

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Betty Dodson

(American, b. 1929)

Friends, from S.M.S. No. 6, 1968
Offset lithograph and cellophane, 8 x 5 ³/₈"
University purchase, 1990

Jeanne Dunning

(American, b. 1960)

Study for The Extra Nipple, 1994
Cibachrome, 21 x 15 ¹/₄ x 1 ¹/₂" (framed)
Gift of Peter Norton, 2015

Valie Export

(Austrian, b. 1942)

Touch Cinema, 1968
Black-and-white video with sound,
transferred to DVD, 1:08 min.
University purchase with funds from
Samuel Kootz Gallery, by exchange, 2014

Gran Fury

(American artist collective, active
c. 1987–1995)

*Kissing Doesn't Kill: Greed and
Indifference Do*, 1989
Bus poster mounted on aluminum,
32 ¹/₁₆ x 116 ¹/₁₆ x 2"
Gift of Betsy Millard in memory of Earl
Millard, 2004

Jenny Holzer

(American, b. 1950)

*Untitled (Expiring for Love Is Beautiful
but Stupid)*, 1983–85

*Untitled (In a Dream You Saw a Way
to Survive and You Were Full of Joy)*,
1983–85

*Untitled (Men Don't Protect You
Anymore)*, 1983–85

*Untitled (Protect Me from What I
Want)*, 1983–85

Packaged latex condoms with printed text;
2 ³/₈ x 2 ¹/₄", 2 ¹/₈ x 2 ¹/₈", 2 ¹/₈ x 4 ¹/₄", and
2 ³/₈ x 2 ¹/₄"
Anonymous gifts, 2001

Barbara Kruger

(American, b. 1945)

Girl, Don't Die for Love, 1992
Offset lithograph, 11 x 8 ¹/₂"
Gift of Visual AIDS, 2004

Lauren Lesko

(American)

Fur Muff, 1993
Monkey-fur muff and porcelain saucer
with cream; muff 17 x 11 x 9" (approx.),
saucer 7 ¹/₂" diameter
Gift of Peter Norton, 2015

Roy Lichtenstein

(American, 1923–1997)

Crying Girl, 1963
Offset lithograph, 192/300, 18 x 24"
Gift of Mrs. Joseph L. Tucker, 1965

Hung Liu

(Chinese, b. 1948)

Trademark, 1992
Photolithograph with collage, 7/16,
22 ¹/₂ x 33"
Gift of Island Press (formerly the
Washington University School of Art
Collaborative Print Workshop), 1993

Howardena Pindell

(American, b. 1943)

Free, White and 21, 1980
Color video with sound, transferred to
DVD, 12:15 min.
University purchase, Bixby Fund, 2012

Adrian Piper

(American, b. 1948)

Let's Talk, from the portfolio *10: Artist
as Catalyst*, 1992

Screen print, 53/100, 26 x 26"
University purchase, 1994

Mel Ramos

(American, b. 1935)

Candy, from S.M.S. No. 5, 1968
Photolithograph, 10 ⁷/₈ x 13 ⁷/₈"
University purchase, 1990

Martha Rosler

(American, b. 1943)

Semiotics of the Kitchen, 1975
Black-and-white video with sound,
transferred to DVD, 6:09 min.
University purchase, Bixby Fund, 2013

Kara Walker

(American, b. 1969)

The Bush, Skinny, De-boning, from
Edition No. 19, 2002
Painted stainless steel in 3 parts, 29/100;
5 ³/₄ x 5 ¹/₂ x 3 ³/₄", 4 ¹/₂ x 4 ¹/₈ x 3 ³/₄", and 5 ³/₄
x 6 x 3 ³/₄"
Gift of Peter Norton, 2015

Andy Warhol

(American, 1928–1987)

Miguel Berrocal, 1971
Ladies and Gentlemen (Broadway),
1974

Nude Model (Male), 1977

Frau Buch, 1980

Maria Shriver, 1986

Polaroids, 4 ¹/₄ x 3 ³/₈" each
Gifts of The Andy Warhol Foundation for
the Visual Arts Inc., 2008

Hannah Wilke

(American, 1940–1993)

Gestures, 1974

Black-and-white video with sound,
transferred to DVD, 35:30 min.
University Purchase, Bixby Fund, 2016

TEACHING GALLERY

Fall 2017

Reframing Feminism: Visualizing Women, Gender & Sexuality

The question "Why have there been no great women artists?" is simply the top tenth of an iceberg of misinterpretation and misconception.... While the "woman problem" as such may be a pseudo-issue, the misconceptions involved in the question... point to major areas of intellectual obfuscation beyond the specific political and ideological issues involved in the subjection of women. Basic to the question are many naive, distorted, uncritical assumptions about the making of art in general, as well as the making of great art.

