



Evren Tekinoktay, *Tekinoktay Fine Lingerie (detail)*, 2003, collage, 51% x 39%.

BERLIN

EVREN TEKINOKTAY GALERIE ZWINGER

In an era when art and fashion are fusing, Evren Tekinoktay has managed to find the right critical mixture. Instead of designing a store or a handbag for a luxury fashion label, Tekinoktay decided to open a lingerie shop in her hometown of Copenhagen. While the artist has ordered bras, panties, and thongs from around the world, she is the sole proprietor of the business, creating an image for her own profit rather than being co-opted by an international label to revamp

its weary monogram and merchandise.

Tekinoktay *Fine Lingerie* may initially appear as a completely cynical, commercial undertaking, until one considers the artist's ongoing passion: media images of women. An early publication by the artist, *Sisters in the constant lazy travel*, 1999, which combines her childhood photographs from the '70s and '80s with popular advertisements from the same era, attests to a divide between mothers who came of age before the pill and their daughters who were born after its appearance. In her collages, Tekinoktay manages to articulate the ambiguities around two ideals of female sexuality: one bound by motherhood, one freed from reproduction. Opening up a lingerie shop seems like a logical step to reflect on the conflicts endemic to an era cohabited by happy homemakers and gun-toting cowgirls. After all, what feminine article captures more aptly the double destiny of a woman's anatomy than a brassiere?

While hawking bras, Tekinoktay has expanded her research by creating posters and paperworks from the sales catalogues she consulted to stock the shelves. Instead of disappearing behind the counter, these low-gloss advertisements—destined not for consumers but for salespeople—have been combined with the artist's own broad selection of images, both found and made: delicate figurines, arms of anonymous people hugging, cartoon figures, stuffed animals, girls from coloring books, embroidery samples, jungle wallpaper, hands working on a sewing machine. With its hundreds of images cut out and pasted together, *Tekinoktay Fine Lingerie*, 2003, is both a collage and a media quilt, whose patches attest not only to conflicting ideals of womanhood but also to the way women—and animals—are marketed and exchanged. Here, a seductress in a black push-up bra meets a woman testing a wall duster; the Oriental belly dancer finds a place beside the French maid from the boudoir; women are photographs and cartoons while animals appear in their own skins and as the prints on bra-and-panties sets. Tekinoktay uses form—whether of a print or a cutout—to move from one image to the next, from the organic origin to the final product, in a manner that is both humorous and melancholic. A tiger near a woman wearing a tiger-print skirt might be chasing the rights to his own logo, like the snake slinking near the snakeskin shoes and the butterfly fluttering over the wing-shaped décolletage. Indeed, the décolletage—a cut that reveals as much as it holds back—becomes

a body double for the process of collage.

Other works on paper, made from fewer elements, are just as complex in their iconography, as Tekinoktay deploys paper like paint and its shapes like a dialect derived from the visual languages of art history and pop culture. A Matisse-like floating woman is cut out in neon green and set amid space-age stars and circus rings; the same rings appear in bright yellow and hot pink behind the outline of what can only be a pinup baring her breasts. Whatever Tekinoktay's works bare, they bear the traces of a secret history of femininity.

—Jennifer Allen