

*"Erich Gruber's canon of works is characterised by power and intensity, by a differentiated glance beneath the surface and a subtle dramatic element."
(Tina Teufel)*

Erich Gruber – Abstract Drawings: Symphony for Pencil and Paper

Erich Gruber's canon of works is characterised by power and intensity, by a differentiated glance beneath the surface and a subtle dramatic element. The drawing always played an important role, even though it was subsidiary to paintings and works created in a mixture of techniques, often functioning as a basis for these. Erich Gruber's fascination for the drawing can be compared with a volcano whose lava is bubbling underground and then forces its way upwards. A new focus is required both from the artist himself as well as from the observers.

For Erich Gruber the drawing has been a possibility of creating an individual world since 1999; abstract drawings in particular have merged to become a special portfolio since 2010, and at present can only be linked peripherally with his older groups of works.

What is special about the artist's drawings is the concentration on movement, vibration, indistinct borders and dissolution, their materialisation to volume and space. For Erich Gruber it is not only important what and how he sees but also everything round about. Dissolution is a special form of precision, a pictorial description of what is inherent in what has been seen. Contrasts between rapid, frothy, bubbling, in other words powerful dissolution often directly encounter a gentle, vaporising de-materialisation, or they even overlay each other. Areas of powerful accumulation of the flow of the pencil are attributed the same meaning as seemingly empty areas. Micro- and macrocosm merge to give a new world.

The characteristic style of the pencil – from gentle touch to veritable penetration of the paper – is concentrated on the power of the line. Although representational objects appear in some drawings – bodies, vegetable forms, landscapes – the dynamism of how the line is drawn is of prime importance as it is a formal invitation to a game of deception on the levels of space and time.

The intensity of the perception of space and volume is not dependent on a cluster of superimpositions but is equally present in the drawings which concentrate on a few strong lines.

In the meantime Erich Gruber has completed many hundreds of works but these represent only an intermediate stage in his search for his own form language and his own world.

Tina Teufel, 2011