



ANA
RATKOVIĆ
SOBOTA



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JEZERA | LAKES

16.6. – 1.7.2022.

GALERIJA JOSIP RAČIĆ – NACIONALNI MUZEJ MODERNE UMJETNOSTI
JOSIP RAČIĆ GALLERY – NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
Margaretska 3, Zagreb

Naši se krajolici mijenjaju, a to se slabo primjećuje. Čovjek se ne mijenja. Zago-spodario je prirodnim potencijalima koji su postali izvori tržišnih resursa. Zbog profita odvija se proces nestajanja šuma, pčela, prirodnih staništa, istrebljivanja biljnih i životinjskih vrsta, gubitak bioraznolikosti. Zanimanje za odnos prema netaknutoj izvornosti koja se nalazi u prirodi Plitvičkih jezera i koja je devastirana razvojem masovnog turizma pokazuje ciklus *Jezera* Ane Ratković Sobote. Riječ je o slikarici zainteresiranoj za izazov slikarske tehnike pa fokus na ručno oslikavanje tkanine koji je napravila u najnovijim radovima ne iznenađuje. Od samih početaka formalnog razvoja, bliski su joj postupci grafičkih tehnika koji su utjecali na eksperimente, kao i na izgled radova. Ti postupci zahtijevaju predviđanje, precizno razrađene faze nanošenja boje i kontrolu likovnog postupka koji rezultira ujednačenošću.

U pogledu tehnike, ovo je za Anu bio odmak, a znamo što znači napuštanje poznatog: nosi sumnje, zahtijeva smjernost i smionost – čak i usprkos današnjoj otvorenosti prema korištenju, a katkad i prekoračivanju granica likovnih medija koje je rezultiralo trenutno izraženim pluralizmom tehnika i izraza. Oslikane tkanine u tehnici batika razrada su istih motiva prethodnog i vjerno prenošenje iskustva jednog likovnog medija u drugi. Radeći prije u ulju i temperi, Ana Ratković Sobota je kadrove raskošnog svijeta prirode prenosila najprije iscrtavanjem ili otiskivanjem struktura na velike formate, potom na manje, te isticala refleksiju svjetla. Ovdje je atmosferu prirode predočila isključivo sintezom naglašenih linija i plošno nanasene boje; vrlo čitljivim crtežima linearnih ritmova koji su nastali drevnim indonezijskim postupkom slikanja voskom. Dominantno crvena, siva, plavo-crvena, zeleno-crvena objedinjuje prikaz, a unatoč naglasku plohe i linearnosti te slikarskoj oskudnosti autorica je skrenula pažnju na noćno ozračje mekoće i pitomog. Tome je doprinio i materijal, tkanina, na čijoj se poledini također reflektirao prikaz.

Isto tako, logično je da je sâm postupak rada učinio da je na nekim dijelovima redukcija volumena od prirodnih oblika stvorila ornamente; primjerice, u prikazima neba spiralama, kružnicama, točkama, ili linijama iscrtanih planina. Riječ je o pojednostavljanju pejzaža ne samo zbog tehnike, nego i zbog teme, o nestajanju svijeta kakav smo poznavali, dehumanizaciji i čovjekovoj alijenaciji od krajolika. Premda u doslovno ispranim prikazima, radeći nadahnuti fotografijama s početka prošlog stoljeća, Ana Ratković Sobota retrogradno oživljava prošla vremena. Naime, nekad oaza mira, čistoće prirode i pitke vode, u novije su vrijeme Plitvička jezera obilježena prekomjernim turističkim posjetima, i primjer su nebrige te zagađenja površinskih i podzemnih voda. Zapanjujuća višegodišnja usredotočenost na iste motive i kreativni postupak Ane Ratković Sobote upućuju na to da čovjek u odnosu na probleme, poput devastacije okoliša, treba razmišljati o svojoj odgovornosti prema mjestu kako ne bi bio rušitelj nego stvaratelj vrijednosti, a prvenstveno da poticaj za to opet može naći u prirodi. Dajući savjete, i Rainer Maria Rilke upućuje mladog pjesnika na približavanje prirodi: „Ljudi su (uz pomoć konvencija) sve riješili na najlakši način i usmjerili sve prema najlakšem od najlakšeg; no, očito je da se moramo držati onog teškog: sve živo drži se toga, sve u prirodi raste i brani se na svoj način i biva vlastito iz sebe samog, pokušava to biti po svaku cijenu i usprkos svakom otporu.“¹