– Linda Nochlin, 1971

Reframing the art historian Linda Nochlin's pioneering question to think not only about women artists but about art engaging with feminist philosophies, this Teaching Gallery exhibition considers the role art plays in the development of feminist activism. Specifically, *Reframing Feminism: Visualizing Women, Gender & Sexuality* pulls together a selection of artworks from the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum's permanent collection to consider how women's bodies, sexuality, and feminist activism have been central themes for artists in the United States and beyond. What characterizes a feminist art practice, and how does it relate to social movement activism? Some artists, such as Valie Export,

Barbara Kruger, Martha Rosler, and Hannah Wilke, are explicitly committed to feminist practice, while others, such as Gran Fury and Andy Warhol, are less overtly feminist yet also offer important interventions against sexism and heteropatriarchy.

The term *feminist art* is most often used as a rubric for discussing art made by women, and by some men, that is consciously aligned with the politics of the women's rights movement and feminist theory as they emerged in the "second wave" of feminism in the late 1960s through the early 1980s. Therefore, at issue are both the political and conceptual involvement of the artist

This Teaching Gallery exhibition—on view September 8, 2017, to January 8, 2018—is curated by Trevor Joy Sangrey, lecturer in the Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and assistant dean in the College of Arts & Sciences, in conjunction with the course "Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies," offered in fall 2017.

and the core ideas and ideals of this period of social, cultural, and political activism. Rather than focusing explicitly on what is and what isn't feminist art, this exhibition brings together a variety of artworks to consider central themes of, as well as continuities and discontinuities in, feminist struggle. Indeed, the prints, photographs, videos, and mixed-media works collected here engage many of the key topics discussed in the course related to this exhibition, including the history of US women's movements, global feminisms, masculinity, sexuality, racialization, and intersectionality.

Bodies

The selected works invite viewers to reflect on what images of women and women's bodies they expect to see, and are comfortable seeing, both in art and in public spaces. Many artworks trouble the archetype of the naked woman's body and critique common art practices of presenting women through the male gaze, or as beautiful objects to be looked at, often using such techniques as abstraction and defamiliarization. **Lauren Lesko's** *Fur Muff* (1993) sits politely, taking a traditional accessory of upper-class femininity and making it a playful sexual pun of the cat lapping up cream. **Hannah Wilke** pulls her face toward the grotesque in *Gestures* (1974), and **Jeanne Dunning's** study for *The Extra Nipple* (1994) imagines reconfiguring the body in ways that muddle pleasure and utility, rendering the body strange and unfamiliar. As a counterpoint, **Roy Lichtenstein's** *Crying Girl* (1963) and **Mel Ramos's** *Candy* (1968) are two Pop art engagements that make looking at women's bodies easy by presenting them in ways that are familiar, comfortable, and knowable to the viewer.

Valie Export's performance *Touch Cinema* (1968) confronts both the objectification and commodification of women's bodies by inviting the public to engage (literally) with a real woman's body rather than with images on a canvas or a screen. Part a retort to rampant consumerism and part a response to the 1960s male-dominated art movement Viennese Actionism, Export performed this work in ten cities across Europe. In each performance she would build a "movie theater" around her naked chest and invite people on the street to "visit the cinema" by reaching inside the box and touching her body. **Hung Liu**, a Chinese-born artist whose work builds on her experience navigating Mao Tse-tung's Cultural Revolution, collages an old photograph of Chinese prostitutes in her *Trademark* (1992) to comment on women's images and consumption. These and other works illustrate how

traditional assumptions about the meaning of women's bodies change when decontextualized by feminist and feminist-influenced artists.

Sexuality

Concerns with sexuality, sexual propriety, and activism to expand cultural conversations on sex and sexual health undergird many of the works on view, echoing the feminist theorist Gayle Rubin's remark that "sex is always political." In particular, sex and sexuality galvanized sharp discussions and renunciations on all sides of the so-called feminist sex wars, the heated disagreements within feminist circles about pornography, sexuality, trans issues, and prostitution. In this vein, **Betty Dodson's** explicit print *Friends* (1968) pushes the viewer to consider sex outside of partnered relationships, while its evocative cellophane cover resonates with **Jenny Holzer's** collection of condoms (1983–85). The condoms, culturally associated with loose sexual morals, have wrappers printed with expressions ranging from potential disdain (*Men Don't Protect You Anymore*) to love (*Expiring for Love Is Beautiful but Stupid*), and aim to shift the debate around proper sexual behavior by evoking the theme of commitment rather than penetration.

