drawing

David Connearn‘s drawings, which he has been producing continuously since 1979, always consist of horizontal lines that are lay close together and with which he successively covers the sheet from top to bottom. For this, he uses a Rapidograph, an ink pen usually used for technical drawing, and by architects or cartographers. Such a pen is frequently used in conjunction with rulers or drawing machines. However, Connearn does not do this. He draws each line freehand so that as it proceeds - even though the hand guiding the pen is highly controlled - small inaccuracies occur so that no two drawings resemble each other, even if it may seem so at first glance.

Connearn counts among those artists who create only one single great „life‘s work“ on which they have been working for decades. One can think of the Japanese artist On Kawara and his series of „Date Paintings“, begun in 1966, which were created day by day. The painting‘s date appears as a typeface on the canvas. Another example is the Polish-French artist Roman Opałka, who began in 1965 to apply a continuous sequence of numbers with white paint onto a canvas until it was filled from top left to bottom right, then the next painting, and so on. He successively added a little more white to the image ground, so that the pictures became a little lighter as the numbers increased.

On Kawara and Opałka are generally regarded as conceptual artists. Everything that results in a work is pre-formulated as a concept or idea that is followed by its realisation. There is a distinct difference between this and Connaern‘s approach. Although he follows an equally strict „concept“ and renounces any form of expressive representation, it is precisely that which cannot be planned in advance that is ultimately decisive - otherwise, he could draw the lines using a ruler.

Unlike Opałka, Connaern works with different formats, and there are individual groups of works or series, such as the „Para Drawings“, which in principle could continue indefinitely, or the „5 Drawings“, in which he successively draws on five 2 x 2 metre sheets with ever thinner pens.

Ludwig Seyfarth

David Connearn, born 1952, attended Queens‘ College Cambridge where he took a degree in History (1975), Camberwell School of Art where he obtained his BA in Fine Art (Sculpture) in 1979, and was a postgraduate at The Slade School (HDFA 1981). He was appointed John Florent Stone Fellow at the Edinburgh College of Art in 2000. He has works in the public collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum, the City Arts Center Edinburgh, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the British Museum, the Arts Council England and The British Council, and it is in the collection of James Ward Aldon, Adam Barker-Mill, Doris Lockhardt, Alan Banks, of the Economist and Unilever.

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Poster Untitled drawing (NY Puck Building perfomance drawing), 1983, 1.4 mm black rotring ink line in 300 g Heritage Rag paper, 196 x 196 cm
Reverse para - landscape series, Drawings number 1 through to 15, 0.5 mm black rotring ink on 300g Heritage Rag paper, 29,7 x 42,0 cm

DAVID CONNEARN

drawing

April 26 – June 8, 2019

Opening April 26, 7pm

Drawings