

ARTFORUM

Bacon, Alex, "K.r.m. Mooney: Näcre," *Artforum*, February 6, 2019



K.r.m. Mooney, *En I*, 2018, engraving block, polyurethane, cast mistletoe, silver, gold, 7 x 4 1/2 x 4 1/4".

K.r.m. Mooney

ALTMAN SIEGEL
1150 25th Street
January 15–February 16

"Näcre" is K.r.m. Mooney's first solo exhibition at Altman Siegel. The show's title is a stylization of a term for mother-of-pearl, the iridescent substance that covers pearls. Pearls form when irritants such as parasites enter a mollusk's shell and are coated with layers of protein and minerals. This reference evokes the proximity that can exist between the beautiful and the abject, a dialectic that is central to Mooney's *Second Affordance II*, 2017. For this work, the artist has partially submerged a minuscule, intricate tangle of wire and cast lavender in a narrow metal tray of water on the floor. The conglomerate slowly oxidizes in an alluring and mildly repulsive progression. Across the room, in *En I*, 2018, an engraving block is discreetly displayed on the ground. Upon close inspection, this diminutive steel orb displays two exquisitely crafted gold objects that resemble rings, conjuring the two fingers they might encircle. But they are only visible if viewers are willing to put their bodies in a vulnerable position: bent over, face lowered to the object.

Other enclosures, architectural, bodily, and natural, are explored in works such as *Accretion I*, 2018—two awnings that have been repurposed as floor-bound sculptures, voiding their functionality—or the series "i-iii," 2018, in which copper fragments that could be casts of tongues are divorced from the imagined protective embrace of a mouth.

While each work operates on a subtle register, together they denature forms of enclosure and suggest ways of responding differently to built spaces, man-made objects, and our own fleshy bodies.

— Alex Bacon