

## Crèvecœur

Christopher Knight, *Review: Miho Dohi turns scrap materials into sculptural poetry*,  
Los Angeles Times, May 18, 2019.



Miho Dohi, "Untitled #58," 2019, mixed media (Nonaka-Hill Gallery)

Small-scale sculptures by Miho Dohi are like handmade driftwood, a kind of cultural debris that has been carefully shaped into poetic forms by unseen forces. Scrap materials get unexpected new life.

Eight table-top sculptures, two on the wall and one suspended from the ceiling are in the artist's Los Angeles debut at Nonaka-Hill Gallery. Based in Kanagawa, Japan, south of Tokyo, Dohi calls her sculptures *buttai* — objects — a usage that locates them somewhere between the cherished and the everyday. Her materials are humble, even mundane — paper, wire mesh, cotton batting, yarn, chunks of scrap wood — but they have been assembled with self-evident precision.

Juxtapositions are certainly eccentric, as when small pieces of copper screen are trimmed in tufts of raw cotton, or a small wooden lump is crowned with a droopy paper disk. Metal strips are applied as nominal handles for things that will only be picked up in the imagination, while lengths of twisted yarn are further bound with thread.



Installation view of Miho Dohi's tabletop objects. (Nonaka-Hill Gallery)

## Crèvecœur



Miho Dohi, "Untitled #41," 2019, mixed media. (Nonaka-Hill Gallery)

Move around Dohi's objects, and the shapes shift — one side looking nothing like the other. Her compositions are additive — one thing attached to another and then another — but always the forms end up turning back in on themselves.

It's as if growth is something internalized rather than expansive, the capacious quality a trait of the object alone rather than something dependent on its relationship to the space around it. Classical Japanese arts of refinement are deeply embedded in the work, but any established language of circumscribed control is energetically rebuffed. Inventiveness is prized over constraint.

Like Richard Tuttle's sculptures made from scraps, Dohi's diminutive objects radiate an element of pathos. Yet they burst with lively eccentricity too. Resolutely abstract, her sculptures are cutting-edge spirit catchers.