

John Massey - Clip 5

The House that Jack Built

The *House that Jack Built* is a nursery rhyme that comes from a whole body of literature called the Jack stories..... Jack the Giant Killer, The House that Jack Built. At some point I identified with these stories when I realized that Jack was in some way allegorically dealing with his desire. He builds his house, he slays the giant, he steals the golden eggs.

The poem itself is an accumulative narrative. It never forgets what it has already said, meaning that with the introduction of every new image the preceding lines are repeated. In the work I made based on the nursery rhyme, I wanted to make a series of pictures that would say that the accumulation of information, the accumulation of imagery, the accumulation of what you look at; this is part of your history and it doesn't go away, and the desire, the constant desire for more things is not necessarily an illuminating thing.

The model, which is the base for the pictures, replicates my studio of the period. It is exact and detailed....when I made it I had no idea whether any part of it would play in an artwork. I just wanted to see what it would be like to look into a miniaturized version of a space I lived and worked in. At some point I realized that I was identifying with the small volumetric space as if it were a surrogate for the inside of my head. I had made a room.... a

physical interior that could act as a psychic interior.

I began to experiment by taking photographs of the model while projecting slides into and onto it. As I positioned and repositioned the camera back and forth in front of the model to shoot from different angles I realized that I was making a kind of dance in front of the illusion and this dance in a very basic way was connected to my sense of trying to make the imaginary real.

