

# emotional light project

Alfons J. Kleine Möllhoff



A stylized, handwritten signature or logo, possibly reading 'AK' or similar, located in the bottom right corner. The signature is written in black ink on a white background, featuring a large, bold 'A' and a smaller 'K' with a diagonal stroke.

# Art Concept

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Out of light, clay (soil), air and water the artist Alfons J. Kleine Möllhoff creates light sculptures. They are a visual and at the same time materialised approach to the biblical story of Creation and the ancient knowledge of the four elements.

Soil is the primal element of all life, however on its own remains unanimated matter. Water makes Adam's soil (Adam derives from "red lump of clay") supple and opens it for the development of its potential. By adding the energy of light dead matter becomes alive. In nature this process happens every day, makes plants grow, and creates animal as well as human life.

The creation of light sculptures follows this principle. Soil, completely dissolved in water is applied on a transparent glass body which serves as a canvas and is left to dry at air. A source of light penetrates the soil thus illuminating the soil's structure, density and intensity of colour.

Light sculptures with soil tell the story of Creation. They illustrate the beauty of the planet Earth, allowing us to sensually experience the earth's power and to witness the fascination of Creation by combining the primal elements soil, water, air and light.

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# Some Examples



# Light sculptures

Each light sculpture is a unique piece of art. The artist makes out a certificate indicating the origin of the soil used, date of production with numbering and signature.

The above images of the light sculptures show the most commonly used lamp shapes. These are completely sealed glass bodies which protect the applied soil from being damaged.

The following images show light sculptures made from Majorcan soil. This soil with its warm colour effects creates a pleasant atmosphere in rooms. "Light images" with Majorcan soil create a landscapes of exceptional beauty.



## Light object Oval

Ø 20 cm, 25 cm, 30 cm,  
40W, E14 od. 60W, E27



## Light object Ball

Ø 20 cm, 25 cm, 30 cm,  
40W od. 60W, E27



## Light object Touch

Ø 12 cm,  
40W, E14  
3-phase touch dimmer

# Light sculptures



## **Light object Planet**

Ø 7 cm, Height 120 cm

Base: Cube with pedestal

Brushed metal

20W, G4, 230/12V



Full-size view of the object, light switched off

# Light sculptures



**Light object Planet**  
Ø 7 cm, Height 40 cm,  
Base: Cube with pedestal  
Brushed metal  
20W, G4, 230/12V



Full-size view of the object, light switched off

# Artist's Biography

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- 1951 Born in Gelsenkirchen/Germany
- 1989 First art objects: Sculptures made from rain forest wood
- 1992 Abstract water colour paintings
- 1994 Discovery of soil as a water colour medium – works on paper and canvass
- 1995 First works with soil and light on water colour paper in light boxes, experiments with glass and light
- 1996 Freelance artist work:  
Art project "terra art" with project members in Germany, Austria and The Netherlands, subsidized by EU;  
Art project "Kreis Recklinghausen" with soil from the 10 county towns;  
Art project "Potsdamer Platz", Berlin, soil paintings, soil sculptures and photography;  
Exhibitions in Bottrop, Dusseldorf, Recklinghausen, Berlin
- 1998 Development of light objects with soil and glass
- 2004 "emotional-light-project", artist focussing on creation of light sculptures
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# A Discovery

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It was November 1994 in Italy when I first discovered soil as a medium for my artwork in Italy in midst of traumatic chaos: During the first days of November I had travelled to Piermont in order to do some writings free of any outside disturbances. This was meant to be a creative retreat; however it turned out completely different'ly.

On my arrival day I found myself in the middle of a catastrophic flood. 70 people had died that day. I was lucky to arrive a few hours after the peak of the flood wave in Alba/Piermont, had been more annoyed with all the road closures than realizing at that stage that I had escaped a huge danger only few hours ahead of me.

That night I spent in some emergency accommodation and it was only in the next morning that I saw the chaos caused by the flood, bridges had been destroyed, houses torn away, cars were hanging in trees – the fields and roads of the valley were covered with yellow mud.

I went through inner turmoil, felt devastated; no way could I pursue my original plans, and since I did not speak any Italian I could not communicate my experiences with anybody and I let myself drift during the following days.

The day after my arrival I went for a walk and stopped to take a long rest. I looked over the valley, slowly the haze of the rain would settle, and I could see the Alps in the distance. At the same time I became absorbed in my immediate surroundings, the insects, plants, stones. After some time I noticed a disturbance in this peaceful silence, I became aware of a noise in the distance, the rescue helicopters which were on their missions throughout the valley.

Amidst this scene of both beautiful paradise and the disaster of the flood in the valley below, a gentle sun ray pierced through the clouds. I clearly remember how this ray of light was shining on a spot of soil on my blue jeans, a beautiful ochre yellow, almost perfectly designed for the blue background. Later when I was cleaning my jeans in the sink the ochre coloured soil dissolved into fine pigments. I no longer saw soil but a watercolour. Spontaneously I started to draw with it. Looking back I am sure that it was this short moment of the flash of sunlight which would inspire me to use soil in my art work. The theme soil and light was predestined this way.

