



GERHARD RÜHM

*1930

The artistic practice of Gerhard Rühm is based on an understanding of absolute interdisciplinarity, finding its place across music, literature and visual arts. His aim in each of these fields is explorative and transformative, working consistently in the liminal spaces of each discipline.

Rühm initially studied composition and Oriental music, but soon developed an interest in language and literature. As a founding member of the "Wiener Gruppe" (together with Friedrich Achleitner, HC Artmann, Konrad Baier and Oswald Wiener), he sought radically new forms of literature through treating language as a visual and acoustic medium. He has maintained an interest in the transformative potential within language, evident, for instance, in his concrete poetry, in which words are liberated from the rules of syntax and treated as autonomous compositional elements. As a visual artist, Gerhard Rühm is no less ambitious. Using words and phrases as visual objects, his automatic drawings, typocollages and torn newspapers construct new patterns with musical and literary references.

Rühm (1930) lives and works in Cologne. Retrospectives of his work have been shown at Kunstverein, Frankfurt am Main, the Venice Biennale, the Kunsthalle, Vienna, the Museum für Moderne Kunst, Bremen, and the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, MUMOK, Vienna. Rühm took part in Documenta 6 and 8 in Kassel. From 1972-1995, he taught at the Hamburg Academy of Fine Arts, and was awarded the "Grosse Österreichische Staatspreis" for literature in 1991. He is a member of the Austrian Kunstsenat, a board of artists advising the government in cultural affairs.*