Small *Worlds* and

Impossible Realities

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First Things First

I have always found myself fascinated with the impossible worlds of make believe. Ever since I was a child, I have been engaged with fairy tales and the invention of places that seem too foreign and fantastic to be real. I have carried this mentality from my youth into my artwork, moving from watercolor illustration into the realm of three-dimensional construction of imaginary spaces.

When I began my SMP, I struggled to find the medium through which I could best form these worlds of my imagination. I have always worked in watercolor and ink in the context of illustrated children's books. I thought I would continue using these same mediums but as I preceded, I realized that this was not enough. I had an impulse to build these worlds in order for them to become more real. I needed the viewer to have a tangible connection with the work in order to see that the structure, the space, could be possible.

This began my exploration into the realm of small worlds and dioramas. I built *Oliver's Travels*, three diorama boxes depicting the story of a young boy who falls asleep during his mathematics class. Accompanying these boxes was a short narrative of the story that the boxes told. I began to realize more and more that if I wanted the works I was building to encompass the same magical fantasy that is captured within a child's dream and the inner workings of their imaginative minds, that I could not structure the narratives quite so forcefully.

This realization began my understanding that to create a world is to create a mystery. Throughout the remainder of my first SMP semester, I have been creating and then photographing models of spaces from my own imagination that evoke feelings of mystery and the ethereal and haunting qualities of dream worlds. Through photography, a medium that suggests reality and documentation, I attempt to capture the moments through which the world of reality and the world of the fantastic dream cross over, enveloping the viewer in a state of altered belief. I challenge them to question whether the image I provide is a real and existing space, or whether they must dispel it as a fantasy, or a fairy tale. I urge them to, just for a moment, believe in the impossible reality of these spaces.

I tend to draw from iconic images within children's stories and fairy tales: an enchanted bedroom forest, a troll behind the curtain, a monster under the stairs, a castle in the sky. With these images, I gesture toward the imagination that we once had as children when we believed that anything was possible. With this nostalgia in mind, my images place interesting and ominous twists on the content that we may slightly recognize. Without explanation of the connection to the recognizable facets of other stories, the viewer is left to create their own meaning and their own story. This is when the work I have created truly captures fantastic and dream-like experiences like those in the mind of a child.

I hope to continue exploring these themes of the open narrative, references to the realm of children's stories, questioning reality, and the construction of space through my future in SMP 2. It is obvious through my discoveries this semester that I have only begun to scratch the surface of the intriguing world of constructing and deconstructing the realm of the dream. This document book is constructed to show a progression of my ideas, artworks, and written responses throughout the semester. It is designed to demonstrate my understanding of myself as an artist through my own narrative.

Words You Should Know

       To begin, you should probably understand how a few words are truly defined, and how these words can define my SMP in one sentence. I have chosen the definitions that are most essential in understanding the connections to my artwork and how these terms affect my artistic exploration.

Reality |rēˈalətē| noun (pl. **-ties**)

The world or the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them *: he refuses to face reality | Laura was losing touch with reality.*
A thing that exists in fact, having previously only existed in one's mind *: the paperless office may yet become a reality.*

Imagination |iˌmajəˈnā sh ən| noun

The faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses *: she'd never been blessed with a vivid imagination.*
The ability of the mind to be creative or resourceful *: technology gives workers the chance to use their imagination.*
The part of the mind that imagines things *: a girl who existed only in my imagination.*

Narrative |ˈnarətiv| noun

A spoken or written account of connected events; a story *: the hero of his modest narrative.*

Photograph |fōtə graf| noun

A picture made using a camera, in which an image is focused onto film or other light-sensitive material and then made visible and permanent by chemical treatment.

Belief |bi lēf| noun

An acceptance that a statement is true or that something exists *: his **belief in** God | a **belief that** solitude nourishes creativity.*

Thus…

Through a *photograph* and *belief* in a *narrative* that stems from one's own *imagination*, anything can become a *reality*.

When It Was Summer...

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Over the summer I created two works. One was an accordion book entitled *Microbes* and one was a series of three sculptural perspective boxes entitled *Oliver's Travels*. The three dimensional work that I completed really led me into the work I've done throughout the semester.

We read through the text *Themes of Contemporary Art Visual Art after 1980* in an attempt to gain an understanding of current themes within contemporary art as well as those artists who create work based in those themes. I was intrigued by the themes of **Time** and **Place**. I still find these two themes to be very applicable to the work I am creating. I also explored the work of two artists, Paula Hayes and Alexis Rockman. I wrote an essay on each of these artists, describing connections and comparisons between my own work and their artwork.

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What I Discovered about Time

While reading through the various themes of our text, I found myself intrigued by the idea of time. Time is something that seems so intangible, yet is always so present, and important, to my artwork. Time is in my interest through narrative—the creation of a space of time through sequential images, scenes, scenarios, etc. It is clear, however, that narrative time is not the only time that other artists explore.

While I was interested in Peter Fischli and David Weiss's film concerning a random sequencing of time created by the "domino effect", I realized that this is not exactly the form of time that captures my attention. I do not necessarily enjoy the uncontrolled time, but rather the ability to draw a reader through time within another place. The one thing that does speak true to me with Fischli and Weiss is that they seem to believe that there is a "devotion to time spent in creative play" which "contradicts how time is valued in day-to-day life". (p111) This statement could be applied to the creative play of children as well: moments in a child's life when they spend their time in make believe, simply for the joy of play. This may be a stretch, but I felt there was a connection to my own ideas of the fantasy world and play of a child's imagination.

One may think of time through the ideas the book presents: movement, change, representation, and history. The area that interests me the most—and which I have already touched on—is the narrative, which the text also discusses at length. The narrative "visualizes a story by representing a key moment, or moments, in an event as it is unfolding." (p114) Specifically in my own work, I tend to use "multi-episodic" formats, like my children's books and my recent work with a story told through a series of sculpted and arranged scenarios within enclosed boxes. Multi-episodic, as the text describes, is a format employed frequently within cartoons, graphic novels, and illustration. I find all three of these formats close to my own work, and thus am more attracted to their use of the narrative time. I particularly enjoyed looking further into the interesting and bazaar narrative works of Laylah Ali and Kojo Griffin. They seem to incorporate familiar human experiences with their own twisted and unusual worlds and characters. With the scenes depicted by these artists, we are left to play the narrative through in our own minds, recalling other situations we have seen like those represented. Thus, these images become only a snap shot of a larger period of time. We relate to these situations on a human level, though most of the characters depicted by Griffin and Ali are animal in form and quite different from our selves.

Time is something that can be measured in a variety of ways, depending on our cultural beliefs, understandings, and even imagination. The book delves into the idea of parallel universes and even other dimensions in which time may not exist on the same level. I find the artist mentioned, Matthew Ritchie, to have extremely intriguing works that create a new world through their intricacy. His works seem to explore time and space in a biological and scientific way, though also through his own unique imagination and his fantastical eye for creation. His narratives are certainly something I will be looking to in the future for more movement and ingenuity in my own constructed worlds.

The history of time, while quite relevant to the world around us, is something that interests me less within my own artwork. This, however, does not mean I did not enjoy reading about Kara Walker and the intriguing silhouettes that she constructs. I find these a very interesting way to place the viewer "in" the world of the artwork. The viewer's necessity to turn to see the story and spend time viewing each character's action is in line with the idea of a storybook. This is something I may attempt in the future with my own

stories. The cyclical presentation is very interesting. The silhouette, of course, adds a mysterious quality of the unknown, who are the characters? Walker's focus on topics of history may not hold great interest to me, but I do appreciate her style and approach of how she conveys information.

As I proceeded through the chapter, I wished that there were a contemporary artist that created works for a child-audience. I would say that in a child's mind, time is something that seems to stretch for ages—commercials between cartoons, time before mom comes to pick them up from school, the very length of a school day. My interest with time is exploring the endlessness of time that fantasy can have for a child. This concept is still in the works, and a bit vague, I will admit. But it is something I wish to explore through the construction and appearance of my works—to make the worlds that I create look endless and almost as though they are from the perspective of a child. I will hold onto the concept of time and incorporate it into my works through my SMP work this fall and see if the ideas take me in the direction I wish to go.

What I Discovered about Place

"In creating a simulated place, an artist is engaged in an unusual quest: to create an alternative world (or detail of one) that evokes the real one and yet retains its identity as a world apart…The viewer would find themselves transported into another realm brought magically to life within the borders of art." (p170) This quote from the text speaks to exactly what I want my artwork to do. I want to create a world that is so apart from what the viewer sees as reality, that they are drawn in to explore and see what this unusual "place" could truly be. The world of fantasy is about creating a new, unexplored place that becomes the viewers' reality for the time they spend with the work. Place, and subsequently, space are require careful consideration and planning for the viewer to believe the world that is created.

The book defines place as "real or imagined. A place is a site of possibility, hypothesis, and fantasy—a somewhere where something may occur." (p154) Artwork can emphasize these places that are "real", whether through landscapes or other works that depict a scene that exists somewhere in the world. The imagined place, however, introduces a factor of the making the unknown known. Paul Noble, who the book discusses briefly, created an entire city that has never existed. His drawings, some of which seem to be depictions of existent places, are completely fabricated from his own imagination. I like this idea of drawing something recognizable and creating a familiar response from an audience, but still keeping the content entirely your own.

I also like the idea of bringing the viewer into a space where they must interact with what you have created. Richard Serra creates winding artworks through which the viewer must walk in order to fully experience each piece. If I could incorporate this into my works, perhaps I could make the viewer "feel" the worlds I create from an even more personal view. I think I am going to dabble more in the realm of creating on a scale through which the viewer may walk and interact. In order to fully realize my idea of the imaginative becoming another "world", I think this could be a step in the right direction.

