

PRESS RELEASE

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Exhibition: January 11– March 26, 2010
Artist reception: Friday, March 5, 2010, 5–7:00 p.m.

SARA CHESTNUTT-FRY: *ROCKING STITCH*

SAN JOSE, CA—On January 11, Orchard Commercial North First ARTSpace will present *Rocking Stitch*, a solo exhibition featuring photographs of imaginary landscapes by emerging artist Sara Chestnutt-Fry. Chestnutt-Fry combines her digital photographs of contemporary urban landscapes with family snapshots taken by her parents and grandparents to create virtual fairytales. Using a visual vocabulary that moves between representation and surrealism, Chestnutt-Fry composes photographic images of people and places from the past and present in surprising and unexpected ways. Layered with meaning, her images suggest many narrative interpretations. They also express her nostalgic sense of wonder and curiosity about her family history as she explores ideas about personal identity, place, and American culture. *Rocking Stitch* will be on view through March 26, with a reception for the artist held on Friday, March 5, from 5 to 7 p.m. Visiting hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

In 2007, Sara Chestnutt-Fry began working on the series *Rocking Stitch*, a photographic exploration of personal identity and place. She visited her mother and grandparents and listened to stories about their childhood and dreams. Inspired by their stories, she collected snapshots of family members that seemed to best capture something unique about their lives and personalities. In *Dirt Pile Girl Scout*, a young girl (who may be the artist's mother or grandmother) smiles and poses proudly in her uniform while appearing unaware that she is standing in the center of a deforested construction zone. She wears a bright yellow scarf around her collar and a dark green sash displaying her merit badges. Viewers familiar with the Girl Scouts recognize that the young girl in the photograph is an active member of an all-girls organization created to promote character and leadership development as well as social and environmental awareness. Yet Chestnutt-Fry places her directly in front of a mound of dirt. By combining disparate images of people and places from different times, Chestnutt-Fry questions the documentary truth of the photograph and opens the door to new narrative interpretations about identity, place, and culture.

While viewing images from the *Rocking Stitch* series, there is a moment when the viewer becomes acutely aware that something is out of order. At that moment, every object in the photograph can be thoughtfully viewed with a new awareness and attention.

Sara Chestnutt-Fry is an emerging artist living and working in San Francisco, California. She graduated with her BFA from the Academy of Art in San Francisco and currently is an artist-in-residence at Kala Art Institute in Berkeley. Sara would like to extend her appreciation to everyone at Kala Art Institute for their assistance with printing the *Rocking Stitch* series.

About Orchard Commercial North First ARTSpace

Orchard Commercial is Silicon Valley's leader in commercial real estate operations. For over 35 years, Orchard Commercial has worked with investors, brokers, and developers to maximize the value of commercial real estate investments in Silicon Valley. With extensive regional expertise and a distinct understanding of how local companies operate, our team of property management experts integrates a wide range of services with creative approaches to meet your property management needs.

Orchard maintains a long history of commitment to the Silicon Valley community. In May 2007, Orchard Commercial opened the North First ARTSpace, an alternative art exhibition venue located within a multi-tenant commercial building. Both emerging and established artists living and working in the Bay Area are considered for solo and thematic group exhibitions. The North First ARTSpace presents up to four exhibitions each year for tenants and the community to enjoy. For more information about the Orchard Commercial North First ARTSpace, please visit: www.orchardcommercial.com

Visiting Orchard Commercial North First ARTSpace

Address: 2665 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95134

Phone: 408-922-0400

Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.– 6 p.m.; closed Saturday and Sunday

Admission: Free

Map and directions: www.orchardcommercial.com

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