

Michael Müller Solo Exhibition

***Drei biographische Versuche* [en: *Three Biographical Attempts*]**

Exhibition Period: 17 November 2021 – 29 January 2022

Opening Reception: 17 November 2021, 5pm to 8pm

Venue: Galerie du Monde, 108 Ruttonjee Centre, 11 Duddell Street, Central, Hong Kong

Drei biographische Versuche

Kapitel I.: Gefüge – Gefühl und Genauigkeit¹

Kapitel II.: Der Wolkenvermesser²

Kapitel IV.: Das gemachte Ich³

¹ Einschließlich: Der Versuch unter Hypnose abstrakt zu sein

² In „Vermessen“ steckt das Maß, kann auch anmaßend bedeuten und dem Maß nicht gerecht zu werden

³ Fehlt der dritte Teil?

[English translation]

Three Biographical Attempts

Chapter I.: Structure – Feeling and Accuracy¹

Chapter II.: The Cloud Surveyor²

Chapter IV.: Self-Creation³

¹ Including: Trying to be abstract under hypnosis

² In “measuring” there is measure, it can also mean presumptuous and being not enough

³ Is the third chapter missing?

HONG KONG – Galerie du Monde is pleased to present groundbreaking German artist Michael Müller’s three-chapter solo exhibition series *Drei biographische Versuche* [en: *Three Biographical Attempts*] in Hong Kong from September 2021 to March 2022.

The *Drei biographische Versuche* exhibition series is like Müller’s personal diary from the past three decades. Through each chapter, Müller unveils his journey of self-discovery, embracing change, and self-formation.

In the first chapter, Michael Müller presented his decade-long journey in the Himalayas that he embarked on in his early 20s, divulging a man’s quest to one’s cultural heritage and faith. Müller believes one must first understand and recognize one’s heritage, one is then able to form one’s own structure of thoughts and belief system.

“How do we make sense of the world?”

This is the key question Müller addresses in the second chapter *Der Wolkenvermesser* [en: *The Cloud Surveyor*], through the diary of a traveler observing clouds. Delving into specific events and dreams from his journey in the Himalayas, Müller further elaborates on the concepts of feeling and accuracy, the self and the other, and **shifting perspectives**.

The question of **sense** informs our understanding of the world. The ability to love may be the core of human life. The love we understand as a child, the love we understand as a teenager, and the love we understand before death – they are very different. Our understanding of the world is always changing and shifting, like clouds.

Do we follow the systems we are brought up into, or do we each have our own system? Throughout his artistic practice in the past three decades, Müller has been trying to build his own systems. In this process, the artist discovers that everything around us is changeable, produced by us.

Taking center stage in this chapter is an 81-part installation work, *Der Sinn des Wolkenvermessens (Working Title: Wolkenatlas) für Jean-Luc Nancy* [en: *The Sense of Measuring Clouds (Working Title: Cloud Atlas) for Jean-Luc Nancy*], composed of drawings, silkscreen printing and paper collages which Müller created over a period of 14 years, from 2007 to 2021. Through images of clouds, an atomic bomb explosion, and cauliflower, Müller explores the possibility, the creation, and the measurement of meaning.



Der Sinn des Wolkenvermessens (Working Title: Wolkenatlas) für Jean-Luc Nancy
[en: *The Sense of Measuring Clouds (Working Title: Cloud Atlas) for Jean-Luc Nancy*]

Pencil, ink, ballpoint pen, text-marker, acrylic paint, gesso and
water-based silkscreen print ink on different papers and plexiglas
Installation, 81-part work, overall size: 175 x 1013 cm, 2007 / 2014 / 2021

The clouds, which recur in a variety of formats and representations – from childlike naïve to abstract drawings, from memory to elaborate scientific analyses, serve as symbols of the genesis of understanding and meaning, allowing us to discern structures and similarities. The underlying orange grid shows how meaning can be created and become a system, what rules of order are necessary and possible, and reflects the relationship of a system to what is represented and vice versa.

