on one side. Its doublet, CC, in common contemporary use, is a function in e-mail programs to co-send to multiple recipients. The name derives from the old analog technique of the carbon copy, referring to a usually bluepigmented paper that was used to copy a handwritten or typed action, an individualized and simple method of reproducing. Considering the existing abbreviations in digital media, CC could also stand for the Spanish/Italian double affirmation “Si, Si,” either showing deep approval or disregard.

Andy Boot is a stoic artist, with a finely tuned and reduced output, in which time and again patterns loom large. A pattern is a discernible regularity, where forms, symbols, and colors repeat in an anticipated manner. What underlies the pattern, what shapes its character and interval, would be its grid. A bigger part of Boot’s work circles around those patterns, or symptomatic surfaces say—forms, symbols, shapes, and colors appearing on the skin of things, and the reasons that bring them there.

In his current show at Croy Nielsen, Boot deals with patterns carried out by scrap-like objects. The patterns, building the chorus of this show, appear on printed metal sheets. They are rooted in the customized backgrounds of Geo-Cities, a former Web host for personalized homepages. GeoCities peaked at the end of the nineties, in sync with the dot-com bubble, was acquired by Yahoo!, and collapsed in 2009, by which time Myspace and, finally, Facebook had already taken over. Many of the sites came in a digital, collage-like 90s look, garnished with GIFs, and still haunt the Web today as retro chic. For its time, GeoCities had a symptomatic, simplified logic, divided into sections or “neighborhoods,” with themes of professional and private everyday associations, that were reinterpreted, such as “Capitol Hill” as a political section, “Vienna” as the classical music area, “Pentagon” and so on.

Some of the patterns used as backgrounds for the sites mirror the themes; other ones are just abstract, colorful, and pixelated. An arbitrary selection of six of them are to be found in the show, taken from an actual online archive showing a cross section of former sites. Flipping through this—of the millions of sites, only hundreds were archived—some of them have a professional intent, e.g., private car rentals. Many of them are quite random attempts, ranging from Black Ninjas, Winnie the Pooh, and a high amount of fantasy related contents or just blog-ish personal introductions involving cats and dogs.

Boot manufactured sculptures with fine fabric-like, metal grids, quite carelessly bowed and dipped into concrete rectangles. We see groupings and constellations of these handbag-sized objects, like roughly crafted hints on classic pop cultural clichés of a “matrix,” where animated things evolve from woven digital grids. But for a more analog observer, the objects could also just remind

you of tissue boxes changing shape every time you pull.

Benjamin Hirte

