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**BROOKS INSTITUTE PARTICIPATES IN THE DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION'S
1ST THURSDAY WITH '5 x 5', A FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION**

Santa Barbara, Calif. – (December 13, 2006) -- Brooks Institute of Photography announced today it's "5 x 5" fine art photography exhibition will be the school's featured event as a participant in the Downtown Organization's 1st Thursday initiative. Refreshments will be served at a public artist's reception on Thursday, February 1, 2007 from 5 – 9 pm at the Cota Street Campus and Gallery, located at 27 E. Cota Street in Santa Barbara.

Five photographic perspectives by five recent Brooks' graduates depict this "artist invitational" public exhibition. More than 50 images will be on display by photographers: Chris Buckpitt (2003), Adam Gerlach (2003), Kodiak Greenwood (2004), Serena Lee (2005) and Matthew Rainwaters (2003).

Adam Gerlach, who serves as the gallery's assistant director, specializes in black-and-white photography. He also specializes in hand-toning his work to transform reality and create strange and unfamiliar qualities in his images. His work was profiled in a recent issue of Black and White magazine.

Greenwood, a native of Big Sur, has twice earned awards in the Fuji photography competition, and is represented in private galleries. His extensive photography of the West Coast – both in color and black-and-white – has garnered critical acclaim.

In contrast to outdoor and landscape photography, Chris Buckpitt strives to capture the essence of people. About his work, he says "I have a very deep connection to the human race, and I have always found the human body to be very beautiful."

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Serena Lee, already distinguished in her field of portrait, wedding and fine art photography, finds that her passions lie in using antique and alternative processes, and digital imaging, to mix the old world with the new. Her work has been seen in many venues, including the International Photography Hall of Fame.

Matthew Rainwaters began working with cameras at age 14 shooting skate videos with his friends. Five years later, he bought a Pentax K-1000 and took a junior college photography course. A teacher's comment that he was "pretty good" forever changed his life. Today, his work's featured twice in the Advertising Photographers of America annual Personal Ads show, appeared in the notable Focus on Aids charity auction in Beverly Hills, and has shown in the Frank Lloyd Wright Hollyhock House. He presently teaches photography and reprints portfolios for publication.

The '5 x 5' exhibition, which opens on January 18, will run through March 31, 2007. In the coming months, the Cota Campus and Gallery will feature exhibitions by a range of professional photographers, as well as shows presented by Brooks Institute students and alumni. The public is invited to visit the gallery on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., and on weekends from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, call the Brooks Institute Cota St. Campus and Gallery at (805) 690-4913.

About Brooks Institute

Brooks Institute of Photography celebrates more than 60 years of educating students in the visual and media arts. With campuses in Santa Barbara and Ventura, California, the school offers Masters and Bachelors degrees in fields including Professional Photography, Visual Journalism, Film and Video Production and Visual Communication. Brooks' graduates are visible nationally and internationally, working for distinguished organizations including National Geographic, Smithsonian, Los Angeles Times and other national media outlets, including Hallmark Publishing, Cousteau Society, HBO, Kodak and other industry leaders in the visual media arts fields.

For more information about Brooks Institute and the school's programs, visit www.brooks.edu, or call 805-966-3888.

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