

MEDIA RELEASE

For more information contact:
Deborah M. Colton 713-869-5151
info@deborahcoltongallery.com

Suzanne Anker
FutureNatural

September 17th to November 5th, 2005
Opening Reception: Saturday, September 17th, 6:00 to 9:00 PM

From designer babies to elixirs of immortality, the genetic age is a revolution in values. By restructuring evolution through technological intervention, questions concerning the future of humankind resonate as if it is a science fiction tale. *FutureNatural*, an exhibition of work by **Suzanne Anker** at the **Deborah Colton Gallery** highlights some of the most controversial practices inspired by the genetic sciences: origins of life, cloning and regenerative medicine.

Ms. Anker, an artist, writer, and curator, is internationally known for her work which explores the intersection of the visual arts and the genetic sciences. She is a leading voice among a growing group of artists invested in this field, who create works that blur the boundaries between the fine arts and the biological sciences. In particular, *FutureNatural* will showcase some of Anker's most compelling themes, including chromosomes as life's writing system and the possibilities for the production of life-forms in the lab. Employing diverse materials that span the traditional to the digital, works of art are created through a variety of processes, consisting of silk-screens and paintings, to computer generated sculpture.

In *Code X: Genome*, inspiration is drawn from the ways in which biological patterning can be converted into a genetic code. By morphing chromosomes into figures lifted from the Canadian Air Force exercise manual, she highlights the strangely anthropomorphic tendencies that appear in unlikely places in the sciences. Chromosomes, from the Greek meaning, "colored bodies" take their place as cellular scripts in Anker's tableaux, while human figures, reduced in scale, cruise across picture planes in concert.

In other works, the bridge between what is man-made and what is natural is often traversed. Her three-dimensional Rorschach pieces, for instance, which are highlighted here in Houston for the first time, Anker converts an inkblot into a three-dimensional entity. Although the Rorschach has been used as a projective psychological instrument of questionable scientific stature, in Anker's work the Rorschach takes on the persona of the natural world. Whether crab, spider, wolf, or tarantula, these pieces appear as if they are parts of the natural world, despite having been extruded from smears created randomly for the purposes of a psychological test. The Rorschach is emblematic of early scientific attempts to uncover the complex mechanics between biology and consciousness.

As humans develop novel technologies to remake themselves - by employing stem cell research, cloning, microchip implantation, and tissue engineering - the ethical and social implications require very careful consideration. Anker refers to these dilemmas in her ongoing digital print series *Golden Boy*. In this suite of twenty prints, chance and necessity are employed to create images that imply parts of the body. They are reminiscent of the heart, the brain, a fetus, and other human elements, such as bones, cells, and skin. Commenting on future applications of regenerative medicine, they become mix-and-match aggregates of new cell formations.

Ms. Anker has shown both nationally and internationally in museums and galleries. She has also lectured on this subject at such institutions as the Yale School of Medicine, the Max Planck Institute, the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, and the Royal Society in London. Her book, co-authored with the late Dorothy Nelkin, *The Molecular Gaze: An in the Genetic Age* was published by Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press in 2004. She is currently Chair of the Art History department at the School of Visual Arts in NYC.

Deborah Colton Gallery is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography and conceptual future media installations. The gallery aspires to provide a forum through connecting Texas, national and international artists to make positive change.

2500 Summer Street | THIRD FLOOR
Houston, Texas 77007
Phone: 713 664 2364 | Fax 713 664 9592