

# ART & IDEOLOGY

Bill Olander - Do Not Remove

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FRED LONIDIER and ALLAN SEKULA

Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, guest curator

NANCY SPERO and FRANCESC TORRES

Donald B. Kuspit, guest curator

JERRY KEARNS and SUZANNE LACY

Lucy R. Lippard, guest curator

ISMAEL FRIGERIO and ALFREDO JAAR

Nilda Peraza, guest curator

KAYLYNN SULLIVAN and HANNAH WILKE

Lowery Sims, guest curator

The New Museum of Contemporary Art



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## Preface and Acknowledgments

"Art & Ideology" was originally conceived in response to the growing numbers of artists whose work is politically, rather than formally motivated. It is clear, over the past few years, that a concern with the political ideas and activities which so profoundly affect the world we live in is having an increasing impact on the arts. This became most clearly evident, in recent history, in the mid to late 1960s, when Angry Arts Festivals and artists' protest groups sprang up around the country in response to the war in Vietnam. At the same time, artists began to object vehemently to the exclusionary attitudes which museums, galleries, and critics, as well as the public, brought to bear upon work by women and minority artists.

Today, in the 1980s, feminist and anti-war advocacy has become, in the art community, couched in the more subtle and sophisticated language of ideological debate. The questions are broader: that is, to what extent do unspoken social, cultural, and political factors – among them race, class, gender – affect the way we present and perceive works of art, and to what extent are those works of art part of the larger social fabric of our lives?

This exhibition cannot, of course, be definitive, nor is it intended to be. It is intended instead to further enlarge the debate. To this end, we have invited five guest curators, Benjamin Buchloh, Donald Kuspit, Lucy Lippard, Nilda Peraza and Lowery Sims, to show the work of two artists, one lesser known, the other

more established, which they feel addresses some of these issues in a provocative way.

I am grateful to Lynn Gumpert, Curator, who has undertaken the complex task of staff liaison with the guest curators and artists with skill and patience; to John Jacobs, Preparator/Registrar and his assistant, Eric Bemisderfer, who have rebuilt the Museum space and overseen the installation of the many pieces created especially for this exhibition; to Tim Yohn, our editor, who has once again applied his considerable skills to the careful editing of the five manuscripts; to Curatorial Coordinator Marcia Landsman, who has compiled and produced the catalog; to Lisa Parr, Curatorial Secretary for the tireless organizational skills she has brought to bear on the exhibition; to Melissa Harris for diligently researching the artists' biographies and bibliographies; and to the many volunteers and interns who have assisted us with every aspect of the exhibition, and without whose dedication we would be sorely bereft.

Most of all, I am grateful to the guest curators for the extraordinary time, effort, and knowledge they have brought to this task, and to the ten participating artists whose work provides us with a fresh vision of the world we live in.

Marcia Tucker  
Director

## Since Realism there was... (On the current conditions of factographic art) by Benjamin H.D. Buchloh

The title of the exhibition "Art & Ideology" seems to invite misconceptions: first of all that the work in this exhibition differs from all other currently produced art in its relationship to ideology. Either the work in this exhibition is the kind of investigation that confronts ideology head on (as opposed to the one that "bathes in it"), or it is, due to its obsessive confrontational involvement with ideology, close to a point of merging with it. It is *ideological* art, as opposed to *aesthetic* art. In any case, the title offers us a liberal choice: we can be, but do not have to be, involved with ideology when we produce/receive art. If, however, we do focus on the ideological nature within which we are constituted, we risk depriving ourselves of the essentially aesthetic experience: the pleasure of symbolic liberation from ideology.

To participate in a venture with this title offers a moment of truth to the artists and to the curator. The artists can reflect upon the actual situation of their work in relation to the ideological apparatus: the social institution of art within which it is contained and the forms of discourse within which it is determined. They can realize that condition as a determining factor and gauge its importance – in comparison with the works' actual claims for political reality, operational interference, and substitution of aesthetic knowledge for ideology. They can, at the same time, reflect upon the degree to which the work has actually taken those determining conditions into account, or whether in its claim for a political confrontation with the conditions of ideology, it has in fact neglected to examine the very root of its proper existence in ideology and therefore has blindly fallen prey to the particular ideological conditions of the apparatus of art and its specific history and discursive features. They can reflect whether the truly ideological moment of the work then might not be the claim to deconstruct ideology effectively, not on the site of its constitution and operation, but outside of it, in a realm of pure intelligibility and practice, whether or not it has been contaminated by the inversion and transformation of meaning that the production of representation entails when it operates without reflection upon the conditions of production and distribution.

For the curator, the confrontation with the work opens a different perspective, the opposite in fact. In flagrante, so to speak, the curator can observe his/her operation within the institutional

apparatus of art: most prominently the procedure of abstraction and centralization that seems to be an inescapable consequence of the work's entry into the superstructural apparatus, its transformation from *practice* to *discourse*. That almost seems to have become the curator's primary role: to function as an agent who offers exposure and potential prominence – in exchange for obtaining a moment of actual practice that is about to be transformed into myth/superstructure.

When one of the founding fathers of American Modernism and the first director of the institution that taught the American Neo-avant-garde arrived in the Soviet Union in 1927 on a survey journey to take stock of international avant-garde activities for their possible import into the United States, he saw himself confronted with a situation of seemingly unmanageable conflicts.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, there was the extraordinary productivity of the modernist avant-garde in the Soviet Union (extraordinary by the numbers of its constituency, men and women, its modes of production, ranging from Malevich's late Suprematist work through the laboratory period of the Constructivists to the Lef Group and the Productivist Program, from Agit Prop-theatre productions to avant-garde film production for mass audiences). On the other hand, there was the obvious general awareness among artists and cultural producers, critics and theorists that they were participating in a final transformation of the modernist aesthetic, which would irretrievably and irrevocably alter the conditions of production and reception as they had been inherited from bourgeois society and its institutions (from Kant's aesthetics and the modernist practices that originated in them). Moreover, there was the growing fear that the process of that successful transformation might be aborted by the emergence of totalitarian repression from within the very system that had generated the foundations for a new socialist collective culture. Last of all and crucial, there was Alfred Barr's own disposition of interests and motivations of action within that situation: searching for the most advanced modernist avant-garde in a moment and place where that social group was just about to dismantle itself and its specialized activities in order to assume a new role and function in the newly-defined collective process of a social production of culture.<sup>2</sup>

The reasons why Alfred Barr, one of the first "modern" art his-



torians, then just about to discover and establish the modern avant-garde in the United States, was determined (in the literal sense) to fail in comprehending the radical change that those artists and theoreticians introduced into the history of aesthetic theory and production in the twentieth century, are obviously too complex to be dealt with in this context. One point, however, has to be developed since it applies immediately to the questions that are generated in regard to the work of Fred Lonidier and Allan Sekula, the contemporary artists in this exhibition, who, as we suggest, have decided to continue and expand the tradition of factographic production.

The paradigmatic change that occurs in the emergence of productivist factography is the reversal of the Kantian conception of Modernist art production as an essentially disinterested activity that opposes all other forms of activities of human labor and production. With the productivist position, modernism entered a stage where the activity of the artist was not only equated with all other social forms of production, but was no longer and in no way considered desirable or virtuous to support the special activity of the unique concentration of talent. Furthermore, it was supposed to programmatically merge with the social forms of production and integrate itself in the collective where the artist as chosen individual and specialist would take his/her role side by side with all other professions and functions in society.

The present social and political situation differs drastically from that in which the Productivist avant-garde found itself, for example, in regard to its audience relationship. The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 was not only a radical political and socio-economic transformation of the feudal society of Russia, it also introduced the delayed industrial revolution. We can in fact assume that artists such as Eisenstein and Vertov, Rodchenko and Lissitzky who insisted on the technology of their production as much as on the actual dissemination of their work to a mass audience, reached an audience that was not only eager to learn and share the new representations and meanings that the cultural revolution produced and disseminated, but were also physically, emotionally, and intellectually enchanted with the new images and sounds that photography, radio, and film had to offer.

Even when Brecht and Benjamin developed productivist aesthetics for the historical conditions of the Weimar Republic – such as Brecht's "Radiotheory" or Benjamin's major theoretical tractatus "The Author as Producer," both of which were a direct outcome of the authors' confrontations with these theories during their visits to the Soviet Union and their encounter with Tretyakov

– they were not simply proposing utopian phantasms as strategies, but they argued for an understanding of the actual conditions for the transformation of hitherto passive, receptive audiences into active participants and producers, the transformation of art from catering to an existing apparatus to dismantling and changing that existing apparatus, and their theories were based on a materialist study of the actual and potential realities of the historical moment.

One has to be very careful in even establishing a reference to those circumstances from a contemporary perspective, especially one that operates from within the artworld, which has a habit of pilfering historically available positions, extracting them from their context and transplanting them onto a contemporary avant-garde production which in itself is in constant need of renovating its instantly bought-off radicality. Obviously the situation is entirely different in the present moment, where mass audiences are not only locked up firmly in the terminal grip of the media, but where the access that artists have to the actual apparatus of ideological production is at very best that of a parasite who mimics and excels in the strategies of the consciousness industry and who is furbishing new stylistic gadgets to the producers who need avant-garde creativity to renovate their rapidly worn out strategies and styles. On the other hand, artists who position themselves in relation to analysis and criticism with respect to the monolithic institutions become quickly aware that marginalization seems to be the alternative option to becoming a parasitical beneficiary of the consciousness industry. They have to take into consideration that the claim for a position and practice of criticism of ideology that might be made in the work itself is ultimately falsified by the fact that the work remains passively confined to the position of powerlessness to which it is relegated by the centralized institutions of the ideological apparatus. That instant falsification – which is expressed already in the term "political art," a categorization most often used to contain and frame practice in a type of art that connotes "obsolescence, isolation, inefficiency," is obviously not – as it seems at least to most at the present moment – the condition of those artists who deliberately remain with their production inside the traditional framework of the modernist high art avant-garde. They do not engage in the argument with the totalitarian institutions of television and advertising, of corporate and state power, but they remain safely installed within the controllable confines of the traditional setup of the discourse of the artistic individual producer, the modes of production that go along with it (painting, sculpture, drawing, etc.), the distribution forms by which these objects are disseminated (the individual dealer, the individual collector, the

museum institution) and the position of the discourse itself (its universality as *art* – as opposed to the vulgarity of the culture industry or the nebulous realm of ideology – by implication and tradition therefore instantly associated with the inevitability of truth content).

In the world of art – as opposed to that of the media and ideology – one operates under the assumption that social relations are still transparent and that the forms and means of production and distribution are owned and controlled by the artist/producer and, for example, the individual dealer. Furthermore, the social institution that legitimizes and contains the discourse of art production, the museum, is assumed to be beyond doubt and it is venerable in its universal commitment to cultural truth, and as a nonprofit organization, it does not serve anybody's particular economic or political interests. These bucolic conditions of art production, however, appear gradually in a different light with the realization that most of the assumptions with which the mythology of these conditions of the production of aesthetic knowledge have been maintained – as opposed to the collective falsity of ideology and the consciousness industry – are in their own way constantly falsified by the operations of the apparatus of the institutions that support and contain the discourse of art production. The fact is that the hieratic image of individual knowledge and social truth content constructed in the name of art, does by no means find its way through the liberal institution of the market into the hands of the individual devoted to the furthering and sustaining of the conditions of individual knowledge as they are evidenced in the work of art, but that more often than not the individually-crafted artifact enters the anonymous corporate collection or the art investment bank, and it becomes the subject of systematic tax evasion schemes and fulfills political purposes within the legitimization process of museum institutions. As Hans Haacke has clarified frequently and convincingly in his work, one does not have to dig very deep to discover the intersection between cultural devotion and ideological political and massive economic interests.<sup>4</sup>

Signs without referents, practice without matter, discourse without institution – these seem to be the ideal conditions of contemporary aesthetic production, or more correctly, the conditions that exclusively generate aesthetic *pleasure*, which after all, has been the criterion to establish the specificity of the aesthetic experience against all other experiential modes. Aesthetic pleasure (as in the play of the signifier or the rupture of the symbolic system) is defined in opposition to all other pleasures and certainly even

more so in opposition to all other physiological, perceptual or psychological interactions with the objects of reality and their material transformation, in the process of labor, or learning, and in the production of knowledge. Kant's rigorous confinement of the aesthetic to the disembodied and the disinterested became the cornerstone of the prisonhouse of modernism. It corresponded to the increasing need for the division of labor in the process of industrialization and the necessity of specialization and legitimized the foundation of the modernist avant-garde as a group of specialists of vision, perceptual exploration, construction of representation, and innovators of perceptual codes. This group was in itself disembodied from the totality of productive processes in society, opposing in heroic acts of negation and refusal of the totalitarian subjection of the forces of production to utilitarian interests, i.e., the maximization of profit. This opposition resulted in the formation of a social character, the avant-garde artist and the "exclusive concentration of artistic talent in the individual and the corresponding repression of artistic talent in the masses."<sup>5</sup> That confinement of the aesthetic to the anti-utilitarian and that delegation of artistic production to the artistic specialist have governed the notion of aesthetic experience and pleasure and have placed it in opposition to all other forms of social production.

Yet this privilege of disembodiment (literally the freedom from manual labor and the utilitarian function, but not from the commodity form and the market), has throughout the history of modernism been perceived by artists as the stigma that tainted their claims for the essentially realistic nature of their pursuits. Hence we witness the history of the disavowal of the aesthetic within the modernist work itself, its constantly reiterated quests to abolish the aesthetic status of the constructs, the anti-artistic impulse that distinguishes the relevant art of modernism from Courbet onwards and insists on its association with the paradigms of science (as, for example, in the case of the Impressionists) or on its association with the general conditions of production in society (the paradigm of the industrial mode as opposed to the individual craft production, e.g. Duchamp and Constructivism). The anti-aesthetic impulse not only insisted on the potential equality of all social forms of production and tried to abolish the special status that had been assigned to the aesthetic construct, but also on the essential reality (i.e., the labor of production) of the sign, *as well as* that of the referent. This position which Lonidier and Sekula assume in their work refuses to see artistic practice as being disembodied from the matter of the social and political reality upon which it is imposed as a superstructural function and it insists on a dialectical



critique and tries to dismantle the very centralizing institutions within which it is constituted, contained, and isolated as a discursive practice. Their work, once placed in the institutional context of an exhibition, asks: what potential of oppositional practice is historically still inherent in the discourse of art? And what is the need to define oppositional practice in terms of art, and place it inside the social institution of art and address its particular limited audience and what is the need to accept the confinement that those attachments imply? Why should artists not attempt to define the practice of cultural resistance outside of the existing institutions, outside of the historicity of the discourse and thereby address different audiences altogether?

If Althusser's argument is correct that the aesthetic constitutes itself viably only inside the ideological, what then is the nature of the practice of those artists who, as we are suggesting, are in fact trying to develop a practice that is operative outside and inside of the ideological apparatus? The first argument that will of course be leveled against this type of work is that it simply cannot be "art" – and this accusation has in fact been made against artists like Lonidier, Hatch, Rosler and Sekula (in the very same way that the work of the Productivists and the factographic writings, or the production of John Heartfield have been excluded – perhaps to their advantage after all – from acceptance into the history of modernist art production). Furthermore it will be argued that this work lacks the essential quality that has defined art throughout its history: the experience of disinterested pleasure – which the interested didacticism of this work opposes by its explicitness in taking positions, its clarity of informational instruction, the concreteness of its actual involvement with the particular segment of reality that it has chosen to be engaged with in an approach of interference and operational transformation. If we follow Althusser's definition of ideology as a system of representations in which real relations are transformed into imaginary relations, and, furthermore, that these imaginary relations are endowed with a material existence, then the question of the interrelationship between art and ideology assumes in fact a degree of complexity that the forthright claims to a dimension of practice in this contemporary political art will have to confront.<sup>6</sup> We do not have to mention of course, that the opposite kind of work, that which seems to resolve the dialectic by simply aligning itself in its entirety with the ideological apparatus (the traditions of the discourse, the position within the institution, its conventions of audience address), and the power of the governing conditions would have resolved any aspect of that question. Quite the contrary, its very existence, its modes of reading and reception,

as well as its forms of production and circulation are entirely exhausted and compressed into the dominant practices of ideological representations.

Simply put, the question could read as follows: How progressive can aesthetic production be under the historical conditions of aggressive conservatism? Or, otherwise: Can this production be perceived as "aesthetic" if it denies the validity and deliberately ignores the essential historical material reality of those conditions that produce the representations of ideology? Hoelderlin's famous question "Why would there be poets in sinister times?" pointed to the contradictory nature of the situation: if aesthetic production is a discourse that is contained within a society at any particular moment in history (which implies that the discourse of art is always legible only by the oppressor and is only directed at the oppressor) and if its historical reality (i.e., its legibility and efficiency of meaning) is dependent upon that audience – not upon the utopian anticipation of different social and political conditions and representations of the oppressed – then what can the "reality" of an aesthetic production be that in fact addresses a different audience altogether, but within the system and the language of art and with the means of the apparatus that the bourgeois definition of art has provided for the contemporary producer?

This dichotomy can probably only be resolved by realizing that it is precisely our perceptual apparatus (that domain of the primary process where we are constituted in ideology and where aesthetic perception is anchored and generated) by which we abide most solidly to the social demands that guarantee the continuation of the order of the relations of production. It seems therefore that it is precisely the dimension of aesthetic pleasure which will have to be sacrificed in the perceptual system that provides the basis for ideological reproduction in art that should be seriously questioned. In a way we should be grateful to those contemporary artists who currently receive the attention of the apparatus that they offer us such blatant and profound insight into the relations between "aesthetic pleasure" and reactionary power that the apparatus of art production as a subsection of the general ideological apparatus is capable of producing at this point in history. They help us in fact to gradually disentangle and disassociate ourselves from the seemingly insurmountable fixations upon those primary pleasures of aesthetic experiences. We recognize, after all, that it is our desires and our pleasures as they can be fulfilled by contemporary art production which are the most secret and reliable agents of dominant ideology: like all other superstructural instances (the moral and the legal code, religious belief, family structure and the

construction of sexuality), it is the attachment to aesthetic desire and aesthetic pleasure that guarantee the continuation of our archaic modes of perceptual and cognitive behavior.

As in all instances where the self seems to be most secure in desire and where identity seems to be guaranteed in gratification and pleasure, one might have to realize that what applies to the narcissistic pleasures and gratifications of fashion and consumption in which the self is most clearly constituted in ideology and where the ideological apparatus is most successfully at work, by now applies equally to the traditional modes of generating aesthetic pleasure. They have historically become the most effective maneuvers to inscribe the order of the relations of production into the representations of identity and imbue them with the authority of legitimation that only high art seems to offer. In the era of corporate state power where the consciousness industry is systematically organized to prohibit and destroy individuality and identity, the public notion of individuality itself becomes a strategy of oppression and the means to achieve a semblance of the fetishized concept of individuality must by necessity be the fetishistic production procedures and materials that Arvatov identified so clearly in 1926:

While the entire technique of capitalist society is based on the most advanced and most recent achievements and represents a technique of mass production... bourgeois art has remained in principle on the level of crafts and therefore it has been removed from the general social practice of mankind and shifted into the realm of pure aesthetics... The lonely master – that is the only type of artist in capitalist society, the type of that specialist of “pure art,” who works outside of the immediately utilitarian practice since it is based on advanced machine technology. From here we derive the illusion of art being its own purpose, from here its bourgeois fetishism.<sup>7</sup>

This need for the supply of mythical images of individuality and identity, which dominant ideology currently imposes on aesthetic production, would also explain the miraculous rediscovery of European art by the section of the ideological state apparatus that is called the “artworld.” As in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century “primitivism” as an inspirational force for the definition of the “modern idiom,” when African and Asian artifacts were “discovered” for the practice of high art at a moment when imperialist politics had successfully eradicated authentic cultural practice in the colonies, so now do the old European nation states supply idioms for the fetishized concept of individuality at a moment when multi-national corporate state power and its con-

sciousness industry have successfully deleted the last vestiges of practices of representation, learning and knowledge in the sphere of collective public experience. At a historical moment when there is every reason to be terrified at the perspectives that Reaganism opens up economically and politically and every evidence that there is no national autonomy when it comes to vital questions such as missile deployment and nuclear armament – at that moment we are told by German Neo-Expressionist artists and their critical spokesmen that they have successfully performed the labor of mourning about fascism in their paintings and that they have thus established the images of a new national identity. Thus:

The new German painters perform an extraordinary service for the German people. They lay to rest the ghosts – profound as only the monstrous can be – of German style, culture and history, so that the people can be authentically new. They are collectively given the mythical opportunity to create a fresh identity.... Thus to see these pictures is to be confronted with the special necessity and special freedom of the Germanic today.<sup>8</sup>

Allan Sekula's work, *Sketch for a Geography Lesson* (1983), offers us a different picture of what links contemporary American politics with the mythical tendencies as they originated in the German Romantic past of the nineteenth century. It negates the mythification of historical fact in the guise of the aesthetic and his work provides the synecdochic information that has since the inception of Realism asked the viewer/reader to confront the reality of the referent as much as the reality of the sign. The false globality and universality with which contemporary paintings treat historical subject matter (e.g. the mourning of the unfathomable German past) is substituted here with concrete information about the global interrelationships of present day American politics. The myth of the national character (from which the original need for expression supposedly springs) appears here in a detail that reminds us of the transition from agricultural production and its close affiliation with mythical and religious practices and their lasting impact on the formation of a national character that is historically ill-equipped to come to terms with the industrial reality of corporate capitalism. As Theodor Adorno once pointed out, it is the discrepancy between scientific and technological progress on the one hand and the retardation of social progress and political participation on the other hand that generates the cyclical reoccurrence of the need for mythical and religious explanations in advanced capitalist societies. In the juxtaposition of the rural

slaughtering ritual in a German village with the American television images choosing that very landscape as "theatre" for wargames, that discrepancy of an uneven development of technology and social and political consciousness becomes obvious. The terror of irrationality here, however, is emanating from the corporate television's wargame, not from the expressive imagery of the rural slaughtering. In the same manner as the color photographs of the "German Romantic" landscape that seems to have endured from Caspar David Friedrich's vision onwards, are devaluated not only by the presence of signs that remind us of the actual situation of that landscape (to function as wargame terrain for the American forces in Germany), but also in the way that they reveal the irretrievable moment of history when landscape imagery could still carry the meaning of the conflict between the mythical and the rational. Sekula's work addresses the reality of a contemporary experience – that which links the American public actually, rather than aesthetically, to the geo-political reality of West Germany (a strategic and economic ally at the forefront of the border with the rivalling economic and political system, the war theatre where a potential conflict between the two superpowers could be possibly resolved without actually involving the American population on its own terrain). The work assembles the elements of representation (past and present) through which this experience is mediated: the photographs of the romantic German landscape and its pre-industrial agrarian rituals, the Cold War "popular imagery" from Sekula's high school textbook that depicts the Madonna as being assaulted by the masses of Red Army soldiers and the photographs from an American TV program of a wargame that is situated in the rural area in West Germany, near the East German border that Sekula depicts also in his tourist photographs. It is this analytical approach to the construction of representation and its mediations that justifies and requires the work's display and insertion into an aesthetic context (such as this exhibition). On the other hand, it is the work's "factographic" approach – its insistence on the necessity to explore and clarify the construction and operation of representation within present day reality and to make that reality transparent rather than mythify it, which distinguishes the work of Allan Sekula from most contemporary aesthetic practice. It is therefore neither confined or limited to the traditional institutions of art mediation nor is it restricted in its reception to the exclusivity of an artworld audience. Without assuming or suggesting the falseness of a popularization of high-art traditions, it addresses a concrete instant in the conditions of contemporary experience and its constitution in ideological representations. Thus the work becomes

both accessible as an analysis of ideological representations to multiple audiences and it takes its place in the necessary formation of a culture of resistance. To develop a more specific audience relationship is a crucial interest of Allan Sekula's and Fred Lonidier's work. That means to address the specific needs and interests of a particular audience as much as it implies to move out of the institutional confines of the artworld. Both artists have produced work that operates primarily in situations that are not part of the existing exhibition and distribution system, not in order to emphasize the problematic legitimization of that system, but more so to actually enter the spaces where the concerns of the new audiences are at stake. As Tretyakov suggested in his essay "From the Photographic Series to the Systematic Investigation" in 1931, this involvement with a new audience will have to gradually increase their participation and emphasize the necessity of self-representation of these audiences. That requires more than the token commitment that previous art practices have offered to different audiences by splashing the work with hints of popular culture, for example, participatory gadgets, or by dressing it up in a crude "proletarian" materiality. Allan Sekula's work, *School is a Factory* (1979–80), for example, was primarily conceived for display and interaction with the audiences of students at community colleges, since the work investigated the interrelationships between the interests and needs of corporations in certain areas of California and the educational programs that the community colleges in that area offered. Fred Lonidier's work, *The Health and Safety Game: Fictions Based on Fact* (1976), a documentation and analysis of individual experiences of work-related injuries and the neglect with which the victims are treated by the responsible corporations, was shown primarily at spaces where large numbers of workers would regularly pass through, such as labor council halls, shopping malls, a museum of Science and Industry and union halls. His more recent work which is his contribution to this exhibition, *L.A. Public Workers Point to Some Problems: Sketches Of The Present For Some, Point To The Future For All?* was published in excerpts in two issues of the weekly paper *The Citizen*, the official publication of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO and was exhibited in both union halls and at the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art.<sup>9</sup> The work addresses the questions of the detrimental impact, not to say disastrous consequences of federal and state legislation in favor of corporate and entrepreneurial interests on those sectors of public life and culture, that we would not normally be confronted with as a museum- or gallery-visiting art audience, since the system of rep-

resentation that we traditionally refer to as “the aesthetic” by definition extracts itself—as it seemed—from the economic and the political reality of the basis of culture in everyday life, in order to construct the aesthetic mirage that generates pleasure due to its mysterious capacity to disembody and disassociate our perception from the weights and demands of the real. Lonidier’s work successfully counteracts that tendency—which is as compulsive in aesthetic production as it is firmly embedded in the conventions of aesthetic reception—by not only systematically exploring the basis of culture, i.e., labor, but also by specifying the connections where the global system of political and economical determinations concretely manifests itself in the conflicts of individual existence. Self-representation of those individuals is as important in Lonidier’s work as is his interference in the construction of what he calls “Fictions based on Facts” (what Brecht said about the insufficiency of the photograph of the factory is also true, much more so, for the portrayal of the individual working in the factory:

its “truth” has to be constructed). That strategy of self-representation is not only one of the many necessary steps to develop different and multiple audiences for the production of cultural interference in the seemingly hermetically closed system of ideological representation, it is also a necessary condition for that practice to resist centralization and the immediate extraction from practice by the cultural apparatus. Perhaps even more than the difficulty of successfully developing new modes of presentation, display and interaction with different audiences, the work of Lonidier and Sekula faces the problem of how to protect itself from the effects that the traditional audience of the cultural apparatus has to offer. Marginalizing the central authority of the apparatus of “Art,” and its institutions: the critics and the magazines as much as the museums, the galleries, and the collectors, seems for the time being one of the successful strategies that these artists and others working with similar means and intentions have employed.

## Notes

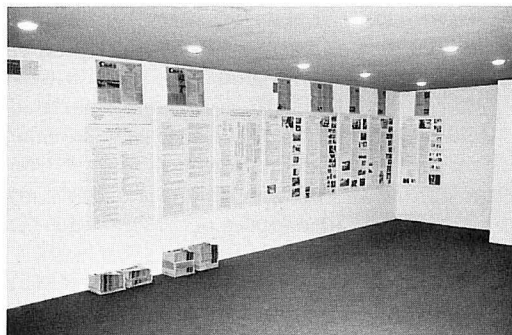
1. For detailed information on Barr’s unsuccessful search for easel paintings in the homes of the Soviet avant-garde, his encounters with Rodchenko, Lissitzky, and Tretyakov in particular, see: Alfred H. Barr, Jr., “Russian Diary 1927–28,” in *October* 7, Winter 1978, p. 21.
2. What happened instead was predicted in 1926 by Boris Arvatov, along with Tretyakov and Taraboukine, the third of the Productivist theoreticians, when he wrote about the painters who did not join the group of the Productivists: “Those on the right gave up their positions without resistance... either they stopped painting altogether or they emigrated to the foreign countries in the West, in order to astonish Europe with homemade Russian Cezannes or with patriotic-folkloric chicken paintings.” Boris Arvatov, *Kunst und Produktion*, Munich, 1978, p. 43.
3. See for example: Bertolt Brecht, “Radio as a Means of Communication.” English translation in *Screen*, vol. XX, Winter 1979–80.

Recently reprinted in *Communication and Class Struggle*, vol. II, edited by Armand Mattelart and Seth Siegelaub (New York: 1983).

4. Hans Haacke, *The Master Chocolate Maker* (Toronto: 1983) as well as *Mobil Observations* (Saskatoon: 1982), and, of course, *Framing and being Framed* (Halifax/New York: 1976).
5. K. Marx/F. Engels, “Die Deutsche Ideologie,” in *Marx, Engels, Lenin ueber Kultur, Aesthetik, Literatur* (Leipzig: 1968), p. 113.
6. Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy* (London: 1971). Particularly the essay: “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” p. 127 ff.
7. Arvatov, loc. cit. p. 12.
8. Donald Kuspit, “The American Case Against German Expressionism.” *Expressions* (St. Louis: 1983), p. 46 and passim.
9. *The Los Angeles Citizen*, vol. 83, no. 17 and 18, September 1979.

