

# ŠKART

Location: Belgrade, Serbia

Operative since: Two of us founded the collective in 1990; a friend joined us in 1997

Practice organised as a: collective of freelancers

<http://www.skart.rs>

Škart is a poetry and design collective founded in 1990 at the Faculty for Architecture in Belgrade. “Architecture of the human relationships” is their main motto and within the collective, members collaboratively work to develop new values. Škart works with print, creates objects, organises initiatives and performances in the urban fabric, runs workshops and, at times, produces music. In their work, they embrace “beautiful” mistakes and tirelessly strive to combine work with pleasure.

What desires, values and elements of support/discouragement made your practice evolve over time?

Working together and exchanging ideas is always helpful to evolve work further.

What, in your case, are the advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses of working collectively?

The advantage is that we can exchange ideas, help each other, develop ideas together. The weakness could be that it is harder to earn enough money to survive.

How do you deal with money and wages between the components of your group?

How do you deal with tensions and power relations within your group?

I tried to settle the proportion: from everything we earn, 30% goes to the studio budget (to pay rent, equipment etc.), the other 70% is shared between us. Sometimes not everyone is happy with this. But usually, we do not have a problem with power relations. For example, one person is the best at PR, he likes to do it a lot and we are all fine with that.

How do you access meaningful commissioned work and how do you finance and carve-out time for self-initiated projects? What strategies and tactics are you making use of?

We do not make a lot of effort to access commissioned work - everything comes through recommendation. Many years ago, when we started, people were recommending us to one another and it still works like this. We never work with clients if we do not ideologically agree with them (even if it is a not classic client-maker relationship). This means that we do not work for big companies, merchants, never with Right-wing movements and so on. We are lucky enough that we can choose with whom to work. Unfortunately, however, the choice is not big. For self-initiated work, we use the money we earn as graphic designers; our “projects” are very cheap and involve a lot of voluntary work.

How do you organise your time between work and non-work? What systems do you use to keep track of where you invest your time?

We do not have such a system; often there is no distinction between work and non-work time.

How does your current working and living environment (geographic location, spatial arrangement) reflect (or otherwise) the ethos, methods and dynamics of your practice?

The geographic location and environment we work in have been quite difficult for the last three decades, which we are used to. Since here in Belgrade we often have political turbulences, it affects our work, shifting it towards the more political and pushing us to be more critical. And, since we live in a city which is quite chaotic and where not many things are planned in advance, we have to adjust ourselves to that, so we work under a certain degree of permanent pressure.