

# Jacques Gassmann

Berlin » Würzburg



# Berlin

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# Artist Statement

## What made you start painting?

Painting is the oldest way of expressing thoughts and stories. As a kid I wanted to become a cartoonist. So I started drawing a lot with ›fineliners‹. In highschool I got to know a girl who was the daughter of Pelikan`s ink company marketing chief, and as they liked my drawings they sponsored me for years with a supply of ink in exchange for drawings. Suddenly I had this access to liters of ink, and this opened new possibilities for me: I could experiment as much as I wanted.

## ...and so you developed your very own way of drawing?

Some topics seem to be particularly fitting for a certain technique. The ›Natural Hazards‹ paintings for example produce a lot of unclarity through phenomena such as dust, smoke, mist, foam etc. All of these have a blurred quality which I can perfectly achieve with the medium of ink.

As another example, the topic of the ›Apocalypse‹ series came to me because I had found a proper technique for it: my way of drawing with ink allowed me to treat the topic of ›vision‹ without being purely illustrative. Visions are something very immaterial, and so is my way of using ink. Again, there is this blurred quality which leads in this context to a certain transcendence.

This way of treating the subject of vision was also the reason for the Hanns-Lilje Foundation (curated by Dr. Joachim Büchner, former director of the Museum of Modern Art in Hannover) to offer me a scholarship to realize the monumental ›Apocalypse‹ cycle of 32 large scale pieces within two years.

During this process of working on the ›Apocalypse‹ cycle I read Eduard Lohse`s translation of the original Greek apocalyptic text, and he came to my studio several times to talk about it with me. There was thus a fusion of conceptual background with the more intuitive process of painting.

Until today the quality of translucency in my work is appreciated in the context of church and religion. This also leads to regular commissions for public spaces and churches.

## What fascinates you with ink?

Ink has very specific characteristics: it is fluid and water-like but contains pure pigment without any of those sticky ›binding agents‹. Thus it`s a precious material. It allows staying in a flow while painting, in a way it offers the same fluidity of a process as writing with an ink pen. This made me create my very own technique which makes the specific transparent and translucent quality of ink manifest. The procedure of this technique is contradicting the academic ways of thinking and practicing, and is thus for the viewer not immediately comprehensible. The mystery remains within the picture.

# Biography

Jacques Gassmann was born in 1963 in Heidelberg as son of Günther Gassmann, professor of theology, and Ursula Gassmann, conference interpreter. He grew up in Heidelberg until his family moved to Strasbourg in France. From 1972-1976 he attended college and at the same time the conservatory of Strasbourg as a student of the cello class. In 1982 he graduated from college in Germany. After that Gassmann worked in graphic studios and played electronic instruments in the band ›Cache Sexe‹.

During this time he produced a series of drawings on paper and realized first performances with his girlfriend Uli Schneider under the name of ›Jeunesse Dorée‹.

Gassmann is an autodidact. His first painting was presented in 1985 at an exhibition in the ›Haus der Kunst‹ in Munich – an expressionist work of the 22 years old artist.

In 1988 -on recommendation by Dr. Joachim Büchner (Sprenkel Museum Hannover) and Hanns-Werner Danowski (Stadtsuperintendent) he is granted a 2 years

scholarship by the Hanns-Lilje Foundation in order to develop a 32-part Cycle on the Apocalypse.

Since 1989 Gassmann concentrated increasingly on thematic cycles. ›Natural Hazards‹ originated as his first work cycle. By experimenting with ink and hydrography he develops the painting technique ›Ogrody‹ green (Polish: ›garden‹) in 1990, which became patented by his lawyer friend and collector in Hannover as homage to Yves Klein. This special ink painting technique produces particular structural effects. Gassmann is probably the only ink painter in the western countries, where as Inkpainting is usual a traditional main painting style in Asian countries.

From 1998-2002 he lived and worked in a restored farm building in the nature park of Steinhude near Hannover. In 2003 he was invited by the Art Academy in Poznan/Poland where he spent three years. Presently he lives in Würzburg since ten years, where he realized plenty of architectural projects, wallpaintings, altarwing pain-

tings, glassworks, mainly in the catholic churches of the Würzburg Diocese. Many churches are decorated by his paintings, as well as by many painted organ prospects and ways of the cross. Jacques Gassmann`s works were exhibited in Europe, Asia and America. He gives lectures and leads master courses at various academies and universities in Europe. (Rotterdam, Stuttgart, Augsburg, Hannover, Stockholm)

# Exhibitions

## Recent individual exhibitions

- 2018 Le Guern Gallery, Warsaw, Poland
- 2016 Museum Burg Miltenberg  
Uterstaedt Gallery, Berlin
- 2015 Uterstaedt Gallery, Berlin  
Diözesanmuseum, Regensburg
- 2014 Museum am Dom, Würzburg  
Uterstaedt Gallery, Berlin
- 2013 Kunsthalle Concordia, Poznan, Poland  
Fu Xin Gallery, Shanghai, China  
Julian Ehrlicher Gallery, Leipzig  
Stift Haug, Würzburg

## Recent Group exhibitions

- 2015 Museum am Dom, Würzburg
- 2014 Baumwollsoinnerei, Nsk-Folk-Art-Biennale,  
Leipzig

## Art Fairs

- Art Miami (USA)
- Art Karlsruhe (D)
- Arte Fiera - Bologna (I)
- London Art Fair (GB)
- Art San Diego (USA)
- Art Bodensee Dornbirn (A)
- Art Cologne Köln (D)
- Berliner Liste (D)
- Art Fair Köln (D)
- Art Fair Shanghai (CHN)
- Roma Contemporary Art (I)

## Commissions in the sacred area

- 2016 Two Altar-piece paintings, Catholic Church in  
Volkersberg

- 2014 Painted Glass Window (skylight and  
two-sides windows), St. Jakob  
Church in Waigolshausen
- 2013 Two Altar paintings, St. Kilian Church,  
Obertheres
- 2011 Triptychon for the crypt in Dom am  
Würzburg, Way of the Cross and altar  
painting, Augustians Church, Würzburg

## Art in Architecture

- 2016 Ogrody Room, Burkardushauuses
- 2015 Wall paintings, Mijas / Malaga, Spain
- 2013 Painted Glass Window, Clinic in Quedlinburg
- 2010 Organ design, Neumünster, Würzburg

# Black & White

1987-1989



Paques | 1999  
Ink on Canvas, 270 x 400 cm

# Black & White

1987-1989



Untitled | 1988  
Ink on Canvas, 160 x 250 cm

# Black & White

1987-1989

Furuffuta | 1988  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 200 cm



# Black & White

1987-1989



Centaure | 1988  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 200 cm

# Black & White

1987-1989



L'Étranger A. Camus | 1988  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 750 cm

# Diaspore

1985-2018

Since 1985 Jacques Gassmann has been processing packaging material of different substrates for freehand ink drawings. This continuous series of pictures clearly shows Gassmann`s graphic development.

