

Natalija Juhart Brglez

GEOMETRIC WALKS; EXPLORING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

12 January–10 February 2024

artKIT

“If you choose beauty, you will find it.”

We find ourselves in the aesthetics of artist Natalija Juhart Brglez's lyrical spatial graphic works. By exploring the urban space, she creates a uniquely original view of the city, captured in her focus and love for the city, its architecture and buildings. By observing what is in the moment, she creates urban compositions that capture the everyday life of the city, exploring the paths and passages from one point to another and from one building to another. The emerging or disappearing passages, paths, intersections and junctions, compositions and spaces in between offer a variety of views and unique perspectives that the artist captures in her prints. On every path, in every scene, you can find both chaos and order, calm and bustle. And at every turn, you can also see the beauty of life, which is often much closer and much more often within our grasp than we imagine.

On a walk through the city, the eye lingers at certain points of convergence, condensed perspectives and expressive contrasts. Regardless of the season, the city's buildings stand still as silent components and harbingers of what is and what has been. We always see them differently, from different angles, with an angle in the composition, an ascending view or a turn. Seemingly simple graphic works depict familiar urban spaces, but their unique compositions strike the viewer as completely new, offering a fresh perspective. Her visual backdrops display an aesthetic of perfection and a rich architectural imagination that springs from her creative source. Her explorations of the urban landscape create pathways that invite a walk through the passages that bring together subtle, gentle collages and the artist's cubist visual memories and dreams.

The etymological source of the word perspective comes from Latin, where *perspectus* means “perceived, known”; the late Latin word *perspectivus* means “of sight, optical”, from *perspicere* “to see through, recognize, look through, look closely at, perceive”, consisting of the prefix *per*, meaning “through”, and *spacere*, meaning “to look at”. The one who inspects, looks through, perceives the visible, the invisible and the in-between, observes the urban landscape and creates new drawing fields of framed objects as compositions of composite geometric, ornamental, architectural and handcrafted details.

As you walk through urban space, the environment offers you selected visual snippets that are retained in our memory as visual glimpses that we store in our memory base, in what we call our collage-like memory. These glimpses then overlap in our memory with other glimpses that we have collected, which are then combined with the images from our daily lives, such as images of streets, the beautiful trees or houses of our childhood, a place that is dear to us, a bench in the park, our favorite panoramic view, the beauty of a row of chestnut trees, the beautiful garden fence, a statue of an angel that I see on my way to work and back home.

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artKIT, Glavni trg 14, Maribor
Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

All these glimpses and images take on an even stronger connotation and meaning when we add a pinch of our own emotional memory, which is also linked to certain places, cities and visual panoramas in our urban landscapes.

The artist's most important consideration and guiding principle is the line. The observed line that follows the gaze, breaks, folds, doubles, cuts or combines the visual into newly developed spaces and associated color planes, which the artist then begins to assemble and rebuild. The resulting dynamic drives the theme forward in a strict and dynamic arrangement and offers the eye a multitude of points of contact. It also generates and draws its strength from the balance and harmony of the compositions and from the softness of the vegetative details as a counterweight, be it in the leaves of the trees, the curved light poles or in the water elements.

The viewer is usually the only one in the prints, with a few exceptions, such as in the works *Harlequin* and *Notre Dame in Paris*, the figure of Peggy Guggenheim in the work *Collected Collection* or in the work *Without Swimsuits*. But despite the absence of the human figure in the artist's prints, the viewer does not feel alone. Rather, we find ourselves in the pleasant and good company of amazing buildings, squares, nature and trees, playful compositions that invite us to play, drawn details of facades that reveal themselves in their beauty as esthetic ornamentation, in the undulation of arches and arcs, on bridges and castles and various sources of light, majestic like lighthouses, whose presence illuminates the entire compositional landscape. Above this hovers the final and definitive layer of harmony and balance that encloses the whole and gives the work of art a unique structural character.

Her drawing eye is like a subjective photographic lens, for the drawing is ultimately both a mirror of reality and a reflection of our own inner reinterpretation of reality. The simple givenness of different perspectives and choices that our spatial subjectivity allows is followed by the less simple making of numerous decisions about what to include, select, add, reshape or omit. Given the infinite number of possibilities, the work is much more difficult to create. The composite nature of the artist's unique and specific perspectives is therefore a testament to the brilliance of her eye. She is a drawing magician who collapses spaces, raises planes, creates transitions, composes and builds, draws soft lines and solid structures, tectonically connects different forces and perspectives, and creates new visible and invisible spaces between spaces. Her drawings are her own detailed interpretations of the reality of urban landscapes, whose esthetic beauty tells an elegant, unique story of the environment.

When the door to the world of art opens and we cross the threshold, we become discoverers of our own intuition, in which we sense, perceive, create and follow the forces of our own excitement and interests. These paths rarely lead us to our destination. But the destination is not as important as the exploration and dedication to one's artistic practice and the role of discovery along the way. And if you choose a path of beauty, you will find it, just like the artist.

– Nina Šardi

BIOGRAPHY

Website



Natalija Juhart Brglez (1992, Ptuj) completed her master's degree in art education at the Faculty of Education at the University of Maribor under Prof. Sandi Červek in 2018 and her master's degree in printmaking under Prof. Branko Suhy at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design at the University of Ljubljana in 2019.

She is the winner of the Excellence Award in the Japanese competition *Utazu Art Award Biennale* (2018), the Recognition Award of the *Biennial of Slovene Graphic Arts* (2019), the *Prešeren Award* of the Academy of Visual Arts and Design Ljubljana (2017/18) for a series of seven prints of Venice, the *Primavera Charter* and the *Curator's Award* of the Maribor Fine Artists Society (2019 and 2021) and an honorable mention at the *International Graphic Triennial in Bitola 2021* for her contribution to the development of graphic art. She exhibits nationally and internationally. She lives, works and creates in Maribor.