

Clara Brörmann - The Archeological Gesture

In contrast to digital art analogue works of art have the privilege of being made of similar 'stuff' as humans. Its material surface breathes the same air, is just as vulnerable to physical or chemical influences, its appearance transforming with the changing light and the movement of its viewer. Space and time, as quantities closely linked to the material and human constitution, can be found in Clara Brörmann's work on various levels - from the processual working method that can be read on the picture surface, to the picture structures and the associations derived from them, to the titling.

“End and Beginning” is the title of the central work in this exhibition. Two high, narrow canvases face the viewer, equal to human dimensions, and reflect each other in their identical structure. In the overall view a circle emerges, which overlaps the canvas at the top and is bordered by a truncated whitish sickle at the bottom. In warm orange tones non-overlapping rays spread out from four axisymmetric points within the once again visually divided circle. The composition is enclosed by a dark blue framing that continues along the depth of the stretcher. A rough and brittle texture opposes the graphically precise lines of the image structures. The gray canvas is exposed between the rays, while the overlapping layers of paint can be seen at the broken edges. Whatever you are reminded of - a peeling facade advertisement with a sunrise on the beach or a tattered, iridescent work of Op Art - it is this broken color structure that draws the picture into the moment of material transience, of temporality and makes it legible as a result of a process in which the color does not serve as a means of illusion, but becomes visible as the working material of the painting.

This processual visual appearance of Clara Brörmann's paintings goes back to the artist's specific way of working, which was once compared to an archaeological excavation. Like an archaeologist detaching layers of earth from an artifact that has been deposited over many years, the artist works through the material and temporal layers of her work, exposing them and the 'beginning' by parts of visible canvas.

The motif of the circle or of rays which spread out from a central point and at the same time point back to it, is also a recurring theme. The interpretation of this motif as a sun would be conclusive insofar as this, in the form of a wagon wheel, also represents the primordial symbol for the passage of time. However, the artist's starting point here is the pictorial combination of two ideas of the Renaissance, which sought to capture people and their surroundings in ideal proportions. Leonardo was able to harmoniously fit the Vitruvian man into a circle and square by giving each of them their own offset center. Brörmann's mutually shifted circles of rays also point to the construction of the central perspective, whose projection rays meet in a common vanishing point or whose visual rays meet in the fixed eye point. By breaking, shifting and reversing her geometries, the artist not only moves the viewer's eye. The image as a proportional and physical counterpart encourages the viewer to set his entire body in motion. In this way, the multi-layered and multi-dimensional aspects of Clara Brörmann's works can only really be perceived. And that's how it is with our human counterparts: if we really want to get to know each other, it's best if we move together in a room where the same light falls on our bodies.

Cora Waschke, 2022