

Jürgen Partenheimer. Vasts Apart
Areas of Order. The Slowdown of Conditions

Häusler Contemporary - Zurich

November 25, 2022 - January 20, 2023

"When Jürgen Partenheimer worked on the series of drawings and watercolors last year (1989), which the Kunsthalle Hamburg is now exhibiting in the gallery of master drawings, he had a clear concept: „to visualize the movement of thought." This is how a text by Evelyn Preuss in 1990 begins about the group of 11 watercolors and 34 drawings entitled "Vasts Apart." Werner Hofmann, then director of the Kunsthalle in Hamburg, exhibited the body of work of „Vasts Apart" to show how Jürgen Partenheimer's work differs independently and autonomously from that of Paul Klee, with whom he was often compared in the 1980s. In his text on the group of works for the exhibition's publication, Werner Hofmann expressed "that the drawings are to be perceived as an event" and he convincingly elaborates on this insight: "the categories of Partenheimer's formal plan become recognizable when we engage with the interpretation inherent in his works : the design is perceptible as the measuring and taking possession of the picture surface. But these dispositions have a finality that is unobtrusive, not categorical, which is why it would be wrong to speak of completion. Not only is the reference to the production process preserved, it permeates the setting that results from it as intention and energy, it controls it." The intention and energy of the watercolors and drawings refer in their entirety to those "areas of ordering" in which their connections are explored and recognized during their creation. "This recording, which comes into drawing, means recreating a space, finding a world that allows this work, that trusts its meaning, that can be established. Establishing is also an act of „digressing". In perceiving and thinking, we distinguish between things, we consider and examine, and while we decide intuitively, the parts branch out into a new whole." The connection, the ordering, and the intertwining open up correspondences in the drawings in the interplay of unlimited imagination: Vasts Apart, separate worlds—vastly distant. Bridging infinity. Werner Hofmann interprets this coherence of the interdependent, branching drawings plausibly when he continues: "Individual drawings are linked to one and the same conceptual idea; they are its continuation. Since this interlocking stabilizes the elements with which it works for the viewer's eye, turning them into constants, the formal order takes on something like authority. Nevertheless, the process is still contained within the

stabilization, which is perhaps where the easiness of these drawings originate. Of course, it also has to do with the economical articulation. This economy of means represents the word ascetic, and the solemnity refers to the level of form that Partenheimer achieves with it." The "solemnity" that Werner Hofmann speaks of senses the slowing down of movement, the silence in the drawing as a space of events, "for it is only when things come to a standstill that their presence is illuminated." In our attention to the totality of the works, in which the individual drawings and watercolors comprehend their diversity as a unity, we recognize the attitude of perception—far removed from all conventions. Thus, more than three decades after its creation, „Vasts Apart“ (Hamburger Block) takes on a central significance in the graphic work and, with its radiance, also inspired painting and sculpture as "spatial drawing."

Bruno Glatt, 2022