

Laetitia Soulier: Fractal Architectures

February 25 - April 9, 2016

At first look, the viewer may feel they have fallen into a Lewis Carroll novel; Laetitia Soulier's works of art offer up a world where fantasy and reality intertwine not only to defy common logic, but also to expose the constant fluctuation in human perceptions. Upon closer examination, we see we have been invited into the artist's fastidious architectural world, a wondrous place of never-ending fractal recurrence. Incorporating her signature large format photographs, handmade wall paper, sculptural dioramas, live topiaries and mechanical vignettes, Soulier's first solo exhibition gives the viewer more than a little peak into the artist's studio practice.

Conceiving her hyper-realistic sculptures for the unique point of view of the camera, Soulier's "sets" are built for the monocular perspective of the lens. For every photograph she takes, a new "stage" is created. Each small book, basket or hat box is constructed by the artist; 3D modeling is never used in creating any part of her work. From concept to construction to the final printing of the photograph, the process can take up to a year's time, depending on the complexity of the particular piece. The architecture of Soulier's spaces is at once vast and claustrophobic; each room not only offers a glimpse of its recurrence elsewhere, but is also endlessly divisible into its component parts. The viewer senses that the only limits to the system are those imposed by his or her own field of vision.

The artist's inspiration begins with the geometry of a wallpaper design and the structure of the "set" sculpture then follows that fractal logic; Soulier weaves together microcosm and macrocosm all the while keeping in mind there will be a human interaction confined within the sculpture. Creating nested spaces in which the viewer can glimpse a foot, an eye or a face, Soulier uses adolescents to reinforce the multiple scales and meanings incorporated within the work. Stories unfold within these fractal architectures, which are at once the subject's toy, home, imagined childhood and promised adulthood; this world is the space between their past and their future.

Within Soulier's work we see mathematical perfection. Using interplay between scales of 1/6 and 1/12, the artist creates a false perspective. We question our own sense of scale; we are voyeurs to the world behind the production of the photographs and Soulier's deeper interest: the subjective experience of reality. "In Fractal Architectures, Soulier's remarkable craftsmanship, exacting eye, and attention to the theoretical concerns in her work have combined to produce a truly provocative multimedia experience" writes Allison Grant, Assistant Curator at the Museum of Photography in Chicago.



The Matryoshka Dolls 3 (Detail)
C-print, 40x80 inches
From The Fractal Architectures series



The Square Roots 2
C-print, 40x80 inches
From The Fractal Architectures series

"Unlike sculptures, which you can explore from various angles, I attempt to allow the viewer to enter the one dimensional world of photographs. My research in fractals to model structure naturally translated as sculptures and installations," says Soulier. "While the photographs offer a constructed and layered time frame within one image, the installations allow the viewers to encounter multiple viewpoints, and to explore my photographic process in a more immersive experience."