

GALERIE DIVISION

AN TE LIU

"Des bribes et des morceaux"

May 9th to July 4th 2015

The bricoleur's means represent a set of actual and possible relations. He interrogates all the heterogeneous objects of which his treasury is composed to discover what each of them could signify. He speaks not only with things, but also through the medium of things. The characteristic feature of mythical thought, as of bricolage, is that it builds up structured sets by fitting together the remains and debris of events, 'des bribes et des morceaux'
- Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, 1962

An Te Liu's sculpture and print-based work are ruminations on time, memory, and origins. The work of modern sculptors such as Isamu Noguchi or Barbara Hepworth is often thought of as embodying a sense of permanence and the ability to assimilate vast cultural references. Liu's work resonates with these influences and positions them at the centre of a larger conversation on how reinvention and continuity overlap in paradoxical ways. Working with bronze, ceramic and concrete—the material language of endurance—Liu mines the idioms of ancient and modern sculpture to challenge how we perceive value and time in physical form.

In an expansive series of works begun in 2013, Liu has crafted an evolving assembly of objects that suggest the fossilized remnants of present-day material production. Styrofoam packaging, intended to protect goods in transit, provides a point of departure for sculptures that are reminiscent of artifacts found in anthropology and archaeology museums. In the *Tropos* works, a disposable form designed to fill negative space is recast and multiplied to provide the basis for a series of delicately balanced orders. Part Brâncuși's *Endless Column*, part abstract totem, the *Tropos* works speak to aspiration and precarity as oppositional—yet productive—forces.

Des Bribes et des morceaux features related works that address the nuances of memory within contemporary culture. *Untitled (Units I – VI)* is a series of photolithographs in which planar views of obsolete computer equipment are reconfigured to echo brutalist architecture. In *Agenda*, a decade's worth of the artist's weekly calendar appointments are transcribed to form a pixellated calligraphy, the specifics of the past made cryptic within the present.

Liu complicates perceptions around culture—as both a system and product—while revealing the fine line which separates an artifact from an object which has simply outlived its importance. As an ensemble, these works compel us to consider how ways of seeing and knowing shape our relationship to objects, across cultures and time.

An Te Liu (born 1967, Tainan, Taiwan) lives and works in Toronto. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at venues including the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art (Rotterdam), the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Copenhagen), the Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna) and the Contemporary Art Gallery (Vancouver). Liu's works are included in the

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permanent collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Recent and ongoing exhibitions include *In Absentia* at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie, and *Shine a Light—Canadian Biennial 2014* at the National Gallery of Canada. A forthcoming monograph on the artist's work will be released in fall 2015 by Black Dog Publishing (London, UK).