

# Anja Jerčič Jakob

## Rašice, Near Sava

MMC KIBLA / KiBela

15 February–16 March 2019

Nature is Anja's art. Nature is (also) society. The awareness and consciousness, that we are. Connected. Flora and fauna. The faun, a mythological creature, half-man, half-goat. A satyr, the deity of mountains and forests in Greek mythology, accompanying the god Dionysius. A symbol of fertility. And movement. Half-human and half-nature. Flowers, leaves, stems, trunks, trees, treetops are animals, which don't have to be walked, but we can talk to them. Listen. Hear. Find out. They can manage without us. It doesn't matter, where they are, because they are. They will be.

"In the present cycle, all the motifs come from nature, and I am also re-questioning the notion of natural beauty as a specific manner or manifestation, which we perceive in things that were created independently of man's influence. It is as if random glances at piles of decomposing branches depict formations of nature, which make us think about that genuine nature – nature untampered by human activity, despite of the fact that we are living in the Anthropocene, an era marked precisely by man's indelible imprint on geology and the earth's ecosystem."

Nature, untamable and wild, luscious and humble, solitary and united, is existence. Like a rampage without knowledge or purpose. A dance of the colors of thought and a song of the strokes of perception. Sensation. In the painting and through the painting. Being and essence. Here and there. We feel. We grow. In the intertwining of colors and the melody of the strokes, which stem from a feeling of the elemental energies offered to us by the eternal circle of life. Seasons are turned timeless in the paintings, moments are caught in the color palettes, brushes embrace thoughts, the look stops in an instant of the composition, to complete the cycle. But the cycle is only imaginary, as each painting reveals its own space-time, giving itself away with its distinctness, which usually runs past our perceptions. Anja's paintings give us the opportunity to stop, take a breath, and gaze into the singleness of the natural cycle.

"Throughout my work, since the beginnings of my artistic path, I have been working with nature, and these ties differ widely. In some of the cycles I am concerned with nature directly (for example, with mimetically depicted fragments from nature, which I positioned into the complex painting's structure, or by incorporating living plants into my objects), but also indirectly, in the working process itself, in the process of constituting art works, where analogies are seen to natural processes, for example, using dripping as a visualization strategy in the painting, or the growth of plants in conceptually designed objects with living plants, where it is precisely their spontaneous growth, or decomposition, that has the last say."

The naturalness, variety and harmony of the processes around us becomes an impression of our eternities, of the timelessness kept by each plant, each leaf, each branch, each tree, as their own story of eternity. Through the elementary structures of a landscape that appears as if it has been caught under a microscope, and traditional techniques employing egg tempera, oil, canvas and other sustainable materials, the artist reveals a journey inwards, into a subtle sense of coexistence and unity.

"Minor motifs, which we usually overlook on a stroll through the forest, are like random views of a forest landscape bereft of anything human. However, these are still well thought-out compositions, at times dramatically dynamic, clearly guiding the viewer's eye, at times dispersed, with no single focus, or layered..."

The environment becomes, it is the interior. The painting descends into us. We are woven into fascinating tendrils of gentle persistent threads, which connect the network of eternal movement and fluctuation, of sensing and perception, of understanding and acceptance. Touch becomes a sensation;

nature keeps its balance between things that come and things that go. Buds open in one place, leaves fall down in another. No questions and answers. All to make one single wholeness. With or without an awareness, is irrelevant.

“The relationship between the painting matter (haptic layers of color, brush strokes, the materiality of the canvas) and the easily recognizable and clear motifs, creates a sense of constant dynamics, it implies ambivalence, the split between decomposition, decay, transience, and the possibility of re-emergence. Decomposition holds the potential for new life.”

Nature is our endowment and the paintings of Anja Jerčič Jakob reveal the dimensions of our realities, open up worlds to us and invite us to enter them. They broaden our understanding and trigger ancient memories of some primordial condition. Whenever we stop next to them, surrendering to their whispers, it is almost as if we can walk into them. We hear them, see them, smell them, sense them. They are there for us like a principle of meaning. The point where we find ourselves (and perhaps meet each other) in them, depends entirely on ourselves.

“The paintings’ titles are factographic, they are named after the places from where the depicted motifs are derived. I try to avoid metaphorical, lyrical designations. This is my way of expressing the momentary, or intuitive immersion into the painting process, which means that ultimately, the painting thus created does not require a context outside of itself.”

What is life, other than constant movement, from one condition to the next ... Nature is life, and it only takes very little to get into character. To come alive. If only we are not afraid to cross the boundary that separates us. To not be afraid. And not fight. And there is the catch: to be afraid eventually means to fight. The essence of Anja Jerčič Jakob’s painting is understanding nature, forests, trees, leaves, branches.

“In the end, let me mention a short but telling commentary, or actually, a dialog with my seven-year-old daughter at the studio on July 29th, 2018, when I was creating one of the paintings exhibited on this occasion.

Ema: *The way you paint, it’s so hard to understand ...*

Anja: *Take a look from further away!*

Ema: *Branches, twigs, ... compost? Mommy, you made it sad.*”

Immersing into a painting without any purpose or focus (i.e., the way it is supposed to be, or should be), is an invitation to explore ourselves through the motifs of forest landscapes, to explore our acceptance and acceptability, our openness and the enchantment with which we wake up and go to sleep every day – things we take for granted in nature’s eternal processes, a synonym for life.

*The way nature works is that nothing gets wasted. Everything is caught in an endless cycle of matter, where the death of one organism means life for another.*

(Source:

<https://www.vrtnarava.si/delo/gnojenje/kompost>)

Peter Tomaž Dobrila

Quotes: Anja Jerčič Jakob

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**Anja Jerčič Jakob** was born on the 20th of October 1975 in Slovenj Gradec. She grew up in Velenje, where she completed secondary school (gymnasium). She obtained her BA (2000) in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, as well as her MFA in graphic arts (2004) and painting (2007). Since the year 2000 she has been actively present on the national and international fine art scene. Her works have been shown regularly in exhibitions home and abroad, and form part of numerous public collections. Occasionally, she works as a book illustrator for children’s books. Her debut work was the picture book *Morje* (The Sea) written by Jure Jakob, published by Mladinska knjiga in 2016. Since 2000, Anja Jerčič Jakob has been active as an educator as part of formal and non-formal education models. Since 2016 she has been lecturing as Associate Professor of painting at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana. She lives and works in Ljubljana.

<http://www.anjajercic.si>

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Exhibition opening: Friday, 15 February 2019, at 7 p. m.

The exhibition will be showing until 16 March 2019.

Exhibition curators are Živa Kleindienst and Peter Tomaž Dobrila.

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MMC KIBLA / KiBela, Ulica kneza Koclja 9, Maribor  
Open on weekdays between 9 a. m. and 10 p. m.,  
and on Saturdays between 4 p. m. and 10 p. m.