Rei Naito, *human* (detail), 2011-12, acrylic paint on wood, 2⅛" x ¾" x ⅜". Gallery Koyanagi.

REI NAITO

was exhibited atop a white pedestal underneath a clear acrylic box. As delicate as it was miniscule, the solitary pillow seemed to suggest that we must all lay our heads down in death, and to offer a symbol for the universality and inevitability of that moment.

It also offered a compelling counter to a recent installation titled *human*, which included 21 tiny wooden figures arranged along the top of a long white table. Made between 2011 and 2012 in the wake of Japan's 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster, each ethereal character was painted by hand and had delicate individual characteristics. Looking down on the small statues from a bird's-eye view, we had the impression of surveying an eclectic landscape of human life. Though Naito's esthetic is nuanced rather than bold and modest rather than flashy, this show rewarded patient visitors with an intriguing meditation on the expressive power of light, water, and plenty of white. ***—Danielle Demetriou***

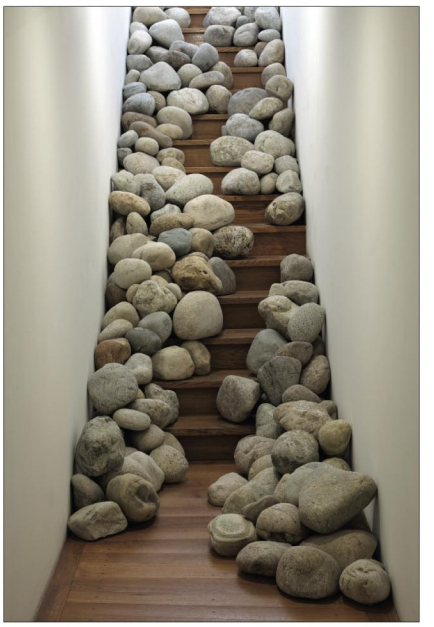
Céleste Boursier-Mougenot

Galerie Xippas

Paris

Trained as a musician and theater composer, Céleste Boursier-Mougenot makes poetic sound installations that explore the potential musicality of quotidian space. Putting commonplace objects in banal places, he creates unexpected situations that at times feel transcendent. For one recent exhibition, he transformed the gallery into an aviary inhabited by finches, with plugged-in electric guitars as perches and upturned cymbals as feeders, so that the birds' daily movements created a constantly shifting soundscape.

In this show, Boursier-Mougenot placed thousands of live bees in an open wooden structure—allowing the insects to fly in and out and even to leave through the room's windows—and rigged it with a system of microphones. Remixed by a computer algorithm, the low hum produced by the bees' wings in flight created a peculiar, murmuring music that sounded like white noise. As viewers drifted through the corridor-like gallery, they passed five other black structures made from the materials of traditional apiaries. The microphones transmitted the sound made by the bees' activity into these boxes, so that it seemed to fluctuate from one imaginary hive to the next.



Céleste Boursier-Mougenot, *chorégraphie*, 2012, stones, installation view, dimensions variable. Galerie Xippas.

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From time to time the buzzing was interrupted by another strange noise that ushered from a curious work titled *U43* (2012), which refers to a specific model of old-fashioned telephone (the Bakelite Universal 1943). Perched atop a sleek black pedestal, the phone contained software that programmed it to "ring" whenever the word "fantôme" (ghost) was typed into Google's search window on the Internet. *U43*'s unnerving energy was echoed physically in *chorégraphie* (2012), which reconfigured the narrow stairway leading up to the gallery. Boursier-Mougenot covered the steps with large stones, transforming the passage into what felt like a steep mountain path or the dry bed of a waterfall, and forcing visitors to delicately, conscientiously navigate their descent. ***—Laurie Hurwitz***

'The Ancients Stole All Our Great Ideas'

Kunsthistoriches Museum

Vienna

Giving new life to 36 artworks and objects drawn from the museum's vast holdings, this original exhibition was curated by artist Ed Ruscha. Taking its title from a Mark Twain quotation, "The Ancients Stole All Our Great Ideas" included a range of pieces from Old Master paintings to curiosities, both natural and man-made, all displayed without regard to school, category, or historical importance. Wall texts for a taxidermied coyote and a black-tailed rattlesnake, for example, explained that since both are native to the western United States, it "felt right to let these creatures intrude on the exhibition."

Jan Brueghel the Elder, *Animal Studies of Dogs*, ca. 1616, oil on oak panel, 13¼" x 21⅝". Kunsthistorisches Museum.

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