A

Untitled | 2011  
Ink on Paper, 180 x 160 cm



A

B

Untitled | 2006  
Ink on Paper, 110 x 90 cm



B

# Diaspore

1985-2012

A

Untitled | 2007  
Ink on Paper, 61 x 52 cm



A

B

Untitled | 1985  
Ink on Paper, 96 x 107 cm



B

# Diaspore

1985-2012



A



B

A

Diasporen 12 | 1998  
Ink on Paper, 82 x 148 cm

B

Diaspore | 2006  
Ink on Paper, 80 x 60 cm

# Diaspore

1985-2012

A

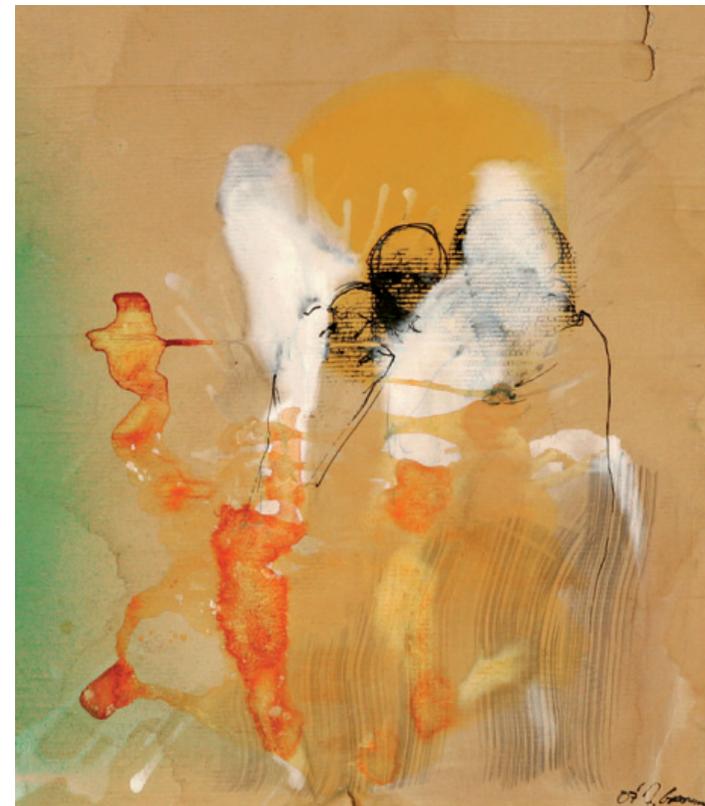
Untitled | 2006  
Ink on Paper, 125 x 92 cm



A

B

Untitled | 2007  
Ink on Paper, 117 x 95 cm



B

# Apart of Me

1988 - 2018

In this artistic unleashing of figure, color and surface lies the great aura of images and drawings.

Jacques Gassmann works with the greatest possible color out of the black and white.

Jacques Gassmann penetrates into the depths of the painting ground by removing the paint material with water. All the colors he uses come from black. He develops his motif, the figure, out of the drawing. He emphasizes his protagonists with the contrast of abstraction and concretion and above all of painting and drawing.

A

Figure playing with strings | 2005  
Ink on Canvas, 110 x 130 cm



A

B

Bleeding figure with bird part 2 / 2008  
Ink on Canvas, 205 x 100 cm



B

# Apart of Me

1988 - 2010

A

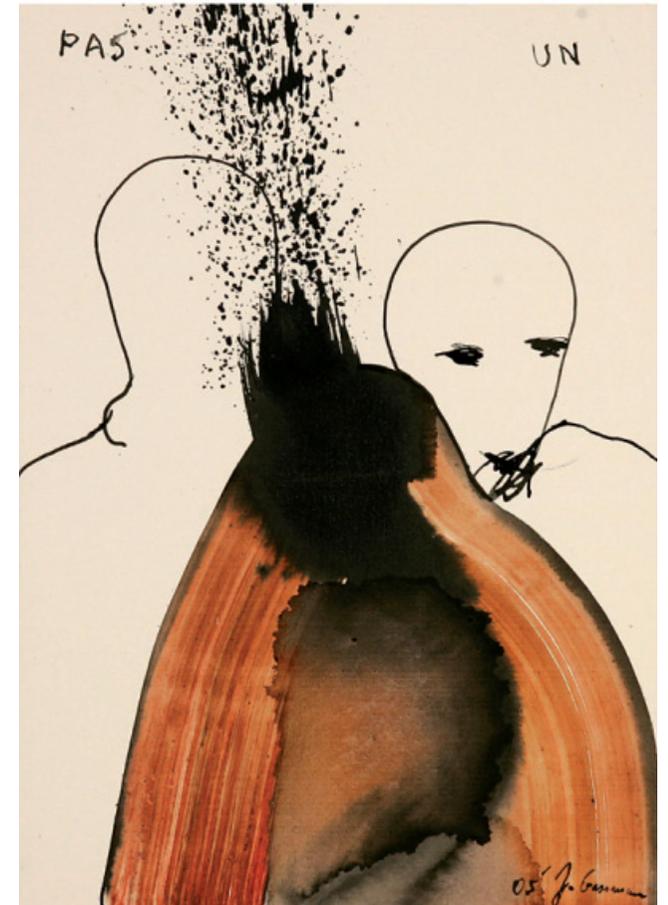
Baptism | 2005  
Ink on Canvas, 75 x 140 cm



A

B

pas un (unPas) | 2005  
Ink on Canvas, 70 x 50 cm



B

# Apart of Me

1988 - 2010



A

A

Figure analysing | 2003  
Ink on Canvas, 120 x 135 cm



B

B

Two figures in a surfing discussion | 2004  
Ink On Canvas, 100 x 130 cm

# Apart of Me

1988 - 2010



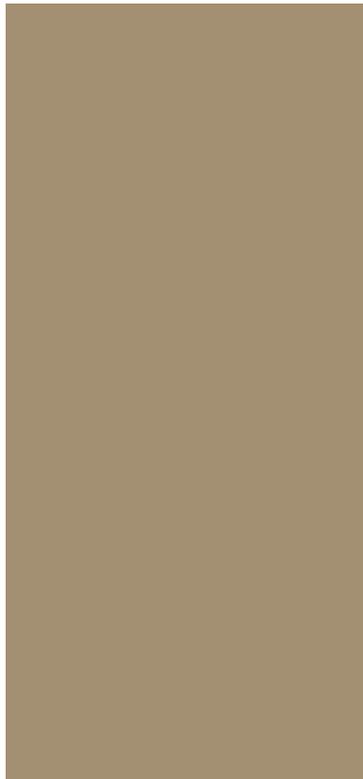
A

A

Figure over and underworld | 2006  
Ink on Canvas, 360 x 160 cm

B

Listening figure | 2010  
Ink on Canvas, 80 x 60 cm



B

# Apocalypse

1988 - 1991

The Revelation of John is the cycle of 32 paintings. (Color pigment showers on canvas, each painting 150 / 300 x 250 cm). From 1989 to 1992 the artist worked on cycle with support and scholarship from the Hans-Lilje-Stiftung Hannover and was accompanied by the director of the

Sprengel Museum Hannover, Dr. Ing. Buchner. Gassmann strictly adhered to the chronology of the biblical text of Revelation, using the translation of Eduard Lohse.

The Revelation of John places us right in the middle of problem of the relationship between world history and the history of salvation. It throws the problem in sharp focus, but it doesn't solve it. Perhaps that is why John's apocalypse has always challenged the painters, as Jacques Gassmann now does with his large format images caught in a dark excitement.

The revelation of John portrays in tremendous pictures the end of history and time. And that seems to be the fascination for the painters who are trying to shape these intersections.

the throne of God (part 3 / 32) | 1989  
Ink on Canvas, 300 x 250 cm



# Apocalypse

1988 - 1991



The millennial kingdom (part 29 / 32) | 1991  
Ink on Canvas, 300 x 250 cm

# Apocalypse

1988 - 1991



The seventh trumpet (part 18 / 32) | 1991  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 250 cm

# Apocalypse

1988 - 1991



The last judgement (part 30 / 32) | 1991  
Ink on Canvas, 300 x 250 cm

# Natural Hazards

1990

Natural Hazards refers to natural disasters.

In the true sense of the word, this also includes natural coincidence, natural moment. In this weather conditions can be caused by unpredictable constellations: droughts, floods as well as temperate climates.

In this early cycle Jacques Gassmann turns for the first time to a comprehensive perspective. He chooses the central parts of his compositions from a great distance of partially stellar tendency. The landscape becomes a continent, a surface of the earth. In this vastness, those images have a microscopic view though the image solution in his ink technique, even if ›Ogrody‹ was not yet invented at that time. This cycle is to be understood as a pioneer for Gassmann's significant and subsequent cycle of images about Apocalypse. Natural Hazards opens up to him the artistic possibility with the juxtaposition of man and nature, of observers and paintings. In this way, he places the human dimensions in context with the natural dimensions of natural phenomena.

Ariha | 1990

Ink on Canvas, 220 x 250 cm



# Natural Hazards

1990

Elements of Natural Hazards V | 1990  
Ink on Canvas, 100 x 135 cm



# Natural Hazards

1990



Elements of Natural Hazards VIII | 1990  
Ink on Canvas, 100 x 135 cm

# Natural Hazards

1990



() | 1990  
Inl on Canvas, 210 x 250 cm

# I lost my cigarettes in the metro

1991

The cycle contains 25 panels which are offered individually in a cartonage with the respective imprint of metro stations. In each one of them there is a photo print of Amedeo Modigliani handmade by the artist.