What I have been working on, and what the book discusses at length, are dioramas. Looking at Joseph Cornell's shadow boxes has shown be some of the appropriated spaces that can be formed inside the shallow and restricted area of the box. While his works are quite different than mine in content, they still "create alternate worlds in the surrealist

tradition." (p168) This is not an idea all too far from my own. "Curator Toby Kamps noted that most dioramas 'present idealized concentrated views' and that the simulations 'engage our sense of depth perception and with it, a bodily awareness of space, which encourages us to make the imaginative leap into their constructs.'" (p168) This is what I intended to do with my own dioramas. I wanted to engage the viewer with a perspective view that allowed them to peer into the worlds that Oliver created with his own mind. I felt that their scale made the scenes more intimate and alluring—such as looking through a keyhole into a forbidden room.   This "leap into their constructs" is what I want the viewers to desire. I want them to feel pulled into the worlds.

I was most thoroughly excited about the breadth of the book's discussion on simulated places. I opened this discussion of place with the book's quote that comments on the artist's ability to create an alternative world that beckons to the viewer for an exploration. I particularly became fascinated with the work of Alexis Rockman who works with references to ecological and biological constructs, but creates alternate situations in which change what we think about these two fields of study. A change in the natural world immediately become unnatural, and thus captures the attention of a viewer and sends them into an unreal setting—a different "world".

One must question what occurs when the artwork becomes so unreal that there is no real "place" at all. The world of digital art has already brought us to this strange realization. While we all may make remarks at our parents "old school" style of going "to the internet" for information, can we actually call the digital and computerized realm a "place"? Digital video works, abstraction, online artwork, projections, all exist within a strange "placeless space" as the book describes. I have yet to delve into the world of digital/online art, but I do think that there is something to this idea of creating a world that has no place. Like understanding we are on a planet, but knowing nothing about the galaxies that dwell outside of our own. How is it possible to understand all of the places, all of the worlds that may or may not exist?

The child needs only to shut his or her eyes and they immediately find themselves immersed within a world of their own imagination. Here they find whatever they need, whatever they want. There are dreams, there are nightmares, there are things they know and things they have never seen. There are places they want to explore and places they wish they could escape. For the moment of the play, these worlds feel so very real. It is possible that they do not even realize that the worlds are unattainable in reality. I want to create these worlds in a tangible nature—through illustration or sculpture, viewable or participative, placeless space or concrete construction. These are the major concepts that I hope to study concerning place.

Why Paula Hayes Interested Me

I first found myself attracted to the living botanical sculptures of Paula Hayes from a news special on CBS about the growing trend of terrariums at the beginning of the summer. I had been thinking a great deal about terrariums prior to seeing the show, and observing her work only made me further intrigued by the idea. Hayes' work is inspiring—hand blown glass containers brimming with plants, mosses, ferns, dirt, and even the occasional creature such as a leopard slug. An entire world encased within sculptural glass.

In an interview from her website about her work Nocturne of the Limax Maximus, Hayes describes her childhood and how it has affected her artwork. "I grew up in a very

rural place. Most of my childhood was spent with my horse and the landscape and building forts. That space in between the imaginary landscape and the landscape that I truly inhabited let my imagination grow [and that] is still that place I work in."[1] Here I see a huge connection between my own artistic mind and that of Hayes. These micro-landscapes that she constructs are coming not only from her agricultural background, but also from the imaginary landscapes that her mind creates. These imaginary landscapes are her own miniature "worlds" which she builds and cares for with a nurturing fervor. Her focus is on the interaction between the caretaker and these environments, for without this interaction the works would be lost. "Hayes reminds the viewer that art need not be an object, but rather may require the viewer's interaction and even care. [She] strives to preserve and nurture her environments, offering a hopeful outlook for the future of the larger world."[2]

Paula Hayes, Terrarium, Photography by Sherry Griffin,
http://www.paulahayes.com/terrariums/gallery.php?g=2&i=6

What interests me so much about her work is the potential to create something so open to and dependent on the viewer, yet something so contained and sustainable within itself. Terrariums, to me, are a place to create a world that could be either real or imaginary. They are a "space" as our text would describe. They are dioramas that contain a living environment that is entirely open to our viewing. They are growing and changing; in this way, her works are also dependent on the theme of Time.[3] Over time the worlds will transform and become something new, though still contained.

It is obvious that her works have ties to sustainability, ecology, and environmental science. Terrariums themselves are self-sustaining. My own curiosity with the works is less in regard to their scientific nature (though I do have a soft spot for any living creature and

[1]Paula Hayes, "MoMA: Behind the Scenes: Paula Hayes, Nocturne of the Limax maximus", November 15, 2010, http://paulahayes.com/press/video.php (accessed August 10, 2011).

[2] "Pubic Art Fund Archived Project Paula Hayes," November 2007, http://publicartfund.org/pafweb/projects/07/everydayeden/hayes/hayes-07.html (accessed August 13, 2011).

[3] Jean Robertson, *Themes of Contemporary Art Visual Art after 1980,* 2nd ed, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 111-189.

the study of the biological world). Rather, I am interested in their contained growing selves and the prospect for these worlds to orchestrate a story. As I have created a few dioramas thus far, it is easy for me to see the interesting difference that can occur when living subjects are introduced to the miniature environments. They make the feeling of the work that much more real and relatable to the viewer, while also allowing for change within the piece. The plants would grow around the construct like a real, existing world, drawing the viewer into its environment as though it were a life sized, participative space. Hayes' ideas and sculptures have provided new doors for my own artwork, leading me to new ideas and expanding upon my own thoughts of the contained world.

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   http://tang.skidmore.edu/index.php/posts/view/238/ (accessed August 10, 2011).

Why Alexis Rockman Interested Me

I have always found myself drawn to the graphic nature of the work of comic book artists and the book jackets in the science fiction section of the library. I guess I would say this comes from my love of the fantastic, or the impossible images that these artists create. What fantasy and science fiction offers is a mutated image of something we once thought to be a stable truth.   This creation of an alternate universe is one of the reasons I am so entranced by the futuristic landscapes and surreal scientific illustrations of Alexis Rockman.

"A combination of natural science and fantasy, [Rockman's] work explores the predatory relationship between nature and culture. Inspired equally by scientific curiosity and artistic compulsion, his startling images are at once literal, naturalistic, and entirely imaginary."[4] This description provides a very accurate image of the paintings with which I have become fascinated. My first reaction to Rockman's paintings was an admiration of the intricacy, color, space, and beauty found within the bazaar scenes. *Manifest Destiny*, a mural Rockman painted in 2003, shows a futuristic version of the Brooklyn that has been flooded and overtaken by a myriad of creatures.[5] I admire the space created within the work—from the environment beneath the surface of the soil to the underwater level filled with the

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[4] Polyxeni Potter, "Manifesting ecologic and microbial connections [about the cover]," Emerging Infectious Disease, April 2006, Available from: http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol12no04/about_cover.htm

[5] Polyxeni Potter, "Manifesting ecologic and microbial connections [about the cover]," Emerging Infectious Disease, April 2006, Available from: http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol12no04/about_cover.htm

deteriorating familiar Brooklyn landscape to the surface of the disappearing world. His paintings are a world in themselves, opening the viewer's eyes to a new space and a new creation that is utterly different from what we know as our reality today.

Alexis Rockman, *Manifest Destiny,* **2004, oil on wood, 96 x 288 in. http://alexisrockman.net/projects/american-icons**

"Thomas Lovejoy, the scientist who first used the term 'biological diversity'," discusses Rockman's work: "'His vision is based on a real understanding of what's going on,' Lovejoy says of Rockman's paintings. 'It's a surrealism that is seriously anchored in reality.'"[6] This contortion of something known and familiar into something new and foreign is what makes the fiction believable to audiences. Rockman's paintings are further applicable to today's environmental awareness and even crisis. Is the future of our own world depicted within these surreal paintings of mutation and disaster?

I do believe that if I had the opportunity to discuss my infatuation with "creating a world" through my art with Alexis Rockman, that he would support and agree with the magic that can be created in this way. Rockman invents worlds of what "could be" with the environmental impacts that we continue to have on the earth. They are not necessarily worlds that the viewer wants to be drawn into, but rather worlds that the viewer is pulled into out of instinctual reaction. In a way, Rockman is drawing our homes and then placing them in a dangerous and undesirable context from our own fault. I want my works to compel viewers to be a part of their experience, though I wish to do this on a more welcoming level.

I find that Rockman's works are tragically beautiful, and I admire his style and spatial construction. His knowledge of science intrigues me, and his opinions of the world's future are evident and undeniable. I want to adopt his compelling nature and his two dimensional construction of a world through an image. I want to attempt to incorporate his graphic art, yet painterly, style within my own children's stories and further artwork.

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[6] Cathleen McGuigan, "Painter Alexis Rockman Pictures Tomorrow," December 2010, http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/Painter-Alexis-Rockman-Pictures-Tomorrow.html (accessed August 18, 2011).

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What I First Thought:

Initial Intentions

As I start my work this semester, I am thinking mostly about child's creative play and the imaginary world. My works this summer progressed from a two-dimensional drawn work to a three dimensional representation of a story. My boxes give the viewer an opportunity to "peer" into the created world, which was my original goal and intention. I've begun thinking, however, that this simple interaction is not enough.

As a child, we understand thing through play and through our imaginative games and ideas. In my sketches and in my thoughts lately, I have been sketching a young girl named Maxie who lives in a house where her imagination runs wild. I want to try and bring this concept into my own work through the creation of a sculptural work that incorporates play and audience interaction. I intend to build a dollhouse that can become Maxie's house of imagination. As I created separate worlds within my summer workboxes, I want to create imaginative worlds within the rooms of the house. Instead of putting Maxie permanently within each separate scenario, the work will require the viewer to place her within each room. I want the piece to engage the viewer in this child-like creative play, but also still illustrate a sort of story that I have created in my own way.

