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## A Collection: Simulations of the Home

Liana M. Owad

*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*, [liana@owad.org](mailto:liana@owad.org)

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A Collection: Simulations of the Home

By

Liana Owad

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Major: Art

Under the Supervision of Professor Mo Neal

Lincoln, Nebraska

April, 2014

# A Collection: Simulations of the Home

Liana Owad, M.F.A.

University of Nebraska, 2014

Advisor: Mo Neal

The collection of objects of which a home is comprised changes and grows over time. We inherit furniture and accumulate these pieces to create our own particular atmosphere of home. Our furniture and belongings range from handmade articles to store bought manufactured items. These items we live with everyday perform several different roles. A dining room table does not only have the function of serving food, but is also embedded with the memories of many family dinner conversations. Objects in the home have this layered purpose of utilitarian function and placeholder for memories.

After moving away from home, I drew inspiration from the memories my family's secondhand furniture held for me. These objects evoke recollections or events of a specific time, place or person. The nostalgia surrounding the items generated a mindset that the objects were not mine, but that I was just borrowing them. The furniture became large toys, and I was playing at home, just as if I was a child. This continuous pretend play at home became frustrating. I was unable to distance myself from the previous placement or room association the objects formerly occupied in my memories. Therefore, I constantly experienced a lack of control over my environment and desired this stability. Over time, the idea of pretend play resonated with me and sparked my investigation of the conventional nature of the home and our perceived ideas of how objects could perform.

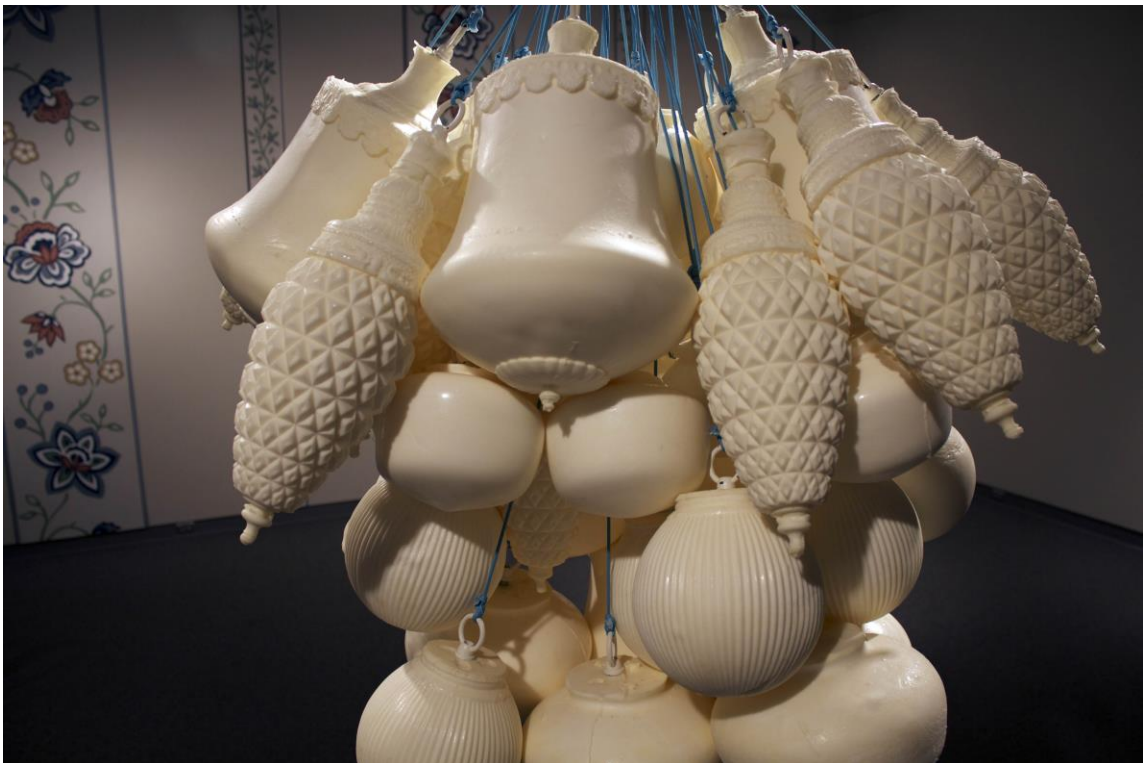
“A Collection: Simulations of the Home” embodies the unease I felt in this new environment. Through reworking my personal household objects by casting or constructing in unconventional materials and odd exhibition placement, I transform these ordinary items into imaginative likenesses of their former selves. The handmade quality and labor made apparent in the work, suggests that the sculptures are removed from the household object and are now altered stand-ins. Through these changes, I de-functionalize the known utilitarian qualities inherent in the objects, leaving a simulation of the home. These objects then form a symbol, allowing your own associations to permeate the form.