Mijenjajući tehnike, Ana Ratković Sobota razvija vlastit pristup pejzažima posredstvom fotografija sada sve dalje prošlosti koje pretvara u osobne vizije krajolika koji nestaje, a koji ovom prilikom iščitavamo u jeziku pojednostavljenih oblika svedenih na znakove koji podsjećaju na nužnost aktivnog suočavanja sa stvarnošću. Tkanine su upijale boje za tekstil te su, prolazeći kroz promjene stanja, iznijela ozračja prirode koja iščezava i koja je zapuštena zbog čovjekove nezajažljivosti, a pokazuju da platno može „upiti“ i na površini rafinirano manifestirati oblike prirode.

¹ *Pisma mladom pjesniku* (preveo Dragutin Horvat), Zagreb: Divič, 1997., str. 50.



Taking a step back, leaving the comfort of the familiar breeds doubts, and requires humility and boldness. Openness to using, and sometimes crossing the boundaries of different visual media has resulted in the current existence of pluralism of techniques, as well as expressions. In this sense, Ana Ratković Sobota's focus on hand-painted fabrics in her latest works is not surprising. From very early on in her formal development, painter Ana Ratković Sobota has gravitated toward the processes of printmaking techniques that influenced her experiments, as well as the appearance of her works. These processes require anticipation, precisely elaborated stages of the application of paint and control of the artistic process, which mostly results in uniformity.

This is evident in the way she approached the creation of the *Lakes* series, which she has been executing in various techniques during the last few years. The series is inspired by the artist's interest in our attitudes towards untouched originality as found in the natural environment of the Plitvice Lakes, which has been devastated as a result of the development of mass tourism. Fabrics painted using the batik technique show elaborations of the same aforementioned motifs and the faithful transfer of the experience of one visual medium into another, which is mostly used in this case and belongs to the field of applied arts. In her earlier works in oil and tempera, Ana Ratković Sobota treated nature by first delineating it, or imprinting its structures on large formats, and then as if "passing it through" coloured filters, thereby achieving, to some extent, the effect of a negative. In the new series, however, the atmosphere of the same natural environment is conveyed exclusively by the synthesis of accentuated lines and the flatly applied paint; very legible drawings of linear rhythms that emerged through this ancient lengthy wax-painting procedure which originated in Indonesia. Predominantly one colour (green, red, grey, blue) consolidates the image, and despite the dominance of surface and linearity, as well as pictorial scarcity, the artist conveys scenes that appear nocturnal and draws attention to the atmosphere of softness and tameness. Contributing to this is the material, that is, fabric, the back of which also reflects the image.

