



27 Dicembre 2016, Eliška Bartek, 55 × 46 cm, Watercolor on Paper © the artist

## FARBRAUSCH FRENESIA DI COLORE COLOR FRENZY

*“My life is art. Whether it’s the story of my life, whether it’s me. Whether it’s the food or the cooking. Whether it’s the celebration. Whether it’s painting. Everything around me is art and my art.”* Eliška is the Czech version of the first name Elisabeth, and it means My God is abundance.

If you take a look at Eliška Bartek’s extensive oeuvre, which she has created over the years, it seems as if she absolutely wants to embody the meaning of her first name. The quote by the artist at the beginning reflects this very clearly.

With a verve that is unparalleled, she absorbs herself in her works. It doesn’t matter in which medium she is currently working. With Eliška everything emanates from a lust for life. Her mode of working moves from ecstatic to obsessed. The sensory impressions that she inscribes in her works, be it photography, cliché verre, oil on canvas, ink on paper or even performances, reflect this. As in the case of her anniversary exhibition on the occasion of her 70th birthday in the hilleckes probst gallery, her watercolours shone in a way that nearly nobody else’s can.

She does not tolerate dilution. Eliška Bartek condenses and entangles color until it glows. She draws from the full source and confronts us with the complex intensity of her watercolors. However, anyone who thinks they see harmless landscape images in her work is misguided, because the seemingly full life in her work harbors stumbling blocks, as the cycle “Il mio piccolo paradiso”, which she painted in the Corona isolation in her house in Ticino, reveals. These pictures boast brilliant colors, but in truth numb the worry about the severe loss of freedom caused by Corona and are intended to keep the feeling of involuntary loneliness in check.

Similar emotions of powerlessness go hand in hand with the Diario di Maggia cycle. Forces of nature have always been a fascination, but also a threat to people, just like the desire of people to overcome them, either by combating them or by accepting them. Eliška Bartek chooses the latter route and hikes the valleys around the Maggia River in Ticino with her border collie, Maila, every day. What you encounter is nature in all its intensity: not rain, but downpours, not snow, but masses of snow, not gentle warmth, but heat. This sensation culminates in her painted diary sheets.

Almost aggressively painted aggregate states of air, water, earth and sun, not classicistic, impressionistic landscape paintings, but powerful outbursts by an artist who has always accepted life with all its emotions and challenges.

Bartek translates some of the watercolors on display onto canvases. Translating is the expression she consciously chose for it. She translates her motifs into another language, as she says, which gives the topic a further impulse. The canvas works can be seen in the second room of the hilleckes probst gallery.

Eliška sees abundance in everything that surrounds her, rarely lack. And if so, this is also addressed in her work with the full use of her palette. As in the currently shown watercolors, Eliška Bartek confronts the melancholy emotions by pouring her own cornucopia over them.

The hilleckes probst gallery warmly congratulates its artist. Continue to live up to your name, dear Elli! É una festa la vita!

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## ELIŠKA BARTEK

The artist lives in Ticino (Switzerland) and in Berlin. In 1972 she fled from the former Czechoslovakia to the Federal Republic of Germany, later studying at the Hochschule der Künste in Zurich. Eliška Bartek became known for her abstract painting, photograms and photography, which are concerned with the medium of painting.

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