If I am pleased with the result of this project, I will in turn begin to create more participatory works that engage the viewer on more than a simply visual level. I find this viewer participation essential in all of my works, even the two dimensional books I create. The viewer must pick up the work and handle its contents. Maxie's dollhouse should produce a very similar hands-on effect, while also allowing me the creative initiative to form a cohesive set of interconnected worlds that surround the main character. This is my overarching goal for all of my works over the course of this semester. I want to tell a story, engage my audience on a level that reminds them of their play as a child, and to create the scenes from my own creative imagination.

I intend to read more into the creative play and imagination of the child from a more psychological point of view so that I can use this toward my future works and ways to engage the viewer just as we were engaged as a child. I want to foster the same imaginative curiosity within my adult audience as we experiences when we were little. I am finding that for this project play is essential.

When laura Asked Me Questions the First Time

1. Who or what influenced your decision to make art?

"When I was younger, I think around 4th or 5th grade, I was really into drawing cartoons. I had a good friend and together we would draw in our sketchbooks and it was around that time I first realized that I might be getting better at art. We were illustrating a series of books we had created- I wish I still had them- there was a dragon, a little bird creature, and an evil unicorn. The evil unicorn had a magical crystal and all the other animals were trying to steal it- that was the basis of the story. And we would just make tons of these drawings. In fact I still think the stuff I was working on back then is relevant to my work today. I still focus on the basic idea of the narrative in my work, but now I am trying to create a narrative without using words.

Also, when I was in fifth grade, I was chosen to be in the Art Club at my middle school. This really had an impact on me pursuing art to the degree I have today. Those chosen were a select few who really enjoyed and put forth great effort during art class. After 5th grade, art stopped in my parochial middle school. So this opportunity to keep going with art really inspired most of my interests in pursuing it further."

2. Who is your favorite artist and why?

"I don't really have a favorite artist in the classical sense of the term. I really relate to a lot of the lesser-known artists. In a way those artists have to be discovered. Lawrence Yang is really good and I follow his work a lot online. He paints images on wooden blocks, making a statement about space, but also using characters he invents to tell small narratives. I admire his color use and his ability to make a narrative without words. I like so many people it's difficult to pick just one. There are so many that I follow online through their artist blogs and just through social networking. Vanja Borcic is a fabulous painter I follow as well that I first found in an exhibit booth at ArtScape in Baltimore. He works with amazing creatures and fantastic settings. I respect illustrators, generally speaking, and extremely innovative crafters.

I think that my interest in the lesser-known artist comes from my affinity for art that may be considered "lower art" by some critical people. I love children's illustrations, aesthetically beautiful design artwork, and those individuals who create artwork because it makes them happy. I feel a connection with these artists that I follow online, because I too am a "lesser-known" artist who makes things because it makes me happy to do so.

3. What artist or type of art do you dislike the most and why?

"I don't like- and keep in mind this is just my opinion- I don't like abstract art. I can appreciate it if there is some aesthetic quality. But I don't like when people use art as a puzzle and try to create some secretive meaning that has to be discovered. It is good if the artwork inspires questions or if it creates controversy from an art critical standpoint, but I just don't enjoy that type of view myself. For me, I like art that represents something and playfully connects to all people. I like when the art is relatable to the audience, not when it restricts certain individuals from seeing something within it.

On another note, I can appreciate still life paintings, but I hate making them. I struggle with the three-dimensional aspect when drawing from real life source material. I also just don't like the idea of painting something that is sitting right in front of me when I could be painting something surreal within my own mind. Everyone has seen a basket of fruit.

Perhaps instead of replication, we can try to open the viewers' eyes to something that have never seen before. Or perhaps our representation of something they are seeing.

4. What inspires you? What are some of the sources both within art and outside of art that you turn to?

"I have a Tumblr (Note: a Tumblr is a website where people can upload and share photographs, art, and music with other people all over the world who "follow" their pages). It's my major source of inspiration. It is full of pictures that please me and that I find both aesthetically and contextually inspiring. If there is ever a day where I just feel completely uninspired, like I don't have a single thing to draw, all I need to do is get on Tumblr and look at a few people's pictures to get the inspiration I need to draw. It just gives me that little boost. It also helps to remind me what certain things I am attracted to and how they interact with my life, my art, and my ideas.

Movies I have watched, books I have read, people I have spoken to, and events that have happened to me over the course of my life also inspire me. I think it is almost impossible to make a work of art that doesn't relate to your life on some level. You are putting bits and pieces of your visual life journal into the works, whether you realize it or not.

5. What draws you to the medium and materials you work in?

"Before this summer, I had been in a sculpture class, so I had made three dimensional objects but I didn't really know what kind of artist I was. I moved into making books, and really enjoyed it. I found some sort of comfort in telling a narrative within the bound format of the book. Recently, I switched back to three dimensional work after I realized that I needed to more fully understand the way three dimensional objects exist in space in order to make my two dimensional work believable. Three-dimensional work helps me better understand space because in a way it allows me to be in that space and to interact with it. Right now I am using lots of different objects and almost collaging them together in an attempt to make my viewers believe in this invented space. It sounds cliché but I'm trying to "make a world." I just find this medium really engaging, it's accessible and it's fun.

 Also, I think it's important to mention I didn't feel like I could start working on my own original thoughts and ideas until around sophomore year. I often felt like the style I work in, and even now the manner in which I am approaching the medium is challenged in many ways as being considered a "craft" as opposed to a "fine art." I often feel very challenged in my work and in the message I want to send. It makes me a bit defensive regarding my work and ideas."

6. What, in your mind, makes a work of art successful?

"All art is successful on a personal basis, for me. A majority of the time, I am making artwork under my own terms and for myself, or as gifts for others. I find the most success when an artwork looks how I wanted it to look, or fulfills the purpose I set out for it to fulfill. Unless I completely botch something up, I usually consider my work to be successful. There have certainly been works that I have created, and been a little disappointed in, but I think this is just avenue for rework! If I didn't accomplish what I wanted to accomplish, I look at it more as an opportunity to recreate and try again.

Also, I feel success when the person you girl the work to loves it. I have written multiple children's books for other individuals and seeing their response at such a precious and hand-made item really makes my day. It's then that I realize that everything I worked so hard to create was worth it. It's hard to call something you have created "unsuccessful" because the process of making it usually provides some sort of happiness. I think there is a problem if you are ever unhappy about what you are creating. This means the process is not going as planned."

7. What motivates you to make art?

"Well right now my SMP deadlines are motivating me. Haha. My classes at school help me to manifest my ideas, the deadlines help me to set realistic goals for myself. Mainly, I make art because it makes me happy. Sometimes I even create art subconsciously, like if I am doodling during class, or making pipe cleaner sculptures during my Education classes with the fidget toys. Making things never feels like a chore for me. I really love creating things, and that is what motivates me.

Little kids motivate me also. They just have amazing imaginations and can make anything seem like it is reality. I almost miss that feeling of play when you could be anything and play anywhere in the world you want. That freedom of imagination is really something I wish adults still exercised. I have especially become motivated with my interactions with children in the art classrooms of the public schools for my education observations. I find that when you create things you are demonstrating for children that they can make things, fostering their creativity and urging them to think of art as an outlet. You are showing them how to be creative. It's upsetting that art programs are being removed from some school systems."

8. How is your art a response to the world you live in?

"In a lot of ways the work I've been creating lately has a lot to do with education. Psychology is such a large part of my art. What are kids thinking? What goes on in a child's imagination? I've had to revisit my own fears and experiences as a child while I've been creating this dollhouse, as well as ask others what fears/imaginative experiences they can recall. I take these personal elements of what my imagination was like as a child and I apply it to other people, I make it relatable. The audience can be either adults or children, but I feel as though I can cause them to relate through their own imagination- I try to take them back to the time when their imagination was overactive…or maybe just evoke their young imagination.

At the same time, I feel like my art is a response to my affinity with illustration. Illustration and graphic design is everywhere—in the media, in books we read, in directions for cooking food. These illustrations tell us something about the story. They tell us about what is going on in a visual field. I respond most clearly to visual representations, and I think in a way this influences my decision to work in such a graphic and illustrative style.

9. Ideally where do you see yourself in five years? How is art a part of that?

"I'm not sure where physically in the world I will be. I know I want a house, not a huge house, maybe like a cottage with a garden and some woods and a stream. I want a dog and I want kids, and it would be nice if the place I was living had space for them to play

outside. Nature definitely plays a big role in my life. It's within nature that you can find pure inspiration, created just by chance. The way mushrooms grow on the side of a fallen tree or the colors of the leave changing in fall, the smell of a fire. These things have impacts on my life and my artwork. They are peaceful for me, and they are inspiring. I definitely don't want to have to drive to get to some woods.

I want to be teaching art, and I want to be illustrating children's books. I think, I don't know in some ways illustration scares me. I don't like judgment, which makes being an art major almost terrifying for me. I like to make art for myself and for other people, but I don't know if I can submit to publishers or sell my work. That would be something I'd have to really work on personally before I could let go and get myself out there.

Really I would like to do something similar to what Carrie Patterson does in terms of exposing small children to the world of making things. Having kids over after school to just play around and create. I would also like to be able to ride my bike around. Maybe I'll go south. I like South Carolina with its coastal towns. The ocean can be just as inspiring as the forests."

When We Had Our First In-Progress Critique

9/22/11

The most critical issue I realized at the critique is the issue of transformation of space. I thought, as I was completing my rooms, that I was making worlds of fantasy, but I realized that they are coming across as a little decorative. "Let the psychology of it become

The Attic, September 2011, Mixed Media, Printed Image 12x18

it" is a powerful statement that came out at the critique and that really points in the direction I want to precede with the Dollhouse. Instead of thinking of these spaces as built and restrictive, I want to try to dabble in this psychological approach to spatial awareness.

Overall, I was pretty pleased with how the rooms were received. The work I put in with understanding three-

dimensional construction, and the décor of these spaces has prepared me to take a next step with my modeling and has encouraged me to try new ways of constructing that come from a more inventive point of view. I watched the movie *Coraline* after the critique to get a grasp Tim Burton's amazing worlds of stop motion and creepy imaginative sets.

