

# Jürgen Partenheimer. The Appearance of Things

## Artist's Books 1970–2023 Art and Museum Library of the City of Cologne

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Jürgen Partenheimer (born in Munich in 1947) develops his work from abstraction and is one of the outstanding German artists of his generation. With critical theory and literature as his content references, his oeuvre encompasses painting, drawing, sculpture, artist books, and text. In the 1980s, Jürgen Partenheimer gained international renown through his participation in the biennials of Paris, São Paulo, and Venice.

Artist books are a central component of Jürgen Partenheimer's oeuvre. Over four decades, the artist created more than ninety artist's books. In the 1970s, he produced almost exclusively unique pieces in which drawings, watercolors, collages, or oil sketches were combined with his own texts. In the following decade, the artist increasingly integrated printmaking techniques such as linocut, etching, and lithography. From the mid-1980s, authorized editions of usually ten to a maximum of thirty copies appeared, some with his own texts, some with selected texts by other authors.

Since becoming an artist, Partenheimer has been exploring the possibilities of formal invention and visual narrative language through his extraordinary wide range of books. As essential as his numerous graphic images related to the books, especially the correspondence between drawings and texts, Partenheimer's unique, revised, and edited books have contributed to consolidate his art, which is internationally recognized by comprehensive exhibitions. Partenheimer's images and books radiate a wordless silence and can never be reduced to a paraphrase, even though they possess poetic quality and a strict syntax of formal elements. Each of Partenheimer's books evokes reflections on its method of production and its connection to meanings and emotions in its content. They stand for much of what distinguishes Partenheimer's highly regarded artist's books: their intrinsic media status as works of art, the enormous aesthetic and qualitative awareness with which the artist accompanies all stages of production, and the open, associative dialogue between image and text that shapes the specific "space" of the book. From their beginnings in the 1970s to his most recent artist's books, the books have set artistic standards at the level of the best artist's books of our time.