*Benjamin Buchloh is a critic and teaches modern and contemporary art history at the State University of New York at Westbury.*





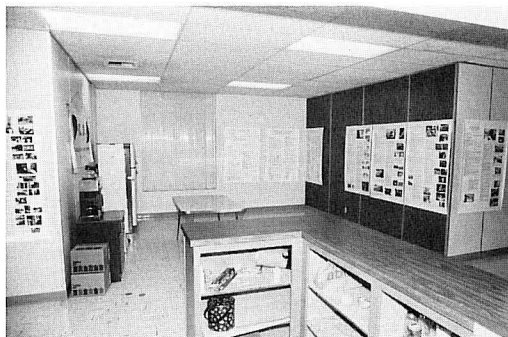
Los Angeles Institute for Contemporary Art "Social Works" Show



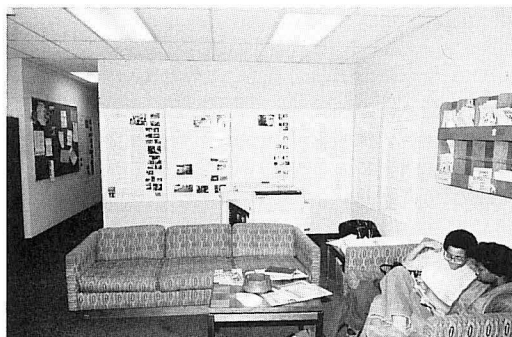
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Council 37



Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO



Service Employees International Union 434



Service Employees International Union 660



United Teachers of Los Angeles 1021

**Fred Lonidier.**

*LA-Public Workers Point To Some Problems: Sketches Of The Present For Some, Point To The Future For All?*, 1979.

Black and white photographs with text  
Ten panels: 50 x 34 inches each  
Courtesy of the artist

# L.A. Public Workers Point To Some Problems:

sketches of the present for some, point to the future for all?

By Fred Lonidier  
Artist/Teacher  
AFT 2034

## CRISES OF WESTERN CAPITAL: The International Context of Stagflation (Stagnation & Inflation)

### 1. Shortage of Markets

Economies of Europe, Japan and European socialist countries maturing from World War II devastation. For many goods and materials there is now excessive international capacity. That is, with the U.S., more can be produced than will be bought. Those countries which buy more than sell will have balance of payments deficit and face cuts in production and employment.

### \*7 Multinationals Weaken National Control

Wave of the future already here and politically advanced beyond much control of nations. Able to avoid regulation and taxation better than national companies. Also a challenge to basically national labor unions. With weak national identity multinationals will look out for selves internationally.

### 9. Investment Uncertainty

Inflation, shaky dollar and mixed performance of various enterprises has slowed economic expansion. Financial and corporate investors inclined to go for safer, but low yield, rather than riskier, but potentially high growth, investments. Government anti-inflation policy, like credit restrictions, slows investment.

### 10. Unemployment High

Stagnation will not absorb growing work force. As more women and youth, who must now work, enter job market, further strains on employment. National and international minorities swell the army of unemployed in some countries (surplus people).

### 11. Growing Underdevelopment

With few exceptions nonindustrial countries falling further behind as manufacturing ventures founder and cash crops, raw materials fluctuate in international markets. Failure to grow economically has put national debt at astronomical levels threatening industrial economies if chain of default occurs. Penetration of underdeveloped world by foreign business tends to drain what earnings are made out to investors abroad.

### 12. Fiscal Crises of the State

Varies internationally but tendency within last decade for government expenditures to grow and exceed revenues. Ironically, in the U.S. where much less of Gross National Product taken by public sector than in Europe and where business has been paying a declining share of taxes, business has taken leadership in 'cut back' movements. Proposition 13, for example, has returned more to business property than home property and this disparity will increase because homes are sold more often, and therefore reassessed more often, than commercial property.

## NOTES AND QUOTES ON STAGFLATION OR, The Cause Depends on the Effect OR, Laissez Faire Takes on Keynesianism

Finance Magazine January 1978

William E. Simon  
Treasury Secretary for Nixon and Ford  
Now senior advisor at Booz, Allen & Hamilton, Inc. and senior consultant at Blyth Eastman Dillon & Co., Inc.  
from a speech at a conference sponsored by Continental Bank, Chicago, Nov. 20, 1977.

The hard truth is that we have been suffering from a profits depression in this country.... pp. 4-5

So when 15,000 American Steelworkers get laid off the job, we ought to make sure that everyone understands why — they are paying the price for a long history of capital punishment here in our own country. p. 4

We have too much unemployment today not because the government has failed to spend enough or do enough for us, but because the government has spent too much and done too much. And we suffer economically today not because the private enterprise system has failed us, but because we have failed that system — we have failed to encourage enough savings and investment for a sound future. p. 4

Business Week May 22, 1978

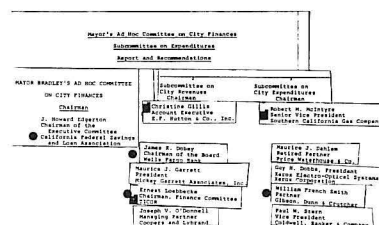
Barry Bosworth of Council on Wages and Prices, using work of Brookings Institute's M. Denison, says government regulation is main cause of decline in productivity which is key to satisfying 'competing social claims' on output. p. 113

Fortune April 9, 1979

Roy Ash, Litton Industries

If [a huge Federal budget cut] would blow all the fuses in our whole political system. At the moment of the Conference Board once observed that deficits are the price we pay for 'peace at the border' between the country's social aspirations and its economic output. If you reduced expenditures overnight by such a big amount, there would no longer be peace at that border. We'd have an internal upheaval.

## THIS TRANSLATES INTO THAT Decoding Some Implications of the Debate



### Principles of Service

While the Subcommittee is a citizens' committee with a business bias, we believe that the majority of the members of the Senate Finance Committee are business leaders and we believe that the majority of the members of the Senate Finance Committee are business leaders.

COMPANY REPRESENTED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CALIFORNIA INDUSTRIAL

**DUANA DOHERTY ADULT EDUCATION TEACHER**  
**UTLA 1021 United Teachers – Los Angeles\***

\*American Federation of Teachers + National Education Association

The problem we experience the most underneath it all is because we have a patronage system. Everybody has to be well liked by the Principal. We all want to be well liked....Women in particular have this need for approval, especially when you have a male father-figure as your Principal which most of our Principals are. So, what happens is the people that are most prone to being liked by the administrator,...they need that approval and the administration favors, or is more kindly to those that are in that seeking position. Those people that want to try to make some change, and to make changes you have to come together, you have to work together, now we're told,

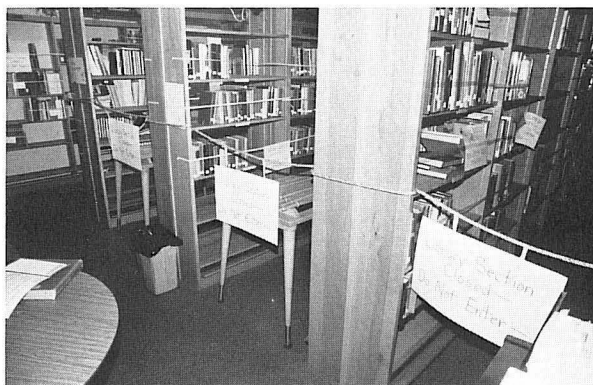
"We're one big happy family. I'll take care of you. Don't worry. Come in and see me. My office door is always open." The idea is come in one at a time. As soon as more than one goes in together there's a problem....Then those who are seeking the approval are given more favoritism and they're smiled at more often and so slowly there's a kind of polarization that takes place. And those of us that are really genuinely trying to seek changes, not to make division in a school,...not to create problems but to better the situation, are slowly made to feel and look like there's something wrong with us. And you put that together, you add that with lack of job security, due process, no future, low pay, a lot of competition that we have amongst each other for students, the lack of status that we're given, that people feel for us, "Oh, you're just Adult Ed." You hear it all the time. You know that people feel that way about you. You're talked down to all the time. You put it all together, add it all together. The fact that a lot of you are women, that you have a lack



Duana with some of her writing composition class

of finances, that you have a lot of emotional problems because of the sexism in the discrimination in the job situation but, also especially, in the society. You add it all together with large classes, without materials, with a lack of morale, with insecurity and Proposition 13 and lack of facilities in the lounge that's not painted and your ditto machine is broken and the line is long and, go to get your snack bar and the lines are long and the food is crusty or the machine for a Coke isn't there. You go sign out and someone is smiling at you when you have a large number [of students enrolled]. And you put it all together, it's the combination of those things, put together, that really causes the problem. You can't just look at one without the other. And the people that have the full time, that are approved by the Principal, have more money, they can walk around being happy all the time. Those of us that are trying to go against the grain a little bit, we're feeling our pain more, we see the contradictions more, we see the lack of education being given. We try

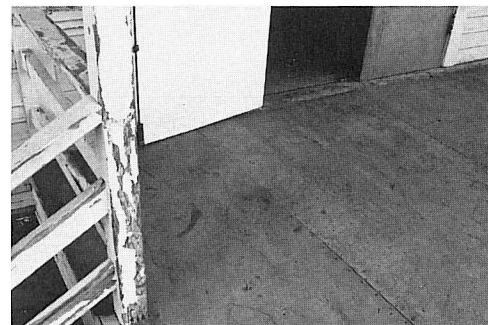
to do something and we're made to look like something's the matter with us and you walk around with that feeling on you all the time. And, because we're women and that's what people don't realize, because so many of us are women and what we look like and how people see us means so much. Nobody I know would understand this. But we're always sitting around talking about our diets all the time...and we go on these Encounter things and what we can do to look good because so little about our work validates us. And when they gain five pounds they are so depressed. Now if the women who gained five pounds were making a good salary, they wouldn't feel that way. They'd walk around with their heads high. They cry easily; it's really true. And the competition is greater and the frustrations are greater and the bickering is more and the gossiping is more and all these little things. Paranoia is much higher. I just can't get over when I'm walking around with the secondary teachers. They live in a world of impunity.... And I'm very aware



"We don't have enough librarians"



English is a second language in the Student Lounge



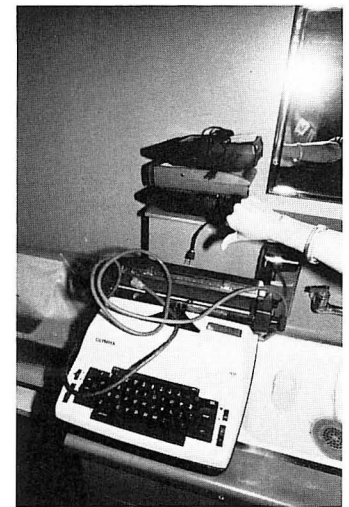
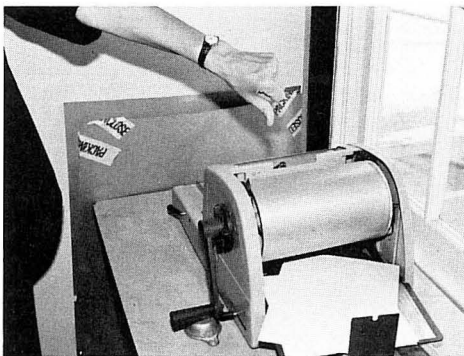
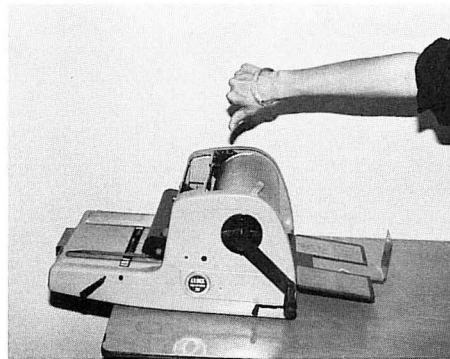


when I go to meetings. I see these people, they walk in with their heads high, they sit down with a certain amount of grace, they speak in a way that they know people are going to listen to them. We don't feel that way. When we go somewhere we have to fight to be heard, constantly fight to be heard. We have to be always pleasing people, always whinning, "Please hear me...." And it affects you morning, noon and night, your morale, your psychology and your emotions. It's all part of it and I just really, you know, that's the hard part and you can't explain it to anybody.... You don't know how much time I spend on the phone talking with people in tears because they're so depressed.

I personally, if you want to know personally, wanted to do something for minority education. I felt that children in the upper-class white neighborhoods would probably always receive a fairly good education but that we really needed to really put a lot of energy into our poorer, working-class and minority areas for education.

We have a lot of part time students. Well, the reason is because we don't have a program of continuity with strong support services and stability in the teaching staff.... So, naturally the students know what is going on and they come and they go and they drop out and people don't understand....

Well, we have to organize. Basically the whole key is coming together, working together, developing our package and [be] willing to stand behind it and really stand up for it and stand firm, having the courage to go against a lot of opposition, having a lot of hope in what we really believe in and really our ideals. Believing so much that we overcome the negativism that's everywhere.... Put aside our differences and unite...and that's one thing we've been able to do.



## Sketch For a Geography Lesson Allan Sekula



Religion is the dream of the human mind. But even in dreams we do not find ourselves in emptiness or in heaven, but on earth, in the realm of reality; we only see real things in the entrancing splendour of imagination and caprice, instead of in the simple daylight of reality and necessity. Hence I do nothing more to religion... than to open its eyes, or rather to turn its gaze from the internal towards the external, i.e., I change the object as it is in the imagination into the object as it is in reality.

But certainly for the present age, which prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, fancy to reality, the appearance to the essence, this change, inasmuch as it does away with illusion, is an absolute annihilation, or at least a reckless profanation; for in these days *illusion* only is sacred, *truth* profane.

Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, 1843

And indeed we can suppose that the time will come – even if it is far in the future – when technique and the easy domination by men of the most powerful forces of nature will reach a stage which makes the application of the technique of murder quite impossible, since it would mean the self-destruction of the human race. The exploitation of technical progress will then take on a new character; from a basically plutocratic activity it will to a certain extent become a democratic, general human possibility.

Karl Liebknecht, *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*, 1907

The United States should plan to defeat the Soviet Union and do so at a cost that would not prohibit U.S. recovery. Washington should identify war aims that in the last resort would contemplate the destruction of Soviet political authority and the emergence of a postwar world compatible with Western values.

Colin Gray and Keith Payne, "Victory is Possible," *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1980

It would be a survival of some of your people and some of your facilities that you could start again. It would not be anything that I think in our society you would consider acceptable but then we have a different regard for human life than those monsters do.

Ronald Reagan, interview with Robert Scheer, *Los Angeles Times*, January 24, 1980

But the reason for the godlessness with regard to Communism – here is a direct teaching of the child from the beginning of its life that it is a human being whose only importance is its contribution to the state – that they are wards of the state – that they exist only for that purpose, and that there is no God, they are just an accident of nature. The result is, this is why they have no respect for human life, for the dignity of the individual.

Ronald Reagan, interview with Robert Scheer, *Los Angeles Times*, March 6, 1980

Weinberger, moreover, skillfully presents his arguments in ways most likely to catch the President's attention and approval. On at least one occasion, the Defense Secretary did not really need words at all: during a crucial budget session in September 1981, when many White House aides were urging Reagan to cut defense funds, Weinberger simply presented charts illustrating the various proposed budgets. The one with Weinberger's numbers was labeled REAGAN BUDGET, and showed a brawny soldier hoisting an automatic weapon. The alternative was called OMB BUDGET, and pictured a puny man with a small rifle.

*Time*, December 20, 1982



(originals in color)

These photographs were made in West Germany and in Ohio, in my living room. In one sense, they are tourist pictures. In another sense, they are cold war pictures.

The nine small photographs were taken in January 1982 in Hesse and Northern Bavaria, in villages and countryside very close to the East German border. This is a farming region, a poor region, seemingly bypassed by the "economic miracle" of postwar German recovery. One of the biggest economic and technological presences in the area is the United States Army. Fulda, the one city in the region, is a garrison town with GI bars and GI brothels. American military convoys roam the highways near the border. Tanks prowl the forests. The highest mountain here houses a ski resort and an American radar base. A tourist marker tells us that the second highest mountain was once a Celtic hill fortress, built in the first century B.C. as a defense against Germanic tribes that were moving east. Now the Druids have been displaced by saints and madonnas; a Roman Catholic chapel tops the mountain. As we walked in this once sacred forest, we could hear land mines exploding from the extreme cold. The East German border was only a kilometer or so away.

Official American policy now argues that the Soviet Union is preparing for the military conquest of Western Europe. NATO generals like to believe that any Warsaw Pact attack on West Germany would occur first in the area around Fulda. Consequently, this region is regarded as a likely site for the "defensive" use of nuclear weapons. While we were in Germany, however, it seemed arguable that official American fears are ultimately more economic than military, once layers of bellicose rhetoric were stripped away. At that time, the Americans were attempting to block the construction of a natural gas pipeline from the Soviet Union to Western Europe. This attempt

to maintain American control of European energy resources was in keeping with economic policy formulated in the 1940s.

Bavaria and rural Hesse are strongly Catholic regions of Germany, and strongholds of the two right-wing Christian parties, the CDU and the CSU. Both favor a belligerent stand against the Soviet Union. However, in September of 1982, the anti-war party, the Greens, won 8% of the vote in Hesse state elections. This was enough to shift the balance of power in the region to the left, in favor of a possible voting coalition of Greens and Social Democrats. The Greens have become an important counterforce to moves by the United States and the new Chancellor, Helmut Kohl of the CDU. The *New York Times* worried about the effects of this development on support for American policy in Germany. An article published three days after the Hesse elections concluded with the following dire warning: "And, with the Greens lurking in the hills of this menacing landscape, there is little wonder that many Germans are edgy in the aftermath of Hesse." But many Germans are also edgy about being caught in a nuclear war.

Should I tell you anything more specific about these small glimpses of Germany? Is it important to know that the photographs at the upper left and upper right were taken on opposite sides of the same street, or that the monument next to the crucifix commemorates the dead and missing of the two world wars, or that the cow's blood is being collected for sausage, or that the border was a tourist attraction although a nearby Nazi labor camp was unmarked and seemingly unremembered? Whose land is this, whose landscape, whose terrain?

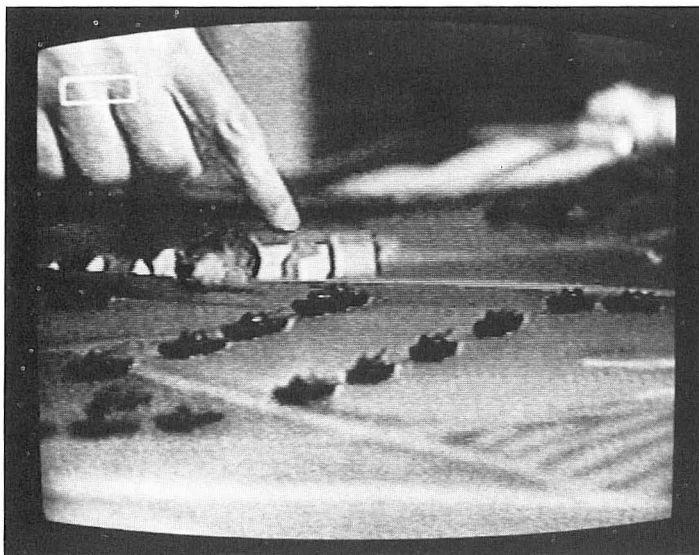
Should I tell you that another image filled the mental vacancy of this "vacation?" I remembered a picture from my childhood, an illustration from a Catholic children's encyclopedia, published during the first cold war. Like the

**IMAGINATION**— is the power of forming images in the mind. A person may wish to think about some person or place, and he calls up pictures and sounds in his mind. Other images also come to our minds, such as things we hear or read about in stories. We can use our imagination in our prayers. For instance, when we are saying our rosary and meditating on the mysteries, we can imagine we see Our Lord and Our Blessed Mother before us as we pray.



(originals in color)





**Allan Sekula.**

*Sketch for a Geography Lesson, 1983.*

Nine cibachrome prints: 11 x 14 inches each.

Two black and white prints: 24 x 30 inches each.

Six text panels with illustrations: 11 x 14 inches each.

Courtesy of the artist

memorials around Fulda, this encyclopedia erased fascism from history and pointed with fear to the Soviet East. We didn't own a television, and I was fascinated by these weird brightly-colored didactic pictures. I telephoned my sister, ten years younger than I, and she remembered the same image almost immediately. She sent it to me.

The large television stills were taken from a program produced in April 1982 by the main cable channel in Columbus, Ohio. We have "interactive" television in Columbus, which means that cable subscribers can vote on their favorite soap opera stars and democratically advise soap opera writers and football coaches on their future moves. On this occasion, the audience was invited to participate in a wargame. The war was directed by two Army ROTC professors from Ohio State University and a chipper mistress-of-ceremonies. Although the television audience remained ignorant of this fact, the plastic terrain upon which this imaginary war was conducted was modeled on that around Fulda. Normally, this map is used to train future officers in the art of war.

Allan Sekula January 1983

Thanks to Timm Rautert (who grew up in Fulda), Ute Eskildsen, Sally Stein, Vicki Sekula, and Captain Kerry Abington.

## Symptoms of Critique: Nancy Spero and Francesc Torres

by Donald B. Kuspit

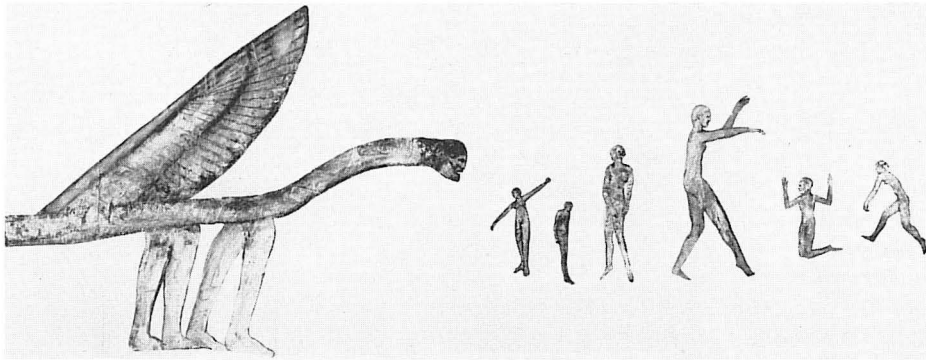
A little bit about ideology, the concept under whose auspices this exhibition appears. Theodor Adorno, writing about ideology with his usual sense of dialectical irony, remarked that "ideologies... become false only by their relationship to the existing reality." But the labeling of ideas such as freedom, humanity, and justice, which seem "true 'in themselves'," as ideologies, "testifies much less to the irreconcilable opposition to false consciousness than to the rage against that which could indicate the possibility of something better, even when in terms of an ever so powerless intellectual reflection."<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is the falseness of such ideas, even when "they present themselves as though they were already realized," that gives them their critical value. In their falseness they reflect the criminal character of existing reality; they paradoxically mirror its power to enslave, dehumanize, and be unjust. Reversing the image of the existing reality into their own truthfulness, they express irreconcilable opposition to the everyday consciousness which accepts existing reality as business-as-usual.

But there are ideas that can be labeled false ideologies not because they are ironically utopian, but because they inhibit, with unconscious intention, the growth of critical consciousness as such. These ideas describe existing reality as inevitable, a reflection of the way things fundamentally are. Such ideas also appear to be true in themselves and are totalitarian ideologies; they are false because they claim to give us a complete picture of unchanging reality. They are the real false consciousness. They exist in large part to crush questioning of existing reality, and the development of a relationship to it that would disclose its historical, and so changeable, human, and nonfatal, character. Their "realism" exists not to counteract utopianism, but to suppress spontaneous criticality. Thus, what totalitarian ideologies, with their deterministic outlook, imply, is the natural pathology, the innocent illusion, of the self-conscious mind.

At their most grand, Nancy Spero and Francesc Torres intend to subvert the totalitarian mentality which conceives of existing reality as inevitable and unchangeable (figs. 1, 2). This is the revolutionary intention of their art, the source of its critical thrust. Totalitarian mentality is everyday consciousness; its idolization of the facts of the life-world as bespeaking only of themselves satisfies its desire for security and certainty, solid unity and wholeness. In accepting facts as fated, it celebrates its own completion; it is critical

consciousness that is fragmented, spontaneous, and in dialectical disarray—seriously incomplete, for it is in the process of shedding the illusion of inevitable wholeness. Critical consciousness shows that what the facts connote undermines their simple self-evidence, and makes everyday consciousness, with its implicit acceptance of fate, suspect. The mentality that accepts fate does so for unconscious political reasons, namely, to ensure its own powerful, determinative role in existing reality. It is this role that makes it so comfortable, and so complete to itself, in the first place. Spero and Torres must use the same facts that the everyday, totalitarian mentality uses to prove the truth of its ideas, evocatively and provocatively to prove that these ideas are false ideologies, political rather than analytic descriptions of the status quo of existing reality. In achieving this, Spero and Torres will have restored the rights of critical consciousness, which means that they will recreate the abstract possibility of something better as a concrete question in the spectator's mind.

In Spero the idea that woman's reality is inevitable inferiority, and the victimization that naturally comes with that, is subverted by a critical articulation of that inferiority (fig. 3). Woman is shown not to be a natural victim; her oppression is man's demonstration to himself of his will to power. Spero turns the fated facts of woman's victimization into a critical history of male oppression. At the same time, they become a critical record of woman's self-recognition. Emphasis on the historical character of the facts of her relationship with man shows that the existing relationship is not inevitable; it has been resisted before, and that resistance belies the truth or official definition of "the eternal feminine" as passive victim. The facts are presented not for themselves, but as a record of revolt, which re-historicizes woman as critical of man, after de-ontologizing her as his inevitable victim. In Torres the idea that war, declared or undeclared, is the human condition, is disclosed to be the correlate of a quasi-mythological, biological determinism, and thus as much an ideological assumption as the idea of woman's natural inferiority. In one installation, *The Head of the Dragon* (1981), the supposedly unconditional influence of the reptilian part of the brain on human behavior—a demonstration of it as the absolute basis of human aggression, and by implying sociality in general—makes clear the possible ideological use of biology. Torres' frequent "expressive" quotation of prehistoric images—menhirs, cave paint-

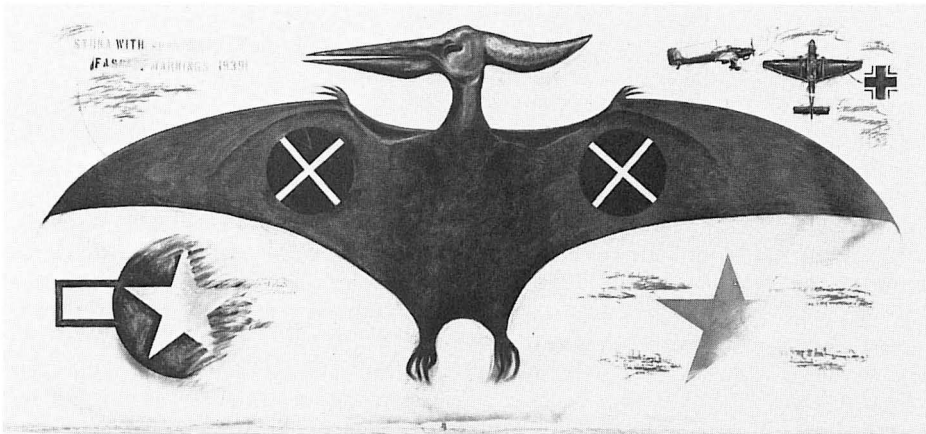


Nancy Spero.

fig. 1. *Torture of Women II*, 1976.

Painting, typewriting collage and hand printing on paper; 20 inches x 125 feet.

Courtesy of the artist; Detail



Francesc Torres.

fig. 2. *For the Empire, for the Fatherland, for the People, for the Working Class*, 1983.

Charcoal, pastel, crayon and spray paint on canvas; 84 x 180 inches. Courtesy of the artist

ings of animals—suggests the primitive character of ideology. The phallic, primitive character of the will to power presumably bespeaks its inevitability, and makes human responsibility for it absurd. But by showing the mythical character and ideological use of this primitivism, Torres makes it impossible to deny responsibility for power—deny that it is a matter of choice. Torres achieves the same general result as Spero's demythologization of woman does: the restoration of psychohistorical specificity. Blame becomes excruciatingly human, rather than against the gods and fate. The revelation of the fatalistic character of enslaving ideas—ideological disclaimers—is one of the important achievements of both Spero and Torres.

