

RIGHT TO ROAM

DANA HARGROVE

ACA

ARTS ON DOUGLAS | alt_space

123 Douglas Street, New Smyrna Beach, FL
Gallery hours: Tuesday-Friday 10-5, Saturday 11-3
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Landscape is a complicated term, simultaneously signifying our literal and metaphoric relations with earth, sea, sky, our habitats and how we organize them, as well as how we co-exist with each other.

In some places, such as the hills of Scotland, a common site while walking a Glen or Munro is the form of a Cairn—an assembled mound of gathered rocks, hand built stone by stone through the centuries by locals and visitors to memorialize their summit. We can join in and leave another stone on the pile to communicate with both the past and future, to say ‘I too, along with you, climbed this mountain.’ This is a form of community, although we have never met and there are spaces between our togetherness, we have partnered in like-mindedness as we look over the sublime vista.

My spatially illusionistic, three-dimensional relief paintings offer a synthesized version of these grey stone piles, transformed via saturated color, forced perspective, and simplified shapes. The works are presented so as to create a spare, simulated landscape where my constructions begin to play with the space of hyper-reality. Here, individual representations come along with the multiple to reference community and the family unit.

Cairns, for me, are loaded with ideals, of the constructs we gather through life, concepts surrounding what it means to have commune or live near/with each other. Parts of the whole, come together, like to like, and have union, forming and transforming with our participation. These remnants of life and community, thick with the residue of history and folklore, are adopted, simulated and transplanted within my work in order to contrast with an over-produced culture that has a somewhat contradictory respect for the real. Our comfort in abstraction is an interesting by-product of our commercial and corporatized worlds, where pre-packaged goods aim to be more palatable than the original and somewhat ordinary thing. (In this instance, the original is just a pile of grey rocks after all).

As we traverse the land, we may find our search for utopia leads us on a journey that offers, on the surface, little more than a façade of our ideals. Perhaps we need to go beyond the surface, past the representation, and back to the ‘authentic’ to find it, or as this exhibition aims to do, continue to harness the representation and instill it with our own meaning to become the new real.

—Dana Hargrove

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Dana Hargrove received her B.F.A. from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee, Scotland and her M.F.A. from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Hargrove has exhibited her work nationally and internationally since 1998. She has recently exhibited her work at: Bridgette Mayer Gallery, Philadelphia; Greatmore Studios, Cape Town, South Africa; Emerged, Glasgow, Scotland; Studio 107, Austin, Texas; Festival of Media Art, Gallery of Contemporary Art, Crakow, Poland and was the 2009 winner of the William and Dorothy Yeck First-Place Purchase Award, *National Young Painters Competition*. Hargrove is currently an Associate Professor of Studio Art at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida.
