

Karin Kutsch – Etchings

Written by Sabine Elsa Müller, art historian, annual bulletin 2019

Not too much is to be said about the etchings by Karin Kutsch. Words and clarifications are not necessary. Everything that constitutes them is laid bare before our eyes. Nevertheless they are surrounded by a mystery that demands a key, demands access. A suitable instrument for opening a door. This instrument is located within ourselves. Immersing oneself in these etchings demands utmost alertness, openness, clarity. A highly developed sensorium, which grasps the delicacy of nuances in the truest sense. Karin Kutsch possesses this sensorium. Her senses have been heightened by her lifelong dealing with subtle differentiations. This small series of etchings is an invitation to partake in her joy of discovery. To acquaint oneself with one's own vision as something that prompts fresh astonishment time and time again, and does so over the simple and initially casual. A line on a sheet of paper! The expression of tenderness, poignancy, directness, force and fragility that it can contain! Like every printing method, drypoint only indirectly reproduces the drawing, in the track of the ink. The ink gets caught in the line incised in the copper etching plate by means of an etching needle. In the print, the brittleness of this line reflects the full brutality of the intervention. A smooth surface is deeply scored, positively wounded, with a sharp needle. With this technique the painter steps into a proximity to sculpture, to the art of the mechanical/spatial reshaping of matter. This explains the intense haptic sensation that sets in during contemplation. Although completely flat, the etchings convey their creation as a procedure associated with enormous pressure and exertion. In the print's skin of paint, the so-called plate tone, the lines are present as though tattoo'd in – sensitive closeness to skin explains their tremendously physical impression that defies their delicateness. The formal regularity recalls a rulebook, finely orchestrated, like the notes of a musical score. These are sounds emerging, here, out of the base paint, louder and quieter, coming forth out of the background more clearly in the darker prints, coalescing with it more harmoniously in the light ones. A vacillation to and fro that has no end, that celebrates every single sheet in its singularity and infinite flux as a precious particularity. The precise opposite of the notion of printed graphic as random repetition of the eternally same.

In a rendering of the statements of John Cage, one could say Karin Kutsch's etchings are pure poetry, because they allow musical elements to be introduced into the world of the visual.*

This poetry requires a specific form. Content and form are identical. This integrality is aimed at all senses and can be embraced by all senses only.

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*cf. John Cage, Silence, Foreword, p. x. Wesleyan University Press, 1973

https://monoskop.org/images/b/b5/Cage_John_Silence_Lectures_and_Writings.pdf