

IMMATERIAL PHENOMENA

Jorinde Voigt mines complexity and velocity of her environment through abstract configurations.

INTERVIEW BY DAVID NOLAN



Jorinde Voigt. Photograph by Amanda Holmes.



Jorinde Voigt, *Potential I*, 2020, India ink, gold leaf, pastel, oil pastel, and graphite on paper in artist's frame, 55.12 x 82.25 in., framed: 59.37 x 87 x 3.75 in. © Jorinde Voigt. Courtesy of the artist and David Nolan Gallery.

Jorinde Voigt (b. 1977) is a German artist who lives and works in Berlin. She has exhibited extensively all over the world and has had many museum presentations in America. Most recently, she was commissioned to create murals for the Menil Drawing Institute in Houston in 2019, and then for *Soundwaves: Experimental Strategies in Art + Music* at the Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University, Houston, in 2022.

Since her earliest years, through the medium of drawing, Voigt has devised a complex and highly developed system of articulating immaterial phenomena as visually engaging compositions. Suggesting the appearance of scientific diagrams or musical scores, these seemingly abstract arrangements encompass a very precise range of references.

Voigt's intuitive and expressive works evolve from rigorous meditative and observational processes that seek to capture the complexity and velocity of her environment through abstract configurations and systems that depict the intersection of one's inner world, emotions, and memory with external conditions. Constantly engaging questions of perception, sensation, and presence, the artist has progressively expanded her expression beyond the medium of drawing to experiment with painterly elements, collage, design, and music.

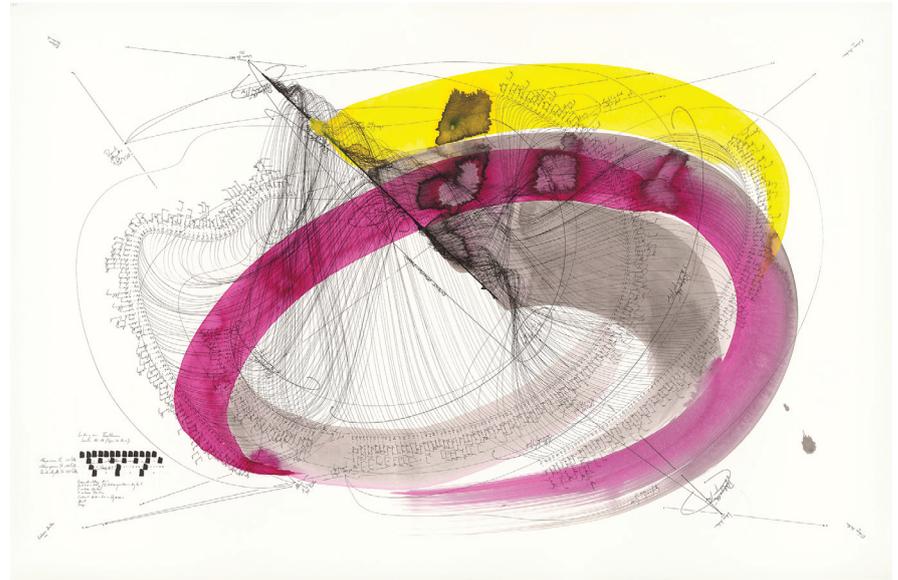
At present, Voigt has an exhibition of new sculptures and drawings at David Nolan Gallery in New York. She was recently interviewed about her relationship to Texas; her new works, which will be shown at Dallas Art Fair; and her vision.

David Nolan (DN): *Jorinde, you have been to Texas several times and traveled around the state. What struck you as particularly interesting? The landscape, architecture, the culture?*

Jorinde Voigt (JV): A vertical connection to the moon has historically passed through Houston, and communication with the International Space Station has continued from here to this day. At the same time, drilling is being carried out all around Texas under the earth's surface towards its interior, and oil and water are being extracted from underground. Horizontally, you can see enormous road networks that connect Houston to the wider world: refineries, substations, pipelines, highways that go straight for hours, skunks that have been run over, crocodiles, and herons along the road. A breathtaking natural vastness, magical mangrove forests, and fantastic museums in Texas. Men and women in cowboy boots everywhere.

DN: *Your work has been informed by your having played the cello and the piano, as well as having studied in science. I often wonder if the discipline of playing the cello influence the linear fluidity and energy of your drawing. Your father and grandfather were physicists, your mother an artist, and your interest in nature and natural phenomena seem to have influenced your notational and labeling of events such as movements of clouds or birds in flight, and human motion in time and space. You also have been inspired by surrounding nature in your use of color and form. Can you explain the decision-making in what the colored lines suggest, particularly the red and white lines?*

JV: The red and white lines in recent drawings such as *Potential* are a performative imprint, a gestural notation, each from maximally delicate to maximally intense and back to the ephemeral. Drawing the lines is like a breath, a pulse, a rhythm... a rhythmic movement. On one hand, white on blue provides maximum contrasts, while red on blue is a kind of flickering because they have the same hue. Perhaps it is best read musically, as an expression, a communication about a specific simultaneity of delicacy and clarity, vibration and standing directness. Together the lines form a kind of flying structure, a high-level movement, like a swarm. It's interesting how the detail of each movement translates into a single swarm of energy. The drawing makes this possible at the point that you can look at time from a different perspective.



From left: Jorinde Voigt, *Immersion IV (7)*, 2018, ink, India ink, copper leaf, pastel, oil pastel, pencil on paper, 40.12 x 26 in, framed 44.87 x 29.12 x 3.50 in. © Jorinde Voigt. Courtesy of the artist and Sicardi Ayers Bacino; Jorinde Voigt, *Ludwig van Beethoven /Sonate Nr. 16 (Opus 31, Nr. 1), #6*, 2012, lithography with graphite and ink, 31.87 x 49.37 in. © Jorinde Voigt. Courtesy of the artist and David Nolan.

DN: *The celestial exploration of the heavens is suggested by the recent work, where sheets of paper were dipped in huge vats of ink, with the natural effect the water has on the paper as you lift the paper out of the colored water. You then draw over the colored sheets with crayon and the donut-like forms are very three-dimensional. Are these forms of a specific object or from your imagination?*

JV: For me, the donut shape is an archetype: a shape that has a multitude of formulations in the world. Topographically, it is particularly interesting because the inside is simultaneously the outside that seamlessly merge into each other. I see it as a model for our perception: We take external influences into us and translate them seamlessly into chemical, electrical, psychological processes (which change us at the same time) in ourselves. The perception

takes place in our body, and we constantly give impulses into our environment, caused by gravity in the form of contact acoustically, chemically, technically, biologically, through movement. We take in the environment through food, through breathing. We cannot be thought of separately from the environment. The earth's magnetic field has the shape of a donut, and possibly galaxies. Among other things, the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan also drew. To illustrate his investigations into desire, he chose the form of interlocking rings. A hole always has a great attraction; something always wants to be in the middle.

I look forward to my exhibition in Texas later this year with Sicardi Ayers Bacino gallery in Houston. **P**



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