

Stare

Vanessa Müller, Ausstellungskatalog Reservate der Sehnsucht, U-Brauerei Dortmund, HARTware-Projekte, 1998

In 1995, Andrea Wolfensberger filmed the formations of a flight of starlings above Rome. The video installation *Stare* [Starlings] shows the birds' flight on two separate monitors with the speed reduced by 50%. Trying to defend themselves against an intruding falcon, the starlings constantly form new configurations that, from the distance and through the manipulation of the medium, seem like the abstract patterns of computer graphics. Order and chaos alternate; each form seems simultaneously exactly choreographed and unstable in its temporary appearance. Some time is needed to realise that the objects on the screen, reduced to dots, are in fact birds. The metaphor of the birds' flight as a longing for freedom is thus combined with the idea that nature is subject to a rational principle of order, and creates a profoundly ambiguous image of disintegration and a closed system.