More Than Minimal:

Feminism and Abstraction in the '70s

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Feminism and Abstraction in the '70s

April 21-June 30, 1996

19th Annual
Patrons and Friends
Exhibition

Rose Art Museum

Brandeis University

Waltham
Massachusetts

Lynda Benglis

Jackie Ferrara

Nancy Graves

Eva Hesse

Ana Mendieta

Mary Miss

Ree Morton

Michelle Stuart

Dorothea Rockburne

Hannah Wilke

Jackie Winsor

Organized and
edited by
Susan L. Stoops

With contributions
by
Whitney Chadwick,
Kate Linker,
Lucy Lippard,
and
Anne M. Wagner

This exhibition and publication have been supported by The Charles Engelhard Foundation; Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles; The Henry Luce Foundation, Inc., and National Endowment for the Arts.

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Library of Congress
Catalog Card Number
96-67664

Office of Publications

K127/2.5M

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Foreword

I wish to express my gratitude and admiration for the job that curator Susan Stoops has done in assembling *More Than Minimal: Feminism and Abstraction in the '70s*, which I consider one of the most important exhibitions that the Rose Art Museum has presented in the more than 20 years that I have been its director. In saying this, I am referring to the range and depth of its exploration of a truly revolutionary aspect of the decade in question, a range and depth that are embodied in the high significance of the artists and objects that constitute the exhibition and the insightful essays of the writers who have contributed to this catalog. Through our exhibitions, publications, and related educational programs, we at the museum invariably seek to expand understanding of the art of our time, and we pride ourselves on our record of achievement in this regard. In this instance, however, I feel that that record has been markedly extended by the very scope and ambition of *More Than Minimal*. Feminism and abstraction, along with the aesthetic, social, political, psychological, and philosophical concerns that attend them, represent deeply complex, intimately bound, and highly volatile issues that bear equally on past and present, on the systems within which art is produced and brought before its public, on the significances of gender we regularly encounter and together learn from, on the very nature of contemporary artistic expression and the culture it reflects. Like many other exhibitions we have presented, it first of all offers arresting visual experiences; equally, and beyond, it invites nothing less than ongoing dialogue about ourselves. Because it provides the opportunity to engage such art and discourse, I think *More Than Minimal* is a remarkable exhibition.

My gratitude and admiration go further and attach to the fact that six of the objects in *More Than Minimal*—by Jackie Ferrara, Ana Mendieta, Mary Miss, Michelle Stuart, Hannah Wilke, and Jackie Winsor—are drawn from the permanent collection of the Rose Art Museum. In this, too, I take institutional pride, insofar as our commitment to support the art of our time entails acquiring art as well as exhibiting it, our wish being that the two activities will grow in tandem and reflect positively on one another into the museum's future, thereby enabling us to continue to describe our contemporary collections as the most comprehensive in the New England region. In recent years our commitment has been largely focused on women artists whose aesthetic and historical significance is, for us, beyond question but who in our thinking remain under-appreciated among collecting institutions generally. Susan has been instrumental in guiding and articulating that thinking and in bringing these important objects to our attention. All of us who are associated with the Rose Art Museum are accordingly indebted to her.

Carl Belz
Henry and Lois Foster Director

Acknowledgments

Although plans for this exhibition began over two years ago (coincidentally, its gestation began right around the birth of my son, Marlon), my personal investment in the artists and issues explored in *More Than Minimal* dates back to my graduate studies at the University of Massachusetts in the late seventies and a particularly meaningful course offered by Professor Anne Mochon on contemporary women artists. At the time, her course was not only an opportunity to learn about recent art and ideas, but it was the only formal situation in which issues of *both* aesthetics and gender were given serious consideration. Lucy Lippard's recently published *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* and occasional articles in the art press were our "text books," while Mochon acted as pioneer/critic/feminist/mentor. Each session ended with a room full of female students eagerly awaiting the next week's meeting; we couldn't get enough.

It's 1996, and some things have changed....During the past several years, the Rose Art Museum has acknowledged the individual contributions of many of the artists in this exhibition by hosting major exhibitions in their honor or acquiring works for the permanent collection. *More Than Minimal* has evolved from thesis to reality, and in the process has become an exemplary collaborative effort to document the collective achievements of this generation of artists and to make available this unprecedented assemblage of seminal works from the seventies for a new generation to experience firsthand. It is with genuine appreciation and respect that I thank all the numerous individuals, institutions, and organizations responsible for this celebratory occasion.

To the artists Lynda Benglis, Jackie Ferrara, Mary Miss, Dorothea Rockburne, Michelle Stuart, and Jackie Winsor, who shared their time and personal reflections with me I am deeply honored and grateful.

On behalf of all those associated with this project and the Rose Art Museum, I wish to acknowledge the generous financial support from the Charles Engelhard Foundation; The Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles; the Henry Luce Foundation; and the National Endowment for the Arts—whose demonstrated commitment to support challenging contemporary art has made this exhibition and publication possible.

To the lenders to the exhibition who have agreed to part temporarily with such meaningful works from their collections, I am most grateful for their personal and institutional participation in this project.

It is with great respect and appreciation that I acknowledge the contributions of my colleagues and guest essayists Whitney Chadwick, Kate Linker, Lucy Lippard, and Anne M. Wagner.

I am indebted to the artists' gallery representatives for their generous support and thorough assistance with numerous details: Paula Cooper Gallery, especially former director Julie Graham and Natasha Sigmund; Michael Klein, Inc.; Robert Miller Gallery, especially archivist Diana Bulman; Galerie Lelong, in particular Mary Sabbatino and Christine De Metrius; Ted Bonin and Caroline Alexander of Alexander and Bonin; and Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, especially Marc Nochella and Amanda Smith.

For their kind assistance with the exhibition, I wish to thank the artists' assistants David Bowers, Sarita Dubin, Christine Perrotta, and Janie Samuels, and the expert assistance of the following individuals: Harry Bartlett, Christine Berry, John Caswell, Donald Goddard, Sondra Goldman, Elizabeth Jaff, Ingrid Jenkner, Vera Lemecha, Lisa Lyons, Barry Rosen, Terry Segal, Camellia and David Sullivan, Howard Wasserman.

