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20 YEARS Y8

## **KATHARINA GROSSE** *WHEN MY FATHER WAS SAND*

20.06. – 20.12.2021

**Opening: Sunday 20.06.2021, 11.00 a.m.**

Welcome: Benita-Immanuel Grosser

Address: Prof. Dr. Stephan Günzel, UE Berlin

*“To imagine the world simultaneously as past and future and to see it as the whole.” K.G. 2021*

When we set up Katharina Grosse’s exhibition in 2001, we asked her if she had a particular approach in her work: “Yes: the most direct access to space.” Even then, it was not so much the concepts that led to a result as the descriptions of the space that set the stage for her work to begin. So, lying on her back, Katharina described the surface on which she would paint: “The slats, the porch, there’s a retracted steel beam, a facing – yes, you can already speak of a lamination process ... All in all, it’s a very complicated space, it slopes down towards the back like this, from every point the space looks completely different ... interesting are the beams that don’t quite rest against the wall.” After Katharina had described the spatial elements, she concluded by saying, “It’s still supposed to be a painting.”

At that time, Katharina Grosse handled the space like a picture support without ultimately really responding to it. Protrusions and edges were only registered in order to ignore them again the next moment. The Y8 beams were thought of at the time without explicitly addressing them. By treating the architectural structures like a flat picture support and spraying her colours straight across the beams and battens, space and surface were made one. Three-dimensional spatial experience and two-dimensional pictorial experience alternated. The complex spatial conditions disappeared behind an oscillating mesh of colour.

Today, 20 years later, Katharina Grosse allows the beam in the middle of the space, which shaped the character of the space at the time but has since been removed, to reappear. She stuffs a room-sized, crumpled-up picture into the headband struts of the beam. Just as the picture made the architectural beam elements “disappear” in her first exhibition, she now makes the picture “disappear” in the beam.

20 years lie between Katharina Grosse’s first and present work. Spaces came and went like signs in the sand. The stuffed picture gathers all these sanded-up signs and tells of the whole sand, which indistinguishably carries past and future within it.