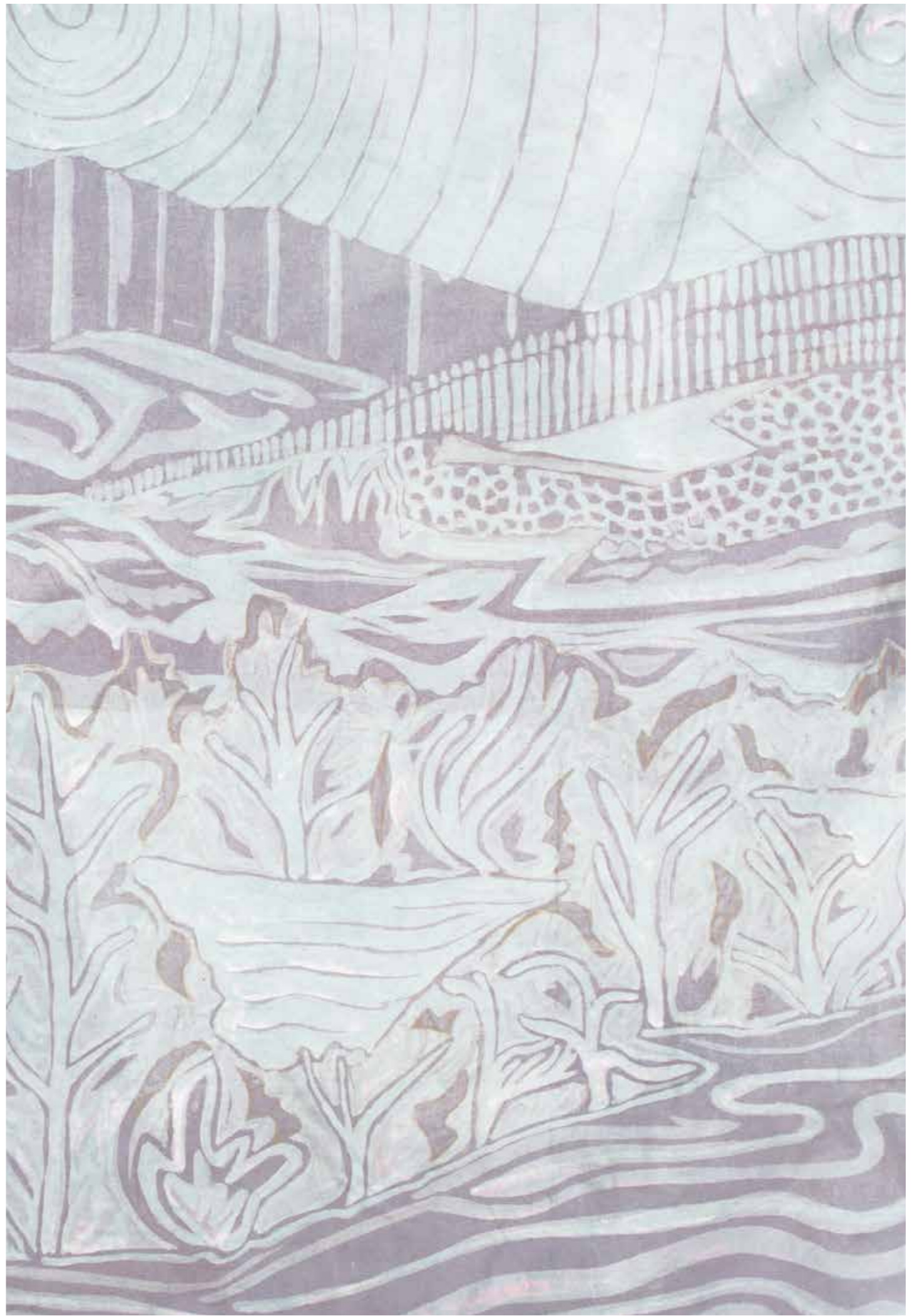
On the other hand, it is logical that the work process itself contributed to the fact that in some parts natural forms appear like ornaments due to the reduction