In the Brandeis community, I wish to thank my colleagues in the University's Library, especially Mary Moynihan and the efforts of the interlibrary loan department; publicist Barbara Blumenthal; and the Office of Grants and Contracts. Production of this publication was expertly coordinated and sensitively designed by our friends and colleagues in the Office of Publications. To the entire staff, in particular Clifford Hauptman, Charles Dunham, and Audrey Griffin, for their uncompromising efforts on behalf of the project, I extend my warmest congratulations and thanks.

I wish also to acknowledge the ongoing support and participation of the members of the Rose Art Museum Board of Overseers, in particular Jill Starr, chair, the museum's Patrons and Friends membership, and Patrons and Friends Chair, Lois Foster, whose unequaled passion for and patronage of contemporary art are a constant source of personal inspiration.

Thanks and congratulations also are shared with my friends and colleagues at the museum—Carl Belz, Roger Kizik, John Rexine, Corinne Zimmermann, Leah Schroder, and Julie Samach—whose individual contributions are evident in *each* and *every* aspect of this project. I am particularly grateful to Corinne for sharing her expertise (and personal library) in recent feminist theory and for her participation as coordinator of the adjunct film and video program. To Leah, for her untiring optimism and attention to far too many details over the past year, I extend my most heartfelt thanks.

Finally, for understanding that time given to this project necessarily meant time away from you, I dedicate this publication to my son, Marlon, and his father, Jim.

Susan L. Stoops

More Than Minimal: Feminism and Abstraction in the '70s

An Introduction

Susan L. Stoops

"It is impossible to define *a feminine practice...and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice will never be theorized, enclosed, encoded—which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist."* Helene Cixous[1]

Looking back, the early seventies signified not only a watershed for the American feminist movement but also a shifting of sensibilities within the dominant abstract aesthetic of the art world. No mere coincidence, but what was the cultural fallout from the convergence of these two apparently disparate forces? By considering that question, *More Than Minimal: Feminism and Abstraction in the '70s* raises a number of challenging propositions about the relationships between politics and culture, gender and subjectivity, authority and language. At the same time, a close look at the relations between feminism and abstraction also leads us to a reappraisal of the collective impact on contemporary American art of a generation of women artists working circa 1970.

While most studies of women's art of the seventies have been devoted primarily to the overtly figurative and polemic works of the period, and most considerations of abstraction have avoided the issue of gender, *More Than Minimal* brings together formative works by 11 women who are part of a generation of artists whose visual sensibilities were strongly shaped by the abstract aesthetics of minimalism during the sixties and whose lives and art were empowered by feminist principles.[2] Uncompromising individuals, Lynda Benglis, Jackie Ferrara, Nancy Graves, Eva Hesse, Ana Mendieta, Mary Miss, Ree Morton, Michelle Stuart, Dorothea Rockburne, Hannah Wilke, and Jackie Winsor legitimized the role of female subjectivity in a fundamentally abstract aesthetic. Collectively they not only extended many boundaries between the traditional genres of sculpture, painting, and drawing, but also conceived an alternative to minimalism's monolithic voice, making concrete the possibility of formally challenging yet profoundly human art.[3]

Like many of their postminimal artist-peers in the late sixties and early seventies, who rejected the austere, domineering presence and industrial fabrication characteristic of minimalist sculpture, the artists included in *More Than Minimal*, while retaining a minimalist emphasis on relatively elemental forms, schematic compositions, and formal repetition and restraint, turned toward human experiences (sometimes their own) and natural occurrences, and gravitated toward unpretentious, oftentimes raw materials and visibly direct, hands-on methods. Ferrara's cut and stacked fir, Hesse's latex-covered spheres, Mendieta's blood-stained drawings, Stuart's earth-impregnated scrolls, Wilke's kneaded erasers, and Winsor's lath cube, expose an array of emotive associations concerning an individual's relation to the external world and imbue the matter-of-fact vocabulary and "pure" materiality of minimalism with the richness and urgency of human sensuality, volatility, and humor. In an unprecedented range of media and formats—from Graves's constructed fossils to Benglis's anthropomorphic knots, Miss's fenced boundaries, Morton's diaristic installations, and Rockburne's marriage of geometry and crude oil—these women pioneered new ways of seeing, thinking, and participating, especially ways to acknowledge and incorporate material based on human and physical relationships. The works selected for *More Than Minimal* are neither explicit in conventional narrative imagery nor autonomous, self-contained forms, but rather consciously allusive objects that expose the creative participation of their makers as well as provoke an active conceptual, psychological, and physical engagement with their viewers.

It is a distinguishing mark of this generation of artists that much of their work has come into existence through their acknowledgment and acceptance of the role of female subjectivity. According to feminist theorist Teresa de Lauretis, subjectivity is constructed through a continuous

process of renewal based on an interaction with the world, in other words, experience. Subjectivity "is produced not by external ideas, values, or material causes, but by one's personal, subjective engagement in the practices, discourses, and institutions that lend significance (value, meaning, and affect) to the events of the world."[4] While not ideologically driven, each of the artists represented in *More Than Minimal* has produced a body of work that has absorbed the cumulative effects of her gendered "engagement" with the practices and issues of a post-war America.

In order to fully appreciate the achievements and practices of this generation as "more," we must first consider how the cultural position of "woman" shaped the experiences which they lived and from which they worked as individual artists and second, recognize how their art articulates a "both/and" discourse—that is, *both* a feminist rejection of the exclusive ethos of minimalism *and* an affirmation of the human relatedness of an abstract aesthetic.[5] As we consider their embrace of abstraction as a representation of female subjectivity, we must also refer to the contexts of "minimalism" and "feminism" as historical experiences rather than stylistic categories.

Difference, Multiplicity, and the Feminist Movement

"Differentiation is not distinctness and separateness, but a particular way of being connected to others." Nancy Chodorow [6]

For the generation of women who came of age in post-war America, feminism legitimized the experience of growing up female. Historically, the unprecedented inclusion of female artists' voices circa 1970 coincided with an American feminist movement whose demands for equity quickly spread beyond the political arena into the culture at large, calling for nothing less than the recognition of female constructs of experience as multiple, necessary, and productive positions in both the private and public realms. Emerging in the aftermath of the civil rights and anti-war movements of the sixties, the feminist movement inherited a sweeping critique of American society and the challenge of dismantling the dominant self-image—white and male. Rather than defining the "feminine" as a fixed position in opposition to the "masculine" or identifying its value with one attribute over another, feminist practice over the past two decades has encouraged a heightened cultural sensitivity to difference, not only in terms of gender but also race, class, and age. By "reclaiming" difference as a position of empowerment, feminist thought has inspired a reformulated vision of personhood with the possibility of incorporating into the paradox of self and other a fundamental sense of human connectedness.

