

About drawing

Quite often, drawing is a curiously deliberate process of creative derailing. No matter how much the artist believes that she has absolute control over the image coming into being, a moment arrives when this sense of control breaks down. While the meaning of any work of art is a topic for ongoing speculation, drawing in particular is generally approached hesitantly and circumspectly.

Theorizing about the art of drawing is complicated, perhaps, because it is the most intimate and personal form of expression among the visual arts. What can be said about the hand that moves across the surface of the paper? Does the mark, created spontaneously, become an integral part of the meaning of the image? Does the derailing line, incorporated in the work, contribute to its ultimate quality? More than any other discipline, drawing bears witness to a process that now frequently originates from a particular theoretical perspective, though it often arrives at a point where sensibility seems to take over from technique, thus energising and animating the work of art. The more tangible inspiration and vision become, the more difficult it is to define them.

Anita Groener's work derives its significance in part from exposing the analysis of the process of drawing. We can appreciate her singular drawings for their vision, their quality, and their sensibility, yet virtually all the images in any one series represent a view from a specific vantage point. The title of each series points towards the origin of her vision, the diverse drawings showing visual parallels, while each individual drawing can equally be appreciated as an autonomous work. The immediate power of the work is derived from the artist's preference for using ink, suggesting "colour" in its tonality by condensing finely-drawn lines; this high level of quality is retained in her most recent wall drawings. Groener explores the tipping point between the open-ended and the clearly defined in her drawings, in the same way that she explores the boundaries of what is recognisable and abstract in her work.

Each work is in search of a moment in which the tension of a sequence of lines converges with a sense of structure and form. These drawings are never ill-defined, or

of an easy charisma. On the contrary, they reveal such autonomous power that each series remains fascinating, so that we keep musing over their titles, and, subsequently, on their subject matter. Groener's work engages us in a process in which our own experiences and perceptions help constitute the meaning of the image, and in which the scope of the work is stretched between the tensions of figuration and abstraction.

A drawing is the basis of hope, of a revelation, of a perspective. Groener creates this perspective by means of her individual script of miniscule lines (an abstraction, a form) with a tendency to undermine values, to break away from them, before establishing a new order. Not always clearly visible to others, she proceeds in small steps, during which a line in a drawing may be derailed to such an extent that the artist herself realises that something significant has happened. Accepting this derailing for its effective and symbolic quality, Groener seizes the moment when these drawings have reached a meaningful visual. Once she decides that the drawings have reached a state of conclusion, the viewer must take over to complete their meaning.

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