

Stories, in Pieces: Intrigue and Enchantment

JUSTINA M BARNICKE GALLERY, TORONTO JUL 20 TO AUG 24 2008



When it comes to art gallery exhibitions, "meanings are arbitrary, but compulsory"—or so complained a recent article in *The Independent*. If you've found yourself similarly dismayed by proscriptive explanations, "Stories, in Pieces" at Justina M. Barnicke Gallery might be the show you've been waiting for. Eschewing the urge to give the game away, curator Aileen Burns aims to provoke viewers' own spontaneous interpretations of the art.

Myfanwy MacLeod's series of photographs *Where I Lived, and What I Lived For* gives viewers a setting (an eerie estate in northern Scotland) and a character (a bedsheet-clad child). Dirt roads and peeling paint set the mood for ghost stories or perhaps memories of encounters much more real.



Myfanwy MacLeod *Bedsheet With Holes* 2005 Courtesy Catriona Jeffries Gallery, Vancouver

Taking imagination's potential one step further, Jon Sasaki's installation *Antihero Décor* invites viewers to completely lose themselves in the gallery. Under yellow lights, a rotary dial phone, a haunted doorknob and a mirror transform the space into a film noir-style set. A tangled romance might play out here—or murder.



Jon Sasaki *Theremin Doorknob* 2006 Courtesy of the artist

Reminders of memorable meals can also be powerful triggers to memory and storytelling. In this case, *Character Care Packages* by Liz Knox documents moments in the life of film characters—from Sally Albright to Edward Scissorhands—through photographs of the food each consumes during their time on the screen. A video by Geoffrey Farmer and a whimsical watchtower installation by Curtis Grahauer and Kara Uzelman round out the show.



Liz Knox *Kevin McAllister* 2007–8 Courtesy of the artist

Like settling into a good book, a visit to "Stories, in Pieces" begins with intrigue and promises to end on a note of enchantment. (7 Hart House Circ, Toronto ON)



Geoffrey Farmer *The Fountain People* 2008 Courtesy Catriona Jeffries Gallery, Vancouver