

## **Hanne Weskott about Friederike Oeser**

### **The capture of little worlds**

A young family sits down exhausted on a park bench at the zoo. A small cheeky sparrow comes up and picks up a crumb. "Look a birdie", calls the five year old daughter.

The greater world of animals has sharpened the senses of the child, also for the little world around her.

As it still not applicable, what the Swiss author Peter Bichsel in his numerous columns establishes; The world has become smaller, because the world is not happening any longer in the small. And: we lose the world, because we lose the little worlds. When we leave children time, they discover ever more new worlds, but sadly today, mostly we hear instead - "hurry up" This restriction of the world of the child, means for the child a harsh loss, the loss of their own small world, to which belongs the putative frittering away of time, as well as the exact observations of the apparently unimportant events of every day life.

Because, who of the grown ups, still listens in all quietness to the talking in the pubs or beer-gardens, who watches the farmer in the market or the man at his desk in his little office, in which the window is open because of the heat? Children would immediately notice if the ash of the cigarette is falling down, or someone scratches his head with a pencil, but otherwise? The artists, of course, the graphic artists and painters, the poets and writers. They ensure that the small worlds are not completely lost.

One such person, who almost exclusively concentrates on these small worlds is Friederike Oeser. Her studio is exclusively a work shop, in which framing, sorting and archiving is taking place.

The real artistic work takes place outside: In Cafes, at the museum, at the airport, in the beer garden, in fact everywhere where people come together, by accident or deliberately, not to alter the big world, but rather to live their little lives. Everywhere, Friederike Oeser might appear with her sketchbook, her thick artist's chalk, the multicoloured- or plain pencils and sometimes even with a ball-pen. She sits in a corner, watches and at some point in time she begins to draw and paint, etches out her pictures and what she sees and hears. At this, it is not a detailed realistic transcript, but rather an artistic reaction, in which details of the perception appear as abbreviations: a railing, a foot, a hand, a chair. Sometimes also portraits are sketched in between, because she likes to portrait.

Individual words surface, and whole texts, numbers, dates and places.

The activity always happens on different layers, but without an illusionist space being constructed, The eye must jump back and forth and searches in vain for a Hold or for an orientation, because a pre-determined reading direction does not exist. The story, that Friederike Oeser tells in her mostly small scale drawings, does not unfold in a linear fashion, but have to be deciphered from every point of view onwards, where as a once reached result, should not be taken as absolute. For next time, already even a few minutes later, it could all look quite different. Usually she works on a series, whose cohesion exists in a geographic time bracket, which means that they have been created at the same location in one phase of

work, but still do not tell a continuing story, but many small stories or the same story many times, but in different ways.

Differing from the open air painters of the 1900s, who went into nature with an easel on their back, Friederike Oeser does not seek truthfulness. Natural or artificial light are quite indifferent to her, equally daylight and weather conditions. It does not matter to her, to reproduce what has been seen or is obvious, rather to create a picture from the experience, that is on the one hand connected to the experience, and on the other hand is completely independent from it in design.

Reality is only a kind of suggestion maker. For this reason she seeks not the world-shaking events, but the small worlds, the everyday, the unspectacular, on which she can react without great preparation.

The centre of her art is eventually herself. It is her view, her view of the world, her circle of reality, that is surrounding her like music and gives her the inspiration to transform this into art. Only thus can she reach the openness she seeks in her pictures and drawings and she can leave it to her hand and the pencils to draw story telling lines, to chose colours and create shapes. Only in this way, can there be every explanation of the paintings of Friederike Oeser, commencing from the basic elements, colour, line, area and according to contents orientated interpretations return to the basics, because the message is entirely picturesque and not as regards content. Therefore there is not one interpretation, but many interpretations. Friederike Oeser does not want to draw a picture of the world with her art, but stimulate the imagination of the observer, to animate to recognise more attentively, like children, when they are given time, the little worlds, and in that way make ever new discoveries.

**Hanne Weskott / Translation Miriam Kennet, London**