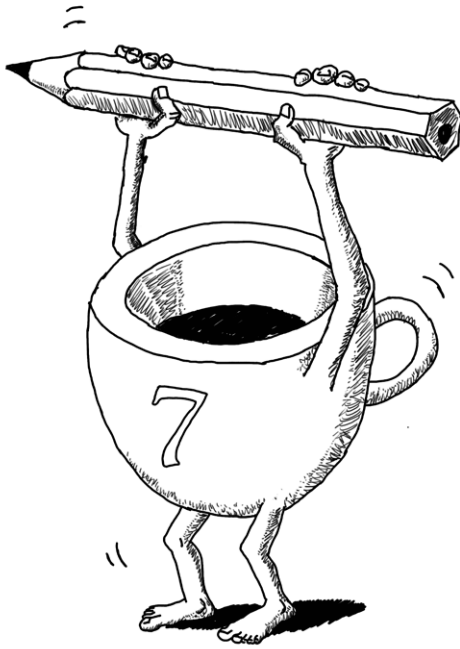


**PROJECT PROPOSAL BY STEFAN ZSAITSITS**

APPLICATION - ARTIST RESIDENCY @7ARTSCAFE



# THE DRAWING CAFE

## A PORT OF IMAGINATIONS

### PART 1: THE DRAWING CAFE

The inspiration for this project comes from the Viennese coffee house culture and the port of Yokohama. For centuries, the **Viennese coffee house** was a center of intellectual exchange, inspiration and creative encounters. Writers, artists and thinkers met there, had long conversations, sketched ideas on napkins or simply let themselves be carried away by the atmosphere. It was a place of open discussion, reflection and creation - a space where thoughts met, were discarded, condensed and developed.

The **port of Yokohama** played a similar role, not only for ideas, but also for cultures, goods and people. As one of Japan's first gateways to the world, Yokohama was a melting pot where tradition and modernity, local and foreign met.

With *THE DRAWING CAFE*, we can translate this idea into a visual dialog: Instead of written manifestos or trade goods, drawings are created here - spontaneous, non-verbal reflections of the visitors. The constantly growing collection of images reflects the lively exchange that takes place in coffee houses as well as in port cities, where cultures meet and new ideas emerge.

#### COLLECTIVE IMAGINATIONS

During my stay, the 7artscafe is transformed into *THE DRAWING CAFE*, a lively, constantly changing exhibition space, a temporary shared workplace and an exchange of ideas.

Paper and pencils are always available on the tables - alongside an information sheet with the project description - and guests and employees are invited to draw on them spontaneously. There are no thematic guidelines - just one rule: no writing or words are used. The drawings are created intuitively, as direct visual streams of thought, free from linguistic interpretation. These can range from small doodles to detailed drawings or portraits of their dogs :) Whatever someone chooses to share.

I love the simplicity of drawing - just a pencil and paper are enough to create entire worlds. And since no technical skills are needed to make at least a simple doodle, I believe this medium is perfect for the project.





The finished pictures are continually hung (with removable tape) on the walls of the café. **With each new drawing, the project grows organically and develops into a multifaceted archive of collective creativity and imagination.**

As an artist, I will also be making at least one drawing a day in the café during opening hours (see “The Workshops” below) and will thus be a visible part of the creative process. My artistic practice - which often begins with fragments, is reworked, cut up and reassembled - is reflected in this open, collaborative experiment.

To encourage guests to make small drawings themselves and become part of the project, I propose the following: **A drawing exchange** in the form of a raffle (or price draw) that will take place at the end of the month. Every drawing submitted will automatically be entered.

The prizes will be the artworks that I have made during my stay at the café. It would furthermore be great if we could encourage local artists to also donate small drawings or sketches and become part of the project.

In this way, the idea of *A PORT OF IMAGINATIONS* will remain alive in the community beyond the project. After the drawings have been taken down, the café will visually return to its original state, but *THE DRAWING CAFE* created will remain through the artworks sponsored by the participating artists as fragments - in the hands, thoughts and maybe homes of those who took part.

## **THE WORKSHOPS**

The workshops will also break away from traditional models. Instead of a firmly structured course, I will sit at a table for one to two hours or more (depending on the practicality and in consultation with the owner of the café) during opening hours and simply draw.

This is not meant to be a secluded area - on the contrary: **guests are always welcome to sit down,**



**draw along** or ask questions about the project or my work. It's a kind of experiment with the aim of encouraging them to follow their own imagination and creativity - without pressure or guidelines.

Ideally, **local artists could also become part of this open studio**. They would sit at the table with me and enter into a drawing dialog with the guests.

Thematic focuses could be created by inviting manga artists, for example, to share their techniques and tips. This could appeal to younger visitors in particular and attract them as new guests. Or experts in the traditional sumi-e technique could be involved to reach other interested parties. Or...

To reach as many people as possible, *THE DRAWING CAFE* as well as the open drawing sessions would be announced and advertised both in the café through posters or flyers and via social media.

## **PART 2: FINDING BRIDGES**

I have long been captivated by Japan - its traditions of minimalism, precision, and introspection have deeply impressed me for a long time. (Like the aesthetic philosophy of wabi-sabi, with its embrace of imperfection - for example)

And so the residency at 7artscafe offers a unique opportunity to immerse myself in a culture that values both traditional and contemporary artistic expression. Exploring museums, galleries, and the local art scene, as well as engaging with traditional craftsmanship, will be an invaluable experience.

Besides working on *THE DRAWING CAFE* i will be reflecting on my impressions and aim to create experimental drawings. They should explore the intersection of familiar (European) and foreign (Japanese) influences in both content and technique while examining how personal cultural perspectives shape the interpretation of another culture.

**Themes:** I am fascinated by the ways diverse cultures interconnect through their narratives and myths. Therefore, I intend to delve into Japanese narratives and **explore potential parallels with European - and, more specifically, Austrian - storytelling traditions, focusing on their absurd and surreal dimensions**. I believe that engaging with any culture, whether foreign or familiar, requires an understanding of its ancient and modern myths and the self-perceptions they inspire. The notion that myths are outdated simply does not hold up under closer scrutiny.

**Technique:** A key focus during my residency will be **experimenting with the interplay of ink and graphite within a single composition, exploring their contrasts and harmonies**. Studying Washi paper and Sumi ink - through museum collections or workshops - will be essential. I am particularly eager to discover whether - and how - I can integrate brushwork into my drawings.

With only four weeks, I am fully aware of the time constraints, but I am committed to making the most of every moment. Beyond the proposed work projects, this residency offers me a platform for cultural exchange - an enrichment for my practice and an inspiration for my future artistic development.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION & LET'S DRAW BRIDGES TOGETHER!**