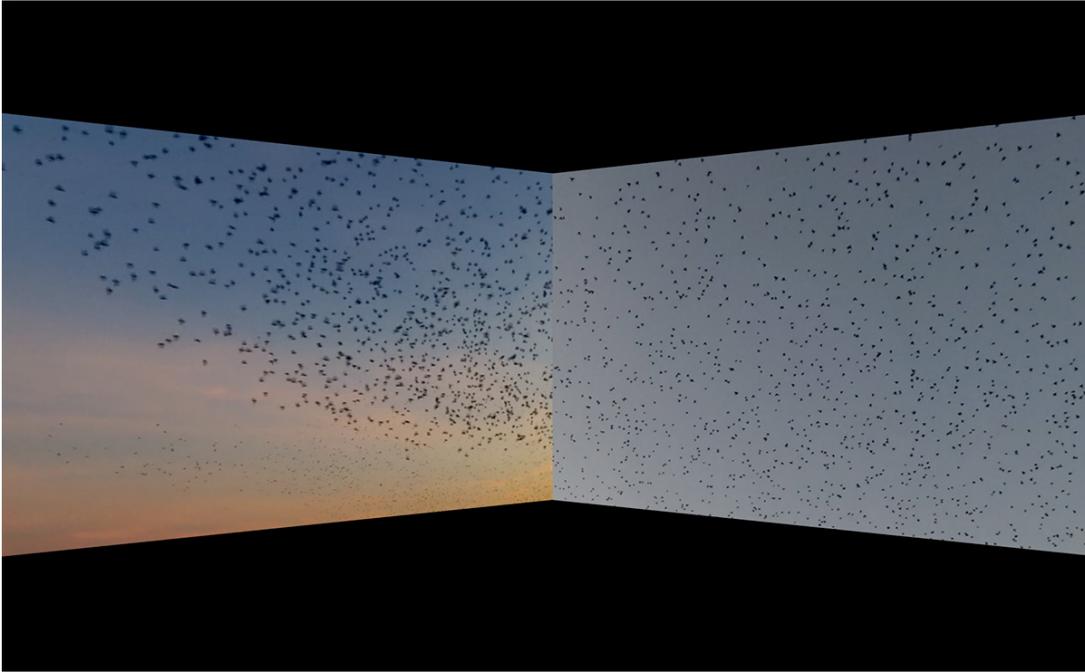


**Dossier: immersive video installation flocks of birds are art. So simple - just starlings (80 g/20 cm each one)**



Two of four walls of the installation as animation in my Vimeo channel

## **I. Background:**

It is probably unprecedented that someone - as I did in autumn 2017 and 2018 - studied and artistically documented the swarms of starlings for weeks in one place - here near Basel - with photography and film.

During the filming I concentrated on documenting the swarms of starling in a very reduced way, even from close up. The camera literally dives into the fascinating, flying events.

Although the impressive flight movements of thousands and thousands of migratory birds, which came to the neighbourhood at sunset, had an inherent high aesthetic quality, this rare natural spectacle remained almost unnoticed by the public.

This shows once again that mankind apparently has a low regard for nature and his environment and hardly perceives it. Respecting and protecting the environment and showing consideration for flora and fauna are faced with a ruthless economy of action - especially in intensive agriculture.

Since it is precisely this failure to consider the needs of starlings that has considerably worsened the conditions for their foraging and nest-building, starling populations have fallen dramatically over the last 30 years. The German Society for Nature Conservation (NABU) had chosen the starling as "Bird of the Year 2018" to draw attention to this loss. And the starling is only representative of many other bird species. This is species extinction on our doorstep, less spectacular than the threat to polar bears, but no less important. And it has been a very topical subject not only since the World Species Conservation Conference in Paris in May 2019.

## **II. Flocks of birds are art :**

The immersive video installation artistically reflects the impressive natural spectacle in Huningue/Basel, where tens of thousands of starlings gathered for weeks to fly on to their warm winter quarters.

Just like the camera during the shooting, the viewers of the all-round video installation are immersed in the flocks of birds. They themselves immediately become part of these flocks and merge with them. An immersive experience.

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### **III. Immersive video installation:**

It is planned to use at least three, if technically possible all four walls of a room including the ceiling with very selected, detailed clip material of the swarms of starlings. With the projections on these walls and the ceiling, a space is created in the middle of the flocks of birds.

There will be endless loops, each of which is about 10 minutes long and will be repeated continuously during opening hours. It is also planned to play the track *Vessels* by Philip Glass, which is already the basis of the short essay film, to the swarm images. This track is 8 min long and could be an indication of the length of the repeated endless loops. It would be possible to program one set of the endless loops with the track, which runs alternately with a silent set and one with original starling beeps of the endless loops.

It is also conceivable to add selected sequences from the short essay film, all of them spectacular celestial phenomena, in order to underline the essay character. These would be gathering, swelling thunderclouds, the Milky Way or the blood moon in time-lapse.

### **IV. Outlook, environment and effect of my starling projects:**

Since the film recordings on which the video installation is based offer a strong visual experience, individual film sequences are also particularly suitable for projection onto large, bright walls of houses. In this way, a broad public could be sensitized to nature experiences and sustainability at suitable locations.

The essay film focuses on the aesthetics of swarm movements. Not only the sometimes spectacular flight manoeuvres, but above all the meditative character of the swarm movements - captured on film at close range to the swarms - create an extraordinary film experience.

Through the intensive after-experience of this natural spectacle it is obvious to pay respect to these birds and to encourage the viewers of my artistic works to a possible, changed, new perception of nature and environment. This new view could in turn lead to a changed, new behaviour in favour of nature and environment.

My video installation will be accessible to a broad audience - even without previous ornithological or artistic knowledge a visual, aesthetic and intensive experience for all visitors can be expected.