" Her language does not contain, it carries; it does not hold back, it makes possible." Helene Cixous [7]

Like the female subject referred to in the title of Yvonne Rainer's landmark work, *Film About a Woman Who...* (1974), the works in *More Than Minimal* re-elaborate for viewers today a female identity that is multiple and "in process" and represent a thinking and feeling social subject who, before the seventies and the feminist movement, was all but unrepresentable. Historically, notions of intelligence not only have been gendered but have discounted the possibility that knowledge sources are multiple and include the body, emotions, desires, memories.[8] Similarly in art and art critical practices, there is a history of denying that the language of abstraction can articulate multiple subjective discourses. Although thus far it has seemed either too problematic for critical consideration or outside the "official" feminist program, the co-mingling of feminism and abstraction suggests otherwise. As the works in *More Than Minimal* and the artist's multidisciplined practices demonstrate, there is another paradigm.

"What would history be like if it were seen through the eyes of women and ordered by values they define?" Gerda Lerner [9]

It was no coincidence that the redefinition in American ideology circa 1970 also heralded the beginning of a feminist revision in both the practice and theory of the visual arts.[10] The decade of the seventies saw the injection of a feminist consciousness that sparked a sweeping reorientation by women involved in the arts and exceptional publications, which spread the word, challenged the official dogma, and analyzed the relation between women's practices and the dominant discourse: Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists" and Elizabeth Baker, "Sexual Art-Politics" (*ARTnews*, January 1971); Carol Duncan, "When Greatness is a Box of Wheaties," (*Artforum*, October 1975); Cindy Nemser, *Art Talk: Conversations with Twelve Women Artists* (1975); Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower* (1977); *Feminist Art Journal* (1972-77); and *Heresies: A Feminist Publication of Art and Politics* (1977-present), among numerous others here and abroad.[11] In retrospect, if there is one individual whose feminist activities as writer, curator, and political activist most shaped the cultural discourse and practices of the decade it was Lucy Lippard, from her early identification of "anti-form" tendencies in the exhibition *Eccentric Abstraction* (1966) to *Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists* (1971), one of the first exhibitions predicated on the gender of

the artists, to her widely read anthology, *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (1976), which charted her critical shift from a formally directed discourse on minimal and conceptual art to an embrace of feminist principles and a profiling of women artists' achievements. (Her reflections on the decade appear in an interview in this publication.) The seventies would mark the first occasion on which the cultural response of the acknowledged avant-garde included the collective voice of a generation of women artists. What followed was a period of unprecedented representations of female subjectivity visible across the country in exhibitions, videos, films, and performances—and with it, the gradual demise of the aesthetic canon of modernism.[12]

"Feminism's greatest contribution to the future of art has probably been precisely its lack of contribution to modernism." Lucy Lippard[13]

This generation's approaches to abstraction, though not direct critiques of modernism, resulted in a broad revision of a language that, until the seventies had been male-dominated but was never assumed by these particular women to be gender-exclusive.[14] The postmodern abstract practices and conceptual postures, which unfolded and inevitably overlapped with feminism, were variously referred to in the critical literature of the late sixties and early seventies as "process" (Robert Morris), "anti-form" (Lucy Lippard), and "postminimal" (Robert Pincus-Witten)—designations intended to identify types and measure degrees of revisions to the parent aesthetic of minimalism. Pincus-Witten's journalistic term "postminimal" seemed to work for many as a descriptive umbrella for the pluralist activities in the abstract camps during the late sixties and early seventies and the emerging emphasis on human experience and meaning over form and style. His early acknowledgment of the impact of the woman's movement on the emerging aesthetic was one of the few analyses of abstraction during the period to consider the role of gender. "The new style's relationship to the women's movement cannot be overly stressed; many of its formal attitudes and properties, not to mention its exemplars, derive from methods and substances that hitherto had been sexistically tagged as female or feminine, whether or not the work had been made by women."[15]

Feminist art historian Amelia Jones suggests that modernism's "refusal of pleasure," epitomized by minimalism, "intersects with the denial of female agency" and has had the disempowering effect of ignoring the "possibility of desiring female viewers and makers of art."[16] But this generation of women's claims to abstraction may best counter what Laura Mulvey identified as the historical position of woman "as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning."[17] Their work also may pose the ultimate threat to a patriarchically driven art system, as these women have persisted to revise the shape and meaning of the dominant visual language of 20th-century art (abstraction) rather than locating their discourse outside the mainstream, despite being dismissed, as Jones has pointed out, by a generation of post-modernists and feminists as not being "anti-modern enough."[18] As several of the artists whose relations to abstraction intersect with their interests in mathematics, logic, architecture, or science can attest: "art that is both sensual and conceptual, both corporeal and theoretical... is disallowed."[19] Gisela Brietling has written, "Competence and expert knowledge have all too often been rejected as 'masculine and achievement oriented.' Carelessness or inelegance could therefore be regarded as 'open,' 'non-structured,' 'subjective and spontaneous' stylistic means; efficient professionality and intellectual edge—aspects of articulation and self-representation which have anyway hardly ever been permitted to women—have also had to suffer the feminists' reproach of 'unfemininity.'"[20]

The collective of women represented in *More Than Minimal* was emphatically against any assumptions about how and what their art should

be, including the notion that abstraction (a language frequently and mistakenly "coded as not life, as art") was incapable of functioning as a discourse that represents lived experience as female.[21] Rather, they found in post-war abstraction, a male-dominated, underdeveloped language that had not been explored fully in this century and culture (as compared to other histories and cultures studied and experienced through many of these artists' extensive travels) as a fundamentally human and therefore social practice.[22] de Lauretis argues that there is a "direct relation, however complex it may be, between sociality and subjectivity" and that the "relation of experience to discourse, finally, is what is at issue in the definition of feminism."[23] As articulated by these women and with its basis in their lives, abstraction necessarily came to mean not merely "post" but "more."

