

operates on an illusionistic level, Small's photographs are constructed in such a way as to combine attention to detail with some of the maker's handy-work - the rooms are seemingly fitted with power points, yet corrugated cardboard frames a window. The patterning in the wallpaper appears gigantic, dominating the space of the rooms. These visual anomalies set up a tension between our presumed knowledge, and our perception of real and fabricated space in photographic representation.

Small's rooms appear to be in a state of transition - 'to be let' or perhaps a real estate advertisement for 'a renovators delight'. The original meaning of the word abode is 'the action of waiting', and it is in Small's photographs that one observes vacant spaces that are metaphorically linked to the act of waiting for occupancy, or waiting to be furnished. Like the vacant or sparsely furnished rooms often pictured in magazines and real estate guides, Small's photographs operate on a similar level. The photographs in these magazines are designed to draw the observer into the picture as they imagine decorating or renovating the space. Small's photographs prompt a similar response, as the viewer attempts to piece together a narrative in order to complete the picture. This also suggests the activity of building an image within the mind, which is prompted by the photograph.

Small's proposition of a reference to Vermeer's paintings suggests analogies to the representation of domestic spaces and open doorways that metaphorically lead the



SAMANTHA SMALL
Bedroom, 2002
C type photograph, 110 x 182 cm



Spare Room, 2002
C type photograph, 110 x 172 cm

observer over a threshold into another space. Another device employed by Vermeer, was the open window from where a cool, radiant light illuminated the interiors, and the inhabitants represented within the space. A great sense of loss or yearning - and even absence resonates from Vermeer's paintings despite the human presences. In Small's photographs, these devices may serve to create a sense of self-consciousness about our solitary presence outside the frame. The use of light in her work highlights the sparseness of the space and lack of human presence. Rather than the radiance that warms an inhabited space within the home, a soft, yet cool light comes from the outside through the open window - not yet warm - maybe early morning. This light may signal a glimmer of hope for future habitation, or anticipation that we the beholder will temporarily inhabit these sparse interiors, decorating the spaces with our own memories and desires.

Rather than the building as *object*, in Patrick Pound's photographs, the building is of *objects* - objects that we normally associate with an internal, built structure. Yet in Pound's photographs, defining boundaries such as walls, are barely visible. In presenting the objects in photographic form, Pound offers the viewer an opportunity to build connections between the objects and the photograph's titles - bounded space is suggested by the titles, *Walters' Bedroom* and *Walters' Studio*, and by the framing of the photographs.

While the bed in the photographs of *Walters' Bedroom* is minus bedclothes, and there is no visible human presence,