

Drawn by nature

Christina Wendenburg

Eliška Bartek looks on as the beauty of nature passes by. She paints the glow of the sun, the vigour and sound of the wind, the abrupt transition of light and shade. Plant shapes seem formed by the weather, striving in tentacles and an unceasing flow of colour towards the light, sprawling in fascinating density. They seem to emerge from the depth of the image, reaching for its vibrating surface.

The artist's temperament is expressive and impulsive. Her compositions, partly reminiscent of impressionism, are sensitive and powerful examinations of the existential conflict between man and nature. Akin to a continuous struggle for survival we experience the marvelous and fantastic blossoming of living matter, a precious state of an ephemeral existence overshadowed by death.

Both in her photographs of flowers and in her paintings, the colours seem to breathe, they glow and die down, discharge, and seem caught in a moment of culmination, already dissolving into a different (physical) state towards the margins of the picture. Just before burning, singeing or evaporating completely, the enormous energy of the colours accumulates for an eruption. The inherent contradiction stems from the emotional charge that the artist releases in front of her canvas: the blazing contrast of colours, which are mixed in a state of moodiness and extreme agitation, invokes a short moment of unity and balance when coming in contact with the surface. Her mixture is almost alchemical, yet viable only by means of incorporating all our senses.

Eliška Bartek is not a distant observer of nature, she is part of it, has absorbed sunlight and scents. She explores the nature of painting from her innermost self. Hence, nothing in her work seems to be controlled, static or minutely planned. Her paintings evoke the impression of a natural and continuous flow.