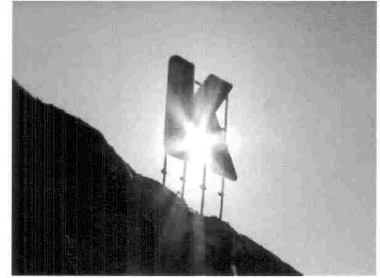


1



2



3

# TOM BOGAERT

## “K is for KOMPRESSOR”

1- “K is for Kompressor Sign”, 2011, welded galvanized steel, 126 x 102 x 4 cm  
 2 & 3- Still images from “K is for Kompressor video”, 2011 3 minutes 59 seconds

K for Kompressor (KfK) is a filmed Hollywood-style sign featuring the letter 'k' of the Mercedes-Benz 'kompressor' logo. In this piece I further explore intersections between enlightened absolutism and badges used by Mercedes-Benz for their supercharged engines.

KfK consists of a large welded galvanized steel letter 'k' and a short film. Documentation of the preparatory process that led to the materialization of the KfK project in the form of text, photos, sketches and the production model form an integral part of the piece and act as a narrative voice-over about Kompressors

I coined the neologism 'kompressor' in the context of his pre-revolution research on forms of government in the Arab world. Until recently the term 'kompressor' referred mainly to Mercedes-Benz's turbocharged engines and the hugely popular – albeit overused – badges that identify them. The new meaning I gave to 'kompressor' is the product of the following formula: compassionate + oppressor = kompressor. It reflects the 'Everything for the people, nothing by the people' spirit of self-declared enlightened absolutism and it can still be applied to the majority of rulers in the region.

In effect, it seems that compassionate Presidents, Sheikhs, Kings and Chairmen rule with the intent of improving the lives and happiness of their subjects primarily in order to strengthen their own authority.

Kompressors also share their subjects' obsession with German cars, and Mercedes Benz in particular. A cult of personality often arises and kompressors tend to use mass media and propaganda to create an idealized and heroic public image. Compassionate oppressors see themselves as heroes of the nation without whom the transformation to a better future can't occur.



Born 1966  
 Brugge, Belgium  
**Visual Artist**

2011  
 - Group Exhibition “Rituals”, AiOP festival New York, NY  
 - Group Exhibition, “Piso Mojado para Gaza”, Eltiqa Gallery, Gaza, Palestine  
 - Group Exhibition, “Living Spaces” All Art Now, Damascus, Syria

2010  
 - Solo Exhibition “IPO 2” – work in progress Le Pont Gallery, Aleppo, Syria  
 - Solo Exhibition “Impression, Proche Orient I”, Makan Art Space, Amman, Jordan

2008  
 Solo Exhibition “Amahoro, Jack The Pelican Presents”, New York, NY

1991  
 Masters Degree in International Law  
 Leuven, Belgium

1987  
 Bachelors Degree in Philosophy  
 Brussels, Belgium