# Ogrody

1991-2018

Ogrody is the protected name for the painting technique of the artist. Ogrody means in Polish »gardens«. The artist left it with this polish term because it has more complex meanings and also underlines the process in question. The Ogrody represents the cycle of becoming and decaying, the cyclical course of all life processes in a constant change. Water, images, sounds, dance merge within the Ogrody installation into total artwork. The artist had worked on this in collaboration with composer Ecki Stieg and dancer and choreographer Ralf Jaroshinsky and particularly with the ballerina Natalia Wojciechowska (Warsaw).

Ink on canvas is a laconic name of the technique that the artist has been developing for years. through an alchemistic artistic material transport, the color of his work emerges  
»

Ogrody | 2005  
Ink on Canvas, 40 x 60 cm

»...The Light is there, the colors surround us, but if we do not deceive light and no colors in our own eyes, we would not perceive such things outside ourselves...«

J. W. von Goethe



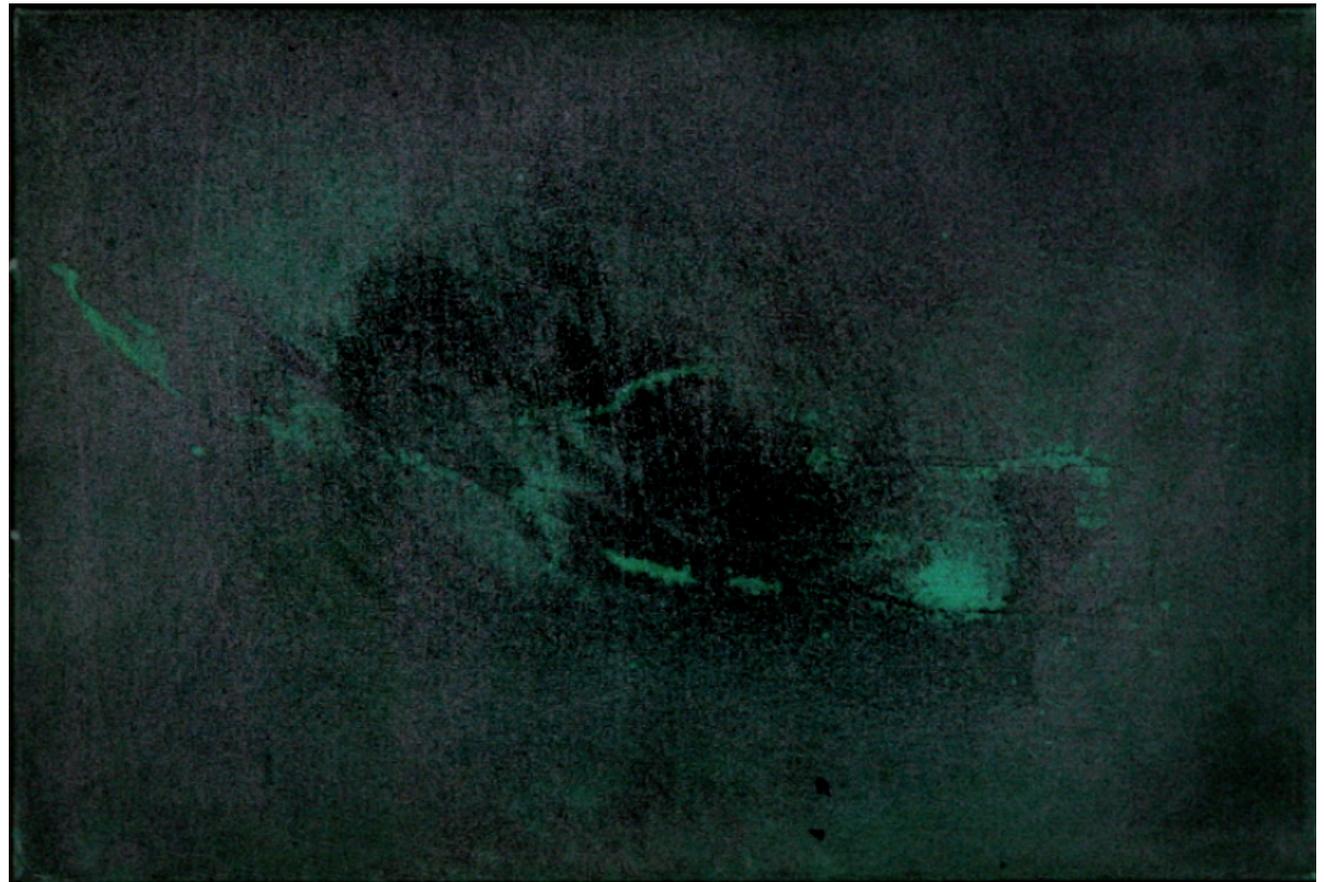
# Ogrody

1991

in a subtle way. Streams of color arise: atomized floods of colour, partical bump. The stream of color following gravitational forces unfolds a space in which the figurations emerge dimly. With Ogrody, the artist has placed the process of creation at the center of his work.

The gradual disappearance of the original subjects painted by the artist thus finds its expression in the cyclical processes of Ogrody. The pictures are visible surfaces of an inner system. They mark the places of visibility and yet are themselves without a place, everywhere and nowhere. Images of a total space that is constantly being targeted by colors, sound and movement.

Ogrody | 2005  
Ink on Canvas, 40 x 60 cm



# Ogrody

1991



Ogrody | 1997  
ink on Canvas, 30 x 60 cm

# Ogrody

1991

Couple (US & PK) | 1998  
Ink on Canvas, 195 x 168 cm



# Passion

1992-2008

The figure of Christ appears floating, sliding and flat. His head is tilted, the torso bent, and his feet stand slightly side by side. The contours of the light-shadow figure are fluid. There is no cross, nor assistance figures. The picture indicates no ground, no sky, no earth.

The style and the painting technique become here the medium of understanding. Its surface texture of monochrome green is reminiscent of planetary, fossil which can emanate from the own environment to the universe. A green patented as well as the blue of Ives Klein IKB — international Klein Blue — the wafer thin glazes of the inks go from black to green, to white, to green in the green: black is the deepest layer, and light is the main emphasis of Gassmann's works. Jacques Gassmann renounces the essential sign of cross. He removes the Christ figure from the cross, which is to be taken literally here: his archetypes are very specific, Ottonian, Gothic and contemporary crucifixes.

