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Oh, you beautiful doll!

Mississauga News

Mississauga's Fausta Facciponte is most often found at garage sales and thrift stores, searching through toy bins for children's dolls that will appear in her larger-than-life photographs. She is one of four artists whose work is now on display at the Glenhyrst Art Gallery in Brantford in a show that proves that a paint brush, a camera or a bit of silicone can alter one's perception of reality.

Though varied in media and subject matter, the artwork featured in *Narrative Transformations* succeeds in subverting viewers' expectations and challenging how we think about seemingly safe topics, like nature and children's toys. Facciponte digitally stitched together dozens of minute photographs of each doll to create the mammoth pictures that dominate the gallery walls.

"They're so creepy," said one visitor as he and several friends eyeballed the giant dolls.

That's the point, Facciponte said. The viewer is meant to be put ill at ease — almost as if the doll's kaleidoscope eyes are watching them.

The scale of the photographs brings out the tiniest details — cracked plastic, loose threads, even bits of dirt and mould that jarringly obscure a doll's eyeballs.

"There's a sense of terminated love and abandonment about these objects," Facciponte said.

By blowing up the photographs, she tries to create a similar experience for the viewer.

"It's inviting, but it keeps a bit of distance," she said. "It's not really about the dolls. It's rooted in that, but it's really about the relationship between viewer and object."

It bothered Cambridge sculptor Jane Hook that Mattel's iconic Barbie doll wasn't allowed to grow up, so to celebrate the eternally 17-year-old toy's 50th birthday, she created a wrinkled, midriff-baring Barbie, still rocking short shorts well past retirement age.

Narrative Transformations closes on May 6. To learn more about the artists and artwork, visit www.glenhyrst.ca.



All dolled up

Photo by J. P. Antonacci

Mississauga artist Fausta Facciponte is one of four artists whose work is now on display at the Glenhyrst Art Gallery in Brantford. Her work features photographs of dolls she often finds at garage sales.