There is an intellectual frustration and tension brought on through interaction with the pieces, achieved by altering specific characteristics and varying the scale. The work frustrates the mind as the objects perform. In revising the scale, I transform the sculptures, creating an environment that plays with the perception of our body and shifts how we view the work.

The work explores the surreal nature of altered domestic forms, how they play at being real objects, and the impact of the objects on the viewers. The works then ask how far can an object be manipulated and removed from its known associations and still remain familiar enough in form to retain a personal context.



*(un)Familiar* Detail, Expandable Foam, Paracord, Garage Door Opener, 2014



*(un)Familiar*, Expandable Foam, Paracord, Garage Door Opener, 2014



*(un)Familiar Detail*, Expandable Foam, Paracord, Garage Door Opener, 2014



*A Gathering*, Wood, Metal, Fabric: Installation view, 2014



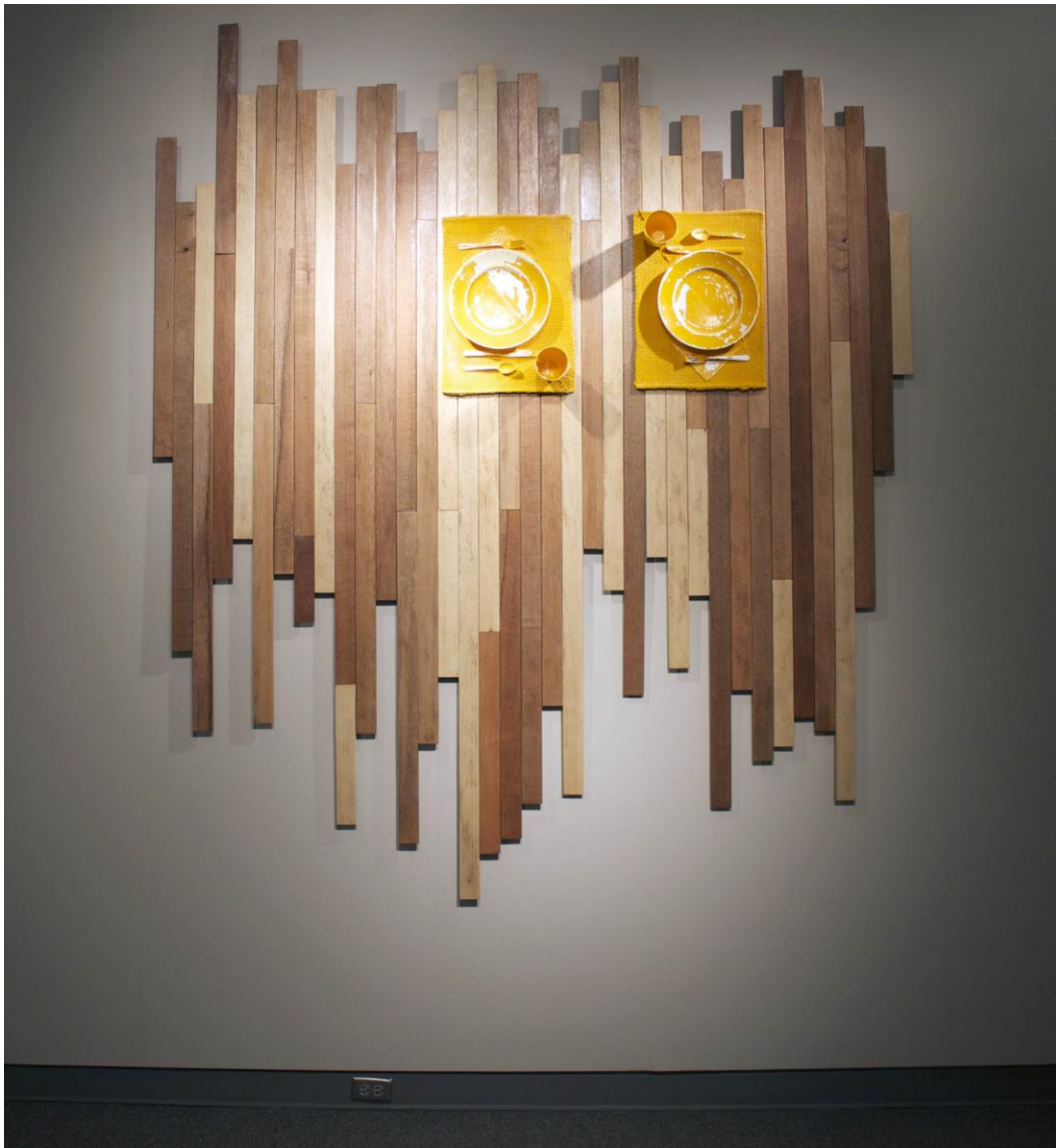


Installation view of Thesis Exhibition: *A Collection: Simulations of the Home*

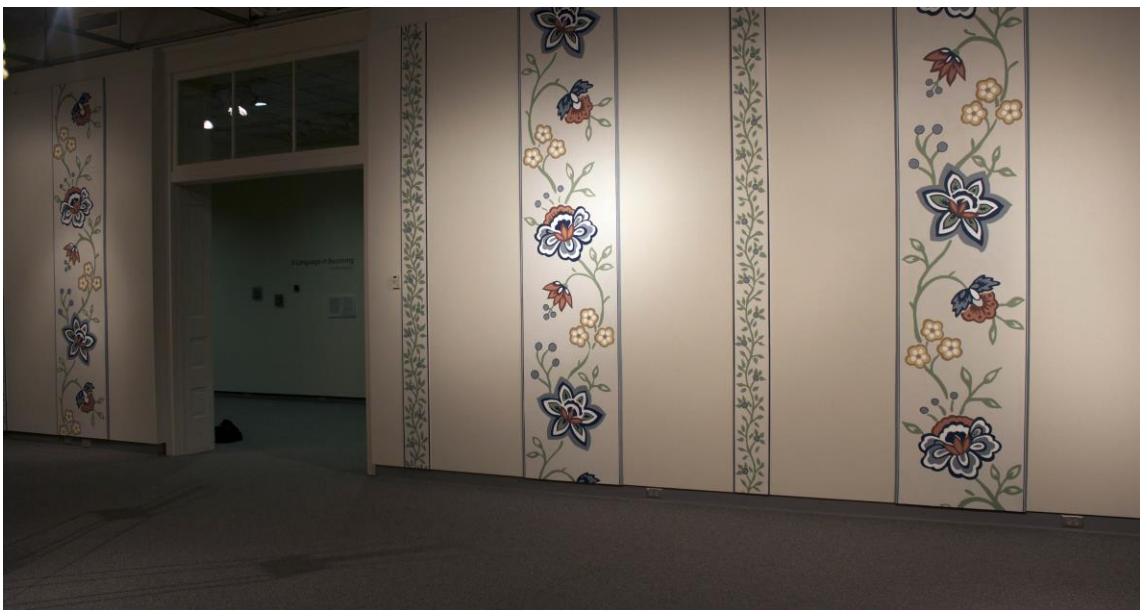




*A Gathering* Installation view



