

ART IN REVIEW

**PATRICK JACOBS: 'Familiar Terrain'**

By KEN JOHNSON

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*Pierogi*  
177 North Ninth  
Street

*Williamsburg,*  
*Brooklyn*

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Patrick Jacobs's superrealistic, miniature sculptures are amazing. You view them through round glass lenses built into [gallery walls](#) like portholes. The windows range in diameter from 2 to 19 inches. What you see are luminous landscapes, close-ups of grass and mushrooms and a pair of grungy apartment windows with a view that calls to mind the distances in Northern Renaissance painting.

They are confounding. Lighted from within, they look like some kind of unusually dimensional and vivid, fisheye photographs of real scenes. In fact, they are elaborate, three-dimensional constructions like miniature natural-history dioramas with hidden electric lights making them glow. [Mr. Jacobs](#) achieves his Pre-Raphaelite-like magic naturalism using mostly artificial materials like paper, plastic, acrylic gel, hair and metal.

In "Small Fairy Ring Mushroom Cluster" we behold a [quartet of mushrooms](#) standing in the midst of grass, each blade rendered in detail with a keen sense of botanical accuracy. We also can see beyond to fields, forests and a snaking river. The largest piece offers a black-and-white, high-angled view of a close-cropped field with three puzzling, circular formations in the grass and another expansive landscape in the distance.

Mr. Jacobs is curiously preoccupied by fairy-ring mushrooms, which grow in expanding circles, much to the chagrin of fussy lawn owners. In his works this ordinary natural phenomenon hints at another, more fanciful dimension, and the optical lucidity suggests a heightened state of perception, as if we could see through the eyes of Emerson in transcendentalist ecstasy.

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