

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

I warmly welcome you to the opening of the exhibition *Johann Zechmeister, painting and drawing*, which is at the same time the prelude to our new gallery arToxin.

Some of you will know this space under *kunst@sono*, where Angelika Donhärl and I have offered a forum to Munich based artists in 20 exhibitions over the past four years. With my withdrawal from my former company sono Studioteknik GmbH, this concept could not be maintained, as the new shareholders did not want to continue this cultural engagement.

Proceeding from this situation, Angelika and I have decided to continue the exhibition activities as a gallery in the classical sense.

"Artoxin" stands for the artistic work as a "toxic" substance in the sense of a counter-draft to mainstream and conformity. The toxic effect may be regarded as quite desirable. Risks and side effects such as sensory irritation, critical questioning, defense or enthusiasm and infatuation are deliberately accepted. Whether healing or destroying is just a matter of dosage.

For Johann Zechmeister drawing is essential. At this point, I would like to quote the art historian Dörthe Bäumer: "With the pencil, he appropriates the world, rearranges it, and senses the unconscious. Family photographs, old newspaper excerpts and everyday images are the starting points for series, which are condensed into image stories while retaining the protagonists. But as a master student of Karl Fred Dahmen, as you see here, he is also familiar with the large format. With overpaints and stratifications, he opens up the picture spaces, the coloring of which is a highly distinct one. His skillful drawing and the impulsive colouring form his specific picture language. "

The exhibition shows large-scale works from the year 2012 in the front rooms as well as paper works from the years 2003 to 2012 in the adjoining hallway.

I'm linked with Johann Zechmeister for more than three decades through some exhibitions in the former LOFT and my former gallery W4! So we know each other for quite a time.

Now I wish you much pleasure with the first injection!

Gottfried Düren