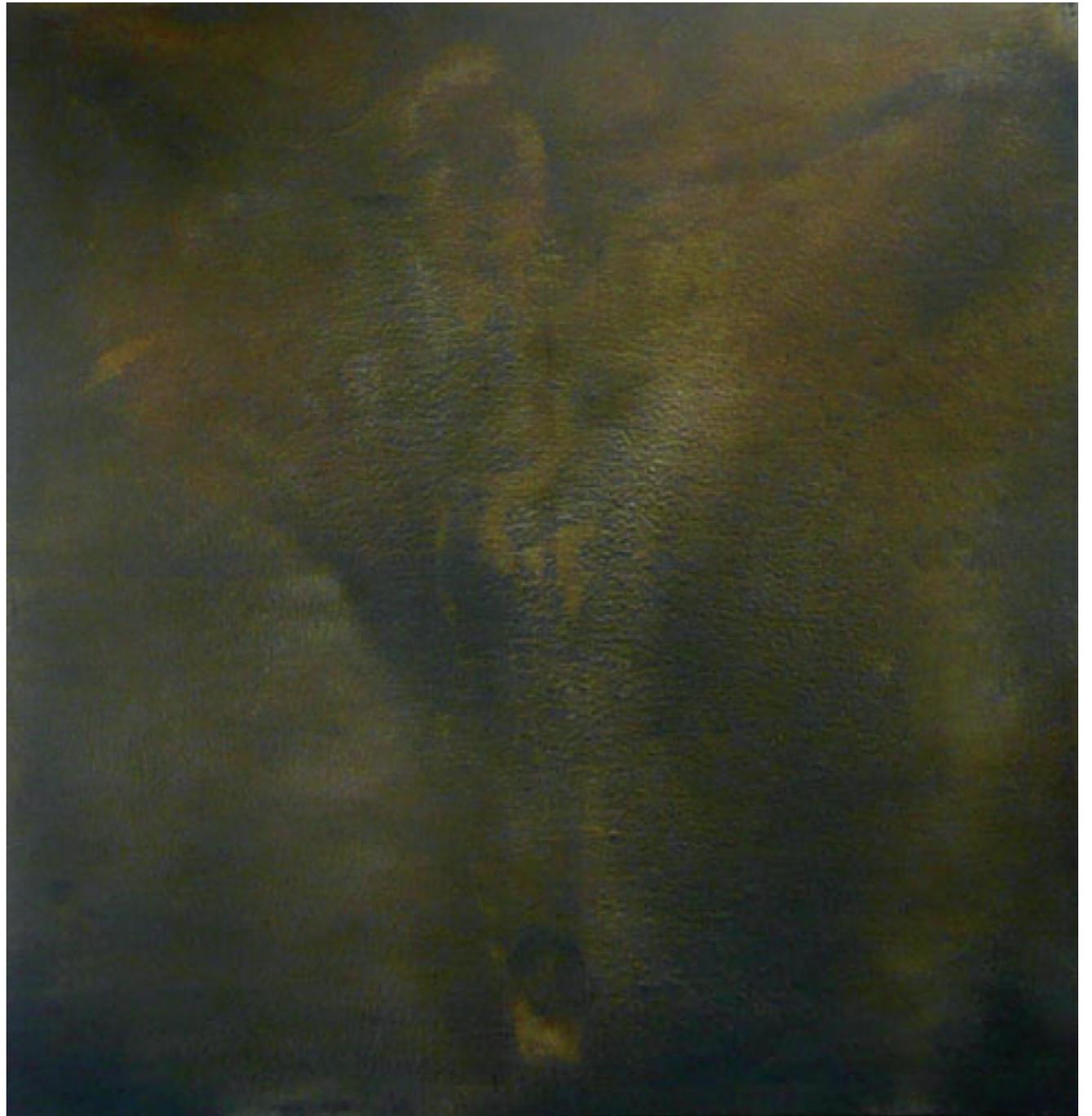
Passion VIII | 2000  
Ink on Canvas, 250 x 250 cm



# Passion

1992-2008

Passion XXII | 2008  
Ink on Canvas, 200 x 195 cm



# Supersonic

1993-1994

Picture cycle consisting of 180 canvas works. Ecki Stieg created a soundtrack on MC for the exhibition in the gallery Borkowski, Hanover. since 1989, Jacques Gassmann has been working on cycles of images that encircle a precisely defined theme in the serial form of large-format image panels. The working title of this series was TOP GUN and is borrowed from the film of the same name, Jacques Gassmann has transposed the visual impressions of the pilots, who shoot through the atmosphere at supersonic speed up to 2 mach. Already in the pictures of the apocalypse, whose material effect lies at the border between painting and experimental photography, Gassmann succeeded in unfolding spaces on the canvas that seem to be of cosmic depth, using a technique of inking developed by him. This vastness of immeasurable space becomes the central theme of Supersonic.

»

Tomcat Pilot | 1994  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 250 cm



# Supersonic

1993-1994

Beyond a socially critical sequence of images, perhaps expected in these contexts, which would pursue a critique of military operations in the age of nuclear weapons, Gassmann's sole concern is capturing the pilot's gaze, his visual and emotional experiences during high-speed flight.

Supersonic is about visual experiences that are closed to most people. It will be about the gaze and the feeling of pilots who are at the limit of human capacity.

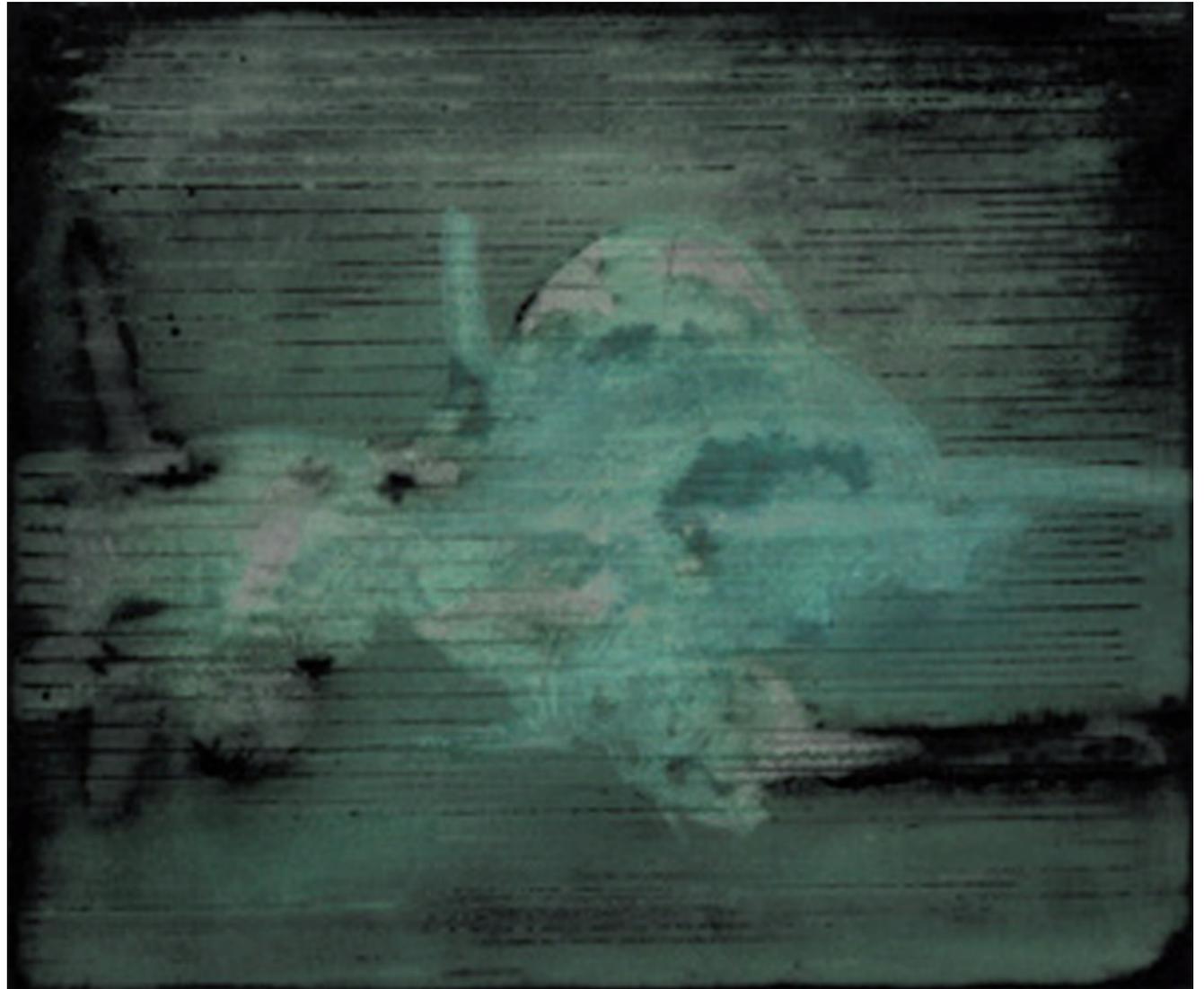
Thus, a form of visibility is made the theme, which is part of our reality. On the other hand the fascination of speed- and the military implications as well as the aestheticization of horror has so far hardly been considered by artists in Europe.