*Communication*, Plastic, Wood, 2013



*The Dinning Room's Presence*, Hardboard, Paint, 2014





*A Collection: Simulations of the Home* Installation view





*A Collection: Simulations of the Home* Installation view



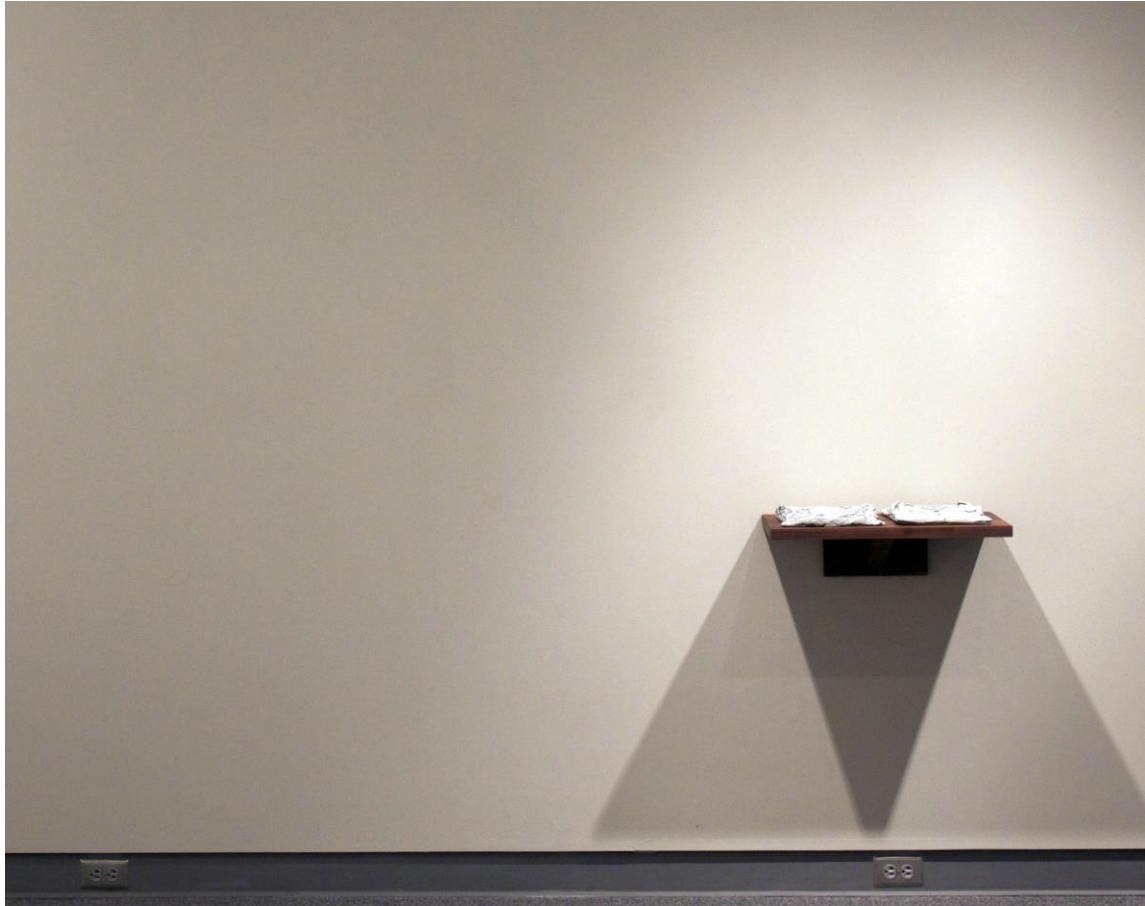
From Left to Right:

*If You Stay Long Enough, It Will Tell You Secrets*, Found Objects Wood, 2013

*If You Stay Long Enough, It Will Tell You Lies*, Found Objects, Wood, 2013

*If you Stay Long Enough, It Will Make You Reach*, Found Objects, Wood, 2014







*Of What We Think We Know*, Grout, Wood, 2013