

Edinburgh Festival Exhibition 1992

Andy Goldsworthy Ice and Snow Drawings and Throws
Raimond Girke Paintings

Exhibition 15 August – 12 September 1992
Admission Free

Andy Goldsworthy Ice and Snow drawings and Throws

The drawings in this exhibition are made with snowballs, ice and natural materials from different locations: Borrowdale graphite, Borrowdale slate, Derwent water, Drumlanrig clay, Pit clay, and earth from the source of the Scour River, Penport. The process of the snowballs melting on watercolour paper and forming the drawings echoes processes in the natural world: erosion, sedimentation, ice and flow. The visual structure and colour qualities thus produced are extraordinary.

The *Ice and Snow Drawings* have two main sources. The first *Arctic Snowballs* of 1989 resulted from an experience Goldsworthy had while out hunting with his Inuit guide Luti and his son. Coming across a breathing hole in the ice pack, Luti circled around at a distance, moving towards the hole, while his son stood ready with his gun in anticipation of the rising seal.

Dark blood dripped and trailed in the snow as the sledge moved off, carrying carcass and hunters. The seal was caught by the hunter's instinct and knowledge of its survival habits.

The second source for the *Snowball Drawings* was an experience made by Goldsworthy following an exhibition at Glasgow's Tramway. His large snowballs, which gradually melted during the course of the show, left an afterimage caused by the 'impurities' in the snowball.

On another occasion in the Arctic, Goldsworthy and his guides came across a polar bear's tracks in the snow. Running parallel to this were the tracks of a mechanised skidou. Luti's comment was simply: "dead bear."

This experience of immersion in the natural world continues with the snowball drawings, but other questions arise. In the drawing with graphite from Borrowdale – one of the main sources for this material – there is a dual process: on the one hand natural, on the other with the artist's participation. Who, or what, is making the drawing?

Such questions lead on to the conference held at the Botanic Gardens during the Edinburgh Festival, which looked at order, chaos and creativity in the arts and science. Goldsworthy was the key speaker at the conference, the themes of which also embrace *The Throws*, a set of Goldsworthy photographs in which spontaneity, change and order are invoked and juggled.

24 July 1992

Raimond Girke Paintings

German artist Raimund Girke has exhibited his 'white paintings' widely over the past thirty-five years. They have been seen in the major private and municipal galleries in Germany, in many other European countries and in the USA, Mexico, Australia, India and Japan. British audiences, apart from Girke's inclusion in a couple of group shows seen in London in the early seventies, have been completely missed out.

Born in 1930, Girke trained at the art school in Duesseldorf, and began his painting career in the mid- fifties. Since 1971 he has been a professor at the Berlin Art Academy, and now flits between the old imperial capital and the current German art capital Cologne.

While there are clear connections between the structures of such early paintings as *Stratifications* and those from the late eighties such as *White World*, Girke's work shows a steady process of evolution. In colour terms, sharply contrasting tones move through shades of grey to tinted white; and his brush work gradually becomes freer, more dynamic, more consciously rhythmic.

His work has been described as "a drama of stillness", a paradox which aptly sums up Girke's approach. While the individual brushstrokes work against each other to create tension, their cumulative effect is one which invites meditation. As Girke himself puts it, "white puts the painting into a state of suspension and takes away its weight."

Girke's paintings were selected as a further perspective on the theme of order, chaos and creativity: the notion of unconnected elements forming an ultimately coherent order. *Order, Chaos and Creativity* was the title of a seminar taking place at Edinburgh's Botanic Gardens during the Festival, at which Andy Goldsworthy, also showing at the Fruitmarket during the festival, was speaking.

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