Weapon | 1993  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 250 cm

# Supersonic

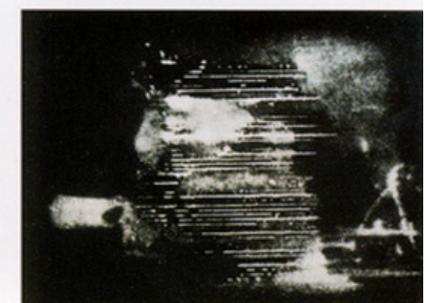
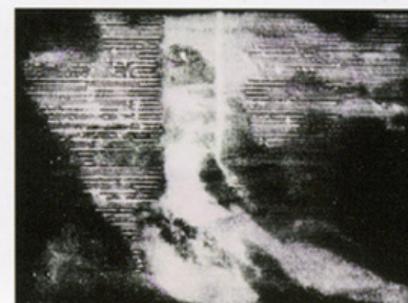
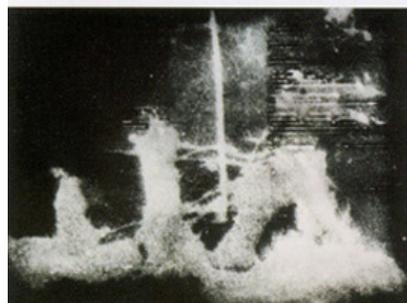
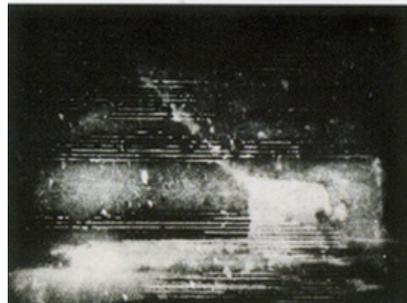
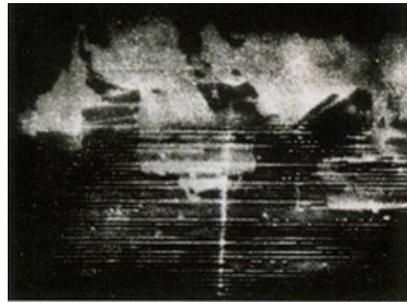
1993-1994



Tomcat I | 1994  
Ink on Canvas, 60 x 80 cm

# Supersonic

1993-1994



Serie\_o\_ | 1994  
Ink on Canvas, 156 x 230 cm

# Viriditas

1994-2001

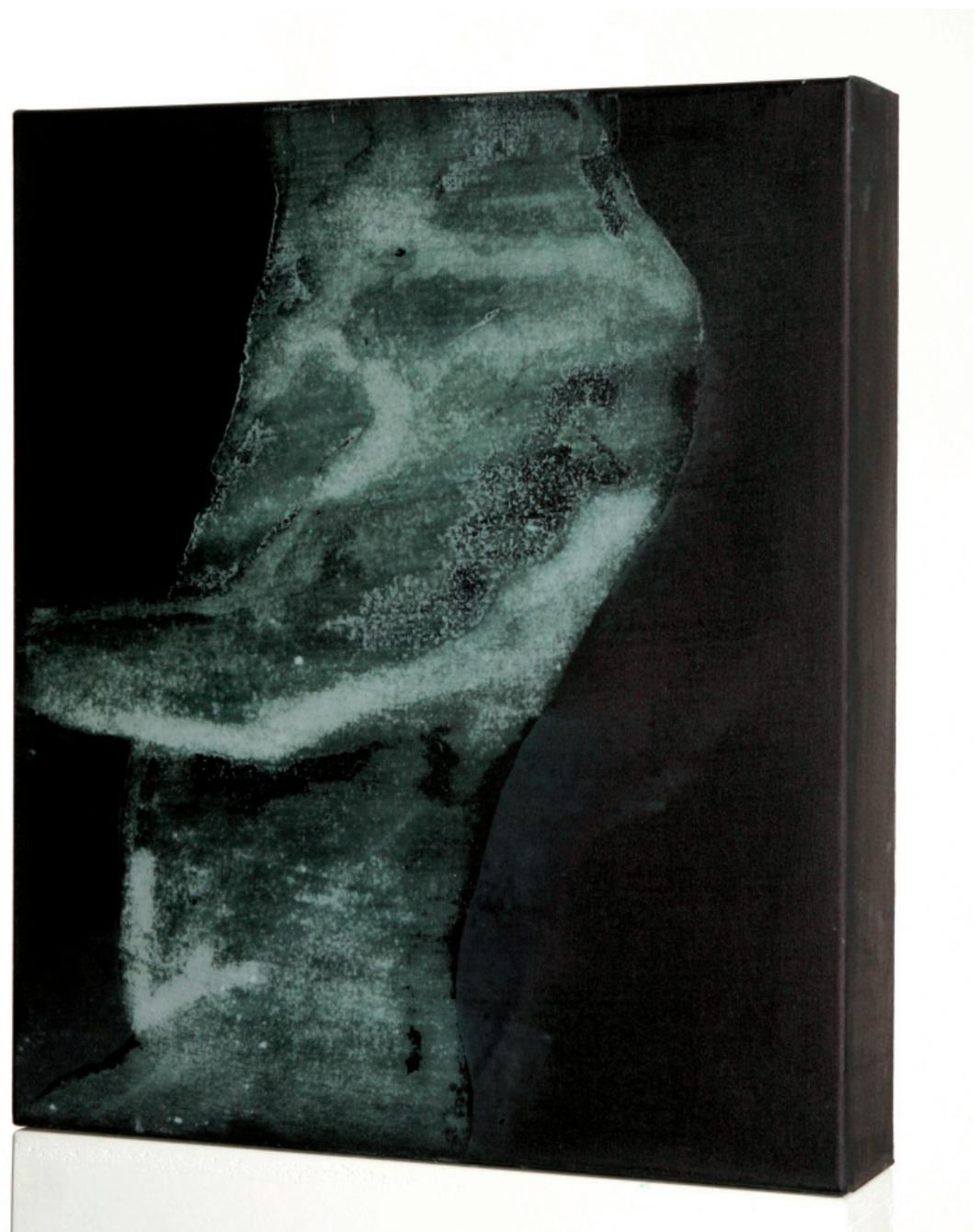
These images emerge from the creative source of VIRIDITAS, the „creative power of God“ in the sense of Hildegard von Bingen. Thirteen herb pictures and four anatomy picture are scattered around the chapel pillars. The canvas are drawn on boxes about 65 x 35 cm size.

Green figuration can be recognized on black and green canvas. Lady's mantle and fern, St. John's wort and cornflower, rosemary, aloe and velvetleaf are all medicinal herbs. here listed after Hildegard von Bingen and related to the therapy in humans.

»With this installation, Jacques Gassmann bridges the gap between Passion Christi and Hildegard von Bingen's holistic view of the world, the doctor, healer, natural scientist, gifted visionary and if you will, a far-sighted, critical European and church politician. The installation of herbal images is understood by Jacques Gassmann as VIRIDITAS.

»

Anatomy VIII | 2001  
Ink on Canvas, 70 x 60 x 10 cm



# Viriditas

1994-2001

About this VIRIDITAS, a core idea in the work of Hildegard of Bingen, I understand the Christ differently and correctly. Gassmann requisitioned this term as a technology and designed it into a special program. How far the term garden is to be stretched, one may understand understand in the sacred and the profane aqually horizontally and vertically. The herbs are here not to be understood in the purposeful, but rather in their pure existence, in their existence within the creation of God. Nevertheless. they are medicinal plants. In relation to the anatomical images, their function becomes evident. Gassmann's work here in the spirit of Hildegard von Bingen. Green means life and is the oldest symbol color, not only in the ecclesiastical context. I understand the color through the medium and through this decidedly technical technique, the artistic process, the statement.«

