

**Course après le temps (Race after time) (1972).** The artist has always been fascinated by the idea of time flowing by, a fascination bordering on anxiety. In a sense, all of his works fight against the oblivion of all of the hours and days which pass us by. The diary is a privileged witness of this impossible struggle. It is a testimony, in 'crossed out numbers', to our passage on Earth and the derisive or futile utility of our actions. But it is also, and most importantly, a map. Pierre Courtois likes to recall that it is the map of the day, and thus one can divide up the day as one divides up a space. Dividing of days and months graphically is exactly like circumscribing land with fence-posts. The stratigraphic element, which is so important to Pierre Courtois, is clearly linked to memory, and thus to the passing of time. In the 1980s he created box paintings in which he would place 'dead' objects, that is to say 'recollections of his walks': birds' skulls, eggs, nests, etc.

**Olivier Duquenne, 2012**

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