Both use the same disruptive, confrontational tactics to achieve their results: a cinematic stream of broken discourse, that is, the

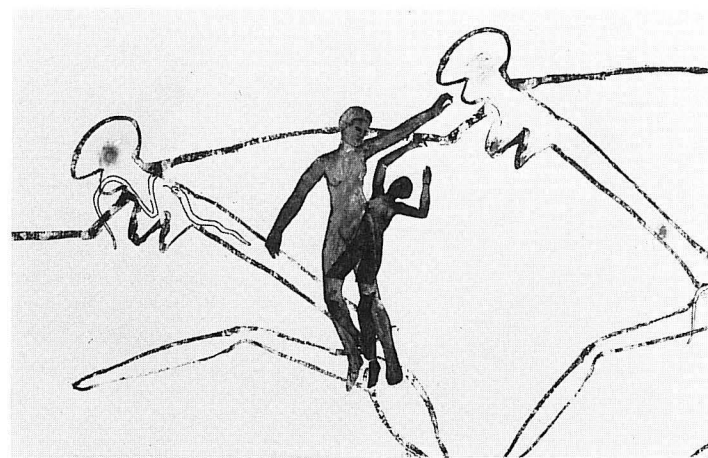
creation of a “discontinuum” of images focusing on particular acts of historical violence. These emerge as voluntary, rather than the result of inevitable forces. No longer spellbinding, they become signs of bad faith, indictments in a court of conscience (fig. 4). Spero and Torres overwhelm us with fragments of data, and pile up evidence until the judgment to condemn is forced upon one. Their disjunctive display of the brute facts makes them all the more urgent, and our consciousness of them all the more desperate. For they come at us from all sides, they seem uncontainable, spreading in Spero's seemingly endless scrolls, and in Torres' sprawling installations, where information is pumped at us with a variety of mechanisms (video, toys, drawings, and a variety of artifacts, both everyday and esoteric “machines”). “Art” here creates a convergence of data through seemingly random means; the pressure

mounts with each new fact, from each new source, until the general idea that the different facts point to shows its ideological face, that is, shows it to be a sign of a mentality. With that, the ideology seems to collapse of its own weight; its bankruptcy self-evident, it disintegrates into a surface, through which the facts break, vehemently speaking for themselves.

The anti-esthetic choppiness and juxtapositions of Spero and Torres, in a sense, the cutting edge of their critique, reflects a larger issue than the effective working of their art. Their radical, insistent "informality" is not only a critical method for unmasking totalitarian social ideologies, but also undermines totalitarian artistic ideology, namely, the idea that art is the administration of the perception of subject matter in the name of esthetic/spiritual goals. The lack of formal unity in their pieces is a reminder that all art is not transcendental in purpose, and art that is transcendental is more likely to be ideological than critical – more likely to restrict the kind of relationship one can have with art, and that art can mediate with existing reality. Adorno has written that

With the crisis of bourgeois society, the traditional concept of ideology itself appears to lose its subject matter. Spirit is split into critical truth, divesting itself of illusion, but esoteric and alienated from the direct social connections of effective action, on the one hand, and the planned administrative control of that which was once ideology, on the other.

The anti-estheticism of Spero and Torres reflects the effort of an art of critical truth to be socially effective simply by getting free of the ideological use of art to esthetically manage existing reality in order to transcend it. The first step toward an authentic unity of artistic spirit is to deny that art is the planned, predetermined unity of stylistic form and subject matter, for such wholeness generates rather than eliminates illusions. Esthetic harmony is false to exist-

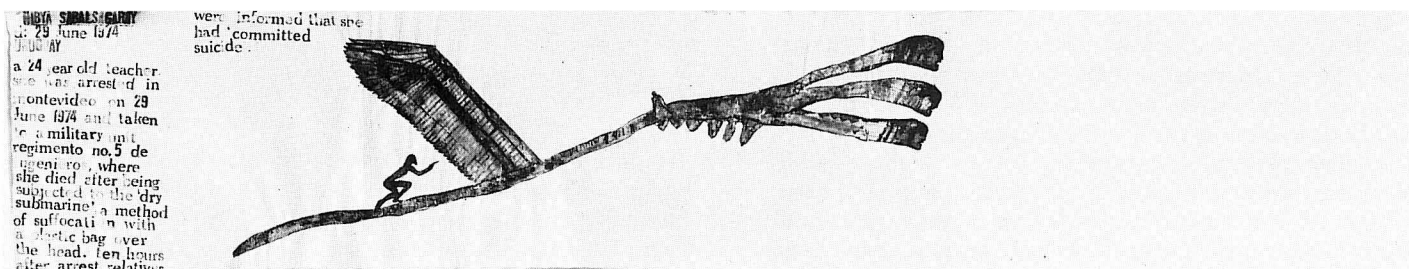


Nancy Spero.

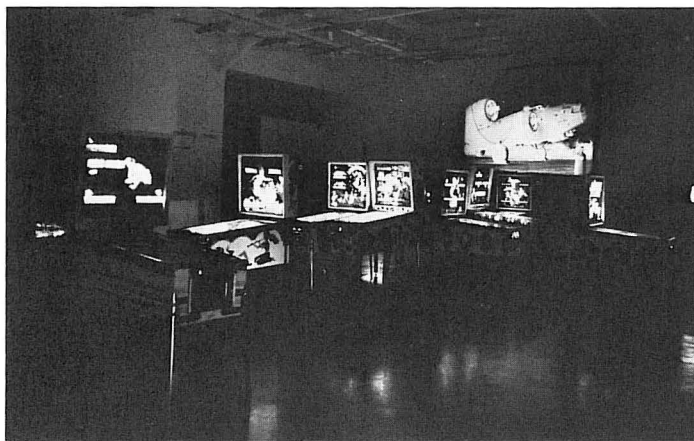
fig. 3. *The First Language* from *Torture of Women*, 1981.  
Painting, collage and hand printing on paper; 20 inches x 125 feet.  
Courtesy of the artist; Detail, panel 21

Nancy Spero.

fig. 4. *Torture of Women*, 1976.  
Gouache, collage and hand printing on paper; 20 inches x 125 feet  
Courtesy of the artist; Detail, panel 10







Francesc Torres.

fig. 5. *Steel Balls*, 1983.

Installation view; 15 pinball machines (arranged in configuration of an airplane), 16 mm film loop projection, twin-motor single channel videotape, sound, cut-out cardboard planes; 42 x 32 feet approx. Photographed at University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado

ing reality, and so has no critical effect on it, not even a utopian one, because the truth in itself that it offers is realized entirely in an art object. There is no ideational residue, as it were – no idea left that can stand against existing reality, as a perspective on it. By offering art objects that are really neither art objects nor esthetically disinterested or transcendent ones in the usual sense, Spero and Torres create an art of ideas, one that can function in a critically effective way, without becoming esoteric. Subject matter remains all too obvious and raw so as to resist esthetic ordering, with its promise of the transcendence of the existing reality represented by the subject matter. Subject matter appears increasingly out of control, strident, in Spero and Torres, as if to insist that one act upon it. Thus the groundwork for effective action is prepared, action overcoming the social alienation the subject matter loudly bespeaks. Coming at us illogically in a discontinuum, the subject matter becomes all the more compelling. The lack of purposeful order eliminates predetermined ideological meaning, and suggests the impossibility of manipulating or falsifying facts for ideological ends. Discontinuity gives the facts a coarse, brusque immediacy which is difficult to manage or transcend, for their lack of smooth-



Francesc Torres.

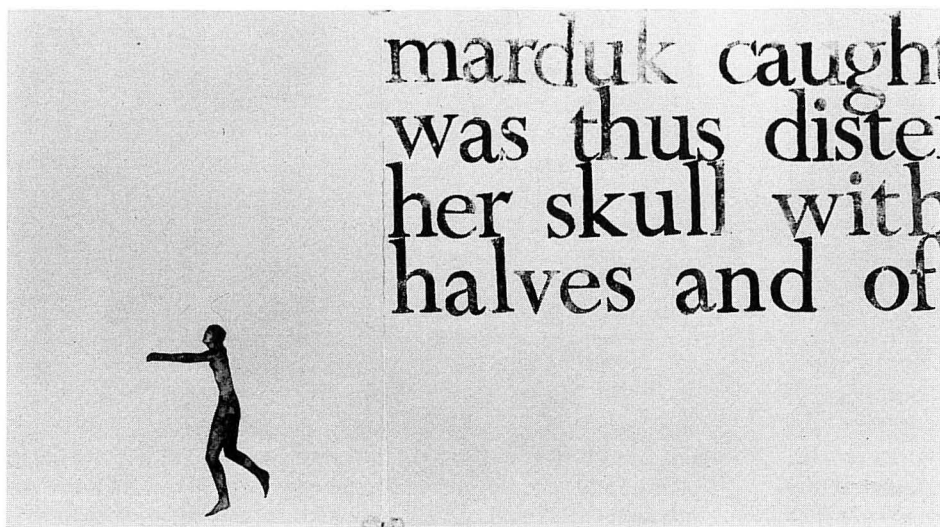
fig. 6. *Steel Balls*, 1983.

Installation view

ness makes them difficult to easily hold fast in an esthetic order. They are too slippery for style.

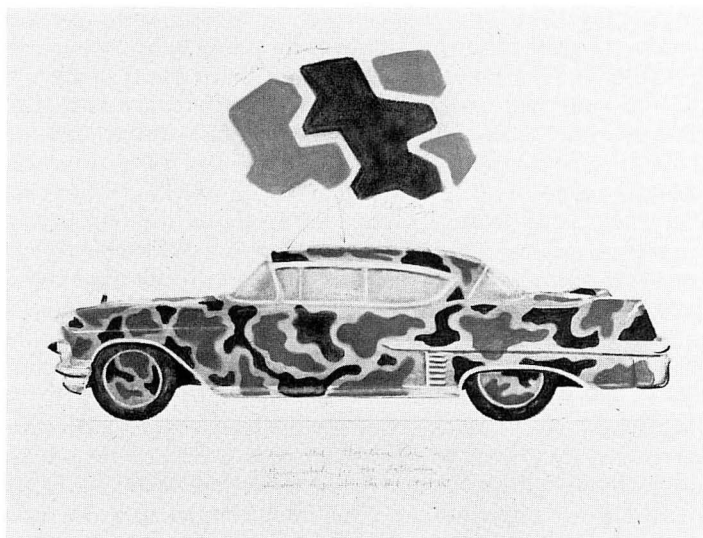
Adorno has written that “ideology today is the condition of consciousness and unconsciousness of the masses.” But Spero and Torres show us the possibility of getting free of ideological illusions, and so of becoming individual. Indeed, a strange individuality emerges in the art of Spero and Torres. The more woman appears as victim, some kind of human garbage, the more one seems to be focusing on her as an individual. It is this woman who endures this torture and suffering and death; she becomes not just an example, but a particular person. As one reads Spero’s scroll, slowly a sense of the resistant personhood of woman emerges, beyond her general victimization. Similarly, in Torres’ work, war, as in *Residual Regions* (1978), leaves behind a human mess, signs of human suffering and failure – signs of men unable to live up to the warrior myth. And this failure, this sense of their victimization by their own aggression which comes up against the limit of their humanity and shows its and their inadequacy, individualizes them. We feel we know intimately those who wore the displayed shoes and sandals, just as we feel we know intimately the women





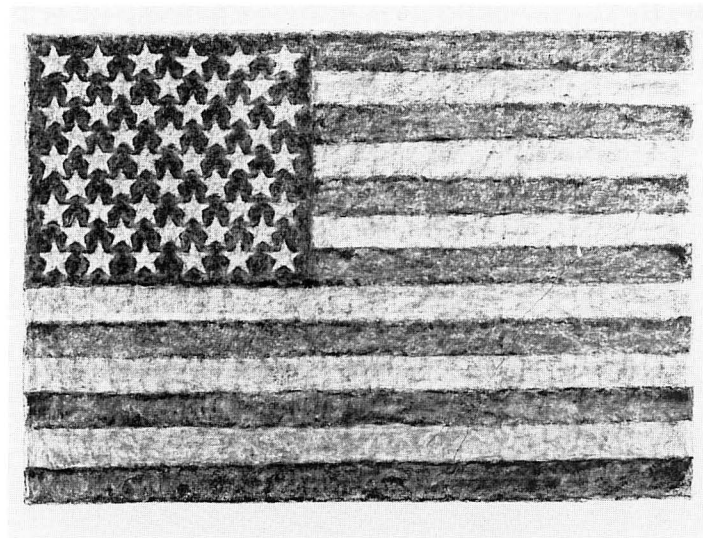
Nancy Spero.

fig. 8. *Torture of Women*, 1976.  
Painting and typewriting collage and hand printing  
on paper; 20 inches x 125 feet.  
Courtesy of the artist; Detail, panels 3 and 4



Francesc Torres.

fig. 9. *Hegelian Car*, 1982.  
Pastel on paper; 38 x 50 inches.  
Collection of John Hanhardt, New York, N.Y.



Francesc Torres.

fig. 10. *Tails*, 1982.  
Charcoal on paper; triptych: 124 x 50 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist

becomes hallucinatory, indicating that it has been understood in all its implications. Its hallucinatory state becomes the sign that it has been worked through unconsciously, as well as consciously known. It is experienced passionately as well as socially interpreted, and so is doubly effective.

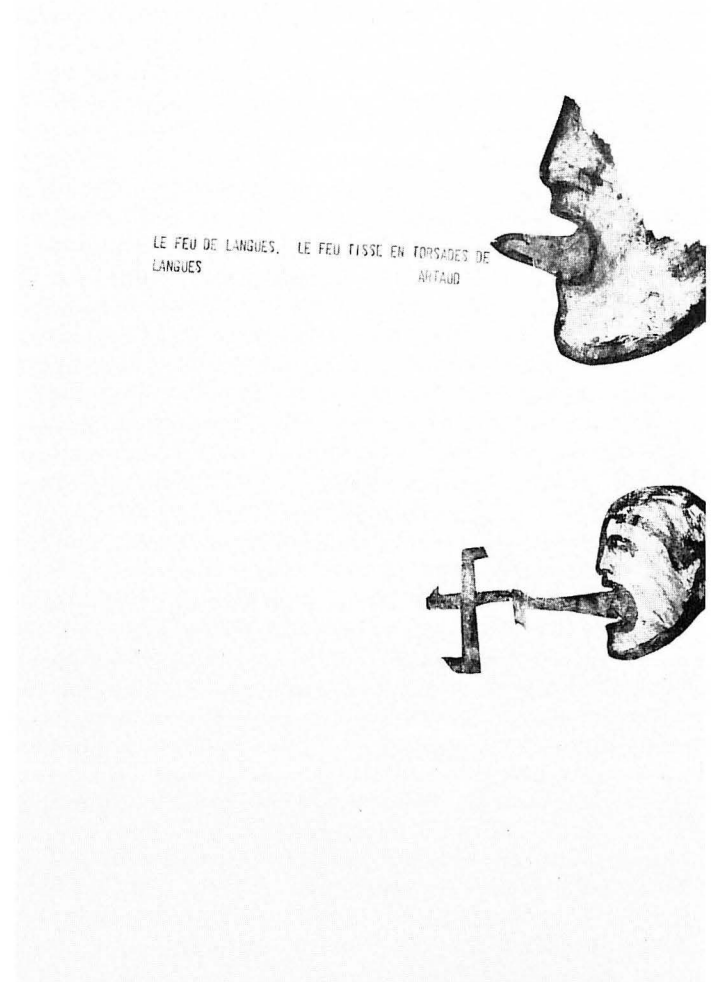
In *Steel Balls* Torres utilizes both familiar three-dimensional objects—the pinball machines—and familiar two-dimensional images on film and videotape. This mix of three-dimensional and two-dimensional sources of information is crucial, for it creates a sense both of the density of real life and the density of real life representation. That is, objects really used in life are artistically utilized, and a conventional, socially-approved narrative of a real life event is utilized. There is no discrepancy in means; the real, and the reflection of the real, are from the same everyday source. This continuity between pinball machines and visual narrative of the bombing raid allows the metaphoric potential built into each to be realized. The pinball machine is a mechanical game whose visual-verbal overlay of associations—part of the game—makes it explicitly metaphorical. The scoring of points in the game of chance, in which balls move through a maze with a minimum of control, has psychosocial, even world-historical, meaning. Similarly, the bombing raid becomes “representative,” by reason of its melodramatic representation in the film, in which facts are manipulated in a kind of artistic game. Neither toygame nor wargame are objectively given by the time Torres is through with them. They converge psychically, their game meaning becoming archetypal, generalized into a mock world-historical perspective. Torres sets a stage for a world theatre. Flying and crashing toy planes, blinking spotlights, politically charged “Liberty Bell” and “Freedom” pinball machines become operative. The film, and its two monitor representations—one at one-third speed, causing further, disturbing discontinuity—become separate voices singing the same aria. The grating, garish quality of it all confirms that art is a spectator sport, but here the spectator is transformed into a participant observer by reason of the metaphor unity he is compelled to give the piece to make sense of its contradictions. These—pinball machines and film—are already “reconciled” in the general theatrical garishness, and it remains for the spectator to give “meaning” to that reconciliation. In this interaction with the work he makes it world-historically representative, and himself part of what it represents, namely, a life-world in which meaning is a chance game. This “metaphysical” aspect of the work underlies its political character, as archetype does to type, as type does to individual fact.

Nancy Spero.

fig. 11. *Codex Artaud XXII*, 1972.

Painting, typewriter collage on paper; 2 x 10 feet.

Courtesy of the artist





Torres, like Spero, offers us a work that is not only dialogical in character, but generically dialectical. Opposites are played off one another. Fun and war, games and “for real,” past and present cancel each other out in ironical awareness. June 2, 1944, the day of the filmed bombing raid, becomes a Doomsday, as much tragicomic as James Joyce’s *Bloodsday*. Similar techniques for creating intimacy and distance – simultaneously – are used, subverting our sense of the uniqueness of the moment yet also heightening it, which makes it all the more haunting. Everything that is done generates a sense of racial as well as personal and historical memory; it is the same convergence, corrosive of the ideological meaning superimposed upon the event by the totalitarians of thought, that Spero uses. By showing the embeddedness of the violent treatment of women, much as Torres shows the embeddedness in mentality of violence as such, Spero makes individual events of violence “momentous” and memorable (fig. 8). Truly they have shown the truth of Adorno’s assertion that “ideology today is the condition of consciousness and unconsciousness of the masses,” where the masses represent the collective consciousness and unconsciousness that gives the individual resonant depth of meaning. And in stripping off collective masks – the conception of war as a fatal chance game, and of intellectual abuse as well as physical torture of woman as confirming the truth of her inferior status – Torres and Spero permits the spectator to effect a transference to the work which restores individuality, and personally experience “premises to be changed.” Their works create a consciousness irreconcilably opposed to mass consciousness and unconsciousness through the use of mass means.

Spero has written that in *Torture of Women* she “used ancient quotes of repression and torture in conjunction with the case histories to show the timelessness of this practice.” This “timelessness” is equivalent to Torres’ sense of the “archetypal,” and involves the evocation of a grand historical continuum of events through the focus, and discontinuous display, of single historical events. The

double status of the historical event used is crucial, for it leads to a reading of the work as simultaneously descriptive and evaluative. Spero creates a stream of historical consciousness which communicates at once the shock of (self-) recognition and the cross-examination of history by an angry, depressed interlocutor. Each of her paper sheets (20 inches by 9 feet long, made of 4 units) is linked to another in a mural – continuum – which seems to question its own right to existence, for the cracks along which dismemberment can be effected are highly visible. The possible break-up of the total piece into fragments of history signals the factual character of the work, while the sense of the durability of the continuum signals the effort of will which created it through a scathing questioning of and searching through history.

Torres deals with men as victims of their ideologies; Spero also deals with women as victims of male ideology. There is really no difference; the destructive results of the ideology of power are the same. Both demystify – de-idealize – power by showing it in all its historical vulgarity, and above all in its failure to realize its goal, namely, to secure power once and for all by one group. Spero’s women, martyred, rise up to tell their stories, and so show the falsehood of the story of inevitable male glory. Torres’ pilots, martyred in their own way, tell their stories of fear and service, and so show the falsehood of the ambition of the society that sent them on their mission. The works of Spero and Torres deal with martyrdom in the cause of freedom, humanity, and justice, a cause which seems uncertain because we see it only in critical, oppositional form, as a kind of protest against existing reality. We do not see what a world without torture of women and war would be like. Spero and Torres do not want us to see that future, for that would be to offer the utopian in place of the critically effective – the critical as social action. Such critical action is the only kind that can heal the split of spirit, for it alone shows us the futility of administrative control – the planned bombing missions, the planned murders of women – of destructive dominance (figs. 9, 10 and 11).

## Notes

1. Theodor W. Adorno and the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, “Ideology,” *Aspects of Sociology* (Boston: Beacon Press Paperback, 1973), p. 198. All subsequent quotations from Adorno are from this source (pp. 182-205).

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## Give and Take: Ideology in the Art of Suzanne Lacy and Jerry Kearns

by Lucy R. Lippard

The word "ideological" is used in the artworld interchangeably with the word "political" to describe art from the left, as though the center and right were so secure in their dominance that they had no need of such things. I'll use this term, as do the artists I've selected, in its activist sense, though by doing so, I risk prolonging that mood of subtle redbaiting that also ascribes activism to the left alone. Bourgeois ideology—that propaganda so thoroughly encompassing us that we barely recognize it as such—is made to appear more passive, downright harmless, like the dictionary definition of "ideology"—"the science of ideas." The activist definition is fundamentally critical. It analyzes what *affects* us in words and images—what it hides and whom it serves by what it says and what it hides, and how it can be used to our own ends.

It is understood by now that all art is ideological and all art is used politically by the right or the left, with the conscious and unconscious assent of the artist. There is no neutral zone. Artists who remain stubbornly uninformed about the social and emotional effects of their images and their connections to other images outside the art context are most easily manipulated by the prevailing systems of distribution, interpretation, and marketing.

These ideas have been sufficiently belabored over the last decade, but they are interpreted differently by people practicing and not practicing an activist art; by which I mean some element of the art takes place in the "outside world," including some teaching and media practice as well as community and labor organizing, public political work, and organizing within the artists' community. From my experience, a depth and complexity of discourse comes primarily from acting/doing, and secondarily from seeing, thinking, sympathizing.

. . . .

The two artists I chose for this show—Suzanne Lacy and Jerry Kearns—are the two people from whom I've learned most over the past five years about art in the world, art *in* ideology—its strategies, frustrations, and unlauded triumphs. Both operate in a kind of trialectic that overlaps the experimental artworld, the progressive or "political" art networks, and that local part of life vaguely called "the community." Their art is informed by a deeply felt political analysis which pervades but does not overwhelm their

populism and their esthetic integrity (my term for formal "quality"). They are both committed to the fusion of ideological analysis, social action, and the fine arts tradition, and they are both aware of the contradictory challenges of this task. Their work is stylistically dissimilar; their politics sometimes diverge. Kearns' critique is based on Marxism but does not exclude feminism. Lacy's art is made with, for, and about women, but does not exclude socialist principles. They also have a lot in common, some of which I share, which is probably why I am so moved by and involved in their work.

They are both about the same age. Lacy was born in 1945 and Kearns in 1943. Both come from working-class backgrounds, both were raised in California, and both attended the University of California at Santa Barbara. Both are educators; both work with video, print media, and have made artists' books; both have made art for political demonstrations, have done performance in the narrow and broad senses of the word. Both are concerned with breaking the traditional isolation of art and are therefore opposed to the ghettoization of feminist and "political" art. Both work collaboratively and both have consistently integrated political and/or community organizing into their arts. Both respect and have thought long and hard about audience—the most muttered-about and simultaneously ignored factor in the activist art equation.

Kearns and Lacy understand the importance of psychology to art and to ideology. Their art is drawn from a reservoir of social/emotional rage and outrage, and countered by clear and unsentimental examination of the results. Violence, fear, death, and survival as seen through the vehicle of vulnerable self/body is their common subject matter. Lacy's pioneering public performances as networking structures and media strategies have focused on institutionalized violence against women and her profound compassion for and identification with women of all ages, races, cultures. Kearns' eerily dynamic paintings drawn from comics ("fantasy") and news photos ("reality") look at violence from the viewpoint of the white male who is seen as the oppressor. ("Even the blue-eyed devil gets twisted by reality," he says, after Malcolm X.) At the same time Kearns identifies with the oppressed because of his class background; his early childhood in North Carolina was spent in what he calls "a buffer zone between Blacks and whites—what's called 'poor white trash.'"

A homogenized, classless, integrated American life exists only in the fabrications of the dominant corporate culture. In reality, differences of race, class, sex, culture and ethnicity slide, glide, and bump into each other like the geological surfaces we all ride on. When they touch, disruption threatens. And sometimes as the pressure builds, the shaking begins and a social earthquake occurs. When the ground shakes, the otherwise seamless fabric of corporate culture is ripped. The lie busts open and a complex reality comes bubbling up, spilling out all over the place. It hits first in the buffer zones where the social plates collide – that's why I choose to live and work there.

– Jerry Kearns.

What is the intention of the artist? What does the artwork actually do? Who is its audience? How does it relate to similar ideas, images, and issues in popular culture?... And beyond that? What is the total vision of social change embodied in the work?... To make new images is one challenge, to make them positive and forceful still another, and further, to introduce these into culture in a non-manipulative manner is a task of major proportions, yet we feel this is our job as activist artists, to find visual representations for the experience of oppression and ways to present that information so that a large audience can participate in an open-ended learning situation.... The paradox between wanting to impress one's ideas as forcefully as possible and the manipulative techniques often used to do just this, results in a juggling of expediency and political values.

– Suzanne Lacy.

Suzanne Lacy was a graduate student in psychology with community organizing experience in VISTA when she was seduced into art by Judy Chicago's Feminist Art Program at Fresno in 1970. She followed Chicago to Cal Arts, where she also studied under Allan Kaprow. Performance was an integral part of the feminist program and Lacy was immediately attracted to its directly communicative possibilities. Her early solo work focused on performances using the grotesquely visceral image of a lamb's carcass. She was also exploring her own body and female experience through autobiographical fragments eventually published in an artist's book called *Falling Apart* (which came wrapped in an ace bandage) and women's general social experience, in a book called *Rape Is* (which had to be ripped open). Among her less ordinary personae were a vampire girl (to explore the metaphysics of violence) and a Frankenstein (to explore creative responsibility).

Lacy was and still is concerned with the issue of otherness and alienation, which she examines by going into other people's experiences, discovering the political through personal re-enactment,

as a means of overcoming her own prejudices and resistances to change. By the mid-'70s, based at the Woman's Building in Los Angeles, she and other women artists were concentrating on efforts to understand the social experience of women coming from places unfamiliar to them. In public performances that could "pass" as real life, Lacy became an old lady in a hotel lobby (*Inevitable Associations* [1975] was about mortality and public obliviousness to older women); and a street woman (*Bag Lady* [1976] was "a meditation on accumulation, alienation, and survival").

In 1977, a key year, she collaborated with Asian actress Kathleen Chang on *The Life and Times of Donaldina Cameron*, performed on San Francisco's Angel Island, its subject interracial women's relations today as seen through the life of a nineteenth-century missionary working with Chinese immigrants to oppose the Chinese slave trade (fig. 1). In 1978, she collaborated with Evalina Newman, an elderly Black woman from Watts (where Lacy continues to work). The long-term performance piece, *Evalina and I: Crime, Quilts, and Art*, culminated in a memorial video/quilt/installation at the Woman's Building after Evalina's death.

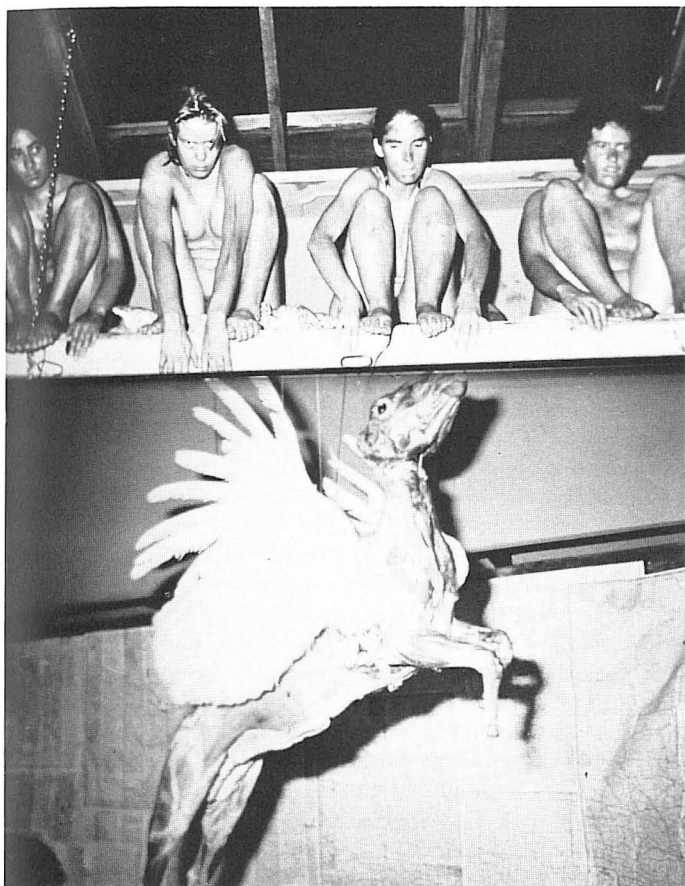


Suzanne Lacy and Kathleen Chang.

fig. 1. *The Life and Times of Donaldina Cameron*, 1977. Performance, Angel Island, San Francisco, California

At the same time Lacy initiated the first of her huge-scale pieces that dealt with a more generalized identification with all victimized women projected through intricate media strategies. *Three Weeks in May* was a durational performance structured around a giant map of Los Angeles on which each day's rapes and their locations were recorded. (Over 90 rapes were reported to the LAPD during those 3 weeks.) There were public events involving the media, local government officials and agencies, and feminist

organizations working against violence. Several artists did street performances and Lacy herself did an intimate piece called *She Who Would Fly*—an exorcism and reconstruction ritual incorporating testimonials about rape and abuse told by the audience/participants. The central image was a winged lamb's carcass and the piece ended with a final stunning flash of four nude women painted red, crouched like harpies on a platform over the door (fig. 2).