Students and viewers are encouraged to extrapolate and examine similar links between works, such as **Gran Fury's** *Kissing Doesn't Kill: Greed and Indifference Do* (1989) and **Barbara Kruger's** *Girl, Don't Die for Love* (1992), both of which, like Holzer's condoms, engage public spaces and social movements around sexuality. Gran Fury, the artist collective that grew out of AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), used this poster, displayed on the side of a bus in New York City, to explicitly critique government policies, or lack thereof, around HIV and AIDS. Similarly, Kruger adopted the style of a broadside for her poster that was designed to be easily reproducible for circulation by artists, activists, and others.

The range of works referencing or implying the cultural battles around HIV and AIDS, which burned hottest in the late 1980s through the mid-1990s, reflect the longstanding relationship between art and activism. Many of these artists, like Grand Fury and Barbara Kruger, are overtly political, engaging the public through both the form and the content of their art. Such a public exposure of sex and sexuality recalls Gayle Rubin's important essay "Thinking Sex," which critiques the cultural value system that ascribes particular meanings to sex and reminds readers of the context of the early AIDS movement.

Intersectionality

Issues of race, identity politics, and white supremacy took center stage in the feminist debates in the late 1970s and early 1980s and continue to offer important insights for feminist activists and artists. **Howardena Pindell's** and **Kara Walker's** works speak to the long history of the struggle against racism in the United States. Walker's *The Bush, Skinny, De-boning* (2002), as in much of the artist's other work, focuses on the history of American slavery and the attendant gender and sexual violence on which that "peculiar institution" thrived. Her visual engagement with violence and race is echoed in Pindell's video work, as both pieces force the viewer to grapple with history of slavery and a lack of reparations that is often publically ignored or misrepresented. Pindell, who was twenty-one years old when the Civil Rights Act passed in 1964, reflects on both the second wave of the women's movement and the civil rights and black power movements in her video *Free, White and 21* (1980). In this searing work Pindell plays both herself and a rude, inconsiderate white woman from midcentury reflecting on race; the performance demonstrates various privileges white people, particularly white women, gain from white supremacy. It also provides an important counterweight to Peggy McIntosh's canonized text "White Privilege and Male Privilege" by offering insight into the impact of structural racism while recentering the discussion on the experiences of people of color. Students and viewers might find fruitful a cross-reading of Pindell's video with either the almost-contemporary Combahee River Collective Statement (1977) or bell hooks's "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory" (1984), both of which contextualize criticism of white-centered feminism and the burgeoning black feminist critique.

Adrian Piper's evocative *Let's Talk* (1992) comes from her *Mythic Being* performance project, begun in 1973, in which she transforms herself into a racialized, masculine character by donning an Afro wig, mustache, and sunglasses and exhibiting conventionally masculine behavior. In *Let's Talk* we see the artist, a light-skinned, mixed-race woman, as the "mythic being," looking away from the viewer with knees apart. Piper's piece challenges ideas of what constitutes a proper racialized gender performance, exploring how masculinity is made and remade through what Jackson Katz calls the "tough guise" in his documentary of the same name.

Andy Warhol's presentation of masculinity is more subtle, though not less fleshly. In his photographs on

view from the 1970s and 1980s, a subset of a larger collection held by the Kemper Art Museum, Warhol lingers on gender expression and representation, frequently photographing men as active and women as static. Warhol also inverts the typical portrayal of the nude, capturing parts of male bodies for the viewer and challenging expected heterosexual viewing patterns. In *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975) **Martha Rosler** plays an apron-clad housewife reciting the inventory of her kitchen, a parody of stereotypical female domesticity. Exploring the formative link between identity and representation, these works further reflect on the malleable and unstable nature of identities and the social structures within which they develop.

The works in this gallery can be explored through some of the themes suggested above, or by geographic location of the artist, or chronologically in relation to unfolding histories. One could trace, for example, the development of women's and feminist activism from the 1960s into the early 1990s. However viewed, the artworks prompt us to reconsider many of the familiar tenets of feminism and ponder just what makes a feminist art practice, who makes feminist art, and what role art plays for and within feminist movements.

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