Nowhere is this distinction more visible than in the fusion of abstract form and cultural meaning found in the works included in *More Than Minimal*: environmental flows of polyurethane foam (Benglis), pyramids of cardboard covered with cotton batting (Ferrara), fabricated fossils (Graves), collectives of humble spheres and rectangles (Hesse), a silhouette of burning candles (Mendieta), an expanse of stakes and rails (Miss), playful hybrids of drawing, wood, and hardware (Morton), "self-generating" carbon paper drawings (Rockburne), archaeological stacks of rubbed earth (Stuart), erotic grids of kneaded erasers (Wilke), a sculptural grid of stacked plywood (Winsor). As they make extremely clear, it is not a question of should but *how* women work with abstraction and what is signified when a particular system, process, or material is employed.

"The Body, and its language, which is of course, all language.... But that male body, how IT dominates the culture, the environment, the language. Since 3000 B.C. in Sumeria, Tiamat's monsters again and again, and every myth an effort to keep the sun rising. Save the sun...will it rise again will it will it rise again? The language of criticism: 'lean, dry, terse, powerful, strong, spare, linear, focused, explosive'—god forbid it should be 'limp'!! But—'soft, moist, blurred, padded, irregular, going around in circles,' and other descriptions of our *bodies—the very* abyss *of aesthetic judgment, danger, the wasteland for artists! That limp dick—an entire civilization based on it, help the sun rise, watch out for the dark underground, focus focus focus, keep it high, let it soar, let it transcend, let it aspire to Godhead————"* Frances Jaffer [24]

In the visual arts, post-war modernism perpetuated an exclusive, phallocentric value system that confused power with quality, abstraction with idealism, and the role of the artist with that of the hero. With its emphasis on "pure" abstraction, its claims of universality and objectivity, and general disinterest in the cultural contexts in which art is conceived, produced, and received, modernist art reached a momentary state of consummation with orthodox minimalism during the sixties and archetypal objects such as Carl Andre's alignments of bricks, Donald Judd's rows of Plexiglas boxes, Sol LeWitt's logical permutations of the cube, Robert Morris's sectional polyhedrons, and Tony Smith's black "box."[25]

However alienating and authoritarian much minimalist art and rhetoric remains to the uninitiated, the aesthetic can be credited with a somewhat ironic but nonetheless important return of human experiential content within an abstract format, insofar as minimalist sculpture (and the critical discourse surrounding it) initiated a shift of content away from the exclusive domain of the object toward the physical body of the viewer.[26] As Michael Fried observed about the new aesthetic in 1967, "the experience of literalist art is of an object *in a situation*—one that, virtually by definition, *includes the beholder*."[27] Minimalist sculpture would serve as visual confirmation for the theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, which proclaimed the body as "the condition necessary for perceptual experience."[28] But minimalism's acknowledgment of the embodied "viewer" was not so much an invitation to either you or me as it was a directive that allowed for a one-way relationship with a clear set of contingencies attached; in other words, the minimalist aesthetic intended a denial of subjectivity.

"The better new work takes relationships out of the work and makes them a function of space, light, and the viewer's field of vision. The object is but one of the terms in the newer aesthetic. It is in some way more reflexive because one's awareness of oneself existing in the same space as the work is stronger than in previous work, with its many internal relationships. One is more aware than before that he himself is establishing relationships as he apprehends the object from various positions and under varying conditions of light and spatial context. Every internal relationship, whether it be set up by a structural division, a rich surface, or what have you, reduces the public, external quality of the object and tends to eliminate the viewer to the degree that these details pull him into an intimate relation with the work and out of the space in which the object exists." Robert Morris [29]

In her important essay, "Sense and Sensibility, Reflections on Post '60s Sculpture" (1973), Rosalind Krauss proposed a phenomenological reading of late sixties and early seventies abstraction not limited to the ideology of form but directed towards a model of meaning which she identified as the "externality of language" and thus an identification of the self "in contact with the space of the world."[30] Like the nature of meaning, the status of the subject in minimalist art was, according to Krauss, also conceived as "public" and produced in experience in the world. While Krauss courted a sensibility for abstraction that functions in the space of a lived (unfixed) present, she nonetheless stopped short of acknowledging the social implications of the designation "public" and the complexities of the subject/viewer relation

(that is, minimalism's intended denial of the subjectivity of the viewer), and considering the contextual role of gender as a "particularity" of experience.

In the wake of feminism, postmodern issues of authorship and gender entered the critical discourse. In "The Crux of Minimalism" (1986), a revisionist analysis of minimalism's break with modernist practice and rereading of some of its most important texts, Hal Foster raises critical questions regarding the minimalist theoretical positions toward the "body" and subjectivity of the viewer.[31] Foster understands Morris's "Notes on Sculpture" to be an important yet contradictory text in which "a new space of 'object/subject terms' opens up. The minimalist suppression of the anthropomorphic is more than a reaction against abstract expressionism; it is a 'death of the author' (as Roland Barthes would call it two years later) that is at the same time a birth of the reader." But, as Foster correctly notes, "the minimalist delineation of perception is said to be 'preobjective,' which is to suggest that perception is somehow before or outside history, language, sexuality, power—that the perceiver is not a sexed body..."[32]

One of the few recent texts to address minimalist art in terms of gendered subjectivity is Anna Chave's "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power" (1990).[33] She decodes dominant icons in terms of minimalism's masked subjectivity and the artist's intended effect of "denying the art's identity as a private statement" where an embodied who speaks to an embodied whom. Chave argues that Morris's call for an aesthetic "unity," a resistance to "separate parts," and the elimination of details that might result in "intimacy producing relations" was clearly a valuation of power and control over the psychological or physical risk of involvement—exactly the invitation to a relationship between artist, object, and viewer that the artists in *More Than Minimal* embraced rather than avoided.

"Subjectivity denied to woman: indisputably this provides the financial backing for every irreducible constitution as an object: of representation, of discourse, of desire. Once imagine that woman imagines and the object loses its fixed, obsessional character. As a benchmark that is ultimately more crucial than the subject, for he can sustain himself only by bouncing back off some objectiveness, some objective. If there is no more "earth" to press down/repress, to work, to represent, but also and always to desire (for one's own), no opaque matter which in theory does not know herself, then what pedestal remains for the ex-sistence of the "subject"? If the earth turned and more especially turned upon herself, the erection of the subject might thereby be disconcerted and risk losing its elevation and penetration. For what would there be to rise up from and exercise his power over? And in?"
Luce Irigary[34]

Despite minimalism's aspirations to be "something everyone can understand" (Tony Smith) and its intended "reflexive" exchange between subject and object (Morris), there was no conscious differentiating among viewers in terms of their subjective identities. The viewer, although identified in the abstract (like the anonymous reader "without history, biography, psychology" referred to by Roland Barthes) was nonetheless assumed to be both male and privileged (that is, with access to modernism's coded language). The female subject was notably and consistently absent.

