TWENTY SIX CONTEMPORARY WOMEN ARTISTS
26 Contemporary Women Artists

Organized by Lucy R. Lippard

Cecile Abish
Alice Aycock
Cynthia Carlson
Sue Ann Childress
Glorianna Danvenport
Susan Hall
Mary Heilmann
Audrey Hemenway
Laurace James
Mablen Jones
Carol Kinne
Christine Kozlov
Sylvia Mangold
Brenda Miller
Mary Miss
Dona Nelson
Louise Parks
Shirley Pettibone
Howardena Pindell
Adrian Piper
Reeva Potoff
Paula Tavins
Merrill Wagner
Grace Bakst Wapner
Jacqueline Winsor
Barbara Zucker

The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art
Ridgefield, Connecticut
April 18-June 13, 1971
Museum Hours: Saturday and Sunday, 2 to 5 p.m.
I have agreed for some time with women artists that museums and art galleries have, by and large, overlooked their talents, and have discriminated against them, consciously and unconsciously, by not presenting one-woman shows of their work or including them in many of the important group exhibitions, certainly since the end of World War II, and even within the past ten years. Notable exceptions, of course, are Helen Frankenthaler, Louise Nevelson, Marisol, Lee Bontecou, Sue Fuller, Agnes Martin, and a few others. These women achieved recognition only through extraordinary talents, extreme hard work, and great courage. Their professional roads were often made unreasonably rough by gallery and museum personnel.

We are very pleased to use the Aldrich Museum for the purpose of presenting the talents and the works of women who have been little recognized, and we hope it will offer them an opportunity for increased presentation in the future.

I asked Lucy Lippard to make the selections for the exhibition because she is highly thought of as an art critic, and because she is such an ardent participant in women’s search for equal opportunity in art.

Larry Aldrich
March, 1971
Introduction

I took on this show because I knew there were many women artists whose work was as good or better than that currently being shown, but who, because of the prevailing discriminatory policies of most galleries and museums, can rarely get anyone to visit their studios or take them as seriously as their male counterparts. The show itself, of course, is about art. The restriction to women’s art has its obviously polemic source, but as a framework within which to exhibit good art it is no more restrictive than, say, exhibitions of German, Cubist, black and white, soft, young, or new art. I chose what I chose because of my personal tastes, accumulated over 6 years of writing about and 12 years of looking at contemporary art. These tastes are for the most part based on a broad acceptance of the double mainstream of modern art, the so-called avant-garde, which for better or worse has been largely white and male-dominated.

Within the next few years, I expect a body of art history and criticism will emerge that is more suited to women’s sensibilities. In the meantime, I have no clear picture of what, if anything, constitutes “women’s art,” although I am convinced that there is a latent difference in sensibility; and vive la difference. After selecting this show from hundreds of possibilities, I was aware of a strong personal identification with work by women, but as yet I hesitate to draw any conclusions from it; I sensed a similar undercurrent in 1966 and 1968 when organizing two shows called “Eccentric Abstraction” and “Soft Sculpture,” which included more women than was my habit or anyone else’s at that time. I have heard suggestions that the common factor is a vague “earthiness,” “organic images,” “curved lines,” and, most convincingly, a centralized focus (Judy Chicago’s idea). But
until a great many women artists surface who have been taught by women, turned on by women's art as much as all artists have been turned on by the widely exposed art of men, until women artists have become aware and unashamed of the particularities of their own sensibilities—until then, I don't think anything definitive can be said on the subject.

It is, however, fully possible, and necessary, to reject the inane cliches of "feminine" art based on superficial characteristics such as delicacy, prettiness, paleness, sweetness, and lack of structure. Miriam Brummer has pointed out that from Renoir to Lyrical Abstraction, these qualities are consistently found in art made by men. As the search for more profound biological, psychological, and political sources advances, far more interesting common factors will be exposed. Organizations like the pioneering WAR (Women Artists in Revolution), the more recent Women Artists, Ad Hoc Women's Committee, and the west coast groups; art historians like Linda Nochlin Pommer and critics like Cindy Nemser, are among those who have begun to raise and propose answers to these questions in the art world. My own answer, for the time being, is this show, the work of all the other women who could have been included in it, the work of those few who have already "made it," and of those who have the guts to keep up the struggle and make it easier for their sisters.

