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One would have to follow the lines, have to get closer, have to turn it around, have to get inside. With Pia Linz's works of art, the viewer is gripped with the desire to understand the workings of this object which looks insignificant from a distance but up close turns out to be inexhaustible, how it might have come about, and – beneath its black lines – what story it has to tell.

This nearly obsessive behaviour of the viewer, which results in a constant circling around the box engraving, reminds one of a man from a Franz Kafka short story, who is simply called "the family man." One day the family man notices a creature named Odradek, which he cannot define. It lurks around in front of his house, and after being away for long periods, it settles now and then into the garret. Whatever happens, it keeps coming back, but when asked, says it has no place to live. To sum up, Odradek is "extremely agile"¹ and "cannot be caught"², which is why nothing definite can be said about this creature. The family man is worried – he doesn't know: What is it supposed to mean? Neither simple questions nor thorough investigation can lead to a clear definition.

Pia Linz constructs her box engravings for the most part in the context of a public space, the dimensions of which she includes in her works. A sort of partial negative of the space directly surrounding the box engraving emerges. In a second step, she projects spacial views surrounding her by turning herself around and drawing them from inside on the acrylic glass surfaces, a process that can take the artist several weeks to complete, and which along with the next step of engraving the lines finally ends up colouring the resulting grooves with strong black ink. The images become consolidated in their entirety into representations of expansive spaces which produce on the glass surfaces a combined multi-perspective achieved by synchronising and projecting multiple views of the outer world.

Just as the family man's thoughts constantly revolve around Odradek, the viewer circles around the box engraving, which constantly suggests, through the complex connections written into it, that *the* solution is just one small step away, just one more turn around, but its very structure makes a consistent definition impossible. It boils down to switching between reflecting about the artwork and reflecting about one's own position, something that amounts to turning oneself around in a way similar to how the artist earlier turned herself around inside the box. In this way the encounter with the artwork looks a bit like improvised choreography, in which the dancers are reacting to each other, fully inside of and fully outside of the world, all the while in suspended state between them. In reproducing the actions of the artist, her attempt to produce a consistent spatial structure, the artwork points toward the idea that perception unfolds through time and motion, and it can almost never deliver a finished, unchanging conceptual image.

¹ Kafka, Franz, *The Cares of a Family Man*, in: Reuss, Roland (ed.), *A Country Doctor. Short Stories*. Facsimile printing of the first edition of the 1920 printing, Munich/Leipzig/Frankfurt am Main, 2006, p. 98.

² Ibid.

It is precisely these aspects of perception that the artwork brings to mind simply by opening up to the viewer the possibility of concrete realisation. Knowledge is not achieved by standing still, but by moving.

The series of box engravings is thematically related to a series of earlier works which dealt with the problem of projection of multisensory perceived spaces and which the artist collects together in the group of works called "Projection Studies." "From her thought process," Pia Linz maintains, two paths automatically crystallised, both of which depend on each other but which have a separate and independent existence.³ In this statement, the artist hints on the one hand at a "perspectival" approach, which she uses in the group of works "Projection Studies," and on the other hand at a "cartographic" approach, which prevails in the group of works called "Early Images of Places" and in current "Drawing Projects."

In this large-scale drawing project the artist leaves her box enclosure in order to walk around, head held up, turning around and shifting, looking and finally losing herself in details. All in order to wrench herself away from the pull of a close look and thus to weave a map that is left behind almost freely floating – restrained only by finely spun pencil lines – on the white surfaces of the ark of paper: Central Park.⁴ – Convoluted lines move in a spiral formation across the white surface, thicken in the centre to an opaque forest of drawing only to spread out explosively and unravel at the edges. Free surfaces push forth – crisscrossed by countless lines – like empty places in the thick texture at whose ends the line merges into writing. Delicate elements, which looked at closely are words and sentence fragments, but have gotten tangled in the branches: "Streetlights are lit in broad daylight" "The existentialist is laying on the grass like he is dead" "19:50 everything is running" "looks like Ms Kirsch from Schillerpromenade" "water! water! ice cold water! that's a great skill walking and drawing in the same time!" "the squirrel is lured with false promises..." "unbelievable squeeking" "air is cleaned by the thunderstorm" "Little girl crying, helpless father, suddenly the tragedy is forgotten."⁵

