

Biographical notes

- 1954 born in Wettingen (Switzerland)
I grow up in a family that values art, music, literature and theatre
- 1970 - 74 teacher training in Wettingen (Switzerland)
- 1974 - 77 three years as a primary school teacher in Gebenstorf (Switzerland)
- 1978 - 79 preliminary course at Zurich arts school.
Subsequently, a first painter's journey to the South: six months in Apulia and Greece.
My parents support me and encourage me to choose the truly unprofitable profession of – a painter.
- Ever since the beginning of my life as a painter 35 years ago, I've been collecting various soils and stones. I started doing so because I take much pleasure in beautiful things and in collecting them.
I didn't know at first that minerals and soils form the material basis of painting. Since primeval times – up until around 200 years ago – pigments used for painting were almost exclusively produced from coloured stones and soils.
- 1979 I spend days in a colour pit in Otranto, Apulia, digging for the various soil colours and looking for coloured stones. Otranto, its people, the town and its surroundings, the colour pit, the cathedral with its Roman floor mosaic by Pantaleone, the sea and the Apulian sky – all this would become crucial in the coming years and for my future work.
Otranto was love at first sight. Up to today, I've visited Apulia, my second home, numerous times and kept working in the colour pit (see colour book, Die ersten Farben der Menschheit, page 158).
- 1979 - 92 Studio flat on Chornberg in Herznach (Switzerland)
- 1980 During my first years on Chornberg, I bring home a bag full of soil from each of my walks. I marvel at the rich variety of colours that I find in Herznach.
- 1984 With my friend Andi and a donkey I'm travelling around Peloponnese on foot. During half a year in Arcadia and Laconia my backpack is filling up with stones. Lakis, our donkey, is taking the load off me.
- 1985 Three months in Otranto, Apulia. I paint «100 Ansichten über Pantaleones Mosaik von Otranto».
Many powdery colour substances have been accumulating in my studio over the years: mineral, organic, natural and synthetic pigments and dyes, from which I develop my card index of colours.
- 1987 Back in Apulia. My subject is the sea, the sky, the horizon between the sky and the sea.
During my desperate yet thrilling search for particular shades of blue, it becomes clear to me that it's not actually possible to mix every shade and idea of a colour. I discover pigments that will become absolutely essential to my work, one after the other: all of them shades that can't be mixed. Strangely, at arts school they told us that it was possible to mix each shade using other colours ... (see colour book, Manganese Blue, pages 192 - 197, available on the website).
In Otranto, I complete the two series «Come è profondo il mare - Wie tief das Meer ist» and «Come è rosso il papavero - Wie rot der Mohn ist». These works represent an important stage in my development from representational painting to monochrome, non-representational painting.

- 1990 In a similar way, my colour card index of the 80ies provided the basis for my monochrome painting.
In the early 90ies I started to paint with mineral pigments: monochrome, square colour surfaces. Each colour is – up to today – applied in its pure state and can be ascribed to a particular stone, soil or pigment. The pigments are watered down and then bound with different binders. My studio has become a colour kitchen. Since then I've been looking for the recipes of the Old Masters.
- 1992 move to Gebenstorf (Switzerland)
Studio in Windisch (Switzerland)
- 1995 For the first time, I'm using lapis lazuli pigments for monochrome painting. Blue minerals that can be ground into pigments are very valuable. Natural occurrences of azurite and lapis lazuli in particular are very rare compared to other coloured minerals.
I venerate the Medieval, Renaissance and Romantic artists. Among his contemporaries, Fra Angelico was famous for his superb handling of pigments. The most outstanding of them is natural ultramarine gained from lapis lazuli. The purest lapis lazuli ultramarine is also called Fra-Angelico-Blue. When I get the opportunity to work with these wonderful historic colours, I feel like I'm saluting the Old Masters.
- 1990- For over 20 years, I've been developing my monochrome painting, mainly on paper.
- 1995- I regularly share my knowledge of colour pigments, dyes and colour recipes in courses for adults: they take place in my studio in the summer, at the IAC in Zurich and in the colour pit of Otranto during two weeks in the autumn (1999 - 2010).
- 2007 For two months, the chapel of the Catholic Church in Windisch (Switzerland) becomes an open studio in the style of a builder's hut. I'm painting a 10 metre wood panel and a large fresco with lapis lazuli pigments from Afghanistan and Chile (see colour book, Ultramarin – Das Pigment von jenseits der Meere, pages 168 - 177).
- 2007- Monochrome painting on stone: I use the pigments I found in the colour pit of Otranto and apply them in thin glazes on stone slabs, a pale variant of Pietra Leccese, from the Salentinian tuff pit between Lecce und Otranto.
- 2002- As a «colour research scientist» I've started to provide advice for various museums and curators in Switzerland and abroad, much sought-after as an expert on colour pigments, dyes, binders and ancient recipes, as well as for talks on the cultural history of colours.
- 2010 I have the opportunity to publish three decades of research in a book: **Farbpigmente Farbstoffe Farbgeschichten**. The first edition is published by alataverlag Winterthur. The book includes a lot of interesting facts on the various aspects of dyes and binders: cultural historical, historical, chemical, technological, literary, anecdotal and artistic.
- 2011 The book is sold out within a short time. The second edition appears in 2011. The book has since become a standard work for art colleges and in the realms of art, art history, restoration, architecture, design and artistic craftwork.
- 2012 I'm presented with the Karl Miescher Award in Berlin from the German Farbenzentrum. This international award is made for outstanding achievements in the field of "science and colour design".

2010-

After 30 years, I finish my course work for adults. I develop a new program for presentations on the stories of different colours: **«Farbgeschichten: Farben zum Anfassen»**. My work is shifting due to an increased demand from prestigious museums, art institutions and other cultural institutions within the German language area: Presenting colour in its materiality.