

frosch&portmann

Eva Lake

Fashion Items

frosch&portmann is pleased to present *Fashion Items*, Eva Lake's second solo exhibition with the gallery. The show includes two distinct series of recent collages by the Portland (OR) based artist.

In her most recent work, Eva Lake turns her attention to the body of unknown beauties. While previously exploring female identity via the face, the artist's new approach depicts her subject headless, legless and often without arms. In this new series, called "The Torso", the artist uses sections or parts of a whole and thus explores the concept of incompleteness. But there is nothing mutilated about Lake's 'amputated' women, they pose graciously and elegantly in front of different settings, be it a deep blue ocean, a wintry landscape or an ancient temple — the artist's torsi subtly and beautifully merge with their seemingly contextless backdrop.

In art history, the term torso refers to the representation of the human body without its extremities; the *Torso del Belvedere* for example was highly influential on late Renaissance and Baroque artists. For Eva Lake, the torso isn't just a set of curves, an art historical or anatomical term — it stands for a complicated relationship with fashion, body politics and what we learn from our mothers as well as from the boys; a girl-to-woman passage.

In her second series, the "Fashion Items", Lake went even further, entirely departed from the human body and began collages with just a garment. High-end dresses float high above the mountains or the ocean, far away and detached from the hype of the fashion world. The beginning of this series coincides with the artist's start at a day job selling very expensive clothes.

Lake was fascinated by the attention that was paid to just one garment; she calls it an "entire romance", a romance that followed her into the studio and eventually led to her "Fashion Items".

*I remember a quote from an artist who used a jacket in one of her installations: "This is not about fashion or style," she said. "This is about transformative power." Those words really stuck with me because I witness the transformational power of style and fashion on a daily basis. It is all the same thing to me. These new collages come out of that idea and are what I call Fashion Items.*

—Eva Lake