

Small Worlds

Bonnie Lucas

Jan. 11 - Mar. 2, 2024

Opening Event Thur. Jan. 11th, 5-8pm

168 Suffolk St.

New York, NY 10002

www.trotterandsholer.com

Tuesday to Saturday: 12:00 - 6:00pm

Trotter&Sholer is thrilled to present *Small Worlds* a solo exhibition by **Bonnie Lucas**.

Bonnie Lucas's artmaking practice has, for more than 50, years stood in obstinate defiance of the patriarchal norms of both the art world and the broader culture. She has always seen the beauty, value, and depth of the treasures relegated to the territories of women and children.

In 2023, Lucas' work is particularly salient. Recently there seems to be a cultural rejection of this status quo. Women are rejecting it. The #metoo movement empowered many women to publicly acknowledge and communicate their experiences. The excitement and cultural capital of Greta Gerwig's *Barbie Movie* has also exemplified that women have an appetite for work that is for and about them. It seems that at a societal level we are finally willing to look at women and attempt to see them as full beings. Lucas's works have long been depicting complicated and full expressions of the feminine, but now there is a sense that people will be able to see them.

Lucas's assemblages are little worlds unto themselves. They could be read as Jungian explorations of the artist's psyche, as well as of the communities and societies she has existed and worked in. Living in her 4th floor SoHo walk-up for more than four decades, Lucas has criss-crossed the city, and even the globe, in search of little treasures, cutsie trinkets that many of us overlook. With these treasures and pastel-colored fabrics collected from clothing, fabric stores, and other places, Lucas creates surreal scenes that that are both sweet and disquieting.

Women and children have long been linked to each other and described as needing male protection; naive innocents who must be cared for and shepherded. This has contributed to the infantilization of women; the notion that they are less competent and valuable than their male counterparts. It has helped to shape the world in which women who are working artists have been given less space, less attention and less credibility by the institutions and powerbrokers in the industry. Yet, undeterred for a half-century, Lucas has continued to make art.

Viewers are pulled immediately into her work with its sentimental color palate, and compelling composition. Unexpected and sometimes unsettling details emerge through closer looking, female forms bound to the backdrop, stuffed upside down or in tight containers. One gets the impression that big ideas are being examined in this work. Ideas that are clear intentions of the artist, but perhaps also subconscious musings about the places women have been relegated and the experiences they've endured. The works make use of children's playthings, but they are not unsophisticated. Lucas lovingly challenges her viewers and refuses to apologize for her love of the feminine and sweet.

Small Worlds will be on view at 168 Suffolk Street from January 11 through March 2th, 2024.

@bonnielucasartist
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