

The enigma of arrival. Il mistero dell'arrivo | Jürgen Partenheimer

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A man pushed a wheelbarrow full of pictures through a distant landscape. He regularly stopped by the side of the path, took a picture out of the wooden barrow and showed it to the trees. He showed them to the birds, the foxes and the deer as well, he even held them up to the sun, as the flowers turn their faces towards it. He took them through meadows and fields, leaned them against sheaves of hay, or laid them in the full grass so the sky could see itself in them. He pushed the barrow into the gloomiest forests, made a bed for his burden on the dry moss, hung them on the broken branches of the pines and fir trees, carried them up to the tops of the tallest trees, covered with his visions the nests of the woodland grouse and the aeries of the eagles and did not tire of sharing them out. But even the largest of them were always too small. For every picture that he gave away, he found two new ones in his barrow, each one stranger than the next. He never seen such forms and colors. So, he pushed the barrow in front of him, passing through deserts and forests, struggling over rocky mountain paths and through swampy meadows, till a path took him to the foot of a mountain whose pastures were divided by a snow-fed stream. He followed the gurgling course of the waters, which rushed past him with ever-increasing force, and lined the leaping spring with the most powerful pictures – pearl by pearl he strung them on the chain of the retreating winter. Joyfully he jumped over the shining rocks and made his barrow dance to the wooden sound of the dancing pictures. Hundreds of them fell out of the low-sided barrow and vanished the moment they touched the ground. So, he climbed over the mountain's slopes till, on the other side of the saddle, he beheld a quarry cut into the mountain like a hunter's chair. He quickly steered his barrow into the semi-circular quarry and, obeying an invisible plan, began to build a house which in its interior focused the mighty gaze of all surrounding mountains in a single room. Once the stone house was complete, he pushed the barrow through the empty doorway into the spacious square of the well-lit space. But to his great surprise the barrow was empty. Only one picture lay at the bottom, smaller than all the others. It was covered with the prints of his fingers, which like stars, mark the sites of human thought, and above everything floated the outline of a staff – blue over grey.

– Jürgen Partenheimer, *The lake is a river. A conversation about riddles and parables*, Amsterdam, 1987

The solo exhibition *il mistero dell'arrivo* presents a body of new work of cross-media concepts including sculpture, painting, drawings and text of Jürgen Partenheimer following his five-year commitment to the comprehensive group of works of *One Hundred Poets*.

In his fairytale-like parable *The lake is a river* Jürgen Partenheimer addressed as early as 1987 the unpredictable magic of creation which leads into the world of imagination: that realm of discovery where everything is conceivable and dreamable. Dare and dream characterize this area where all transformation unfolds and the never-ending new beginning of our attempts, of our approach as conscious action is defined.

In the exhibition, the dialogue with sculpture, painting and drawing, their common presence enters a conversation about the complexity of the order of things and addresses the space they conquer and assume as an unequivocal position: *Topos*, *Tracks* and *Maze* draw the coordinates in which *Small Shapes*, the *Heart of Flowers*, *La Fortune* and *Drenched Moon Rising* meet. Within the eventful zones of imagination, we experience the *Redress*, the bringing back of the restoration of balance as well as a new beginning after five years of concentrated work on the *One Hundred Poets*.

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In an incomparable way, Jürgen Partenheimer creates spaces of contemplation and visual imagination in which his abstract art does not show what is seen, but instead reveals spirit, movement, trace and energy, giving the movement of thought a visible form. Thus, Jürgen Partenheimer's complex oeuvre inspires experiences that reshape the realms of perception, thinking and doing.

The poetically abstract oeuvre of the German artist **Jürgen Partenheimer** (*1947 in Munich, DE) stands in the great tradition of modernism, from which he consistently develops his work. In various forms of artistic expression – painting, sculpture, works on paper, artists books and text – he combines minimalist formal vocabulary with lyrical content. His work is characterized by an extraordinary relationship of line and form that invite to free association and trust the world of imagination. While avoiding the narrative, Partenheimer explores in his art a mental, geographical, historical and political space for a new correlation beyond sensual perception. Thus, Partenheimer could be described as a cartographer of imaginary worlds: he creates a universe in which the work of art becomes legible as a sign and event within a metaphysical, spiritual reality. For Partenheimer, abstract art is not self-referential, but opens up the possibility of transforming the movement of thought into a visible form. This unique approach was defined by the artist as „metaphysical realism“.

Jürgen Partenheimer was represented internationally as early as the 1980s with participations at the Biennales of Paris (1980), São Paulo (1981) and Venice (1986). Solo exhibitions of the artist's work have been held by the National Gallery Berlin (1988), the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (1997), the National Museum of Fine Art, Beijing (2001), the CGAC in Santiago de Compostela (1999 and 2004), the S.M.A.K. in Gent (2002), the Pinacoteca do Estado in São Paulo (2004), the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham and the Kunstmuseum Bonn (both 2008), and most recently at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, the Gemeente Museum Den Haag, The Falckenberg Collection-Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (all 2014) and the Musée Ariana, Geneva (2016). Jürgen Partenheimer has taught at the San Francisco Art Institute, the University of California, Davis, the Staatliche Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, the Royal College of Art, Edinburgh, the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam and at the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence. Until 2011 he held a guest professorship for painting at the Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel.

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