

Space Walk

According to recent reports, NASA's Voyager 1 spacecraft, launched in 1977, has become the first probe to ever exit the solar system and is still hurtling away at a speed of 38,000 miles per hour some 11.7 billion miles from Earth. For Ati Maier, that's the kind of news that provokes a frisson of excitement, and it's not hard to imagine that, given the opportunity, this New York-based, German-born artist would not mind being a passenger on that endlessly roving emissary from humanity's home, sharing its discoveries in the infinite expanses of the unknown.

"I've long been very interested in outer space," says Maier, a maker of paintings, drawings and videos. "I see my recent work as a reflection of my exploration of inner space, too." Packed with overlapping, web-like thicket of pulsating lines, roller coaster ribbons of color and spinning wheels of vibrant hues, Maier's paintings—which she makes with ink, acrylic and woodstain on paper, often using an airbrush—bring to mind various points of reference. Among them, she notes, are



"constellations of stars, the palettes of the expressionist Blue Rider group—artists like Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc—and outer-space phenomena like black holes and comets."

In several of the pictures Maier showed at her recent solo exhibition at Pierogi, in Brooklyn, she incorporated a line-drawing tracing of the path of astronaut Neil Armstrong's first-ever-for-a-human walk on the

Moon in 1969. That loopy path also figured subtly in "The Map Is Not the Territory," a futuristic-looking video Maier presented in conjunction with her paintings, in which the artist, an experienced equestrian and dressage trainer, appears in the saddle; in the video, both rider and her horse wear globular space helmets as they meander through the landscapes of two far-away planets.

Of her labor-intensive paintings, whose compositions organically unfold without advance planning, Maier says, "When I start a new work, I never know what the results will be. I suppose I'm creating abstract landscapes, in which I make visible what is not visible—the ever-present waves of energy that are all around us."

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