

## Sarah Grothus

Sarah Grothus is an artist who works a lot, hard and dynamic and so vitality and dynamics grow in the drawings and paintings she makes. In fact she always 'demands' an image, or more precisely, the moment of the creation of an image. It puts her in a state of being rooted in reality, because she exists and wants to create. Possibly the prospective artwork partly already exists to some extent in spirit or in mind, but during the moment of making she is able to transform tension and dynamics into a substantial and personal image.

Her drawings are always linked to the artificial, namely the art she wants to make, as well as to something mystical, something mysterious. It occurs to many artists that during the making of an artwork something 'offhandedly' happens, something we did not think would happen. Partly it is possible to evoke that, which the artist will undoubtedly attempt by creating favourable conditions.

Sarah Grothus is surely to some extent influenced by the spaces in which she works, after all she stayed at several places, at so called artist in residences, in Europe. At those different places she felt she had to move on. Perhaps even more prosaic matters influence her work, the sounds of music, the smell of coffee, all these things can influence the artist in one way or another.

Creating an artwork is sometimes an attempt or an entitlement to control a moment or even life itself. Her drawings shimmer of technical coincidences, so it seems, and yet she has everything under control. That is also one of the great characteristics of her work, the tension between control and spontaneity, between the factual of a human body and the abstract of possibilities that are sometimes offered by the applied technique. It finally results in works with a strong personal vision and handwriting.

Sarah Grothus seems to love visual adventure and she takes risks during the process. Not knowing exactly where it will lead to, hoping that it leads to a result that surprises and that even, regardless the amount of experience with which the artist works, could never be expected. Despite her ability to control the development of the image, there may come a moment in which control no longer seems important, in which the mind is working vigorously, and that translates into her drawings. Above all, her drawings are testimonies of processes. They may have a theoretical starting point, for example originating from the human being. But at a certain moment it seems sensitivity takes over technique and initial vision, and then the work is given a soul and comes to life. Inspiration and vision become tangible and the more that happens the more difficult it becomes to describe. In an artwork the artist often strips, consciously or not, everyday reality of time and space, and visualises this in his drawing. Again and again the basis of a drawing is mostly hope and not reason. Specifically not a theory that needs to be clarified or defined. More often it is about breaking down and then breaking out. Working towards the unknown.

Sarah Grothus draws a lot and intuitive, therefore a relationship can develop between hand and image. She draws, so she is, she feels the importance of her creation at the time of making. But we are also there, later as the work is completed and exposed, we look at it. While observing her work we are in our own reality, but at the same time in the fictional reality that Sarah drew. All in the hope that the created work moves us. Then, as observers, we become fellow creators of new emotions and visions.

Of course artists plays god in a way, and 'play' is perhaps a key word for the way most of the visual art that deals with feelings, comes about. Some of the freedom you experienced on the playground will arise. Living in your own world. Letting happen what should happen. Sensitive stimuli take over. Artist Sarah Grothus searched, experimented, had fun, I hope, she fought, got upset when it did not

work, but succeeded in the end. And suddenly the power to create is in your hands. In front of your eyes a shape develops, a stain, a line and an image. Sarah Grothus took, gave and worked herself black and blue and she became the creator of her own big bang.

Often a maker of artworks, as free and wild an artwork may be, eventually seeks a certain cohesion, possibly the cohesion of life itself. Harmony, explanation, what not, we cling to the belief that through our art we impose some order onto the disorder, which is sometimes equated with the world, reality and also evil.

Aristotle said that art always has a beginning, a middle and an end. That sounds simplistic, but is also profound. For the artist, I think, it is always recommended to practice the art of the duality, of the split personality.

The 'self' willingly oversees how something evolves under the hands of Sarah Grothus, that is the beginning, where she will always be on the road to a middle, without knowing where this is. Let alone, that she knows where the end is. All of this is inherent to the process of creation. Thus, to art. This of course is all rather speculative and not substantiated by facts.

The drawings of Sarah Grothus are never true portraits of people you would recognize, but the striking thing is that they evoke many emotions and so should appear to be familiar. Perhaps the figures are placed in archetypical confrontation with each other. Visual searches on paper lead to worlds we suspect, but do not really know. The fairytale-like, the antemundane even gives some direction to our thoughts, but suddenly there is a clash between people, strife and even death haunt the scene. A scene which we usually can not relate to our familiar environment. Maybe it is a found nature, but certainly not an artificial cityscape. People fight, collide violently, repel and return to each other. They seek the conflict and swim into solution, subsequently loving each other again. Sarah Grothus makes art related to sorrow, suffering, love and death, and to confusion and mortality.

Looking at her titles, you find confirmation of the already mentioned human oddities. There is screaming and hurt and thus suffering, and *The crime began*. She also asks questions about us, the other one: *Who are you?* And she 'plays' with texts that tend to poetry: *With open eyes through night coloured darkness*. All encased in dynamic drawings, sometimes with archaic recognition, questioning: *Do you know the way of love? Or dreaming: I dreamed I was nature, I tell you about my dreams*.

Sometimes the main characters come back to life. There is hope and redemption. It is the art of the 'survival'. 'Splitting art' as the Dutch novelist Oek de Jong once described his work. Of course as an interested observer of her drawings I 'believe' in her art and I analyze the elusive to salvation or liberation. A kind of concept developed on a different level than that of the simple everyday reality, a concept that is mind-expanding and metaphysical.

Sarah Grothus does not avoid any theme concerning human relationships and deficits. She places them in a very personalized and visual cohesion. By drawing she sharpens our perception and mind and thus summoning things in us that we could not evoke in any other way than through the resulting art.

Arno Kramer

*Translation: Hedy Hempe en Sarah Grothus*