The artists represented in *More Than Minimal* proposed a new subject for abstraction and spoke not to an ideal viewer but to the unfixed nature of human experience as it is lived in the physical, sexed, and gendered body as well as the acculturated mind. Their works attest to a feminist identity while proposing no essential notions of the "feminine" nor fictions of formalism; they are the responses of female witnesses who speak in the first person without presuming to be universal. If we consider the gender of each of these artists as the position from which she works, we understand her identity as "relative to a constantly shifting context, to a situation that includes a network of elements involving others" in which, however, she plays an active part.[35] Anne Wagner's observation about Eva Hesse could be applied to the each of these artists: "To claim that

Hesse's art aims to remember and express some common human quality or experience is not the same as attributing to it some universal force or purpose. In others words, it gives *its own account* of that experience..."[36]

"When women become feminists the crucial thing that has occurred is not that they have learned any new facts about the world but that they come to view those facts from a different position, from their own position as subjects." Linda Alcoff[37]

Conscious of abstraction's particular freedoms and limitations, these artists acknowledge a physical and psychological connection to the world, to the viewer, as a primary aesthetic concern. Their works situate themselves within the daily spaces of the spectator-subject, but in contrast to the "immaculate conception" of the minimalist object, the works in *More Than Minimal* were born with the visible traces of biographies lived and outside the subject/object dichotomies that the minimalist ethos perpetuated.[38] In critically distinct ways each artist has conceived of the object/installation as "a space that contains and a space in which we create," which allows us an alternative art experience that immediately acknowledges a double discourse: the subjective agency of the maker in the factual details of the object and the subjective agency of the viewers in our experience of it.[39] Here are occurrences of abstraction as a place where "two subjects meet."[40]

They "do not put me in the place of the Female Spectator, do not assign me a role, a self-image, a positionality in language or desire. Instead they make a place for what I will call me, knowing that I don't know it, and give 'me' space to try to know, to see, to understand. Put another way, by addressing me as a woman, they do not bind me or appoint me as Woman." Teresa de Lauretis[41]

While their feminism is manifest in the incorporation of a second subject, these artists refuse to assign any definite alignment with gender for that subject/viewer and acknowledge the possibility that their works may mean different things to viewers on different sides of the gender line, which is critical to the communicative effectiveness of their art. Each of the works in *More Than Minimal* is a "statement that permits interpretation...rather than positing an absolute. Not vagueness...but a whole that doesn't pretend to be ultimate, academic."[42] As they reject the authority of modernism, so do these artists articulate an alternative to the "unified structures" and "enduring objects" of minimalism, creating conditional constructions built upon the active relations (temporal, spatial, psycho-social) of repeated units and layers, labor-involved processes, and allusive materials and images whose meanings are socially produced.[43] Candles, lattice, earth, crude oil, and kneaded erasers that were burned, nailed, rubbed, spread, and folded to suggest silhouette, fence, book, bed, and vulva are intentionally multiple rather than universal in their associations.

Formally, their works embody a structural coherence that is founded upon but ultimately transgresses the systematicity of minimalism. In a series of visual pauses and disruptions, along irregular edges, and between shifting boundaries through which "she" can be seen and heard, there exists a physical and psychological continuum that includes, what Jessica Benjamin designated, as the "space between the I and the you" as well as the "space within me."[44] Although the objects form external boundaries that we can measure, their informal postures and multipart structures refuse any idea of fixedness or absoluteness:

A "'shapeless' shapeliness...the unique gift of the feminine psyche...It's power to do what the shapely mentalities of men appear incapable of doing for themselves, to act as a focus for divergent points of view...being all over the place and in all camps at once..." Dorothy Richardson[45]

In contrast to minimalist references to the viewer's physical existence but intended denial of the cultural clutter of our lives, the feminist/post-minimalist tendency was to openly reference herself and us in terms of embodied experience. What is apparent in the frequent repetition of individual elements and actions is not simply a structural system but evidence of a commitment (Winsor likened it to "a relationship...like loving someone and pulling out qualities there..."), a tangible incident of autobiography, and a symbol of self-regard in an otherwise decidedly non-narrative format. While these artists characteristically profiled "process" (both intellectual and physical) as an integral carrier of form and meaning, it is meaningful to consider the social implications of art that is so clearly of the verb as well as the object.

The project of humanizing abstraction is the legacy of this generation of women artists. In their hands, the isolated, authoritative, impenetrable "object" devoted only to itself has yielded to a subjectivity that is "dialectically articulated in relation to others in a continually negotiated exchange...between subjectivity and objectivity, between the masculine position of speaking discourse (which no man can have any more securely than a woman can, though he has a definitive advantage under patriarchy in pretending to possess it) and the feminine position of being spoken."[46] The content-oriented abstraction of a subsequent generation of artists and the fact that it is not the exclusive domain of either gender, is its promise.

Self-described as "pioneers" and "rebels" and empowered in various ways and times by feminism's principles, each of the artists in *More Than Minimal* refused to be told what were appropriate subjects or permissible practices for her work. Rather than accept "otherness" as her state and locate her discourse in the margins, each of these women chose to redefine the dominant idiom of minimalist abstraction as an affirmation of her experiences and values. Given their individual convictions about making art that reinforced her identity and agency (despite frequently formidable odds—personal, political, professional—that each of their biographies tell), how could they neglect to invent forms that would speak with equal candor and eloquence about resistance, ambition, pleasure, vulnerability, strength, sensuality, and trust?

"this multiplicity of voices is...a strong voice, which in spite of or perhaps because of difference, will continue to reject the metaphor of woman as a detour on the way to man's truth." Alice Jardine[47]

Notes

1. Helene Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" (1975) quoted in Elaine Showalter, "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness," *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature & Theory* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), 247-8.

2. While the past decade has seen a dramatic increase in the availability of material on the feminist movement and art, an apparent "official" feminist program has developed and it (not unlike the exclusive formalist doctrine before it) has consistently failed to address the challenging issues of feminism and abstraction and the role of a number of leading artists. For example, it is only in their introduction to *The Power of Feminist Art: The American Movement of the 1970s, History and Impact* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994)—a major resource that limits the discussion of abstraction to the "pattern movement"—that coeditors Norma Broude and Mary Garrard point to an ongoing refusal to acknowledge gender as a relevant factor and category "in the framing of the history of mainstream modernism" and to the continued need to formally acknowledge the historical existence and position of female experience within that male-dominated and defined history. Even in considerations of Mendieta and Wilke, whose overtly autobiographical work has been thoroughly embraced by the feminist discourse, discussion about the works' relation to abstraction has remained at the margins of the dialogue about their careers.