In the actual situation it had an almost healing effect on me. It enabled me to work through my experiences with the flood catastrophe. As a consequence one of my first works was a huge painting made from the mud of the valley: "The Tanaro-Shroud" (Tanaro is the name of the river which broke its banks). Today this painting can be seen in a mausoleum in Iserlohn/Germany.

As I discovered soil as paint by coincidence the same happened when the first light object was created in spring 1995. I was late with a soil painting on paper as a birthday present for a friend of mine, and in order to accelerate the drying time of the paper I used a strong beam of light. The visual impression was stunning, flooded by light the painting showed much clearer contrasts which was also true for the colouring of the applied soil.

However, further trials with light boxes and soil were discouraging. The direct application of soil onto glass using a brush did not create a visually attractive solution since this technique would cause layering of the different materials.

The major step forward happened in 1998. Looking for canvas material for the light paintings with soil commercial lamps with sealed opal glass spheres proved to be suitable. They allow a painting technique which does not depend on tools like brushes for the application of the material. It took another seven years to realize the professional production of light objects with soil.

# Technique of Painting

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All the soil art work I am doing is made of soil as it is found in nature without any additional substances. The painting technique developed for the light objects does not require brushes or other painting tools. Soil diluted in water is poured into the glass body. Viscosity and gravity will decide which appearance the light object will take.

The glass sphere is gently shaken and when the result achieved looks right, the soil is left to dry. The production of light objects uses simple procedures; however, these require expertise and experience in handling the soil. Little changes in the consistency and proportion of soil and water as well as the drying speed have a great influence on what image will result.

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# Durability

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Since it is against my art concept I generally do not use any glue either for my paintings or the light objects for fixing the soil onto the surface. Durability does not require this procedure.

The soil I am using is free of biological active substances from vegetation. All soil consists of at least a small quantity of clay. Even in the case of sandy soil the clay will guarantee enough adhesive properties. In the production of light objects I only use clayey soil. In over 7 years I have found that the soil does not come off even if the light objects undergo transportation.

Prehistoric cave paintings made from clay prove their timeless durability if two conditions are observed: They have to be kept dry and protected against direct damages. These conditions are perfectly provided when using sealed glass bodies.

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# Colour Patterns



## **Toscany, Italy**

Clay with high quantity of clay

Fine pigmented

According to the thickness of application the colour varies from yellow, ochre up to redish shades

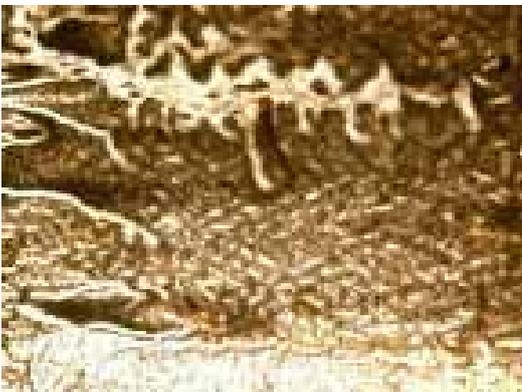


## **Provinz Quang Tri, Vietnam**

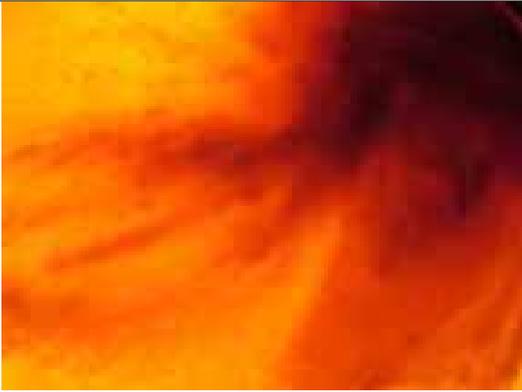
Dark brown rural soil

Colour movements from honey yellow, amber, up to dark brown,

Higher quantity of sandy soil of the same earth leads to stronger tracing



# Colour Patterns



## **Mallorca, Spanien**

Majorcan soil is clayey and usually of red-brown colour, if applied thinner also yellow-red.

This soil develops a clear and radiating colour; especially when the soil is taken from Santa Ponsa the colours are of outstanding beauty.



Santa Ponsa: light, yellow-white soil with red particles; When liquid the soil will turn into a honey-yellow shade

The colour movements are from light yellow to honey yellow up to yellow-red. This soil is difficult to apply, since it adheres best when applied in very thin layers



## **Ramstein, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany**

The soil from Rheinland Pfalz receives its characteristics from the red sand stone. The soil used here contains a higher amount of clay.

The colour is red-brown and depending on the thickness of the applied layers can turn into yellowish.

In comparison to the Majorcan soil this soil is more covering and does not have the same brilliant radiance.

# Contact

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