

HAW/CONTEMPORARY

Anne Lindberg and Anthony Baab's enigmatic systems at Haw Contemporary are perfect companions

Dana Self, Kansas City Star, May 7, 2014

Darkness and light coexist in the work of Anne Lindberg and Anthony Baab.

Lindberg's drawing with thread and graphite on paper explores the physical and metaphysical nature of being, while Baab's brooding marker-on-inkjet prints seem to excavate the dark, mysterious and unfamiliar places we can be drawn to.

Lindberg continually expands the notions of drawing and of physical reality. "Drawn Above" is a bundle of shimmering threads that bridges the gallery's expanse. The threads shiver and seem to alter the gallery air. Situated below them, "Drawn Below" is a monumental graphite drawing on cotton board. Spanning almost the length of the gallery, the work is stolid and centers the effervescence of "Drawn Above." The dark graphite lines vary from dark to light across the expanse.



Lindberg's gift is her ability to intuitively feel her way through space. Her drawings are delicate, yet telegraph the gravitas of the human hand and the consciousness that controls that hand.

Repetitious parallel lines suggest bodily rhythms: We breathe in and out, blink, move and swallow unconsciously thousands of times a day. Lindberg's meditative works illuminate the simplicity of the beautiful but quotidian functions of our bodies.

While artists and galleries often make exaggerated claims about how a work can transform the space in

which it lives, Lindberg has, indeed, created a transformative piece that seems to charge the air with an enchanted lightness.

Baab's multiple drawings on inkjet prints suggest mathematical, topographical and otherwise mysterious systems of image-making. In his artist's statement he notes, "My aim in these works was to create a living, moving image. I began with a photograph of a folded sheet of glossy paper that was printed, re-folded and re-photographed many times. The process later required drawing to further animate the graphic content of the photograph."

The show's title, "Ummagumma," refers to the 1969 Pink Floyd album's content and to its cover art. Baab's technique of rephotographing a single image in one picture multiple times borrows from the Droste effect — a picture within a picture, which summons mathematical theories and imagery, such as

the fractals that Baab exploits to excellent effect.



In "Untitled (Theresa)," the imagery suggests an aerial view of a dark landscape that Baab has embellished with purple, green and copper-colored marks. The work is unsettling, inscrutable and obsessively dense. In "Untitled (Varg)," what looks like an alien cube or doorway covered by pictographic marks sits heavily on an actively drawn ground. It, too, feels obscure, confusing, a little threatening and beguilingly seductive.

We are drawn to these dark spaces and structures. And while they may feel hidden and impenetrable, their repetitive nature is psychologically soothing as our subconscious seeks out rhythms, patterns and systems.

Baab notes the influence of "sci-fi and fantasy art from the '70s and M.C. Escher's morphing landscapes" in the three tidy stipple drawings he shows, but those parameters

apply to all of these works, which often feel like portals to an infinite space.

Baab's two dye-infused aluminum monolithic sculptures evoke the structural imagery found in the prints, although they are less menacing and, counterintuitively, are more static than the flat drawings.

Lindberg and Baab's enigmatic systems are perfect companions. The works are mutually seductive but also remain discrete in their dense and layered ideologies. Their mystery and undiscovered territory suggest that there will always be more.