Suzanne Lacy.

fig. 2. *She Who Would Fly* from *Three Weeks in May*, 1977.  
Participatory performance at the Garage Gallery, Los Angeles, California



Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz.

fig. 3. *In Mourning and in Rage*, 1977.  
Performance, Los Angeles, California



Also in 1977 Lacy and her frequent collaborator Leslie Labowitz set out to revise the media's sexist and sensationalist coverage of the ten Hillside Strangler murders. The elaborate media campaign of *In Mourning and In Rage* culminated in a performance at City Hall centered on the impressive image of nine seven-foot-tall veiled women in black led by a tenth in red (who stood for rage) (fig. 3). The stereotyped image of the female victim was transformed into a powerful unity as the red-caped woman led the group in a litany of memorials for the victims of all forms of sexual violence, ending with: "In memory of our sisters, we fight back!" The event was covered on six television news shows—one nationwide—and on several talk shows, as well as in newspapers as far away as France.

The community organizing that was a major component of these works interestingly led Lacy back toward the "private" domain—though not to her studio. The seeds were sown in *The International Dinner Party* (1979)—another map and visualized networking piece, in homage to Judy Chicago's *Dinner Party*—which involved women all over the world simultaneously holding dinners to honor living role models. In 1980, building up to a week-long ERA protest, Lacy with Jeanne Nathan organized a "chain-letter" series of potluck dinners in widely varied social sectors of New Orleans, leading up to a 500-woman dinner—*River Meetings: Lives of Women in the Delta*—with the Women's Caucus for Art at the College Art Association's annual conference. A similar dinner in Ithaca, New York, in 1981, brought together the Black and white women's communities to honor two respected elderly residents. Homemade food from different ethnic kitchens and multicultural entertainment are prime components in these social rituals.

During the last year, Lacy continued to explore the potluck dinner as a cross-class feminist organizing strategy in *Immigrants and Survivors* in Los Angeles. Initially, these performance frameworks merging audience and participants have no apparent political agenda. Networking is the form, the content and the product. The issue of immigration and the metaphor of all women as immigrants and survivors evolved from the collaborative process of organizing the piece, and from the mutual telling of stories. The women attending are connected to the piece and empowered by the experience itself—which is what art can do. Salvadoran exiles, bank executives, domestic workers, prostitutes, disabled women and athletes, teachers, lesbians, battered women, housewives, ex-psychiatric inmates, nuns—these are some of the constituencies (or constituents) of the work. The emotional impact arose from



Suzanne Lacy.

fig. 4. "Young Anglo Group" from *Freeze Frame: Room for Living Room*, 1982. Performance at Roche-Dubois Showroom, San Francisco, California

the recognition of community and a shared spirituality. The atmosphere of these dinners tends to resemble that of a tent revival.

From all accounts, Lacy's most striking group performance yet was *Freeze Frame: Room for Living Room*, 17 *tableaux vivants* organized with Julia London in an elegant designer furniture showroom in San Francisco, in August, 1982 (fig. 4). An audience of 400 wandered through the showroom eavesdropping on over 100 women in small groups, all talking about survival. A vignette: "Twelve Jewish seniors crowded together on a long serpentine couch, next to them six disabled women sat in wheelchairs around a chrome table, while seven Asian women lounged on a pink settee." There were bridge players (Lacy's mother's club from Wasco, California), teenagers, Black churchwomen, and others. Some of the audience was moved to tears by this vision of a community which clarified the sharing of lives as the basis of women's spirituality.

*Freeze Frame* was choreographed and rehearsed, but nobody was "acting." The sterile and stylized furniture recommended for Lifestyle was energized by a human concern for Life. The store became a "frame" far from "home," with its room settings as sub-frames. Lacy emerged as an impresario showing us the macro-



Suzanne Lacy.

fig. 5. *Whisper, the Waves, the Wind*, 1982-.  
Performance in progress, La Jolla, California

and-microcosmic designs within which women live, the patterns of their interactions. Lacy sees her mandate as an artist to create compelling visual forms for her social rituals; these forms are then filled with content that originates with the women themselves. In *Whisper, the Waves, the Wind*—a major work already in progress for a year that will be performed on a beach in La Jolla, California this coming May—she and some 100 older women will collaborate with nature as well (fig. 5). The subject is the joys, problems and circumstances of aging women. They will be dressed in white, sitting at white-clothed tables, talking about their lives against a backdrop of sea and sky.

Jerry Kearns looks at a “mediated” image that balances between socially-created fantasy (comics) and socially-created reality (news photos) and then finds symbolic ways to reveal their subversive currents. His concern with the media and with the “replica” as vehicle for personal and social expression began when he moved away from his early work (he received a *Prix de Rome* as a minimalist sculptor in 1968) and began to concentrate on “the editorial function of the artist.” His 1974 show at Ivan Karp’s straightforwardly presented newspaper items about the births, deaths, marriages, and anniversaries of the inhabitants of a small Massachusetts town. The artworld being what it is, these were seen as condescending parodies rather than as the homages to commonality and respectful records of invisible lives they were intended to be.

Similarly, his 1974 artists’ book *Western New England Quarterly*, which offered without comment the unheard voices of amateur women writers, culled from the slush files of a woman’s magazine, was seen as anti-feminist when it was, again, intended to make heard a class misrepresented in the dominant media. Angered by the isolation of the artworld from social responsibility, Kearns temporarily abandoned his “career.” He continued to teach art at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where over the last decade he had developed a model course on “art in social contexts.” He began to work with political organizations, first with Artists Meeting for Cultural Change and the Red Herring Collective, then with the Anti-Imperialist Cultural Union (AICU), founded by Amiri Baraka.

This led to an intense, fruitful, and highly educational involvement with the Black United Front in Brooklyn (BUF), which led to the Committee Against Fort Apache in the South Bronx (CAFA), which eventually led back into the art context when Political Art Documentation/Distribution (PADD) was founded to bridge the gap between “ideological art” and “political work.”

Kearns worked with the AICU, BUF, and CAFA as a “photographer”—placed here in quotes because he saw photography as a means to social ends rather than as an artform in itself. His conglomerate artform was the *sum* of his activities as college teacher, artist, political and community organizer, and photo-documenter of opposition and of oppositional culture—particularly in protests and marches where he concentrated on costumes, masks, banners, and theater pieces. An interest in alternate media was implicit in his photos, posters and slide shows, in a book commemorating BUF’s first year, and in the historical calendar for its

membership—works “done by a white socialist in collaboration with Black nationalists” as agitational models for a socialist cultural production (fig. 6).

Ideological awareness was sharpened by association in CAFA with community organizer and media activist Richie Perez—a former Young Lord working for Puerto Rican Independence. There Kearns learned about media from a street level. CAFA (with some 100 other groups) not only protested a racist film—*Fort Apache, The Bronx*—but raised issues of organizing, access, public education, and First Amendment rights not usually tackled in academic exposés. As CAFA tried to stop the filming of *Fort Apache*, and then boycotted and picketed the movie, they saw the big film corporations try bribery, threats, and counter demonstrations to divide them from their local support in the Hispanic communities.

Like Lacy, Kearns saw how culture could “encourage people to act in their own interests by working together for positive change.” He began to scrutinize the ways in which a left artist can co-opt (and be co-opted by) using mass-media techniques. He saw working with ideology as a way to make art in the gap between Marx’s notion (working people will come together because they see it’s in their own class interest to overthrow the oppressors) and Gramsci’s acknowledgment that this doesn’t account for the realities of ideological manipulation in Western culture, that hegemonical ideology and the dominant propaganda keep people from acting in their own self-interest.

In 1980 Kearns began to work with PADD, reassociating himself with fine artists who were dissident, disillusioned, and disaffiliated but didn’t intend to stay that way. From documentary photography, he moved to a critical use of the mass media’s images and styles in a series of “ads” and enlarged photostats and statted montages. Gradually, he moved from making issue-oriented art around racism and classism to making art that dealt with the underlying ideology—what keeps people from seeing those issues clearly. Early in 1982, he returned to his earlier photos of culturally once-removed images in protest art—for instance, the guerilla theater figure of a “blind” CIA man in trench coat and shades, with vampire fangs, which went through several incarnations in 1982–83; it was a tinted photograph, a cutout against an abstract wall painting, and, most effectively, a cutout hovering against its own shadow and the painted shadows of Nicaraguan rightwing *contras*. These photos had proven themselves in the streets; now he began to look at their esthetic residue and what it had to say about the ideology of protest.



Jerry Kearns.

fig. 6. November from *Black United Front Calendar*, 1980.  
18 x 12 inches. Courtesy of the artist

Jerry Kearns.

fig. 7. *Ground Zero*, 1982.

Painted photograph on masonite and paint on wall; 76 x 84 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist



Kearns' show at the Gallery 345 in November 1982 consisted of four life-size photo-cutouts against jaggedly-painted grounds. They represented stereotypical villains (CIA, Uncle Sam), heroes (a serially presented Black sister gracefully orating), and the terrified populace (in *Ground Zero*—a screaming man attacked by a hooded black figure which Kearns considers the beginning of a series of symbolic self-portraits) (fig. 7). The show marked his development from “a political artist to an artist using art politically.” It reflected “the contradictions, fears and anxieties—and the sense of hope, purpose and courage that characterize the Left experience.” Gerrit Henry, in *Art in America*, called Kearns “a kind of Bernini of the Left.... At base his figures are so politically

impassioned as to be religious; and if their ecstasies are agonies, this is, after all, Marxism and not the Catholic Church.”

The religious element does fascinate Kearns, but it arises from childhood experiences with Southern Baptist fundamentalists. The newer work continues this apocalyptic psycho-self-and-social portraiture—“the portrait of people who see no choice but to take a stand.” In it he turns again to replicas, to the “found” imagery of comics, newspapers, punk fanzines, and movie stills—all the ways by which we receive our culture. He exposes the authentic elements of our experience buried in them, searching for symbols of control and resistance that will remain accessible but slip in between the artworld taboos against political realism. (Politics can only be talked about through its ideological reflections; it's okay to paint death but not death squads.)



Jerry Kearns.

fig. 8. *Contra* (after a drawing by Landgraf/Armando in *Rock Comics*, 1979), 1983. Acrylic on masonite; 72 x 72 inches. Courtesy of the artist



"Boogeymen" like the CIA figure have consistently inhabited Kearns' art. Where once he named them, now in his attempt to make "a populist art that struggles in an ideological reality," he leaves more up to his viewers. The discovery of a "cubist" robot monster in a comic book, pictured from two perspectives in monstrous close-up and titled *Contra*, suggests by its composition and by its content not only the "two-facedness" of U.S. "secret" wars against Central Americans and the dehumanized elements of gunboat diplomacy, but also implies the power of fear as a construct, the contradictory ways the U.S. is viewed through mass culture and in "comic book terms" in Central America – as well as parodying the media's obsession with death and violence, and turning that obsession back on itself (fig. 8). (We're forced to fight? All right, then, let's fight back at those who are forcing us to fight instead of fighting with each other.)

While his art appears to be "returning" to the artworld, Kearns continues to view his artform as the sum of his activities, which, since 1980, have included ongoing collaborative work with me: we work in PADD, write articles, organize shows for District 1199's Bread and Roses Program (as well as other forums and exhibitions in other cities); we've made three performances, designed posters, and generally continue to expand the perimeters of both our "fields" in accordance with the notion of the "editorial artist" (and, for me, maybe the "artistic editor"). At the moment we are working on two artists' books that, like Kearns' art, combine the screaming heads, bloody battles, and stylized brutality of comics and the *New York Post* tabloid style with the equally menacing stasis of the status quo in news photos and *New York Times* visual stability.

Kearns prefers these images as vehicles for his "realism" because he doesn't want to criticize individuals (villains or victims), but to criticize the ideas that are used to oppress people. With comics and news photos (figs. 9, 10), he has taken a cue from the master graffiti writers, whom he much admires – their use of cartoons ("art history") as a residual culture from which to forge an emergent culture. (The terms are Raymond Williams'.) In the laborious and absurd process by which he reproduces his cultural artifacts dot by dot, Kearns sees "an image of remaking self and society, of the hand caught between the mechanical and the electronic ages – a symbolic reference to construction and reconstruction, a way of seeing the parts in relation to the whole. . . . Ideology leads to the mythic through the search for a new self in lived experience, for a place to belong, for separation from the whole one is forced to belong to." When political issues are approached from a

personal source, they yield a psychological verity that is unattainable from an objective or imposed viewpoint. Kearns wants "a politics coming from inside, not always sitting on the surface, but more like a submarine in the water, part of the water, at home, but ready to rise."

. . . .

Lacy and Kearns, like all artists, work from visual ideas that boil out of their experiences and unconsciousnesses. But they also trust that their politics are sufficiently organic and deep-seated to be an integral part of this process. The combination of savagery and pathos in Kearns' imagery reflects an overwhelming anxiety that originated in a childhood dominated by fear of violence – physical and economic. Organized by his politics, these grotesque images transcend the apolitical uses of similar pictures. Lacy's preoccupation with violence also has sources in an accident-prone childhood, in the death of a small friend, mediated by movies, in particular Vincent Price's *House of Wax*. She too channels these memories – into a broad compassion for and kinship with women, against whom so much of this society's brutality (again physical and economic) is aimed. Both explore the relationship of dominance and submission as portrayed in the popular (or unpopular) culture.

Kearns sees activist ideology trying "to convey the dialogue between the visible and the invisible, trying to push the invisible out into the realm of visibility," without doing it so obviously that it is immediately recognizable for the subversion it is. Lacy's sympathetic collusion with her audience makes the process more seamless. Both are remaking themselves as they make their art, through an almost evangelical notion of service, which combines personal and political change. The generosity characterized by the amount of time and energy each puts into organizing and outreach began with both literally giving away parts of themselves. Kearns randomly handed out life-like sculptures of his fingers in Boston in 1971; an early conceptual piece of Lacy's involved the donation of her organs to science. Their common interest in disguise and in expanding identities (Kearns too had a "performance persona" in the early '70s), helped them understand both their audiences and themselves. When Lacy several times became unglamorous older women and when she works with other disenfranchised groups, she might be preparing herself for a quasi-religious "life of service." Such gestures constitute symbolic parallels to current



Jerry Kearns.

fig. 9. *I Could Have Danced All Night*, 1982.

Acrylic on masonite; 59 x 95 inches. Courtesy of the artist

attempts by feminist and progressive artists to connect individual and collective experience.

Lacy has pointed out that the media offers “an almost universal frame of reference within which to communicate,” but both she and Kearns are well aware of the specific limitations of different media and that different audiences read that frame from different angles. The question for all activists is “whom do we serve?” The desire to “serve” is in itself a critique of the dominant alienation in which everyone is forced to serve those who pretend to serve us. But the choice of whom one’s art serves and the control of its distribution and interpretation is a luxury for artists today. It takes an immense amount of hard work and dialogue, since the “make-a-leaflet” school of activism is unsatisfying for most artists. As directors, or editors or producers, Lacy and Kearns have had to fight with their constituencies for the right to use their skills as innovative, powerful image-makers. Left, feminist, and populist political organizations are no freer than anyone else from the general public’s failure to see as far as some artists’ visions can push them. And the artworld suffers a similar, if reversed, myopia. In an effort to expose these conditions, both Kearns and Lacy have moved away from issue-specific art.

Kearns’ paintings confront the short-term effects of the dominant ideology by exposing its subtexts, and he undertakes the long-

Jerry Kearns.

fig. 10. *Twist and Shout* (after drawings by Brian Bolland in *Eagle Comics* and Bern Wrightson in *Pacific Comics*), 1983.

Acrylic on masonite; 55 x 94 inches. Courtesy of the artist



term transformation through his collective work. Both he and Lacy have had to confront the issue of stereotyping that plagues activists trying to make positive imagery. Kearns’ “study” for this project took the form in 1981 of organizing an exhibition on racial and sexual stereotypes in the media, collecting and analyzing the negative images and then asking himself “how do we make subtle images of struggle that avoid condescending ‘sympathy’ and still make it clear where and with whom we stand? How, for instance, do we present victimization?”

Victims—whether they are kids playing in the wartorn South Bronx or corpses by the roadside in El Salvador—are conventionally presented either as passively suffering (usually with a certain nobility, rather than with the fear and fury they must in fact feel); or as smiling courageously to prove their humanity in the face of dehumanizing tyranny. When “victims” are pictured getting it together, organizing, fighting back, they suddenly become “stereotypes.”

Lacy deals with stereotypes head-on. *Freeze Frame*, for example, grouped the women precisely in their most banal (or familiar) sets. Lacy was trying to show the beauty *underneath* social stereotypes, but she was aware that she could also be reinforcing them. “I am arranging the women with the studied elegance and showmanship of objects on display in a museum,” she wrote in her

diary. "The distance inherent in this relationship is great and the audience's potential alienation is reinforced by the role of voyeur I'm forcing on them." At the same time, driven by an image, an intuition, or a sensation, she is trying "to hone reality until it becomes one with that of my audience—a reality that's hopefully also a political consciousness raising. But it's almost as if the imagery has its own life and I'm running along behind trying to clarify and explain and make it reasonably responsible to its constituency. The truth is, I'm excited by the challenge of turning alienation into responsiveness."

The complexity of an unfamiliar image is often lost on audiences not part of the pictured community. We take for granted that this operates from the top down (the general public allegedly doesn't "get" most high art). But we are not often reminded that it works both ways. Kearns' photographs acquired the intended "quality" in the Black United Front because of their meaning to those pictured: affirmation and reinforcement of their resistance to oppression. Whereas from the artworld viewpoint, these are clichés, and nasty, scary ones at that. When Kearns showed in an art context a witty anti-Koch poster that had gone over big in the Black Brooklyn streets where the New York mayor's racist policies and cop brutality were neither ironic nor esthetic, art critic John Perreault wrote: "Jerry Kearns' *Ku Klux Koch, the Shah of New York* is so blatantly overstated that one doubts if anyone would take it seriously if posted on the street."

The issue is not so much one of esthetic sophistication as it is of conflicting value systems. It is a profound matter of *meaning*. When art is directed to communities other than those that own it, the dominant notion of "quality" and the supposed "universality" of high art is challenged. The class usually served by art is confronted with something unfamiliar—a process that usually happens the other way around, high art being doled out to the

deserving "others" who will have to learn to "appreciate" it—in other words, forget their own experiences and take on those of the dominant culture.

The pervasive use of irony in "political art" that rarely gets out of the galleries and museums takes for granted an audience so educated as to have the illusion of freedom from the operating hegemony. The people's voice, on the other hand, is not ironic. Cleverness veiling commitment may well go right on past an audience whose critical tools for understanding the media come more from life than from books. For instance, Mike Glier made a mural of Reagan as Dracula ("Give Blood") for a show at District 1199 in 1981. Because the caricature was overt, it would have been condemned as sloganeering in the artworld. But elsewhere the threat is real. One of the union members (also a member of a community Reagan has targeted economically) was particularly struck by Glier's piece because her daughter had just dreamed that Reagan was a vampire sucking her blood. The fusion of dominant and oppositional ideologies can go that deep. Lacy, with her often uncanny, emotional connections to the women with whom she works, reaches similar depths with images of women that are taken for granted only because they have never been understood.

Activist artists are stuck with this contradictory task of informing, provoking, and mobilizing not only the "real world," but also the artworld. It is crucial that art like Kearns' and Lacy's (and many others') intervenes in both contexts. Even when it's misunderstood, this is often the only way to impart a sense of ideological responsibility to those whose responsibility ideology is.

## Notes

1. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotes have been taken from conversations with the artists.

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## Art and Ideology: Alfredo Jaar and Ismael Frigerio by Nilda Peraza

In doing anything—creating a work of art, writing a book, or just living—every human being has a purpose that responds to an ideology. Ideology is a way of seeing things, reacting to things, in fact a way of seeing the world. Historically, whether individually or as a group, man has separated himself from other animal species because he needed for his survival an order of things, a group of philosophical concerns that could enable him to establish his own set of rules on which to base his thoughts and make sense of his existence.

Artistic expression is thought. The artist substitutes symbols for the things reasoned about, thus creating a relationship between thought and content. The symbols are the object of thoughts; thoughts are always about things. Art has to do with the making of things. It gives things a kind of order which they do not naturally possess, therefore the maker of art is allowed the opportunity to establish his own rules, his own kind of order that, if mastered, can give man a knowledge of himself. It is that self-understanding that grants individual empowerment and results in the freedom to create.

The invitation to partake as a guest curator in the exhibition titled "Art & Ideology" brings forth thoughts that are the foundation guiding my performance in the artworld. It made me look around (the external world) and internalize the realities of the surrounding environment. A look was taken as a starting point that would lead to the selection of artists to be included in the exhibition, and a vision asserted itself. It was a positive vision, one that forced definition of several issues relating to the position that history had assigned to us Latin Americans. The vision created a chaos within.

The vision encountered, as well as the theme of the exhibition, became a major preoccupation. It would not have become such a preoccupation if gaps had not been encountered, or if questions had not arisen that demanded clarification and answers. But a challenge was presented to resolve these gaps about our role in the "American" way of life. Questions pertaining to natural idiosyncracies, similarities and differences, remain unanswered.

Looking around, looking within, a search began for a factor that would trigger an encounter between the theme of this exhibition, the surroundings, and normal processes of living. A battle of ideas with work and the exigencies of ordinary experience began.

The vision could not complete itself; it became a succession of experiences, acts, that demanded deeper approaches in which to bring about answers. A totally new activity dealing with predominantly intellectual processes emerged. As in all intellectual endeavors, the element that constitutes the problem needed to be converted in the means to find the solution. Questions flourished again. Is it true we are different from other Americans? Do we belong? Do they have the right to determine our existence?

In the process of addressing these issues artists were sought out who were actively expressing their own realities, their own struggles, and bringing forth their own national character. Two were chosen. These two endeavor not only to preserve an identity but their lives and their country as well as their culture; they search for a solution for troubled social, economic, and political situations.

The procedure that followed was a clarification and simplification of the highly personal act of creation through direct investigations of the artists and their works. The creative act became more fully shared as the artists' intentions were revealed in conversations, and the realization was evident that they bore a lot of similarities in personal visions and ideology.

In the interaction with the artists, an influence was formulated by their life experiences and their attitudes toward their subject matter. This investigative/interpretative process, presenting an opportunity to become an integral part (albeit at the final stages) of their creative process, enables their works to be placed within the context of a particular aesthetic reality.

What kind of relationship is then created between artist and curator? We become equal partners. The curator becomes the vehicle that allows them to deliver their message, to assist the artists in establishing a dialogue with those who come to see the art works, which brings with it the realization that the creative process cannot be detached from the human experience, for it is only together that they will be understood.

All work is the result of the artist's relationship to things. It is extremely hard to know what happens next—why are we, the audience, interested in it; why do we like it; or why are we moved by it. That takes us back to the starting point of ideology being a dominant factor in the way people react to things. It is intuitive, it is sensed, felt, or even acted upon without knowing why or even trying to understand why—that is the power of art, the ability to take us back to experience without our being conscious of it.

What makes artists unique is that they bring about a moment of truth, a real confrontation with the "self," and the external work serves a primary function both creatively and historically. Again,

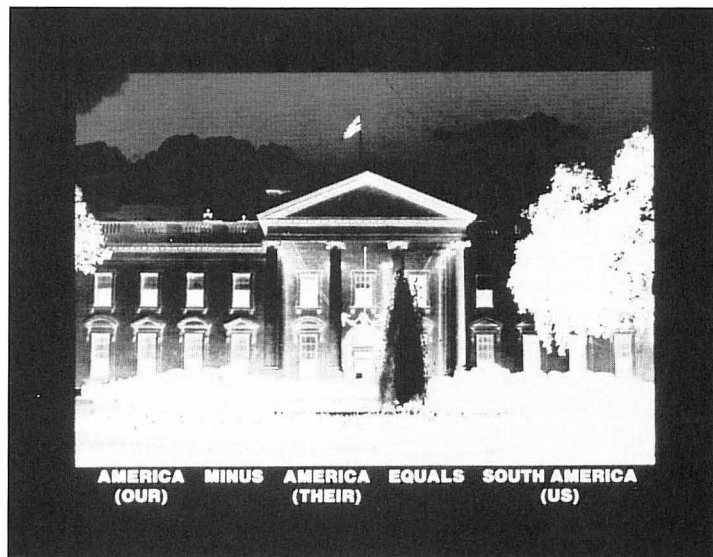


Alfredo Jaar.

fig. 1. *America, America*, 1982.

Black and white photographs and text; five parts: 30 x 24 inches each.

Courtesy of the artist; Detail, first part

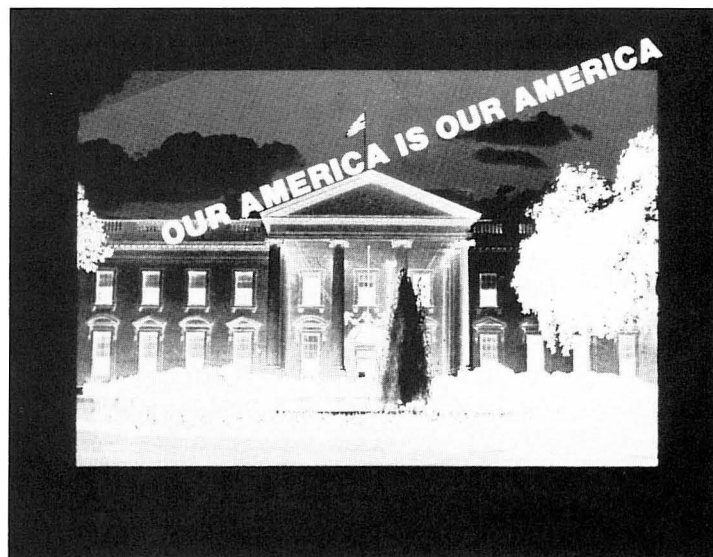


Alfredo Jaar.

fig. 2. *America, America*, 1982.

Black and white photographs and text; five parts: 30 x 24 inches each.

Courtesy of the artist; Detail, fifth part



Alfredo Jaar. fig. 3. *Untitled*, 1983. Black and white photograph and text; 126 x 36 inches. Courtesy of the artist

that is the power of art. And the power of the personal ideology within each artist that is behind the act of creation since ideology is a combination of a state of the reasoning mind with the full gamut of human emotions, i.e., fears, hopes, sympathies, love, and hate. What occurs when an individual artist joins forces with his creation to bridge the unbridgeable (convey a clear message or statement) is again visible (external) and invisible (internal). While judged separately they might not make a statement, but together the artist and his work – and only together – can they be most fully understood.

The product of the creative process tells as much about the artist's ideology as it tells us about the things which are or are not the subject or object of his creativity, thus establishing that *all* of the artist's work is the product of the artist's ideology, his relationship to the world.

One of the artists presented in this exhibition, Alfredo Jaar,

makes us think while we look at his works. Large and controversial truths can be seen. The works are intended to make us re-evaluate how we sense, feel, and know things. Jaar's works can be threatening and chaotic. His art cannot be judged as beautiful or pleasant. Jaar's works are strong statements about his relationship to his surroundings. They tell much about his subject matter, about him, about his ideology. The viewer's understanding of his work depends heavily on the viewer's own ideology and circumstance. And the circumstance in Jaar's work is relayed in his own statements of the realities of the *Americas* – as America in its true sense is the major portion of the Western Hemisphere, narrowly used to define North America as is shown in Jaar's *America, America* series (1982) (figs. 1, 2). He struggles to make and recall a place of his own, a space to which he is entitled – as an American, as a Latin American, and more particularly as a Chilean.

His reality is a constant that never changes his attitude. What



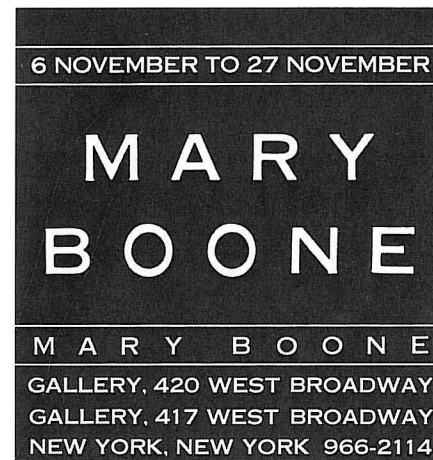
Alfredo Jaar.

fig. 4. *One Plus One Equals One*, 1983.  
Mixed media installation; 84 x 84 x 60 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist



Alfredo Jaar.

fig. 5. *One Plus One Equals One*, 1983.  
Mixed media installation; 84 x 84 x 60 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist; Detail



Alfredo Jaar.

fig. 6. *The SoHo Project*, 1982.  
Mixed media; 60 x 40 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist;  
Detail, black and white poster

has changed is, perhaps, his view of the environment surrounding him. That makes him special. Also special is his continuing search for rationalizing and explaining the political and economic realities that cripple us as a people, pointing out that ideology cannot be separated from his historical or geographical position.

The first lesson that Latin Americans learn upon arrival in North America is that they are different, that they are *Latin* Americans, Third World people, as if coming from those other Americas was not something positive, although a common place is shared. Jaar wants to change this reality. He is recalling America as *our* America. He wants to change the attitude perceived as a sign of superiority of the dominating people over the dominated, the repression and exclusion of the other—ultimately the violent confrontation between oppressed and oppressor (fig. 3).

