

# Paperwork

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In contrast to traditional positions in art history, one of the essential features of art of the 20th and 21st century is the relation of the work to the artist's biography. The conditions under which artists work today are mainly determined by the fact that they work without a commission, that is, freelance. This entails an increase in the work's subjectivity (cf. Bonnet, Anne-Marie: *Kunst der Moderne, Kunst der Gegenwart*, Cologne 2008, pp. 34/35). This subjectivity makes the works hard to decode. Thus, success depends to a large extent on whether an artist has succeeded in developing a language that recipients can hear and understand.

In order to find the key to the "increased subjectivity" of Angela Glajcar's work it would therefore make sense to take a closer look at her biography, while, however, avoiding any simplistic transfer actions.<sup>1</sup>

Angela Glajcar was born in 1970 in Mainz as the second child of Dr Michael Glajcar and his wife Felicitas Glajcar. Her father worked as a teacher at a vocational business school, and her mother had trained as a dispensing chemist and worked, on and off, in various jobs such as RE teacher and eventually as secretary at the women's section of the diocese of Mainz. Her sister Stefanie is three years her senior, her brother Daniel three years her junior. According to Angela Glajcar, the sister was clearly mommy's girl and the brother daddy's boy, while she was always somehow apart, perhaps even "on the sidelines." This individual description is in line with psychological literature describing the middle child between sister and brother as not having a clear place amongst the siblings, as the role of the "oldest girl" and "youngest boy" are already taken (Toman, Walter: *Familienkonstellationen: Ihr Einfluss auf den Menschen – original title: Family constellation: its effects on personality and social behavior – Munich 2011, p. 28*).

At first, the fact that such a young child should concern herself with the allocation of family roles seems curious and begs the question of whether this is not a case of retrospective evaluation. However, Angela Glajcar's biography is dotted with occasions conducive to a contemplation of roles, making this self-awareness less surprising. Angela Glajcar was not even two years old when her mother suffered from the first of many slipped disks. At that time, her mother had to spend two months in a body cast, rendering her unable to do any housework whatsoever. Neighbours and friends helped the father, who was working on his thesis at the time, with looking after the eldest daughter, while Angela (her brother had not yet been born) was sent to live with her godmother in the Black Forest.

One hardly needs any particular psychological training to understand immediately how drastic an experience this must have been for the child. Particularly since, according to her, "she did not recognise anyone anymore." Implicating all her relatives in the statement of "not anyone" is somewhat artificial, a transfer of her experience of father and sister who, in her absence, had formed a close union. Thus, the situation found upon her return already anticipated the family role of the middle child feeling marginalised. According to John Bowlby, during the absence of a child, family life can organise itself in such a way that it leaves no place for the returning child to assume (c.f. *Trennung. Psychische Schäden als Folge der Trennung von Mutter und Kind*, Frankfurt am Main 1986, p. 30; original title: *Separation. Anxiety and Anger*, London 1973).

In general, family life was determined by the father's origins and his career. Today, Angela Glajcar sees her father's work constraints in a different light, namely as restlessness and a lack of commitment stemming from different sources.

Angela Glajcar: "It is surprising to see the extent to which his refugee background had an impact on

our lives; his biography left its mark on all of us.”

While his ancestors hailed from Czechia, Angela Glajcar’s father himself was born in 1939 in Breslau, which became part of Poland in 1945. Following the expulsions of Germans from Poland after World War II, the family settled in Frankfurt/Main. His father, who returned from captivity as a prisoner of war in the late 1940s, established a furrier’s workshop there but died soon thereafter. During her childhood and youth she had no opportunity to find an explanation for her father’s conduct or her parent’s relationship to one another. The past was not an issue. Nobody talked to the children about it. Basically, what little she did know reached her via the detour of her own children, with whom her father seemed to be prepared to talk more.

Angela Glajcar’s individual experience in this respect is in line with the results of scientific study of contemporaries of her father. Edna Brocke writes: “The grandparents are able to talk to their grandchildren. It is almost as if a generation were skipped.” (“Impressions from talks with Jewish holocaust survivors, their children and grandchildren”, in: *Psychosozial* 1988, Nr. 36, pp. 38–43, p. 42). However, this indirect communication only gave her a vague impression of the life of her direct ancestors: the cruel fate of being expelled, an absent father first due to war and then early death, a cold/stern mother, no tender and loving care and the constant feeling of being unwanted, as a German national in Poland and as a displaced person in Frankfurt. The immediate impression is that of a familiar story. Jürgen Müller-Hohagen of the Dachau Institute describes stereotypical, “boring” reports as a specific characteristic of the stories of traumatised persons (Müller-Hohagen, Jürgen: *verleugnet verdrängt verschwiegen. Seelische Nachwirkungen der NS-Zeit und Wege zu ihrer Überwindung*, Munich 2005, p. 129). Because of this typical speechlessness, the mass phenomenon of traumatisation amongst the war generation had consequences that are felt to this day.

Angela Glajcar made these observations early, thus proving a keen eye for her surroundings. However, it is well known that identifying a problem does not in itself solve it. As he is the focal point of the family, Angela Glajcar has had to come to terms with her father’s lack of commitment on the one hand and his overwhelming need for security on the other.

After the father had completed his doctoral thesis, the family moved to Berlin for a couple of years (1973–1979), but returned to Mainz at the end of Angela’s time at primary school. They moved within the city several times after that. During primary school and until puberty Angela Glajcar was a sensitive child, who was often ill and felt helpless before medical attempts at diagnosis and therapy, but she remembers the time in Berlin as a happy one. She felt included, had friends even though her frail health caused her to miss more than thirty days of school each year. During this time she had her second early, intensive experience: visits to the Ethnological Museum of Berlin in Dahlem. Even today, listening to the adult artist talk about the dark halls with dimly lit boats, rafts, huts and tools from Africa and Oceania, it is impossible not to notice the impression this must have made on the child. A mysterious, a mystic place. This museum became the place of her dreams. The artist’s current stance on exhibitions, namely that they should touch the viewers and not be academic and without emotion, is surely based on this intensive, almost dreamlike childhood experience. Naturally, however, it was not predictable at that point that her own works, particularly the monumental installations in museums, churches and offices, would have an impact on viewers comparable to her experience with that museum.