of volume; for example, in depictions of the sky made of spirals, circles, dots or the outlines of mountains. The landscape is simplified, not only because of the technique, but also on account of the characteristic scenery. We therefore witness its disappearance, dehumanisation and man's alienation from it. Still, in her paintings inspired by photographs from the beginning of the last century, Ana Ratković Sobota retroactively revives the past albeit in washed-out depictions. Her astonishing long-term focus on the same motifs and creative process suggests that man should consider his responsibility when it comes to problems of environmental degradation, how not to be a destroyer but a creator of values, and above all that an impetus for this can again be found in nature. Our landscapes keep changing, yet people stay the same. We have taken control over natural resources and turned them into market resources. In the name of profit, we are witnessing the process of deforestation, bee decline and natural habitat loss, extinction of plant and animal species, loss of biodiversity. Let us for a moment observe the challenge that Ana Ratković Sobota dared put before us. The canvases she worked on in this series confirm that the material can "absorb" and finely manifest natural forms on its surface. The fabrics have absorbed textile dyes and as they passed through changing states, they managed to convey the atmosphere of nature that is disappearing and has been neglected as a consequence of human greed. Formerly an oasis of peace, untouched nature and clean drinking water, in recent times it has been marked by excessive tourist visits and is today an example of neglect and pollution of surface and ground water. In his *Letters to a Young Poet*, Rainer Maria Rilke instructs the young poet to stay close to nature and adds that "Most people have (with the help of conventions) turned their solutions toward what is easy and toward the easiest side of the easy; but it is clear that we must trust in what is difficult: everything alive trusts in it, everything in Nature grows and defends itself any way it can and is spontaneously itself, tries to be itself at all costs and against all opposition."¹

By changing techniques, Ana Ratković Sobota develops her own approach to landscapes using photographs of the now distant past, which she turns into personal visions of the vanishing landscape, and which we now read in the language of simplified forms reduced to signs that remind us of the need to actively face reality.

¹ *Pisma mladom pjesniku* (translated by Dragutin Horvat), Zagreb: Divič, 1997, p. 50









1. Jezera | Lakes, 2022.



Ana Ratković Sobota (Zagreb, 1988.) završila je Školu primijenjene umjetnosti i dizajna. Diplomirala je na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu u klasi prof. Matka Vekića. Izlagala je na više skupnih i samostalnih izložbi u zemlji i inozemstvu, od kojih ističemo samostalnu izložbu u Tokamachiju u Japanu i Laubi u Zagrebu. Travanj i svibanj 2018. i 2019. provela je u Leipzigu u sklopu rezidencije „De/Konstrukcija slike“. Oslikala je Zatvoreni odjel kaznionice u Požegi i Odjel za transport pacijenata Hitne pomoći Kliničkog bolničkog centra Rebro. Živi i radi u Zagrebu. Članica je Hrvatske zajednice samostalnih umjetnika (HZSU) i Hrvatskog društva likovnih umjetnika (HDLU).

Ana Ratković Sobota (Zagreb, 1988) finished the School of Applied Arts and Design. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the class of Prof. Matko Vekić. She has participated in a number of group exhibitions and has staged solo exhibitions in Croatia and abroad, specifically in Tokamachi, Japan and at Lauba, Zagreb. During April and May 2018 and 2019 in Leipzig she took part in the De/Construction of Image residency program. She painted a mural in the secure ward of the penitentiary in Požega and a mural in the department for emergency patient transfer at the KBC Rebro Hospital. She lives and works in Zagreb. She is a member of the Croatian Freelance Artists Association and the Croatian Association of Visual Artists.

- 1. Jezera** | Lakes
batik tehnika na tkanini
fabrics painted using the batik technique
153 x 202,3 cm
- 2. Jezera** | Lakes
batik tehnika na tkanini
fabrics painted using the batik technique
142 x 187,2 cm
- 3. Jezera** | Lakes
batik tehnika na tkanini
fabrics painted using the batik technique
152 x 194 cm
- 4. Jezera** | Lakes
batik tehnika na tkanini
fabrics painted using the batik technique
185 x 136,4 cm
- 5. Jezera** | Lakes
batik tehnika na tkanini
fabrics painted using the batik technique
206 x 157 cm

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ANA RATKOVIĆ SOBOTA
JEZERA | LAKES

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Josip Račić Gallery – National Museum of Modern Art
Margaretska 3, Zagreb

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