The basic assumption of Müller’s “Cloud Atlas” is that understanding is only possible through the linking of individual elements, through which similarity becomes perceptible. Müller believes that in every repetition a difference arises, even if it is marginal, in which only sense and understanding can be formed. This belief ties in with French philosopher Jacques Derrida’s theory of deconstruction. Müller questions the possibility of a comprehensive and complete system of meaning and knowledge, and artistically demonstrates the fact that fragments can exist at the same time. These fragments, individually can make sense on their own, but also elude a systematic representation because they lose their meaningfulness in their structural consideration. This is contrasted by the self-referential elements that Müller integrated into the installation work, such as the index of the index can be seen (plate #65), and the grid structure is taken up by individual drawings and passe-partouts.

(Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy were peers with an ambiguous relationship – intellectually, they challenged each other greatly. The two brilliant thinkers took on different strategies in exploring the plurality of singularities. Müller pays tribute to the duo in his “Cloud Atlas”.)

Another major work is *Fucking Prain (Miss Spelling)*, a diptych created with acrylic, lacquer and digital print on alu-dibond and glass. The pair of paintings consists of many layers, not just physical layers, but layers of time – Müller’s personal time, traveling from the artist’s early works to his most recent explorations in the “Schwierige Bilder” [en: “Difficult Paintings”] series.



Fucking Prain (Miss Spelling)

Series: Verschränkte Werke [en: Entangled Works]
Acrylic and lacquer on printed alu-dibond and glass
2-part work, 182.2 x 147.2 x 4 cm each, 2021

Müller created *Fucking Prain (Miss Spelling)* with the idea of dissecting a brain – would we be able to see how information passes through our nerves? How does our brain work? Specifically, Müller photographs his early work, exercises the image on Photoshop, prints it onto the alu-dibond, and then paints over some parts again. This process is repeated. The original image is itself part of the process, subject to revision. In the end, the actual original is nowhere to be found, except perhaps a few remaining fragments.

How accurate is our memory? Is it possible to go back to where we were, both as we were and as the moment was? Could it all be recreated? Can we process a piece of information repeatedly, or are we always cultivating new information? **How do we make sense of the world?**

Questioning assertions or making new ones – has been a central motif in Müller’s artistic practice. And where could this aspect be exemplified in a more forceful manner than in painting, the medium that has such an inherent ideological charge.

In addition to the large works, *The Cloud Surveyor* features two floor installations which include a Scarlet Ibis specimen. Known as the bird of knowledge and the holy bird in North African traditions, the Scarlet Ibis serves as the “observer” of Müller’s “Cloud Atlas”. There are also three unusual format wall objects, and 15 graphite drawings inspired by incidents and dreams from his travels in Tibet and the Himalayas.

The final chapter *Das gemachte Ich* [en: *Self-Creation*] will be presented in February 2022. Stay tuned!

About the artist Michael Müller



Michael Müller (b. 1970, Ingelheim am Rhein, Germany) is an artist with a German-Indian background, whose manifold, proliferating oeuvre cannot be ascribed to any one-way interpretation. He continuously broadens the methods of his artistic expression, combining works on paper with painting, text-based work, sculpture, found objects, music, and performance. Müller studied sculpting and fine arts at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf with Magdalena Jetelová. From 2015 to 2018, he was a professor at the Berlin University of the Arts. In 2018, he was nominated for the Kunstpreis der Böttcherstraße, Bremen.

Recent solo exhibitions include “Drei biographische Versuche” (3-chapter series), Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong (2021-2022); “Schwierige Bilder”, Sammlung Wemhöner, Berlin (2021); “Stripping the Force – The Self and the Other”, Spotlight by Art Basel, Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong (2020); “Anton in a Bast Skirt”, Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin (2020); “An Exhibition as a Copy”, Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong (2018); “Stripping the Force”, Kunsthalle Bremen (2018); “SKITS. 13 Exhibitions in 9 Rooms”, Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (2016). Müller’s works belong to many prominent museum collections including the Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany; Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, USA; among others. Müller lives and works in Berlin.

About Galerie du Monde

Founded in Hong Kong in 1974, Galerie du Monde has been specializing in modern and contemporary works by internationally established Chinese artists for 47 years. The gallery also nurtures and promotes emerging talent, presenting a varied program of solo and group exhibitions with a strong focus on works of art on canvas, paper, sculpture, photography and new media. To celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2014, Galerie du Monde introduced the GDM Project series to strengthen the gallery’s support to a wider group of artists from different geographical regions, providing them the opportunity to exhibit outside of their own areas.

Website: www.galeriedumonde.com
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Galerie du Monde opens from Monday to Saturday, 10 am to 7 pm