



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 16, 2005

PRO ARTS PROJECT
***The Siamese Twins Series* by Brooke Thomas**
June 16 – August 7, 2005

Oakland, CA: Pro Arts is pleased to invite you to an exhibition of *The Siamese Twins Series*, an installation by Brooklyn-based artist Brooke Thomas. The exhibition opens on Friday, June 16 at Noon.

The Siamese Twins Series is a pair of two larger than life works comprised of block printing and sewing on fabric. The works simultaneously draw references to contemporary feminist concerns through the co-opting of iconic female imagery from lingerie catalogues and traditional artistic techniques through the artist's use of sewing and block printing.

From the artist's statement: *My work takes the Victoria's Secret catalogues as inspiration. These glossy catalogues arrive in my, and in most women's, mailbox seemingly every week. The bras and panties occasionally change, but the format is always the same: the same models, the same poses, the same lighting and scenery. The obsessive-ness of the identity-stripped repetition inspires me by its sheer monotony, and yet strange compulsive beauty. By taking the models and reducing them down to a simple form on a linoleum block I have created a single, handmade item from which I can reproduce infinitely. This allows me to claim them as my own little dolls and through their re-representation I can emphasize both what I find ridiculous and what I find attractive about them. My desire is to take something mass-produced and slick and to make it more handmade and labored over, yet uneven and raw. I reinterpret the catalogues and incorporate the handmade into the work by taking on women's craft making--specifically in the form of sewing and quilting. Traditionally this medium relies on rigidity and control, however by leaving the sewn line uneven and erratic it is a way for me to simultaneously accept and reject this practice. This rejection is taken further by clearly referencing the quilt and textiles, yet creating objects whose installation and size renders them useless as functional objects and leaves the viewer searching for what these strange, labored over objects are created for. I want my work to be equally hilarious and thoughtful, beautiful and ugly, mass produced and handmade. I try to weave these disparate elements into the making of these objects so that the conceptual and formal concerns are unified.*

Brooke Thomas holds a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design and has exhibited at the Fitchburg Art Museum (Fitchburg, MA) and Woods Gerry Gallery (Providence, RI). Her work was featured in *New American Paintings* in 2004.

PROJECT: This series presents works which dialogue with topical issues and art practices from the wider contemporary art discourse—with an emphasis on exploring social practices, new genre, large scale installation, off-site projects and new media.

FACILITY INFORMATION

Pro Arts is located at 550 Second Street, Oakland, CA, 94607. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, Noon - 6pm; and Sunday, Noon - 5pm. Entrance is free.

MISSION

Pro Arts is a nonprofit artist-based membership organization that exhibits artists' work and provides a venue for furthering communication in the arts. Find out more at www.proartsgallery.org

* * * * *

For more information or digital images, please contact:
Christian L. Frock, Director of Exhibitions & Programming at christian@proartsgallery.org or 510/763-9425.