

Fellowship



Laurie Simmons, In and Around The House II #25, 2022. © Laurie Simmons

Laurie Simmons

In and Around The House II

Release Date: Wednesday Feb 8th 2023

[Online Auction](#)

The selection of 30 images for 'In and Around The House II' was thoughtfully curated by Claire Silver, a prominent AI artist. Claire's curatorial notes are below:

“Throughout the process of curating Laurie’s project, I tried to choose pieces that were nods to the legacy of her work. I sought examples of images that represented a new twist while striking enough to command recognition on their own, as well as remaining cohesive to the collection. It strikes me how ahead-of-the-crowd her work has always been; the medium, the message, the method.

For Laurie, AI became such a natural continuation of that pattern. All the images she produced were amazing, but I hope the 30 works I curated are a strong representation

of her first foray into AI. Throughout my process, I divided the work into different categories that echo different moments from Laurie's artistic history, and which hold their own in contemporary contexts.

In her Black-and-White images, there's something special about how Laurie's early work echoes in such a futuristic present-tense. AI lends itself so well to the tilt-shift/isometric views, to the small figures drained of color like a 1950s family-values sitcom, and to the underlying meta-message of creating with such a contentious and belittled medium to begin with. There's such boldness and certainty in her artistic vision, and I imagine that in her earlier years Laurie's work may not have commanded the respect it deserved - particularly in a feminist framework.

Pieces #3-7 seem like a natural fit within Laurie's early color interior work. The gilded cage translates perfectly with Dall-E and all the layers of subtext that come with it. The vapid shine of vintage Barbies, the old money housewife who has become part of the furniture, the infantilized, doll-like hostess, and the surprisingly modern woman in a moment of quiet desperation. These pieces exist stirring in their own tiny worlds.

The water ballet pieces are so strong! Reflections are so hard to render in Dall-E, and the large eyes/anime/Japanese doll aesthetic feels very freshly considered. These works also coordinate beautifully with her *Love Doll* series from 2009-2011. Although both these works are similar, the minimalism and familiar forced perspective of **#9** are immediately appealing. I could see both works becoming highly sought after.

Works **#10-14** are, of course, iconic. Each composition (particularly **#10 & #11**) reveals such subtle subtext. I can't tell you how excited it makes me to see that kind of nuance being coaxed from the machine. And the depth in **#12** makes the scene look quite modern and genuinely new, while still absolutely recognizable as Laurie's fingerprint. I can't wait for the "traditional" art world to see for themselves just how collaborative AI art can really be.

I could be wrong, but piece **#15** felt like a reflection on ventriloquism to me. I'm not as familiar with *Talking Objects* (1987-98) as I am with *Walking Objects* (2014), but it was the only work in the collection that struck me that way, so I felt it important to include. I know from my own work that if one piece in a style makes it to the final curation stage, there's something special I want to say with it.

Pieces **#16-19** are SO fun. They will immediately thrill anyone with fondness for the original. I also love Laurie's interplay with the artificial/futuristic/colorful art of/as "toy" here. Again, like each sub-series in this collection, there's so much brilliant meta-commentary on the nature of the medium itself. The shadows in **#17** are unforgettable, and **#18's** palette is beyond modern. **#19** holds a beautiful minimalist setting and the figures seem quite influenced by anime (and perhaps *Love Doll!*). These pieces are widely unique in the best possible way, and hold an undercurrent of feminist dark humor (because we're living in the future, and it's mostly the aesthetics that have changed).

Images **#20-23** spoke to me with echoes of the social and literal maximalism of *The Instant Decorator* (2001-2004). They are visually strong in a variety of ways, and **#20** is one of my absolute favorites from the entire collection.

I'm absolutely head over heels for works **#24-28**. They have the clearest faces and invoke the "uncanny valley" most powerfully of all the work in the collection. Please forgive me for absolutely pouring my little curator's heart out here. Obviously my interpretation is just my own, but they spoke to me and wouldn't stop. In these works there is the idea of youth and culture's unhealthy relationship with it, there is nostalgia for a time inexorably tied to inequity, there are politics/myths/archetypes, and the way our cultural consumerism feeds them. I'm fascinated by the expectations we project on to the dolls, especially in the context of a particularly American expression of "privilege."

In work **#24**, I find the Louis Vuitton carrying, full-makeup wearing child empress with an artificial horse in a sheltered fairytale is naive to how she is seen or who she is expected to become.

It invokes a similar feeling I get from **#25**, in which the intelligent, earnest, lovely teenager from a good family with a good name (and Lassie to prove it) resides in a garden so beautiful you almost forget how uncanny the piece is. But the more you look, the less you can unsee it.

In piece **#26**, The young woman, a romantic, is idealizing the traditional and the simple. The figure seems to disbelieve (or perhaps chooses to embrace) her own commodification in service of the "role."

And in both **#27** and **#28**: I see Jackie Kennedy with all her broader implications: Myths, heritage, and what selves we inherit from these ideas. I find expectations, roles to play, strength, grace, womanhood, and the ever-present, uncanny, and perfect plastic of "The Doll." I hope others see what I do, because I'm just floored by these works.

Finally, pieces **#29** and **#30** in the collection are visually stunning and wonderful conversation starters. They immediately made my gears start to turn, which is what all great art invokes in its viewers."