Jaar's work is an affirmation of identity, a demand for recognition. This affirmation is clearly stated in his untitled piece (an outline of the Chilean flag) where the artist provides the materials/tools for viewers to participate in finishing and personalizing the work. Although the experience may be a circumstantial one it nevertheless is mutual, as the viewer is moved to establish his presence by participating in the process of creating a work of art. With this action Jaar once again creates a common ground, a common place for all, that defies all the intent of the dominating to erase the dominated from the map.

In *One Plus One Equals One* (1983) Jaar confronts viewers with the major areas marking differences between the Americas: a nation rich in land, minerals, and other natural resources versus a nation commercially valuable and absorbed in consumerism. The differences are established differences that have divided the world among itself (figs. 4, 5, and 6).

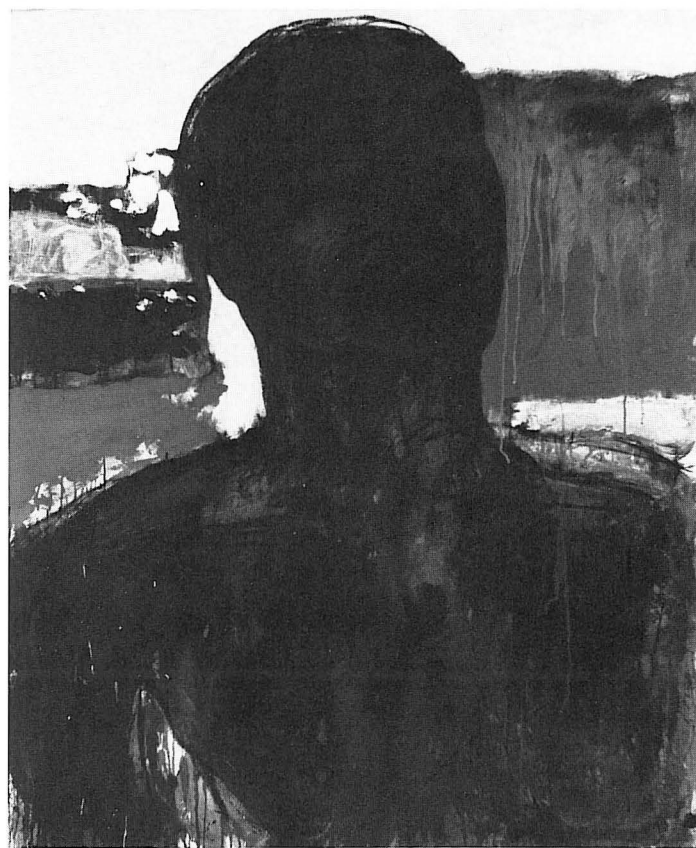
The second artist chosen to participate in this exhibition is also a Chilean, now living in New York. Ismael Frigerio's works are quite dissimilar to those of Jaar's in media and style. He portrays the marginality in which a person in exile or in transit experiences in North America as a result of differences in origin (fig. 7).

His paintings present a drama that causes reflection in a different manner about us (Americans) and them (also Americans). Frigerio's paintings dramatize the realities of people in exile. His works exemplify the clashes and confrontations resulting from the diversity of races, social status (class), and cultural backgrounds of people sharing a common place and heatedly disputing their identity or ethnicity.

His series *Looking at our own Backyard* (1983), depicts basic differences in ideological approaches to deal with ethnocentrism.

He searches not for an assimilation but rather a reaffirmation of some of the similarities and differences that make Latin Americans equal or if not better than those (other) Americans.

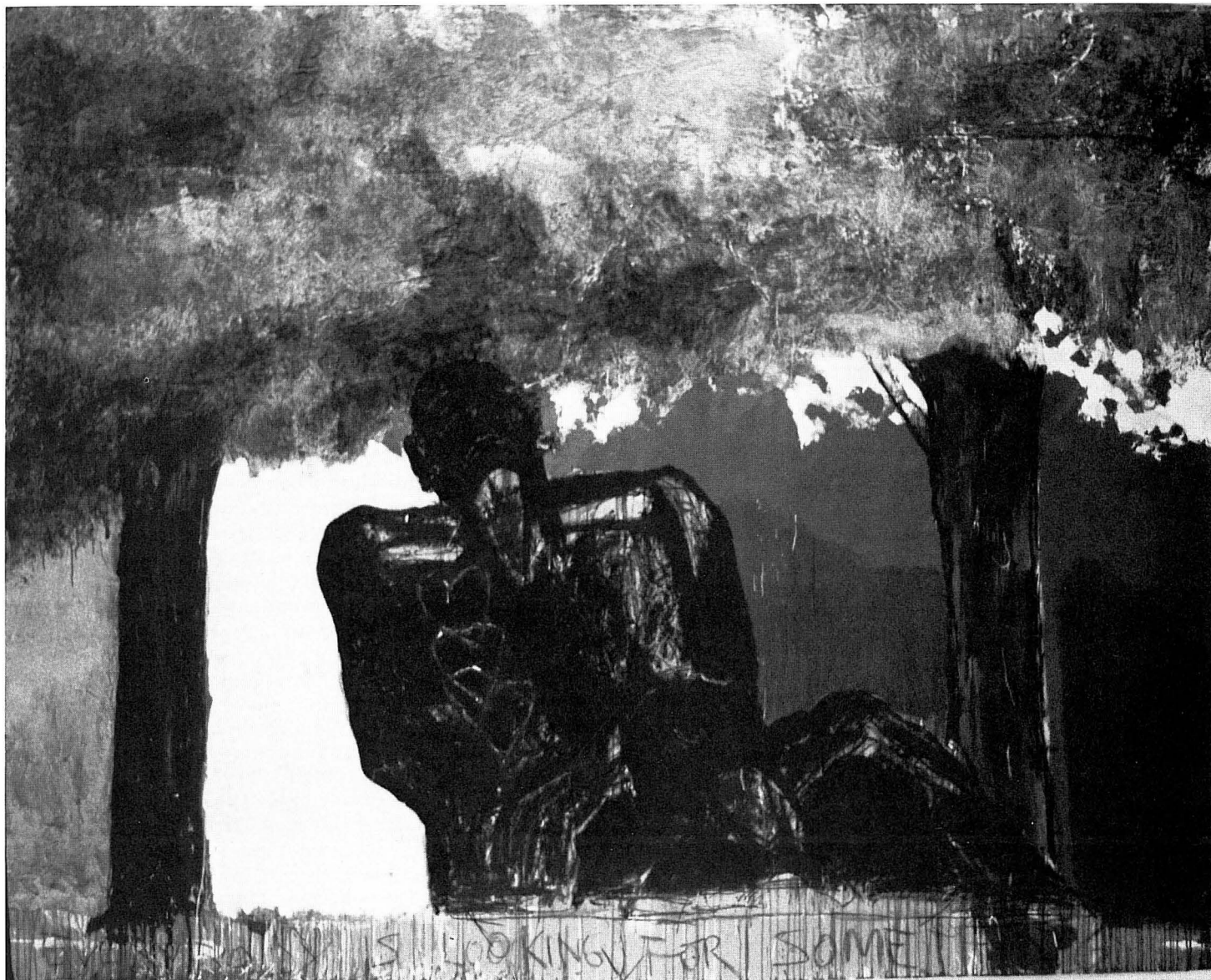
His statement is clear and emotionally charged. He positions viewers in front of images that are highly critical of collective thinking in North America. Frigerio's works dramatize contemporary life in this country, especially a social malaise labelled "consumerism." He highlights the abuse of natural resources, waste of paper and other products, and the aimlessness and meaninglessness of Capitalist life.



Ismael Frigerio.

fig. 7. *Double Portrait of an Unknown Body*, 1983.

Mixed media on canvas; 110 x 55 inches. Private collection; Detail, panel one

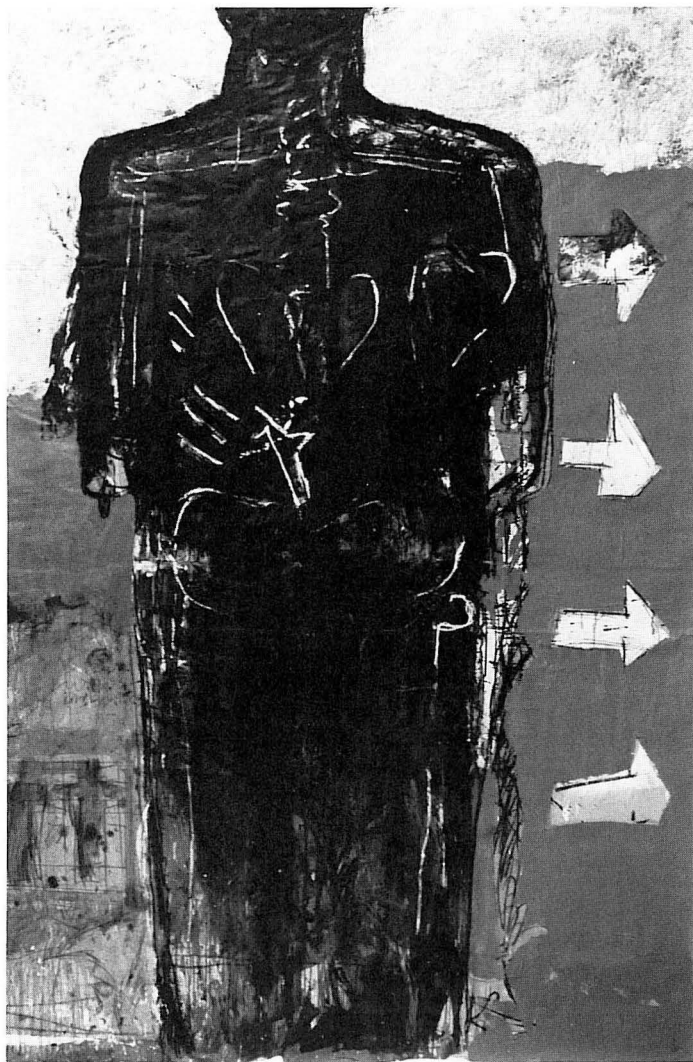


Ismael Frigerio.

fig. 8. *Everybody is Looking for Something/Somebody is Looking at us*, 1983.

Mixed media on canvas; 84 x 106 inches. Courtesy of the artist; Detail, bottom panel





Ismael Frigerio.

fig. 9. *Everybody is Looking for Something/Somebody is Looking at us*, 1983. Mixed media on canvas; 84 x 106 inches. Courtesy of the artist; Detail, top panel

Frigerio is an artist who uses the political theme not to attack a structure, a system, or an ideology, but to recreate a reality produced by the confrontation of the artist and the images of economic, political, and ideological struggles so ingrown in the depths of human societies.

In *Everybody is Looking for Something/Somebody is Looking at Us* (1983), he stresses the isolation and penury of Latin Americans looking for a place but who receive nothing except loneliness and alienation (figs. 8, 9). In his skillfully mastered expressionistic style, which he describes as Latin Expressionism, Frigerio confronts us with what is lacking here, and compensates himself by looking back at the abundance that his country once had. Questions of survival then arise.

Ismael Frigerio unconsciously, or consciously, reminisces about the past to eliminate or maybe to bring to present reality the origins of our loneliness without identifying the causes, although aware of them, thus avoiding being cut-off from present reality. He takes us to its climax when we stand in front of *Solo y Errante* ("Alone and Errant") (1983), a portrait of a wandering body. He takes us back to bring us forth to the present.

Survival depends on understanding today, the now of our lives. Frigerio's bodies increasingly speak for us, for the masses: the foreigner, the worker, the alien, and the poor. He talks about abused people: people in war, people dying; people ignoring people; the origin of a person; the origin of a nation; the origin of life.

*Nilda Peraza is the director of the Cayman Gallery in New York City.*

## Body Politics: Hannah Wilke and Kaylynn Sullivan by Lowery Sims

Hannah Wilke: "The Body Politic" or  
"The Adventures of a Good-Looking Feminist"

In a statement prepared for the performance *Intercourse With...* in 1977, Hannah Wilke referred to her own early awareness of the ambiguity and power of language: "As an American girl born with the name Butter in 1949, I was often confused when I heard what it was like to be used, to be spread, to feel soft, to melt in your mouth."<sup>1</sup> Throughout her work and in conversation, Wilke conveys an almost compulsive concern with metaphorical modes of expression, with the sounds and nuances of the words as both a totem of truth and an infinitely transmutable medium, an instrument of social control and of political provocation. For Wilke, language represents the structuring of experience through politics, art, and other forms of socialization, whereas images from the most abstract to the most realistic biological forms, are the individual organism, the living self. This conflict is the source of the ideological tension and passion in Wilke's work.

Although Wilke is perhaps best known for her more public performances and videos, she is, even in those mediums, fundamentally a sculptor who shares some concerns with the minimalists and conceptualists of her generation, though shaped into a feminist ideology.

Robert Pincus-Witten has noted how the reductivist vocabulary of minimalism—"the square, the circle, and the triangle as well as each of their spatial projections"<sup>2</sup>—served as psycho-sexual surrogates for the more personalized forms of expression that followed minimalism. He in turn relates these autobiographical, conceptual, and performance artistic modes to the literary conceits and/or outright puns of Marcel Duchamp:

The ontological artist, therefore, as Duchamp had anticipated and indicated is the one whose work is completed in the public psyche. It must be noted that the psyche is primed by a literature of myth. In the absence of this acculturation nothing appears to happen except the work itself and the viewer's subjective experience of it.<sup>3</sup>

According to Pincus-Witten, the "imaginative leaps" made by such artists as Jasper Johns, Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci, and Dennis Oppenheim "transpose these implications into an oblique,

conceptually multi-variant iconography wholly different in type from the character of much of American abstraction."<sup>4</sup>

Although Wilke is not included in Pincus-Witten's discussion, it is clear that there is a similar transformation, but into a unique feminist symbolic system that includes vaginal-layered latex sculptures and chewing-gum "reproduction process" cunt forms. As the wedge or cylinder may be an updated apparition of Duchamp's *Objet-Dard* or *Wedge of Chastity*, so Wilke's single-gestured ceramic or chewing gum sculptures have a minimalist resonance, though the strict sense of the term hardly applies. Formally, these works derive from minimal shapes, flat circles of clay and rectangles of gum which are gesturally transformed into three-dimensional drawings or images. The act of creation is spontaneous, immediate, and self-defining. Metaphorically, the created shapes are irreducible entities of the self, not only as forms which incorporate or concretize the gestural movements of the artist, but also as individual objects representing the species.

Related to these are the serial self-portraits of *Hannah Wilke-Super-T-Art* (1974), *S.O.S.—Scarification Object Series* (1974), and *So Help Me Hannah* (1978), in which the artist becomes the irreducible self (fig. 1). *Draw Provoke Attract Gain* (1978–81) is, in a sense, a distillation of *S.H.M.H.*, which includes photographs taken on site and then shown as part of an installation at P.S. 1 in New York. (The video-performance with the same title later evolved out of this work.) Four photographs show Wilke nude within architectural settings with gun in hand. Below these are four shapes abstracted from the photos—interstices which might otherwise escape notice, translations of "reality" into drawing, or "art." Under these are "found" gun shapes, aggressive phallic objects which relate to the word "Draw" and its synonyms appearing on the last line and completing the cycle of form and language, of socio-sexual conflict and ambiguity. This transformation of what was essentially a performance for the camera into a "static" art object, is consistent with Wilke's oeuvre, and it allows her to present a multiplicity of perceptual accesses to her work.

The constant sexual content of Wilke's work associated her early on with the feminist art movement. And within that movement she has maintained a controversial presence.

Since 1960, I have been concerned with the creation of a formal imagery that is specifically female.... Its content has always related to my own body and feelings, reflecting pleasure as well as pain, the ambiguity and complexity of emotions. Human gestures, multi-layered metaphysical symbols below the gut level translated into an art



Hannah Wilke

fig. 1. *SOS - Scarification Object Series*, 1974-82.  
Ten black and white photographs, fifteen chewing  
gum sculptures  
57 x 40 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

close to laughter, making love, shaking hands. Eating fortune cookies instead of signing them, chewing gum into androgynous objects.... Delicate definitions.... Rearranging the touch of sensuality with a residual magic made from laundry lint, or latex loosely laid out like love vulnerably exposed?

In the early 1960s, even earlier than the gestural cunt forms, Wilke sculpted clay boxes which represented more or less specifically genital forms. These works are striking in view of similar forms Charles Simmonds evolved twenty years later. "My concern is with the word translated into form, with creating a positive image to wipe out the prejudices, aggression and fear associated with the negative connotations of pussy, cunt, box."<sup>6</sup> The word is also "Jew, Black, Christian, Moslem.... Labeling people instead of listening to them." Wilke has explored the boundaries of pleasure, pain, frankness, vulnerability, life, death and ultimately, male and female through her insistence on individualism and a feminist perspective, in her own words.

...to diffuse the dangerous power of male separatist religious ideals; the virgin as superior being, the nun, the celibate priest, the bleeding Christ—a female fertility figure in disguise...recognizing the marks, the wounds, the suffering, the pain, the guilt, the confusion, the ambiguity of emotions; to touch, to cry, to smile, to flirt, to state, to insist on the feelings of the flesh, its inspiration, its advice, its warning, its mystery, its necessity for the survival and regeneration of the universe?

The ability to engage us viscerally in her life and work is experienced most directly in Wilke's videos and performances. From an early phenomenological video in which she slowly and progressively touched and then pulled her face (*Gestures*, 1974), to the scarification works and the sensational nude dance to the camera in *So Help Me Hannah*—brandishing a gun, and wearing only high heels—Wilke's projection of herself contrasts markedly with the more impersonal impersonations of Eleanor Antin and the recent work of Cindy Sherman, whose "dress-up" masquerades

are *au fond* no less narcissistic, but somehow easier to accept or digest as art, because they disguise the self and parody the suffering, pain, and pleasure we sense is real in Wilke's art. In costume it is no longer the artist but a character "created" by her. In the performance video *Intercourse With...* Wilke is seen listening to recordings of phone messages from friends, lovers, her mother, as she removes the names which have been attached to her nude torso. Disturbingly personal, it insists on a "one-to-one relationship" to the artist's biography. Wilke's performances nonetheless maintain an elegiac quality. They are alternately self-involved, even narcissistic, and yet universal in their sculptural, operatic expression of emotional states. There is a ritualistic aura about the slow unfolding of Wilke's choreography and gesticulation. They are spontaneous and intuitive, but seem studied and highly rehearsed, like the movements of a No play. In this respect her work relates to the "chance" aspects that have characterized modern performance and dance. The body becomes a vehicle of sculptural form and of spatial and sensual as well as emotional interplay.

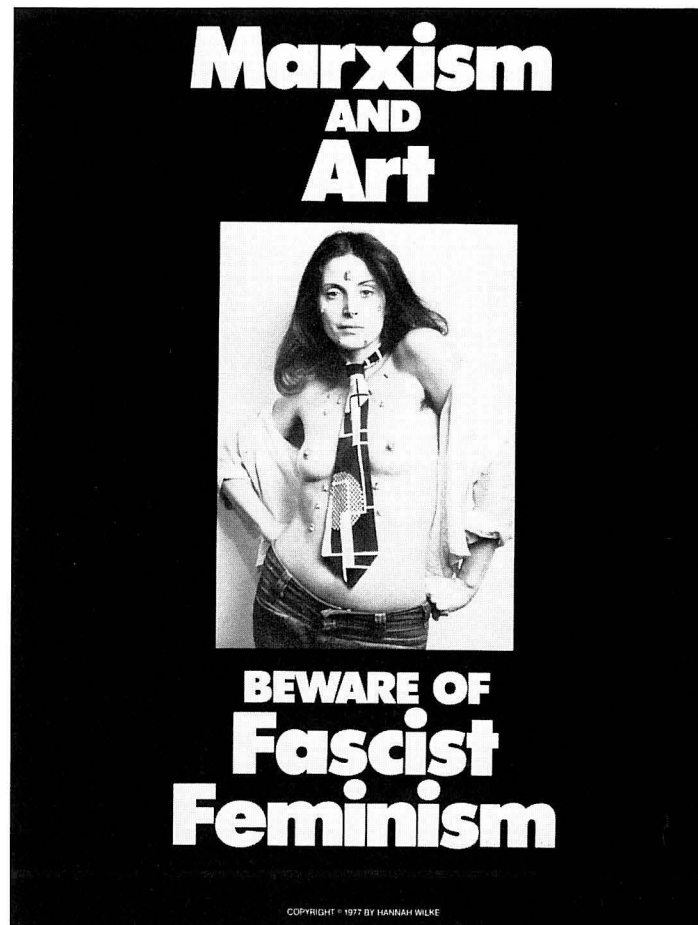
That Wilke always uses herself in her art is the point, and this makes her and others such as Carolee Schneemann and Lynda Benglis, who, like Wilke are good-looking and have appeared nude in their work, vulnerable to accusations of narcissism and what Lucy Lippard dubs "political ambiguity."

Men can use beautiful sexy women as neutral objects or surfaces but when women use their own faces and bodies, they are immediately accused of narcissism!!! Because women are considered sex objects, it is taken for granted that any woman who presents her nude body in public is doing so because she thinks she is beautiful. She is a narcissist, and Vito Acconci with his romantic image and pimply back, is an artist.<sup>8</sup>

So it is not difficult to understand the provocativeness of the work *Marxism and Art: Beware of Fascist Feminism* (1974–77), in which Wilke's flirtatious image, juxtaposed with the caption, suggests the worst type of sexploitation backsliding (fig. 2). The fact that Wilke posed herself, with gum-scars, makes the image both a satire and a defense of the usual pin-up fashion model repertoire. "A woman using her own face and body has a right to do what she will with it, but it is a subtle abyss that separates men's use of women for sexual titillation from woman's use to expose that insult."<sup>9</sup> The poster is also, however, an assertion of sexuality as an

Hannah Wilke.

fig. 2. *Marxism and Art: Beware of Fascist Feminism*, 1974–77. Silkscreen on plastic; 36 x 28 inches. Courtesy of the artist



expression of freedom and humanity in the face of an over-rigid political ideology.

As Gloria Steinem has observed, it was difficult to be a good-looking feminist back in those days. If we consider the issue of clothing, of unfettering the body, in the context of popularist and



feminist movements over the last 150 years, it is obvious that it was germane to the public bra-burnings of the 1960s. But the line between unfettering the body and flaunting it in public was narrow indeed, and Wilke was accused by some feminists of sensationalism, which led her to pose the Fascist-Marxist conundrum pointing to the danger of repressing individual freedom, even on the part of radical feminists. One conjures the uneasy alliance between the communists and the surrealists – and the eventual conflict over similar perceptual differences thirty years earlier.

At this point I would like to return to Wilke's signature cunt/scar forms and to elucidate their relationship to the ideological content of her work. Bruno Bettelheim has observed that modern practices of scarification – i.e., cosmetic surgery – parallel precisely those of African women who endure hundreds of cuts without anesthesia to achieve prized keloided designs on their bodies.<sup>10</sup> In one context, cosmetic surgery, scarring, tattooing, and dieting relates to the concept of suffering to be beautiful; in another – not so far removed – they are preludes to death. These dichotomies

must be recognized in Wilke's work if its meaning and portent are to be fully comprehended.

Photographs of Wilke's mother, Selma Butter, with the real scars of cancer and a mastectomy, are seen in conjunction with photographs of the artist marked by symbolic scars (fig. 3). Although Wilke's artistic scars may be removed, the psychological scars they also represent (like the ravages on the image of Dorian Gray) nonetheless remain. That Wilke is an attractive woman renders the sense of scarification – suffering to be beautiful – almost ironic if not mocking. But the internal wounds are those of a child, little Hannah Butter, conscious of the time/space coincidences that saved her from the bodily suffering of Jews in Europe – suffering that included mutilation, tattooing, starvation, and annihilation.

The relationship of mother and daughter is made more poignant by the contrast of their postures. The artist, head flung back, shoulder thrust forward, "body physick" lean, intact, gum scars arranged in symmetrical patterns across her breasts and abdomen.



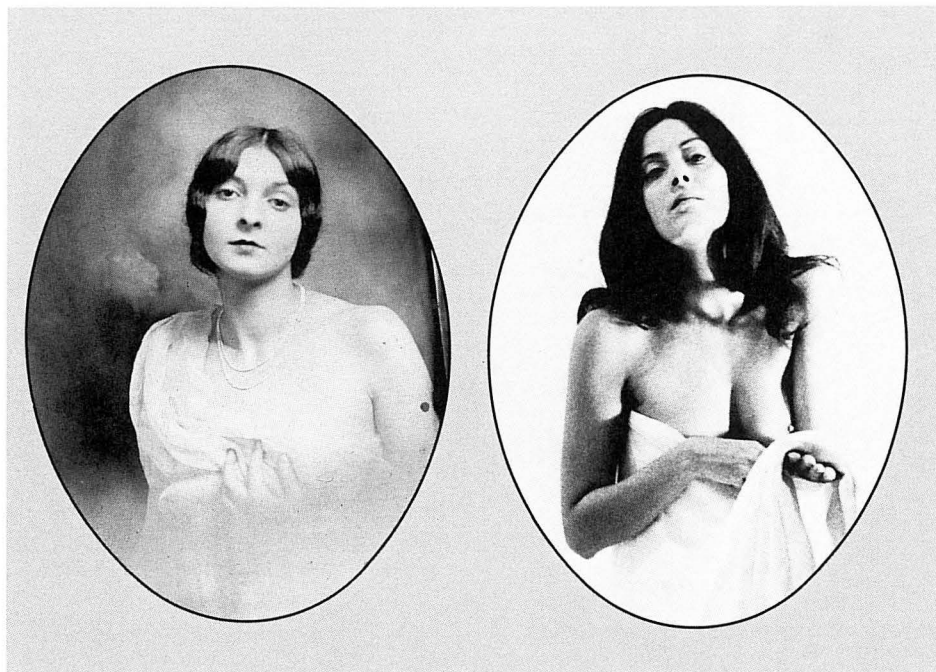
Hannah Wilke.

fig. 3. *SOS – Starification/Scarification: Self-Portrait of the Artist with her Mother Selma Butter*, 1978–81.

Two black and white photographs

40 x 54 inches.

Courtesy of the artist



Hannah Wilke.

fig. 4. *Super-T-Art*, 1974.

(from a 3-minute performance at The Kitchen, New York)

Twenty photographs: 40 x 32 inches.

Courtesy of the artist; Detail

Photograph of the artist's mother at age 16

Her mother sits in front of us, an unflinching portrait of the ravages of cancer—scars of her mastectomy inflamed, establishing their own pattern across her torso. Her tousled wig, mimicking her daughter's tresses, hides the consequences of chemotherapy. If viewers found Wilke's flaunting of her attractive body disturbing, how much more so the sight of the emaciated, sagging, wearied body of Selma Butter. In the exclusively erotic context that we accept the nude, an aged body is often deemed tasteless and inappropriate. (A comparable audacity is Alice Neel's nude self-portrait done two years ago when the artist was over eighty years old.) But eroticism can also be a matter of intimacy and love, and, in fact, it is clear from photographs of the youthful, and even the aging Selma, that the artist's flirtatious mugging is inherited (fig. 4). So the juxtaposition of Wilke, with symbolic scars, and her mother, her body ravaged by cancer-caused scars, is particularly poignant and downright neo-Platonic. It suggests allegorical contrasts of the ages of (Wo)man, and reminds us of the fragility of her existence, the absurdity of life, but also of its extraordinary presence in the face of death (fig. 5).

Wilke alludes to this terrible contradiction when she describes poses she has related to photographs of cadavers in Vietnam and Hiroshima, and to the fact that people are stripped not only of their clothing but of their flesh. One focuses on a more recent image, that of a young pubescent Vietnamese girl running down the road straight at the camera, screaming in fright and pain, her clothes having been burned off in a napalm attack.

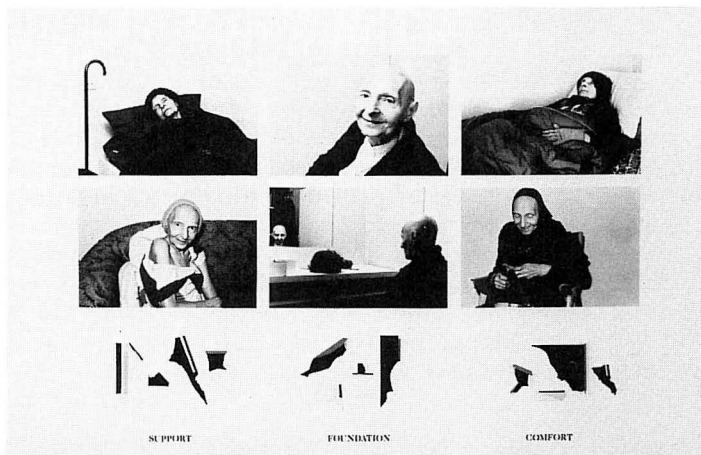
Wilke constantly challenges the reaction of the viewer and throws the onus of dealing with our own interpretations of her actions back on to us. This is perhaps most effectively achieved in a series of "posters" derived from still photographs related to the *So Help Me Hannah* installation and performance. We see the artist nude in various poses with the gun, crouching in fear, lying on the ground like a cadaver, or seated like a sad child contemplating her scattered toys (fig. 6). On each of these images is superimposed one of the sixty statements about art, life, and politics that were originally part of both the installation and the performance. In the "poster" with the scattered toys, Wilke uses a cryptic inquiry cribbed from Ad Reinhardt:

Hannah Wilke.

fig. 5. *Support–Foundation–Comfort*, from *In Memoriam: Selma Butter (Mommy)*, 1974–82.

Black and white photographs, collage and arttype; 40 x 60 inches.