Back in Mainz, the sickly child was nicknamed “red Angela” on account of her ginger hair. Now she also felt excluded outside of the family, lost and curiously defenceless. From then on, she frequently pursued her interests alone: crafting, working with her hands, walking, playing outdoors – those were the things she liked to do.

In 1985, the parents separated, and the answer to the question of what to do with the children

seemed clear: the brother was to stay with the father, the sister with the mother, and Angela was to decide for herself whom she wanted to live with. A great responsibility for a child. Between 1985 and 1987 she stayed with her father, from 1987 to 1990, when she began to study, she lived with her mother. She sees the need for security embodied in her father's and siblings' choice of the teaching profession. Both brother and sister continued the family tradition and adhered to social conventions: the brother qualified as a grammar school teacher, the sister as a primary school teacher.

Angela Glajcar describes life at home, particularly before the parents' separation, with analytical detachment as that of a typical teacher's household, with the school at the centre. Her father's favourite pupils were constant visitors, and they received a lot of attention. For a while, her parents were involved in the ecumenical grassroots organisation "Kirche von unten" (Church from Below). Her mother was to intensify her involvement later, after her separation from her husband and eventual divorce, through her work in the church administration. However, religious issues played no (major) role in their daily life. In their free time, the family went hiking and on simple holidays. Visits to the museum or similar excursions, however, were definitely the exception rather than the rule. They were by no means of the intellectual middle-class. Art in particular played no role whatsoever in the family. There is no indication of a particular inclination towards the arts in the extended family, either.

At the end of secondary school, the direction in which she would develop and the career path she would follow were completely open.

It was obvious to her in principle "that I had to sort out my career myself, [because] nobody else showed any great interest in it." This impression of a middle child is also in line with the results of research in the field. Middle children see themselves as frequently overlooked and excluded from the family, and imagine themselves to be the least important. They are the children most likely to move away from the family, both geographically and with regard to their choice of career (Toman, l.c., p. 28).

In continuation of her childhood activities she spent a large part of her free time in the studio of Reginald Krämer, her teacher, and, thanks to his contacts, at the school vacation camp in Winterburg. In fact, Reginald Krämer, his wife and his children were for years like a second family for her. At the school vacation camp Angela Glajcar joined a group known as the "Construction Crew."

The group, who was responsible for carrying out all kinds of manual work around the house, consisted almost exclusively of grammar school students. In line with her social environment, Angela then began to attend grammar school, too. Her home-life also changed: she moved in with her mother.

Training to be a carpenter or learning another trade, as suggested by her father as a "proper" job, was, however, out of the question for Angela Glajcar. A work experience during secondary school left her with the distinct impression that a trade was all about "right or wrong." Even as a schoolgirl she considered this too narrow an approach. Right or wrong solutions were precisely what she was not interested in.

After finishing her A-levels, her father made it very clear he would only finance one type of education, an unmistakable "no" to any aimless wanderings. Any careers advisor worth his or her salt would nowadays interpret manual dexterity combined with a deep-seated mistrust of right and wrong as an aptitude for a creative occupation (art, architecture or similar). As a result of a lengthy work experience in the teacher's studio, Angela Glajcar herself developed the idea of studying at an art college – specifically, enrolling in a sculpture course. Without this work experience, this idea

would not have been possible: being an artist, creative, and a woman; all this did not seem to go together at all. The degree course – feared for its high theoretical content – and the personality and circumstance of artists – chaotic, insecure and badly paid – offered no suitable role model for a woman. For the budding artist, women in art had the roles of ethereal muses and objects of art, never creators. Looking back, it was certainly a stroke of luck that Angela Glajcar was provided with this haven – even if this was for want of anything else – where she could use her practical abilities to develop her own model.

### **University as a safe haven**

The start of her studies in Nuremberg in 1991 and the associated geographical distance to her core family made the existing conflicts considerably less acute. Under the influence of her tutor, Reginald Krämer, Angela Glajcar initially arranged her foundation course along conservative-figurative lines. However, all too soon this required another disengagement, the shedding of another skin. Just as she soon felt that mere manual labour became “too much of a drudge,” she tired of the figurative work that was part of her course. For the last time in her life, she appeared to somatize a problem: surgery on a bone enlargement on her hand and the subsequent months of convalescence provided her with some breathing space and the opportunity to disengage from her supporter and substitute-father. The teacher, who really saw himself as an artist, accused her of betrayal. Glajcar was meant to realise his dream of an artist’s life, independent of the need to earn a living as a teacher. Glajcar was disappointed by his position and responded with “patricide.” This constellation of disengagement and shedding of a skin, which for her constituted the obvious next step, is something we encounter more than once with the artist. Surprisingly, her counterparts in these situations always seemed to make it easy for her to leave with their irrational behaviour and their demand that she remain where she is. It is almost comical to demand of an artist that she be happy with her lot and not continue to explore and develop.

At the start of her studies it was widely held that “it was the job of art colleges to grant the students a safe haven where they were allowed to make mistakes” (Burkhard Held in a statement to Anna Prizkau, published in: “Im Mondschein Kunst verkaufen” (Selling Art in Moonshine), in: *Der Tagesspiegel*, 13 July 2011). After the Bologna reforms and the introduction of Masters degrees even for art degrees, today’s courses are hardly comparable with Angela Glajcar’s experience (instructive reading: Scheller, Jörg: “Nicht schön, aber klug. Viele Künstler studieren neuerdings nach den Regeln der Bologna-Reform. Was bedeutet das für die Kunst?” (Not pretty but clever. Many artist nowadays are studying according to the rules of the Bologna reforms. What are the consequences for art?), in: *Die Zeit*, 25 December 2010).

