

# Into the wild unknown



Sally Moore's detail view of "No Ark" 2011, wire and paper clay.  
Sally Moore's "human/nature" exhibit is at the Barbara Krakow Gallery.

BARBARA

"Our feet rarely touch soil anymore," sculptor Sally Moore says in her artist's statement. "We eat parts of creatures wrapped in cellophane, disguised, without even remembering that what we are eating once breathed and felt pain."

Moore's show, "human/nature" at Barbara Krakow Gallery, examines the gulf between our civilized lives and nature's unpredictable force. The work suggests we're living in a dream world, but there's a double meaning there. On the one hand, we're willfully blind to nature's power, caught up in the illusion of a safely manicured world. On the other, our dreams are a conduit to our wild roots, if only we would pay attention.

Precariousness has always been this artist's central theme, and past work has branched off the wall, seemingly ever growing and ever more threatened. Here, she introduces freestanding sculptures, in which scale captures the delicacy of human order cast against the vastness of

natural chaos.

In "Denial," she plants a lovely little house with trees and a fence five feet in the air, perched on bowing, fragile lengths of bamboo. A breeze might take it down. The people who would live here are the type, I found myself thinking, who build beach houses in the paths of hurricanes. Or who build McMansions. Then I felt a knot of dread in my stomach: Maybe it's all of us.

The most visceral piece in the show "No Ark," depicts animals dashing up the wall. It's a familiar scene from nature shows: an aerial shot of wildebeests, say, sprinting across the Serengeti. Moore's assortment comprises a range of critters, all casting fantastic shadows. The godlike vantage point enables the viewer to recognize the panic and remain distant from it - until the presence of a woman in the group brings the scene uncomfortably close to home.

Moore still makes wall sculptures. "Trophy" is a witty one-liner: a little room with a Persian carpet and straight-backed

chairs, with a moose's head hanging above them. The moose's brawny body stands on the other side of the wall. The image is surreal, as if from a dream. The natural world becomes a metaphor for the unconscious, and the room a metaphor for how we order our lives. Only a thin barrier lies between, and here, it's been ruptured. All these works carry the same warning: The wild unknown is closer than you think.

By Cate McQuaid  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Sally Moore  
human/nature

At: Barbara Krakow Gallery,  
10 Newbury St.,  
through October 15th.  
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KRAKOW GALLERY