

# Ira Vinokurova

## *The River Knows*

- Die Düssel -

18.6. - 25.8.2021

The exhibition *The River Knows* shows a selection of black and white photographs by the artist Ira Vinokurova. The central motif of her photographic series is the Düssel, the small river after which the city of Düsseldorf was named in the 13th century. Etymologically, the Düssel was previously called 'Tussale', which in turn evolved into today's German term 'tosen' (eng. thundering ). While the urban space changed and grew over time, the Düssel lost its importance and usefulness. The Düssel can be seen in today's cityscape, but it is tamed in a straight riverbed and runs its course as a shallow trickle.

For Ira Vinokurova, the river's history is symbolic of the changing relationship between man and nature. Since 2016, the photographer has been dealing with the river and wants to fathom its peculiarity as a natural being. To do this, she seeks out the Düssel in hidden places that exist amid urban space yet bear witness to an untouched wilderness. The artist places the "essence" of the Düssel as a self-sufficient natural element in the context of the urban development of the city and its relationship to the Düssel.

In her finely differentiated black and white photographs, she creates a mysterious, almost magical image of the river between beauty and darkness. In addition to the river, the light as a motif represents an almost independent element of her photographs. Vinokurova takes her photographs in the deep state of sunlight during the morning and evening. Her works have a painterly feel and appear more abstract than representational concrete ?

Like Impressionism, the essence of the subject is revealed through the perception of the play of light. The artist works exclusively analogue in this series. The handprints are preceded by many studies in the darkroom until the final result. Partially she colours some of her photographs with a bronze tone. She uses the techniques to visualize the atmosphere of the place.

The exhibition at the gallery combines the classical presentation of art with digital and interactive media. Virtual reality and 360° shots of the natural environment create additional layers and expand the gallery space. In nature along the Düsseldorf River, an interactive route allows visitors to experience Ira Vinokurova's artworks. On a website, the exhibition can also be visited virtually in a decentralized way. Thus, gallery, virtual space, and natural area become an overall concept.

In ontology, a river is a flowing, non-constant matter. It is a unity of impermanent and eternal, hence a dichotomy of being and non-being.

Ira Vinokurova (\*1975 in Kaliningrad/Russia) studied in Moscow at the Film & Television Academy and then at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, where she became the master student of Thomas Ruff in 2006. A catalogue will be published to complement the exhibition. In addition, interviews and podcasts will be available on a dedicated exhibition website.

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