The catalog for the recent exhibition, *Sense and Sensibility: Women Artists and Minimalism in the Nineties* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1994) by Lynn Zelevansky is to be credited with placing minimalism and the feminist movement within the same context, and for acknowledging (however briefly) this generation of women artists working in the seventies as necessary to the history of art and as the legitimate precedents for much current work, however, their involvement is typically summed up as: "Post-Minimalism enabled women as a group to have an impact on the art world for the first time..." and "If the Minimalism of the first half of the 1960s was largely a male preserve, Post-Minimalism, which coalesced toward the end of the decade, at approximately the same time as the contemporary Women's Movement, was in part defined by women....While male as well as female artists created precedents for a more open-ended application of Minimalist precepts, Post-Minimalism....extended the boundaries of what was acceptable to the art world in a manner that paralleled certain goals and strategies of the women's movement." With the exception of an insightful discussion of Hesse, mention of individual artists (including Eleanor Antin, Benglis, Mary Kelly, Stuart, and Winsor) occurs in a brief discussion that is little more than a collective footnote to an art history apparently effected only in this decade by feminist developments worthy of greater discussion.

3. By choosing to consider a collective identity and achievement, I wish not to obscure the well-documented critical distinctions between these 11 accomplished individuals but to explore their individual approaches to the language of abstraction through a critical practice that allows for "the possibility of a collective identity resistant to, but ultimately bound up with, Woman" (Nancy K. Miller). Also, the exhibition's emphasis on artists working in sculpture or exploring the boundaries between two- and three-dimensional formats has necessitated the exclusion of consideration of the issues of feminism and abstraction specific to painting during the seventies by artists including Jo Baer, Mary Heilman, Louise Fishman, Agnes Martin, and Joan Snyder among others.

4. Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 159.

5. Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "For the Etruscans: Sexual Difference and Artistic Production—The Debate Over a Female Aesthetic," in *The Future of Difference*, ed. Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1980), 132. DuPlessis created the designation "both/and" to describe an alternative vision, "the end of the either-or, dichotomized universe...a dualism pernicious because it valorizes one side above another, and makes a hierarchy where there were simply twain."

6. Nancy Chodorow, "Gender, Relation, and Difference in Psychoanalytic Perspective," in *The Future of Difference*, ed. Eisenstein and Jardine, 11.

7. Helene Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," in *New French Feminisms*, trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (New York: Schocken, 1981), 260.

8. In his study, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: HarperCollins, 1983), psychologist Howard Gardner has suggested that there are at least seven forms of human intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Studies considering the gender implications of this theory will be the project of future feminist scholarship.

9. Gerda Lerner quoted in Showalter, 260.

10. The seventies have also been designated as years in which "the 'social history of art' was developed and transformed by Marxists, feminists, philosophically inclined art historians, and theoretically self-conscious strays from adjacent disciplines." See Lisa Tickner, "Feminism, Art History, and Sexual Difference," *Genders*, no. 3, (fall 1988): 93.

11. See Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Patricia Mathews, "The Feminist Critique of Art History," *Art Bulletin* (September 1987) and *The Power of Feminist Art*, ed. Norma Broude and Mary Garrard (New York: Abrams, 1994) for feminist activities during the seventies and eighties in the practice, history, and theory of art. *Making Their Mark: Women Artists Move into the Mainstream, 1970-85*, ed. Randy Rosen and Catherine C. Brawer (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989) is a good survey of the range of art produced by women during the period and offers a

