

Hanna Roeckle

Sculptural works from 2014–2015 Aquarius, Gemini

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Hanna Roeckle is taking part (along with Andreas Marti and Bernhard Voita) in an exhibition in the museum Haus für Kunst in Altdorf/Uri (Switzerland). The title given to the exhibition by curator Barbara Zürcher references Melencolia, Albrecht Dürer's celebrated engraving from the year 1514. The winged figure engaged in reflection in the foreground of this engraving, with its highly complex and to some extent unfathomable iconography, has been perceived as personifying inspired artistic melancholy (in the sense of a brooding genius). The numerous symbols in the engraving that can be interpreted as metaphors for the liberal arts include a polyhedron in the middle ground; in Renaissance art, polyhedrons were understood as emblematic for the link between art and science.

As such, it is only logical, and entirely consistent with her previous work, that Hanna Roeckle has been drawn to this motif and has spontaneously taken it up. It is precisely this connection between science and the arts which has long stirred and excited the artist and forms a thread running through her work. This cannot be discerned at first sight by viewers of the artist's works, but it is evident in, for example, the creative inspiration she has drawn from engaging with deep sea research, with the colour spectrum of minerals, and with the fascination of Mandelbrot sets and fractals.

While the geometric solid in Dürer's work serves as a model, the polyhedron developed by Hanna Roeckle in the run-up to the exhibition in Altdorf is, in its proportions, strictly in keeping with the modular dimensions (43 x 33 cm) of her entire oeuvre: the upper horizontal vertex of the polyhedron is 43 centimetres long. The distance from this edge to the centre of the truncated rhombus is 33 centimetres, and the remaining dimensions of the figure result from these dimensions and their subdivisions (into triangles and rectangles). The work Aquarius (125 x 99 x 99 cm) thus captivates viewers with its elegant proportions while simultaneously also sitting harmoniously alongside Hanna Roeckle's remaining oeuvre. Viewers will realize this – consciously or at the level of the subconscious – as soon they are afforded the opportunity to regard the sculpture in its interplay with wall reliefs.

In Autumn 2014, the large Aquarius will form part of the exhibition Enlightened in the Galerie am Lindenplatz. Along with the works of François Morellet, Keith Sonnier and Christian Herdeg, this is the sole work that plays indirectly with light effects. Its finish in dichroic car lacquer changes colour according to the angle it is viewed from and reveals almost all the colours of the spectrum as viewers walk around the sculpture. As such, this work is completely true to the aspiration formulated by Morellet and Sonnier that works that play with light should engage viewers in an intimate dialogue.

Further editions of polyhedrons in a range of sizes, colours and finishes have been emerging in continued homage to the fascination of this solid. The works Gemini Green, Gemini Red and White Pearl play, just like Aquarius, with the refraction of light: viewers witness a fine display of shifting colours as they shift their own vantage points. Hanna Roeckle has since continued to develop this group of works further by probing the possibilities of these geometric solids at all levels – again while staying true to her own artistic practice. The principal roles in these dramatic compositions are occupied by the horizontal and vertical planes and by surfaces, lines and volumes. As such, the works invariably also reference the space, the surrounding architecture and the human form inscribed on this system of coordinates. In this way, the most recent works to emerge, columns which have, again, been produced in a range of sizes and colours, are formed from a stack of polyhedrons resting on their sides that can be imagined as extending vertically towards infinity.