

**How does one know they're human?** How can art help us learn more about ourselves? These questions lay at the core of my painting practice, guiding my inquiry into how art can help us understand what it means to be human.

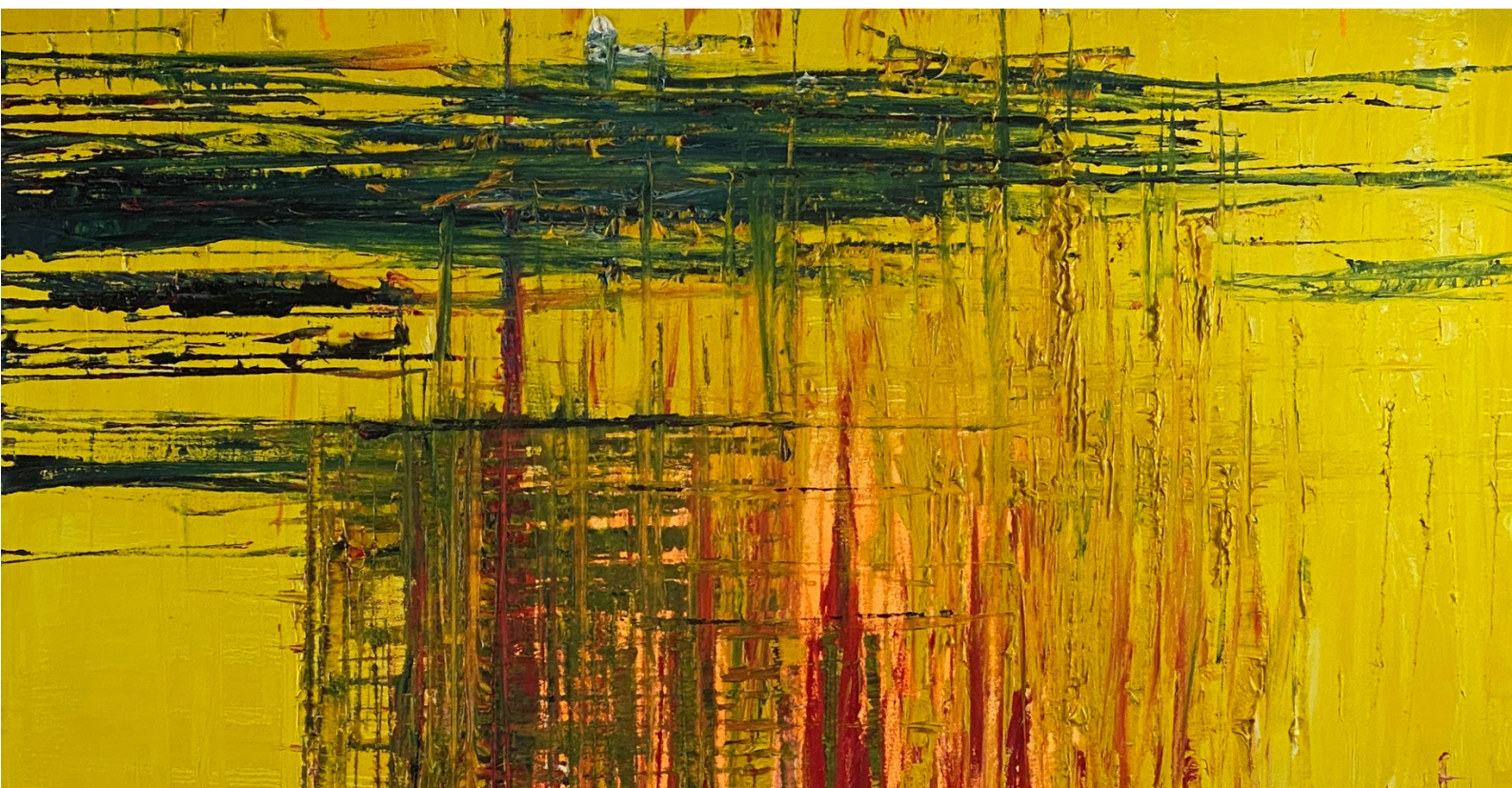
KRICKEL  
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I am a passionate creator, a visual artist, and a professor of interaction design with extensive research experience on how humans interact, individually and societally, with technology. I commit myself to shaping people's experiences, which I explore through art and design.



