

# Manfred Naescher

## **Artist Statement: Shadows Of What It Is Not**

My work explores the idea of memory as image-making. My main medium, watercolour, has the unique property - in materiality and through gesture - of both mirroring and making visible the process of memory. A recording of the process is made in the time it takes the medium to dry: Water and pigment leave traces on the paper that reveal a trajectory through which the biography of the image becomes legible. The emerging image functions analogously to memory in that distortions, shifts, additions, cessations, redistributions, and re-prioritising occur. The work becomes a witness of its own gestation and transformation, illusion becomes concrete form. What remains is a memory.

»The art of allowing ghosts to come back«, as Jacques Derrida describes the medium of cinema (a statement he made while performing in a film himself), implies that whoever or whatever it is that is »coming back« has been a »ghost« all along. My work uses existing imagery from the history of art, in particular the history of cinema - a world of ghosts, if you will - as an openly accessible archive of collective memory. According to Derrida, ghosts are manifestations of a memory of a past that has never existed in the form of a present. In other words, memory is in essence a product of artifice. My way of making images out of existing images considers the impossibility of »coming back« in any form other than that of a ghost: Memory, fragmented and ephemeral, is itself the work of ghosts.