There is nothing left to laugh about. These times are not a time for humour. Nothing could be further from someone's mind than laughing or risking a joke when thinking of the current global crises and the planetary catastrophe.

Crises have become our new future. Catastrophe is our new present tense. Mass extinctions, oceanic acidification, resource depletion, swaths of the Earth rendered unliveable and dead, toxic materials, human exhaustion, non-human disappearance, wasted land, ruined lives.

What might ecocritical and environmentally conscious art in times like these look like? What artistic strategies are not reliant on the politics of protest? How can outrage be articulated? How can resistance be voiced differently? How can despair find a form that does not give up? How can rage take a form that does not give in?

Questions like these posed here have been provoked by the work of Michael Niemetz, whose installations venture into the risky territory of wry humor. Humor has not dried up yet, but humor is wry. Humor is contagious. He makes us laugh precisely because of the predicament we find ourselves in. This is the activist dimension of the work of Michael Niemetz. (Elke Krasny)

The first monographic publication by Michael Niemetz, which covers the ecocritical artist's body of work of the past 20 years, is not intended as an instruction manual for production, but rather as a misuse guide with a rethinking process in mind.


English and German text.