

# HARALD GLÖÖCKLER

AN ESSAY BY PROF. DR. HELGE JOACHIM BATHELT PART 1: A MAN AS PAINTER



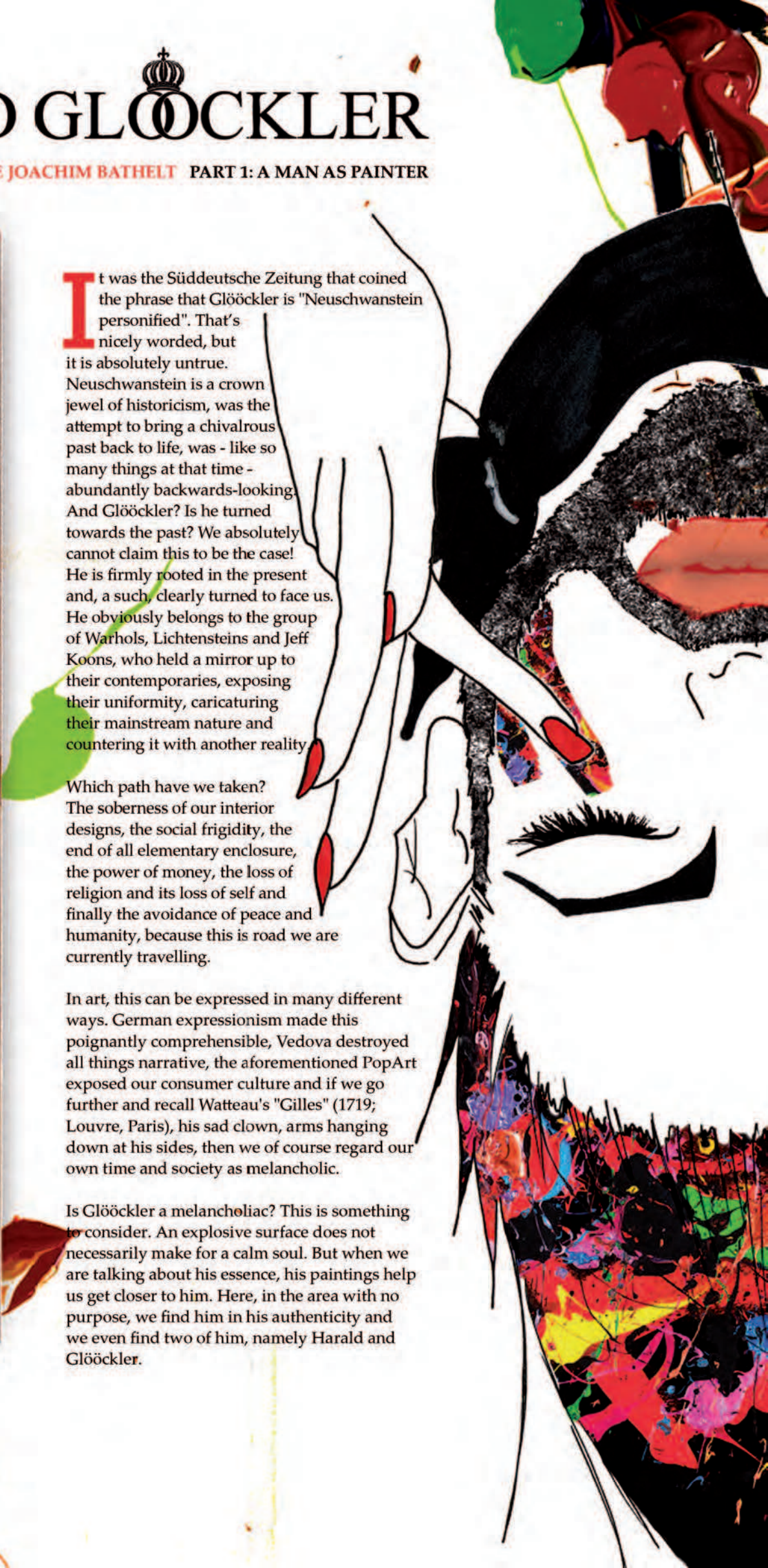
*Sweet poison*

It was the Süddeutsche Zeitung that coined the phrase that Glööckler is "Neuschwanstein personified". That's nicely worded, but it is absolutely untrue. Neuschwanstein is a crown jewel of historicism, was the attempt to bring a chivalrous past back to life, was - like so many things at that time - abundantly backwards-looking. And Glööckler? Is he turned towards the past? We absolutely cannot claim this to be the case! He is firmly rooted in the present and, a such, clearly turned to face us. He obviously belongs to the group of Warhols, Lichtensteins and Jeff Koons, who held a mirror up to their contemporaries, exposing their uniformity, caricaturing their mainstream nature and countering it with another reality.

Which path have we taken? The soberness of our interior designs, the social frigidity, the end of all elementary enclosure, the power of money, the loss of religion and its loss of self and finally the avoidance of peace and humanity, because this is road we are currently travelling.

In art, this can be expressed in many different ways. German expressionism made this poignantly comprehensible, Vedova destroyed all things narrative, the aforementioned PopArt exposed our consumer culture and if we go further and recall Watteau's "Gilles" (1719; Louvre, Paris), his sad clown, arms hanging down at his sides, then we of course regard our own time and society as melancholic.

Is Glööckler a melancholic? This is something to consider. An explosive surface does not necessarily make for a calm soul. But when we are talking about his essence, his paintings help us get closer to him. Here, in the area with no purpose, we find him in his authenticity and we even find two of him, namely Harald and Glööckler.



