

The Tree, Living Knowledge

Samuel Rama



Samuel Rama, *Raft #1*, 2025, ink on paper,



Samuel Rama, *Raft #2*, 2025, ink on paper,



Samuel Rama, *Raft #3*, 2025, ink on paper,

Technical Sheet

- **Author:** Samuel Rama
- **Title:** Raft #1; Raft #2; Raft #3
- **Year:** 2025
- **Media:** Drawing on cotton paper

Pressure, Temperature and Gratitude

A series of drawings that take their cue from the calligraphic rhythm of drawing, which is the twin of writing and of thinking. Detailed drawing or writing that seeks to distil the search for the idea of the tree, of each individual tree. Many trees, the forest, the symptom of loss, but simultaneously the urge to plant that the drawing seeks to follow, perhaps guided by the words of Jean Giono, or by childhood memories of accompanying my grandfather, a carpenter by trade, as he tended to be planting his woods, the man who planted trees. Uncovering the essence of nature!

The drawings are always made from the centre outwards; there is no hierarchy or defined sequence. Each tree, as it falls onto the support, erases the one before it, fossilises the space, becomes eternal like a rock and dissolves like a body or fire. What each drawing is, results from cycles of configuration and deformation, inscription and erasure.

The attention to detail is so obsessive that, whilst working, the direction of the drawing's movement has as its magnetic centre the tiniest particle of sepia dust, charcoal or graphite.

In this degree of movement of the material imagination, in the pursuit of the drawing, light is of great interest. If I have a surface heavily marked by successive lines, the more I mark it, the less the original white of the sheet of paper remains visible, and thus the more this sense of penetrability is enlivened by light as density.

I am inspired by the atmospheric density found in Andrei Tarkovsky's films, and by the legacy of the many drawings from the 15th, 17th and 18th centuries, which I have seen in museum collections.

I often observe certain 17th-century Dutch engravings closely and at length, trying to guess the impulsive, rapid gestures with which they were usually made, using a very fine nib, gliding over a metal plate previously coated with smoked wax.

These drawings are smudges, they are vertical landscapes, perhaps imbued with the idea of the 'world landscape' pioneered by Joachim Patinir or Pieter Bruegel the Elder. They are a search for temporality.

Perhaps they seek the impossible; the drawing of the tree in landscape compositions has always served to push the space into the background. But to draw, in a calligraphic and obsessive succession, every possible tree—those evoked, those seen, those invented, those that are now mere gesture. A conflict arises in the drawing between surface and depth.

Is this a way of giving form to the connection between the outer and inner worlds? The interior of the body may be a twin of the branches of the outer world, a place one can enter through the imagination burning with desire. The macro and the micro.

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