

It's a small world MiniARTure sculpture exhibit proves size doesn't matter

ARTS PREVIEW

MINIARTURE: 10 X 10 X 10 X 10

Runs until March 13

Triangle Gallery

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The old saying that less is more might be the perfect way to describe a new exhibition of sculptures at Triangle Gallery entitled *miniARTure: 10 x 10 x 10 x 10*.

Ten artists whose sculptures measure 10 cubic inches or less have been invited by curator Reinhard Skoracki to demonstrate why smaller is better. The selected participants, from local artists to ones as far away as Waterloo, Ontario, have cast aside the traditional raw materials of sculptors — such as massive sheets of steel or giant blocks of granite — in favour of a medium that can be manipulated in more intimate ways.

"Traditionally scale in sculpture meant human scale," says Skoracki.

"Intrinsically, human scale

refers to our memory of the inherent proportions of the human figure compared with those expressed in a sculpture. Sculptors have liked to conceive their output in terms of a direct proportion between scale and integrity: the more space occupied by the work, the easier it is to grasp the artist's point of view."

What the 10 artists included in *miniARTure* have done is exchange the scale-integrity quotient for a small-scale-sanctity theorem.

Because of their size, viewers are urged to have close encounters with these sculptures. The result is a further understanding of the painstaking process involved in creating works on such a subtle scale.

"The first impression of the work is that everything seems very small," says Skoracki. "But if you come closer, the objects have a power that belies their small scale.



An icon of pain — Kim Bruce's *Pinpoint* is one of the miniature sculptures at the Triangle Gallery

Sometimes viewing them can be considerably disconcerting, for there is something disturbing and voyeuristic about scrutinizing these miniatures. By focusing in, bending down, you almost feel as though you are breaking some taboo, looking a little too closely, intruding on another person's privacy."

The works of Calgary-based artist Kim Bruce illustrate this point in the most elegant fashion. The former interior designer, now a full-time artist, creates sculptures that provoke musings about her state of physical, emotional and spiritual well-being and, ultimately, our own.

Her piece, *Pinpoint* (2002), has been fashioned from muslin, beeswax, glass beads and straight pins. The beeswax form, so delicately constructed by Bruce and draped in a dress, is punctured with brutal efficiency by

straight pins, which bristle from its top. Something familiar becomes an icon of pain in all of its manifestations.

Another artist included in *miniARTure* who captures the massive potential of this smallest of sculpture is Adrian Cooke of Lethbridge.

In a series of cedar and enamel forms, Cooke has created gently curving elemental objects that are as powerful as any full-sized sculpture.

"Through his work, Cooke proves the underlying idea that an artwork has value as an independent object, even if it doesn't illuminate social concerns," says Skoracki.

"His purpose is the elimination of all associations, all extraneous elements, and the refinement of sculpture to a single dominant experience, through the use of colour, form and texture with absolutely no recognizable subject matter."

The tiny works on display here demonstrate, in wildly diverse styles, how some of the very best sculptural works being created today can be cradled in the palms of your hands.