

Ceija Stojka: Making Visible

February 20 – June 7, 2026

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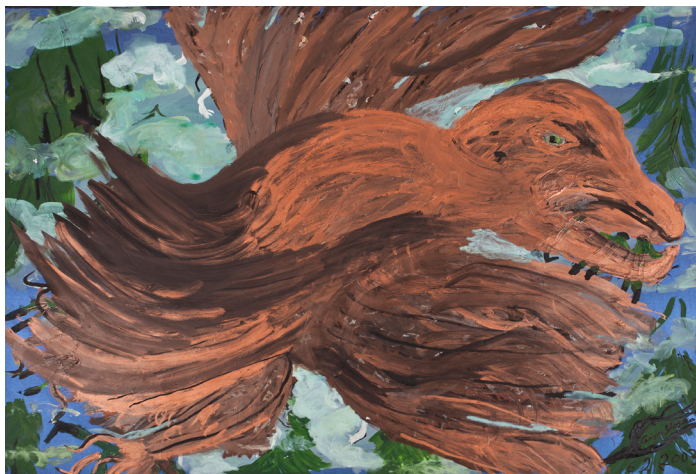
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The Drawing Center

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Free Admission

Wednesday-Sunday: 12–6pm



The Drawing Center is pleased to present an exhibition featuring the work of Roma artist, activist, writer, lyricist, and singer Ceija Stojka (1933-2013). Comprising more than sixty artworks, as well as a selection of sketchbooks, archival material, and documentary films made during Stojka's lifetime, *Ceija Stojka: Making Visible* explores the fullness of Stojka's production as a visual artist, centered in her Roma life and heritage. Spurred by the resurgence of extreme right nationalism in Austria and abroad, and by her experiences as a Holocaust survivor, Stojka created works of profound beauty and horror that resonate today in strikingly contemporary terms.

On the cusp of the 1990s, when she was in her late fifties, Stojka began making art. Over the next two decades, she produced hundreds of paintings and graphic works based on her early life experiences. Born into an itinerant family of horse traders in Austria, her traditional Roma childhood was brutally disrupted by the German invasion in 1938, after which she and her family were deported to a succession of concentration camps, including Auschwitz, Ravensbrück, and Bergen-Belsen. Though Stojka, her mother, and four of her siblings survived, the remainder of her extended family perished, together with some 500,000 Roma and Sinti.

Whether responding to those traumatic formative experiences, or to current events that ranged from racial violence and oppression to the desecration of Holocaust sites, Stojka eschewed illustrative modes and a diaristic approach. Honing her choice of subjects to key episodes and select moments, she deployed a wide range of styles and formal idioms that evolved significantly over the two decades of her practice. This exhibition traces, for the first time, the full arc of the artist's oeuvre, illuminating milestones in her stylistic development and the recurrent subjects she developed over time. Key themes include the richness of traditional community life, the reparative force of nature, and the murderous horror of tyranny and war.

Whether rendered in visionary and metaphorical terms, distilled in an emotive abstraction, or manifest as lyrical naturalism, Stojka's art is grounded in the specificities of the concrete and historical. Deeply affecting, her works attest to the power of art to bear witness in the face of destruction, chaos and autocracy.

Ceija Stojka: Making Visible is organized by Lynne Cooke with Noëlig Le Roux.

Publication

Ceija Stojka: Making Visible is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalog edited by Lynne Cooke, Senior Curator, Department of Modern and Contemporary Art, National Gallery of Art, with contributions from Dr. Ethel Brooks, Romani Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Sociology at Rutgers University, independent curator Noëlig Le Roux, and Austrian-born, New York-based visual artist Ulrike Müller.

Credits

Ceija Stojka: Making Visible is made possible by Phileas - The Austrian Office for Contemporary Art; the Robert Lehman Foundation; the Republic of Austria's Federal Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport (BMWKMS); and the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation.

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Special thanks to the Ceija Stojka International Association.

Images

Ceija Stojka, *Untitled*, 06.02.2003. Acrylic on paper, 27 1/2 × 39 3/8 inches (70.0 × 100.0 cm). Collection Marin Karmitz. Image courtesy Galerie Christophe Gaillard © 2026 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / Bildrecht, Vienna