



Andy Coolquitt's Alter Objects

Text Andy Beta

Since moving to New York in 2002, Andy Coolquitt, a native Texan, quickly adopted the urban practice of scavenging curbside trash, at times working directly in the street to create pieces from discarded grannie carts, deodorant cans, and vacuum cleaners. His work conjures dumpsters more than galleries, the results not so much recycled as re-appropriated. His recent solo show, "iight," at Lisa Cooley Fine Art, emphasized light and electricity. Pieces like *wink wink* and *21st century Aggressive Carpet Growth* (a wooden pole tipped with delicate light and swaddled in soiled carpeting) were at once streetwise and fragile, their gruff and grimy exteriors belying their precarious and fraught balance. Some of the reedy sculptures were carefully perched atop their lit bulbs; others leant against the gallery walls as if inebriated.

Referencing both Walter DeMaria and Dieter Roth in his work, and emphasizing a decidedly Duchampian outlook, Coolquitt deploys everyday objects so that they might "suddenly, be rendered dysfunctional." His own home in east Austin bursts with salvaged sculpture and cobbled color, itself a living work that provides for Coolquitt and cohorts, "an alternative to institutional community," as he describes it.

Finishign up pieces for his show at the Texas Biennial, Coolquitt clarifies that the confluence of art and home in his new work doesn't stem from the necessity of starving artists living in their studio; he draws inspiration from more temporary living spaces. "I'm not interested in crack houses per se, [but rather] the residue of a gathering of people the night before who came together to share the pipe," he says. "There is always an this intensely lame attempt at domestication. A piece of cardboard placed on the ground or against a wall to create a primitive sofa- creating comfort through collection and object fetishization."