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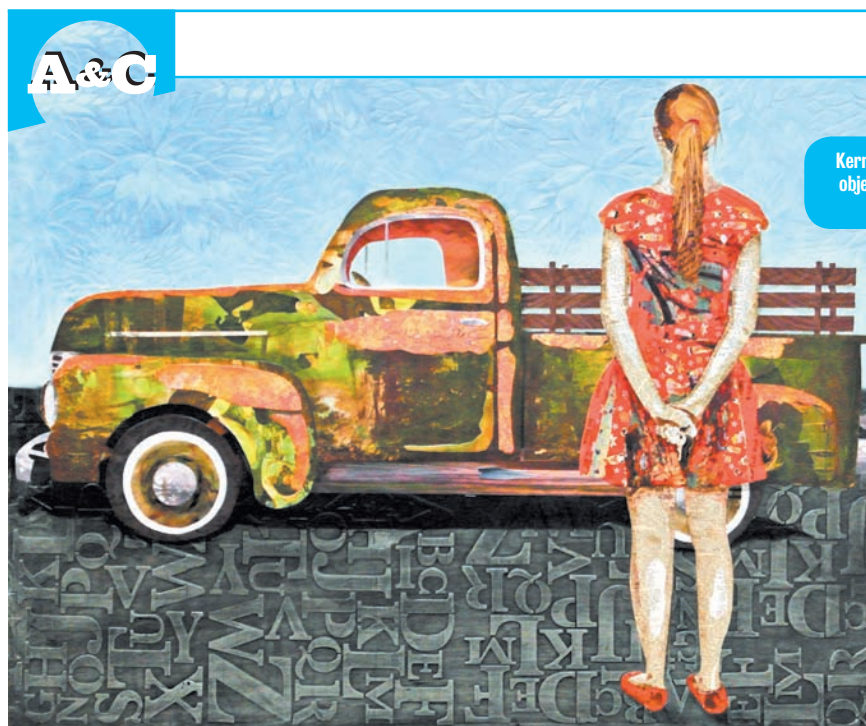
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Kerri Warner uses paper and found objects such as car keys to create multi-dimensional scenes.

"I love the challenge of capturing an expression through facial or body gestures," Warner says. When making a collage, Warner typically starts by creating

a black-and-white digital draft, then applies it to a wooden panel. From there, she sketches out her subjects and begins layering on page after page, from background to foreground until she's satisfied with how it looks.

Sometimes, a piece calls for found objects to add a three-dimensional element. In one collage, titled "Van Gogh on the Farm," a bright yellow Tonka truck pops out of an idyllic farm scene.

"I do a lot of thrift store shopping and antiquing and a lot of picking up bits and pieces of things," Warner explains. "I did a piece for Teichert Construction, and that was a half of a tractor that was left, so I had to give it a home."

For the theme, Warner drew from her experience hanging out on her uncle's farm in Rocklin, as well as exposure to media based in small towns. She connects a few of her pieces—including those of well-dressed ladies dishing out the latest gossip—to the experience of living in a close-knit community.

"Growing up watching those kinds of shows on TV that were centered in small towns, a lot of the themes were kind of the gossipy neighbor or the older woman in town who knew everything and was watching everything you did," Warner says.

Her work provides a stark contrast to Howell's photographs, which are largely devoid of human subjects. Much of the life in Howell's photographs emanates from particular textures—peeling paint or splintering wood, details that give each place a rich sense of history.

"I always say that I think small towns are forgotten by most people, especially if they travel or if they come out to California," Howell says. "They want to go to San Francisco or L.A. or Sacramento even, and there's all these just, really cool little towns."

## Middle of nowhere

New exhibit at the Gallery at 48 Natoma explores different sides of small-town life

BY RACHEL MAYFIELD / [rachelm@newsreview.com](mailto:rachelm@newsreview.com)

There's a sense of lived-in realness to Kelly Howell's latest series of photographs. She captures scenes of small towns—dilapidated buildings, rusting vehicles and faded graffiti.

They're part of the newest exhibit at the Gallery at 48 Natoma, aptly titled *Small Town*, which aims to stir up feelings associated with visiting or growing up in the kinds of towns that most people wouldn't think twice about passing through.

Howell, a professional photographer for three years, says she was inspired to shoot her series of photos after she moved from Folsom to Placerville.

"I just kind of fell in love with the small-town feel," she says. "It's just a slower, more relaxed nature."

In addition to Placerville, Howell traveled to Amador City and Sutter Creek to capture that feel in the form of weathered brick storefronts and charming houses with picket fences. It's a different vibe from Folsom, where Howell grew up.

"Most small towns are pretty old," Howell says. "When you live in a suburb most of your life, everything's new, everything's built up."

Another participating artist is Kerri Warner, who uses pages from books and other paraphernalia to create colorful collages of human subjects.

*Small Town* runs through Jan. 16. The Gallery at 48 Natoma, 48 Natoma St., Folsom. Open Mon-Fri, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is free. For more info, call (916) 461-6601 or visit [folsom.ca.us](http://folsom.ca.us).