

Antonio Kutleša

Flowers That Have Not Bloomed

According to the encyclopaedic definition, a drawing is a graphic representation of shapes on a surface, but it is also a means of explaining an always abstract thought, that is, the communication of an actor, artist, technician or craftsman with himself.¹ Its application is broad, and although it has been replaced by photography in certain fields, in some disciplines it remains indispensable for a detailed depiction of elements for the purpose of educating on a specific topic. Primarily, we speak of technical drawing, while artistic drawing can be seen as a separate subcategory, although their characteristics may intertwine. While there is still no historical overview of drawing in Croatia, and we get a cross-section of contemporary works at occasional exhibitions where the question arises of what drawing is and what its nature is today, we are left to study and compare artistic expressions and see how they correspond to the sensibilities of today's society. Are these explorations into the directions in which this medium can develop and with which other disciplines it can be connected, or are they solely the technical skill of the artist? And how to approach graphics – a discipline that is today almost inseparable from design and visual culture, where, however, traditional techniques are increasingly being replaced by their digital counterparts?

Maintaining a meticulous approach traditionally associated with historical periods of the appearance of graphics, but using modern technological tools at the same time, Antonio Kutleša, in his work *Flowers That Have Not Bloomed*, translates graphic drawing into a three-dimensional form without prior shaping of the objects in traditional sculptural techniques. The artist's

¹ Premerl T. (1998). "Crtež kao način mišljenja", in: Crtež u znanosti, (ed.) Miljenko Lapaine, Zagreb: Faculty of Geodesy, p. 19

GALERIJA KARAS

experiment, building upon his earlier work titled *DIY 3D Printer* from 2020, starts from the idea of problematizing the range of the drawing medium, intertwining disciplines, and using modern tools, taking us through a process of complete transformation – at the level of idea, medium, and experience of the creative process and its product. Contemplating the limitations of the two-dimensional surface, mastering which, however, testifies to the artistic skill because creating a three-dimensional illusion based on nature remains a fundamental criterion for admission to art schools and academies, the artist delves into the field of sculpture and materializes the apparent representation on a surface of paper. In doing so, he uses digital three-dimensional printing technologies that enable the desired transfer, resulting simultaneously in an original drawing and its transformed version. Unlike the traditional approach where a study or sketch serves as a note of an idea and a template that the artist uses to contemplate the solution in the sculptural medium, but where he remains free to creatively explore the process of creation, Antonio Kutleša seeks to achieve a complete and accurate transfer from one medium to another, in which we simultaneously observe the two-dimensional graphic sheet as well as its final three-dimensional object, which in the process of manipulation has not lost the qualities of the original template and can simultaneously be used as a template for new graphics, thus reverting to a two-dimensional form. For example, the work *Cvijet (Flower)*, made as an etching, becomes a template for the creation of other works that make up a graphic installation. The three-dimensional model obtained from the etching through designed computer processes is printed by printers into individual matrices, and by printing them in blind embossing, elements are created whose combination creates a three-dimensional graphic object identical to the original template. Such a transfer allows us to rotate and view the former two-dimensional representation from new perspectives, which can be used in subsequent transfers and experiments.

GALERIJA KARAS

However, despite the successful transfer of a two-dimensional representation into a three-dimensional object, the desired transformation of the work is not complete because the original drawing was lost in the transfer process. The work *Plod (Fruit)* is an example of an imprint and print in which the original drawing is contained, and therefore, it can be seen as a complete transfer of the desired result.

In the modern era where technology is an inseparable part of human life, current artistic reflections on one hand deal with the exploitation of technological potentials aimed at questioning the way we perceive the world, and on the other hand, critique the lifestyle and value systems stemming from today's needs, standards, and the availability of content and tools. The widespread use of three-dimensional printers not only in numerous sectors and industries but also in individual projects, and its indispensable place in contemporary interdisciplinary artistic practices, raise questions of originality and interchangeability of disciplines. The artist is no longer merely a passionate observer of everyday life in search of inspiration, but an active participant of his time who tests the limits of media and wonders how to use the available resources to act in society. Antonio Kutleša focuses his gaze on the form he exploits to navigate through creative, aesthetic, functional, and social processes. Through experiments in mastering the tools used and perfecting the form, this artist leaves the observer with the possibility of interpreting the results in which the individual and factory segments intersect and permeate, free and default working mechanisms, creative potential and technical procedures, as well as reflection on the past and a glimpse into the future, which, judging by the title of the work, he sees as a frozen image, a kind of mirror of the post-technological society.

Ivana Završki

GALERIJA KARAS