

PAINTED SOUND

by KOTHER

Artist Story

One life. Many worlds. One language.

ART. ROCK CULTURE. COLLECTIBLE ASSETS.

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1974

Some artist biographies begin at an academy. Mine begins with a used Fender Mustang, built in 1965, in the hands of an eleven-year-old. No one could have told then that this instrument was the first sentence of a language that I was to learn to speak only decades later.

A Life Without a Script

My path was never straight. There were times when I started with very little – with 500 Marks, without an apartment, without a steady job. What emerged from that was not a linear rise, but a life of opportunities, decisions, and the ability to constantly re-orient myself. People have therefore repeatedly called me a 'master of life' ('Lebenskünstler') – today, I understand this for what it truly is: the ability to develop new possibilities out of difficult situations and to connect different worlds. This is precisely the raw material of PAINTED SOUND.



Music, Markets, Motorsport, Fashion

In 1979, at the age of sixteen, I stood on a stage for the first time; later I worked as a label manager and production assistant at Paradise Music Studios in Munich. There, I understood that music is far more than sound – it is atmosphere, memory, identity.

In parallel, three other paths unfolded: decades in international foreign exchange trading (FOREX), as Store Manager of MJ Guitars Munich in partnership with Matthias Jabs (Scorpions), in Porsche racing from 1993 to 2000 with my own team and club presidency, and as the founder of the fashion labels ROX Fashion and TARA Couture. Each of these worlds gave me something that I find again today at my workbench: precision, material awareness, and the capacity to make decisions and stand by them.



Family

Between all these worlds, there was something greater than any professional milestone: my two children, now grown up. They are the most personal and quiet testimony to a life that consisted

of more than just projects and fresh starts. This, too, belongs to PAINTED SOUND, because art does not only arise from what one achieves, but also from what one carries and preserves.

A Quote That Remained

On May 30, 2014, the Munich P1 bouncer and writer Damir Fister said to me:

“You are truly the only Klaus who is Liberace, Siegfried & Roy, and the Incredible Hulk all in one person. Chapeau.”

— Damir Fister

Liberace stands for staging and opulence, Siegfried & Roy for the ability to create an entire world of one's own, and the Hulk for power and the courage to embrace great contrasts. Perhaps this phrase indeed describes something about me: the fusion of business and rock 'n' roll, of precision and chaos, of risk and control.

The Path to Art

PAINTED SOUND did not arise from a sudden resolution: 'Now I will become an artist.' It emerged later, when I began restoring guitars, and at some point it became clear that restoration alone was not the goal. Out of repair came transformation, out of transformation came design, out of design came art.

Each work begins with an instrument, its history, its traces of use. These are not necessarily removed – they can become part of the artwork. Paint, material, overpainting, exposure, destruction, reconstruction: the result is not a decorated musical instrument, but an independent work of art.



PAINTED SOUND Today

For over a year, I have been working continuously on this body of work. It now comprises 33 completed original pieces in a distinct evolution: from the immediate, eruptive gesture of the first ten works, through a more controlled, deliberately composed second phase, to its expansion into physical space – with two completed spatial installations, including a work dedicated to Jimi Hendrix, and a third currently in progress. The guitar remains the central medium, but it has long been more than an instrument: a vessel of memory, an image carrier, a sculptural body, sometimes part of an entire space.



A Life as Material

I do not believe that I invented PAINTED SOUND. I believe that at some point it had to emerge inevitably – from the guitar of my childhood, from the music, the businesses, the racetracks, the fashion, the family, and every necessary fresh start. I do not just paint on guitars. I work with history: my own, that of the instruments, with what is visible – and with what remains hidden beneath the surface.

My goal is not to produce as many guitars as possible. My goal is to establish an independent artistic language at the intersection of contemporary art, music culture, and materiality. The guitar remains the medium. But art is greater than the instrument.

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