

# Stojan Grauf

## NATURE IN THE DRAWING

16 February–16 March 2024

artKIT

The artistic arc of the painter and artist Stojan Grauf is strongly interwoven with the creation of art in nature, with nature and its power of giving and taking, with drawing with exaggerated gesture and self-made natural materials such as charcoal.

The beauty of living slowly and observing the environment in which we live reveals harmonious motifs of nature that surround us and speak to us. In these found and compositionally structured open spaces, under the protection and spell of nature, we can recognize motifs such as the river Drava, pergolas and willow trees from the surrounding area, the quarry in Pohorje, scenes from the sea and bays in clear gestural lines created by the movements of the charcoal on the drawing. The captured segments speak of the transience and beauty of life and of the artist's love of nature.

Drawing is created by drawing a line across a surface. It is at the service of other arts, where it is used as a sketch, as a study, as an auxiliary drawing, as a draft ... But since the 16th century, drawing has also been a work of art in its own right. Grauf's drawings are the result of a vehement gesture that requires a vital creative impulse. The construction of the overall composition of the drawing, however, requires a slower and more specific style.

The artist uses the charcoal strokes like a painterly line, adjusting the thickness and weight of these melodious lines, their inclination and dynamism. His drawings contain both the elementary pure line and the gesture of autonomy, which in turn allows the line to guide itself. He produces his drawing material – charcoal – himself. By working with natural materials, he brings to life the matter he incorporates into his drawing and connects with nature on an even deeper level. The motifs are depicted on paper in various sizes and dimensions, enveloping and appealing to us in different ways. These elements also have an effect on the viewer, resulting from the different angles and the way they are drawn. The drawing is created by the movements of the hand, the elbow or even the arm in the case of larger formats.

The gaze does not concentrate on a single point – the strokes move it back and forth. The drawing comes to life through the strokes that leave a trace. The eye is nourished by the scene of nature. The body moves, nourished and inspired; nourished and inspired movements lead to strokes and traces, the stroke that leaves a trace rounds into a drawing.

The exaggerated drawing gesture offers more than just the image. It speaks of the artist's inner world, of a certain time and a certain feeling, of the experience and existence of one's own creativity, which is transferred to the outside world. The transformation of the visible moves through the eyes into the body to reconnect with the paper guided by the hand. His expressive strokes carry two strong poles. One stands for spontaneity and intuition, the other for a precise and deliberate gesture. This way of drawing is characterized by holistic experience and deep reflection on the visual and the experience of the world.

The result is a unique manuscript that speaks of understanding and perceiving the outside and the inside, of the body as transducer and translator, and of creating art through the life energy that, in direct contact with the paper, creates art based on the life impulse.

Grauf's inner world is thus realized in drawing with exaggerated gestures, expressed in action, rapid strokes and dynamics, as well as in natural reflections of realistic images and motifs from nature. It is guided by artistic individuality, the urge to draw and the subjectively feeling, attentive and observing eye.

The gaze is always directed towards nature, its beauty and the pulsating rhythm of life. For nature is creation. It is the source that gives, creates, gives birth, interrupts, takes, teaches about the flow of life and the cessation of breath, about the early morning opening of a flower in a meadow and the changes in light throughout the day and night. Whatever part of nature we look at, we can see the entire ecosystem in this tiny section, the perfect microcosm in a macrocosm. The gentle connection with nature, being in nature, being a part of nature and being surrounded by its visual and auditory beauties adds to the richness of our inner world, for it is the true source and also a potion that nourishes and strengthens, that inspires and liberates.

– Nina Šardi

# BIOGRAPHY

**Stojan Grauf**, a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, is a well-known artist from Maribor. He is known as a master of drawing, the main virtue of every work of art. Stojan Grauf is a painter of the middle generation and is closely connected to Maribor, where he lives and works. One of the basic impulses of the artist's personal inspiration is the primacy of nature and natural materials. He has been working as a freelance artist since 1987. He works in various fields, namely painting, restoration, mural painting, graphic design and the design of interior and exterior spaces. He has had numerous solo and group exhibitions at home and abroad and has received several awards.

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artKIT, Glavni trg 14, Maribor  
Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.