

Not as Advertised

- talking back to consumerism.

Whether it's antique advertisements or Communist Russian propaganda, what was produced with the serious intention of moulding public opinion in one era easily becomes the kitsch decoration of the next. We frame posters that extol the virtues of Stalin in illegible Cyrillic script, and send postcards depicting chubbily cute infants advertising soap. Our nostalgic affectation for these relics of extinct cultures is not unmixed with superiority: we can see through them, we are not taken in, so by implication we are smarter than their original audience.

Imagine if one day we have managed to achieve a sustainable lifestyle. If consumer culture had collapsed and we had stopped compulsively buying stuff we don't need and throwing away stuff that is not worn out. Today's fashion advertisements might come to seem as naïve as a Victorian advertisement for mustard. The concept of 'This season's look' could become as redundant as that of 'The peoples revolutionary party'. The posters on the hoardings would be abandoned to fade in the sun and tear in the wind, relics of a time when people were stupider than we are now.....

"It's the End of the World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)"⁷