

JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

Claire Cowie
“Stagings”

July 3 – August 3, 2002

Reception for the Artist: Wednesday, July 3rd 5:30-7:30PM

James Harris Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of watercolors, sculpture, and photogravures by Seattle artist Claire Cowie. The imagery is inspired by a bizarre architectural model that Cowie built and populated with miniature ballerinas, kittens, garden gnomes and other tiny kitsch figurines. She photographed the structure and its inhabitants using the images as a starting place for her works.

Cowie’s wall-size watercolors depict these small figurines, toy animals, and model-landscaping elements on a large scale. Despite their size, the pieces are spacious and light, painted loosely with spare brushstrokes. The watercolors are accompanied by small plaster sculptures coated in dripping layers of white latex paint and accented with touches of color. The forms are ambiguous; some are animal, some are human, and some are both. Five photogravures of scenes from within the house give the show its grounding in this mysterious world of Cowie’s origin.

The three elements of watercolor, sculpture, and photogravure work together to construct different representations of this house inspired by the artist’s personal experiences. Though Cowie’s work draws upon stories, events and people in her life, meaning is not exclusive to her alone. By framing common objects in a context of ambiguity, she offers viewers an opportunity to place themselves into this narrative that stretches across media.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday 10:30 to 5:30 and by appointment. Photography is available upon request.