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ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICK - JUNE 2014

By Anne Prentnieks

In his monumental book, *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy*, the social theorist Niklas Luhmann explored the cultural fusion of intimacy and matrimony, analyzing economic and political influences on love's changing role in society. Jorinde Voigt's airy, diagrammatic drawings are a reflection on Luhmann's writing: Playful and associative, they are a poststructuralist response to his structuralist text, interpretatively assigning a set of visualized systems to codify Voigt's own experience studying Luhmann's book. In doing so, Voigt's works seem to reference an ebullient jumble of science metaphors: Using iotas of text—specific phrases and graphemes that resonate with her on an intuitive level—she builds pictorial information chains, which she in turn compounds into matrices. The result is a series of vast, graceful images that embody nuanced conversations between the components.

Voigt is known for her lyrical sensibility as well as her calibrated approach to creating artwork. She is a classically trained musician from a family of scientists. If in past series, her imagery has specifically conjured graph-like linear systems—based on such exact references as musical scores, sound waves, linguistic structures, and mathematical algorithms—then these new drawings, inspired by Luhmann's nonlinear writing, evoke a more biological take, as they track the evolution from one literary moment to the next. Voigt collages metallic leaf in varying tones alongside swaths of marigold, coral, and azure to create unusual floating forms with an illustrative impishness; the resulting pictures resemble space-age landscapes occupied by mercurial creatures. Her works are innately didactic: She carefully structures the bulbous shapes, framing each with a draftsman's delicate, curved lines and handwritten text annotations. Ultimately, her drawings function as cognitive maps, as meaning multiplies from passages of text and grows into webs of association. As Voigt regards Luhmann's discourse on societal structures enabling love, her drawings delineate her own way of reconciling information through whimsical interpretation, shaping an elegant visual reality from the tangles of language.