



A Tiny Show of Very Miniature Works by Big Artists

By, Crystal Meers
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“The Mini Show” has all of the trappings of a very big exhibition: big-name artists (Ed Ruscha, Geoff McFetridge, Tierney Gearon); a big, broad theme (memory); and an address (L.A.’s the Lodge) frequented by big Hollywood types (Sia, Rose Byrne, Jacqui Getty).

It could even be the biggest deal in town when it opens this weekend, if it weren’t for its size: “The Mini Show” is a 10:1 scale architectural model of the gallery filled with a collection of original, teensy-weensy work from life-size artists, co-

curated by Clare Crespo and the gallerist Alice Lodge.

“I have always loved to shrink things,” laughs Crespo, who conceived the show. A multimedia artist, she is known for creating fantasy lands in many forms — including [Yummyfun](#), a quirky kids’ cooking show set in a mouse hole in the wall, and the exotic jewelry displays at Irene Neuwirth’s Melrose Place boutique. “There’s something about building little worlds that is magical,” she adds. For this miniature replica of the gallery, Crespo commissioned a carpenter to construct the walls, but she took it upon herself to recreate every other detail — from the doorbell to the drain pipes — by hand. “To imagine being inside of them is really fun for my brain.”

This is not the first collaboration for Crespo and Lodge, a fellow CalArts grad and former set decorator who opened the gallery earlier this year. The pair worked together on the desert display (complete with coyote) mounted in the lobby at the Ace Hotel and Swim Club in Palm Springs, and first discovered their shared admiration for the small arts over a decade ago — as members of the Diorama Club, an unofficial organization of creative types (including the photographers Todd Cole and Melodie McDaniel, and directors Mike Mills and Phil Morrison) who met on a monthly basis to build shoe-box structures inspired by themes like prom night or “The Jerk.”

“The Mini Show” endeavor was approached with all of the seriousness given to an art show 10 times its size. “I find it intriguing and inspiring working with the individual artists and their different personalities,” says Lodge, who opened the gallery earlier this year. “It was the largest group show I had ever been involved with.” “It’s not a joke,” adds Crespo, who contributed her own little canvas to the show. “This is a serious group of amazing artists who we feel really compliment each other.” There is an assortment of Lilliputian protest signs by Miranda July, who says, “Anything involving dramatic changes in scale is interesting to me; condensed or elongated time or space is really my bailiwick — if I were to have a bailiwick.” The view from the top showcases the work of the sculptor Janet Levy, whose onyx “Wing (Yellow and Brown)” and marble “Wing (Pink)” pieces are butterfly-size, and Rob Reynolds, whose incredibly detailed shipwreck paintings often measure at 108 x 80 inches. The artist and T contributing editor Konstantin Kakanias provided two tiny, ballroom-inspired paintings (a ballroom served as his home and studio for over a decade, before being acquired by Lodge). And Ed Ruscha, who wrote via email that his disposable-lighter-size contribution expresses that “remembering and forgetting and vice versa is an aggravating fact of life,” summed up the spirit of “The Mini Show” best with his remark: “Tiny works sometimes can scream louder than something that is very large.”