

## Danh Võ

The next morning, he went with it to the man, and said to him, “No one shall be my wife except for the one whose foot fits this golden shoe.”

The two sisters were happy to hear this, for they had pretty feet. With her mother standing by, the older one took the shoe into her bedroom to try it on. She could not get her big toe into it, for the shoe was too small for her. Then her mother gave her a knife and said, “Cut off your toe. When you are queen you will no longer have to go on foot.”

The girl cut off her toe, forced her foot into the shoe, swallowed the pain, and went out to the prince. He took her on his horse as his bride and rode away with her. However, they had to ride past the grave, and there, on the hazel tree, sat the two pigeons, crying out:

“Rook di goo, rook di goo!  
There’s blood in the shoe.  
The shoe is too tight,  
This bride is not right!”

Then he looked at her foot and saw how the blood was running from it. He turned his horse around and took the false bride home again, saying that she was not the right one, and that the other sister should try on the shoe. She went into her bedroom, and got her toes into the shoe all right, but her heel was too large.

Then her mother gave her a knife, and said, “Cut a piece off your heel. When you are queen you will no longer have to go on foot.”

The girl cut a piece off her heel, forced her foot into the shoe, swallowed the pain, and went out to the prince. He took her on his horse as his bride and rode away with her. When they passed the hazel tree, the two pigeons were sitting in it, and they cried out:

“Rook di goo, rook di goo!  
There’s blood in the shoe.  
The shoe is too tight,  
This bride is not right!”

He looked down at her foot and saw how the blood was running out of her shoe, and how it had stained her white stocking all red. Then he turned his horse around and took the false bride home again.

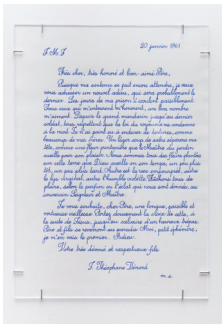
“This is not the right one, either,” he said. “Don’t you have another daughter?”



**If you were to climb the Himalayas tomorrow, 2005**  
Rolex watch, Dupont lighter, American military signet ring  
Vitrine containing the Rolex watch Vō's father, Phung Vō, bought with the gold left over from organising the family's escape from Vietnam, the Dupont lighter bought with the first money he earned in Denmark, and his signet ring.



**bye bye, 2010**  
Black and white heliogravure on Somerset white satin 300g  
Print of Jean-Théophile Vénard, G. Coulon, Joseph Marie Perrier, Jacques Lavigne, and Joseph Simon Theurel in Paris on September 19th 1852.



**02.02.1861, 2009**  
Ink on paper

This was the last letter Jean-Théophile Vénard, a French missionary, wrote to his father before he was beheaded. Danh Vō's father, Phung Vō – who does not speak French – has hand written this letter over 600 times and will continue to do so by commission until he dies or is no longer able to.



**Untitled, 2008**

Luggage, wood

One of six pieces of a medieval sculpture of St. Joseph, each stored in regulation sized hand luggage.



**Christmas (Rome), 2012, 2013**

Velvet



**Good Life, 2007**

12 vitrines, 12 black & white photographs, 2 colour photographs, 1 photo camera, 1 letter, documents

When I saw Danh Võ's name in the invitation to the reception for new fellows at the residency program of the Villa Aurora, I knew he was Vietnamese. I decided straightaway to go to the reception to meet him.

On arriving at the Villa the night of the reception I saw him at a distance talking very softly about his work. After the new fellows had made their presentations I went looking for food, wine, and Danh.

After getting my wine and food, I saw him sitting alone outside on the patio having a smoke. I went over and introduced myself and mentioned to him that I had spent a considerable amount of time in Vietnam - probably many years before he was born. He smiled and I immediately felt attracted to him and knew that I wanted to have some kind of close relationship. I then invited him to visit me at my nearby house and was surprised and pleased when he smiled again and said he would come the following morning.

The following morning I waited for him to come to my house somewhat apprehensively because I wasn't sure that he would really come. I thought that maybe it was only polite reception talk and that he might not show up.

I was of course very pleased and surprised when he appeared that morning at my front door. I invited him in and I could see from his expression that he was quite excited and astonished by what he was seeing. Usually people are only moderately curious about my collection of Mexican and Asian folk art. From Danh's reaction, however, I could see that he was not only interested in my collection of folk art but was also interested in the diversity of my photos which revealed many different aspects of my personal intimate life.