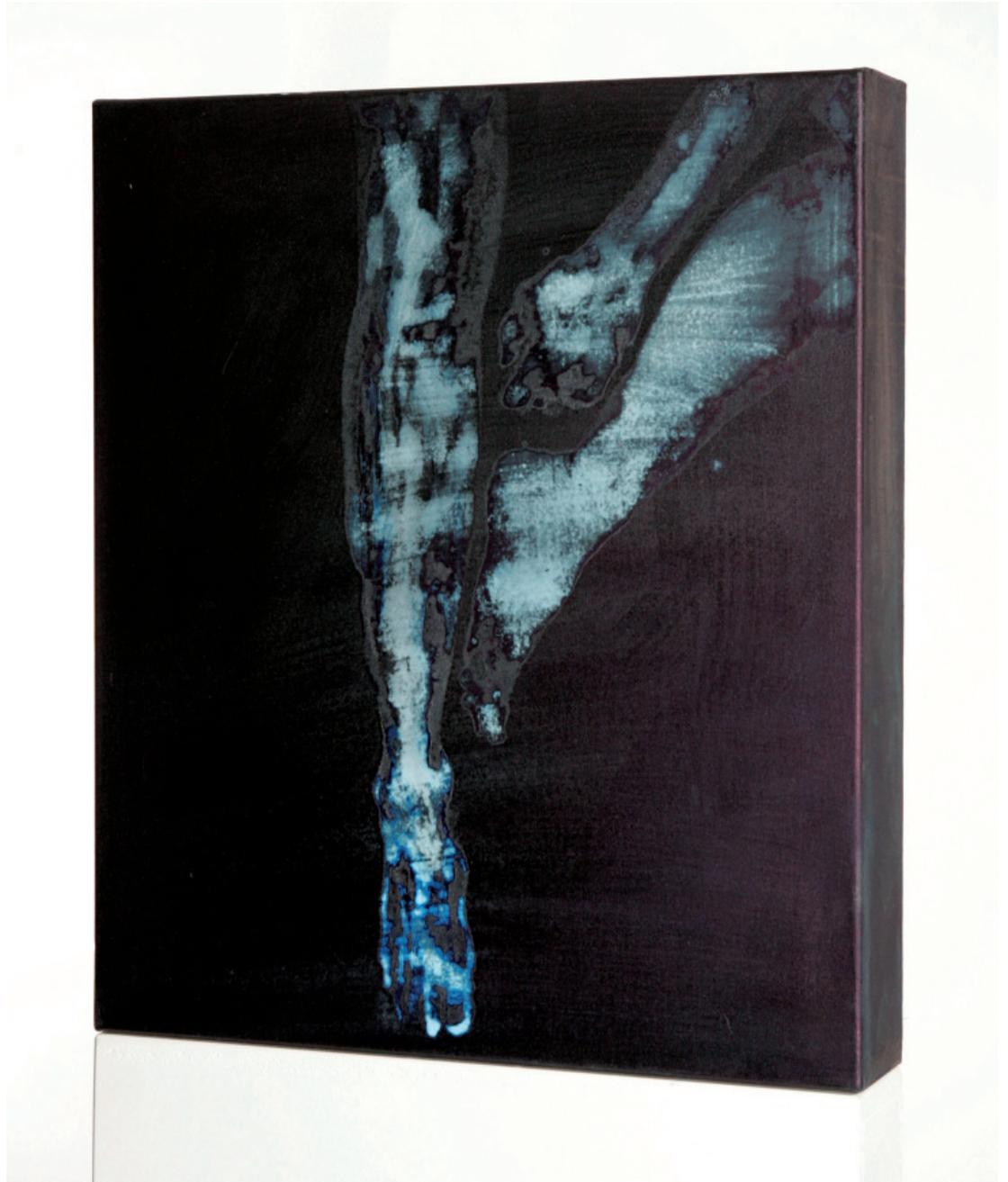
Prog. Dr. Melanie Luck-of Claparede, Oldenburg, 1998  
(at the opening of the exhibition in Oldenburg)

Anatomy VI | 2001  
Ink on Canvas, 70 x 60 x 10 cm



# Viriditas

1994-2001



Anatomy V | 2001  
Ink on Canvas. 70 x 60 x 10 cm

# Viriditas

1994-2001



Anatomy III | 2001  
Ink on Canvas, 70 x 60 x 10 cm

# Coasts

1998-2012

Selected coastal sections were painted on the basis of exact cartographic specifications. Without references to streets, cities, etc., the pure landscape is reproduced.

Ironically, seeing these most densely populated cultural areas depopulated on Earth becomes alienated as soon as one begins to think about it. The blurred reliefs of the water surfaces, the gently undulating land-disintegrated by the sea and by rivers graze completely and completely. Perhaps it is precisely from utopian untouchedness that her special beauty arises.

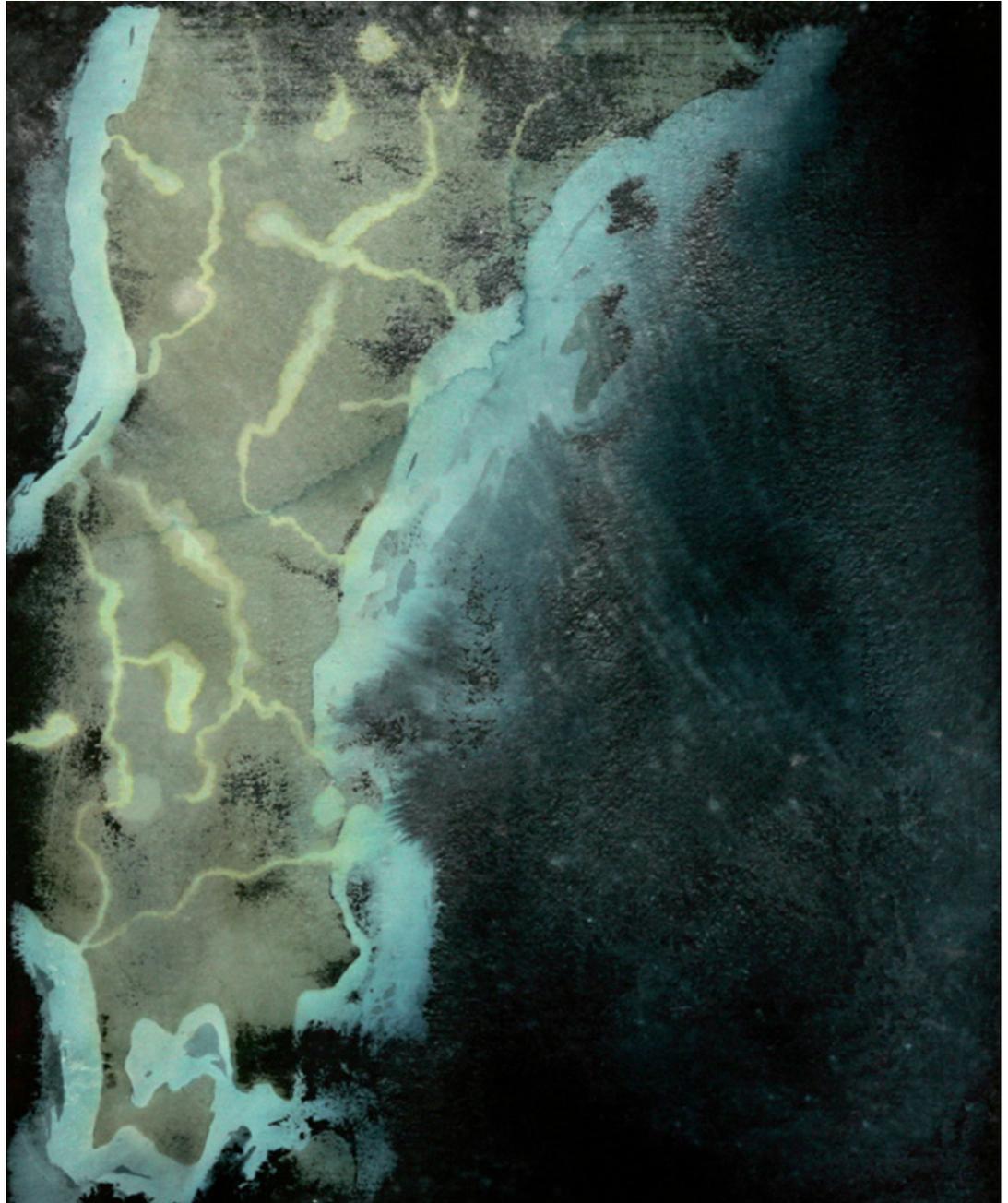
With water he removes layer by layer the ink with which he has previously transferred maps to the canvas. Seen in this way, the artistic technique appears analogous to the process of creating the landscapes depicted in the picture. These landscapes are art space and thus free for individual settlement.

