

THE ARCHIVE LOUIS ZOELLAR BICKETT

March 3 – April 15, 2017

Since 1972, Louis Zoellar Bickett has meticulously collected and cataloged items from his daily life and assembled them into a functional installation he refers to as: THE ARCHIVE. Photographs, dinner receipts, dog brushes, jars, binders and items of every sort are tagged and neatly placed within the 3-D collage that serves as home and studio to the artist. The archive's contents are seemingly endless and infinitely varied.

The crux of Bickett's work lies in his ability to transform the most basic object into a work of art by using a simple associative process. The collection, organization, and archiving of everyday objects imbues them with significance beyond function or simple metaphor. Every object is tagged with a name and date, corresponding to a set of events, an idea, or some larger on-going project. The object's viewer knows precisely what it is, where it's from, why it was purchased, the name of its previous owner or the role that it plays in the artist's life. Its placement within the Archive further secures its importance and guarantees its survival. Sculptures, photographs and paintings are tagged in the same manner (and with the same precision) as flashlights, bowling bags, and hats. Certain objects are tagged or stamped several times to reflect their inclusion in various projects. The age-old question, "What is art?" is clearly answered in Bickett's process: anything I choose.

The Archive Louis Zoellar Bickett provides a glimpse at a seemingly random sampling of objects. It is not intended to be a retrospective or even an accounting of various projects. Indeed, there are too many for an exhibition of this size. The intention is rather to select objects that resonate with simplicity and illuminate the artist's transformative abilities while hinting at the larger themes of sex, identity, and death that permeate Bickett's work. Furiously collecting and archiving towards death, Bickett has become the central object of the archive - missing only the tag he will receive, not unlike the rest of us, upon his own demise. With this exhibition, we invite the viewer into the artist's studio for a fleeting glance at Bickett's work and the machinations of his vast and ever-growing Archive.