While asking questions about my art objects and photos, Danh disclosed many things about his personal life. I thus felt very comfortable responding to his direct questions about many personal details about my life and allowed him to go through my personal possessions.

The strong bond quickly established between us has already generated many unforgettable moments. Hopefully, many more will follow. The way our lives have crossed has been touched strangely by the magic of shared interests, surfacing forbidden aspects of my life and evoking Danh's memories about a past that he had unwillingly left behind.

Joe Carrier



**Self Portrait (Will), 2008**

2 framed documents



**Portrait of a Hand, 2010**

Black and white heliogravure on somerset white satin 300g

This image is of the artist's paternal grandmother Ngo Thi Ha in Vietnam.



**Galoppal, 2009**

1 saddle, 2 framed documents

Bishop Peter Trần Thanh Chung's riding saddle. Chung was a Christian minister for indigenous people in the Central Highlands of Vietnam between April 1958 and August 1966, and the last missionary to use horses for this purpose.



**Untitled, 2013**

Ink on vellum

The text reads Fabulous Muscles / Take My Breath Away.  
Calligraphy by Phung Vō.



**Oma Totem, 2009**

Phillips 26 inch TV, Goenje washing machine, Bomann refrigerator, wooden crucifix, Nguyen Thi Ty's personalized entrance card for a casino

Objects which belonged to the artist's grandmother Nguyen Thi Ty, who received them from the Immigrant Relief Program and the Catholic Church on arriving in Germany, plus her casino card.



## **Massive Black Hole in the Dark Heart of our Milky Way, 2012**

Installation of seven components:

One Johnnie Walker, gold on used cardboard

Ten Coca Cola boxes, gold on used cardboard

27 US Flags with 13 stars, gold on used cardboard

Cinderella, Grimm Brothers (edition of 1812) handwritten by Phung Vō, divided in 24 parts, gold leaf on carbon copy paper

99 Shopping Bags from Liberty Island, gold on brown paper bags

Printed images, gold leaf on 18 plastic sheets (14 clear and 4 white):  
flowering branch, fruiting branch and fruit of *Rosa soulieana*,  
fruiting branchlet of *Salix souliei*, fruiting branches of *Prunus tomentosa* var. *Souliei* distal portion of flowering plant of *Lilium souliei*, basal leaves, fruit, carpel and flowering plant of *Anemone coelestina* var. *Souliei*, cauline leaves of *Aconitum souliei*, fruiting branch of *Berberis soulieana*

Ten empty Coca Cola and eight empty Johnnie Walker bottles filled half way

Danh Vō was born on the island of Phu Quoc, South Vietnam, in 1975 and settled in Denmark with his family in 1979. Vō, now residing in Mexico City, has had solo exhibitions at museums and institutions such as the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, The Art Institute of Chicago, Kunsthalle Basel, Kunsthalle Friedericianum in Kassel and the Steedijk Museum Amsterdam. In 2012 he won the HUGO BOSS PRIZE.

Vō's work explores the intersections of personal experience and major historical events, including the impact and mutations of Catholicism as it spread through colonization. His artworks reflect on the paradoxes inherent to the construction of identity. His use of objects evokes the historical circumstances which shape contemporary life: "I don't believe that things come from within you. To me things come out of the continuous dialogue you have with your surroundings," he has said.

*List of lenders*

**Untitled**, 2008

Private Collection, Turin

**Good Life**, 2007

Private Collection, Turin

**Self Portrait (Will)**, 2008

Collection Klosterfelde, Hamburg

**Galoppa!**, 2009

Collection John Morace and Tom Kennedy, Los Angeles

**Oma Totem**, 2009

Ravetto Collection, Turin

**Massive Black Hole in the Dark Heart of our Milky Way**, 2012

Ishikawa Collection, Okayama, Japan.

Photography by Nick Ash, Florian Kleinefenn, Jacopo Menzani, Markus Tretter, Uwe Walter

**BOSS**  
HUGO BOSS

Supported by BOSS  
at Bridlesmith Gate,  
Nottingham.

THE DANISH ARTS FOUNDATION

