

MEDIA RELEASE

Exhibition: Jürgen Partenheimer «Vasts Apart»
[Hamburger Block]
Opening: Friday, November 25, 2022 | 5–8 p.m.
The artist will be in attendance
Duration: until January 20, 2023

Häusler Contemporary is proud to announce the exhibition Jürgen Partenheimer «Vasts Apart» [Hamburger Block]. This group of works was first presented at the Hamburger Kunsthalle in 1990 and was acquired for a private collection. Thirty years later, we are showing this extraordinary cycle in Switzerland for the first time.

A year earlier (1989), when Jürgen Partenheimer was working on the cycle of drawings and watercolors that the Kunsthalle Hamburg is now exhibiting in the room of master drawings, he had a clear concept: “visualizing creative thought”. Thus begins an article by Evelyn Preuss¹ from 1990 about «Vasts Apart», a group of works consisting of 11 watercolors and 34 drawings which Werner Hofmann, then director of the Kunsthalle in Hamburg, exhibited in order to show how independent and distinct Jürgen Partenheimer’s work is from that of Paul Klee, to whom he was often compared in the 1980s.

Writing about this group of works in the artist’s book for the exhibition, Werner Hofmann recognizes “that the form (drawing) is to be perceived as a process”, and he gives a convincing explanation for this insight. “The categories of Partenheimer’s designs become recognizable when we accept the interpretation that his works suggest: that it is possible to understand the process of the form taking shape as one of surveying and taking over the picture plane. But these arrangements have a *finality* that appears unobtrusively, not categorically, which is why it would be wrong to speak of *completion*. Not only is there still a reference back to the process of production, but this process interacts with the resulting placement through intent and energy; it controls this placement.”² The intent and energy of the watercolors and drawings refer in their entirety to those “areas of ordering” in which their contexts are explored and recognized even as the works are being created. “This drawing up, the act of *becoming part of the drawing*, means remaking a space, finding a world that accepts this work, that trusts in its purpose, one that can be set up. Setting it up means focusing on the details. With a discerning eye and mind, we differentiate things; we ponder and examine, and while we are making

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¹ Evelyn Preuss, “Ausflüge zur Farbe. Jürgen Partenheimer in der Hamburger Kunsthalle”, *Die Welt*, March 25, 1990.

² Werner Hofmann, “Anschauliche Parabeln”, in Jürgen Partenheimer, *Vasts Apart* (Hamburg: Hamburger Kunsthalle, 1990).

intuitive decisions, the parts branch out to form a new whole.”³ The context and the ordering as well as the interrelationships within the latter reveal correspondences between the drawings in an interplay offered by unbounded imagination: Vasts Apart, separate worlds – worlds apart. Bridging the vastness. Werner Hofmann offers a plausible interpretation of this coherence of these interdependent, branching drawings when he continues: “Individual drawings depend on one and the same idea of form; they are an extension of it. Since this interplay stabilizes the elements it employs for the eye of the beholder, making them constants, the formal order attains something like authority. Nevertheless, this stabilization still includes the process; perhaps that is the source of the airiness found in these sheets. It also has to do with their economical articulation. This economy of media is what is meant by the word *ascetic*, and *solemnity* refers to the height of form that Partenheimer achieves with it.”⁴

The “solemnity” of which Werner Hofmann speaks gives a sense of the decelerating motion, the silence in the drawing, being a space in which a process occurs, “because only when things come to a standstill is their presence revealed.”⁵ In giving attention to all the works as a whole, in which the individual drawings and watercolors understand that their diversity forms a unit, we recognize the approach that underlies this perception – *vastly apart* from all conventions. Thus, more than three decades after its creation, the group of works titled «Vasts Apart» [Hamburger Block] is of pivotal importance among graphic works, and its appeal has also inspired painting and sculpture to be “spatial drawing”.

Bruno Glatt, 2022

**For further information and print-quality images,
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³ Jürgen Partenheimer, “Erst der Stillstand der Dinge erleuchtet ihre Gegenwart”, in idem, *Vasts Apart* (Hamburg: Hamburger Kunsthalle, 1990).

⁴ Werner Hofmann, loc. cit.

⁵ Jürgen Partenheimer, loc. cit.