My paintings are interactive artifacts, allowing a particular form of interaction: they are intended to **guide the viewer's attention inwards**, toward their own reaction to my paintings. At the same time, my goal is to bridge the gap between people and art, which, unfortunately, many perceive as an intellectual elitist commodity. I hold a personal reflection of art as something that sets us apart from machines and animals, and thus I find it essential that as many people as possible should be encouraged to try it, **regardless of how much they know about art.**



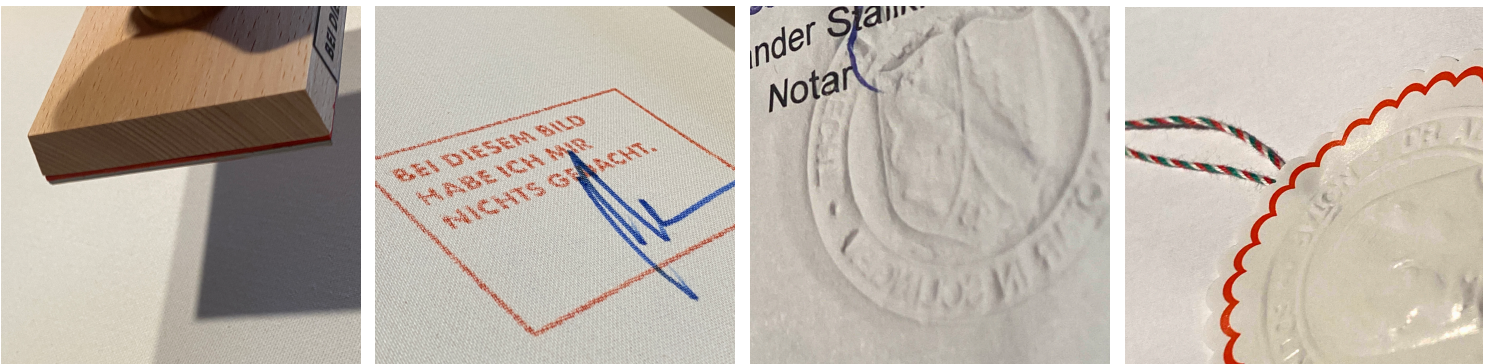


I believe that the **creation process** of my art continues long after the material object is made – to be precise, it really **begins when a viewer starts feeling that a painting does something to them.**

My inspiration comes from a mix of art movements such as Abstract Expressionism, Post-Minimalism, and even New Realism (Nouveau réalisme). The latter is particularly relevant because it pioneered conceptual art through notions such as “immaterial art” as addressed in Yves Klein’s visionary work *Le Vide* (The Void, 1958). Similarly to many other New Realist artists, I incorporate various materials directly into my canvases. My artistic work is characterized by physical features such as painterly shapes, colors, and textures, which I combine in a neo-expressionist style.



My work also builds upon Roland Barthes' idea of the "Death of the Author." On their backside, **I sign my paintings with a customized wooden stamp** that reads in German, my mother tongue - "**Bei diesem Bild habe ich mir nichts gedacht**" ("**Painting this picture, I had nothing in mind.**"). Each canvas is thus irrevocably marked as having been painted with no intention at all.



Furthermore, I emphasize my artistic intention not only by using the stamp but also through a **performative gesture in a notary office** in Germany: In front of a notary, I sign a certification that I painted with nothing in mind. The document containing my notarially certified signature is a part of every painting.



My **creation process resembles a practice of mindfulness**, witnessing aesthetics without judgment – nothing is right, nothing is wrong. The stamp on the back of my canvases, accompanied by the document with a notarially confirmed signature, is an artistic gesture meant to serve as an **invitation to this new viewpoint** that only the audience can activate with their minds. I understand **art as materialized thought that can connect us with ourselves.**

I seek to make room in the viewer's mental space for a non-judgemental aesthetic experience of art, which many people shy away from. I want to **break with the binary conception** that art can be understood either **correctly or incorrectly**. This traditional conception often intimidates the audience of contemporary art, tricking people into believing that they lack some important knowledge to understand an artwork. I strongly believe that art should be about how a specific piece resonates with the viewer, which cannot be wrong. **It's like a mirror:** With my painting, I invite the audience to become aware of their emotional responses and, thus, of their inner space.

This way, **art can help us learn more about ourselves** by giving us a **reflection point** from where to observe our feelings. To engage with my art means to engage in self-reflection and in witnessing one's own emotions without prejudice. To sum up, the Krickelkrackel paintings promote art viewing as a cultural practice that encourages people to reflect on what an artwork makes them feel – and thus to **experience what makes them human.**

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