At that time the artist’s exploration meant the development of her own oeuvre and not the more narrowly defined scientific research of today’s art studies, or those of other subjects. Angela Glajcar used the haven – the academic playground – and gave her studies a practical outlook. Another stroke of good fortune during that phase was that she found, after lengthy searches at other academies, too, Professor Tim Scott at her own college.

Once she had been accepted into his class (1993), her actual development into the artist we know today began. Without being restricted to figurative work and without being pressurised “to produce art,” as she put it, Angela Glajcar could gain experience and try her hand at various activities. The derogatory expression “to produce art” implies more than her renunciation of figurative art. It was also of great importance for the artist that commercialisation played no role whatsoever during her studies. It simply didn’t occur to anyone to wonder whether the creative process would ever result in saleable, useful works. At the time this was hardly unusual. Today, however, it is worth mentioning because the conditions have changed. In the course of the general tendency to interlink

degree courses with industry and business, the changes made to arts courses are, amongst others, also explained by the fact that the vast majority of art graduates will never be able to earn a living with their art. Angela Glajcar, however, was of a generation of art students that considered the degree course an end in itself, and who trusted that they would be amongst the chosen few who would manage to make a living with their art alone. Here, too, one is tempted to observe how a fundamental question is resolved by her at a surprisingly young age. And here, too, personal, biographical events are what prompted this early insight: Reginald Krämer's life, whose way of working in the studio she considered to be chaotic and with little sense of time, and whose career choices she judged to be insufficiently risk-embracing. With regard to career choices, Tim Scott had put all his eggs in one basket and had become an artist, with the financial security a position as a professor at an academy brings. Tim Scott is primarily a metal sculptor whose works have a high degree of material density. Angela Glajcar embraced working with the heavy materials steel and wood and, through working with them, developed great physical strength.

As already mentioned, Glajcar enjoyed hiking and walking as a child. At the school camp, she took up manual labour. And then those early indicators of a pronounced physicality re-emerged in her work with massive tree trunks and monolithic blocks of metal. Bearing in mind that she was a sickly child, early portraits of the artist that show Angela Glajcar wielding a power saw are astonishing (cf. Knubben, K 13, p. 60. All sources cited with K and a number can be found in the List of Publications on pages 268–269 of this book.). It was completely beyond her imagination, which was always three-dimensional, to be anything other than a sculptor. Consequently, there are hardly any drawings or paintings, and very little work on paper. This is limited to some manikin sketches during her studies that were not finished works, and a finished cycle from 2003, included in the section of this catalogue that provides an overview of the oeuvre (Catalogue raisonné 2003-024 ff. All further combinations of numbers are from the Catalogue raisonné and consist of the year and, separated by a hyphen, the serial number of that year).

From the time of her degree course practically no works have been preserved, as is in the nature of such a course. Early released and exhibited works show the strong influence of Tim Scott. In part, one cannot but describe it as close mimicry (e.g.: 1997-001; 1997-002).

However, almost simultaneously she created works that disassociated themselves from her professor's formal vocabulary. Her work *Schmiedelied* (Forging Song; 1997-004) seems like a pointer towards a different future.

The work appears fragile and is a delicate construct compared to her previous, monolithic works, or to the works of her professor. Inevitably, this suggests an imminent shedding of another skin. The conflict that was in the air was brought to a head in the very controversial discussion about the professor's public space contract work. Angela Glajcar fundamentally questioned Tim Scott's concept of space and in the process became determined to look for her own, original approach.

## OEUVRE

### **An individual concept**

Around the end of her studies and master class with Tim Scott Angela Glajcar worked predominantly with forged and welded steel and with wood. Contrary to Dellwing's claim (K 6, p. 7.) there are no works of stone. Experiments the artist made with this material in the course of the Salzburg summer academy in 1996 did not result in actual works. Glajcar's mostly mid-sized metal works (e.g. 1997-001 et al.) and her – partly monumental – wood works (e.g. 1999-004) document the gradual moving away from what she had been taught, but a nod towards Brancusi, Caro and

Tim Scott is still clearly present (c.f. Fellbach-Stein, K 7, p. 1 and Scott, K 26, p. 5). Existing appraisals of Angela Glajcar's work establish a connection to Anthony Caro (e.g.: Fellbach-Stein and Scott l.c.). However, the name Schmiedelied (1997-004), given to her first lyrical, less compact sculpture, points towards David Smith, whose famous work is entitled Blackburn: Song of an Irish Black-smith. When asked, the artist recalls that during her time as master student she devoured everything about David Smith she could find. This comes as no surprise, seeing that for Tim Scott, too, David Smith "sends out major impulses amongst artists of his age" (Hirsch, Thomas in: Winkelmann, Günter (ed.), Tim Scott. Skulpturen, Zeichnungen, Düsseldorf 1997, p. 10).

