

Artist statement

Long before the beginning of our history someone must have picked up colourful earth from the ground, added a rudimentary binder to it and started 'painting'. I find this very touching: Humanity's first attempt to analyse reality and relate to it by depicting the surrounding world and using its gifts. In my work I explore the fundamentals of painting and how its materials and tradition can help us to open up to the beauty and relevance of nature again.

My works can be seen as shrines in honour of earth materials and human contiguity. Raw painting materials represent the natural world in which they originate and symbolise the stories mankind has depicted with them. By practicing traditional production processes and craftsmanship, I connect with the long and tactile tradition of the Art of Painting. Preferably I create site specific installations, in which the individual artworks, as *Andachtsbilder*, interact with both the public and the exhibition space.

As an art historian and paintings restorer, I am used to long and thorough observations, combining a bird's eye view with a microscopic zoom. This versatile perspective is a core characteristic of my work. For several years now my focus has been on 'landscape': as a subject, as a stage for our lives, as a source of artist's materials and as an independent entity that is present within a painting. Just like real landscapes, paintings evolve by sedimentation and erosion and have a geology of their own. Sometimes I visualise the landscapes that are present in my paintings by microscopic recordings (see also portfolio), to honour the invisible yet indispensable. One microscopically thin layer sometimes seems to carry a whole world within. For example, thanks to the presence of chalk (CaCO_3) formed out of plankton fossils, the preparatory layers of my panel paintings evoke stories about the sea and minuscule marine life.

Charlotte Caspers, 2024