I think critiques really give you a chance to open the floor to all kinds of ideas. I'm

going to pocket all the ideas that were discussed and think about how I can incorporate them into the rest of this house and my projects in the future.

Intention Statement

"Don't let the stuff become the room…let the psychology of it become it." From here onward, I am going to try to construct by this statement. I intend to proceed with my idea of the child's psyche and throw my inhibitions to the wind. For the remaining rooms of the house, I am going to try my best to let my own fantasy just populate the room. I am going to use papier-mâché, a material that generally is more flexible and free, and mold the situations in the room.

While I want this house to look fairly cohesive and like a body of work in itself, I think I want to really go with the remaining rooms and see if I need to make alterations at the end to the attic and the bed room. I think were I am struggling the most is with the personal attachment of the child to the fantasy. The fantasies that I have created seem a little detached, perhaps because I am not a child. I need to really put myself in the mind of a child with an overactive imagination, working to create his or her world.

With my further art works I am going to try to create works that can be photographed and printed or filmed, containing this inventive space really appearing to be some sort of wonky, twisted surreality. I still want to attempt some sort of stop-motion work that tells a story through movement but with limited textual or verbal prompting. I like the idea of creating a story without words, letting the work itself and possibly sounds and camera angles do the narrating. After I am finished with my Dollhouse, I want to start making prototypes for this movie. I am going to refrain from building a structure that contains the landscapes, as I think that this will cause me to run into the same issue I am having now with constraint. I will begin with just making some landscapes and atmospheric situations and then photograph them to "feel out" their impact on the audience.

I am still unsure of what I want this movie to be about, but I do know that I have been very inspired by Tim Burton's *Coraline*, a stop action about a young girl who travels to an alternate world where everything appears to be perfect. In this movie, there is a serious underlying creepy edge, which I have never been able to fully incorporate properly into my work. I may attempt to bring out my darker side with my future projects. When fantasy begins to merge with reality, the result may be more jarring and ominous than originally expected.

When Ying Li Visited My Studio

Today we visited the visiting artist, Ying Li's, studio space at the artists' house. It was very interesting to see the similarities between our own studio spaces and Ying's studio space. She works in oil paint, and her pieces were hung around the studio, displayed, as they would be in a gallery. She had various tables, a couch, windows that provided good lighting, and easels propped up against the wall. I really enjoyed seeing her pieces in person, opposed to simply in the slide show that we saw during her artist talk. She works with such texture and thick application that seeing them first hand made me feel differently about them than I had

when we saw them in the presentation. The thickness astonished me, and the use of color was very mesmerizing. She uses color just as a sort of suggestion. Several times, I was unsure of what I was looking at within the painting. Then Ying would say something like "Look, that boat there," and it would become clear to me what the landscape was. Her abstraction, for me, needs a little hinting to fully let me into the world she is creating. Some of the paintings she showed were more abstract than others, showing simply the mood of the atmosphere instead of a physical depiction.

When Ying visited my studio, I could tell that she was bringing some of her own style into the suggestions for my work. She said that for some of my rooms, I could use a sort of abstraction—just hinting at the things I want to show. She really urged me to play with scale, a comment I brought up as was suggested at the critique. She suggested also that I should try to make the rooms less rigid—in a way less controlled by the structure. I could do this by making some of the areas more visible than others. This really brought forth an idea for the hallway that I could perhaps "curtain off" some of the front view. It is an idea I want to sketch out further, but it is still developing. Just as my intentions remain, Ying said I should make the house "like the unreal is taking over the real". This is certainly my goal, and I plan to keep going in that direction.

The final thing Ying suggested to me is that I create a large sketch of the house. She said it needs to be at least life sized so I can plan exactly what I am going to be putting within each of the rooms on the same scale, as it will be as a finished product. I really like this idea. I am going to track down a piece of paper and make myself a blueprint!

When We Had Our Midterm Critique

Some things that were discussed that seemed important...

Something is going on in the photographs that I don't think I am achieving in the model itself
- The pictures achieve a cinematic quality that the dollhouse does not.
- The pictures create a sense of the unknown. Is the space big or small? Where is this space located? Are the structures real or fabricated?
- In the dollhouse this is all known because we can see inside it and touch it and know that it is real and miniature.

Artists
- I need to look more broadly at artists.
- Looking at miniature artists taking pictures of their miniatures might not be helping as much as other foci.
- Look into sculpture artists who take pictures of their sculptures.
  - Thomas Demand—paper worlds that he photographs...enormous
  - Greg Kreatson—follow up with Hannah because I can't find him...
  - Walk into the space itself, creepy childhood rooms...Carrie will get back to me about artists name...but I'll probably email her to be sure
  - Laurie Simmons—houses/dolls photographed, other set photography
  - Tomas Schuton—follow up with Joe because I can't locate his work online

- o Various focal points due to merged photos creates dream-like effect
- IT by Stephen King

Varied Media Choices
- Photographs, sculpture, video…these may all take me to different places
- What do I want my medium to be doing for the audience?
  - o If I find these pictures so successful because they are creating this space that may be large or may be small…will video really do the same thing? (I think that stop motion could open the door to a more cinematic approach to the set. Allow time to make a greater appearance, possibly just through slight motion with pieces of the set. Even audio could make an appearance.)
- The idea of a book format was suggested as well as narrative and the format of a storyboard. These both appeal to me a great deal.
- I need to think of how I would present these images, because this can also have a very strong effect on the audience—would they be big, or small…. book format or wall, in a row or separate? How do they interact if put together?

Language
- I need to hone the way I discuss my work. Wonky and Whimsical may not be the best adjectives to describe the imaginative and child-like feel I am exploring. Perhaps an unsure and skewed sense of reality? I'll look more into this language issue.

How I responded

The main issues discussed are actually the four headings of content that I have already outlined above: something is happening in the pictures that is not happening in the model, my choice of mediums and the possibility of a varied turn out, the language that I choose to describe my work and its content, and I need to look at a broader group of artist references,

1.) I think I need to start really identifying how best to exploit the fact that these pictures I am taking are creating a world that becomes unsure. The photos are creating a place that is between the real and the unreal to the audience. These spaces may be small models, or they may be huge and disorienting rooms. This moving back and forth between what the viewer should believe is real and what the viewer is seeing is what I think is working the best in my photos. What this means is that the models should not be in front of the audience that sees the photos. At first I wanted them to be accessible for this type of interaction, but I am realizing that I can "tap into" their creativity and imagination (so to speak) through these images on their own. It makes the surreality even more approachable and believable when they do not see where the images came from.

2.) Along these same lines, I need to start thinking about how the media I still want to explore will affect the experience of the audience—i.e. Stop action, book format, largely printed photos. The photos are successful because, as I discussed, they create this space that could be life-sized, or even larger than life. What is the best way to display this? Would changing medium to stop action video detract from this experience? Would giving the photos a narrative remove the sense of the unknown? I need to figure out how I want to approach this, and of course I do not know all the answers yet. I think that trying these things out will be the best way to discover if I really want to go in the route of these different media. Like Carrie said at the critique, I am at an exciting point because there are so many places I could go. Simultaneously, I need to think pragmatically as Joe suggested— These different approaches may take me to very different places.

3.) Sue brought up a very important at the end of the critique. I need to know how to talk about my artwork. I think my ideas are becoming more clear to me and I am branching out with my ability to talk and write about my art, but it is clear that I am still lacking some of the language necessary to discuss exactly what my art is doing for me. Sometimes I choose words based on what their meaning holds for me, when that same word may have a different meaning to another viewer of art. I need to sit down and brainstorm what words encompass the main message in my artwork. I have always struggled with conveying very specific ideas in a concise amount of words, so this is going to be challenging, but I think it will really help me clarify exactly what my work is doing—an essential part of the SMP process.

4.) Finally, I really need to add to my list of reference artists. It is clear that I have looked at artists who are doing the same thing as I am—creating miniatures and photographing them. The teachers all suggested I look more broadly at sculpture artists who photograph their work. I have done a little research on those artists that they suggested, and I intend to follow up even further with those that I could not identify from the recording of the critique. A general theme that seems to be immerging, however, is artists who take a photo of their work and that work in turn becomes transformed into something new in two dimensions. Many artists do this in ways different from miniatures, and I need to be open an receptive to these techniques and why they are doing this. I think it may be true that many of them art attempting to create some sort of world, just like me.

How My Process is Working

Right now, I feel very good about the direction that my SMP is moving. The content that I presented at this critique was very positively received and the ideas that I wanted to convey seemed to resonate with the teachers present. This being said, the positivity has not made me complacent. I know that there are still some technical and conceptual aspects that I need to sort through to take my work to another level. I think that the feedback I received was just what I needed to give me the added push to proceed with what I am doing.

Time wise, and taking into account my week lost due to my arm injury, I feel as though I am proceeding very well. I did not expect to have the dollhouse and the photographs done by this time, but I am glad that I have made that stride. From here I can continue to explore the world of stop animation using the prop that I have spent this time creating. This will allow me to see if it is still conveying the same feeling of distorted reality that I find in the photographs.

I need to watch some more stop action and films with sets that utilize a distortion of reality and dream-like settings. I have found that watching movies that use this really sets my creativity into motion. Coraline and the Science of Sleep have been two very inspirational films for me so far, and I want to continue to develop my ability to picture these worlds within my own mind. There is nothing worse for my model making than having my mind stuck between four walls, a floor, and a ceiling and not being able to think outside of them. Seeing inventive inspirations from other filmmakers, artists, and even literary sources really sets my own imaginative gears into motion.

As I discussed in my critique response, I need to start attaching words to my artwork. While I work, I am going to start keeping a list of words that represent what I am doing, or what my artwork is coming to stand for, in my eyes. I think this will help me to

see that I need to think clearly and represent my thoughts clearly in a more linguistic form. This will also help hone my intention statements and artist statements further down the line.