For these large-format drawings, the artist meandered while drawing through terrain measured by her step by step. She moved in circles while looking, being aware, turning around and moving her pencil through this field, and thus develops "a network with inexhaustible connections."⁶

In her works such as "Mile End Park" or "Schiller Promenade," the artist fuses in her studio detailed studies made on location into a large layout, but she also emphasises in her Central Park study the independent nature of these detailed studies, while avoiding a direct transfer. Even though it is blotchy and rough, the work is evidence of her daily efforts in the outdoors and gives a soupçon of the parts worked over repeatedly, of the ground covered, and in the margins also some hint of people she met along the way. Piece by piece the space covered unfolds to the eye of the beholder, soars out above the creases, where time stretches out and to him and makes an inseparable bond with him.

³ Linz, Pia, Notes based on a telephone conversation with the author, Bonn, 12 March 2010.

⁴ Linz, Pia, Central Park, Pencil on paper, 180 x 127 cm, Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst der Bundesrepublik Deutschland [Collection of Contemporary Art of the Federal Republic of Germany].

⁵ Sentence fragments taken from, Linz, Pia, Central Park, Pencil on paper, 180 x 127 cm, Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst der Bundesrepublik Deutschland [Collection of Contemporary Art of the Federal Republic of Germany].

⁶ Eco, Umberto, Poetics of the Open Work, in: Ibid., The Open Work", Stuttgart 1973, p. 31 [Original, Opera Aperta, Milan 1962].

Space arises here from a combination of thinking and acting: Acting, pencil in hand and changing locations, thinking, the fundamental abstraction – combining, synchronising, and arranging – is transcended in the form of a rhizome-like map. The artist appears here as a wandering nomad in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari. With her pencil she draws lines on her sheet of paper, revealing connections, branches, and transitions from one plateau to the next, and thus out of the chaos of disparate impressions and views a map emerges which makes transparent the artist's act of construction, the extreme compression of space and time in the act of observation. Thus in this artwork, space also becomes a relational construct which reproduces the individual through "spacing" – "erecting, building, and positioning" – and through "synthesis," the combining of people and goods into spaces, partly self-constructed and partly moving through this arranging/ordering.⁷

The concept of arranging/ordering accentuates a process of arrangement per se, the realm of action which opens up a relational concept of space. On the other hand, ordering, which is accomplished through space and using the example of Central Park, structures motion in space, as is the case with the paths, streets, and bridges, the positioning of the green spaces and sports facilities, even the positioning of the park benches. In this sense, the artist strolling through the park is both a producer of and a component of the space.⁸ Above all, though, in the act of drawing she defines herself as both a designer *and* a creator who is actively participating in the processes of perception of and designing of artefacts. Such a concept of the individual permits both her and the observer to have a greater sphere of action and movement than the image of space as a container would. Space as such is not usually defined in such a procedural way, but rather is seen as closely connected to the thought and perceptual models for action of the individual.

In this way the artworks of Pia Linz invite us on the one hand to become a subject and to value our own potential, our own subjectivity. On the other hand, it is up to the subject to inquire about the structures and processes it has been engaged with, in other words to experience what it is like to hover between the tendency to be subject and object.

Her studies, regardless of whether they lead to a more cartographic or a more perspectival treatment, are reflections about representation itself, are also – and I return here to our family man, an Odradek: images for an enjoyable and at the same time a deeply painful hermeneutical circling around an object. And finally, they are also above all, entirely in Foucault's terms "Places outside of all places"⁹ – heterotopias which are capable of giving some idea of how space is conceived today.

⁷ Cf. Löw, Martina, *Sociology of Space*, Frankfurt an der Main 2001, p. 158 ff.

⁸ Cf. Löw, Martina, *Raumsoziologie [Sociology of Space]*, Frankfurt am Main, 2001, p. 166.

⁹ Foucault, Michel, "Of Other Spaces," in: Barck, Karlheinz / Gente, Peter / Paris, Heidi / Richter, Stefan (eds.), *Aisthesis. Perception Today or Other Perspective of a Different Aesthetic*, Leipzig, 1993(5), p. 39.

