OBJECTION

Fight or Flight

October 19 - November 30

Opening reception: October 19, 6-8pm

[559 W. 23rd Street. New York, NY](https://maps.google.com/?q=559+W.+23rd+Street.+New+York,+NY&entry=gmail&source=g) 1001

Crossing Collective, at [559 W. 23rd Street. New York, NY](https://maps.google.com/?q=559+W.+23rd+Street.+New+York,+NY&entry=gmail&source=g) 10011, is proud to announce its inaugural exhibition: *Objection:Fight or Flight*. The exhibit dissects the expansive definitions of art and design. Through unconventional vocabulary and transdisciplinary working methods, the selected artists both embrace and at the same time protest functionalism. Through the application of materials, methodology, education, politics, and identity, each artist tells an individual story of how ideas relate to national history; how personal narratives respond to contemporary culture and conditions of production and consumption.

*Objection* examines the deviations between logical contemporary forms and the role of function in art and objects. In so doing, it argues the idea that art is a genuine creative labor that cannot be resolved ontologically or epistemologically. It argues the 'principles' approach to design, promoted by the De Stijl movement, and underpinned the Bauhaus movement, is a form of purism that is limited to functionality and esthetics. Do both not constitute an encounter with the problematic? It is all the property of the living, of intelligence coupled to action, that not only enactspoiesis, but indicates a broader role for creative anomaly.

———

What, then, are these distinctions? Perhaps function is a presently differentiating characteristic. Architecture and design serves a purpose, and by embodying an aesthetic philosophy can point also towards a higher realm of living. Whereas, the modern acceptance of self-expression as a productive artistic force means that in terms of function, art may relate the object to its maker, while design relates the object to its audience. Of course this is limited; much art today has an outward facing function, addressing aspects of collective life rather than the artist’s singular experience, for example, or inducing chaos or instilling calm in a viewer rather than offering the maker his own cathartic gratification.

It is in the form’s relationship to function and purpose, rather than the quality of possessing purpose itself, that art and design might be separately understood. Where form follows from function, we are speaking primarily of design. But where form is something understood in itself, untethered to aesthetic values that intend meaning, we might be then in the presence of art. “Art is art-as-art,” said Reinhardt. Wittgenstein: “the meaning is the use.” A work of art is a useless tautology: it manifests the artist’s intention to make a work of art, and is therefore a work of art. “Art-as-art” – excluding conceptual art, artwork carries no information beyond itself, while aesthetics binds appearances to perceptions and judgements about the world in general. The habit of connecting art to aesthetic, borne out of philosophy’s attitudes towards beauty and taste, ultimately conflates distinct notions.

An object's individual relationship to perceived aesthetic, form, and function may help more clearly separate design from art, and yet all the objects here, presented within the context of exhibition, are eligible for consideration aesthetically, formally, and functionally - objecting to classification. Indeed, such a comprehensive assessment illuminates the motivations and understandings of the world that contribute meaning to each work, helping orient us to the objects, their makers, and to one another. But we may well also admire each piece for its beauty, its art in itself.