I also took on this show as a form of personal retribution to women artists I'd slighted, unintentionally, in the past. I have recently become aware of my own previous reluctance to take women's work as seriously as men's, the result of a common conditioning from which we all suffer. (When I was an art historian, the problem rarely arose; most women artists have already been "evaluated" out of the picture by male-oriented historians.) The woman artist has tended to be seen either as another artist's wife, or girl, or as a dilettante. Now I know that, contrary to popular opinion, women are not any more "part-time artists" than anyone else. Very few artists of any sex in America do not work at something other than their art to earn a living, though it's true that women often have three jobs instead of two: their art,
work for pay, and the traditional unpaid "work that's never
done." The infamous Queens housewife who tries to crack the
gallery circuit is working against odds no Queens housepainter
(Frank Stella was one) has had to contend with. I admire
tremendously the courage of those who stick to it. Women's
art often has an obsessive element to it; it has to, given the
obstacles laid in its path. It is far easier to be successful as a
woman critic, curator, or historian than as a woman artist,
since these are secondary, or housekeeping activities, con-
considered more natural for women than the primary activity of
making art.

For these and endless other reasons, choosing this show
has been an exhilarating and a depressing experience;
exhilarating because I saw so much personal and esthetic
strength, so much more good work than even I had suspected;
depressing because of the spectacle of so many women torn
between so-called femininity and their work (a choice that
will, hopefully, soon be outdated), and because I couldn't see
enough, because I had to make judgements and choices and
narrow down several hundred artists to 26. In order to
facilitate the task of going to some 100 studios in the New
York area in 6 weeks, I made one wholly arbitrary limitation. I
hope it was at least no more unfair than any other. No one in
this exhibition has had a one-woman show in New York prior
to March 1, when I make my final decisions. For the injustices
incorporated in this limitation, I apologize, specifically to the
three women whom I asked to participate and had to
withdraw because they had shown: Agnes Denes, Pat
Johanson, and Anne Wilson; and generally to all those whose
work I liked very much and didn't include for illogical reasons
of space, compatibility, in short, my manner of putting
together a show as a whole. I'd like to thank Larry Aldrich for
asking me to do the exhibition, the museum's director,
Dorothy Mayhall, for her sympathetic, energetic help, Susana
Torre for designing the catalogue, the artists for specifying the
layout of their own pages in it, and above all for their
enthusiastic support of the show and the reasons behind it.

L.R.L.
THE FIELDS ARE MADE OF VINYL, GALVANIZED WIRE CLOTH & BOTH SOFT & RIGID URETHANE FOAMS. THEY CAN BE EASILY ASSEMBLED, TRANSPORTED & ALSO TAKEN APART & STORED. I HAVE USED A 2' MODULE THROUGHOUT. IN SIZE THEY VARY FROM 5' - 12' IN LENGTH & 2' - 8' IN WIDTH. ALL ARE 2' HIGH.

EXHIBITIONS: SCULPTORS GUILD '67/NEWARK MUS '68/DETROIT INST OF ART "OTHER IDEAS" '69/NEWARK COL OF ENGR '68/MEAD LIB OF IDEAS '70/WHITECHAPEL '70/MULTIPLES-BOXED MONUMENTS-3 '69/FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON '69/OBSERVER AT BUCKMINSTER FULLER'S "THE WORLD GAME" FOR NYC PLANNING DEPT.
One of approximately 180 transactions conducted with various agencies in obtaining maps of network systems.

1500 lbs. of clay flour mixed with water and poured into a 6’x6’x10” plywood container in which, over a period of months, it dried, hardened, shrank and cracked.
Cynthia Carlson
born 1942

*Untitled*, 1970, 60"x42", oil on canvas (photo)

*Untitled*, 1970, 72"x66", oil on canvas

Four untitled drawings, 1970, 18"x24" and 22"x30", colored pencil on paper
Sue Ann Childress
born 1947

Torque, 51″×70″ (photo)
Undertow, 24″×38″
For Bo Diddley, 36″×68″
Float, 53″×74″
Glorianna Davenport
born 1944

My primary interest is in the sensate awareness of order

*Layers*, 1971 (wall to wall)
*Permutations*, 1970-71, 23"x12"x10", Cotton, mesh wire, polyurethane, paper, and polyethalene (photo)
*Permutations*, 1971, 108"x6"x24", Mesh wire, corrugated cardboard, polyethalene and rubber
Susan Hall
born 1943

Winter Solace, 1971, 50½" x 59½"
The Waitress at Work, 1971, 52⅛" x 52" (photo)
The Courtyard, 1970, 64½" x 65¼"
Projection, 1970, 57½" x 59¾"
Mary Heilmann
born 1940

Three paintings, including Moonlight Sea (photo), 1970, 83”x72”, Canvas, glue and acrylic. Collection Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kardon, New York.
Audrey Hemenway
born 1930

*Swamp*, 88" x 63", transparent fiberglass, earth, water and bog plants
HOMAGE TO KRAZY KAT
1971 - hemp, wood, steel - 20x16 - Laurace James b. 1936
Mablen Jones
born 1943