Restating My Intention Statement

Through my SMP work this semester, I am exploring the area of overlap between a child's reality with the world of their subconscious and its free, imaginative state. I am particularly interested in the state of a child's dream world or imaginative play. There are aspects of the child's subconscious that can entertain possible realities that the mind with a firm grasp of reality cannot. Spatial structure and the comprehension of time can drastically change within the world of dreams and fantasy, thus contorting our perception of environments and events. In dreams and in our imaginative play, we often believe things that we know could never be true. The creation and capturing of these "impossible realities" has become the main focus of my body of work.

I am currently creating models, or sets, which explore this transient state between the

child's understanding of real space and dream space. The first setting is the rooms within a child's house. I have begun with settings that are familiar—an attic, a bedroom, a hallway, a bathroom, a living room, and a kitchen. My goal through modeling, however, is to capture this overtaking of the reality by creating situations or events that would exist only within our dreams. The attic, for instance, plays into the sinister and dark connotations associated with climbing the ladder into the small, claustrophobic space. In a dream, this feeling would be amplified, causing manifestations of a crooked, splintered and threatening ladder, monsters lurking in the darkness and dark shadows that allude to vacant, yet possessed space.

I then photograph these created spaces so that they may be perceived as spaces existing in reality. As in a dream, this jarring contortion of reality may evoke a sinister and uncomfortable feeling. The viewer may find himself or herself questioning why the picture frame in the hallways is crooked, or why the ceiling in the bathroom appears to be receding backward at an angle that defies the construction of a level house, or what enormous creature is reaching its hand around the curtain in the hallway. When these perfectly recognizable spaces intersect with occurrence we know can only exist within dreams, we find ourselves placed in a strangely cinematic and temporal setting that challenges us to decide whether this is reality or fiction. We find ourselves believing that the photographs before us might be life-sized rooms with a real story. We may even find that we begin to feel the magic of the dream.

When I Studied and Presented My Source Artists

Thomas Demand is an artist who constantly poses the question, "What is real?"

Demand, born and still residing in Germany, takes inspiration from historical and cultural media sources, using images from crimes and other events to create intricately composed,

Thomas Demand, *Room*, 1996. Chromogenic color print, 67 3/4 x 7' 7 3/8" (172 x 232 cm)

life-sized replications out of cardboard and paper. He photographs these models, presenting a three-times-removed view of a familiar and widespread setting. His final photographs address the issue of what happens when the detail necessary to distinguish a familiar place is removed, leaving a sterile and deconstructed space that barely represents the factually documented image with which the work began.

With the physical matters of his work, Demand is concerned with very similar motives as myself—to use models in a way that makes the viewer unsure of the reality in the final image. The images are quite large, their size alone urging the viewer to believe that they exist as real structures. Through his transition from model to photograph, Demand "provides an opportunity [for us] to re-examine the fundamental capacity for deception that is intrinsic to photography."[7] It is upon the closest inspection of these images that we begin to see that something is amiss. The viewer begins to sense the artificiality of the materials, the perfection and smoothness of the surfaces that embeds a doubt within their minds. The viewer may recognize the setting from exposure to the media, or from the original source, but without the finite details that give the space context, the image may become an ambiguous and banal space.

Through this deconstruction of the space of a well-known, often sinister scene, Demand is focusing on the major theme of deconstructing the memory associated with the detail. Beginning with settings of crime scenes or infamous locations, he "systematically erases and replaces with his own fingerprints."[8] In many of his works, any trace of human presence or distinguishable references is removed, leaving artificial and clean surfaces. The spaces with which he is left become generic, though they are obviously specific in their subject matter. This is where his work begins to delve into the realm of the contradictory.

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[7] "Can You Believe It," Tate Etc 17 (2009): 13, Art & Architecture Complete, EBSCO, Web. 20 Oct. 2011.
[8] Efrat Biberman, "PAPER TRUTH: THE KNOW-HOW OF THOMAS DEMAND," Afterimage 37.6 (2010): 4-8, Art & Architecture Complete, EBSCO, Web, 20 Oct. 2011.

He is representing a "factual documentation [of a space], yet also fictional illusionism."[9] In *The Landing*, for instance, Demand depicts a scene of two vases that have been shattered upon a stairway. The entire photo has a "clinical, seemingly factual quality that we might associate with crime-scene photography. Demand is drawn to such images due to their attempt to faithfully represent reality."[10] Despite this "factuality", the image is devoid of evidence of human activity. We know that this situation is fabricated; yet we can also see that it is a form of documentation of an event that has already transpired.

These transpired events also evoke a heavy sense of time in Demand's works. In his work *Room*, Demand shows the audience a replication of a "New York hotel room in which Ron Hubbard, the controversial founder of the Church of Scientology, spent time in the early 1970s writing science fiction novels."[11] This image is amazingly static, yet also demonstrates a quality of time through the materials present in the space. It is obvious that someone has been living in the area. The bed is ruffled, littered with food and books and there is a mug on the table. Everything vital for a human being to survive and work is located within the edges of the photograph, aside from the person himself. I am intrigued by Demand's ability to deconstruct a memory from its original and true version, yet simultaneously provide the viewer with the ability to fill in his or her own narrative to complete the scene. In Demand's own words, "everything is there, just like someone left for the bathroom."[12]

What I find most engaging about Thomas Demand is that he and I appear to be striving toward different ends of the same goal. Demand wants the viewer to see his work as reality, and slowly realize the illusion within the scene. He allows them to create narratives, even though the image has a direct source in a historical context. Conversely, I want my viewer to see the image I provide as a situation that seems unreal, yet strangely reminiscent of a memory from a dream. My images open the door to various narratives as well, as each individual has a different perception of dreams and how they conflict with reality. Regardless of where we start on the spectrum between the real and the unreal, our major similarity lies in our desire to leave the audience lost in the area in between. Here they will continually question how the modeled artificial can blend with a truly sinister reality.

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Carl Warner, living and working in London, England, creates landscapes that seem to have leaped from the pages of a fairy tale to the photographic frames of his exhibitions. Some have insisted that his works appear "so real that they leave some insisting that they've really visited his imaginary worlds."[13]Although the content itself is by no means unfamiliar— a beach at sunset, a fishing village with tugboats and a lighthouse, a tropical underwater scene—Warner challenges the viewer's perception of what materials forms a landscape. Warner constructs these intricate, mystical, and fantastic scenes, deemed "foodscapes", entirely from perishable food items, creating commissioned works that explore the human relationship with food, place, culture, and ultimately with the world of fantasy.

Warner's process of construction must occur amazingly fast. His medium is highly perishable and thus does not allow time for uncertainties of composition and layout. This means that he must prepare with mental images and very complete sketches of the particular foodscape that he wishes to create. These drawings themselves are fantastical in themselves. In a CBS news interview and documentary, Warner walks the viewer through his process of planning, sketching, construction, and ultimately the finished product meshed together using Photoshop layering and alteration. His mastery of the food items is admirable. He knows how to produce texture and mood through his choice of material and realizes the relationship between these food textures and the world around us.

Carl Warner, *Bread Caravan*, Digital Print

Perhaps one of the most interesting facets to Warner's work is his use of scale. He builds his scenes through the camera lens, ultimately producing one photograph, from only one

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[13] Martha Teichner, "An artist's incredible edible landscapes - CBS News Video," *Breaking News Headlines: Business, Entertainment & World News - CBS News*, N.p., n.d, Web. 31 Oct. 2011, <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7386470n&tag=cbsnewsTwoColUpp

angle.[14] In his scenes, however, one may notice the extraordinary use of the food in differing scales. Using an illusory technique, Warner experiments with the proximity of the food to the camera to form depth in his works. This technique is expertly demonstrated in one of his works that depicts a kitchen that would appear to be from a village in Tuscany. In the foreground of the image, vegetables and bread appear to be "normal" in size. As the viewer proceeds further into the image, they find themselves seated at a table with quite the spread placed haphazardly upon the provolone tablecloth. Here we find a sliced cherry tomato serving as a punch bowl. The contrasting scale makes the items unfamiliar to the viewer, causing them to believe for a moment that the construction is not simply a food construction, but rather an actual space that may exist somewhere in the world. The actual scale of the images as Warner presents them also changes our association with these food items. They are printed and displayed in frames, appearing at first to be familiar landscapes. Warner even discussed a man who had said to him, "I've been to this beach. It's in Portugal."[15] I want my own work to embody this same use of scale to convey a space that may remind a viewer of a real location, or encourage them to suspend their disbelief for a moment to believe that the world I have constructed may be a real, even if only in their imagination.

What I find to be the largest common tie between Carl Warner and myself is the use of narrative in an image or video. Warner's images are designed to create a landscape with food items and they certainly all accomplish this feat. This is not the final impression that these images make on the viewer. Many of the images provide a narrative relating to the place that they represent in the real world or even a constructed narrative that the viewer begins forming upon first glance at the photograph. In one of his landscapes, Warner constructs a trailer in a Midwest style setting entirely from a loaf of bread. The door and windows of the trailer emanate a yellow glow as though from candlelight. Sky is streaked with wispy clouds that when further examined appear to be the marbleized streaks of a cut of beef. Ruffled noodles stand upright outside the trailer containing kale-like trash. Garlic bulb trash bags appear to be slouched upon the ground. An old truck drives by, full of more trash bags and other miscellaneous materials. The beef jerky telephone poles recede into the background, creating the awareness of a distant connection between this dwelling and others that cannot be seen.[16] This description is simply my own interpretation of the image that Warner has provided. I want to incorporate this open narrative into my own work— providing a scenario, but leaving the actual events up to the interpretation of the viewer.

