

SARAH GRAHAM



Sarah Graham in her studio, London 2020. Photograph by Miguel Flores-Vianna.

BIOGRAPHY

Natural forms, insects and the plant world are Graham's primary source of inspiration. She works from life, using items borrowed from the Natural History Museum's extensive archives or from her personal collection of objects, often found during her travels. Graham focuses on one type of flower or insect at a time, often approaching the subject from every perspective.

Minimal, clean lines, and swathes of colour depicting larger-than-life organic forms and monumental compositions typify her work, which is often drawn over several sheets of handmade paper. Reinforcing the connection between subject and material, the inks themselves are organic compounds of plant-based dyes and iron-based mineral pigments sourced from a family of artisan colour alchemists in Basel, Switzerland. These organic inks produce livelier and more subtle tones than chemically derived colours. 'I can't paint in oils. My way of working is much more exact,' says Graham, who applies the ink with animal hair Chinese brushes onto paper placed on the floor to control the flow of the ink. 'Ink is a merciless medium. It cannot be removed. It dries in pools, and so mistakes and variations become part of the work.'

Although frequently depicting horticultural subjects, Graham's paintings are not botanical studies, but rather expansive and personal interpretation of a particular plant. Documenting nature with faithful accuracy is not the aim of her work, but instead it is to magnify it into bold artistic forms punctuated by calligraphic brush-strokes. 'Too much dedication to the original source deadens it for me', she says. 'I am looking for an expression. I see a curve or a twist or a pronunciation of some form that I've somehow got to get into my studio and enlarge'.

Graham lives and works in London and shows worldwide, with exhibitions in London, New York, Shanghai, and Aspen, Colorado.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023

Christie's, Shanghai, China, September

2022

Lyndsey Ingram, London, June – July

2021

Galerie Maximillian, Aspen, July – August

2020

Lyndsey Ingram, London, July – September

2019

Galerie Maximillian, Aspen, July – August

2018

Lyndsey Ingram, London, September – November

2016

Lyndsey Ingram, New York, November

2015

Galerie Maximillian, Aspen, July

2013

Galerie Maximillian, Aspen, July

2012

Sims Reed Gallery, London, June

2011

Galerie Maximillian, Aspen, July
The Armory Show, New York, March

2010

Sims Reed Gallery, London, June

2008

Sarah Graham Sims Reed Gallery, London, October

LYNDSLEY INGRAM