



# the nature of things

Jennifer Lee, Hans Stofer and Laura Ellen Bacon

4 February - 15 April 2012

In the Artists' House

In her house, Madeleine Bessborough keeps a table for her grandchildren with finds from nature and otherwise. Invariably one will see a bird's nest, a petrified newt, a dried allium head, curiously shaped flints, a plastic butterfly. The table is found in the Cube, itself a carefully curated space, and the proximity of the specimen table to the art around it is typical of the way one looks at everything at Roche, with heightened awareness flipping between display, art, nature, accident and intent. This way of looking and seeing also informs my selection of artists for the Artists' House.

This is the second in a series of design shows in the Artists' House. Here, the allocation of function in the architecture dictates the layout and content of the exhibition. The monumental and uncanny willow forms by **Laura Ellen Bacon** dominate the double elevation of the exterior of the house. Her sculptures identify its scale and architectural character – dramatically organic against the backdrop of modernist rigour.

**Hans Stofer** takes up residence in the bedroom on the ground floor, where he unpacks his personal life and turns the room into a confessional. The most ephemeral and inconsequential of materials are tenderly remade into jewellery and autobiography, a mix of found objects made meaningful through artistry and intention. This very private space requires the viewer to trespass and scrutinise.

On the first floor, ceramic vessels by **Jennifer Lee** revel in light and space. Born of meticulous research and experiment, the controlled, poised forms belie their organic hand-built beginnings. The unglazed surfaces speak of a multitude of abstracted references, but it is as function and sculpture in perfect proportion to the human body that they are understood.

Once again, an exhibition like this can only happen under the stewardship of an extraordinary person like Madeleine Bessborough. She provides a 'space between' for art that occupies uncertain territory. With huge thanks to Madeleine, Stephen Feeke, and the wonderful team at Roche.

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