

I pretty much think about these things all day, mostly text-object relationships, and what was done made so much *sense.*

... More than anything (and perhaps predictably), Witkin's work realized for me some conceptions about the ancient world. I work on lists that catalogue collections of objects on display, usually in sanctuaries and treasuries, but the actual layout of all these votives or trinkets or larger precious pieces always remains elusive, at best. They would have been inscribed, in many instances, with the names of dedicators and these are often listed in the accompanying inventories, but most of the items have long since disappeared, several already in antiquity.

In Witkin's collection I saw something of a negative reflection of this whole process: an apparently static space whose contents shift about, without any key or legend, and charge visitors to form their own mental inventories, enticing them to disentangle--or perhaps draw lines between--artist and object. In this connoisseurship of the mundane Witkin emerges both innovative and grounded in very old, unconscious traditions. Inasmuch as the modern museum parallels the ancient temple archive, Witkin become magistrate, architect, devotee and priestess (!).

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