

*one large men's black plastic work glove*  
*one dense mat of oak pollen*

*one unblemished dead rat*

*one white plastic bottle cap*

*one smooth stick of wood* <sup>1</sup>

Walking along a coastline, Jane Bennett happened across an odd assemblage. An agglomeration of things floating on the edge of the water. Her philosophical crusade through Western metaphysics is an attempt find the source of this uncertain “thingness.” The recipe for matter soup is produced of ingredients crushed together through causality and time. Pressure and space combine the abandoned, forsaken, the dead. Economic and biological life cycles have come to an end. A conglomerate debris at the fringe of earth and sea. Bennett’s academic venture begins at the edges, but she is interested in connecting the resolute vibrancy of stuff to the economic and political model that has produced them, “the sheer volume of commodities, and the hyper-consumptive necessity of junking them to make room for new ones, conceals the vitality of matter.” <sup>2</sup>

An artificial but recognisable smell of sweet pea blossom tinges the sanitary air. Chloride designer perfume medley. High-street luxury shops offer the same products in every major city. Brand-name virtue, emblazoned shopping bags. Vitrine decorations, polished steel, waxed reflexive marble, true lustrous quality. Objects of power, things of plenty, gravity of responsibility. Uniform of authority, work shoes beating pavement. The crushing weight of abundance slides down through the belly of the beast. Through the churning insides of fast fashion knock-off, celebrity brands. Street seller souvenirs, trinkets of portable property <sup>3</sup>, second hand clothing piles in a vintage shop, Humana, cualquier mercadillo.

In the chaotic corridors of a flea market, things search for a second life. Shouts pierce air, the sun bears down, and smoke combines in an alluvium brew, the smell of tea, sweat, and meat skewers among old leather and dust. Crushed through dirt. Filtering through into the glove-pollen-rat-cap-stick.

This exhibition is part of [Curated by](#), the gallery festival with international curators in Vienna.

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<sup>1</sup> Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Duke University Press, 2009. (pg. 4)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid* (pg. 5)

<sup>3</sup> Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Penguin Random House, original 1861. Mr. Wemmick makes a habit of visiting inmates on death row. They, no longer in need of their portables hand them over to Wemmick who describes portable property as that which can be carried and easily exchanged for cash. Wemmick’s own non-portable property is modelled on a medieval castle equipped with a moat which puts the two sorts of properties in ideological opposition. The first, a modern possession easy to exchange high in liquidity value, the second of the older type with lineage, heritage, and old-fashioned.