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*See full of flowers*



Critical readers could now get the impression that the person writing this is striving to mystify what is playfully exuberant, that Glööckler's actual self seems to be precisely what we perceive in the media. The archaeology of his artistic creations, however, brings something very different and remarkable to the fore.

There are works with broad contour lines and print-like figures. They are depictions of the contours he has made himself, from the tips of the hair to the moulded beard. They are critical analyses of that which Harald - the good guy, the reserved one, the patient one - perceives and knows beyond the diva "Glööckler". As an artist, Harald is more creatively homogeneous, more impressive, more harmonious, more classic and reflects more upon the spiritual than the effective, the pompous. I like this Harald. He is so wonderfully private.

Then there are the works of Glööckler. They celebrate the recognition value of the "HARALD GLÖÖCKLER" brand. They are abstractly expressive, full of colour, pushing all the limits. They are often based on everyday materials, painting over and destroying with the aim of imposing something new, namely a pompous world set free from convention. In this area of his painting he reveals himself as passionate, imbalanced and inspired by Rococo and without boundaries in his evolvment. When he sets free pompous storms of colour and appears unrestrained, breaks through internalized composition schemas with which he, as a designer, is of course familiar, his desire is revealed for a break from, for the suspension of everything creative in favour of an imagination running wild. Glööckler is a free spirit in every sense.

In his two creative states, he reveals to us what his painting means to him. Glööckler himself confirms this poignantly when he says: "Painting is my great passion ... I have created many things and put on great shows in my life. But creating paintings and designing objects has a special importance to me. I completely lose myself in this act of creation. My paintings provide insight into the state of my soul."

Andy Warhol and Harald Glööckler are outstanding cult figures of their time. Both are multi-talented individuals, present in all kinds of creative forms of expression, always good for breaking conventions, always in the midst of staging something spectacular. Enjoy Harald & Glööckler with their most extreme demonstration of their personality in every single work. Retain both creative angles of your consciousness, because the work deserves a lovingly treasured place there.

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## PART 2: GLÖÖCKLER: A SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTS

Harald Glööckler is publishing himself in an art book, 23 x 32 cm, approx. 340 pages, its red cover in velvet look and, of course, with golden crown and brass corners, royal lettering and the title of the book - "Explosion" - protected in elegant design. "Protection": an important motif for Glööckler - enhanced with his likeness, so that artistic figure and art can form a unit sui generis.

In his contributions to visual arts he lives out various creative states. His abstractly expressive painting fury is dominant and beside it are graphic works together with graphic design, plastic works with colour drawings. What makes the book valuable for the perception of the painter Glööckler is the fact that the pompously escalating as the fundamental structure does combine with a disciplined creativeness to create a holy alliance against all arbitrariness, which observers of only individual works could misinterpret as art devoted to capriciousness, selfindulgence and coincidence. Glööckler reveals himself as a careful observer of works of art since the Quinquecento. As an observer, he follows those who have formulated something of their own from a dialogue with the familiar, for example no other than Pablo Picasso himself.

The result of Glööckler's perceptions is a thorough fracture with them. He counters the self-reverential with the communicative ("Green desire", "Birthday party"), he meets a composition especially of what seems to be exuberant with the break of everything in any way narrative ("Sweet poison", "Colour temptation", "Wall of colour"). It goes without saying that he is also aware of the targeted spontaneity of dripping in the style of Pollock, which inspired him to form his own powerful formulations ("Mind"). In this way, he draws the personal conclusions from the impetus of the informal right up to the border of post-painterly abstractions on the one hand, as on the other hand he uses non-narrative imagery action, through which he can cast off all the chains of conventional abstractness. In addition to this, he also shows a connection to art history when he lays traces of colour upon dark backgrounds, thus including Caravaggio's suggestive Chiaroscuro in his painting presence ("Thorn", among others).

*Wall of colour*

*Pyradime of elephants*



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Of course he also has his own contact to the Impression, which he expresses in actual and highly sensitive flower pieces ("Red corn poppy", "Orchids", "Flower garden", "Reed", "Sea full of flowers"). Finally, with his "Carpet art" he picks up the inclusion of materials with no connection to art in his creations and applies them convincingly.

Targeted towards a synthesis of the arts are the frames (also and especially in contrasting colour schemes) the transcendence of the surface of the picture into the frame ("Colourful chaos"), the inclusion of scriptural elements ("All right!", "Censored") and the expansion of the imagery with painted furniture and above all with small plastic pieces which can be reassessed through colour schemes ("Pyramide of elephants", "Angel with wings", "Goblet").

Yet all this exploding diversity does not yet satisfy Glööckler's demands upon the pompous. In his illustrated book he showcases the works in an exuberant framework of graphic design, by proving his extraordinary creative skills in this regard. In this way, he manages to create or confirm a framework for himself, to reconcile the stern with the overflowing and to do justice to his self as synthesis of the arts. This combination of discipline and boundlessness is unquestionably the real Harald Glööckler and sets him apart from all the things which are so alike - which are a sign that modern art has otherwise largely ground to a halt.



*Birthday party*

#### About the author:

Prof. Dr. Helge Bathelt, born in 1948, descendant of the Brothers Grimm, studied in Tübingen and Vienna: History, Politics, German, Art History. Master's 1973, Doctorate 1975, 1977 - 2004 Teaching in Tübingen and Esslingen, Chairman of various cultural facilities. Numerous publications, Laudatory in Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Hungary.