

PRESS-RELEASE

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It's all in the mix

RARE SHOTS ON PLANET X carries us off into visual worlds transcending mass taste and commercialism. The brilliant mix of graffiti, illustration and photography shows what a creative mind has been putting down on walls and paper with consummate skill for two decades

Matthias Gephart - go-getting street artist, musician, multiple award-winning graphic designer and illustrator - wanted to do more than just pack a small part of his work between two book covers. He wanted it to be a monograph, one that not only reflected his own work in text and image and in chronologically sequenced and coordinated chapters, but that told of sources of inspiration, allowed companions to have their say and provided exciting insider knowledge. The result is an artist's book with a difference. One that is a credit to the genre by virtue of its presentation alone.

An artist who brings to bear all conceivable mixed forms of graphic design cannot be pigeon-holed in terms of genre. A hefty 400 pages meanwhile provide the opportunity to examine specific aspects exhaustively. Gephart comes from Bochum. His creative roots lie in graffiti writing and what arose in this regard in the 1980s, especially in the Ruhr area. What looked like youthful insurrection bordering on illegality at the beginning, coupled with subversion, has developed into perfection over the years. The synthesis of image and text remains characteristic of the work of Matthias Gephart. With a penchant for calligraphy and in appearance not unlike oversized ink drawings arise imaginative letter formations and artificial words-all meticulously designed in great detail and implemented on walls and paper with technical mastery.

When he moves to Berlin, the city becomes his territory. With an unerring feeling for intermediate spaces and remote places, he elicits from the big city its peculiarities and passionately seizes on everything strange, enigmatic and ambiguous. Politics crops up again and again. General and specific historical references are regularly discernible. Fine arts and music work together. Commissioned works of graphic art for magazines and record labels alternate with independent work in an exhibition context.

Since 2003 Matthias Gephart has been operating under the Disturbanity [*Graphics*] brand. This peculiar word combination is quite fitting. Loosely translated as "urban disturbance", this playful combination refers to the way he works: never watered down and never conventional, but rather something to trip over.

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