

Marc Andre Robinson

(Los Angeles, USA, 1972)

Known, recognizable, and familiar forms and objects constitute the point of departure for Marc Andre Robinson's works. He often develops his sculptures and drawings from the meticulous repetition of these forms. For example the series *Multitude*, 2003, is animated by a multitude of small figures drawn in black ink, so close to one another that, at first glance, they become unrecognizable, confused in an abstract, decorative motif.

The question of identity, understood above all as a sense of belonging and familiarity with shared things, is central to his work. His project *The Diachronic*, 2010, came about after Robinson's first trip to South Africa, his grandfather's native land, which until then the artist had known only through his mother's stories. That same sense of belonging and familiarity has resulted in his predilection for making his sculptures out of used furniture—tables and, especially, chairs found in flea markets or even in the garbage, which the artist gathers and collects. The furniture is then modified and assembled to compose more or less elaborate but always strongly suggestive, large sculptures. This is the case with *Right of Return (By Themselves and Of Themselves)*, the work in the CRT collection, where a ring of chairs is suspended in midair. It is also true in *Throne For the Greatest Rapper of All Time*, 2005, where the form of the throne vaguely recalls an ancient musical instrument. In 2007 Robinson's *Myth Monolith (Liberation Movement)* was included in "Unmonumental," the inaugural exhibition at the New Museum in New York, which presented works, with particular emphasis on sculpture, that are built by assembling materials that have intrinsic value, even while they are often humble, salvaged, provisional, or fragmentary. The exhibition provided an overview of an expression of the contemporary concept of anti-monumentality, but in Robinson's case, this concept is subtler and more contradictory, for the structure, dimension and drama of his works seem to go in the opposite direction. Yet it is precisely the choice of the chair, of furniture, of the everyday and common domestic object that makes the difference. The very title of *Right of Return (By Themselves and Of Themselves)*, which the artist built on site at the GAM in Turin for the exhibition "Keep Your Seat," is a double reference. On the one hand, the ring shape leads symbolically to the idea of eternal return; on the other hand, the idea that return is a right refers to the more sentimental and moving homecoming and a return to the certainties that are there. (EV)