

THINGS EDITORS LIKE

T Suggests: A Human-Size Doll's House, Colorful Knitwear and More

A roundup of things our editors — and a few contributors — are excited about in a given week.

Jan. 11, 2019



A Human-Size Doll's House

Anyone who's ever played with a dollhouse or surveyed the Thorne Miniature Rooms at the Art Institute of Chicago knows the feeling of wishing it were possible to enter those tiny realms and wander from one neatly appointed room to another. That dream is made somewhat possible with "Blow-Up," a new exhibition at Friedman Benda in Chelsea, Manhattan, that consists of a life-size dollhouse. In other words, the gallery rooms, which have been transformed into a kitchen, dining room, bedroom, study and nursery, are filled with furniture pieces designed for a miniature world and then rescaled for our own. These works differ, ever so slightly, from regular furniture because of the

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quintessential form and tone of dollhouse pieces, and because problems can arise when scale changes and proportions don't, something designers, who often work with maquettes, know all too well. Curator Felix Burrichter, the editor and creative director of the biannual architecture magazine Pin-Up, likens the end results to "the art of the uncanny."

There's plastic cutlery by the New York designers Chen Chen and Kai Williams that is roughly the size of salad tongs and a sturdy wooden chair that the German-Moroccan studio Butternutten modeled after the one used in the television show "Teletubbies" to teach the concept of a chair to toddlers. These commissioned works sit alongside several vintage ones such as a pair of Shiro Kuramata "How High the Moon" sofas, whose typical rounded shape is subverted by their steel mesh material. "The spaces you occupy talk back to you about the time you live in," says Burrichter. "So, while it's a playful show, the hope is that people will walk away from it questioning certain embedded social codes." He worked closely with the exhibition designer, Adam Charlap Hyman of Charlap Hyman & Herrero, who as a child traveled with his parents to see Queen Mary's Dolls' House, among others, and who is responsible for the space's decal fireplace and painted doors to nowhere. "So it will really feel like a house," I said to Marc Benda, a founding partner of the gallery, when he first described Burrichter and Charlap Hyman's vision to me. He offered an important correction: "It will feel like a fake house. A make-believe make-believe." Through Feb. 16 at Friedman Benda, 515 West 26th Street, New York, friedmanbenda.com — KATE GUADAGNINO

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