During this time, Angela Glajcar's main interest lies with the artistic forms of expression of other cultures. The initial spark of her visits to the museum of ethnology is now catching fire, as it were. And even without this background knowledge Ursula Zeller cites South America as a point of reference in Angela Glajcar's formal vocabulary (K 30, p. 2). Tim Scott describes her work as "inspired by African or other 'primitive' artists" (K 26, p. 7). The authors agree that the artist has at no point in time referred to real motives (Zeller, K 30, p.1; somewhat different Knubben, K 13, p. 63: "Aspekte des Figürlichen" (Aspects of the figurative), and instead is engaged in archaic artistic forms of expression (Zeller, l.c.). These archaic motives surely include the specific examination of dance as a motive. In 2002, dancers of the Compagnie Martin Schläpfer created a choreography around the exhibits in the Kunstverein Speyer, which was performed at the opening of the exhibition. Shortly after the birth of her second child in the summer of 2003, Angela Glajcar spent several weeks documenting the movements of these dancers during rehearsal (2003-024 ff.). These oil pastel/pencil drawings are the only classic works on paper by the artist. All other paper works by her are works with paper. Meaning, that except for this series all other works do not use paper only as a carrier material. The artist came away from this project with the realisation "that a choreographer works in the same way a sculptor does: partitioning space, allocating shapes, three-dimensional thinking" (Angela Glajcar on June 8th, 2012, in a mail to the author). Observing the dancers intensified her understanding of space (cf. Petzinger, K16, p. 3). This internal bond with dance was already hinted at in Ursula Zeller's award presentation speech for the Erich Hauser Werkstattpreis in 1998. Here, Zeller mentioned the dancer's grace which Glajcar manages to wrest from the hard, brittle materials (K 30, p. 1). Even if Angela Glajcar was at that point still searching for her own form of expression, her unique feature (Petzinger, K 21, p. 6: exception), her "own, confident grasp and (...) exceptional sensitivity for three-dimensional constellations" (K 30, p. 2) was, at this early point in the artist's development, already evident to Zeller.

The first larger publication deals with two series of wood sculpture, Noyane and Kragkomplex (P 2. All sources preceded by P can be found in the publications directory on pages 270/271 of this book). Noyane is a Japanese type of roof construction. Angela Glajcar encountered the term in Klaus Zwerger's book *Das Holz und seine Verbindungen* (Wood and Wood Joints), Basel/Berlin/Boston 1997. The book mainly deals with pure wood joints, i.e. those without any aids such as glue or metal, across the centuries and compares European and Japanese approaches. It provided the artist with a deeper understanding and a broader knowledge of the interaction of shape, force and mass. For Angela Glajcar, the Noyane works (1999-002 et al.) represent an important advancement on classic wood sculpture, since they are not made of one piece. Glajcar then tried to apply her accumulated knowledge about morticing and dovetail connections and to breathe life into the materials by assembling different parts, by 'cantilevering' and 'elongating'. Titles such as Balance (1998-010) or Akrobat (1998-011) demonstrate that she is interested in balance and tension, in the interplay of stability and instability (Heinemann, K 10, p. 44). The reference to the human body and its movements, clearly present in the title Akrobat, is also in the tradition of Tim Scott's works. For the effective forces in Scott's works were also compared to those of the human body: "Just as in the human body, the elements of support and weight are one – here in each part they are played off against each other in different ways." (Franz, Erich in: Tim Scott, Braunschweig 1988, p. 185)

In addition to dealing with the joints in fixed constructions, Zwerger's book also examines soft constructs such as tents, sails and suspension bridges. Using soft and flexible materials in her own work seems an obvious next step to Angela Glajcar.

## TRANSITION TO PAPER

In the public reception of the artist, her works with paper start playing a major role only much later – explicitly from the *Contrarius* series in 2003 onwards (Petzinger's basic assessment K 16, developed further in K 18, p. 30 and K 19, p. 14 ff.). Chronologically, first paper collages were already created in 1998, that is, only one year after the end of her studies. In March of that year, in preparation of the studio prize awarded by the Kunststiftung Erich Hauser, she created a small series of water colours with applied parts (1998-001 to 1998-004; Petzinger, cf. K 18, p. 31). These led to the monumental steel sculpture *Akrobat* (1998-008). The plastic effect of the glued-on papers exerted a lasting impression on the artist. Consequently, she returned to this concept in 1999 during the Asterstein Scholarship from the Ministry of Culture of Rhineland-Palatinate, when she tried to convert these works to a larger format. The result was a cycle of works (1999-007 to 2000-010) where she experimented with painted and lined up sheets applied to a carrier paper. However, it was only once she began to distribute the papers onto 150 cm wide sheets, paint them with broad brushes and then interlace and nail them directly onto the wall (2000-012; 2000-013), that she was happy with the result. Here she found the plastic quality she had been looking for (Petzinger, K 19, p. 14). Thus, the well-known and much-quoted (K 16, S. 1; K 19, S. 15 etc.) statement by the artist that "the paper came to me" seems to be misunderstood as an expression of a more passive position. It is only Barbara Auer who describes the move away from wood and steel as an active decision and as an act of liberation (K 1, p. 61). Auer's description of the energetic artist who meets every challenge head-on (K 1, p. 61; similar: Petzinger, K 21, p. 17) corresponds perfectly with the aspirations of the woman behind the works.

## Excursus: Biography

Using her astonishing powers of self-regulation (cf. Bowlby, l.c., p. 419), the artist developed a solution for her home life that is at odds with her family tradition: she put a stop to her restlessness and joined Toni, her husband. Both her children, Yelena (b. 2000) and Yara (b. 2003), by now almost adolescents, are as tied to the land as their father. For Angela Glajcar, her family is her force field. She experiences the lack of role models for a life as a woman artist as an opportunity to develop her individual solution. Renouncing the out-dated image of the heroic (male) artist, who, monk-like, only lives for him-self and his art, Angela Glajcar manages to strike a balance between her ambitious professional aims and a fulfilling family life. She summarizes it as follows: "I have always applied myself to pursuing my goals, even more so since sculpture became my main purpose in life. My children are an additional motivation for me to apply myself even more determinedly. But they were not the cause of it."

Private life and work were running in parallel inasmuch as using paper as a material also gave her freedom (cf. Auer, K 1, p. 61). She actively removed herself from any direct comparison with classic positions in sculpture by occupying a "niche" (Mertes, K 15, p. 84): she developed the unique technique of additive paper installations with rips and tears. The artist always strongly protested against having the "classic academy training (...), the traditional way of working" (Dellwing, K 6, p. 7; von Campenhausen, K 3, p. 33) and the employment of "classic materials" (Auer, K 1, p. 61, Petzinger, K 18, p. 31) applied to the results of her work. Her anger at the term "traditional"<sup>2</sup> is what drove her to set herself apart. In addition, there are requirements posed by content: the wooden sculptures are not rooted in any particular space, they do not require any

specific location (Fellbach-Stein, K 7, p. 3). Other viewers disagree. For example, Jürgen Knubben does mention the “dialogical relationship between material and space” ( K 13, p. 63).

