

Drawing and writing lines

By Elke Bippus

Concept art discovered drawing as a primary, independent medium and used it as an important two-dimensional technique. Drawings on paper and on the wall became an equally effective way of expression as painting and sculpture. With their possibilities of scribbling and sketching, of notation and *écriture automatique*, of diagrammatic illustration and mingling of script and image, drawings were recognized as recording and drafting instruments suitable for either commenting reality or inventing exemplary world models in equal measure.

With Hanne Darboven and Irene Weingartner, SCHAU ORT presents two positions, which display the potential of drawing as a means of research. While Hanne Darboven's objects of investigation are history and culture, Irene Weingartner concentrates on processes that elude discursive explanation: while drawing, she registers signals of the body and of the environment. Hanne Darboven's meticulous script-like work method from left to right and top to bottom on paper in letter format is akin to the structure of books. Regularity, order, repetition, system, control, diligence, and uniformity – these terms can be used to characterize Hanne Darboven's pictorial language, a language the artist herself labeled as “mathematical prose” and “genuine writing”. In contrast, a musical, architectural, or topographic terminology is adequate for describing the visual impact of Irene Weingartner's drawings. While some works seem to convey a feeling of sound – evoked through undulating (staff-) lines –, other drawings are suggestive of the visualization of the universe, of topographical maps, or of technical blueprints.

Atta Troll (1988) is one of Hanne Darboven's culture-historical works. In these, the artist often combines her wordless wave-script, which accentuates the act of writing itself, with hand-written excerpts from literature, philosophy, or history. Her calculations of dates, their translation into musical notes, her copied out hand-written texts and wordless wave-scripts constitute an act of writing that can be understood as the history of writing and as a model for history-writing in general. Hanne Darboven uses objectifying strategies such as regularity and repeatability and submits her actions to a serial system, so that she may use drawing as a means of research and a medium to produce and convey cognition.

Irene Weingartner, on the other hand, seems to seek out virtually contrary methods. Even though work series exist, she does not work in serial. Thus, each drawing maintains its unique character. Nevertheless, her works also formulate a model of the ascertainment of reality. Even though she does not abide by a strict

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system, she also negates – comparable to Darboven – the medium of drawing as a merely subjective authentic expression. Instead of control and a linear succession of intention and materialization, Irene Weingartner allows for a complex interplay between material and thought, between signal, pencil, body, mind, and paper. Accordingly, the artist uses a drawing board to develop each work in sections on reel paper. An overview of the whole format is only possible when the sheet is hung on the wall. By means of this methodic procedure, Irene Weingartner transforms herself into a medium of recording comparable to the paper, the pencil, or the ink. The eye as an entity of reason, of verification, of empiricism, of presumption, of coordination, imitation, and control is debilitated, so that signals of the environment or the body can be seismographically recorded. Similar to Hanne Darboven's wordless writing, which does not remind us of a historic time but becomes readable as the trace of a process and of actually lived time, Irene Weingartner's lines of seismographic recording neither originate from a conjured up image nor are they modeled after an existing one, but they record, enregister, leave traces – drawn lines.

Irene Weingartner and Hanne Darboven draw and write lines, which reveal, in different ways, the medium of drawing to be an instrument for exemplary interpretation, for critical recording, and for an active comment on reality.

Text on the occasion of the exhibition:

Line ^{2,3,4}

Drawings by Hanne Darboven and Irene Weingartner, curated by Elke Bippus

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