

UNIT 17

LESLIE THORNTON

SO MUCH MUCH

26 March - 19 May 2018

opening reception: 25 March 12 - 6pm

DIM Cinema screening: 28 March 7:30pm

Unit 17 is thrilled to present *SO MUCH MUCH*, a solo exhibition by New York artist Leslie Thornton, opening 25 March 12 - 6pm and continuing until 19 May 2018. Thornton will be in attendance for both the opening reception and screening.

SO MUCH MUCH marks the first presentation of the artist's newest artwork titled *Cut From Liquid to Snake* (2018). Its contents emerge from works made over the last two years. *They Were Just People* (2016) - originally commissioned by the Walker Arts Center - combines Thornton's own footage of the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles with archival audio describing the first horrific moments after the US dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945. Thornton began making *They Were Just People* as a response to *CROSSROADS* (1976), Bruce Conner's film of the 1946 Bikini Atoll nuclear test. Interlaced into the core of Thornton's work is her biographical reference and the complex emotional response to her own family history. Both the artist's father and grandfather (unknown to each other) were engineers for the Manhattan Project, and it was Thornton's father who fastened the last screw on the atomic bomb that dropped on Hiroshima.

Other elements include *SO MUCH MUCH* (2017-18) which takes on current political, technological and social contexts. The audio came out of a conversation the artist had with an astute, politically-minded friend around the 2016 US presidential election. Rather than playing out the full conversation, Thornton has removed half of the recorded exchange taken on November 9, 2016 — leaving only slices of her own thoughts, worries and anxieties to parse through. Dense imagery of a crawling colony of ants consumes the screen while the constantly replayed term - "Ya" - rings throughout the work, as if agreeing and simultaneously fighting with itself. The insects march endlessly under what seems a rotting lens, eroding beneath their infinite steps while they build, gather and disperse. Frantically paced, as if eating itself, this diarrhetic slippage of the mind exposes these initial, tense moments of panic and disbelief.

Leslie Thornton (b. 1951) is a recognized pioneer of contemporary media aesthetics who is engaged with film, video, photography and installation. Retrospectives have been held at MoMA (New York), FemCine (Santiago), Anthology Film Archives (New York) and at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Her work has been widely exhibited at venues such as Documenta 12 (Kassel); MoMA PS1 (Long Island City); Centre Pompidou (Paris); the Whitney Biennial (New York); Raven Row and Rodeo Gallery (London); the New York Film Festival, Oberhausen, and Rotterdam International Film Festival, among others. Thornton is in the permanent collections of Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Centre Pompidou, MoMA, the Pacific Film Archives, the Walker Art Center and Jeu de paume. In 2018 she was the first recipient, in company with James Richards, of a new CERN Artist Residency, sponsored by Centre d'art Contemporain Genève. Forthcoming exhibitions include Kuenstlerhaus Stuttgart, Secession (Vienna) and Malmö Kunsthalle.

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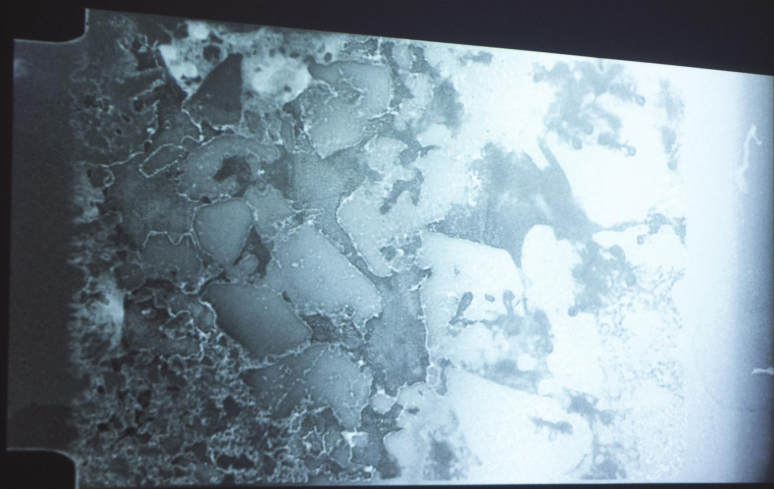
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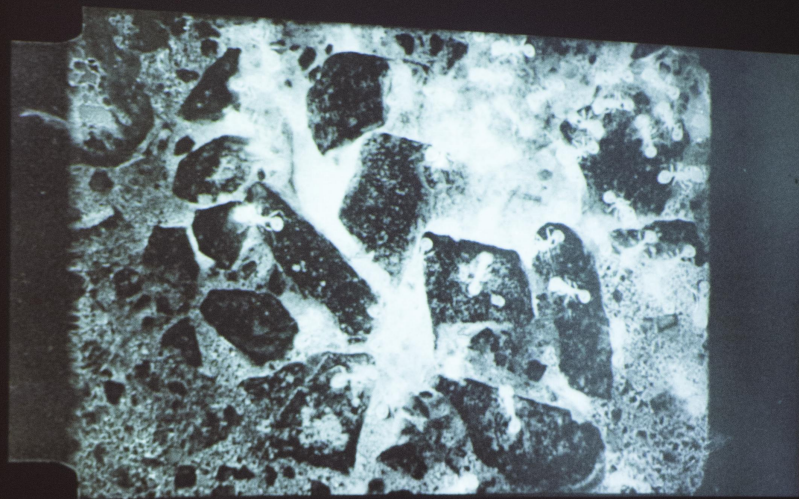
list of works:

Cut From Liquid to Snake, 2018, HD video, 22m 6s









3





