



Untitled, 2007, crayon, coloured crayon, chalk, Indian ink and acrylic on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.

There might well be two Thomas Müllers. The one would be the author of drawings in structured lines. The other would bring chaos to the fore. This dichotomy between empty and full, between gentleness and violence is precisely what makes him move forward in a permanent dialogue with his sheet of paper. Some of the latter can be read by the elliptical stroke of a bic or a pencil, while others let a slither of ink escape. Some of them leave no place

for the white of the paper, while others grant it as much importance as the figurative form.

The artist says with amusement that he does not want to create “a Thomas Müller style of drawing”: “Because my work does not develop in a linear sense but in a circular and in a spiral sense, in different directions at the same time.”

For this, he disciplines himself to a well-defined work process. The drawings are made on a daily ba-

sis, like practising scales. Each one reacts to a preceding work. The format, classic A4 paper, is decided from the start so that it is no longer a problem. They will then be installed in series by the artist during exhibitions. Although a few years ago he showed them in blocks, today he de-structures them, which enables him to highlight their familiarity and their contrast. Some large formats are shown in isolation. There again, on the one hand simple, reduced and precise shapes are revealed in parallel to decompositions of movement. The difference between the poles incessantly nourishes the work. The colour is also chosen according to the norms. For instance, the biro stroke is always blue. At the moment, the oil is green, coming directly from the tube and the acrylic white. The white of the paper is also considered a colour as important as those nourishing it. Some mornings, Thomas Müller compels himself to trace parallels. His entire day will be devoted to it. Another day, the challenge will be to draw on two sides of the paper. He ensures a dialogue with this sheet that sends him back an answer which, in turn, he retorts. But other works blossom much more freely and even reserve some surprises for him!

In this permanent game of ping-pong, in this struggle, a rather gentle one, between shapes and lines, Thomas Müller constructs an atemporal work that doesn't pay much attention to its contemporaries. His references are varied, going back to Rembrandt, via Victor Hugo, Paul Klee or Joseph Beuys and right up to the minimalism of Donald Judd. An initial analysis brings us back in an obvious manner to

a re-reading of the classic shapes of abstraction that he considers being like “memories”. But it is also a work that refers back to oriental philosophy and extols a development of circular time. Moreover, the artist often employs the words “cosmos” and “constellations” to describe his work. The overall work reveals an immanent rhythm. In the end, these fragile and flimsy pieces of paper gather to form one great whole. ■



Untitled, 2007, crayon, acrylic and collage on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.



Untitled, 2007, crayon, acrylic and oil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Müller was born in 1959. He lives and works in Stuttgart. His work is in numerous private and public collections, including the Centre Pompidou and the Kunstmuseum in Bonn and Stuttgart. In Paris, he is represented by the gallery Vidal-Saint Phalle and in Berlin by Jan-Philipp Fruehsorge.