

## The Fussy Eye: Touch or Don't Touch?

Found objects.

By **Brian Miller** Wednesday, Oct 26 2011

"We all have our tchotchkes," explained Massachusetts artist **Andrew Witkin** at the recent opening of his somewhat abstruse show **Among Others**. Pointing to a table with feathers, rocks, bits of metal, and other familiar, tactile objects arranged in a seemingly haphazard group, he says, "People want to grab them." (There are no signs to tell visitors expressly what not to touch.) But the pieces weren't grouped or selected at random from some flea market—"That feels like cheating," Witkin adds. Instead, like the pile of folded white shirts, like the two black boxes of excised magazine photos, like the three white flip-books of words and phrases (yes, you can touch and read them), all these words and objects have been dissociated from the random. There are consonances between thing and text, curatorial links among Witkin's various finds. In a world of too much information available within the keyboard's reach, his show is about selection, winnowing, narrowing down. "There is a structure to it," Witkin insists. Instead of **Google**, he asks rhetorically, "What's your search engine?", meaning *you* the search engine. How do you edit your life? There are no hyperlinks here, only mental associations among terms. The show also includes menu-like placards of keywords that may or may not correspond to your response. That's because the search terms are Witkin's, as he reminds us with a tabletop speaker softly playing "My Way."

James Harris Gallery, 312 Second Ave. S., 903-6220, jamesharrisgallery.com.

