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## THEATER/FINE ARTS

Saturday, July 10, 2004

## CoCA's 'Domicile' really hits home

By [REGINA HACKETT](#)  
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER ART CRITIC

Lying in her narrow bed at night, Amy Ellen Trefsger looks out on an empty street. Women working shifts at the Hostess Cupcake factory come and go, but by and large, she's alone in a dead zone.

Nobody talks to her or comes by to look. One morning, she was startled awake by a stern old man knocking on the window and pointing significantly at his wristwatch.

Apparently, the oddity of a young woman sleeping in an art center didn't strike him. "It's 9:30," he shouted. "Time to get up."

Happy to interact with the public at last, she waved and thanked him.

Trefsger (also known as "Flat-chested Mama") is part of "Domicile: A Sense of Place" at the Center on Contemporary Art. Instead of making art about living, she's living the art. She is the art, really, along with her carefully constructed tableau of identity: the chaste bed, the worn linen, the sad-sack stuffed animal, the desk recycled from a trash bin and brimming over with ideas for art projects and correspondence, which is for her another kind of art.

In the half-century history of performance art, plenty of artists have lived on stage. The key to these performances is a deadpan kind of literalism. Trefsger's version is deliberately slight, and that's the source of its appeal.

She comes and goes, breaking in and out of character. She is not naked, not covered in cow's blood and/or mud, not fasting, masturbating, biting herself or performing (at the moment) any other lunatic chores

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## ART REVIEW

**DOMICILE: A SENSE OF PLACE**

**WHERE:** Center on Contemporary Art, 410 Dexter Ave. N.

**WHEN:** Through July 28. Hours: Tuesdays-Thursdays, 2-8 p.m.; Fridays-Sundays, noon-5 p.m.

**ADMISSION:** \$5 suggested donation

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associated with the genre.

Instead, with no muss or fuss, she's engaged in the effort of being the art of her own making.

Curated by CoCA director Don Hudgins and board members Jim O'Donnell, Mike Sweny and Dino Martini, "Domicile" is a terrific show and a clear sign that CoCA is firmly back on track as an in-your-face art center. The space (tricked out with cash from Lucky Strike) looks great, too. All CoCA needed was real art to create a real moment, which it has done.

Gregory Kucera is not Greg Kucera of Seattle gallery fame. He's a young Los Angeles video artist whose DVD digital video titled "Living" is a pitch-perfect metaphor for the necessary narcissism of artists everywhere.

Through the magic of Photoshop, he made multiples of himself. Four of him sit naked on a sofa, swinging bare legs to a whistled version of "Sentimental Journey." He talks in the bathroom about the distance between what he said and what he wanted to say as he listens, head cocked in sympathy. Don't leave before the credits. The sight of his name scrolling by over and over beside every possible job associated with the enterprise has a delicious charge.

Tom Gormally makes miniatures, sweeping panoramas you could hold in your arms. In one, a man lies in a field, his head smashed beneath a nuclear cooling tower that apparently fell from the sky, a disaster that took his inattentive self by surprise. Todd Hido has become famous in photographic circles for his shy light creeping on cats paws into otherwise nondescript neighborhoods.

Robert Yoder is making wallpaper, quite nice, a kind of lawn he brings inside.

I love Harrell Fletcher. One of the high points of the Whitney Biennial was his video starring a pal who owns an auto shop in Portland and admires James Joyce. Fletcher asked his friend to point out the best parts of "Ulysses," which Fletcher copied onto reader boards and held up for the owner, his mechanics and their customers to read aloud as they went about their daily lives.

Joyce is celebrated by the working class: Who says we aren't a nation of readers?

In "Domicile," Fletcher took the chill off the anonymity of nameless people in snapshots by cloaking them in puffy acrylic color mounds. Miranda July, with whom Fletcher collaborated on the Internet project "Learning To Love You More," also has painted on snapshots, but Fletcher's are less surreal and more warmhearted.

Manuel Wanskasmith photographed his version of intimate settings with

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the camera in his cell phone. The slide-show results have a sneaky charm. Rhonda Wepler's consumerist sculpture (towers of product) are a clever update of similar efforts from the consumerist art golden age, the 1980s.

As for painting, there's Hao Zeng, using blue as an existential barrier, a mood field that separates a bright young man from his possessions.

### Webtowns

More headlines and info from [Eastlake](#).

**P-I art critic Regina Hackett can be reached at 206-448-8332 or [reginahackett@seattlepi.com](mailto:reginahackett@seattlepi.com).**



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## Seattle Post-Intelligencer

101 Elliott Ave. W.  
Seattle, WA 98119  
(206) 448-8000

Home Delivery: (206) 464-2121 or (800) 542-0820

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