Landscape series, Terracotta

18" x 11" x 3"
16" x 11" x 2"
15" x 10" x 2"
12" x 10" x 1½"
Carol Kinne
born 1942

Drawing for *Number 1 (Yellow)*, 1969, 7'2'' x 30' (10 panels, each 3' wide), w/n oil on canvas
CHRISTINE KOZLOV
BORN: DECEMBER 6, 1945
LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY

NEUROLOGICAL COMPILATION: THE PHYSICAL MIND SINCE 1945
(PROJECT 1: THE BIBLIOGRAPHY)

PAST ACTIVITIES: (1) INFORMATION: NO THEORY. A RECORDER EQUIPPED WITH A LOOP TAPE SO THAT AS NEW SOUNDS ARE RECORDED THE PREVIOUS SOUNDS RECORDED ARE ERASED. (2) TELEGRAM WITH STATEMENT CONTAINING NO INFORMATION. (3) A SERIES OF CABLES SENT DURING THE EXHIBITION SUPPLYING FACTS ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF CONCEPTS REJECTED DURING THAT TIME. (4) FIGURATIVE WORK WHICH IS A LISTING OF EVERYTHING EATEN FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS. (5) 271 BLANK SHEETS OF PAPER CORRESPONDING TO 271 DAYS OF CONCEPTS REJECTED. (6) RECORDED SOUND OF BELL TELEPHONE OPERATOR STATING TIME (DURATION 24 HOURS). (7) INFORMATION DRIFT: COMBINED RECORDINGS OF NEWS BULLETINS OF THE SHOOTINGS OF ANDY WARHOL AND ROBERT KENNEDY. (8) FILM NO. 2 WHITE LEATHER—16 MM—100 FEET. (9) FILM NO. 1 ALL BLACK (EXPOSED) 8MM—100 FEET. (10) PRACTICE PROJECT, SYSTEM/STRUCTURE: CONTEXT OF LEARNING HOW TO TYPE. (11) COMPOSITIONS FOR AUDIO STRUCTURE—A CODING SYSTEM FOR SOUND.
Sylvia Mangold
born 1938 in New York City

Floor Corner, 1969, 60"x46", Liquitex on canvas (photo)
Shaded Floor, 1970, 88"x42", Liquitex on canvas
Floor Without, 1970, 56"x44", Liquitex on canvas
Brenda Miller
born 1941

Homage to Constance-Marie Charpentier

FIRST FLOOR
7'3"

6'8" CLEARANCE
STAIRS ARE CLEAR

SECOND FLOOR AND LANDING
Mary Miss
born 1944

January 1971, 18'x16'x2', cardboard and paint
Dona Nelson
born 1947 in Grand Island, Nebraska

20 drawings, 1970-71, 9" x 12", ink and crayon
Louise Parks
born 1944

Three paintings
*Untitled*, 1970, 55”x54” (photo)
Shirley Pettibone
born 1936

1 - 1971, 21"x96", Acrylic on cotton
2 - 1971, 21"x96", Acrylic on cotton
3 - 1970, 10"x90", Acrylic on stuffed muslin
4 - 1970, 15"x88", Acrylic on stuffed muslin
5 - 1970, 2"x86", Acrylic on stuffed muslin
Howardana D. Pindell
born 1943 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
lives in New York

