



## Press Release

20 January 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### The Cottingley Fairies fly home in the forthcoming exhibition

#### 'In Fairyland'



'In Fairyland' is an exhibition by Tessa Farmer which takes inspiration from the famous fairy photographs taken in Yorkshire that fooled the world. On display will be Farmer's tiny fairy sculptures, along with several other examples of 'Cottingley art', and the infamous fairy photographs themselves. This is a rare opportunity to see the fairy photographs which were taken almost a century ago in a small village a few miles outside Leeds.

In 1917 and 1920 Elsie Wright and her cousin Frances Griffiths took five photographs of what appeared to be fairies frolicking by the local beck. These photographs captured the imagination of writer Arthur Conan Doyle whose father, Charles, and uncle, Richard, illustrated fairies a generation before. There was speculation for decades about the fairies' authenticity and it wasn't until the early 1980s that the cousins admitted that the first four pictures were fakes. Both of the girls claimed, right up to their deaths, that the fifth photo ('The Fairy Bower') was, in fact, authentic.

The exhibition takes its title from Richard Doyle's 'In Fairyland' (1870), Farmer's tiny fairy sculptures reinvigorate a belief in fairies: not the sweet decorative Cottingley fairies made out of

paper cut-outs propped up with hatpins, but a more biological and insect-like fairy. Farmer makes her fairies out of body parts from wasps and butterflies, roots and leaves, they're intricate in detail, barely standing 1cm tall.

#### Press Invite

Press are invited to Blenheim Walk Gallery, **Private View on Friday 30 January 2015, from 17.00-20.00.** Please RSVP to: Emma Morris at [emma.morris@leeds-art.ac.uk](mailto:emma.morris@leeds-art.ac.uk) or 0113 202 8044.

#### Editor's Notes

For more information & images contact:

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More info at <http://www.leeds-art.ac.uk/infairyland>

The exhibition will run from **30 January - 26 February** at Leeds College of Art's Blenheim Walk Building, Leeds, LS2 9AQ.