Herbert Dellwing even called an early review of her works “Correspondence in Space” (K 6, p. 7), thus alluding to the titles of a whole series of sculptures by the artist (from 2002-004, intermittently until 2002-013). The artist, however, wanted to react more to existing spaces (cf. Strohm, K 27, p. 14). Transporting and reassembling the objects, some of which weighing thousands of kilos, at a different location, without any adequate reaction to the space that the artist could sense, was enervating to her. Having turned her attention to flexible materials, she experienced each new exhibition space as a new, an empty studio<sup>3</sup>. Despite the precision and reliability of the planning and drafting processes, the choice of material means that the work on-site has become the decisive factor of her sculpture. A welcome effect of working with paper – and later with glass fabric – is the relative independence from tools and helpers. Except for the support of Caroline Strack, her studio assistant, who lends an experienced hand with scaffolding or particularly large volumes, for example, the artist does not need anyone else for her installations. This is the case even with monumental works. Thus, the “most important part” (Beitin, K 3, p. 23; and below p. 62, similar: Auer, K 2, p. 56) of her work is free of distractions and technical limitations. Through the material, Glajcar’s sensitivity for movement and space is heightening (cf. Petzinger, K 16, p. 4).

### **Excursus: Paper and Art**

The Association of German Paper Manufacturers estimates the per capita consumption of paper in Germany to be more than 250 kg per year. Hardly surprising then that paper is considered profane (see Schwarz, K 25, p. 1) and ubiquitous. It is mainly used as a carrier of information, for example as a newspaper, a book, a letter, money or as wrapping. Judging from the types of paper encountered every day, it seems a material that is light, fragile (cf. Beitin, K 3, p. 23) and transient (Wichtendahl, K 29, p. 74). However, depending on quality and layering, paper can be heavy and very resilient (cf. Beitin, l.c. et al.). Paper consists of natural ingredients and is as perishable as a natural tissue. However, it is not a raw material, but is manufactured by hand or mechanically. Thus, paper assumes a middle position between the natural and the artificial.

In contrast to wood or metal it takes on colour without being coloured itself. Mostly, it can be processed without any tools, although this sometimes requires substantial strength. Easily agitated, set in motion, it can cast a moving shadow. Due to electronic data transfer, the use of paper should really be in decline, but this is not the case. Far from it, we are using ever more paper, and its cultural significance remains strong. An empty sheet of paper and an unread book continue to exert fascination. Metaphors such as “turning over a new leaf” or “paper doesn’t blush” refer to human activities that involve paper in a passive, serving role. In Western art, too, paper generally assumes such a passive, serving function as a mere carrier of images for photographs, drawings, watercolours and prints (cf. Hübl, K 11, p. 10, von Campenhausen, K 5, p. 33 et al.; quite different in Asia: Petzinger, K 21, pp. 4/5).

In the 1960s many artists began to work with everyday materials. In their search for materials “free of tradition,” the artists also used paper (cf. Bardt, Juliane: *Kunst aus Papier. Zur Ikonographie eines plastischen Werkmaterials der zeitgenössischen Kunst*, Hildesheim/Zürich/New York 2006, p. 13). Robert Rauschenberg and Frank Stella experimented with paper pulp (Petzinger, K 21, p. 5), and Claes Oldenburg and Niki de Saint Phalle worked with similar materials. At the end of the 1960s, Frank Gehry developed an entire series of cardboard furniture. His famous wobble chair was created in 1972. Emil Schumacher incorporated corrugated cardboard in his tactile pictures, turning parts of them into sculptural wall objects. A number of artists worked with silhouettes (e.g. Eduardo Chillida, Felix Droese), folding techniques (e.g. Eberhard Fiebig, Peter Weber) or relief technique

(e.g. Josef Albers, Raimund Girke, Günther Uecker). However, just as the artists that work with book objects (e.g. Thomas Virnich, Franz Erhard Walther), they remain tied to the flat sheet of paper. An exception here is Peter Callesen (born 1967), who transforms silhouettes into true three-dimensionality. Recently, Andreas von Weizsäcker came to prominence with his transformation of everyday objects and monuments by making casts of them with handmade paper as a unique sculptural position. Peter Wüthrich (born 1962) and Jonathan Callan (born 1961) use books as the material for their sculptures.

While Wüthrich deals with the cultural and historical significance of books, Callan, like Angela Glajcar, only hints at this significance and mainly concerns himself with the material properties of the books. Other points of contact in art history specifically for Angela Glajcar's works can be found with Jo Enzweiler and Oskar Holweck. The former combines serial sequencing (albeit side by side) of paper with manual ripping and the effect of creating three-dimensional objects. His work, too, gives rise to associations with landscapes and rock formations, despite being equally abstract. With a few exceptions, Oskar Holweck, a member of the ZERO movement, uses exclusively white, industrially manufactured paper, like Angela Glajcar, and rejects pliable masses of paper that could be cast like plaster or concrete. Holweck destroys the white sheets in different ways, such as scratching or tearing. Then, the sheets are usually fanned out from their binding (ill. p. 35) Angela Glajcar for her part arranges the sheets one after another at identical intervals, thus creating entire three-dimensional objects on the inside of these constructs. Recently, she created several objects that, although reversing the process by compressing the sheets of paper at one corner, in their appearance resemble the direction Holweck has taken (2012-003 ff).

Despite the PaperArt Biennial and various scientific papers on the subject, beginning with Dorothea Eimert through to Juliana Bardt's dissertation (l.c.), paper as a material in sculpture leads a marginal existence. The concept of "made for eternity," which the 1960s were already supposed to see out (Bardt, l.c., p. 13), seems quite resilient when it comes to sculpture. Angela Glajcar, however, does not think much of it (Beitin, K 3, p. 23 and below p. 62).

