

## Dinh Q. Lê

P.P.O.W

535 West 22nd Street, Third Floor

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Dinh Q. Lê's latest exhibition is both formally elegant and critically incisive, probing how technology shapes perception of collective memory and global politics. In his four-channel video, *WTC in Four Moments*, 2014, still images of 9/11 are digitally stretched to the point of abstraction and reanimated against a sound track of ambient noise. Color bars in ochre and steel run vertically along each screen, resulting in images that are opaque yet eerily indexical to the event.

The “woven” compositions for which Lê is known, composed of gridded strips of distinct and anachronous images, offer an impression of global history as relational and antilinear. Yet, the structural logic of his earlier photo-tapestries is disrupted throughout these recent, more fluid works. *The Continuous Creation*, 2014, a ten-foot-long triptych, features a montage of contorted bodies—borrowed from Renaissance frescoes and contemporary photojournalism—that echo the undulating patterns into which they are assembled. The sinuous fault line that splits the right-hand and center panels crosses the open zipper of a screaming man's khaki coat, an unlikely *punctum* that draws attention to “rupture” as a compositional device. In *Witness I* and *Witness II*, both 2014, warp and weft are left incomplete, exposing the scorched ends of each vertical strip. Throughout, there is a marked sense of violence with which the artist handles photographic paper.

As such, Lê offers us *The Last of the Alchemists*, 2013: a memorial to the analog printed image. Enclosed within this silver “coffin” rests a sample of light-sensitive paper, never to be exposed. The sculpture assumes the role of reliquary, firmly grounding Lê's practice in the “digital age” and relegating film photography to the pages of history, along with similarly time-sensitive frescoes that are expertly—and digitally—incorporated throughout.

— Allison Young



Dinh Q. Lê, *The Scroll of Thich Quang Duc*, 2013, c-print scroll and gold lacquer box, 12 1/2' x 3".