1 — Untitled, 1970-71, 139”x152”x3”, Synthetic polymer, polyurethane, canvas, enamel, graumets and rings
2 — Untitled, 1970, 72”x61½” (irreg.), Synthetic polymer paint on canvas
3 — Untitled, 1971, 72”x79¼” (irreg.), Synthetic polymer paint on canvas
Adrian Piper/born 9/20/48. Some ideas I’ve been working around: 1) I can no longer see discrete forms in art as viable reflections or expressions of what seems to be going on in this society. They refer back to conditions of separateness, order, exclusivity, and the stability of easily-accepted functional identities which no longer exist. For what a posteriori seems to be this reason, I’m interested in the elimination of the discrete form as art object (including communications media objects), with its isolated internal relationships and self-determining esthetic standards. I’ve been doing pieces the significance and experience of which is defined as completely as possible by the viewer’s reaction and interpretation. Ideally the work has no meaning or independent existence outside of its function as a medium of change; it exists only as a catalytic agent between myself and the viewer. E.g. Catalysis VIII, which is a recorded talk inducing hypnosis. 2) Making artificial and nonfunctional alterations in my own bodily presence of the same kind as those I formerly made on non-art materials. Here the entire art making process and end product has the immediacy of being in the same time and space continuum as the viewer. This process/product is in a sense internalized in me, since I exist simultaneously as the artist and the work. This is not to be confused with life as art or my personal identity and tastes as art. The artifice of the work temporarily replaces or supersedes those characteristics which define me as a private individual. I define the work as the viewer’s reaction to it: to me the strongest, most complex, and most interesting catalysis is the one that occurs in undefined and non-pragmatic human confrontation. The immediacy of a human presence as artwork/catalysis has greater impact; it confronts the viewer with a more powerful and more ambiguous situation than discrete forms or objects. E.g. Catalysis IX, in which I covered my face, neck and arms with feathers and attended the opening of the “Women Artists” show as an otherwise conservatively dressed spectator, and accompanied by a number of other people similarly altered. 3) Preserving the power and uncategorized nature of the confrontation. Not overtly defining myself to viewers as artwork by performing any unusual or theatrical actions of any kind. Actions tend to define the situation in terms of pre-established theatrical categories, e.g. “guerrilla theatre,” “street work,” etc. making viewer disorientation and catalysis more difficult. E.g. Catalysis V, in which I recorded loud belches made at five-minute intervals, then concealed the tape recorder on myself and replayed it at full volume while reading, doing research, and taking out some books and records at Donnell Library. For the same reason I don’t announce most of these works, since this immediately produces an audience vs. performer separation. 4) Art contexts (galleries, performances) are becoming untenable for me. They are being overwhelmed and infiltrated by pieces of other disintegrating structures; political, social, economic. They preserve the illusion of an identifiable, isolable situation, much as discrete forms do, and thus a prestandardized set of responses. Because of their established functional identities, they prepare the viewer to be catalyzed, thus making actual catalysis impossible. Alternate contexts I’ve been using: public transportation, parks, Macy’s, the Empire State Building Elevator, the Metropolitan Museum (as a spectator in Catalysis VII, in which I went to the “Before Cortez” show while chewing wads of bubble gum, blowing large bubbles, and allowing the gum to adhere to my face and clothes). The exceptions to this are where the pieces depend only on their diffuse and unobtrusive presences regardless of context. E.g. Catalysis VIII (see 1), above) at the “Women Artists” show. 5) Eliminating as many decision-making criteria as possible. This has a psychological function for me. It decreases the separation between original conception and the
Reeva Potoff
born 1941

Outcropping, 12'x15'x3'4", cardboard and polyurethane
Paula Tavins
born 1939

Androgyne, 1970, 20" x 3½" x 28" h.
Mercator’s Projection (3 modules), 1969, 12" x 1½" x 18" h.
Grey Inminence (5 modules), 1970, 30" x 3" x 14" h.
(photo)
Merrill Wagner
born 1935, Seattle, Washington

December, 1970, 96”x96”,
Liquitex on linen
Neti Art #1, 1970, 36”x72”, Liquitex on linen
Multi, 1971, 72”x72”,
Liquitex on linen
Grace Bakst Wapner
born 1934

16 lbs., 1967, 41"x44",
urethane painted with acrylic

Plastic Landscape, 1971,
48½"x28½"x20⅓" h.,
urethane painted with acrylic and plexiglass

10 lbs., 1970, 42⅝"h.x
19¾"x16½"
Jacqueline Winsor
born 1941

untitled, 4'x4'x4", wood and nails (photo)
brick dome, 50"x50"x28", brick and cement
nail piece, 7"x7"x7", wood and nails
Barbara Zucker
born 1940

Three part piece, 1970, 13'5'' x 14' x 9'6'', Natural rubber latex (color added) (photo)
Floating forms, 1970, Natural rubber latex
Size of piece varies in accordance with size of wall
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The Aldrich Museum is located in a post-revolutionary mansion built in 1783 by King and Dole, two lieutenants in the Revolutionary War. It is nicknamed "Old Hundred" because for 100 years (1783-1883), it was a grocery and hardware store, serving the townspeople as a meetingplace in the evenings. In 1883, Grace King Ingersoll, a descendent of Lt. King, remodeled the building for her home. In 1929 it became the First Church of Christ, Scientist. In 1964 it was completely renovated by Mr. and Mrs. Larry Aldrich to provide a country museum of contemporary art and to house the Aldrich Collection. The historical exterior of the old landmark was preserved. Since then, four exhibitions have been held each year.

Seminars in contemporary art are held throughout the year. Guided tours through the galleries are conducted on Saturdays at 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. and by appointment for schools and groups. The contemporary art reference library is open on Wednesday through Friday from 1 to 4 p.m. and during regular museum hours on Saturday and Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m. $100 memberships are available under the Friends of the Aldrich Museum. Activities for the Friends include special preview openings with the artists, admission passes, free catalogues, admission to special symposia and events. Membership forms are available at the museum.