Courtesy of the artist



What does this represent?

What do you represent?

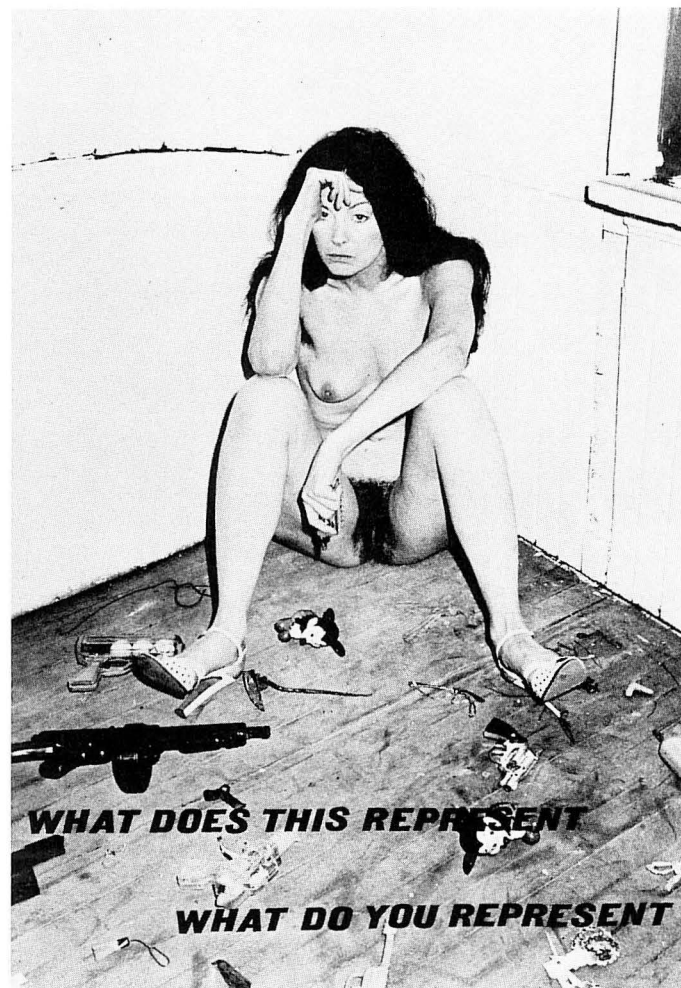
The provocative conjunction of images with random yet resonant quotations from Nietzsche, Marx, Oldenburg, and others diffuses any snap judgement we might make about the images themselves. When the two separate reverberations are considered together they may cause the viewer to pause and reflect instead of pursue a strictly deductive analysis. Magritte said it succinctly: "Ceci n'est pas un pipe," thus destroying all sense of bourgeois materialism and the linguistic designations that maintain the integrity of inventorying goods through the use of commonly-accepted designations.

Wilke's use of this disjunction is given a more cogently ideological bent due to the actual content and character of the statements she selects to go with the images. The Duchampian tradition is particularly pertinent, given Wilke's skilled punning. What gives her use of language its special edge, absent in the work of comparable male contemporaries, is a political sense with regard to personal and sexual stances that are rife with humor. Like Magritte (and ultimately Ludwig Wittgenstein) Wilke

Hannah Wilke.

fig. 6. "What does this represent? What do you represent?"

from the *So Help Me Hannah* Series



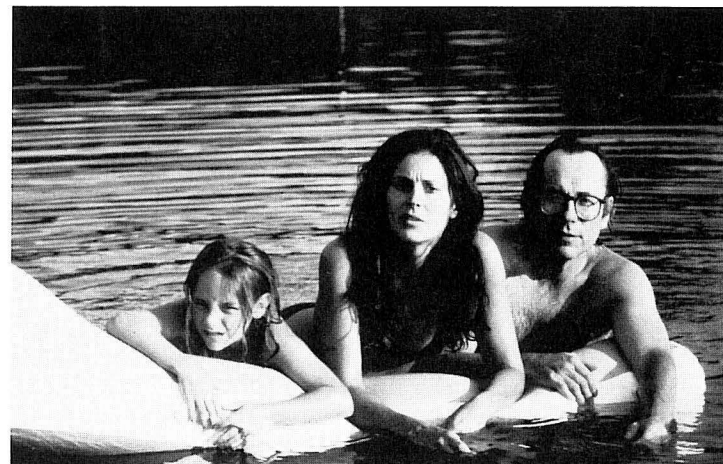
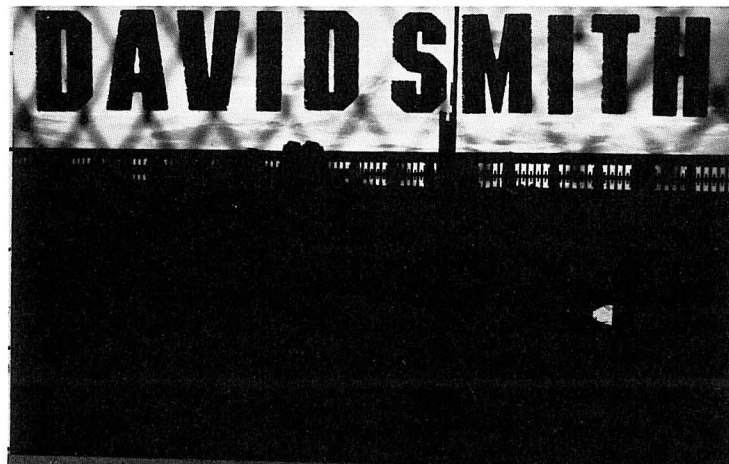
adroitly places language with her imagery in order to strike new terror into our complacent comprehension or word/image correlations.



Hannah Wilke

fig. 7. *Double Portraits: Name Brand*, 1965–83.

Hannah Wilke with Richard Hamilton, Type-C print; 30 x 80 inches. Courtesy of the artist



Hannah Wilke.

fig. 8. *Double Portraits: Name Brand*, 1965–83.

Hannah Wilke with Don Goddard and daughter Nellie, Type-C print; 30 x 80 inches. Courtesy of the artist



Her series of "Double Portraits," further annihilates our usual associative practices. In large color photos, the names of artists, philosophers, and politicians float like brand names on fragments of urban landscapes and still lifes. These are paired with candid photographs of the artist, her friends, lovers or family members. The ostensible basis for the pairing is formal – similarities in composition, shape, and color in the two photographs. A photo of the artist hugging Richard Hamilton is paired with a Sol LeWitt "advertisement" (fig. 7). Against the dark background, the figures of Wilke and Hamilton echo the two lighted windows in the other photo. "David Smith" straddling a bridge seen at dusk paired with a photo of the artist floating on an inflatable raft with Don Goddard and his daughter Nellie stresses the horizontal divisions in both pictures (fig. 8). In a highly ironic, even sarcastic coupling, the diagonals of a gray-socked foot on a yellow and black ground labeled "Oldenburg" parallel the green and yellowish shapes of the grass and blanket upon which repose a very young Wilke and her boyfriend.

The curious power of these diptychs derives from their joining of very private moments, in personal snapshots, with the trappings of history, media, public exposure, and august pronouncements. Whatever humorous or pointed references are made, each half enters the realm of the other, with the personal space extending its moment beyond the strictly personal and the public figure removed from its usual historical context, reduced to a name advertising another's life. They represent a life played out in art, an almost Matissean subversion of history and affirmation of life.

#### Kaylynn Sullivan: "Diminished Capacities" and other little murders

In 1958, Charles Raymond Starkweather and his girlfriend, Caril Ann Fugate, murdered 10 people in eight days.

They wrapped the bodies, sprinkled some perfume around to cover the smell of blood. He walked to Hutson's Grocery and bought three bottles of Pepsi and a large bag of potato chips. They lived together in the house (her parents' house) with the bodies for almost a week going out for more Pepsis and potato chips. . . .

June 25, 1959, Charles Starkweather was pronounced dead after receiving 2200 volts in the electric chair.

In 1978, Dan White stayed up all night, eating cupcakes, drinking cokes. He put on his three piece suit, loaded his .38 Smith and Wesson and at 10:50 shot Mayor Moscone 4 times and walked down the hall and shot Councilman Harvey Milk 5 times.

A psychiatrist stated his habitual consumption of junk food – particularly Twinkies, potato chips and Coca-Cola – led to the killings.



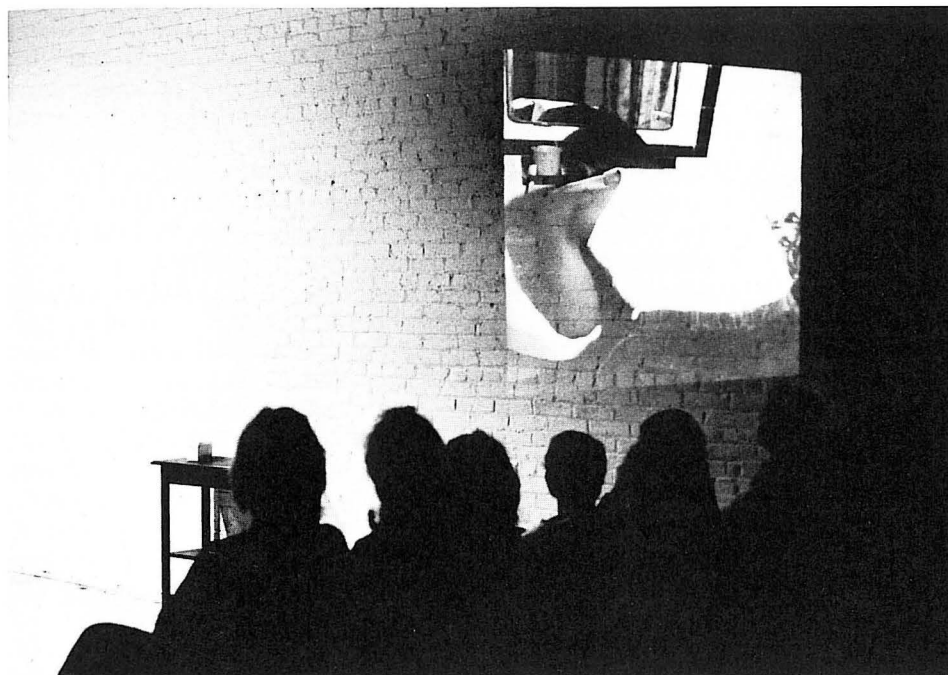
Kaylynn Sullivan

fig. 9. The artist's mother and how she is portrayed in the performance of *Victims* at Just Above Midtown Gallery, New York, New York. At the left, Tone Blevins, at the right, Kaylynn Sullivan.

May 21, 1979, Dan White was found guilty of voluntary manslaughter with a sentence of 7 years and 8 months with time off for good behavior on the grounds of "diminished capacity"!!!<sup>11</sup>

Kaylynn Sullivan has been a force in the performance art-world only since 1980. Since that time she has produced performances centered on a number of discrete themes: victimization of individuals – specifically women – within the context of murder; dispersal of elements, parts, inventory, etc., by appealing to the audience's consumerist greed and consumption; and the mechanisms of her own survival as a black woman in this world.

Sullivan delves into her past growing up in Iowa, and her position as a black woman to find larger paradigms for her work; she is



Kaylynn Sullivan

fig. 10. Performance of *Victims* at Just Above Midtown Gallery, New York, New York, September, 1981.

"I can see from the bathroom into the dining room.... Everything is steamy and hot but in the bathroom he is washing his hands from the smell of sex. I didn't know a name for that smell then but I know it now...."

constantly moving from the specific to the general. For example, *Victims* (1981), is a personalized blow-by-blow telling of a murder which occurred within the artist's own family (fig. 9). *Evil in the Afternoon* (1982), seems to take the thematic focus and defuses it by presenting it in a multi-staged, witty English parlor mystery reminiscent of Agatha Christie stories. The most recent, *Diminished Capacity* (1983), again examines an actual murder and seeks not only to examine the mechanisms that made women in both instances become involved in something as drastic and ultimate as murder, how that leads to their being victimized—in one case murdered, in the other as a participant in a series of murders—but also to deal with the shifting legal criteria over a period of time which mitigated the specific punishment meted for two murders that have specific details in common.

Sullivan mitigates the autobiographical aspects of her work by relying on journalistic documentation and sources. In the actual dialogue and action of the performances of *Victims* and *Diminished Capacity*, the artist combines video sequences, slides with voice-overs, and the actual dialogue and action of the performers

(fig. 10). The different parts of the story told in various media are interspersed so that the audiences and the performers can exist in the past and present at the same time. For example, in *Diminished Capacity*, the video component includes a description of the killing of Caril Fugate's family, a voice-over of the confessions, and then a description of the murders of Moscone and Milk with Dan White's confession narrated over the action we are observing. We are also subjected to an extremely longview of a shotgun leaning against a refrigerator, and a second time with a blotch of blood on the refrigerator door.

The Fugate/Starkweather confessions are seen with image, while White's, as I mentioned, is accompanied by a visual of the murder. Sullivan's use of an instant replay in the latter segment reminds us of how we have grown accustomed to watching real murders on television—starting with Kennedy's assassination, then that of Lee Harvey Oswald and then the Vietnam war, and having it recapped on the eleven o'clock news. In fact much more of life is being televised today compared to the situation some twenty-five years ago when Fugate and Starkweather followed

their rampage on the radio and in the newspaper. During the performance of *Diminished Capacity*, Caril and Charles are seen lounging around her parents' house, eating junk food, and watching television. What they are watching is the reenactment of their murders, again the instant replay. What is reality/actuality? What is the present? The past? What is real? What is play-acting? We ask these questions about the performances, but we may as well ask them about our own spatial and temporal senses which have been influenced by television and its canned notion of reality.

Starkweather and Fugate represent the actualization of the media's images of adolescents during the 1950s. They are James Dean and Natalie Wood in the movie, *Rebel Without a Cause*, taken to the extreme, acting out what their movie idols dared not. The images challenge the middle-class model family by emphasizing the alienation of adolescents as a group, whose aspirations and desires had to be contrary to those of their parents seeking a share of the post-war boom – if only by dint of the natural conflict of generations which was defined and publicized for the first time during this period. A suicidal bent was rife in the media image, and it was enforced by the unfortunate and coincidental premature deaths of not only James Dean, but also of several rock 'n roll idols such as Buddy Holly and Ritchie Valens.

The complexity of this situation in assigning the impetus for actions or the motives, also takes into consideration social alienation – the typical American misfit.

On a more sinister note – even a poor boy, a social misfit, a Speck, a Manson, a Hinckley – can achieve instant celebrity on television by committing an atrocity like murder.

So much for the man, but what does it mean for the woman – for the Caril Fugate? In the actual case, her culpability still remains uncertain. Was she a willing participant, or was she forced to accompany Starkweather? Why then did she spend eight days in the house with him without making an attempt to escape? Or is it even more sinister as Sullivan perceives the situation? Had Fugate, like many women, reached a state of dependency where she would do anything, anything at all to hold onto a man, to hold onto Charlie? It is this issue of responsibility which serves as a nuance for the performance, facing the issue of whether or not Fugate and Starkweather in particular were mentally and emotionally impaired by their diet.

If a component of that impairment was also Starkweather's ineptness at communication, then we can comprehend that if the motorcycle and car were instruments of thrilling feats for James Dean, then the gun served a similar use for Starkweather. Richard

Allen relates how Starkweather often hunted and how he realized, in the midst of his woe-begotten existence, that those hunting trips, when he was alone in the woods with nature, were the best times of his life. For an individual inept at more socially conventional modes of communication, the gun was a more natural communicator, especially under the stress of the conflict with Caril's parents over his seeing her again.<sup>12</sup>

This situation may be contrasted with the one explored in *Pink Paws and Penny Knives* which "...explore(d) a child's games (e.g. rituals with fire) songs and daydreams. Based on the survival techniques/tactics of an only child living in Iowa."<sup>13</sup>

The issue of isolation and alienation is the same. The more introverted pyrogenics may contrast with the more overt and outward expressions on the part of Fugate and Starkweather, but, in fact, if these little fires got out of hand, the effect may be no less devastating. But what does this difference suggest? A distinction between the socialization of blacks and whites of similar economic and geographical groups? Boys as opposed to girls? The influence of age and burgeoning sexual maturation on the perceptions of personal power on the part of "children?"

Sullivan, who has researched the subject of murder almost obsessively, is eloquent on the differences between black and white murder. In fact, an intriguing component of the particular performance is that she, as a black woman, performs along with a black male the parts of Fugate and Starkweather, respectively. On the one hand she is impelled by an era which ignored blacks in the media and thus ran into the danger of "political ambiguity" given the self-consciousness of black groups over "appropriate media images." But we must not forget that there was a violent murder and suicide in her own family involving her mother and father:

I pick up fragments of my childhood from family conversations but the generations slide together. My grandmother thinks that I remember everything she does. I think it's partly age and partly because she blurs the generations together so she can have a picture of the family without pain. I have trouble trying to keep the few pictures I have, the real ones, separate from the stories, both theirs and mine.<sup>14</sup>

This performance in "blackface" also serves to change the textual quality of the story, hopefully to provide a specific response or questioning – perhaps to indicate something as trite as the universality of the human condition.

In both Wilke's and Sullivan's work our voyeuristic propensities towards divergent, but no less disturbing ends, are exposed.

Wilke's emphasis on the vulnerability of nudity – however much bravado and narcissism may be apparent – is almost old-fashioned and traditional in its harkening of allegorical representations of truth, honesty and openness. Her seemingly introspective dialogues with a still or video camera directly hook us in because of the spatial proximity of the camera eye/lens which Wilke engages directly, and by dint of the optical mechanics by which the camera/lens becomes our eye/lens. The vulnerability of physicality is heightened by the appliquéd marks which evoke disfiguring illnesses as well as tribal rites of passage to achieve a beautiful womanhood.

Sullivan, on the other hand, has self-consciously grappled with the challenge of maintaining an impact on the audience in spaces of different dimensions. As mentioned, the action often takes place in spite of and with an audience who may “drop in” and view the action at any point during a designated time period. A discreet physical distance is a prerequisite in order to prevent the viewers from distracting the concentration of the performers. The intimacy is paradoxical. On the one hand we can't get at it, but at

the same time we are drawn in and view it almost in isolation like the enforced voyeurism of Duchamp's *Étant Donnée*, or the viewers in a penny arcade. In that isolation is terror, for there is no group sharing in the experiences which helps to expedite the cathartic aspects of theatre attendance. What's more, Sullivan is most specific in her scripts about detailing the specifics of the locale. She takes particular care to describe the dining room in *Victims*: it “...is salmon, worn...looking yellow as a result of meals and steam...no door but two wooden columns...”<sup>15</sup> Her obsession with recreating time and place is almost as if she seeks the right formula to turn back time, and perhaps redo the scene and change the outcome.

This attention to detail heightens the effectiveness of Sullivan's exploitation of the non-contiguous, unexpected, incongruous elements in the midst of seeming normalcy. In *Beauty* she juxtaposes the spectre of a preacher delivering an invective against sex and sin, with a female figure who is occupied with eating the jewelry she is wearing. Eventually, the female starts to feed the preacher as he tries to rave on. The erotic associations are inescapable. In fact,



Kaylynn Sullivan

fig. 11. A view of the set table from *Victims* at Just Above Midtown Gallery, New York, New York



food has played a recurring role in Sullivan's works and conjures up more ritualistic associations. During *Victims*, food is prepared and ingested both by the performers and the audience throughout the performance (fig. 11). "Gnawing at chicken bones, in that sterile gallery setting with strangers, I finally began to sort out the barrage of images and feel its terror..."<sup>16</sup> We all can remember reading accounts of domestic violence perpetrated by women who have sustained oppression over a long period of time where the explosions of rage and revenge is followed by the resumption of normal activities about the house—such as the preparation of food—immediately afterward.

It is interesting to note within this context that a similar participatory mastication is involved in the making of Wilke's scarification sculptures from chewing gum. The sticks are chewed into malleable forms by an audience, and then shaped with one gesture into the "scars" which adorn her body. That Wilke sees these appliqué as symbolic wounds that evokes crucifixion parallels, makes plausible an association of eating in the work of both Sullivan and Wilke with the Christian agape or communion. The funerary references in Sullivan's work particularly are illuminated by the communion as symbolic ingestion of the body and blood of Christ to signal Christian community and union with the Mystical Body of Christ.

That Wilke and Sullivan share a surprising number of iconographic elements and thematic motifs in their work is perhaps more revealing of the commonality of experiences than of curatorial caprice. But the distinctions are as instructive as the similarities. Though both artists are involved with performance and are

aware of the nuances of gesture and movement, Sullivan's approach is predicated by her dance training and association with Meredith Monk. Wilke's work proceeds from the act of making sculpture, and feminist nuances illuminate her socialization of body language—that which distinguishes stereotypical "male" from "female" movement and gesture.

Wilke has long been concerned with the rights and responsibilities of women who use their bodies as a mode of expression, and with challenging the male, phallic focus of mythic and psychological content with the ascendancy of female regenerative power. Sullivan has drawn on her family history to thrash out issues of individual responsibility and hegemony within the legal arena, and in view of the mitigating circumstances of psychosis produced by chemical manipulations of mood and emotion.

In the work of both artists, the gun takes on the aspect of phallic surrogate. In Sullivan's work it reappears as a prop in the enactment of murders and becomes an emblem for our national preoccupation with the right to bear arms, an anachronistic hold-over from pioneer days. In Wilke's work the gun is inescapably associated with the "ray gun" of her former lover and companion, Claes Oldenburg. Wilke, brandishing a gun in *So Help Me Hannah* while doing a quasi-erotic *danse macabre*, as if stalking a prey, inspires tense speculation. Will she or won't she use the gun on herself, someone else—or better yet...on us? Again Wilke acts out and transcends her anger and frustration symbolically, while the impaired individuals Sullivan presents actually perpetrate that which Wilke symbolizes—thus illuminating the all-too-thin line between artifice and actuality.

## Notes

1. Hannah Wilke, statement for performance of *Intercourse With...* at the London Art Gallery, London, Ontario, 1977.
2. Robert Pincus-Witten, "Theater of the Conceptual: Autobiography and Myth," in *Marcel Duchamp in Perspective* edited by Joseph Maschek, 1975, pp. 162-172.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 163.
5. Wilke, from *Intercourse With*.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Hannah Wilke, statement for catalog for *American Women Artists*, São Paulo Museum, July 1980.
8. Lucy R. Lippard, "European and American Women's Body Art," in *From the Center* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1976), p. 125.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

10. Bruno Bettelheim. *Symbolic Wounds* (New York: 1968), pp. 78-79.
11. Kaylynn Sullivan, script for *Diminished Capacity*, 1981.
12. William Allen. *Starkweather: The Story of a Mass Murder* (Boston: 1976), pp. 128-129.
13. Kaylynn Sullivan, script for *Pink Paws and Penny Knives*, 1982.
14. Kaylynn Sullivan, script for *Victims*, 1980.
15. Robert Massa, "Bits," *Village Voice* (September 23-29, 1981), p. 111.
16. Kaylynn Sullivan, from *Victims*.

*Lowery Sims is associate curator of twentieth-century art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.*

## Works in the Exhibition

*Height precedes width precedes depth*

### Ismael Frigerio

*Double Portrait of an Unknown Body*, 1983  
Mixed media on canvas  
110 x 55 inches  
Private collection

*Everybody is Looking for Something/  
Somebody is Looking at Us*, 1983  
Mixed media on canvas  
164 x 106 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Solo y Errante (Alone & Errant)*, 1983  
Mixed media on canvas  
100 x 120 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Something is Happening in the Backyard*, 1983  
Mixed media on canvas  
100 x 120 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

### Alfredo Jaar

Untitled, 1981  
Mixed media installation  
80 x 36 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*America, America*, 1982  
Black and white photographs and text  
Five parts: 30 x 24 inches each  
Courtesy of the artist

*The SoHo Project*, 1982  
Mixed media  
60 x 40 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*One Plus One Equals One*, 1983  
Mixed media installation  
84 x 84 x 60 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1983  
Black and white photograph and text  
126 x 36 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Cleaning Up*, 1984  
Mixed media installation  
140 x 66 x 72 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*I Have Seen This Face Before*, 1984  
Mixed media installation  
96 x 80 x 30 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Isabel Viendo Llover en Macondo (Isabel Looking at  
the Rain in Macondo)*, 1984  
Mixed media installation  
112 x 112 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

### Jerry Kearns

*I Could Have Danced All Night*, 1983  
Acrylic on masonite  
59 x 95 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Twist and Shout* (after drawings by Brian Bolland in  
*Eagle Comics* and Bern Wrightson in *Pacific  
Comics*), 1983  
Acrylic on masonite  
55 x 94 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*The Diner* (after a drawing by Jack Kamen reprinted  
in *East Coast Comics*, 1973), 1983–84  
Acrylic on masonite  
78 x 120 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*White Line Fever* (after drawings by Joe Orlando  
reprinted in *East Coast Comics*, 1973, Dick Ayers,  
and Tony DeZuniga from *DC Comics*, 1982), 1983  
Acrylic on masonite  
78 x 82 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

### Suzanne Lacy

*Freeze Frame: Room for Living Room*, 1982  
(Performance at Roche-DuBois showroom, San  
Francisco, California, 1982)  
Black and white photographs, plexiglass and objects  
10 x 25 feet  
videotape; 15 minutes  
Courtesy of the artist

*Whisper, the Waves, the Wind*, 1983–84  
(Performance in progress, La Jolla, California—to  
be performed in May, 1984)  
Type-C prints, videotape and text  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist

### Fred Lonidier

*LA-Public Workers Point To Some Problems:  
Sketches Of The Present For Some, Point To The  
Future For All?*, 1979  
Black and white photographs with text  
Ten panels: 50 x 34 inches each  
Courtesy of the artist

### Allan Sekula

*Sketch for a Geography Lesson*, 1983  
Nine cibachrome prints:  
11 x 14 inches each  
Two black and white prints: 24 x 30 inches each  
Six text panels with illustrations:  
11 x 14 inches each  
Courtesy of the artist

### Nancy Spero

*Torture of Women*, 1976  
Painting, typewriting collage and hand printing  
on paper  
20 inches x 125 feet  
Courtesy of the artist

## Kaylynn Sullivan

*Diminished Capacity*, 1983–84  
Mixed media installation  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist

Selected documentation of installation and performance of *Victims* at Just Above Midtown Gallery, September, 1981  
Four black and white photographs:  
10 x 8 inches each  
Courtesy of the artist

Documentation of the artist as a child from *Pink Paw and Penny Knives*, 1982  
Black and white photograph  
8½ x 8½ inches  
Courtesy of the artist

Model of Artist's House for performance of *Pink Paw and Penny Knives*, 1982  
Cardboard and wood  
6 x 24¼ x 13 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

Documentation of Caril Fugate from *Starkweather: The Story of a Mass Murder* by William Allen  
Black and white photograph  
7 x 5 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

Documentation of the artist as Caril Fugate, 1983  
Black and white photograph  
7 x 5 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

Slide presentations from selected performances:

*Open Clothes*—Iowa University, 1981  
*Victims*, 1981  
*Pink Paw and Penny Knives*, 1982  
*Beauty—The Square Rap*, 1982  
*Civic Plots...If the Shoe Fits*, 1983  
*Feet, Get Me Out of Here—A House is not a Home*, 1983

## Francesc Torres

*Hegelian Car*, 1982  
Pastel on paper  
38 x 50 inches  
Collection of John Hanhardt, New York, N.Y.

*Tails*, 1982  
Charcoal on paper  
Triptych: 124 x 50 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*For the Empire, for the Fatherland, for the People, for the Working Class*, 1983  
Charcoal, pastel, crayon and spray paint on canvas  
84 x 180 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

## Hannah Wilke

*Double Portraits: Name Brand*, 1965–83  
Four type-C prints  
30 x 80 inches each pair  
Courtesy of the artist

*Draw—Provoke—Attract—Gain*, from *So Help Me Hannah*, 1969–81  
Black and white photographs, found objects, pencil drawing and arttype  
52 x 50 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Marxism and Art: Beware of Fascist Feminism*, 1974–77  
Silkscreen on plastic  
36 x 28 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Super-T-Art*, 1974  
(From a 3-minute performance at The Kitchen, New York)  
Twenty black and white photographs:  
40 x 32 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*SOS—Scarification Object Series*, 1974–82  
Ten black and white photographs, and fifteen chewing gum sculptures  
57 x 40 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

Documentation from *So Help Me Hannah* with statements by Claes Oldenburg, Ad Reinhardt, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Karl Marx, 1978  
Four black and white photographs  
60 x 40 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*SOS—Starification/Scarification: Self-Portrait of the Artist with her Mother Selma Butter*, 1978–81  
Two black and white photographs  
40 x 54 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Support—Foundation—Comfort*, from *In Memoriam: Selma Butter (Mommy)*, 1978–82  
Black and white photograph, collage and arttype  
40 x 60 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Stand Up* (Song for “Revolutions Per Minute”), 1981  
Black and white photograph  
48 x 48 inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*So Help Me Hannah*, 1982  
Video performance at A.I.R. Gallery done by Bill Dotson, Bob Rubin, and others  
Courtesy of the artist

## Artists' statements, selected exhibitions and bibliographies

Researched by Melissa Harris

### Ismael Frigerio

The myth, or the waste of our origin.  
 The magic, or the hidden in our heart.  
 The nature, our never ending witness.  
 The Andes, snake slippery for the south until  
 nothing.  
 The jungle, lurking place and temptation of  
 fantasies.  
 The intervention. Colon brought the first  
 opportunity of pain.  
 The "Patria." Eternal part of our maternity.  
 The necessity... has no law.  
 Atacama, dense jungle contaminate of silence and  
 ancestors.  
 Patagonia. Eternal death cold and blue.  
 The memory, or what our America could have  
 been.  
 The heroes, phantoms of our past.  
 The loss... when will be ours again.  
 Amazonas, the stories have been stopped to show us  
 your power and mud.  
 Ayahuasca, a few people will understand your  
 power, we will be your slaves.  
 America, or the defeat  
     Or the hidden in our heart.  
     Or the waste of our origin.

