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Nevin Kelly Gallery

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NEVIN KELLY GALLERY TO PREMIERE DOCUMENTARY ON 2005 CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING MING YI SUNG'S CROCHETED NUDE SCULPTURE

Public Screening and Reception Saturday, January 20, 2007 from 6-9pm.

Artist's work on display January 19 – February 2, 2007.

A 2005 exhibition of knitted sculpture in a Washington DC office building sparked controversy among tenants because it included work that the tenants (predominately lawyers) found offensive. The controversy centered on crocheted sculptures by local artist **Ming Yi Sung** (now **Zeleski**) that showed human figures and monkeys complete with crocheted nipples and genitalia. The controversy attracted significant media attention. A short documentary about the controversy, called "[Public Art, Private Parts.](#)" will premier at the Nevin Kelly Gallery on January 20 at 7:00 pm, with a reception from 6 to 9 p.m. The artist and the film's director, American University graduate student **Brandon Bloch**, will be present. The gallery will display Ming's work in an impromptu exhibit from January 19 through February 2. The exhibition will include the work at the center of the controversy—"Settlement with Monkeys"--which is now owned by gallery director **Nevin J. Kelly**

Background: In June of 2005, **Binnie B. Fry**, director of the Eleven Eleven Sculpture Space in the office building at 1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, curated an exhibition entitled "*Not the Knitting You Know*," that presented knitting and crochet as an artistic medium. Four artists were featured in the exhibition, but the controversy centered on Ming's cartoonish crocheted figures, which included male, female and intersexed humans with bright red crocheted nipples, monkeys with prominent male genitalia, and goats with bloated bright pink udders. The building's anchor tenant, the DC office of a prominent Philadelphia law firm, demanded that the works be removed from the building's public art space. Washington Post arts editor **Jonathan Padget** covered the controversy in his tongue-in-cheek article "*Crocheted Nudes Cause Brows to Knit*" (June 23, 2005; Page C01). Ming's solution to the problem was elegant: she quickly created a number of crocheted fig leaves to cover the offending parts (which those who previously took offense could not resist lifting to see what lay beneath).

Brandon Bloch, documentary film producer, artist, and first year graduate student in American University's Master's Program in Film and Video, recently directed a 5-minute short film in

which he and his collaborators, animator **Brad Lambert** and editor **Brad Soucy** playfully outline the story with interviews and animation.

For a preview of the documentary see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiMZY6ThAK4>.

For a gallery of Ming Yi Sung's work: <http://mingyisung.com/>

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