## **Exploring paper**

From her gouache paintings, Angela Glajcar developed her first central paper cycle: the *Contrarius* series (from 2002-016). The title is derived from "contra" for the black-and-white contrast of the works (cf. Petzinger, K 19, p. 15). The sheets of paper have been brushed irregularly with black paint and behave differently from untreated paper (Petzinger, K 18, p. 30 and K 21, p. 10). This contrast, too, was consciously made use of by the artist when tearing and installing the sheets. This was the first time that she used shadows as a part of her sculptures. Galerie Haasner in Wiesbaden were the first to exhibit in 2003 a small selection of these works alongside wooden and steel objects. Renate Petzinger, who at the time was head curator at the Landesmuseum Wiesbaden, discovered the works at a visit to the gallery and took them as a starting point for a first review, which was later published in a somewhat expanded version (K 16, pp. 30-31, K 19, pp. 14/15; and about Terforations K 19, p. 46) and which includes fundamental observations on the work of Angela Glajcar.

In the studio, she continued with the *Contrarius* series, increasing the works in size (e.g. 2003-012 to 2003-019). Due to their fragility and firm ties to certain locations, none of these works were preserved. Angela Glajcar sees them as working copies, enabling her to learn more about paper as a material and about its possibilities. Alongside her work on the *Contrarius* series, she continued to experiment with applied sheets of paper. The *Conballare* series (starting with 2004-018, intermittently through to 2006-066) is dominated by transparent Wenzhou Paper onto which she applied black painted paper, with the resulting impression of a veil or vegetable tissue. The term

*Conballare* includes the Italian word for to dance, “ballare,” thus returning to the theme of human movement. Here, the artist is dealing with the subject of movement patterns on stage. Just as the view from above onto a stage more clearly reveals the utilization of space than looking at a peep box, the *Conballare* series also reveals formations in their creation and dissolution. The title is also a nod towards the *Contrarius* series, and its ambiguous position between “contra,” i.e. contrast and opposition, and the new meaning by shortening the term to “con” (together, approaching) was chosen by the artist deliberately<sup>4</sup>.

The reference to the performing arts, to the theatre, can also be seen in the way the artist deals with light and shadow. Appropriately, Auer talks about the “stage-managed lighting control” (K 2, p. 60) of her installations.

In 2004 the works began to move away from the wall. Reminiscent of the mobiles of Alexander Calder, Angela Glajcar connected part of the rolled up sheets with coated wire, making them more agile and more elastic (2005-012, 2005-014, 2005-015). Here, the artist again revealed her interest in shadow play. The wire casts shadows onto the paper that resemble writing (Wichtendahl, K 28, p. 63), thus adding a contextual dimension. Angela Glajcar continued to search for her own solution to the problem of fuelling the interaction of paper with light and the movement of air.

At the end of each exhibition the artist was faced with the question of what to do with the works that were created for that specific location. In the case of the installations at the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen (Emy-Roeder-Preis, 2005-005), Angela Glajcar decided to give the work a chance to “live on,” by cutting the sheets and archiving them in the form of a book. This way, the edges of the tears lying upon one another are preserved – if compacted – and are given a new and different form (2005-052 and 2005-062). These archive books can be seen as a preliminary stage of the *Terforations*, which in effect are a (re-)expansion of the books. Proof of this was delivered by Glajcar at the end of 2005. When a Wiesbaden bank asked her for a concept for their large client service hall, the artist considered a work from the *Contrarius* series as too restless and, with a length of 18 metres, not suitable to the premises with regard to its size. Instead, Angela Glajcar proposed a work consisting of 361 sheets of paper (each with a height of 2.50 m and a width of 1.28 m), hung at equal intervals across the entire length of the room and threaded like pages of a book. The work was supposed to be installed only temporarily.

After a total of three small-scale models (2005-076, 2006-001 and 2006-002), which actually are works in their own right, she realised this first monumental *Terforation* (2006-003), which was so successful that the bank decided to buy and install it permanently. The title of the work – *Terforation* – which is also the title of an extensive group of works that is being developed to this day, is derived from “perforation” (Lat. foramen = hole) on the one hand, i.e. the perforation of hollow or flat objects. On the other hand, the term established by Glajcar alludes to the Latin word for earth, “terra,” with which the artist refers to “terra incognita,” unknown land, virgin soil. She herself is venturing into uncharted territory with her works. The view into her works, which never allow an unobstructed view to the other side, as if through a tunnel or a telescope, can also be seen as looking at unknown lands.

At the beginning of the *Terforations* she used sheets of the same dimensions (up to 2008-182, afterwards intermittently, e.g. 2009-028, 2009-054). Tears at the edges and the tearing of holes in the middle of the sheets result in insights, vistas and edge formations that catch the eye. The formal vocabulary that is being created in this way is what the work of Angela Glajcar as we know it today is based on. Initially, these were the *Terforations* where paper (and later sheets of glass fabric and acrylic screens) are arranged vertically. In effect, the *Montcanus* series is a variation on the *Terforation* theme and is characterised by sheets threaded horizontally on metal rods and skilfully arranged in the gravitational field. The sheets of paper behave differently depending on the size and

shape of the torn-out piece in the middle. Their varied rhythms reveal intriguing lateral views. Whilst Angela Glajcar achieved animation in the works of the *Contrarius* series by means of rolling and bending, the *Terforation* works see the dramatic parts being moved to the inside, thus creating three-dimensional structures. The cavities that give rise to various interpretations as grottoes (Auer, K 1, p. 57) are therefore not the starting point of her creations, but the result of moving the momentum of tension inside. A room within a room is generated, and Angela Glajcar thus achieved a way of creating works that could stand alone and not depend on interaction with the space for which they were devised. The view that determines the *Conballare* series, that is, the view onto the stage, may be seen as a parallel for this. The interstices generate a keen awareness of space. For the missing bit between the sheets is not nothing, but, because it is part of the work, it becomes something (cf. Hanten, K 8, p. 90 and Beitin below p. 66).

