LOOKING FOR ZARA
Floriane Sintès

In November 2021, a departmental commission issued an "unfavorable order" on the opening of a Zara store in Bordeaux (Fr), citing the existence of an ongoing judicial investigation.
A refusal motivated by the opening of an investigation against Inditex, Zara's group, for "covering up crimes against humanity" after a report by an NGO that accuses it of buying cotton from labor camps in which Uyghurs are persecuted. Charges that the group refutes.
Limiting the extension of Zara: this project proposes a fictional space, imagining this place as a potential space, an extension of this Zara shop, which kept its doors closed and never opened. A space that could have been in the same type of legal proceedings.
In this phantom space, one can suspect a resumption of another activity, creating a regime of doubt about the nature of the place.
“Looking for Zara” is an exploration and intervention in the return policy system of the clothes. Through the introduction of labels in the jackets, that develop other narratives and data inside the clothing, where the composition is usually featured. The clothes are then put back into circulation, as they are returned to the brand against a receipt.
Like a series of boomerangs.
Several intervened jackets have already been put back into circulation in Zara stores in Barcelona.The rest is ready or in preparation to be put back into circulation, returning it to stores. The proposed infiltration strategies are as much a search for witnesses, accomplices as proposals or tricks to recognize and evolve in a hostile terrain.
“Looking for Zara” deciphers the role and incoherent portrait of the figure of the brand, as a role that one can appropriate, looking for a substitute. In search of a double.

“Looking for Zara” is a research-investigation exhibition on the eponymous corporate entity. Owned by the Spanish group Inditex, the world’s 4th largest textile company. Following on from her series and research “Les Doublures”*(*Lining/Doubler) on clothing brands and what they show about themselves (Chloé, Caroll, Jennyfer, Céline and Morgan), Floraine Sintès confronts the figure of Zara. With, among other things, “MORE THAN A JOB, a Way of Life” as its recruitment slogan, Zara is in line with groups that aim to “put people back at the heart of their company”. By dissecting the marketing vocabulary used by the brand, the language and internal managerial strategies addressed to its employees, and the official and unofficial testimonies, it draws up a portrait of the fictitious identity that the company’s legal entity manufactures, and puts other narratives into circulation. What does it claim to be?

Floraine Sintès (1995) lives and works in Lyon. After a brief stint at Olivier de Serre in brand communication and packaging design, she joined the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Beaux Art de Lyon from which she graduated in 2020. She forms the duo Donnant-Donnant with Agathe Chevalier. Since 2016 she has been involved in several collectives and associations: Maison de l’écologie in Lyon, Cybersistas (intersectional feminist club), Pôle Technique (creation of workspaces for self-managed artists) and in 2021 she co-founded the artist Runspace Monopôle in Lyon. The same year she presents her work in several group exhibitions La quatrième du trèfle ordinaire at the orangerie du Parc de la tête d’or, A Ciel ouvert curated by Studio Ganek as well as Le début de la fin at the Institut d’Art Contemporain de Villeurbanne. In 2022 she will participate in Ce qui reste d’espoir pour mentir at the Brasserie Atlas in Brussels, Zone grise at monopôle and super F97 and will propose on an invitation from the BF15 “Acteur.ices Permanent.es” in-situ exhibition at the Théâtre des Célestins.

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