compendium of major exhibitions as well as statistical analyses of women's representation in arts.
12. The historical coincidence in the seventies of minimalism's dominant aesthetic and feminist revision is, of course, not the only occasion of its kind in the history of the avant-garde. Carol Duncan explored an earlier model in her landmark essay, "Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting," *Artforum*, December 1973. More recently, Tickner made the explicit connection between the avant-garde and women's rights: "From Manet's *Olympia* to Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, the processes of avant-garde painting were played out across the bodies of women (working-class bodies, sexually available, form the ballet, the laundry, the racecourse, the brothel, the streets) in an assertion of "virility and domination" roughly coincident with the height of suffrage activity in Europe and the United States." Tickner, 101.
13. Lucy Lippard, "Sweeping Exchanges: The Contribution of Feminism to the Art of the 1970s," *Art Journal* (fall/winter, 1980).
14. During the seventies there was a conscious effort to retrieve and celebrate the traditional forms of abstraction found in "pattern and decoration" practiced by many generations and cultures of women. Contemporizing and politicizing this activity was the feminist project of artists Miriam Schapiro and Joyce Kozloff. In her important article, "Feminist Abstract Art—A Political Viewpoint" (*Heresies* vol. 1, [January 1977]: 66-70), artist Harmony Hammond called for women to "reclaim abstract art" and look to their strong history of traditional crafts and decorative arts as a model for a nonelite and socially meaningful visual language.
15. Robert Pincus-Witten, *Postminimalism* (New York: Out of London Press, 1977), 16. Although he documented the early careers of several women including Benglis, Ferrara, Hesse, Rockburne, and Winsor in important articles and essays, Pincus-Witten neglected to credit any of these artists (with the exception of Hesse) for her individual contributions to "the shift of sensibility into Post-Minimalism," writing instead that "it grows difficult to ascertain the individuals who created the movement away from Minimalism and from formalist criticism—probably because the drift away is inherent in the movement itself. Certainly, Richard Serra, Carl Andre, Keith Sonnier, Robert Smithson, Robert Morris, to name artists of wide reputation, and perhaps slightly less well-known figures such as Sol LeWitt, Mel Bochner, and the critic Lucy Lippard, must be recalled...." See Pincus-Witten, "Post-Minimalism into Sublime," *Artforum*, (November 1971), 34.
16. Amelia Jones, "Postfeminism, Feminist Pleasures, and Embodied Theories of Art," in *New Feminist Criticism: Art, Identity, Action* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 28.
17. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975), reprinted in *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation* (New York and Boston: The New Museum of Contemporary Art and David R. Godine, 1984), 362.
18. Jones, 22.
19. Ibid., 27.
20. Gisela Breitling, "Speech, Silence and the Discourse of Art," in *Feminist Aesthetics*, ed. Gisela Ecker (London: The Woman's Press, 1985), 172.
21. Griselda Pollock, "Feminism and Modernism," in *Framing Feminism: Art and the women's movement 1970-85*, ed. Rozsika Parker and Pollock (London: Pandora Press, 1987), 95. In her discussion of the relation between feminism and modernism, Pollock points to the formation of feminist practices circa 1970 as important alternatives to the "evolution of art about art." However, I find problematic the underlying presumptions throughout the chapter regarding *all* abstraction's social ineffectiveness: "Feminist opposition to Modernism has therefore been more complex than the substitution of pluralism for formalism, of critical engagement for abstraction and (apparent) neutrality, of photography, video or scripto-visual art forms for pure painting..."
22. Richard Armstrong, in his introduction to *The New Sculpture 1965-75: Between Geometry and Gesture*, ed. Armstrong and Richard Marshall (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1990), has suggested that much of the art circa 1970 shared in the sixties cultural legacy of a "greatly expanded sense of permission" as well as the "liberating effects of skepticism toward authority" generated by inequities at home and injustices on other soils (Southeast Asia in particular). These social factors, punctuated by Nixon's resignation, generated a "common impulse to humanize and particularize both the acts of making and seeing art."
23. Teresa de Lauretis, introduction to *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 5.
24. DuPlessis, 136.
25. Gregory Battcock's anthology, *Minimal Art* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1968) remains an important source documenting the critical discourse surrounding the aesthetic of minimalism. A second edition, with an introduction by Anne M. Wagner (University of California Press, 1995) includes an updated bibliography as well.
26. That much of the art of the sixties through the seventies was body-centered or engaged with physical aspects of the land seems to be a testament to the shifting consciousness of the times, a last effort at maintaining a degree of control (and trust?) at a time when the modern world of empirical knowledge was collapsing into a postmodern, information-centered construction.
27. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Artforum* (June 1967): reprinted in Battcock, 125.
28. Ann Gibson, "Color and Difference in Abstract Painting: The Ultimate Case of Monochrome," *Genders*, no. 13, (spring 1992): 139.
29. Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture, Part II," *Artforum* (October 1966): reprinted in Battcock, 232.
30. Rosalind Krauss, "Sense and Sensibility: Reflections on Post '60s Sculpture," *Artforum* (November 1973): 43-53. Although clearly relevant to the practices of many of the exhibition's artists, Krauss's reading was applied specifically to the work of only one woman, Dorothea Rockburne.
31. Hal Foster, "The Crux of Minimalism," in *Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art 1945-86,* ed. Howard Singerman (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), 162-83. The collection of insightful essays in this catalog accompanied a major exhibition at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art devoted to the work of over 80 artists. With the exception of Eva Hesse, all of the artists in *More Than Minimal* were excluded.
32. In his text, *Minimalism: Art of Circumstance* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988), Kenneth Baker does briefly raise the issue of female subjectivity, specifically in regards to Hesse's and Winsor's works, but only as an appendix to a detailed analysis of the work of Bruce Nauman. "It was Merleau-Ponty's understanding that 'subjectivity is inherence in the world,' a notion intimated in the work of a number of women artists, as well as in Nauman's, around the turn of the 1970s....The philosophical terms 'subject' and 'object' rang differently in women's ears than in men's, though few acknowledged it.... Hesse and Winsor seem not to have even taken as an issue the dualisms that haunted so many male artists of the Minimalist generation." Baker's descriptive terminology surrounding Hesse's and Winsor's processes and objects, however, remain predictably coded: "eccentricities," "organic," "the body as a vessel," "flayed skin and laundry hung out to dry," "metaphors of growth," "the tireless, instinctive work of some wild creature or species."
33. Anna Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts Magazine* (January 1990): 44-63.
34. Luce Irigary, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1974), trans. Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 133.
35. Linda Alcoff, "Cultural Feminism Versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory," *Signs* (spring 1988): 434.
36. Anne M. Wagner, "Another Hesse," *October* (summer 1994): 84.
37. Alcoff, 434.
38. Joanna Freuh, "Towards a Feminist Theory of Art Criticism," *Feminist Art Criticism*, eds. Freuh, Arlene Raven, Sandra Langer (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988), 156.
39. Jessica Benjamin, "A Desire of One's Own: Psychoanalytic Feminism and Intersubjective Space," *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*, 93-94.
40. Benjamin, 92.
41. de Lauretis, "Aesthetic and Feminist Theory: Rethinking Women's Cinema," *Feminist Art Criticism*, 147.
42. Anita Barrows in DuPlessis, 131.
43. Kate Linker, "Eluding Definition," *Artforum* (December 1984): 67.
44. Benjamin, 95.
45. Dorothy Richardson, "Leadership in Marriage," *New Adelphi*, June-August 1929, quoted in DuPlessis, 132.
46. Jones, 31.
47. Eisenstein and Jardine, xxvii.

Balancing Acts: Reflections on Postminimalism and Gender in the 1970s

Whitney Chadwick

"The way to beat discrimination in art is by art. Excellence has no sex."
Eva Hesse (1970)[1]

Eva Hesse's remarks appeared at a moment when the concept of excellence itself was on the barricades as growing numbers of women protested that it had failed to ensure them either jobs or representation. The artists in *More Than Minimal: Feminism and Abstraction in the '70s* occupy a range of positions in relation to two factors that motivated much art of the seventies, but that are often kept separate in critical literature. One concerns the focus on process, materials, site, and concept that shaped the move away from minimalism's fixed geometries and modernism's universalizing (i.e. masculinizing) ideology.[2] The second points to the success of the women's movement in affecting exhibition policies and shifting the focus of critical and historical debate to a consciousness of gender and identity.

