



Thomas Brummett, *Infinites #22 (For Riley)*, 2016, 100% rag paper printed with 100 year archival pigment, 91,5 x 117 cm, © Thomas Brummett / Courtesy of Galerie Karsten Greve Köln Paris St. Moritz

Thomas Brummett: Seeking the Infinite

April 15 to July 9, 2023

Opening: April 14, 2023, 7–9 pm

The work of the US American Thomas Brummett (*1955 in Colorado) is like a spiritual quest. Brummett uses photography to question how natural science, and physics in particular, can shed light on the true nature of the world. He searches for visual manifestations that reveal nature's complex systems. The central element of his series *Light Projections* und *Infinites* shown in the Alfred Ehrhardt Stiftung is the visual investigation into multiple infinite systems he has explored.

According to Brummett light, as the basis of all life and energy, represents »the essence of nature in its purest form«. At the same time, light is also the essence of photography. Brummett's images from the series *Light Projections* are literally light images, which the artist perceives as a »perfect visual symbol of the infinite«. With a camera-less and film-less process he uses so-called circles of confusion (which a lens produces) projected onto light sensitive photography paper through a lens as a representational, (physical) image of light. As a trained ceramist with a profound knowledge of chemical interactions, he subjects the photographs to a special »entropic« darkroom process in which the order of the silver atoms of the light-sensitive paper is dissolved and then redeveloped (along with a technique called solarization, invented by Man Ray and others). This darkroom process the artist invented is a form of entropy as the silver particles in the photographs are being physically changed and slowly destroyed. This idea is for example used in the paintings

of Anselm Kiefer where the artist forces his work to quickly age and breakdown in baths of chemicals and electric current. For Thomas Brummett »entropy is as constant as gravity in our world. To my knowledge the *Light Projections* are unique to the history of photography. They are not photograms as no objects were placed on the surface of the paper. Just light manipulated by the properties of lens optics«.

For his series *Infinities*, he uses the *Light Projections* as the structure for the images which are divided between the celestial and the earthbound. In the celestial based pictures he uses the Hubble Telescope images of deep space which give a retrospective view of time from the light of star systems millions of years old, so old that quite a few are already extinct. He then overlays these images of the universe with other motifs he has photographed from nature such as magnolias, snowflakes or mold grown in his studio.

Spiritually open-minded and after extensive travels in Asia drawn to Far Eastern Taoism and Buddhist art, Brummett wants to make the world comprehensible as a magical universe through the process of close observation. His contemplative preoccupation with the phenomena of nature, combined with a photographic and darkroom technique that has been highly developed over many years, serves to visualize a vital cosmos that defines us. The macrocosm is mirrored in the microcosm of photographic paper.

»My photography process is an act of meditation through deep and extended attention and has evolved over time into capturing or rendering different Infinite Systems that exist right in front of us. I am trying to understand and present the world in its totality. If only we had the means to observe the world as it truly exists, think of how differently we would treat each other and our planet«.

Vita: Thomas Brummett was born in Colorado/USA in 1955. After studying ceramics and photography at Colorado State University (BFA, 1979) and Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan (MFA, 1982), he settled as a photographer in Philadelphia. From 1985 to 2015 he was a part time professor for University of Pittsburgh, University of Arts and Temple University in Philadelphia. Raised in an Episcopal Christian family, he was drawn to Far Eastern Taoism and Buddhist art during travels to India and Asia as a young adult. His work is regularly exhibited internationally and features in many prestigious private and public collections worldwide, including the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston and the Philadelphia Museum of Arts. Among numerous awards for his work, he has received the International Photography Award (2004, 2009, and 2012) and the Sony World Photography Award (2014). He lives and works in Philadelphia/USA.

On the occasion of the exhibition is published the brochure *Thomas Brummett: Seeking the Infinite*, with a text by Christiane Stahl, (Dt./Engl.), 30 pages, ca. 20 ill., 2023, 7,- €.

Accompanying events:

Saturday, April 16, 4 pm: Guided tour with Thomas Brummett und Dr. Christiane Stahl, Director Alfred Ehrhardt Stiftung

Wednesday, 28 June 2023, 7 p.m.: Christian Klant, photographer: »On the trail of Gustave Le Gray's seascapes«, lecture with originals taken from collodion glass plates

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