

JACQUES LOUIS VIDAL

YOU ARE WHAT YOU LOOK AT (AND I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING)

OPENING RECEPTION: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH, 6-8 PM



Detail, *You Will See Ten Things From 1963*, 2009

Marc Jancou Contemporary is pleased to announce the opening of *You are What You Look At*, a solo show by Jacques Louis Vidal. This is the artist's first show with the gallery.

*You are What You Look At* presents a series of new collages, sculptures, and architectural fragments, which together propose a willful confabulation of the artist's true personal history, narratives, beliefs, and emotions culled from a selection of media sources. The varied source materials (a black nationalist magazine, an infomercial on transparency, and stills from a crime TV show, amongst others) come packaged with equally varied ideals, and while these are acknowledged in their transformation, this may be beside the point. Vidal has endeavored to create what he calls a "self-thing synthesis" by creating rooms, or "isolation closets," which are meant to force him to focus on these things, and vice versa. The traditional transformative relationship with which artists engage their chosen materials is here evoked specifically for its often ignored reciprocal nature.

These source materials have been scanned, photographed, re-scanned, layered, and then cut away, creating topographical "reassemblages" in which images recede and advance in intricate ways. The collages were constructed inside the "isolation closets," each thematically or ergonomically designed to hone in on particular facets of each subject. This time spent alone with these sources appears to have produced a private, if not irreconcilable world. Each "isolation closet" is here represented as a cut fragment, a dramatic consolidation of Vidal's experiences.

The final element of this process is a group of metal and wood sculptures, which might function as a model of the artist in an arrested state of transformation vis-a-vis the subject. They complete the tautology of the whole endeavor, as a tangible witness to the process of making and looking, and then remaking with new information. Anthropomorphic in form, the

sculpted wood components of the sculptures are made from layered plywood that seem to grow around, or take over their found metal counterparts, similar to the way in which a tree will grow around a fence in order to thrive. The artist emphasizes this relationship in that "they're both stuck there...one growing towards the other, only light makes that plant grow, thus it is literally seeing towards it, it can't help it." The synthesis of these materials allegorizes the artist's connection with the structures around him. Formally, Vidal builds up a surface, or structure, in an attempt to defamiliarize seemingly concrete subject-object relations while still preserving something of their origins. These are carved and eroded to the point where the original form is scattered. What develops is a sturdy reconstruction of each idea, as believable as the original, yet infused with the delicacy of the inescapable subjective nature of personal experience.

Born in 1982 in Paris and raised in Houston, Texas, Vidal currently lives in Bridgeport, CT. He received his MFA from the Sculpture department at Yale University in 2009. Solo exhibitions include LaMontagne Gallery, Boston and SUNDAY, New York. Group exhibitions include Blood Drive, (curated by Kate Levant), Zach Feuer Gallery, New York; Maximal Minimal, (curated by Nini Bonavoglia), Diego Cassina Art Advisory, Lugano, Switzerland; and People Weekly, (curated by Linda Norden), The Graduate Center, CUNY, New York.