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Graeme Patterson: Collecting the Collectors

TRÉPANIÉR BAER GALLERY, CALGARY JAN 9 TO FEB 7 2009



Graeme Patterson *The Puppet Collective* 2008

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[Graeme Patterson](#) has a thing for miniatures. Even though the Halifax artist started out, and continues to work, in stop-motion animation, he's become best known for the film-sets-cum-sculptures that started as a sideline. "Woodrow," a Patterson exhibition that recently wrapped a national tour at the [Rooms](#) in St. John's, includes several meticulous replicas from a small Saskatchewan town—a grain elevator, a church, a bowling alley—as well as a film that uses those replicas as its set.



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Patterson's affection for his favoured form takes a slightly different spin in "The Puppet Collective," his first commercial-venue show opening January 9 at [Trépanier Baer](#) in Calgary. In this outing, the artist offers 52 small figurine-style puppets of eccentric, unconnected strangers—from mohawked punk rockers to walker-wheeling senior citizens.



Graeme Patterson *The Puppet Collective* 2008

These characters, if entertaining, are enigmatic and far from "Woodrow"'s small-town, prairie gothic feel. But using these disparate toy-folks, Patterson hopes to map the dynamics of yet another small, sometimes-isolated community: that of art collectors in Canada. Every figurine buyer must submit photographs of themselves to the artist so that he can, in turn, produce a miniaturized likeness to maintain his collection.

Whether Patterson's lark at collecting the collectors turns out or not, one thing's for sure. In his eyes, worlds both large and small hold extensive

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