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BROOKLYN RAIL
CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ARTS, POLITICS, AND CULTURE

JORINDE VOIGT: *Integral*

Jessica Holmes | June 5, 2018



Installation view, Jorinde Voigt: *Integral*, David Nolan, New York, 2018. © Jorinde Voigt. Courtesy the artist and David Nolan Gallery, New York.

Berlin-based artist Jorinde Voigt is recognized for the luminosity of her cerebral, abstract drawings, which feature mathematical equations and annotations that explore her hermetic belief systems. *Song of the Earth* (2017), Voigt's previous show at David Nolan Gallery, linked the musical with the terrestrial. In that exhibition, her drawn calculations encircled shapes of muted color in a series of drawings that were meant to be hung together, the parts making up a whole that evoked a topographical map of an imaginary land. During that show, a musical duet transposed Voigt's mathematics into a score, which it performed in the gallery. In *Integral*, the conclusions she draws are of a decidedly more physical nature. The form of a torus—a wide, ring shape similar to a life preserver—is a repeating motif throughout many of the works on view and a shape that suggests infinity. The forms are more bulbous and rounded and feel more submarine or viscous rather than earthbound. Voigt intends to illuminate linkages between the internal and external, the real and the perceived.

Eight small bronze sculptures titled *Integral Series* (2018), made in the shape of polyhedrons, are installed in an upstairs alcove. Beginning with a four-faced polyhedron, each successive bronze contains an additional face to the one previous in the series. As polygons they resemble cut diamonds, suggesting we have stumbled upon a hidden cove of jewels. The warmth of the burnished bronze tempts the viewer but, of course, one must resist touching them. The reflective surfaces of the sculptures' faces find a viewer bobbing around them in an effort to see (or unsee) their own reflections. But even without actually caressing the sculptures, each evokes the lure of tactility, even of corporality. The creamy metal almost seems lit from within by animistic spirit.

In the remaining downstairs rooms of the gallery hang a recent series of drawings in ink and pastel collectively titled *Immersion* (2018). The eye is drawn to the sumptuous, which is highlighted by embellishments of gold leaf. Their gleam is reminiscent of the burnished bronzes upstairs, but on their own, the drawings suggest something more roiling or molten: subterranean environments like a dark ocean floor or the cavity of an active volcano.



Jorinde Voigt, *Immersion VI (3)*, 2018. Ink, India ink, aluminium leaf, pastels, oil chalks, pencil on paper

The drawing *Immersive Integral IV* is representative of this series of drawings. A buoyant torus hovers upon the page, in a cerulean wash of blue that suggests liminality. Below it churns a swathe of deep black ink, highlighted by gold leaf, glints which evoke ocean waves. Elsewhere, *Immersion II (5)*, with its distinct magenta and gold leaf palette, provides a link between Voigt's abstract shapes and the human form. The deformed torus of this drawing suggests a body part, or perhaps an internal organ, floating in a haze of magenta that might be representative of lifeblood. Again, a thick application of gold leaf runs along the bottom third of the paper.

Some viewers may find the connections between the objects, the drawings and Voigt's own beliefs, excessively esoteric. The computations Voigt sketches that correspond to her personal convictions do not necessarily translate easily to those unfamiliar with her work or her hermetic philosophies. While these parallels need not be blunt or even obvious, without a better sense of what her beliefs signify, looking at the work feels like scrutinizing a jigsaw puzzle with several pieces missing, which by itself is a weighty enterprise.