Warner has worked mainly in commissions and advertising, but is beginning to explore the world of children's stories and animation. He has created several videos of his work as well, which I find most applicable to my own exploration of the video realm. While looking through his video works, I have noticed that there is the same change occurring that occurs in my own transfer between still shots and video. Video, while it may provide an outlet for a sequencing narrative, reduces the freedom and openness that a still shot can supply. His videos cross into the realm of animation in which an actual story is told. In his stills, conversely, he provides a scenario as well as the opportunity for the viewer to explore his world of edible creativity, as well as the chance to make them believe in a small surreality.

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[14] "Spotlight | Carl Warner | Photoshop.com," *Photo Editing, Photo Sharing | Photoshop.com*, N.p., n.d, Web. 31 Oct. 2011, <http://www.photoshop.com/spotlights/carl-warner#>.

[15] Carl Warner, *Carl Warner's Food Landscapes*, (New York: Abrams Image, 2010), Print.

[16]Carl Warner, "CARL WARNER – STILLS," *CARL WARNER – PHOTOGRAPHER,* N.p., n.d, Web, 31 Oct. 2011, <http://www.carlwarner.com/warner.html

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When Laura Asked Me Questions Again

1. What is the role of size and scale in your work?

   With my most recent works (The Dwellings) I am focusing on the ability to skew the viewer's perception of the size of the materials present within the images. When I construct my worlds, I focus on keeping distinguishable material out of the image. I want the materials I choose to be ambiguous, thus providing no distinct measure of the scale with which I am actually working. When I was working with the dollhouse, I began to realize how essential it was to actually construct most of the small items myself, opposed to buying pre-made miniatures. I would say that this is why The Hallway is one of my most successful rooms. Within this room, there are no items that are recognizable miniature, thus creating that ambiguity of scale. *Is* it a real room? Is that really a ladder that I could climb? Is that monster real? These are the questions that I hope my viewer is asking.

   The size of the image will play an important role in my work as well. I am still working on deciding how I wish to convey these images—as large epic prints that gesture to a large space? Or as small prints that require inspection, but still make the viewer feel as though they are pulled into these obscure and inventive worlds.

2. How do you envision your prints in a gallery setting? How will they interact in this environment?

   In the gallery I will have three separate groupings of works. I will have the Oliver's Travels images printed and mounted on a black background, hung together in a horizontal sequential filmstrip fashion. They will probably be about 8x10 in size. I find that the smaller size for these prints really pulls us into the vignette style black framing.

   For The Dollhouse, I will print the series of images at roughly an 11x14 or 12x18 size and hang them, again, in sequence. I was thinking about hanging them in a grid-like pattern to

represent the floors of a house, but also a storyboard to really emphasize the underlying of the narrative image. I think I am also going to mount these to give them a sort of framing device, which I am hoping will act like a portal and not a prohibitory obstacle. I want the frame to tunnel the viewer into the image, not push them away.

For The Dwellings, I want to print them at an 18 x 24 size and hang them in horizontal sequence, but separately framed. I think for these I might use a "historical" style framing—maybe gilded looking or antiquated of some sort to emphasize their quality of the narrative historical image. This is still being developed, and I think I will have to go out and investigate the materials that I have open to me prior to making a decision.

3. Are there any new inspirational artists that apply to your work more recently?

During my most recent studio visit, Carrie Patterson showed me the work of William Kentridge and Caspar David Friedrich. These are two very different artists, but I am finding myself drawn to both of their creations. Friedrich was a 19th century German Romantic painter who created scenes of epic-ness. That is really the perfect word to describe the history style paintings that he created using very potent scenes of darks and lights. His landscapes move into a spiritual direction that I think is a bit different from my own work, but he focuses on the sublime. I think in my work with The Dwellings I aesthetically desire to achieve this sublimity through my studies of light and darkness and vast but ambiguous spaces.

William Kentridge's works take me into a completely different direction. He creates videos of himself interacting with paper worlds that he has created and sketched using charcoal. I have yet to decide where he is inspiring me, but I can certainly see the connections between my imaginative set ups and his images and videos. I am not sure if I would desire to put myself into my worlds as Kentridge does, or if I am more aesthetically inspired by the elements of time in his work. There is something almost magical about the way he interacts with his works and I think I am attracted to this sense of the fantastic.

4. What is the importance of narrative in your work, if at all?

I love narrative, as I have discussed before. I find that narrative is essential for telling stories and that is ultimately what I wish to do in all of my work. I have come to realize that the term narrative can mean more than simply the words that accompany an image. I am attempting to inspire my viewers to create their own narratives to accompany the images I provide. When I set up the images, there are certainly narrative that are occurring in my own mind, but I do not necessarily want to explicitly make these known, because I find that it limits the potential of the image. They are strongly narrative, just like Friedrich's landscape paintings, but they that narrative is not defined.

SO! I would characterize this as an "open narrative". There is a story behind the images (several stories, really) and I want the viewer to be able to let their own imagination fill in the narration. My favorite thing about this is the interaction between the artist, the image, and the viewer. It allows the viewer's own creativity to engage, creating a work of art (through the story) themselves, based on something that I have created. I find this type of "play" to be very engaging.

5. What is one suggestion or comment you received at the mid-term critique that you have kept in the forefront of your mind since then, and how are you responding to this image in your work now?

I think that the one thing I can remember from midterm critique is the impact that the camera angle can make upon the feeling of reality within the photograph. I was working a lot with angles in The Dollhouse, but the best angle provides the viewer with the feeling of inclusion within the space. The Hallway was so successful in its ability to confuse the viewer's perception of the reality of the space. I am trying to keep this in mind as I proceed with the creation and photography of small landscapes. I take these photographs from multiple angles and ask myself, which one makes me feel like that house is right in front of me? Is this image pulling me in? Is it looking like a miniature? Can I interact with the objects around me from where the camera is pointed?

Keeping these things in consideration has helped me, I think, as I produce images. I still have a lot to learn and sometimes you just have to ask other people if the image is accessible. It is a constant adjustment between moving the camera and moving the set and taking a step back and looking at the image as a whole.

When Carrie Patterson Visited My Studio

Today I had a studio visit with Carrie Patterson. We discussed this new direction that my work has turned—toward the mystic representation of unreal dwellings. She talked to me about some practical aspects of the work. Mostly, she commented on the sizing issue. She told me that there might be something to having them small so that the viewer must come up to them and inspect them. This could be interesting, especially if I want to make the viewer believe that it is a small photograph. At the same time, she discussed this feeling of the "epic" that she gets when she looks at the work of the cloud house. She said that the darks and the lights in contrast and the sets of impending darkness really gesture toward Caspar David Friedrich, someone that Lisa had mentioned earlier when I made the *Forest Dwelling.* She also said that she dislikes the glossy paper, and I agree. It makes it extremely difficult to see some of the images with some reflection from the light in the room and I think a more matte finish may actually be appropriate. I think it may

perhaps even make the landscapes look like paintings, which would hearken back to the German painter style.

I showed her some of my earlier work, especially my books and my boxes and she asked me a question that really made me reconsider the work I have been doing lately. She said, "Why have you gotten away from this?" I did not have a direct answer, which made me even more perplexed. I've always identified myself as a children's book illustrator and some of my early works were three-dimensional replications of my stories. I've since moved away from this notion of drawing for the

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child, and it makes me uneasy. I'm finding my most recent works to be quite different from what I was attempting to convey within the dolls house and my black boxes. I really want to try to bring back my idea of creating with the child's imagination in mind. I loved my work when it was about the fantasy and make-believe. I love monsters and imaginary creatures and those things that we believed in as children coming true. I think there is a common tie within the work I am doing now—perhaps the idea that these landscapes are not possible, but that they are coming true. But I do not think that they are close enough to the material I really truly love. I'll probably finish the series of three but attempt to go back to my "roots" of creating illustrations for the child. It's a matter of a content switch, I believe, and not a matter of completely changing my process.

When I went to the Art Events

9-14-11
Artist Talk: Ying Li

Our visiting artist, Ying Li, grew up in Bejing China during the time of the Cultural Revolution. China was changing, limiting her ability to go to school, but exposing her to the passion she would grow to love: art. Her first exposure to art was through the painting of portraits for political purposes, after which she saved some materials to paint during her own time. In her words, "It doesn't matter what you paint, just the fact that your are painting is what is exciting for me." She went to college after the schools reopened in 1970, learning more about traditional Chinese painting as well as the Western art of oil painting. The artwork Ying Li showed from this point in her life was quite naturalistic. The strokes were smooth and the content immediately recognizable. There was no question as to what was present, but rather a narrative of sorts running throughout her work.

When she came to America, she was a bit confused and displaced. For a while, she was painting traditional Chinese paintings as a way to find her identity in this new environment. She went to Parson's school of Design in NY and gained her MFA. Here her

art took on a new form. She claimed she "didn't want to paint those sweet paintings anymore." There is a very serious stylistic change to her art at this point in her life. Her concern with naturalism is completely lost, replaced by a focus on the brush stroke and its ability to convey movement. This idea gestures back to her Chinese heritage and the use of the stroke in calligraphy. She later describes these strokes as having their own existence, but together making up a whole. Her works convey more of an impressionist feeling—evoking a landscape without the hard lines of a horizon.

In Vermont, she had a revelation about her relationship with her paintings. She felt as though she was part of the landscapes she was painting and that people and the nature surrounding them really are one entity. It seems she was beginning to understand that she was not disconnected from her subject matter, but rather a part of it. She describes her interest in the landscape as something that the viewer enters and moves through. I find this thought to be extremely similar to issues I have addressed in my own works. A work of art that draws the viewer in and includes them within the landscape is something I have been thinking about for quite some time, and it is interesting to hear that Ying Li shares this thought. I am excited to discuss it with her during our studio visits. I think she will have good feedback about this aspect of my work in particular.

