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Tension mounts at Spooner's White Stag

By DAVID TRIGG

The scene downstairs at g39 looks as if someone has emptied the contents of a woodland foraging trip on to the gallery floor. Get closer and you'll notice that the twigs, foliage, feathers and crab apples have been arranged, forming some kind of shrine.

Above them are a pair of antlers and a nearby Polaroid photograph shows a hunter with bow and arrow at the ready. The work relates to the mythology of The Huntress, a contradictory pagan deity who is both protector and hunter of wild animals.

Upstairs, Rebecca Spooner's mysterious work starts to make more sense. Installed across two rooms, a complex tableaux follows similar themes; another shrine-like arrangement features a stuffed hawk in a display case, and a 16mm film projection shows a man intently watching something, as if he were a hawk stalking his prey.

A similar set-up features a stuffed hare, with another film showing a woman lying in tall grass, perhaps hiding from the hawk. There's a great tension between these two fascinating pieces, with the constant anticipation of an attack that never comes.

Spooner's intricate installations are imbued with lots of symbolism and steeped in ancient ideas about animals and their relationship to humans. It may not be easy work, but allowing time for it to unfold is rewarding.