Californian coast (9-parts) | 2011  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 210 cm



# Coasts

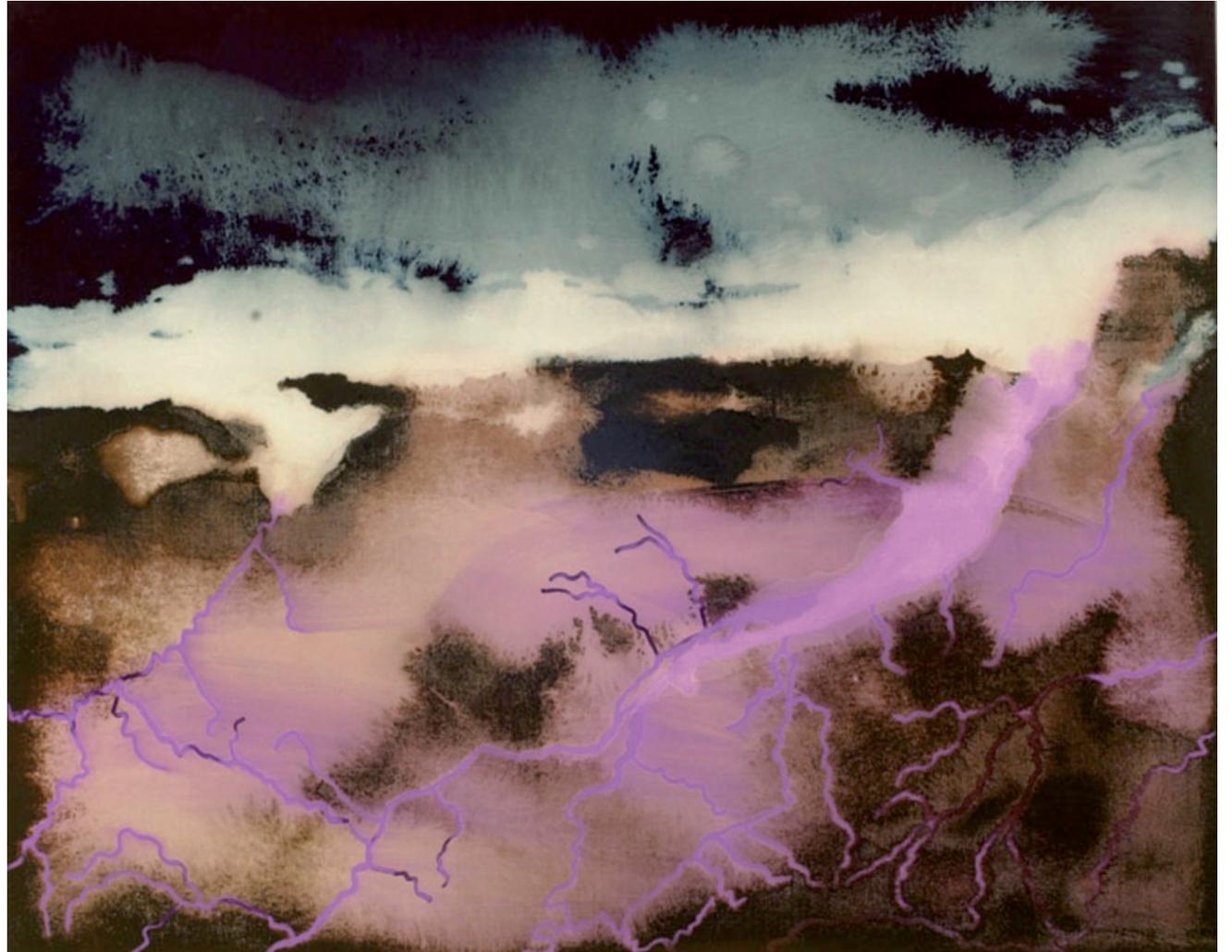
1998-2002



Japan 1 | 2001  
Ink on Canvas, 150 x 130 cm

# Coasts

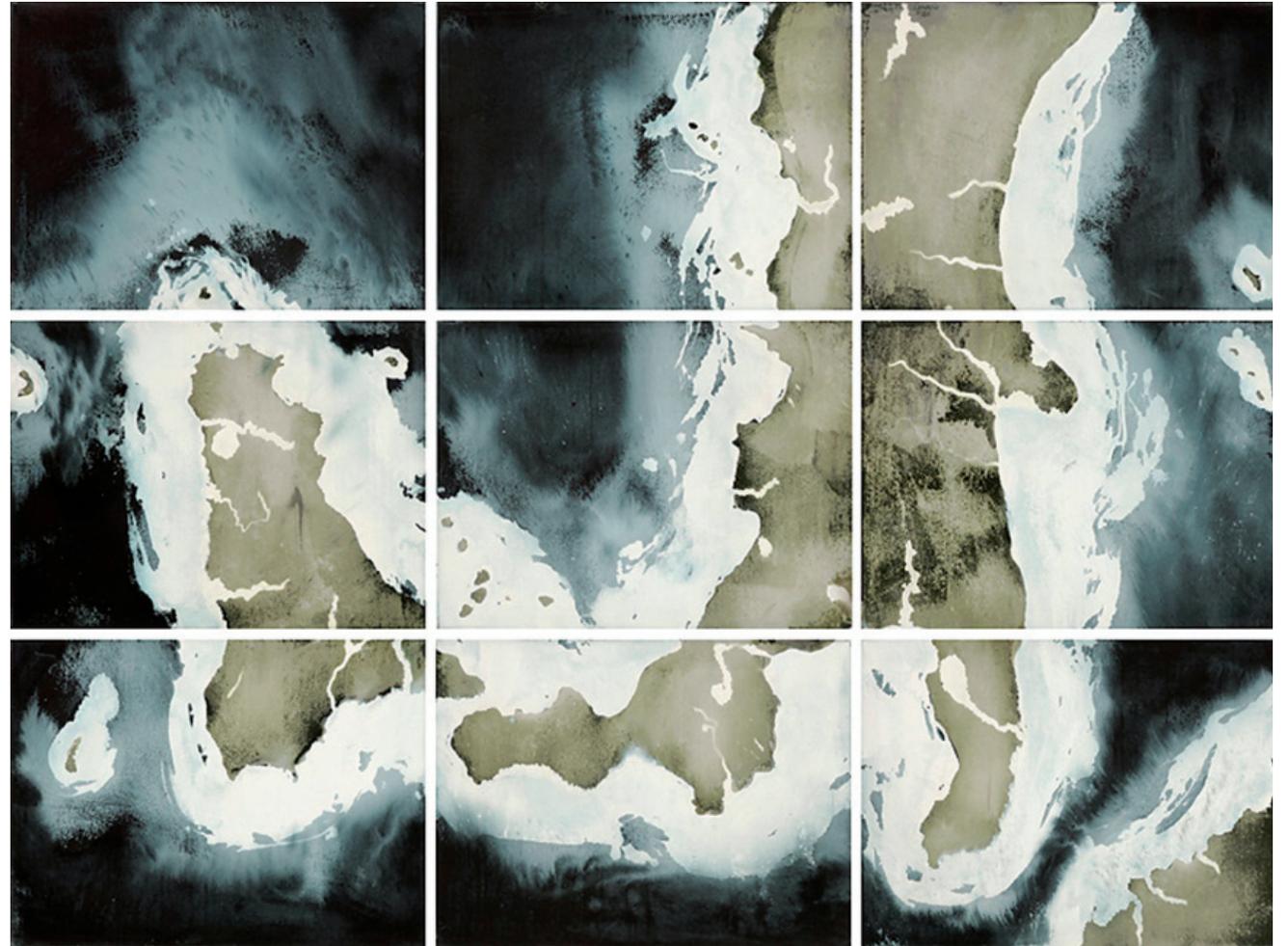
1998-2002



Gironde 3 | 2001  
Ink on Canvas, 120 x 140 cm

# Coasts

1998-2002



Tyrrhenian Sea (9-parts) | 1998  
Ink on Canvas, 160 x 210 cm

# Artwork in Architecture

2007-2016

Threepart Artwork in parish church St. Laurentius, altarpiece  
pictured the patron saint of a church the sacred Laurentius  
(200 x 200 cm), two pictures sideward shown abstract  
colorcomposition, Schwarzenau 2009



