

# EMILIO CHAPELA



"Angst", 2022 © Emilio Chapela

**The MERCEDES-BENZ ART COLLECTION is one of the most prestigious corporate art collections in the world. Anne Vieth, head of the collection, presents some highlights from the extensive archive here. In this issue: a series by Mexican artist Emilio Chapela, whose abstract paintings combine themes of art, science and technology**

Text by Anne Vieth

“Angst” is the title of a series of paintings by Mexican artist Emilio Chapela. Two works from this series were acquired for the Mercedes-Benz Art Collection in 2023. The term “angst” in both German and English refers to a feeling of fear and anxiety, addressing an emotional and physical condition. But what does this have to do with the picture, which shows a collection of coloured lines? These are of different colours and thicknesses. And the path the lines trace also varies – sometimes straight, sometimes less rigid. The lines build on each other and consolidate on the canvas to form a kind of weave.

Emilio Chapela follows a standardised methodology for this series. Only the first line is drawn with a ruler; after that, he works freehand, guided by his breathing. When he breathes in, he starts drawing the line, then finishes it within one or two breaths. This brings the artist into a kind of “meditative rhythmic mode”, as he himself describes it. He combines abstract-geometric imagery with individual emotion in this method, as his state of being at any time is documented in the process of creating the work.

The “Angst” series goes back to a dream the artist had in which he fell down a colourful waterfall and filmed it. The colours in the dream stemmed from contaminated water. The dream is made all the more pertinent in view of the water shortages in many regions of his home country of Mexico. The artist has been working on ecological themes for several years, focusing on the connection between art, science and technology. He favours natural phenomena in his work such as water, light and gravity, and explores the human interaction with nature. Chapela’s art also poses questions about the future. However, it

is important to him not to take a fear-based or even apocalyptic approach. Instead, he finds positive images and addresses the many ambivalences of our existence through his art, as in his “Angst” works – even if this title initially suggests otherwise.



See more art by Emilio Chapela on his Instagram profile @echapela. Find out more about the MERCEDES-BENZ ART COLLECTION and current exhibitions at [mercedes-benz.art/en](https://www.mercedes-benz.art/en)