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An installation view of “Nature Cult: Tremor” by artists Donald Moffett and Shaun Krupa. (Vivian Doering/Von Ammon Co.)

In the galleries: Captivating works of the celestial and terrestrial

Visions of the natural world and depictions of mechanisms for its destruction link the art of Donald Moffett and Shaun Krupa, two New Yorkers showing together in “Nature Cult: Tremor” at Von Ammon Co. All but one of Krupa’s contributions are hard-edged representational paintings. Moffett’s are mostly sculptures but vary from cleanly machined to roughly collaged.

Among Krupa’s pictures are two of augers, corkscrew-like drill bits the artist renders as monochromatic — one gray, one forest green — and massive. Equally precise and blankly objective is “Dinosaur,” a large, light-green 3D architectural model that might be a segment of a ziggurat. (Krupa’s art-college degree is in industrial design.)

Natural forms appear in the other two paintings, one of which shows a glove made of patterned segments that resemble reptile skin. Bits of the fingers are missing, but it’s impossible to tell whether the glove is forming or decaying. Given the implicit destructiveness of those augers, however, rupture seems more likely.

Among Moffett’s sculptures are epoxy-resin wall pieces that suggest liquid or malleable materials yet are solid and nearly symmetrical. An aqua-hued one (subtitled “Nature Cult, Beautiful Blue”) might be a hugely enlarged



water droplet; a brown one (subtitled “Cocoa Brain”) looks like a tissue sample pressed onto a glass slide. The contrast between soft connotation and hard actuality proves engrossing.

The show’s largest entry is Moffett’s burlesque of a tree, made mostly of genuine branches or chunks of lumber, all painted gold and attached with heavy metal bolts. With a coffee-table art book affixed to one bough, the simulated tree is clearly an art object. As with Krupa’s glove, the structure could be a work of either demolition or reclamation. The way the metal intersects with the wood, though, is deeply unsettling. - Mark Jenkins, 6 October 2023

Donald Moffett and Shaun Krupa: Nature Cult: Tremor Through Oct. 15 at Von Ammon Co., 3330 Cady’s Alley NW. vonammon.co. 202-893-9797.