The *Blocs* are the concentrated form of this movement of the dramatic momentum to a space that is clearly separated from the outside (e.g. *Terbloc* 2008-154). Like a *Terforation* which is stacked (horizontally) without spacing – this is how their creation can be described. Here, the tears at the centre of the *Blocs* are of greater importance than the peripheral tears. The object boxes as reliefs distinguish themselves from their surroundings by means of their presentation within a frame or an enclosed hood. The emphasis is placed on the edges of the tears. One fancies one can see entire landscapes in them.

The *Arsis* group of works (2009-001, 2009-073, 2009-085) consists of three monumental installations which were created for the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen, the KunstRaum Hüll and the Österreichisches Papiermachermuseum. In contrast to the *Montcanus* series and many of the *Terforations*, these works were not intended to create a room within a room, thus isolating themselves from the surroundings, but instead fully dominate the space they found themselves in and, supported by sparse lighting, reveal their meaning. It is remarkable that Barbara Auer intuitively grasped the reference when she talked about “enormous, hollow bodies like hulks of ships” (K 2, p. 60). The relative darkness serves to sharpen the viewers’ senses when exploring the installation, which looks different from each position in the room. Most of Angela Glajcar’s works do not touch the ground but seem to be suspended. In this, the *Arsis* block is an exception. However, the title refers to the Greek word for “to rise, to soar,” thus clearly indicating that the works are not about being grounded, but about the transition to being suspended, to flying.

### **Other materials: plastics, glass fabric, mixed media**

Although for Angela Glajcar paper was the material, the one with which she was able to express herself perfectly, she came to realise that it was limiting her when it came to outdoor installations, particularly locations involving water, or with regard to strict fire protection requirements in public buildings (cf. Wichtendahl, K 29, p. 74). Here too, she came up with intelligent solutions that were by no means compromises. She selected materials that met the given requirements and shared the distinctive characteristics of paper. Barbara Auer summarized these as follows (K 1, p. 56): “Flexibility, translucence or transparency, and similar edge formations when being broken, sawn or torn.” Between 2005 and 2006 Angela Glajcar developed, with the support of a large German chemical company, plastic objects made of acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) (intermittently 2005-051 to 2009-002), predominantly for outdoor installation. A light blue pigment was added to the compound, but it remains translucent. When heated, it can be easily moulded. Once it has cooled down, it is inherently stable and weatherproof. Its mouldability and the shadows it casts (particularly in combination with metal joints in reference to the wire mobiles; c.f. Petzinger, K 21, p. 15 and K 22, p. 12) are interesting features for Angela Glajcar. By using this material, however, she became dependent on industrial production cycles, which also restricted her flexibility. Subsequently, she discovered the more freely available acrylic for outdoor installations. With the

plastics (ASA, later acrylic), Angela Glajcar progressed in a similar way as she had with paper before: at the beginning, the material was bent and rolled, but eventually even the plastic works consist of flat, initially identical, sheets arranged one behind the other and with parts taken out or removed from the edges. In her search for waterproof, non-flammable and yet mobile materials, and after careful analysis of all required features and characteristics, Angela Glajcar finally hit upon glass fabric. Starting in 2010, she began to create additive works up to a monumental format (2010-083, 2011-009 and 2011-072). Glass fabric is also a material that the artist can work with alone, which she appreciates. The tissue is cut with scissors and individual strands are picked out using tweezers. It is not possible, however, to tear glass fabric. In contrast to paper, glass fabric is point elastic, so that it is easier to curve. More easily activated than paper, the glass fabric works can, depending on the movement of air at the place of installation, almost be described as kinetic objects. Kirsten Schwarz in 2008 described frozen movement as the artist's main theme (K 25, p. 4). With regard to the paper works, Beitin takes a similar line (K 3, pp. 24/25). The glass fabric works thus seem to take the artist one step further, since the objects not only depict movement, but actually carry out a curving, flowing motion (Mennekes, K 23, pp. 12 and 14).

While ASA resin is bluish and paper white, glass fabric is of a greenish hue. Angela Glajcar considers its behaviour in certain lights, be it light falling through coloured glass windows, artificial light or daylight, as an intrinsic part of the work. The interaction with incoming daylight in the case of a monumental work in Neuwied was in fact so spectacular that a small series of Diasecs was produced in 2011, based on photographs of details (2011-031 to 2011-033).

In the meantime, light coming through coloured windows and falling on her large installations, be they paper or glass fabric, has become part of the artist's many site-specific installations in churches (ill. pp. 53, 60, 70). In general, installations in sacred buildings are subject to specific opportunities and conditions (c.f. Schlimbach, K 24, p. 10). The surroundings alone imbue the works with a specific contextual dimension (for purpose and effect of art in sacred spaces see: Raguin, K 14, pp. 22–24). In this context it becomes particularly obvious how each interpretation with regard to shape, object and content depends solely on the viewer.

## SUMMARY

### Effect

The differences in effect of her various materials are of particular interest to the artist. The haptic potential of paper (Auer, K 2, p. 60) develops in Angela Glajcar's layerings and, despite the wealth of associations (Auer, K 2, p. 61) that her works evoke in the viewer, they always return to certain, recurring motives in the reception of her work: rock formations, slate, terraced landscapes and erosions of earth in bodies of water (cf. Auer, K 2, p. 61), tunnels (e.g. Beitin, K 3, p. 24; Schlimbach, K 24, p. 10), caves (ibid), but also clouds (Wichtendahl, K 29, p. 74) are some of those frequently named. Her early works, made of wood or steel, were described as resembling human or animal bodies (e.g. Fellbach-Stein, K 7, p. 3).

