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ART REVIEW

An open-armed welcome

The Brooklyn Museum is celebrating its lively local arts scene in a huge show of works by area residents. It's a hospitable exercise in inclusiveness.

By Leah Ollman
Special to The Times

Because of its scale and scope, its sheer inclusiveness, to experience "Open House" is at once an adventure and an ordeal. It's also something of a scavenger hunt because works tucked into the permanent collection galleries don't announce themselves with much fanfare, which is exactly what makes several of them worth seeking out.

Set among the Rodin bronzes of heroes and nymphs, a grave monument by Patricia Cronin, also in bronze, inserts a touch of elegant subversion. "Memorial to a Marriage" shows the artist and her female life partner nude, partially draped, in loving embrace. The sculpture gives vivid, compelling form to a union considered legally untenable. Rarely do tenderness and political agenda converge so well in a work of art.



ARTIST AND PARTNER: Patricia Cronin's "Memorial to a Marriage" successfully unites tenderness and political agenda.