

*Elephantasmagorie for Darya von Berner*

"...Que tú estás por el cielo,  
que tú eres nube de colores,  
pájaro errante y libre,  
brisa de última hora,  
¿quién lo podrá negar?"

Juan Ramón Jiménez, Sueños

If they were winged and free of their weight, we would undoubtedly call them angels. They owe their presence to the traces they leave behind, on their way to their end. "Where this animal has been, runs a wide path", wrote Bert Brecht. 'The March of the Elephants' by Darya von Berner, reveals itself as a picture of changing mnemonic. Contradictory to the picture, it is brought to a standstill in the room, yet with the insistence of a memory sustained by hope, it can be saved by moving into future. The folds of their skin are so tender, that each look loses itself in endless speculation, so young that we see eternal youth in them. And yet, the elephant is so imperious in its stature, that with each step it takes, the present is shaken. Departing, their presence persists. For Darya von Berner, the elephants are phantasmagorias which we cannot follow yet they paved the path before us. They leave such a lasting impression, that I wish they would come visit me sometime without memory.

Thanks to Art Special Hansa we can reproduce the translation from Louisa Schaefer, Cologne, Germany.

Hubertus von Ameluxen, Kiel 1997