

**Sculpture**  
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Do-Ho Suh  
Whitney Museum at Philip Morris  
By Audrey Walen

Continuing to develop work that deals with the question of individuality versus a greater group collectivity and the concurrent sense of military or political might that such masses contain, Do-Ho Suh's installation at the Whitney Philip Morris strikes a confrontational position. *Some/One* was made in response to a request by the curators at the site for a new installation piece. Suh added a new element to his earlier preoccupations, evidently recognizing the impact of this move to a museum and, in particular, to an institution housed within a corporate entity such as the Whitney Philip Morris. Unlike his earlier playful anti-monument, *Public Figures* (1998), which features thousands of tiny people holding up a pedestal, *Some/One* strikes a far more serious and pointedly political position. No tiny faces gazed up at you with arms outstretched.

Approaching the space through the soaring atrium of the Philip Morris lobby, a viewer runs the gauntlet of woolen suits and hard-cornered briefcases rushing through Grand Central Station (American corporate conformity at its most clichéd) to view a show that raises questions of conformity versus personal anonymity. In the gallery, there were literally thousands of dog tags covering the floor and filling the space from wall to wall. Viewers had to walk on top of these dog tags, which was difficult to do without thinking about the identities of the soldiers memorialized by their name, rank, and serial number. But bending over to read them, the viewer discovered nothing more than random meaningless words, broadening the work from a focus on individual narrative to a universal reading.

In the center of the gallery the metal dog tags rose up to form a scaly robe, arms outstretched, with its back to the door. The shiny surface of the carefully arranged individual tags radiated out in waves from the central figure. This Minimalist grid-like system evoked order and factory production—the anonymity of the individuals represented by the dog tags and the industrialization of their production in a synthesis of contemporary culture. A computer program was used in the generation of this composite figure, as well as in the generation of the random text on the dog tags.

Viewers circumnavigating *Some/One* discovered that the figure was open on the side facing away from the entrance. Arms outstretched as if in readiness for an embrace, its inner surface was mirrored. You confronted your own gaze peeking out from the inside of the larger-than-life, potentially threatening giant. Suh presents us with a fundamental question: will you be engulfed by *Some/One* and lose yourself within a greater entity—corporate, cultural, political, social—or is what you see when you look at yourself in the mirror going to be the preeminent force? Suh does not make that determination for you.