

ARTIST'S STATEMENT



From birth onwards, I bear something in me that forces me to be an artist. It demands unconditional devotion to my mission. For me, the matter is more important than my personal well-being.

By outsiders, this may be perceived as abandonment and sacrifice. But that is a prejudice. This kind of humility does not make us feel small and weak, but rather releases great enthusiasm and untapped inner potential, and it builds respect for everything that humankind can accomplish and create.

Twenty-five years ago, at the end of my training, my theatre teacher gave me the following advice: *"If you want to further develop yourself into a portrayer of human characters, you have to expose yourself to an extreme situation."* I have implemented the first idea that came along, and locked myself in my completely darkened flat for three weeks.

Never before have I seen the images that appeared in that situation. There were extremely many of them, and they appeared in rapid succession. However, the experience felt completely natural, there was nothing spectacular about it. I memorized these pictures,

and knew that I had to learn a second craft.

There were some failed attempts and deadlocks necessary before I could depict what I have seen. Only by means of the fountain pen, I was able to track down the solution. Gradually, a special painting system crystallized which allowed me to reproduce the three-dimensionality and dynamics of the seen worlds. Finally, I was able to devote myself fully to the productive flow of my work. That was an enormous relief, because my motives urged to be put on paper.

My paintings are created without a preliminary drawing. I can only start with a new motif when I see it in my mind's eye. My head is packed with folders in which I have sorted and filed those images. Sometimes, I can quickly draw the new motif out of the folder, but occasionally it takes several days and weeks to remember.

I follow a strict daily routine, and the motifs grow very slowly. The devotion expressed in the moment of painting is highly important to me. Only what I have poured into a painting can actually reach the viewer. I experience this process as contemplation.

Many times, I was asked what worlds I paint. I have no answer to this question. I do not scrutinize my calling. I rely on my experience. Thus, I would also like to encourage the viewer and invite him or her to turn off his rationality and just listen to the artwork and the subconscious mind, to trust the flow of imagination and

feelings - not to control, but to let go. Then, the door to the inner world can open up, the only place where we can find everything we need.

To me, art is magic. One cannot understand it rationally, only emotionally. I consider my images as a permeable skin between the mental and the material world, activated and brought into vibration by the viewer's attention. My goal is to make the emotional shell of the viewer resound with these vibrations. The one who feels, will encounter reality and oneself. We are no longer outside, in front of or next to, but amidst of – in the Here and Now. Feeling is a form of perception making knowledge from another level of being accessible. "

Axel Neumann, Berlin 2017