**ARTIST STATEMENT**

**Kathleen Boteti**

**Artist Statement & Explanation of Bodies of work**

Since the early 1990s, my work has involved the creation of conceptually based sociopolitical objects and installations. In 1992 I began stenciling text by hand onto objects. Hand stenciled text/language has now become a very prominent feature in my work, and I continue to use the same stencil and medium (graphite) that I used in 1992. In my work, I deconstruct the American dream, fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and lullabies that are part of our childhood and adult culture. My work also addresses gender roles/gender assignment, the fragility of family dynamics, domestic violence and the underlying threads of violence and danger that underpin American society.

Often these themes are combined into installations that feature mundane domestic objects, painted pure white and are often embellished with stenciled text. The color white establishes a dream-like surreal quality, suggests notions of purity and safety, and formally unifies the disparate objects in each installation. The texts provide clues to content and interpretation. My "conceptual sculpture weds minimal form with maximal content" (Shawn Hill, "Bay Windows" Nov. 14 96 p27).

I usually work on several bodies of work concurrently. I also create site specific temporary installations for indoor sites (I have in the past created temporary outdoor site-specific work as well). I often rework a site-specific installation into a self-contained format that will enable the piece to be shown in a non-site-specific installation format/ environment. And often elements from my sculptures, installations, and non-site-specific work are utilized in my site-specific installations. In other words, the various bodies of work inform or cross pollinate each other.

*The six specific bodies of work that I am working on concurrently:*

"Weary Heads"- a series of ten life size beds. I began the series in late 1994. These beds are beautiful objects, but they are also very dangerous. Both stenciled text/language and pillows with text are prominent elements in the series. These works transform an object, that usually provides comfort, into one that has nightmare qualities.

"Forever Hold Your Peace" In 1992, I began this series of 11 large sculptural components that attempt to reveal the life of a person who is in a battering/ abusive environment. The majority of contemporary artwork addressing domestic violence does not show the whole picture of what it is like to live with such violence on a daily basis, nor does it demonstrate the long timeline of domestic violence. It is the goal of my work to represent the long nightmare of domestic violence more fully and to show the underlying thread of violence/danger that underlies such relationships.

Lullabies & Fairy Tales are other areas that I am investigating. Several of my works focus on deconstructing these forms of "childhood" entertainment (these themes also make appearances in the other bodies of work).

Pillows Talk- In 1993, I began working with pillows and stenciling text on them. I have created four major pieces that use only pillows (pillows are also an important element in the Weary Heads series).

Site Specific Installation Work- **Birds** is the most recent example of this work, but **Lullaby/Rock A Bye Baby** and one version of **Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf** are also examples.

Works on Paper- My works on paper tend to differ from my 3-D/ installation work. These works are very personal pieces that have been inspired by and made for particular people in my life.Nor are these works minimal in form, color, or content. I often incorporate appropriated images and text into my works on paper and I usually sew these pieces by hand and/or by machine. Like in my 3D/installation works, the text is hand stenciled onto the piece. My works on paper are usually celebratory and often meant to be humorous.