*El mito, o la perdida de nuestro origen.*  
*La magia, o lo oculto en nuestro corazon.*  
*La naturaleza, nuestro eterno testigo.*  
*Los Andes, culebra escurrida por el sur hasta*  
*la nada...*  
*La selva, refugio y tentacion de fantasias.*  
*La intervencion. Colon dio la primera*  
*oportunidad de dolor.*  
*La "Patria," parte eterna de nuestra maternidad.*  
*La necesidad,... no tiene ley.*  
*Atacama, selva impenetrable contaminada de*  
*silencio y antepasados.*  
*Patagonia. Eterna muerte fria y azul.*  
*La memoria, o lo que pudo ser de nuestra America.*  
*Los heroes, fantasmas de nuestro pasado.*  
*La perdida... cuando volveras a ser nuestra.*  
*Amazona, las historias nunca dejaran de*  
*mostrarnos tu poder y tu lodo.*

*Ayahuasca, tu poder sera entendido solo por*  
*algunos, los otros seremos tus sirvientes.*  
*America, o lo que nos derrota*  
     *O la perdida de nuestro origen,*  
     *O lo oculto en nuestro corazon.*

Born in Santiago, Chile, 1955. Attended the  
 School of Fine Arts, University of Chile, Santiago,  
 Chile (B.F.A. 1980). Lives in New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Solo Exhibitions

1981  
 Galeria Sur, Santiago, Chile

1983  
 Yvonne Seguy Gallery, New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Group Exhibitions

1979  
 C.E.D.L.A. (Center for Architectural Studies),  
 Santiago, Chile  
*First Art Biennial*, Museum of Fine Arts,  
 Universidad Catolica, Santiago, Chile.

1980  
 8 *Young Painters*, Museum of Contemporary Art,  
 Santiago, Chile  
*Musical Weeks of Frutillar*, Frutillar, Chile  
*Second Art Show*, Las Condes Cultural Institute,  
 Santiago, Chile

1981  
 Corporation Gallery, Santiago, Chile  
*Fifth International Art Biennial*, Valparaiso, Chile  
*National Competition of Plastic Arts*, Museum of  
 Contemporary Art, Santiago, Chile  
*Promocion 80*, B.H.C. Gallery (Banco Hipotecario  
 del Comercio), Santiago, Chile  
*Seventh Exhibition*, Colocadora Nacional de  
 Valores, National Art Museum, Santiago, Chile  
*Third Art Show*, Las Condes Cultural Institute,  
 Santiago, Chile  
*Young Chilean Painters*, Museum of Fine Arts,  
 Lima, Peru (traveled)

1983  
*Beatricia*, Lucky Strike Club, New York, N.Y.  
*Chile-Chile*, Cayman Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Contemporary Latin-American Artists*,  
 Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.

*International Week of the Desaparecido*,  
 Arch Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*New Works by Gallery Artists*, Yvonne Seguy  
 Gallery, New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Bibliography

##### Articles and reviews

Quintana, Sonia. "Ismael Frigerio," *El Mercurio*  
 [Chile], 1981

##### Book

Galaz, Gaspar and Ivelic, Milan. *Historia de la*  
*Pintura Chilena—La pintura en Chile: desde la*  
*colonia hasta 1981*. Valparaiso: Universidad  
 Catolica de Valparaiso, 1981.

### Alfredo Jaar

*"Human Rights are Works of Art!*  
*As long as the claim of 'art for everyone' is not*  
*coupled with moral exigencies, society will not*  
*improve. It is only when Human Rights become the*  
*universal law, as Bernard Henri Levy demands,*  
*that things will change. Consequently, I today*  
*declare that peace is the greatest work of art."*

Wolf Vostell

*"Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac."*

Henry Kissinger

My work re-examines the collective memory of  
 the South American people in the light of my  
 individual experience from the United States, that  
 is, seventh row, center.

My work is a field in which external references  
 (social, political and cultural) become operative.

My work is about political societies and the  
 pursuit of happiness. "You don't have a chance, but  
 take it!"<sup>1</sup>

My work has nothing to do with the three C's  
 of the artworld but with the three C's from South  
 America as reported by the media: Coups,  
 Catastrophes, Communism. "America will do  
 anything about Latin America except read  
 about it!"<sup>2</sup>



My work is about my identity as South American being directly menaced. My work is therefore condemned to create a counterculture, to rediscover freedom, to destroy myths. A living culture is one that creates.

My work is not a pleasure to be shared. My work is about a pleasure that must be shared – the pleasure of life.

My work is not political nor ideological. The meaning of my work is the consequence of your reading of the work according to your social and cultural background. My work is no longer mine. And the ideology is yours.

#### Notes

1. Herbert Achternbusch, as cited in *Semiotext*, no. 11, 1982.
2. James Reston, *New York Times*, as cited in *Nacla*, no. 4, 1983.

Born in Santiago, Chile, 1956. Attended the School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile (B.A. 1981), and studied filmmaking at the American Center, Santiago, Chile (1978–79). Lives in New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Solo Exhibition

1979

C.A.L. Gallery, Santiago, Chile

#### Selected Group Exhibitions

1979

*Fifth Exhibition*, Colocadora Nacional de Valores, National Art Museum, Santiago, Chile  
*First Art Biennial*, Museum of Fine Arts, Universidad Catolica, Santiago, Chile

1980

*Centennial of the National Art Museum*, National Art Museum, Santiago, Chile  
*National Printmaking Salon*, Universidad Catolica, Santiago, Chile

*Second Art Show*, Las Condes Cultural Institute, Santiago, Chile

*Sixth Exhibition*, Colocadora Nacional de Valores, National Art Museum, Santiago, Chile

1981

*Contemporary Chilean Graphics*, National Art Museum, Santiago, Chile

*Fifth International Art Biennial*, Valparaiso, Chile

*First Video Show*, French Center, Santiago, Chile

*Second Art Biennial*, Universidad Catolica, Santiago, Chile

*Seventh Exhibition*, Colocadora Nacional de Valores, National Art Museum, Santiago, Chile (exh. cat.; essay by Adriana Valdes)  
 1982

*Art Biennial of Paris*, Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France

*Contexts Exhibition*, Sur Gallery, Santiago, Chile  
*Second Video Show*, French Center, Santiago, Chile

1983

*Chile-Chile*, Cayman Gallery, New York, N.Y.

*Contemporary Latin-American Artists*, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.

*Hispanic Achievement in the Arts*, Equitable Gallery, New York, N.Y.

*In/Out*, Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C. (exh. cat.; essay by Adriana Valdes)

*Terminal New York*, Brooklyn Army Terminal, Brooklyn, N.Y. (exh. brochure)

#### Selected Bibliography

##### Articles and reviews

Annas, Teresa. "Art of Latin-America: The Urgency of Real Life," *The Virginian/Pilot and The Ledger/Star*, November 6, 1983.

Barraza, Fernando. "Esculturas Golosas," *Ercilla*, [Chile], October 7, 1981, pp. 28–29.

Bindis, Ricardo. "Concurso Nacional de Arte," *La Tercera* [Chile], November 22, 1981.

Correa, Maria Elena. "Notas Musicales en Bienal de Arte," *La Tercera* [Chile], November 13, 1981.

Foxley, Ana Maria. "Felicidad en la Mira," *Hoy* [Chile], January 6, 1982, pp. 41–42.

———. "Los Brotes de la Plastica," *Hoy* [Chile], September 23, 1981, pp. 41–42.

———. "Muchos Llamados, Pocos Escogidos," *Hoy* [Chile], November 24, 1981, p. 47.

Goldenberg, Pablo. "Las 7 Estaciones de una Obra Abierta," *Bravo* [Chile], February 1982, pp. 4–11.

Lewis, Jo Ann. "Chilean Concepts," *Washington Post*, April 7, 1983, p. E7.

McGreevy, Linda. "Latin View," *Portfolio* [Norfolk, Virginia], November 8, 1983.

Ossa, Nena. "Alfredo Jaar y su Obra Abierta y de Registro Continuo," *La Nacion* [Chile], November 18, 1981, p. 2A

Sommer, Waldemar. "Alfredo Jaar," *El Mercurio* [Chile], December 1979.

———. "Concursos Universitarios," *El Mercurio* [Chile], October 18, 1981.

Ulibarri, Luisa. "Es Ud. Feliz?," *Clan* [Chile], March 1982.

#### Book

Galaz, Gaspar and Ivelic, Milan. *Historia de la Pintura Chilena—La pintura en Chile: desde la colonia hasta 1981*. Valparaiso: Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso, 1981.

#### Jerry Byron Kearns

Born in Petersburg, Virginia, 1943. Attended University of California, Santa Barbara, Calif. (B.A. 1966, M.F.A. 1968). Lives in New York, N.Y. and Amherst, Mass.

#### Selected Solo Exhibitions/Performances

1969

American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy

1972

Hampshire College Gallery, Amherst, Mass.

1974

OK Harris, New York, N.Y. (also '75)

Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, R.I.

1976

Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.

1980

*Rawhide*, Printed Matter window, New York, N.Y.

1982

*No Place to Hide*, Gallery 345, New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Group Exhibitions/Performances

1969

Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Rome, Italy

1971

A Space Gallery, Toronto, Canada

Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Mass. (also '72)

1972

OK Harris, New York, N.Y.

1974

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, Calif.

1977

*The Ethiopian Question*, Harlem YMCA Auditorium, New York, N.Y. (traveled)

1978

Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif.

*The Woman Question*, Chelsea YMCA Auditorium, New York, N.Y. (traveled)

1981

*An Emergency Exhibition*, Atlanta, Group Material Gallery, New York, N.Y.

*Colab-New York*, and/or Gallery, Seattle, Wash.

*Communique*, Cape Cod Lounge, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass. (traveled)

*Pictures and Promises*, The Kitchen, New York, N.Y.

*Teamwork the American Way*, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y.

*The Fire Next Time: An Exhibition About the Ecology*, University Art Gallery, Hunter College, New York, N.Y.

*Visual Activism*, Student Union Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass.

*Voices Expressing What Is*, Westbeth Gallery, New York, N.Y.

1982

*Art and Social Protest*, Pratt Graphics Center Gallery, New York, N.Y.

*Christmas Show*, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, N.Y.

*Image War*, Student Union Building, State

University of New York, Binghamton, N.Y. (traveled) [performance with Lucy Lippard]

*Kick Ass*, Printed Matter window, New York, N.Y.

*Luchar*, Taller Latino Americano, New York, N.Y.

*Mixing Art and Politics*, Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, Ill.

*My Place, Your Place, Our Place*, Art Gallery, Claremont College, Claremont, Calif. (traveled) [performance with Lucy Lippard]

*Not Misinformation: Eleven Socially Engaged Artists*, Mason Gross School of Art, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. (traveled)

*Southern Exposure Gallery*, San Francisco, Calif. Street, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y.

[performance with Lucy Lippard]

*Urban Activist Art: LA/NYC*, SPARC Gallery, Venice, Calif.

*Windows for Peace*, 345 Gallery, New York, N.Y. 1984, A Preview, Ronald Feldman Gallery,

New York, N.Y.

1983

*Artists Use Language*, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y.

*Nicaragua Solidarity Exhibition*, Danceteria, New York, N.Y.

*Revolutionary Fine Arts*, Taller Latino Americano, New York, N.Y.

*The War Show*, University Gallery, State University of New York, Stony Brook, N.Y. (exh. cat.)

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### Articles and reviews

Brenson, Michael. "Reopening the 1960's" *New York Times*, January 14, 1983, p. C21.

Glueck, Grace. "An Experimental Outpost" *New York Times*, February 6, 1983, Arts and Leisure section, pp. 1, 29.

———. "Who's Laffin Now?" *New York Times*, December 24, 1981, p. C18.

Henry, Gerrit. "Jerry Kearns," *Art in America*, vol. 71, no. 3, March 1983, pp. 151-52.

Heubler, Douglas. "Sabotage or Trophy? Advance or Retreat?" *Artforum*, vol. 20, no. 9, May 1982, pp. 72-76.

Hoffman, Jan. "Who's Laffin Now?" *Village Voice*, December 16, 1981, centerfold.

Lacy, Suzanne. "The Greening of California Performance Art," *Images and Issues*, Spring 1982, pp. 64-67.

Lippard, Lucy R. "A Child's Garden of Horrors," *Village Voice*, June 24, 1981, p. 83.

———. "A Small Slice of Whose Pie?" *Village Voice*, June 8, 1982, p. 82.

———. "Angry March," *Village Voice*, March 25, 1981, p. 92.

———. "Fighting Racism in the Arts," *Guardian*, March 18, 1981, p. 21.

———. "Open Season," *Village Voice*, October 6, 1981, p. 90.

Perreault, John. "Art Attacks," *Soho Weekly News*, February 18, 1981, p. 48.

Pincus, Robert L. "Politics Playing in the Art Arena," *Los Angeles Times*, June 28, 1982, calendar section.

Schwartz, Carol. "Racism/Sexism," *Valley Women's Voice*, March 18, 1981, p. 5.

Smith, Roberta. "Reductivism Redux," *Village Voice*, February 22, 1983, p. 89.

Wilson, Judith. "A Month at the Races," *Village Voice*, February 18, 1981, p. 74.

Wolverton, Terry. "Art, Politics and Intention," *Artweek*, vol. 13, no. 23, July 3, 1982, pp. 5-6.

### By the artist

"Cashing in a Wolf Ticket—Activist Art and Fort Apache: The Bronx," *Artforum*, vol. 20, no. 2, October 1981, pp. 64-73 [with Lucy Lippard].

"Expansion/Subtraction," *Art and Artists*, February 1983, p. 19.

"Happy New Year I," *Village Voice*, Dec. 30, 1982 [with Lucy Lippard].

"Happy New Year II," *Village Voice*, Jan. 11, 1983 [with Lucy Lippard].

## Suzanne Lacy

Born in Wasco, California, 1945. Attended Bakersfield College, Bakersfield, Calif. (A.A. 1965); University of California at Santa Barbara, Calif. (B.A. 1968); Fresno State College, Fresno, Calif.; and California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, Calif. (M.F.A. 1973). Lives in Los Angeles, Calif.

### Selected Solo Exhibitions

1976

Canis Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.

### Selected Group Exhibitions/Performances

1972

*Ablutions*, with Judy Chicago, Aviva Rahmani, Sandra Orgel, Venice, Calif.

1973

*Lamb Construction*, Woman's Building, Los Angeles, Calif.

*Maps*, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, Calif.

*Taboo Topics*, Womanspace Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.

1974

*Performance!*, Woman's Building, Los Angeles, Calif.

1975

*Fresno Girls*, Fresno State College, Fresno, Calif.

*Monster Series: Construction of a Novel*

*Frankenstein*, Woman's Building, Los Angeles, Calif.

*Visual Verbal*, University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, Calif. (exh. cat.)

1976

*Book Show*, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y. *Erotic Images*, Cameraworks Gallery, San Francisco, Calif.

*Second Video Anthology*, Long Beach Museum, Long Beach, Calif. (exh. cat.)

*Self-Portrait*, Cal State at San Bernardino, San Bernardino, Calif.

1977

*The Artist's Book*, University of California at San Diego, San Diego, Calif. (exh. cat.)

*The Bag Lady*, De Young Downtown Center, San Francisco, Calif.

*Current Directions*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif.

*In Mourning and in Rage*, with Leslie Labowitz, Los Angeles, Calif.

*The Life and Times of Donaldina Cameron*, San Francisco, Calif.

*Three Weeks in May*, Los Angeles, Calif.

1978

*Artwords and Bookworks*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif.

*The Lady and the Lamb*, Mills College, San Francisco, Calif.

*Living Here*, Los Angeles, Calif. [installation in Watts]

*Mona by Number*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, Calif.

*Reverence to Rape*, with Leslie Labowitz, Las Vegas, Nev.

*Take Back the Night*, with Leslie Labowitz, San Francisco, Calif.

*Women Artists*, De Appel Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

*XX+ + Group Show*, LACE Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.

1979

*Artist as Social Critic*, Barnsdall Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.

*Both Sides Now*, Artemesia Gallery, Chicago, Ill.

*International Dinner Party*, Ruth Schaffner Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.

*International Dinner Party*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, Calif.

*Making It Safe*, Ocean Park, Calif.

*Social Works*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif.

1980

*Art of Woman's Building*, Artemesia Gallery, Chicago, Ill.

*Decade of Women's Performance*, Contemporary Art Center, New Orleans, La.

*Evalina and I*, Los Angeles, Calif. [installation at the Woman's Building]

*Issue*, ICA in London (exh. cat.; essay by Lucy R. Lippard)

*In the Last Throes of Artistic Vision*, Los Angeles, Calif.

*River Meetings: Lives of Women in the Delta*, New Orleans, La.

*Tree: A Performance with Women of Ithaca*, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.

1981

and/or Gallery, Seattle, Wash.

*Curator*: London/LA performance series, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.)

*Exhibition on Violence*, Cameraworks Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.

*Racism/Sexism in Media*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass.

*Women Look at Women*, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa. (exh. cat.)

1982

*Freeze Frame: Room for Living Room*, San Francisco, Calif.

*Printed Matter Window*, New York, N.Y.

*Typische Frau*, Bonn Kunstverein and Galerie Magers, West Germany (exh. cat.)

1983

*Furnished Rooms*, Los Angeles, Calif.

*Her Own Space*, Muse Gallery, Philadelphia, Pa. (exh. cat.)

*Whisper, the Waves, the Wind*, San Diego, Calif.

### Selected Bibliography

#### Articles and reviews

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Deak, Frantosek, "Inevitable Associations," *Openbaarkunstbezit Kunstschrift*, January 1978, Holland.

"Environments, Performance and Events," *Women's Caucus for Arts Newsletter*, vol. 8, no. 2/3, November 1980.

Glueck, Grace, "A Matter of Redefining the Whole Relationship Between Art and Society," *Art News*, vol. 79, no. 8, October 1980.

Iskin, Ruth, "Feminist Art," *Heresies*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1977.

———. "The Contributions of the Women's Art Movement to the Development of Alternative Spaces," *LAICA*, April 1978.

Kelly, Jeff, "Rape and Respect in Las Vegas," *Artweek*, vol. 9, no. 2, May 20, 1978.

Larson, Kay, "For the First Time, Women Are Leading, Not Following," *Art News*, vol. 79, no. 8, October 1980.

Lippard, Lucy R., "Dinner Party," *Seven Days*, May 1979.

———. "Surprises: Some Women Artists' Books," *Chrysalis*, no. 5, 1978.

———. "The Angry Month of March," *Village Voice*, March 31, 1981.

Newton, Richard, "Suzanne Lacy," *High Performance*, vol. 1, no. 1, March 1978.

Raven, Arlene, "Feminist Art," *Sister Magazine*, October 1975.

———. "The Circle: Ritual and Occult in Women's Performance," *New Art Examiner*, vol. 8, no. 2, November 1980.

Rosengarten, Linda, "On the Subject of Rape," *LAICA Journal*, no. 15, July/August 1977.

Rosler, Martha, "The Private and the Public," *Artforum*, vol. 16, no. 1, September 1977.

Roth, Moira, "A Family of Women?," *Village Voice*, September 26, 1982.

———. "Revisions," *Artforum*, vol. 19, no. 3, November 1980.

———. "A Star is Born," *Performing Arts Journal*, vol. IV, no. 3, 1980.

———. "Suzanne Lacy's Dinner Parties," *Art in America*, April 1980.

———. "Toward a History of California Performance," *Arts Magazine*, April 1978.

"Three Weeks in May," *Los Angeles Times View Section*, May 23, 1977.

"The Vigil," *High Performance*, vol. 1, no. 3, September 1978.

Winn, Steven, "Review," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 16, 1982.

#### By the artist

"Art of Protest," *Ms. Magazine*, October 1982.

"The Bag Lady," *Block Magazine*, No. 7, London, 1982.

"Broomsticks and Banners: The Winds of Change," *Artweek*, vol. 11, no. 17, May 3, 1980.

"Evolution of Feminist Art: Public Forms and Social Issues," with Leslie Labowitz, *Heresies* #6, Summer 1978.

"Feminist Media Strategies" with Leslie Labowitz, *Fight Back*, Cleis Press, 1981.

"Forest and the Trees," *Heresies*, Winter, 1982.

"The Greening of California Performance," *Images and Issues*, Spring 1982.

"The Life and Times of Donaldina Cameron," *Chrysalis*, Winter 1978.

"Made for TV: Media in California Performance," *Performing Arts Journal*, Spring 1982.

"In Mourning and In Rage," *Frontiers Magazine*, vol. III, no. 1, 1978.

"Take Back the Night," *High Performance*, vol. 2, no. 4, Winter 1979.

#### Books

Loeffler, Carl, Ed. *Performance Anthology*. San Francisco: 1981.

#### By the artist

*Falling Apart*, self-published book, edition 20, December 1976.

*Rape Is*, self-published book, edition 1000, May 1972.

*Three Love Stories*, self-published book, edition 500, February 1978.

*Three Weeks in May*, self-published book, edition 20, 1981.

## Fred Lonidier

The post-World War II withdrawal of American artists and their art from politics was and is no withdrawal at all. The fence 90% of my colleagues are still sitting on does not run between the political and apolitical but right through the former arena. It is our neutrality in our art on all issues outside of "aesthetics" that is validated everywhere in the legitimating spaces and pages of the artworld. It is by giving tacit support to the status quo that we get in line and do our duty. "We are free to do anything we want and we chose to disdain the political," is a very significant if only implicit political message. Occasionally a single work of note or reputable artist or trend comes along, like the current neo-expressionist vogue, to vent some pressure for relevancy or concern. Sometimes "politics" is seen as useful to restimulate excitement in the art scene if the fashions for the year are flat. Also, out of a drive to keep up with what's happening, "political art" shows are organized and works can be seen that actually have some resonance somewhere in the society at large. But usually wise cynicism dictates that Art is socially irrelevant anyway and we should embrace our political impotence "honestly" and get on with our careers. On the other hand, one hears so much complaining about the way things are from artists. . .

The various roles connected to contemporary modern art making develop looking inward and the people in them just hope that things can continue as they have, if not flourish as they did recently. Artists, critics, curators, and students are not *prepared* by existing institutions to do anything else. It takes extra effort to understand things differently and to eventually change them.

No sizable institution can change itself from within alone unless it is totally self-sufficient. This is not the case with "our" artworld. We may work our butts off in it but we don't own it. If anything we produce acquires real exchange value, few of us can afford to keep the commodity. The control and ownership of our world rests with our betters in the corporate world. The roles they play include collector (owner) and trustee (controller). They have a close relationship with politicians, museum directors and foundation heads. They decide and act discreetly behind the scene. They don't tell museum directors what to do. They choose museum directors. "Nobody tells me how to photograph" Maybe not. They just shape the environment in which work is shown, written

about, collected. (Sometimes subtlety is not adequate and we get what happened to Haacke at the Guggenheim or Kozloff at *Artforum*.)

It is interesting how well these things are known by artists these days and how much attention is directed away from the overall politics of the situation to the micro politics of how to get shown or land a teaching job or get a grant. The big picture looks like it just can't be reworked.

If we get determined to have it another way we have to rethink the whole business of art making, seeing, owning. And, at the same time I think, we will have to accept that the artworld will be more or less the same for some time to come. There will more or less continue to be gate-keepers to exposure who will be friendly to socially-committed art and who will find it safe to let some through now and then. And those of us that make it through will continue to be ungrateful for getting the scraps. The issue is one of getting started on some alternatives and developing them. Where else might there be support for change?

Without really fundamental social change there is no non-corporate world in the U.S. of any significance. If we aren't them, we work for them. If we are unemployed, we are administered by them. Their police are on hand to repress us if we get out of control; their media scares and soothes in turn. And their system is in crises on a world-wide scale struggling to maintain control.

The long-term trend, I think, is political polarization between controllers and controlled. Although in the near future the Democratic Party will make its pitch on a revived liberalism, "peace, jobs and social services," it will do so in the absence of a material base. The empire is stagnating, not expanding economically, as a whole. In case you haven't noticed, Democrats say they'll make things work "again" but are short on explaining how. In the absence of a viable and visible left in the U.S., though, they will be speaking on behalf of us have-nots and have-littles. The Presidential campaign is already the more publicly visible major battleground for these issues in this country.

There is a working-class majority in the United States. In spite of the high income in a few trades (but now eroded by inflation and wage cuts) and a mass-media appeal for "middle class" lifestyles, most people who work belong to that class that sells its labor or services to businesses or the government. Between sixteen and seventeen million are under union contracts. About fourteen million members of labor organizations are

affiliated with the AFL-CIO. We are one of the least unionized workforces in the advanced industrial world (21-22% and declining), yet if these numbers constituted a unity it would mean a considerable amount of political power. It is this base that is my particular concern to develop as audience and support for a redefined art practice. The labor movement is a problematic and contradictory one and efforts to pull its potential together for wider social benefits have a long way to go. It has to be understood that many of the things many people see wrong with it are the results of things that have been done to it by the corporate world and do not characterize it at other periods. And do not characterize all of it. And, at any rate, there are often misconceptions about it. One needs to know some things about the history of U.S. labor to know.

One last point about labor and politics is that the AFL-CIO is closer to the Democrats than ever.

I have been developing the photo/text installation as a means of representing labor issues to unions and other audiences. Photos in order to see ourselves in a recognizable manner. Images that try to make the socially invisible, visible. To this extent a still necessary role for art that goes back to the 19th century Realists but not their naive ideas of non-mediation in representation. When the bosses run society they control workers and their images as much as they can. Texts that anchor the photos in specific fields of meaning. Unlike traditional documentary, where ultimately many divergent texts become connected to free-floating singular dramatic pictures, these images *belong* with the ones selected/constructed for them. Installations so that they get attention as public art forms. Akin to murals or wall newspapers, they have a long-term presence in a space where workers go frequently. This condition of display maximizes the intended effects of photo/text but are not always achievable. The issues chosen are ones of great concern to workers but submerged from public view. Or the viewpoint differs from that seen in the media or even the labor press. The problem is to fuse the experience from below with a sort of sociology that allows things to be seen differently so that new solutions can emerge.

Organized labor is a major alternative group with whom to negotiate an additional audience and support for art because it is organized. It has resources even under attack and includes a smattering of cultural programs already. In some places it could bring pressure to bear, especially



where public resources are involved, to pry open the narrow gates to the artworld when socially involved art is concerned. Perhaps leading the way for us are the cultural programs of the labor movements of Australia, Canada and England where art is much more socialized than in the U.S. But there are many other constituencies already open to progressive art here. Feminists, minority groups, the anti-nuclear and anti-interventionist movements have varied roles for the arts and artists in them. New York Political Art Documentation and Distribution (NY PADD) organizes artists who do this work. Needless to say, much of these groups' concerns overlap with labor's. And speaking of the Democrats, there's Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition on the horizon to think about.

Born in Lakeview, Oregon, 1942. Attended San Francisco State College, San Francisco, Calif. (B.A. 1966) and University of California, San Diego, Calif. (M.F.A. 1972). Lives in San Diego, Calif.

#### Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1973  
Oakland Museum, Oakland, Calif.
- 1975  
and/or Gallery, Seattle, Wash.
- 1976  
Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, Calif. (exh. cat.)
- 1977  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.)
- 1978  
AFSCME District Council 37, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.)  
New Haven Central Labor Council, New Haven, Conn.
- 1979  
Real Art Ways, Hartford, Conn.
- 1982  
Student Union Gallery, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, Calif.
- 1983  
Houston Center for Photography, Houston, Tex.  
Red Eye Gallery, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, R.I.  
San Diego/Imperial Counties Labor Council, San Diego, Calif.

#### Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1974  
California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, Calif.  
Focus Gallery, San Francisco, Calif. (also '76, '80)  
Galerie La Bertesca, Genoa, Italy
- 1975  
Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, Calif.  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, Calif.
- 1976  
La Mamelles Art Center, San Francisco, Calif.  
Mandeville Art Gallery, University of California, San Diego, Calif. (exh. cat.)  
San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, Calif.  
The Kitchen, New York, N.Y.  
Whitney Museum of American Art, Downtown Branch, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.)
- 1977  
Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif.  
San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, Calif.
- 1978  
*Artwords and Bookworks*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif. (exh. cat.; traveled)  
*Work*, Downtown Center, Fine Art Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif. (exh. cat.; essay by Michael Lerner)
- 1979  
*Dialogue/Discourse/Research*, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, Calif. (exh. cat.; essay by William Spurlock)  
*Social Works*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif. (exh. cat.; essay by Ruth Iskin)
- 1980  
Folkwang Museum, Essen, West Germany
- 1981  
*Conference on Technology and the Future of Women*, San Diego State University, San Diego, Calif.  
Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y.  
Moming Gallery, Chicago, Ill. (exh. cat.)  
*Nucleus I-Mail Art*, XVI Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (exh. cat.)  
Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, Orange, Calif.  
*5th International Vienna Biennale*, Vienna, Austria (exh. cat.)

