



**sarah bowen gallery**  
210 North Sixth Street  
Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York 11211  
Tel. 718.302.4517 Fax. 718.302.4518  
[sarahbowengallery.com](http://sarahbowengallery.com)  
[info@sarahbowengallery.com](mailto:info@sarahbowengallery.com)

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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**Yumi Janairo Roth**  
***Speak Clearly So We Can Understand***

**February 17, 2006 — March 26, 2006**

Reception: Friday, February 17, 2006  
7 – 9 P.M.

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Sarah Bowen Gallery presents a solo show of sculptural installations and conceptual work entitled “Speak Clearly So We Can Understand” by **Yumi Janairo Roth**. Roth fastidiously transforms mundane objects, destabilizing our perceptions of both the new surfaces and the original forms. The reinventions are as humorous as they are unsettling; Roth’s works examine the language of design and function, and jocularly elicit new assumptions about the symbols and framework of culture and society.

Roth’s sculpture is highly ordered; the subtle, rather than haphazard shifts in her hybrid objects reflect for the artist a sociological investigation of how we encounter and process the implications of material culture. Though she works with everyday objects, i.e. hand towels, shipping pallets, and traffic barriers, Roth views all of her forms as points of departure rather than end products. By examining the functional, decorative, and design aspects of her objects, she reveals their possibilities as tools of information and/or propaganda.

While in residency in the Philippines, Roth designed and surreptitiously installed maps, which had not previously existed, for the local public transportation system in Metro Manila, and documented the process of discovery among commuters; call it a ‘Small Act of Public Service.’ Her playful appropriations and manipulations include: ‘Disco Barriers’ (mirror-encrusted police barriers); shipping pallets inlaid with mother of pearl; and kitchen towels embroidered with Homeland Security warnings set behind safety glass (‘Domestic Tranquility’ anyone?), and share with the viewer the temporal shift of customary expectations in everyday visual language. Her work is an inquisitive exploration of the shift between the expected in her objects and the possibilities connoted in her alterations on those objects—both physically as well as cognitively. As David Varno suggests in his essay, “Style Depot,” “Instead of throwing a brick, [Roth builds] a jungle gym.”

“Speak Clearly So We Can Understand” will be accommodated with a catalogue and essay written by David Varno.

Yumi Janairo Roth is an Assistant Professor of Sculpture and Director of the Visiting Artist Program at the University of Colorado-Boulder. She has had numerous solo shows, most recently this past year, *Detoured* at Lawndale Art Center in Houston, Texas, as well as an artist residency and a solo show *Small Acts of Public Service*, at the Vargas Museum, in Metro Manila, Philippines.

sarah bowen gallery is open **Wednesday through Sunday, 11am – 7 pm** and by appointment. The gallery is located at 210 North Sixth Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY, 11211. Directions: L Train to Bedford Avenue stop, take Driggs exit, walk one block south to Sixth Street, and then ½ block East. The gallery is located between Driggs and Roebling on the right hand side.