

Ingrid Gaier – Grids and Lines, Two Examples

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A grid's geometric structure is an instrument to change forms in proportion to the original. Not only has this aid been used for centuries to enlarge drawings to scale, it also serves as a cutting pattern in sewing. Etymologically, the German word for grid, "Raster," in its current usage goes back to the same Latin word, which means "rake" or "multipronged hoe." Conversely, the French "trame" (grid) derives from the Latin "trama," connoting the warp and weft of weaving.

Unpinned from visual motifs, references to textiles and the cultural techniques they involve are hard to deny as coherent factors of Ingrid Gaier's work. The artist herself speaks of "layers of lines put on top of each other" that appear as a "continuous textile tissue."

In her series *orient/ierung* (orient/ation), superimposed colored-pencil lines deliberately discard the compliant boundaries of the red graph paper showing through as a background. Instead they become, as the artist puts it, a symbolic representation of a "memory carpet," as in the room drawings from her series *Gehen-Bleiben-Weg* (Walking-Staying-Path). The color value overlap in the hand drawings creates a depth effect and simultaneity, such that the layers of experiences shine through in the present. At the same time, the lines can be decoded to signify sewing points—as if they used a thread to produce a pattern.

Taken as a single image, the sixty representations of gnarly grapevines in the 2015 series *Bestiarium* (Bestiary) offer fewer links to Ingrid Gaier's practice than her other series share in common. The colors of the graphic works are reduced to the contrast between black ink and white paper, the lines are less geared toward the creation of a plane than are the compositions of *orient/ierung*. And yet it is evident that, viewed from a distance, each grapevine (character) study—in slight variations between vertical and diagonal—ultimately creates the abstracted effect of a line, despite the naturalistic details working against this appearance. In the works of Ingrid Gaier, no geometric grid structure, regardless of how accurate its structure may be, will ever manage to keep the flow of the lines she draws from its innate dynamic.