Once she began using elastic materials, the associations with animate objects disappeared, however. Only Kirsten Schwarz (K 25, p. 1) mentions bird wings, but she may well have been thinking of the act of flying itself and not of the shape. Petzinger (K 21, p. 17) feels reminded of a Chinese dragon. The characteristics of paper and the works' physical presence, especially in the large formats, transport a feeling of safety, warmth and security (cf. Auer, K 2, p. 60). In the case of the expansive installations this effect is heightened due to the sound-absorbing qualities of paper and its interstices. The objects' dynamic and the simultaneous muffling of sound increases the physical presence of the works. The works seem like a frozen movement, thus giving rise to reflections on

the meaning of time (Beitin, K 3, p. 24/25 and below p. 67; cf. also Petzinger, K 18, p. 31). By associating a ship's hull (Auer, K 2, p. 60) a connection is made to one of the artist's early experiences. Many reviewers associate entire landscapes, even if the works thus described are of a compact format. In a way, the installations defy any referential determination of size. Even the smallest of the Terforations is composed in such a way that without any reference objects it is impossible to estimate the dimension of the work. The advantage of the monumental works is their accessibility. In the case of the smaller works, viewers can assume different perspectives without changing places, thus gaining a full view of the work.

The plastic works seem colder, and the jagged formations at their edges seem at times more aggressive, abrupt, and resemble broken ice floes (Auer, K1, p. 56; Schwarz, K 25, p. 5), although some Terforations have also been described as "age-old glacier formations" (Petzinger, K 20, p. 46). Where paper works and plastic works clearly differ is in their reaction to light. Paper absorbs the surrounding light, making its own colours more vibrant (Beitin, K 3, p. 23). There is an interplay of light and shade on the inside and outside of the works, turning the large sculptures into multi-dimensional pieces (Auer, K 2, p. 60; Mennekes, K 23, p. 14). The paper's translucence suggests a walk-in arrangement of lithophanes. The resulting effect is a blurring of the borders between what is real and what is imagined (Auer, K 2, p. 60). The paper used is not coloured. Only the cardboard of the *Blocs* (2008-038 intermittently through to 2010-025) is not white but has the "non-colour" grey. The surrounding light, however, creates "an infinite range of tonalities" (Beitin, K 3, p. 24).

Yet all of Angela Glajcar's works have in common "a harmonious interplay of lightness and weight, stillness and movement, light and shade" (Auer, K 1, p. 56; similar also: Mertes, K 15, p. 83), and we experience clarity, beauty and harmony (Auer, K 1, p. 57; similar also: Wichtendahl, K 28, p. 63). Angela Glajcar touches "our perception, our subconscious, our being" (Schlimbach, K 24, p. 10). The reason her works are of such "unreal beauty" (Petzinger, K 22, p. 12) is best summed up in Reinhard Knodt's dictum of "atmosphere" (K 12, p. 4) when describing the effect of Angela Glajcar's works. The way space is experienced is subjective, and more than a simple geometric expanse. With her installations, Angela Glajcar succeeds in making us sense an occurrence, succumb to a mood, and not know but sense something (according to Knodt, K 12, p. 4). Renate Petzinger is taking the same line when she talks about the "aura" of the works (K 21, p. 12). Manfred Strohm's approach, describing the effect of her works as "space turned into poetry" (K 27, p. 14), is in the same vein.

## Discourse

Similar to the way Angela Glajcar is set apart from traditional sculptural positions, her work is also impossible to subsume under a specific artistic category or a specific "school." In fact, "sculpture" may not even be the right term, as her works are not even fully described by the basic sculptural processes of carving or moulding – for the latter is an additive process, which applies to the layering and stacking processes, but the breaking and tearing processes are more in line with the subtractive process of carving (cf. Beitin below, p. 66). Furthermore, sculpture is generally taken to refer to individual works, and Angela Glajcar's large installations in particular do not seem to fit this description. Consequently, Andreas Beitin draws on the effect and not the genesis of the works when he describes it as "pictorial" (K 3, p. 24).

Suspended in space, the sheets seem like broad white brushstrokes (Beitin on the *Arsis* installation (2009-001, 2009-073, 2009-085) K 3, p. 24). With regard to the artistic position of the works, Andreas Beitin suggests "expressive Minimalism" as a reference (K 3, p. 25). Here, Beitin reflects the repetitive use of industrially manufactured materials, a key characteristic of Minimalism (similar in her approach also von Campenhausen, K 5, p. 33). Angela Glajcar's way of stacking and

creating a certain rhythm meets this condition. However, Minimalism is characterised by hiding any personal signature, whereas Angela Glajcar is particularly concerned about personal expression and authorship (cf. Hübl, K 11, p. 13; similar: Heinemann, K 10, p. 44). Aware of this seeming contradiction, Beitin qualifies his comparison with the association of expressiveness: “For there is no other word to describe her way of dealing with industrially manufactured materials than ‘expressive’.” Since her works are structured following precise rules, Hübl positions them in the region of concrete or conceptual art (K 11, p. 13), thus pursuing the inner connection to Jo Enzweiler even further. However, the engagement with the material (be it paper, glass fabric or plastic) cannot be planned, which is generally the case with concrete positions. In addition to further approaches, Beitin finally explores Angela Glajcar’s references to Deconstructivism and Iconoclasm (in detail below, p. 62–69) and concludes: “Despite all conceivable references to various artistic positions in history, her own position is by no means eclectic, but unique.” (Beitin, *ibid*, p. 69)

Applied to its effect, Dellwing (K 6, p. 9) summarizes the richness revealed by Angela Glajcar’s oeuvre as follows: “The sculptures deny the viewer the quick satisfaction of recognition, and this is precisely where their magic lies.”

- 1 The personal information is taken from detailed conversations and from questions the artist answered in writing in January and February 2012.
- 2 / 3 Angela Glajcar in an e-mail to the author dated August 1st, 2012
- 4 E-mail by the artist to the author, dated July 10, 2012