# Artwork in Architecture

2007-2016



Waigolshausen Glasswork | 2015  
Painting burned into glass, 2000 x 180 cm

# Artwork in Architecture

2007-2016

Obertheres St. Kilian side altar | 2012  
Ink on Canvas, 380 x 360 cm



# Artwork in Architecture

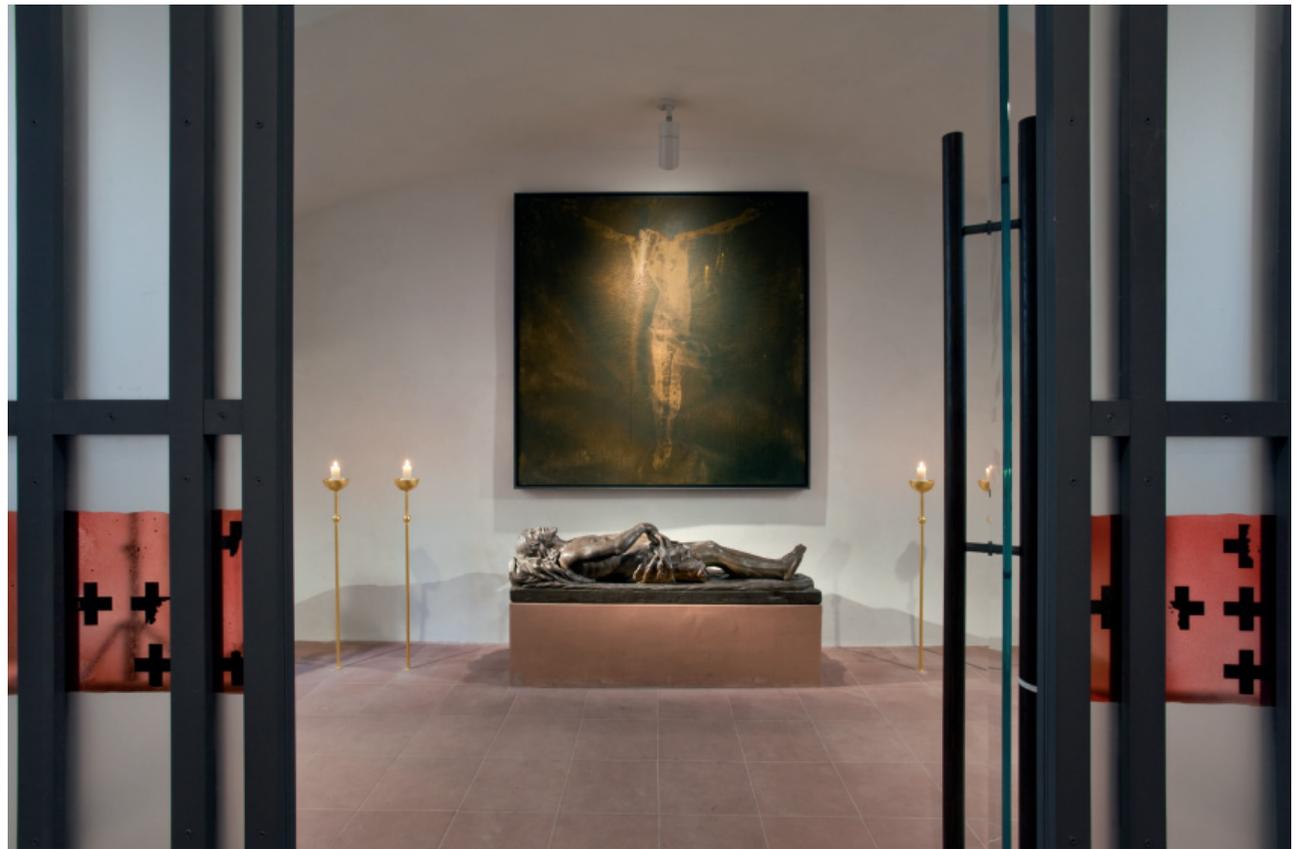
2007-2016

Dingolshausen St. Laurentius | 2016  
Ink on Canvas, 980 x 740 cm



# Artwork in Architecture

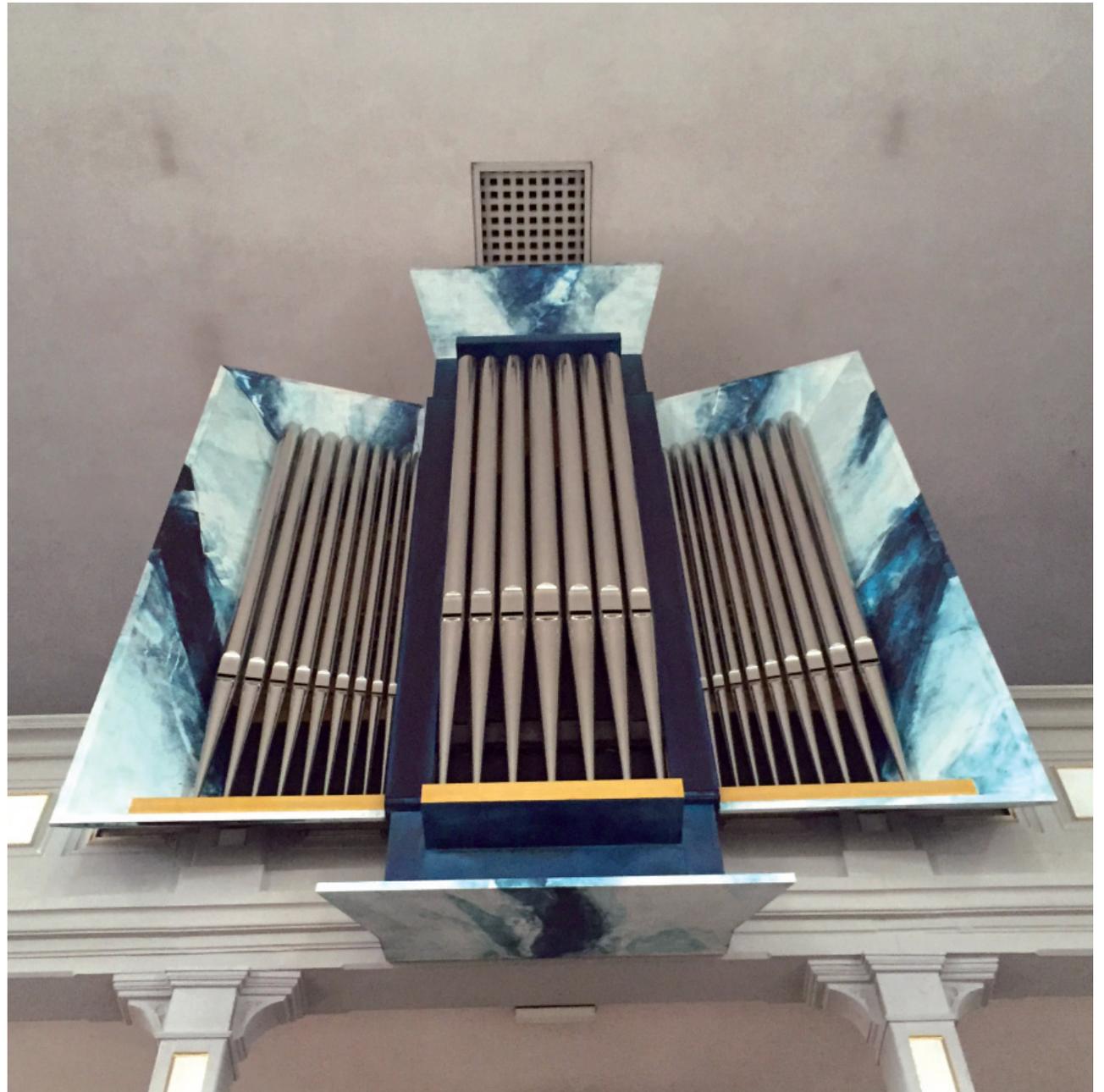
2007-2016



Neumuenster Würzburg | 2009  
Ink on Canvas, 200 x 200 cm

# Artwork in Architecture

2007-2016



Organ Bad Bruckenau | 2009

# Artwork in Architecture

2007-2016



Augustinian Church Würzburg | 2011  
Ink on Canvas, altar painting, 720 x 390 cm

# Artwork in Architecture

2007-2016

Augustinian Church Würzburg, ›Way of the Cross‹  
(part 10/14) Clothes removal | 2007  
Ink on Canvas, 130 x 100 cm