9-21-11
Gallery Opening of Successions: A Jean and Robert Steele Collection

For the 40-year anniversary of Boyden Gallery, the curators hung a collection of prints by African American Artists from collectors Jean and Robert Steele. Jean and Robert came and discussed "the art of collecting" works as the gallery was opened to the public. Personally, I have never been extremely interested in the hobby of collecting famous selections of work and owning a body of works, but I found the stories of some of the collected prints to be quite interesting. Robert opened the discussion of the evening with a question about African Americans and their ability to make art that conveyed a certain depth. He discussed the possibility of stereotypes and preconceived notions that some people may have about the work of African American artists. He urged us, however, to look deeper and consider that these stereotypes, like all stereotypes, are certainly proven false time and time again.

Robert and Jean discussed what it means to form a collection. Collecting, just based on principle, usually revolves around a certain theme. One collects with a focus in mind. They discussed the ability to collect with your eyes, ears, goal, head, and heart—finding a piece that really resonates. I have found works before that have resonated so much with my self on a deeper level that I *had* to buy a print or a copy. I can understand how avid art collectors would use this gut instinct to form a large body of works.

Jean and Robert discussed some of the artists they have come to know and even become friends with through the collecting of various African American works of art. Some of the artists included in the collection are James Wells, William T William, Romare Beardon, Robert Blackburn, and many more. Robert and Jean described the processes of some of these artists, whether they were linocuts, abstract paintings, from a series, etc. It was interesting to hear how some paintings have been overlooked by some collectors, but catch the eye of others. One painting that the couple purchased was a neglected gem, strewn and water damaged on the floor of a gallery. Robert stated that you do not necessarily need to have a lot of money to be a collector of art, but have the eye to spot works that would be essential to the product of the collection. Realistically, I think that you need to both have a bit of money but also look at things in a different way than the average person—you need to see with an artistic eye.

10-4-11
Artist Talk: Chris Saah

Christ Saah, a graduate from St. Mary's, discussed with us his process through light and film based media and his transition to photo manipulations. At St. Mary's he was originally an English and Philosophy double major. He soon discovered, however, that this was going to severely limit his ability to take the film classes that he desired. Trusting his gut instinct and the advice of a professor, he delved into the photography classes, learning as much as possible about the mechanics of the traditional film media. After college he worked in Los Angeles at a new media internship. He was working for commercial production companies by day and exploring the photogenic world of the colorfully lit streets of LA by night. "What amazed me was how light temperatures transformed the spaces," Saah said. "I started to learn about the qualities of light: how fluorescents would cast a yellow glow, mercury vapor lights, halogen… These colors would create the pallet." Saah looks at these spaces as a psychological enclosure: "You can enter it and imagine yourself within the space." I find this thought to be a very engaging idea and very true to my own thoughts as I progress with my SMP. He creates these images using a cinematic eye, placing the viewer at specific vantage points. In a way his work is extremely tied to film, though the finished products are "stills" of a given scene.

After his work with the "Nightscenes" in Los Angeles, he moved on to photography by day. He found that as he would take photos, there were some parts "working" and some parts that were not. In his mind, he could utilize parts of these and create a new landscape that only exists within his own work. This is where his appropriative change in style began, opening him up to the world of photo manipulation. His series "Displacements" demonstrates his exploration into this new medium, creating spaces that can take you several directions at once. When your eye meets the image, it senses that the space is not constructed in the same way as the world around us. "These created spaces," Saah says, "Do not have an analogue in the real world."

Saah's most recent work, of which he shared a single image with us in his slide show, deals less with physical and recognizable landscape-esq space and more with the energy that a space can provide. The texture of the image and the pattern reveal a space that can be explored, even if the material space is absent. I think Saah's work will continue to develop in interesting ways, and I would be interested in seeing his next set of images with this new energetic approach to the manipulation of and engagement with space.

10-26-11
Artist Talk: Hannah Piper Burns

Hannah Piper Burns presented her work to us today at her film screening and artist talk. I was very engaged with her experimental films using appropriated scenes from musicals. In her works, she takes these familiar nostalgic old-time-movie musicals and makes them contemporary with text and music that convey a new narrative. Her work, to me, is as much poetry as it is artwork. The text and the story she creates come through the rhythm of the dancers, creating this visual dance and potency of lyric.

I found it extremely interesting that her work with SMP here at St. Mary's has elements that she still finds relevant in her work today. I loved that she drew this connection and it also provides some grounding for my own SMP. The work that I am doing here has characteristics that I will probably keep with me in my work in the future. It's

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not necessarily directly translated, but Hannah can obviously see traits that she still shares with her earlier work. She discussed hybridity, color, and narrative as three main foci that she has always engaged in her work. Her SMP works *Aborted Fairy Tales* were multi media and used color in ways that attracted major emphasis to certain parts of the work. Her images conveyed a narrative, though perhaps it was not quite as forward as the videos she is making today.

She discovered, upon leaving St. Mary's and moving into the real world with her artwork, that she needed a more time-based medium to convey her narratives. This caused her turn to the field of video documentaries. She showed us her documentary on Morgellon's Disease, a disease whose validity is highly debated in the medical field. I found her use of appropriated documentation and videos to be entrancing. Even though some of the scenes were gruesome, I couldn't help but feel extremely connected to the subject matter at hand. These people were not being recognized as having a real illness. How was that possible with all the material that existed from thousands of cases around the world?

Hannah's other work, as I have already briefly touched on, addressed the changing of a well-known and nostalgic narrative into something contemporarily "rewritten" with music and text. I love the way the songs that she picks completely change the feeling of the dance number. They take something we recognize and change it to something completely unexpected. The words add to this powerful statement, creating an appropriated piece that provides a new message.

When I Annotated My Sources

Ashton, Dore. *A Joseph Cornell Album.* New York: Viking Press, 1974. Print.

In this book, Dore Ashton paints a picture of the anomaly that was Joseph Cornell. She describes how his works, so full of exotic and exquisite images, are representations of poetry in his mind. Just as words can represent dreams and associations, Cornell pressed this creativity and meaning through the construction of his boxes. Ashton continues to describe the connection that Cornell seemed to have with children as an audience for his works. Their "pure hearts" could grasp the messages of imagination and the construction of dreams from which Cornell pulled incessantly. Because of this, there is an undeniable connection between Cornell and the surrealist movement. Surrealism is extremely focused on the invention of the dream and the dreamer's subconscious. Ever connecting his mind to his poetry and consequently the theatre, he referred to his subconscious imagination as his "backstage". He also used some appropriated images from Rene Magritte, a well-known surrealist. The book describes how Cornell would refer to himself as a symbolist and not as connected to the surrealists, though it is obvious that his work makes connections to both forms of art. This idea of the symbolist is explored even more thoroughly in the text *Joseph Cornell: Stargazing in the Cinema,* which better explains Cornell's goals with his individual boxes.

Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales.* New York: Knopf, 1976. Print.

I am still in the progress of reading this book, but so far I have focused mainly on the chapter that discusses the Importance of Externalization. The chapter starts out with a very

powerful and influential quote: "A young child's mind contains a rapidly expanding collection of often ill-assorted and only partially integrated impressions: some correctly seen aspects of reality, but many more elements completely dominated by fantasy. Fantasy fills the huge gaps in child's understanding which are due to the immaturity of his thinking and his lack of pertinent information." (Bettelheim 61) In relation to my artwork, I find this statement powerful. A child's imagination is filling in the gaps between the information they know to be true. The book discusses the manner in which fairy tales often start off in a well-known and logical act—sitting in a room in a house, taking a walk, visiting a grandmother. The tale takes a turn to the imaginative when a problem occurs, forcing the child to discover ways to solve the issues at hand. In this situation, a child will often resort to the use of their emotions and psyche, causing the story to become surreal in the minds of adults, but believable in the minds of children.

"Con Artist." Field & Stream 116.1 (2011): 6. Academic Search Complete. EBSCO. Web. 4
    Oct. 2011.

In this interview, artist Lori Nix gives the reader a little background information about her process in creating a diorama for the Field and Stream magazine. The image consists of a woodland scene with numerous pine trees and a man camping beside a river. Field and Stream asked Nix about her interest in miniature sculpture, and she discussed her past education as a ceramics student. Her interest lies in using her hands to build and create, and then photographing the result. She discusses her use of extruded foam and polyester resin, two materials with which I am unfamiliar, but which seem to convey very naturalistic properties when implemented into the sculptures. Her specific goal with this piece was to make the viewer think for a second that they were looking at something that is real. While my work does not necessarily fall under the category of naturalistic, I still want my viewer to suspend their disbelief for an instant in order to consider that perhaps what I am showing them could be a reality. In this, Lori Nix and I certainly share a commonality.

Hauptman, Jodi, and Joseph Cornell. *Joseph Cornell: Stargazing in the Cinema.* New Haven: Yale
    University Press, 1999. Print.

I mostly looked at Chapter 6: Innocence Unpacked, *The Crystal Cage* from this book by Jodi Hauptman and Joseph Cornell. I found that this section really spoke to the information I wanted about Cornell and his affinity with childhood. Cornell's work, *The Crystal Cage*, documents a search for "Bernice"—really, the idealized perpetual youth that Cornell is constantly trying to capture. Walter Benjamin, a German philosopher, describes Cornell's attraction as one with "magical force to the child's life and ways." This is why Cornell finds his works so suited to the child audience. Adults are too removed from the life and ways of the child that they almost cannot access the content of his works. This book discusses the possibility for adults to "tap into" the imaginative world of the child. Benjamin seems to think it is possible for adults to harness the world of the child and to undergo a transformative effect because of this. This chapter also discusses similar links between Cornell's work and surrealism, discussing the uncovering of childhood experiences through the dreamlike renderings of surrealist paintings. It is clear from these discussions of Cornell and surrealism that I need to look further into the surrealist movement, particularly as it

pertains to childhood worldviews and the youthful innocence. I am hoping that *Joseph Cornell: Navigating the Imagination* will delve more into this territory.

McFadden, David R, and Martina D'Alton. Otherworldly: Optical Delusions and Small
        Realities. New York: Museum of Arts and Design, 2010. Print.

