

Fast Co. Design September 26, 2011

Do Ho Suh Recreates His Previous Homes, In Painstaking Miniature

By James Gaddy

For his new installation at Lehmann Maupin, Do Ho Suh uses rapid prototyping and handmade miniatures to rebuild two of his former homes.

While dioramas and miniatures may be enjoying outsized popularity, Korean artist Do Ho Suh is taking the medium to its extreme in two recent installations. In one, called "Fallen Star 1/5," Suh has fully recreated a 1:5 scale version of the Providence apartment where he lived while attending Rhode Island School of Design. The three-floor building is sawed in half and opened up from the inside, reconstructing each room down to the last detail--small curtains, little bookshelves stacked with books, miniature posters of AC/DC and Che Guevara hanging on the walls, and tiny jackets on even smaller coat hooks--there's even a bicycle hiding out in the stairwell. "99 percent of the things in the house are handmade," the artist tells Co.Design, with the exception of "a few toy parts that had the right scale."

To get to this level of detail, Suh, who has created 16-foot-wide parachutes and staircases made of nylon that fill whole museum rooms, used measurements that he took while living in the building as a student and then also went back to take additional dimensions that he needed to complete the model. Three of the rooms were constructed from memory and the others were imagined, based on research into typical college homes in Rhode Island. The installation also includes a miniature version of his childhood Korean home that crashes into the Providence apartment like it was tossed by a Kansas tornado.

But the Wizard of Oz comparisons are more apt for the second installation, entitled "Home Within Home," where Suh has created a model of both homes out of translucent blue resin using rapid prototyping. In this version, the artist's Korean home is housed inside the Providence building, instead of crashing into it. This model is divided into four equal sections and glows like an architectural plan for the Emerald City.

"Fallen Star 1/5" and "Home Within Home" are on view at Lehmann Maupin Gallery in New York City until October 22.