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Like many of the creative people whose work is published in *Indesign*, Samantha Small designs interiors. Unlike everyone else, her interiors are very small and made of cardboard. After she has painstakingly created the tiny spaces, complete with hints as to the true nature of the constructions (large patterns on the wallpaper and carpet, a glimpse of corrugated cardboard on the side of a window), she photographs what she has created and displays the resulting photography. However, although Small admits to the descriptor 'artist', she is reluctant to be labelled as photographer or sculptor – for her the media of the work is unimportant. "My work is informed by a wide range of references – history, philosophy, art, media, literature, contemporary culture – and the diversity of these ideas is difficult to interpret through a single medium or material. Experimentation is a large part of my process and the fact my photographs are based on my own constructions seems a natural outcome of this approach."

Small's exhibited images play with the concept of photography itself – by deliberately constructing the images for her photographs, Small is undermining the concept of photography as truth. And she is not alone. German artist, Thomas Demand, similarly creates cardboard constructions of interiors which he then photographs, ultimately destroying the 3D creation (though the resulting work is very different, not least because his constructions are life-size and because of the artists' motivations behind choosing certain scenes). Other photographers also play with the concept of reality, such as Cindy Sherman with her artificially-created 'film stills'. Indeed, the argument about whether photography is a passive and empirical document of the world or whether the camera lies has been raging from the moment the camera was invented.

But for Small, to a certain extent, this is all a secondary point – what is important is the meaning behind the work. With a background in art history and a large amount of research involved in her working process, Small is interested in investigating the meaning and significance of domestic spaces. Her reconstructions are based on the intimate settings of the work of Vermeer or, in the case of her most recent work, the interior of the Lizzie Borden house.

Lizzie Borden was a young woman who lived in 19th Century Massachusetts and who was tried for the

murder of her father and step-mother in their suburban house. Both were sleeping when they had their skulls brutally smashed in by a sharp instrument. Lizzie was tried and acquitted of the murder – the identity of the true killer remains one of the most compelling unsolved mysteries in the history of American crime. For her recent exhibition at Johnston Gallery in Perth, 'Stable Vice', Small recreated the crime scene images of the comfortable, homely interiors where the horrible crimes were carried out.

"Initially, it was the crime scene photographs that caught my attention. These were grainy, overexposed black and white images, taken in the hours after the murders that revealed an otherwise perfect picture of domesticity. The floral carpets, intricate wallpapers and delicate furnishings had witnessed a horrific crime and remained silent. Working with these images, floorplans and documents relating to the trial, I constructed my own interpretation of the spaces."

In creating interiors on a tiny scale and then photographing these, Small's work is playing with the concept of truth and photography on one level – and the Borden murders take this one step further. By recreating images taken from a crime scene, and, in particular, one whose mysteries have never been revealed, Small creates another remove from what is real, what is true. And, just to add another twist to the tale, blurring the line between reality and fiction even more, Small has included "clues subtly embedded in the interiors" as to 'whodunnit'. Get out your magnifying glass.

Samantha Small's next exhibition is at Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide in November 2006 and after that at Johnston Gallery, Perth in 2007 and is represented by both galleries.

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