This book provides an introduction to the work of 37 artists who work with miniatures, dioramas, and other small "worlds" through their artwork. The introduction by David McFadden, the Chief Curator at the Museum of Arts and Design in NY, discusses the question "what is real?" which has plagued our minds since we were capable of intelligent thought. These artists who work with the fabrication of these small worlds are challenging this question through their work and through the reaction of the audience. This book really helped me to see the various contemporary artists who are working in a medium similar to my own and to understand why they are delving into the massive undertaking of producing the illusion of an alternate reality. The attempt is to lure the viewer into believing in the created reality. Matthew Albanese, Bethany de Forest, Thomas Doyle, Kim Keever, Ji Lee, Lori Nix, and Charles Simonds, are just a few of the artists that I find to be most inspiring from the listing. I have become particularly fond of Lori Nix's work, which explores spaces in society that have been overtaken by nature and left in ruins.

Westbrook, Lindsey. "'The Art of Diorama' at Bedford Gallery." *Artweek* 39.7 (2008): 11. *Art*
        & Architecture Complete. EBSCO. Web. 4 Oct. 2011.

The Art of Diorama is a Gallery Exhibition at Bedford Gallery in Northern California that reveals the works of twenty-three talented artists. These artists range from those who provide a portal into a miniature-invented world to those who create installations through which the viewer may walk and observe. In the article, Westbrook discusses the evocative effect that dioramas have on the viewer—bringing us back to times of dollhouses and train sets. They describe that kind of "loving devotion to a carefully conceived and inventive universe." (Westbrook 11) This article complimented the book, *Otherworldly*, very nicely, providing examples of artists working in the diorama media and the differing effects that this media can have on the viewer. Helen Cohen, a particularly intriguing artist in this Exhibition, conveys a sense of fading childhood memories and a time that has since passed in her dioramas installed in various antiquated household items. This article raises an important question, however, that contradicts with some other sources I have been reading. Is the goal of a diorama to fool the viewer into believing that what they see is reality? This article suggests that this is not the case, but rather that it symbolizes a simulated reality that is just a "show".

"Black Box: Hans Op de Beeck." *Hirshhorn: Upcoming Exhibitions.* 2010. Web. 4 Nov. 2011.
        <http://hirshhorn.si.edu/exhibitions/view.asp?key=21&subkey=489>.

This description of Hans Op de Beeck's *Staging Silence* discusses the various media that de Beeck employs within his work. De Beeck uses lighting, his stage, and the interference of his own hands to construct a scene before the camera. The setting is described as transition from "the real to surreal". Within my own work, I attempt to transform a scene from the real structure to a fantastic constructed space. Where de Beeck reveals the scene using his

own hands, I reveal the scene in full as a fantastic space. I am intrigued by his ability to begin with objects that are recognizable and tangible and transform them into something completely different as a whole. The exhibition description also discusses de Beeck's gesture toward the film noir and the playfulness of slapstick. I relate this to my own allusion to fairy tale and the playfulness of a child's mind. *Staging Silence* is described as "a magical world" filled with both "wonder and poetry." It would seem that we both share the desire to create a world, even though we approach this desire from differing techniques and media.

Brendel, Maria Zimmermann. "THOMAS DEMAND." ArtUS 28 (2010): 18-19. Art & Architecture Complete. EBSCO. Web. 20 Oct. 2011.

This article discusses Thomas Demand's solo show at the National galerie in Berlin, Germany, the artist's city of residence. The author describes Demand's gallery of large prints hanging from a golden curtain, seemingly floating, looming in the space. The article describes how Demand's work is quite linked to memory and also how this memory can be altered through reconstruction and removal of significant details. At first sight, these images appear to be something banal, such as the *Three Garages* gesture to car culture, while really they refer to extremely potent events in history or the media, such as the plutonium smugglers. Brendel discusses Demand's process of creating the paper model, photographing it, and then destroying the model, left with a photograph of the replica. Most of the works within the National galerie have very significant references to the German culture of the artist. Similarly, the article also discusses one of Demand's more recent works the *Hero Organ* that was commissioned on behalf of the WWI Austrian soldiers who fought and died. I looked at this article primarily to see the gallery settings that Demand constructed. I wanted to see what size his photographs usually were printed, and understand how this would affect the viewer in a gallery space.

Kim, Jiae. "Small Is Beautiful: Lori Nix." *Theme.* 7 May 2010. Web. 27 Nov. 2011. <http://www.thememagazine.com/stories/small-is-beautiful-lori-nix/>.

This article is an online interview between artist Lori Nix and Theme, an online magazine. In this interview, some of Nix's main themes surface: dystopia, scale, and the creation of small town disasters. Nix describes her childhood in a rural Kansas town and how it has impacted her artwork, specifically through *Accidentally Kansas*. She constructs all of her works in front of the camera and photographs them, using this print as her final product. She does no photo manipulation, but rather constructs in as realistic a way as possible to capture her "world". She alters the scale of objects by the distance she places them from the camera's lens. In this way, she creates a feeling of the ominous, looming, and impending. Nix discusses a recent project in which she is participating entitled *Small is Beautiful.* Instead of the photograph as the final work, she is completing a model that will be placed within the gallery to be viewed from all sides. It is interesting that she would complete a project such as this. I think that Nix's works, much like my own, are powerful in their ability to evoke a narrative from the viewer. Photographs create this step of removal that allows the viewer to explore whether they are seeing reality or an illusion. I wonder if Nix will be able to achieve this same sense of ambiguity through her model work as she does through her photographs.

"MoMA.org | Interactives | Exhibitions | 1996 | New Photography 12 | Thomas Demand." *MoMA | The Museum of Modern Art.* Web. 20 Oct. 2011.

<http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/1996/newphoto12/thomas.dema nd.html>.

This website provides examples of Demand's work as well as direct quotes from Demand discussing his image *Room*. This image depicts the New York hotel room of the founder of the Church of Scientology, Ron Hubbard. In 1970, Hubbard spent his time in this room writing science fiction novels. Demand discusses how the temporal quality of the room and how everything feels left by the individual only moments ago. It feels as though someone has just recently rumpled the pillow on the bed and stepped out of the chair. Simultaneously, everything distinguishable from the papers strewn about, from the books piled high, and from the trash crumpled upon the bed is wiped clean, leaving these objects completely plain. He creates these models meticulously, making sure that everything is precisely as it would appear in reality. He then photographs these sets as a "documentary" process. It was extremely interesting to read about how he used paper to begin with due to its cheap cost and ease of transportation. This site was extremely helpful in providing an explanation of what Demand was thinking when he created this particular work, and also assisted me in how to approach his other works.

"Thomas Demand Landing 2006." *Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art*. Web. 20 Oct. 2011. <http://qag.qld.gov.au/collection/contemporary_international_art/thomas_deman d>.

This website discussed the work *Landing* by Thomas Demand. This work depicts a scene of two broken vases upon a staircase. It again discusses his method of creating paper and cardboard models and then photographing them. Interestingly, it discusses how Demand began photography simply as a means of documenting his work. This documentation changed to a fascination with the two dimensional image. He began using the model solely for the photograph. I went through a very similar transition with my own work with the *Dollhouse*. My original desire was to simply photograph for the purpose of documenting my progress. Like Demand, however, I found something enticing within my own photographs that the model itself could not convey. There was a sense of spatial ambiguity and an exploration of the unknown. The *Landing* article proceeds to describe the clinical and clean nature of Demand's paper formed works. They lack identifiable details, which makes them seem factual yet strangely unnatural. Demand's content is usually crime scene photography or media images for this very reason of conveying a factual situation.

Warner, Carl. *Carl Warner's Food Landscapes*. New York: Abrams Image, 2010. Print.

This book provided an insight into the Warner's history and current life as an artist through his own autobiographical writings. The introduction describes how Warner observes and thinks of different food items as pieces to a puzzle, ultimately constructing a landscape composed of edible structures. He describes the first image he made using mushrooms that looked like trees from an African savannah. From this very first image, his creations grew, becoming the incredible, imaginative, and inventive foodscapes that they are today. The rest of the book proceeds to describe some of Warner's favorite and most successful images. He provides a list of ingredients that form each landscape as well as the story behind the commission and construction. This book was extremely interesting and provided me with a descriptive understanding of Warner's process. After reading this, I was inspired to look at

my materials in new ways and to think of my miniature landscapes in a more visual manner. I took inspiration from Warner's amazing foodscapes as I created my *Dwellings*, ultimately building them in front of the camera lens. As Warner built his images from a believable perspective, so did I. Reading this book was essential for understanding the hidden stories behind the construction of the works as well as the technical aspects through which Warner worked.

Future Readings:

Boaden, James. "Joseph Cornell: Navigating the Imagination/Joseph Cornell and Astronomy: A Case for the Stars." Burlington Magazine 151.1276 (2009): 483-484. Art & Architecture Complete. EBSCO. Web. 19 Sept. 2011.

Bunch, Craig. "Joseph Cornell: Navigating The Imagination By Lynda Roscoe Hartigan." *Art Book* 15.3 (2008): 17-18. *Art & Architecture Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 4 Oct. 2011.

Cornell, Joseph, and Lynda R. Hartigan. *Joseph Cornell: Navigating the Imagination*. Salem, Mass: Peabody Essex Museum, 2007. Print.

Lawrence, Sidney. "Lori Nix at Randall Scott." Art in America 96.4 (2008): 171-172. Academic Search Complete. EBSCO. Web. 4 Oct. 2011.

Nix, Lori and Jonah Samson. Interview. *Cool Hunting*. May 2007. 5 Oct. 2011. <http://www.coolhunting.com/culture/an-interview-wi-1.php>

Nix, Lori. Video interview and studio visit. *Cool Hunting*. July 2007. 5 Oct. 2011. < http://www.coolhunting.com/culture/lori-nix.php>