1982

Galerie ImZwinger, St. Wendel, West Germany  
Kunstcentrum De Gele Rijder, Arnhem, Holland

1983

Gallery, 1199, Hospital Workers Union, New York, N.Y.  
*Kunst Per Post*, Utrecht, Holland (exh. cat.)  
*Peace and Justice Art Festival*, First Unitarian Church, San Diego, Calif.

#### Selected Bibliography

##### Articles and reviews

- Albright, Thomas. *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 26, 1980.
- Armstrong, Richard. *Artforum*, vol. 18, no. 5, January 1980, p. 79.
- Bloomfield, Arthur. *San Francisco Examiner*, May 12, 1976.
- Dunham, Judith. *Artweek*, vol. 9, no. 34, October 14, 1978.
- Fischer, Hal. *Artweek*, vol. 7, no. 21, May 22, 1976.
- . *Artweek*, vol. 11, no. 19, May 17, 1980.
- Frank, Peter. *Art in America*, vol. 64, no. 4, July/August 1976.
- . *Village Voice*, December 5, 1977.
- Frankenstein, Alfred. *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 15, 1976.
- . *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 14, 1977.
- French-Frazier, Nina. *Artweek*, vol. 7, no. 17, April 24, 1976.
- Levin, Kim. *L.A.I.C.A. Journal*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, January/February 1977.
- Print Collector's Newsletter*, vol. X, no. 6, January/February 1980.
- Sekula, Allan. "Dismantling Modernism, Reinventing Documentary," *Massachusetts Review*, December 1978.
- Stettner, Lou. *Camera 35*, February 1978.
- Tobia, Blaise. *Art Workers News*, February–March 1978.
- Wilson, William. *Los Angeles Times*, December 4, 1973.
- . *Los Angeles Times*, September 9, 1979.

##### By the artist

- "Art and Unions in the U.S.," *Red-Herring* 2, 1978.
- Obscura*, vol. 2, no. 5, 1983.
- Praxis*, no. 6, Summer 1982.
- "The Health and Safety Game," *Proceedings of the Caucus for Marxism and Art*, College Art Association, 1979.

## Allan Sekula

*Sketch for a Geography Lesson* is the latest of several works done over the past ten years on what might be termed the "culture" of late twentieth century militarism.

Born in Erie, Pennsylvania, 1951. Attended University of California, San Diego, Calif. (B.A. 1972, M.F.A. 1974). Lives in Columbus, Ohio.

### Selected Solo Exhibitions

1974

*Aerospace Folktales*, Brand Library Art Center, Glendale, Calif.

1979

*School is a Factory*, Hippolyte Bayard Photo Gallery, Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa, Calif.

1983

*School is a Factory* and *Sketch for a Geography Lesson*, Lightsong Gallery, University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

1984

Folkwang Museum, Essen, West Germany (exh. cat.)

Hoyt Sherman Gallery, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

### Selected Group Exhibitions

1974

*Socialist Realism: Photo-Text Works by Fred Lonidier and Allan Sekula*, Gallery A-402, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, Calif.

*A Photograph is Worth a Thousand Questions*, Grossmont College Art Gallery, El Cajon, Calif.

1975

*Not Photography*, The Fine Arts Building, New York, N.Y.

*Southland Video Anthology*, Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, Calif. (exh. cat.; essay by David Ross)

*Video: Martha Rosler and Allan Sekula*, The Kitchen, New York, N.Y.

1976

*Autobiographical Fantasies*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif.

*Autogeography*, Whitney Museum Downtown Branch, New York, N.Y.

*New American Filmmakers Series: Connell, Sekula and Torres*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y.

1977

*American Narrative/Story Art: 1967-1977*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Tex. (exh. cat.; essays by Marc Freidus, Alan Sondheim)

*Social Criticism and Art Practice*, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, Calif.

1979

*Social Works*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif. (exh. cat.; essays by Josephine Gear, Ruth Iskin, Lee Whitten)

1980

*Martha Rosler and Allan Sekula*, Anna Leonowens Gallery, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

1981

*Absage an das einzelbild*, Folkwang Museum, Essen, West Germany (exh. cat.; essay by Ute Eskildsen)

*5th International Vienna Biennale*, Vienna, Austria

*Likely Stories*, Castelli Graphics, New York, N.Y.

1983

*Susan Meiselas and Allan Sekula*, Film in the Cities Photo Gallery, St. Paul, Minn.

### Selected Bibliography

#### By the artist

"Aerospace Folktales," *Journal* [Los Angeles], no. 3, December 1974, pp. 34-38.

"On the Invention of Photographic Meaning," *Artforum*, vol. 13, no. 5, January 1975, pp. 36-45; reprinted in Vicki Goldberg, ed., *Photography in Print: Writings from 1816 to the Present* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981); also reprinted in Victor Burgin, ed., *Thinking Photography* (London: Macmillan, 1982).

"The Instrumental Image, Steichen at War," *Artforum*, vol. 14, no. 4, December 1975, pp. 26-35.

"Meditations on a Triptych," *Afterimage*, vol. 6, no. 1-2, Summer 1978, pp. 32-33, 43.

"Dismantling Modernism, Reinventing Documentary (Notes on the Politics of Representation)," *Massachusetts Review*, vol. 19, no. 4, December 1978, pp. 859-83; reprinted in Terry Dennett and Jo Spence, eds., *Photography/Politics I* (London: Photography Workshop, 1979).

"School is a Factory," *Exposure*, vol. 15, no. 3-4, Fall and Winter 1980, pp. 76-81.

"The Traffic in Photographs," *The Art Journal*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 15-25.

"Sketch for a Geography Lesson," *Incite* [Toronto], vol. 1, no. 2, October 1983.

"Photography Between Labour and Capital," in Benjamin Buchloh and Robert Wilkie, eds., *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures: A Selection from the Negative Archives of Shedden Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton, 1948-1968. Photographs by Leslie Shedden* (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983), pp. 193-268.

### Book

#### By the artist

*Photography Against the Grain: Essays and Photo Works, 1973-1983*. Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1984.

## Nancy Spero

"Marduk caught Tiamat in his net, and drove the winds which he had with him into her body, and whilst her belly was thus distended he thrust his spear into her, and stabbed her to the heart, and cut through her bowels, and crushed her skull with his club. On her body he took his stand, and with his knife he split it like a flat fish into two halves, and one of these he made a covering for the heavens."

This ancient Sumerian myth dating from one of the origins of human culture tells what must have already been the timeless fear, hatred of and cruelty directed towards women. This hatred expressed in the dismemberment of Tiamat is seemingly absolved by the idealization of Tiamat as the sky. The elevation of Tiamat to the unattainable is a sublimated version of the fear.

"Tiamat" is today still subject to such attacks in prisons in much of the world. Men are also sexually abused in the torture rooms of the modern world but woman is the prime example and desired object of this avid attention.

*Torture of Women* records case histories, documenting the brutalizing and mistreatment of women. Despite the mythologizing, the story of Tiamat is another case history comparable to those reported by Amnesty International.

This work on paper, 1976 (20 inches by 125 feet), took two years to complete. The case histories are either hand printed with wood type alphabets or are collaged fragments of type. Female figures

darkened like blurred newspaper photos act out resistance in ritual dance and gesture. The piece ends with graffiti-like expletives—"knife cut" and "fascist pig."

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, 1926. Attended Art Institute of Chicago (B.F.A. 1949); Atelier Andre L'Hote, Paris (1949–50), Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris (1949–50). Lives in New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1962  
Galerie Breteau, Paris, France (also '65, '68)
- 1971  
University of California at San Diego, San Diego, Calif.  
Mombaccus Art Center, New Paltz, N.Y.
- 1973  
Codex Artaud, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- 1974  
*The Hours of the Night*, and *Torture in Chile*, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- 1976  
*Torture of Women*, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- 1977  
Marianne Deson Gallery, Chicago, Ill.
- 1978  
Herter Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass.  
Woman's Building, Los Angeles, Calif.
- 1979  
*Notes in Time on Women*, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
Real Art Ways, Hartford, Conn.
- 1980  
Picker Art Gallery, Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y.
- 1981  
*The First Language*, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
Ben Shahn Gallery, William Patterson College, Wayne, N.J.
- 1982  
Gallerie France Morin, Montreal, Canada
- 1983  
Art Galaxy, New York, N.Y.  
*Black Paintings, Paris, 1959–64*, and *Codex Artaud, 1971–72*, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
Matrix Gallery, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn.

*War Series*, Gallery 345/Art for Social Changes Inc., New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1948  
*Exhibition Momentum*, Chicago, Ill. (annually, through '58)
- 1950  
61st *Exposition des Artistes Independents*, Grand Palais des Champs-Elysées, Paris, France (exh. cat.)
- 1958  
*Nancy Spero/Leon Golub*, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.
- 1962  
*Resurgence*, Galerie Breteau, Paris, France
- 1963  
1<sup>st</sup> *Salon International de Galeries Pilotes*, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland (exh. cat.)
- Le Dessin*, Galerie Breteau, Paris, France  
*Realities Nouvelles*, Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, France
- 1964  
*Huit Americains de Paris*, American Cultural Center, Paris, France (exh. cat.)
- 1965  
Los Angeles Peace Tower, Los Angeles, Calif.
- 1967  
*Collage of Indignation I: Angry Arts*, New York University, New York, N.Y.
- 1969  
*II Biennial International Del Deporte en las Bellas Artes*, Madrid, Spain
- 1970  
*Flag Show*, Judson Memorial Church, New York, N.Y.  
*Mod Donn Art*, Public Theater, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.)
- 1971  
*Collage of Indignation II*, New York Cultural Center, New York, N.Y.
- 1972  
*American Woman Artists Show*, Gedok-Kunsthau, Hamburg, West Germany  
*Unmanly Art*, Suffolk Museum, Stony Brook, N.Y.
- 1973  
*Women Choose Women*, New York Cultural Center, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.)

1974

*In Her Own Image*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pa.

1976

*Visions: Distinguished Alumni 1945 to the Present*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

1977

*Solidarity with Chilean Democracy: A Memorial to Orlando Letelier*, Cayman Gallery, New York, N.Y.

*What is Feminist Art?*, Woman's Building, Los Angeles, Calif.

*Words at Liberty*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Ill.

1978

*Overview, A.I.R. Retrospective*, Institute for Art and Urban Resources at P.S. 1, Long Island City, N.Y.

1979

*Artists Draw*, Artists Space, New York, N.Y.  
*Centennial Exhibition*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

*Words and Images*, Philadelphia College of Art, Philadelphia, Pa. (exh. cat.; essay by Paula Marincola)

1980

*Art of Conscience: The Art of the Last Decade*, Wright State University, Ohio (exh. cat.; essay by Donald B. Kuspit; traveled)

*Issue-Social Strategies by Women Artists*, Institute for Contemporary Art, London, England (exh. cat.; essay by Lucy R. Lippard)

1981

*Crimes of Compassion*, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va. (exh. cat.; essay by Thomas Styron)

*Six Feminist Artists*, The Center for the Arts, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa.

1982

*Angry Art*, Basement Workshop, New York, N.Y.  
*The Atomic Salon*, Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York, N.Y.

*Beyond Aesthetics: Art of Necessity*, Henry Street Settlement, New York, N.Y.

*Dangerous Works*, Parsons School of Design, New York, N.Y.

*Mixing Art and Politics*, Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, Ill.

1983

*Art Couples III*, Nancy Spero, Leon Golub, Institute for Art and Urban Resources at P.S. 1, Long Island City, N.Y.

- The End of the World: Contemporary Visions of the Apocalypse*, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.; essay by Lynn Gumpert)
- The Revolutionary Power of Women's Laughter*, Protetch-McNeil Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- State of the Art, The New School Commentary*, Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- The War Show*, Fine Arts Center, SUNY at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, N.Y.
- What Artists Have to Say About Nuclear War*, Nexus Gallery, Atlanta, Ga.

### Selected Bibliography

#### Articles and reviews

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- . "Art," *The Nation*, September 25, 1976.
- . "Nancy Spero," *Artforum*, vol. 14, no. 9, May 1976, pp. 52-53.
- . "Woman's Art in the 70's," *Art in America*, vol. 64, no. 3, May/June 1976, pp. 64-72.
- de Pasquale, Carol. "Dialogues with Nancy Spero," *Womanart*, vol. 1, no. 3, Winter/Spring 1977, pp. 8-11.
- Golub, Leon. "Bombs and Helicopters: The Art of Nancy Spero," *Catepillar 1*, October 1967, pp. 46-53.
- Guthrie, Derek. "Art Politics and Ethics," *New Art Examiner*, vol. 4, no. 7, April 1977, pp. 6-7.
- Hamm, Donna. "Nancy Spero," *Dialogue*, March /April 1980, p. 44.
- Horsfield, Kate. "Interview with Nancy Spero," *Profile*, vol. 3, no. 1, January 1983.
- Kuspit, Donald B. "Nancy Spero," *Art in America*, vol. 63, July/August 1975, pp. 99-100.
- . "Spero's Apocalypse," *Artforum*, vol. 18, April 1980, pp. 34-35.
- Lippard, Lucy R. "Caring: Five Political Artists," *Studio International*, vol. 193, no. 987, 1977, pp. 197-207.
- . "Nancy Spero's 30 Years War," *Village Voice*, April 19, 1983.
- Lubell, Ellen. "Nancy Spero," *Arts Magazine*, vol. 51, November 1976, pp. 34-35.
- Perreault, John. "Women Ain't Losers," *Soho Weekly News*, September 23, 1976.
- Philbin, Anne. "Individual Assessments: Women and Art," *Dialogue*, March/April 1980, p. 42.
- Robins, Corinne. "Nancy Spero: 'Political' Artist of Poetry and Nightmare," *Feminist Art Journal*, Spring 1975.
- Schjeldahl, Peter. "Opposites Attract," *Village*

- Voice*, April 15, 1981.
- Sedaitis, Judith. "Nancy Spero," *East Village Eye*, June 1983, p. 32.

#### Books

- Lippard, Lucy R. *From the Center*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1976.
- Naylor, Colin. *Contemporary Artists*. London: St. Martin's Press, 1977.

#### By the artist

- Antonin Artaud: 4 Texts*, trans. by Clayton Eshleman and Norman Glass. Los Angeles: Panjandrum Book, Inc., 1982. [illustrated by the artist]

- "Ende," *Women's Studies*, vol. 6, Gordon & Breach Science Publishers, Ltd., Great Britain, 1978, vol. 6, pp. 3-11.
- "Ongoing Dialogue Goes On," *Women Artists Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 9, February 1976, p. 2.

### Kaylynn Sullivan

Although I've lived in New York, Paris, London and Berlin the real source of my work is rooted in Iowa with my family and community. Even *Evil in the Afternoon*, a murder mystery performance piece drew on characters from the black community where I grew up while still following the Agatha Christie tradition in style. I try to use images which are strong for me and which I felt touch off common remembrances for me and the viewer. I use smell very often in work to evoke such memories. I am most concerned with using as many keys to the senses as possible to communicate with the audience. I am also interested in creating these "visual and sensory newspapers" in non-traditional and non-art spaces so that the work and the viewer come together in an uncontrived setting.

Born in Des Moines, Iowa, 1945. Attended the Sorbonne, Paris, France, Rambert School of Ballet, London, England, Dance Centre, London, England, and Katherine Dunham School, East St. Louis, Mo. Lives in New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Performances

- 1974  
*Split Ends*, City Literary Institute, London, England

- 1975  
*Bubble Gears*, Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, Iowa
- 1976  
*Some Do, Some Don't*, Simpson College, Osceola, Iowa
- 1980  
*Victims*, Just Above Midtown/Downtown, New York, N.Y.
- 1981  
*Open Clothes*, Marina Dinkler Galerie, West Berlin, West Germany
- 1982  
*Beauty*, ABC No Rio, New York, N.Y.  
*Evil in the Afternoon*, Battery Park, New York, N.Y. (Sponsored by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and Goethe House)
- 1112—*Pink Paw & Penny Knives*, Fashion Moda, Bronx, N.Y.
- 1983  
*Civic Plots—If the Shoe Fits...*, Creative Time Inc.'s "Art on the Beach" at Battery Park City landfill, New York, N.Y.  
*Diminished Capacity*, Women's Inter Art Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Feet Get Me Out of Here (A House is not a Home)*, Sarah Lawrence College, Yonkers, N.Y.  
*Women without Air Conditioning/Man with a Fever*, Nouveau Recluse, New York, N.Y.
- Selected Group Exhibitions**
- 1983  
*Ornaments of Sculpture*, Sculpture Center, New York, N.Y.  
*Spare Parts*, Materials for the Arts—Department of Cultural Affairs, New York, N.Y.
- Selected Bibliography**
- Articles and reviews**
- Glueck, Grace. "Engaging Experiments Transform a Sandy Site," *New York Times*, July 31, 1983, p. 25.
- Howell, John. "See no Evil," *Soho Weekly News*, September 29, 1981, p. 36.
- Larson, Kay. "On the Beach," *New York Magazine*, vol. 16, no. 35, September 5, 1983, pp. 52-53.
- Massa, Robert. "Bits," *Village Voice*, September 29, 1981, p. 111.



## Francesc Torres

Born in Barcelona, Spain, 1948.  
Lives in New York, N.Y.

### Selected Solo Exhibitions

1973

*Two Exercises*, Illinois Center, Chicago, Ill.  
(exh. brochure)

*Two Hundred Steps*, Evanston Arts Center,  
Evanston, Ill.

1974

Redor Gallery, Madrid, Spain

1975

*Almost Like Sleeping*, Artists Space, New York,  
N.Y.

*Personal Intersections*, 112 Greene Street,  
New York, N.Y.

1976

Galeria Akumulatory 2, Poznan, Poland  
*Everybody's House is Burning*, Galeria "G,"  
Barcelona, Spain, (exh. cat.; essay by Terry  
Berkowitz)

I.A.C., Friedrichsfehn, West Germany  
Kleine Gallery, Oldenburg, West Germany  
*Synchronic Attempts*, 112 Greene Street,  
New York, N.Y.

1977

*Accident*, 112 Greene Street, New York, N.Y.  
*Repetition of the Novelty*, Institute for Art and  
Urban Resources at P.S. 1, Long Island City,  
N.Y.

*Scenography of Work*, Galeria Tres, Sabadell, Spain

1978

*Residual Regions*, Whitney Museum of American  
Art, New York, N.Y. (traveled)

*Three Books*, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y.

1979

*John Doesn't Know what Paul Does*, Everson  
Museum, Syracuse, N.Y.

*This is an Installation that has as a Title...*, Joan  
Miró Foundation, Barcelona, Spain

1980

*Rock-Solid-Thin-Air*, The Planetarium at the  
Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, N.Y.

*Running Speech*, Elise Meyer Gallery,  
New York, N.Y.

1981

*The Head of the Dragon*, Whitney Museum of  
American Art, New York, N.Y.

1982

*Drawings*, Elise Meyer Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Field of Action*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of  
Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. (exh. cat.;  
essay by John Hanhardt)

1983

*Steel Balls*, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo.  
(exh. cat.; essays by Barbara London, Jean Edith  
Weiffenbach)

*Tough Limo*, Virginia Commonwealth University,  
Richmond, Va.

### Selected Group Exhibitions

1968

*Festival de Nice*, Nice, France (exh. cat.)

1972

*Encounters in Pamplona*, Pamplona, Spain  
(exh. cat.)

1973

*Chicago*, N.A.M.E. Gallery, Chicago, Ill.  
*4 Elements*, Colegio de Arquitectos, Valencia,  
Spain (exh. cat.; traveled)

1974

*Flash Art Show*, Milan, Italy (traveled)  
*Impact Video Art*, Musee Des Arts Decoratifs,  
Lausanne, Switzerland, (exh. cat.; traveled)  
*International Art Fair*, Basel, Switzerland  
*Prospective '74*, Museu de Arte Contemporanea,  
São Paulo, Brazil (exh. cat.)  
*Video and Action Show*, Vehicule Gallery,  
Montreal, Canada

1975

*Biennale de Paris*, Palais des Beaux Arts, Paris,  
France (exh. cat.)  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Ill.

1976

*New American Filmmakers Series: Connell, Sekula  
and Torres*, Whitney Museum of American Art,  
New York, N.Y.

*Spanish Avant-Garde 1936/76*, Biennale di  
Venezia, Venice, Italy (traveled)

1977

*A Small Self-Portrait*, Art Core Gallery, Kyoto,  
Japan (exh. cat.; traveled)  
*Works to be Destroyed*, West Side Highway,  
New York, N.Y.

1978

*Artwords and Bookworks*, Los Angeles Institute of  
Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Calif. (exh.  
cat.; traveled)

1979

*Pyramidal Influence*, Wright State University,  
Dayton, Ohio (exh. cat.; traveled)  
*Visual Poetry*, School of Fine Arts, University of  
Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

1980

*Vigilance*, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y.

1981

*Alternatives in Retrospect*, The New Museum,  
New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.; intro. by Jacki Apple,  
essay by Mary Delahoyd)

*Lisbon International Drawing Biennale (Lis '81)*,  
Lisbon, Portugal (exh. cat.; essay by Donald B.  
Kuspit)

*Schemes*, Elise Meyer Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
(exh. cat.; intro. by Shelley Rice; traveled)

1982

*Artered*, Bilbao, Spain (exh. cat.)  
*The Atomic Salon*, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts,  
New York, N.Y.  
*Visual Politics*, Alternative Museum, New York,  
N.Y.

1983

*Film as Installation II*, Institute for Art and Urban  
Resources at the Clocktower, New York, N.Y.  
(exh. cat.)  
*Video as Attitude*, Museum of Fine Arts, Museum  
of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
(exh. cat.)

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Sociopsychological Video," *Videography*,  
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Carr, Cindy. "The Complex Implications of the  
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Da Vinci, Mona. *Soho Weekly News*, March 20,  
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- Lieberthal, Mary Louchheim. "On the Spanish Easel," *Saturday Review*, October 29, 1977, pp. 24-25.
- Lippard, Lucy R. "A Small Slice of Whose Pie," *Village Voice*, June 8, 1982.
- Mason, M.S., *Colorado Daily*, October 14-15, 1983, pp. 21, 23.
- Paoletti, John. "Francesc Torres," *Arts Magazine*, vol. 7, no. 2, November 1982, pp. 42-43.
- . "Learning from Experience: Francesc Torres," *Arts Magazine*, vol. 55, no. 10, June 1981, pp. 88-91.
- Piatt, Nicole. *The New Mexican Pasatiempo*, May 20, 1983, p. 21.
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- . "Francesc Torres: The Tyranny of the Past," *Afterimage*, vol. 10, no. 5, December 1982, pp. 4-7.

#### By the artist

- "About Behavior: Three Works." Barcelona: Edicions Alternes #5, 1975.
- "Image's Identity," *On Site/On Energy*, 1974, p. 96.

#### Books

- Brentano, Robyn, ed., with Mark Savitt. "112 Workshop/112 Greene Street. History, Artists and Artworks." New York: New York University Press, 1981, pp. 75, 87, 89, 119.
- Dyckes, William. "Contemporary Spanish Art." New York: Art Digest, Inc., 1975, pp. 115, 124, 156-157.

### Hannah Wilke

Visual prejudice has caused world wars, mutilation, hostility, and alienation generated by fear of "the other." Self-hatred is an economic necessity, a capitalistic, totalitarian, religious invention used to control the masses through the denial of the importance of a body language, which is replaced by a work ethic devised to establish a slavery of the mind burdened by that awful albatross—the body.... The soul struggling to become free... the ultimate gift being death. Through the destruction and decay of the body one is rewarded with Heaven....

We're in Heaven, and our hearts beat so that we can barely speak, and we now can find the happiness we seek, when we're out together dancing cheek to cheek. Although sex may sell songs, and other products, it is generally considered bad news and dirty stuff. The pride, power and pleasure of one's own sexual being threatens cultural achievement, unless it can be made into a commodity that has economic and social utility. Generating a pornographic attitude toward sexuality creates a money market that promotes and supports financial success and a way of life for both men and women. To diffuse self-prejudice, women must take control of and have pride in the sensuality of their own bodies and create a sexuality in their own terms, without deferring to the concepts degenerated by culture. To be the artist as well as the model for her own ideas, whether sexually positive or negative, she must also resist the coercion of a fascist feminism, which devolves on traditional politics and hierarchies in feminist guise rather than self-realization with respect to the physical superiority of woman as the life source. To get even is to diffuse the dangerous power of male separatist religious ideals: The virgin as superior being, the nun, the celibate priest, the bleeding Christ—a female fertility figure in disguise... recognizing the marks, the wounds, the suffering, the pain, the guilt, the confusion, the ambiguity of emotions; to touch, to cry, to smile, to flirt, to state, to insist on the feeling of the flesh, its inspiration, its advice, its warning, its mystery, its necessity for the survival and regeneration of the universe.

Written for the catalog of the exhibition *American Women Artists* at the São Paulo Museum, July 1980.

Born in New York, N.Y., 1940. Attended Tyler School of Fine Arts, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa. (B.S., B.F.A. 1961). Lives in New York, N.Y.

#### Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1972  
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, N.Y.  
(also '74, '75, '78)
- 1974  
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.  
(also '76)
- 1975  
Galerie Gerald Piltzer, Paris, France

- 1976  
Fine Arts Gallery, University of California, Irvine, Calif.
- 1977  
Marianne Deson Gallery, Chicago, Ill.
- 1978  
*So Help Me Hannah*, Institute for Art and Urban Resources at P.S. 1, Long Island City, N.Y.
- 1979  
*Performanlist Self-Portraits 1942-79*, Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C.
- Selected Group Exhibitions/Performances**
- 1971  
*Americans*, Richard Feigen Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- 1972  
*Artists' Benefit for Civil Liberties*, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Herbert Distell's Museum of Drawers*, Documenta V., Kassel, West Germany (exh. cat.)
- 1973  
*Soft as Art*, New York Cultural Center, New York, N.Y. (exh. brochure)
- 1973 *Biennial Exhibition—Contemporary American Art*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.)
- Women Choose Women*, New York Cultural Center, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.; essay by Lucy R. Lippard)
- 1974  
*Hannah Wilke, Super-T-Art*, The Kitchen, New York, N.Y.
- Painting and Sculpture Today*, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Ind. (exh. cat.)
- Sculpture*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Mass.
- Wall Sculpture*, Women's Inter Art Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- 19th National Print Exhibition*, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N.Y.
- 1975  
*The Year of the Woman*, Bronx Museum, Bronx, N.Y.
- 1976  
*Soho—Downtown Manhattan*, 26th Berlin Festival, West Berlin, West Germany (traveled)
- Sunday Afternoon on a Revolving Stage*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y.
- Through the Large Glass*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pa.

- 1977  
*Contemporary Issues—Works of Women on Paper*, Woman's Caucus for the Arts, Woman's Building, Los Angeles, Calif.  
*Nothing But Nudes*, Whitney Museum of American Art—Downtown Branch, New York, N.Y.  
*Six Women Artists*, Rutgers University Art Gallery, Camden, N.J.
- 1978  
*Feministische Kunst International*, De Appel, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (exh. cat.)  
*Give: Hannah Wilke Can—A Living Sculpture Needs to Make a Living*, Susan Caldwell Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*(I Object) Performalist Self-Portraits*, Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Personal Visions: Places/Spaces*, Bronx Museum, Bronx, N.Y. (exh. brochure; notes by Peter Frank)
- 1979  
*So Help Me Hannah*, D.C. Space, Washington, D.C.
- 1980  
*A Decade of Women's Performance*, College Art Association, New Orleans, La.  
*American Women Artists 1980*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil  
*Heresies Benefit*, Frank Marino Gallery, New York, N.Y.
- 1981  
*Drawings*, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Figuratively Sculpting*, Institute for Art and Urban Resources at P.S. 1, Long Island City, N.Y.  
*Heresies Benefit*, Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York, N.Y.  
*Pictures and Promises*, The Kitchen, New York, N.Y.  
*Schemes*, Elise Meyer Gallery, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.; intro. by Shelley Rice)  
*Soundworks*, Franklin Furnace, New York, N.Y.
- 1982  
*Feminist Art Institute Benefit*, Greene Street Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Heresies Benefit*, Frank Marino Gallery, New York, N.Y.  
*Revolutions Per Minute*, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, N.Y. (traveled)  
*Sexuality in Art: Two Decades from a Feminist Perspective*, Westbeth Gallery, New York, N.Y. (exh. cat.; essay by Kay Kenney)
- Sound Corridor*, Institute for Art and Urban Resources at P.S. 1, Long Island City, N.Y.  
*The Atomic Salon*, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, N.Y.
- 1983  
*Protective Devices*, Windows on White, New York, N.Y.  
*Self-Portraits*, Linda Farris Gallery, Seattle, Wash. (traveled)
- Selected Bibliography**
- Articles and reviews**
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Frank, Peter. "Hannah Wilke," *Art News*, vol. 73, no. 6, Summer 1974, p. 115.  
———. "Hannah Wilke," *Village Voice*, April 1978.  
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Glueck, Grace. "Art: A Revival of Recognition for Six," *New York Times*, January 28, 1983, p. C19.  
———. "Forays into Sound and Videotape," *New York Times*, June 13, 1982, pp. 45, 48.  
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Lippard, Lucy R. "The Pains and Pleasures of Rebirth: Women's Body Art," *Art in America*, vol. 64, no. 3, May/June, pp. 73-81.  
Lubell, Ellen. "Women Choose Women," *Arts*, vol. 47, no. 4, February 1973, p. 66.  
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**Books**

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