

STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY

Metro
'Pick of the Week'
13th February 2009
James Garner

Claire Barclay exhibition is a must-see



Claire Barclay's *Openwide* features captivating installations, drawings, watercolours and prints

Bringing together new and previously exhibited work, Claire Barclay's *Openwide* is undoubtedly one of 2009's must-see exhibitions.

Spread over two floors, it's a show you can completely immerse yourself in, so give yourself plenty of time to navigate your way round Barclay's captivating installations, drawings, watercolours and prints.

On the ground floor, installations such as *Silver Gilt* (2005) spark off a fascinating tension between competing moods and potential meanings. Combining elements constructed from brass, printed fabric and leather, it effortlessly walks a line between domestic mundanity and otherworldliness.

There is a sense that this oddly elegant piece simultaneously makes perfect sense and no sense at all, as though some familiar domestic space has unravelled and reconstituted itself according to its own mysterious logic.

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Smaller pieces such a 2007 watercolour of a pair of hands are no less beguiling. The fingers of each hand are positioned so as to form circular shapes that Barclay has accentuated with blue circles partly superimposed over the hands. Simple, but mesmerisingly effective.

Upstairs are two new installations. As with much of the work downstairs, they exist as separate entities but form intriguing relationships with one another.

Subject To Habit has the feel of a gym designed by Dadaists, while Caught In Corners evokes ideas relating to shelter and containment. Both are excellent additions to Barclay's body of work, and show an artist at the top of her game.

Until April 12, The Fruitmarket Gallery, 45 Market Street, Edinburgh, Mon to Sat 11am to 6pm, Sun noon to 5pm, free. Tel: 0131 226 8181. www.fruitmarket.co.uk