*A Frame Laid Bare*: A Review of Letitia Hills “The Lumper Project”

by: Francine Marquis

There is something to be said through naked mediums. The unaltered neutrality of leaving an artwork bare and uncovered. The two sculptural works of visual artist Letitia Hill are an excellent example of utilizing “neutrality” as a mode of engagement.

*The Lumper Project IV*, showcases white cast ceramic potatoes which are cross-sectioned from their furthest points and mounted flush against the white gallery wall. These divided segments are perfectly spaced from one another and assembled horizontally in 12 equidistant rows from floor to ceiling. The only break in the meticulously structured display is a circular absence where the ceramic potatoes are vacant exposing bare wall. This frame draws the eye in and heightens the calculated symmetry found within the rest of the installation.

As the viewer, I am not sure whether I enjoy or dislike this chosen absence. I find myself drawn to it but also displaced by it—left to assume its purpose. So much apparent attention is given to form and order, leaving me to question what role emptiness plays in framing the viewers perception. Whether or not I am captivated or left directionless, the coherency is there and I was directed with the same level of intent seen in her work.

Along side the wall installation we find *The Lumper Project I*, a series of five separate sculptures, alined in a row, each hosting nine white ceramic potatoes, this time in full form, individually mounted onto the top of steal rods welded at its base to a steel plated stand. Three meters tall, the tactility and almost whimsical form the potatoes plays on the stark contrast of the rigidity and cold nature of their steel supports. Their simplicity brings the two collections together with both formal qualities and the choice of materials.

When an artist chooses to utilize the natural qualities of their material, be it wood, stone, clay, canvas or paper, it creates a moment frozen in time. It is a state of metamorphosis, which allows the viewer to see beyond material and object straight into the realm of intent. There is no happenstance, it is a clear and deliberate attempt to push ones perception of what is familiar into what is actually being addressed/represented. Letitia Hill has entered into that space, giving precedence to concept and intent. We no longer see a potato, but see what this mass collection actually means with its ghostly absence.