

Text by Peter Lodermeier

Graphein. Jorinde Voigt

Jorinde Voigt's works are located in a border area between drawing and writing that is difficult to define terminologically. This terrain is characterised by an oscillation of the graphic elements between transparency in the context of a legible interpretation and opacity as simple graphics. The Greek verb *graphein* continued to name this ambiguity: it means *both* the activity of writing and that of drawing, and at the same time it includes their pre- and interim-stages like scribbling, scoring etc. In the case of Jorinde Voigt, the attribution of genre differs according to whether one regards her work from the point of view of the aesthetics of production or those of reception. Asked whether she is pursuing any aesthetic ideas of any kind with her work, Voigt answers unequivocally: "None. It is just writing."¹ "Scores", "concepts" or "notations" represent good approaches to a suitable terminology, for naturally Voigt's works are not texts to be read in a linear way, but extremely differentiated diagrams produced according to specific rules of order.

From the point of view of reception, however, access to these works will usually occur via their aesthetic characteristics: initially, their fascination is conveyed via their rhythmic qualities, via the bold, sometimes turbulently set patterns of lines, via the distribution of empty areas and zones of graphic concentration; in short, first one perceives these works as abstract *drawings*. It is only in a second step of reception that an attempt will be made to go deeper into their systematics, to follow the legible words and numbers and their distribution on the sheets of paper and understand the rules behind the creation of form according to which they are designed. In principle, Jorinde Voigt attaches importance to the disclosure her method, to making sure that the algorithms of her works are comprehensible, and she does not attempt to practise any form of mystification.

In an earlier text, I maintained that "There is much that is naturally descriptive in these works, however abstracted that may be." We also view natural forms (let's say: the branching structure of a tree or the pattern of movement of a flock of birds in flight) from aesthetic standpoints initially – knowing very well that these forms are never arbitrary, but are subject to strict rules of formal creation, which we can only follow with considerable effort and usually only after acquiring specialist knowledge. Equally, most viewers of Jorinde Voigt's works will read them in an under-coded fashion, i.e., without completely following their formalisations. In principle, a failure to read them causes no detriment to the pleasure of reception, indeed quite the contrary – it represents a heightening of pleasure.

Voigt's works open to the viewer spheres of imagination which, dependent on the degree of intellectual penetration, are more or less clearly pre-structured. The choice of the elements that the artist uses and combines certainly appears arbitrary. Eagles, pop songs, electric current, temperature patterns, kisses, wind directions, arcs of light, acoustic impulses, and finally: the state. This obviously

¹ All quotations by Jorinde Voigt originate from e-mail correspondence with P.L. dated 21.11.2007.

non-systematic selection of elements of our cultural environment signifies a rigorous reduction of the over-complexity of our world of experience. Their combination is not measured against empirical reality (even though some of Voigt's concepts are certainly related to what happens in real spaces and can thus function as scores for performances, actions or acoustic installations) – the mere fact *that* we think of the different elements in conjunction grants the status of reality to their combination within our imagination. Being-able-to-relate even the most disparate elements is what constitutes the human being's "basic imaginative ability".

In Jorinde Voigt's works, the formal processing of fragments of reality usually comes about by means of measurable parameters: place, time, strengths of current, durations of time, volumes etc. This links them to scientific diagrams. But they differ fundamentally from such diagrams due to the status of their recognition value. Whereas in scientific discourse it is a matter of the discovery of laws or regularities, Jorinde Voigt's works are concerned with the discovery of *forms*, with the visualisation of thought processes. As the artist herself says, such procedures as declination, inclusion in time loops, increase according to the dimension of a mathematical series of numbers (e. g. Fibonacci sequence) etc. aid the discovery of entirely new forms for familiar realities of experience via "extremely absurd moments". Another difference to scientific drawings is the hand-written character of these folios by Jorinde Voigt. If one imagines her works in a standardised script, e.g. as digitally produced diagrams – the result would be completely different. There is an expressed physical aspect in these works – they are obviously the result of a protracted process of writing/drawing, decisively determined by rhythm and repetition; they are thought and imagination set into motion – that is, spatialised and temporalised.

In this way, the works simultaneously create quasi narrative fields, in which the power of imagination is able to operate. We know from textual semiotics that even a single word, as a seed, is always surrounded by a field of connotation and thus capable of creating virtual texts, i.e. it is by virtue of its "actual structure, a *narrative programme*".² Thus, the title STATE - in connection with the highly complex network of structural sequences in the 11 vertical-rectangular, large-format works – also frees virtual texts of the imagination, in which understandings of the state system (whether they are organisational, whether they are mechanistic) with all their positive or negative connotations can be activated. Ultimately, the extent to which one either confirms or rejects such backgrounds of interpretation is decided during our own individual voyages of discovery as we see and read these works.

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² Umberto Eco, *Lector in fabula. Die Mitarbeit der Interpretation in erzählenden Texten*, Munich 1990, p. 21 (with reference to the textual semiotics of Algirdas J. Greimas).