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# RED WEDGE

For a popular avant-garde

Rekindling the revolutionary imagination

## E C H O E S O F 1 9 1 7

Part II of Neil Davidson on Trotsky, Lukács + Greenberg Alexander Billet + Adam Turl on Enzo Traverso's *Left-Wing Melancholia* poetry by Maggie Corvid Joe Sabatini on Boris Groys + *Stalin's Gesamtkunstwerk* Jason Netek on Yevgeny Yevtushenko + new translations of Yevtushenko's poetry Georgia Blank reviews Art + the Russian Revolution + Ilya and Emila Kabakov Richard Wright's long-lost speech on the task of the artist from *The Anvil* Earl Theodore on Owen Hatherley's *Chaplin Machine* Art from Jon Cornell, David Mabb + Richard Reilly Jordy Cummings on Soviet Disco

art by David Mabb

The installation *Long Live the New! Morris & Co. Hand Printed Wallpapers and K. Malevich's Suprematism, Thirty Four Drawings, including covers, addendum and afterword* is made from a combination of two books: a Morris & Co. wood block printed wallpaper pattern book from the 1970s containing 45 sample wallpaper designs by William Morris, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century English wallpaper, textile and book designer, poet, novelist and Communist; and the Russian artist and pioneer of abstraction Kazimir Malevich's *Suprematism, Thirty Four Drawings*, published in 1920. Pages from Malevich's book, including its front cover and afterword, have been painted (or, for the afterword, pasted) sequentially over the pages and front cover of the Morris & Co. wallpaper book. This interleaves the two designs, which are formally 'merged' together, ceasing to be objects that can be held and becoming an installation of paintings. But another transformation also takes place. The 'politics of form', the aesthetic investigation of the ideological intersections and differences of the two books, re-visions the world out of its constituent historical elements. Morris' once utopian wallpaper designs are recharged with political meaning by their dialectical juxtaposition with Malevich's Suprematist drawings and vice versa. This suggests a way of reinterpreting the past, through a restaging and reconfiguring of key moments in the history of art and design, that investigates what a visual language of change might look like. *Long Live the New!* questions both the rose tinted medievalism of Morris and Malevich's idealised Suprematism.

## Biography

David Mabb is an artist who works with appropriated imagery to rethink the political implications of different aesthetic forms in modern art and design history. Recent work has focused on William Morris. Mabb's interest in Morris stems from the social and political connotations of Morris' work, the continued relevancy of Morris' politics and the continuing market for Morris' designs. Mabb's interpretations and reconfigurations of Morris' designs consider the relationship between Morris' own thinking and other forms of cultural production, particularly art and design produced in Russia around the time of the Revolution. Mabb is a Reader in Art at Goldsmiths, University of London, where he is Programme Co-Director of MFA Fine Art.







