Nicolas Baier
Asterisms
October 27, 2017–January 3, 2018

Division Gallery is pleased to announce Asterisms, an exhibition of new works by acclaimed Quebec artist Nicolas Baier.

In the past, Nicolas Baier focused on the representation of objects in his immediate surroundings and their intensification via art, specifically through photography and its mediated offspring. His past work consisted of a self-reflexive examination of the camera's possibilities, focusing on the medium's transformation in the digital age. Baier's experimentation compelled us to pay attention to the perspectival changes engendered by photography: how the technology alters both the Real and our direct reality. Having examined his immediate environment, Baier has for the past few years turned towards the macro and micro, confronting the metaphysical questions plaguing our understanding of non-visible worlds. Through the appropriation of a scientific language designed to make these realms accessible, the artist explores the forms of knowledge that allow for these concepts.

Asterisms (constellations created without scientific basis) brings together works that mine the networks present in natural and man-made systems—two framing devices for world making. In a secular era where meaning is constantly under construction, Baier puts his faith in science as a perceptual tool, extracting its inherent spirituality and integrating it into his work. Making use of the latest technologies, these works become scientific pursuits in their own right.

This is a realm where human and universal time, and scientific and poetic truth enmesh --where we are asked to trade our desire for totalizing knowledge for a sensitive understanding of a

Universe that can never be fully constructed.

Added to the original exhibition presented in Montreal in Fall 2016 is a series of canvases painted with a palimpsest-like accumulation of formulae. An astrophysicist with whom Baier corresponds at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) furnished him with pictures of boards inscribed with notes and equations. The artist superimposed many of these to create an illegible picture from which no logical meaning can be inferred. Painstakingly transcribed and retranscribed in paint, the symbols acquire new resonance as an artwork and as a metaphor for our capacity to process information.

Nicolas Baier's work has been presented at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), North Adams; the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa, and at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Québec. His work is found in several public and private collections including the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), Toronto, and the Schwartz Art Collection, Harvard School of Business, Cambridge.