The contributions of these particular artists—individual, as well as collective—are not reducible to a singular ideological or aesthetic position. Nor is the relationship between abstraction and representations of gender, identity, and experience necessarily direct or causal. Yet incorporations of the physical body, and notions of embodied experience (physical, emotional, psychological), in their work of the late sixties suggest that the seventies, or the so-called "feminist decade," opened with a wider range of representational stances, incorporating aspects of the female body and women's experiences than is often acknowledged.[3]

During the eighties, ideological splits within the women's movement, as well as the more generalized backlash against feminism, resulted in the "double marginalizing" (to borrow critic Susan Suleiman's useful term) of certain women artists. On the one hand, abstract work, which did not derive from personal sources and overtly political issues, has been omitted from some feminist histories of the period. On the other, many major exhibitions and critical accounts of the eighties returned women to their previous status as tokens or "exceptions" in an historical narrative organized around the exploits of men.[4]

Even today issues relevant to the ways that women chose to position themselves (and/or were positioned) in relation to the discourses that defined the visual arts in the seventies remain to be clarified. If we accept the possibility that a gendered subjectivity might leave its traces abstractly, then surely we must rethink feminism's reliance on figuration as the representational language of the body *par excellence*.[5] If we sever the history of abstraction from constructions of modernism as male and exclusionary, we must raise still more questions about the relationship between political content and stylistic choices.[6]

The relationship of Lynda Benglis, Jackie Ferrara, Nancy Graves, Eva Hesse, Ana Mendieta, Mary Miss, Ree Morton, Dorothea Rockburne, Michelle Stuart, Hannah Wilke, and Jackie Winsor to the shifting political and aesthetic debates of the seventies remains somewhat ambiguous. Committed to exploring the physical properties of materials, expanding definitions of form, and investigating seriality, surface tension, and modular repetition (while at the same time striving to integrate what Benglis and others have called a more "humanistic" content), their practices were, consciously or unconsciously, both oppositional and shaped by the terms of modernism *and* feminism.[7]

The sixties was a decade in which tokenism prevailed, a decade notable for the absence of exhibitions in which gender was foregrounded as an issue, the absence of women from most major shows and historical accounts, and the absence of consciousness of gender as a point of connection between women.[8] By the early seventies, the women's movement was a visible force in New York and a series of groundbreaking exhibitions kept the focus on issues of gender and sexual difference. Between these two sets of coordinates—one marked by women's consciousness of singularity and the need to persevere against all odds, the other by what amounted to a near obsession with assigning gendered characteristics when speaking of women's art—lie the early public careers of most of the artists in *More Than Minimal*.[9] Eva Hesse

was the first to emerge with a distinctly personal style, and the influence of her powerful body of work—with its highly original personal content and unexpected materials (including rubber, latex, rope, and fiberglass)—was considerable. By 1966, the year the Jewish Museum's *Primary Structures* exhibition focused attention on minimal art, her work was firmly identified with the counter tendencies that gave rise to the critical language of "anti-form," "process art," and "post-minimalism."[10]

During the late sixties Hesse, like Louise Bourgeois, Louise Nevelson, Lee Bontecou, and Marisol before her, often found herself the only woman in shows like *9 at Leo Castelli* (New York, 1968) and *When Attitudes Become Form* (Bern, 1969). Her work, while related to that of her male colleagues in its reliance on repetition, dispersion, seriality, and the play between hard and soft, form and anti-form, quickly asserted its own tensions: moments at which opposing forces—some material, others emotional and/or psychological—appeared caught in states of equilibrium. In the face of critical responses that often reiterated a stereotypically gendered identification of Hesse's forms and materials with the intuitive and the personal (and later the diseased), Lucy Lippard's straightforward evaluations come as a relief.[11] "The core of Eva Hesse's art," she wrote in 1968, "lies in a forthright confrontation of incongruous physical and formal attributes: hardness/softness, roughness/smoothness, precision/chance, geometry/free form, toughness/vulnerability, 'natural' surface/industrial construction."[12]

Since 1966, when Lippard and Mel Bochner first remarked on the strong bodily associations present in Hesse's art, critics have often traced the new expressionism of postminimalism to the surface tactility of its expanded repertory of materials. *Sequel* (1967-68), a scattered arrangement of split latex spheres colored with powdered white pigment exploited the sensuous, tactile, and flexible qualities of latex, a material Hesse had discovered the previous year. "The scale is modest, but just right, carrying a strong sense of body identification," Lippard noted.[13] More recently, Anne Wagner has elucidated a subsequent history of critical readings that continue to return us (though not always in consistent ways) to the problematic terms in which "the body might be said to be present in Hesse's art," and the artist and her art collapsed into a single entity.[14]

Hesse herself vacillated between an identification of art and life ("Art is a total thing. A total person giving a contribution. It's an essence, a soul, and that's what it's about...."[15]), and a fear that her repertory of forms might be reduced to the "feminine," and denied an investment in the language of modernism. The work, she said in a final interview in 1970, paraphrasing curator Marcia Tucker's introduction to the previous year's *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, was "ordered, yet not ordered. Chaos structured as non-chaos."[16]

Hesse's focus on positioning her work between material and concept, her acceptance of the play of gender on subjectivity, her resistance to gender stereotypes, was shared by other women seeking to imbue abstraction with new kinds of content in the late sixties. They were aware that the language of abstraction is neither fixed, nor universal, nor neutral. And their models for its deployment were often cross-cultural. "Abstraction can carry all kinds of meanings," Winsor later observed, "from power and extroversion (in modernist art) to great potential for introversion in other contexts."

Often, though not in every case, these women were attentive to feminism's validation of the personal, even as they refused to think of their work as promoting a specific political agenda; "I feel that art is an intellectual process, which both questions and affirms the very nature of being," Benglis said in 1971. "My concerns of identity within and outside the confines of my studio or working situation have everything to do with my experience. And my experience is primarily that of an artist and I am female."[17]

Women were not alone in countering the coolness and alleged neutrality of geometric abstraction with a personal expressionism and a sense of scale closely related to the human body.[18] But while the confrontational stances adopted by male artists were quickly absorbed into modernism's privileging of the (male) artist as rebel and hero, women who referenced the body, whether obliquely or directly, often found their work diminished through associations with the "feminine."[19] Yet Hesse's, Benglis's, and Wilke's attention to inflecting materials with traces of a body understood as sexed and gendered (though not exclusively feminine), and to an acceptance of the bodily as a necessary component of artistic identity, would shape both feminism's emerging self-conscious articulation of the body as sign for female consciousness, and the emergence of a conceptually-based body art—practiced by male as well as female artists—that tested the limits of representation, and of the body, during the seventies.

Among Wilke's early works are a group of terracotta sculptures of the sixties in which layered sheets of clay fold over and around interior spaces in petal-like labial shapes that anticipate Judy Chicago's embrace of cunt imagery as feminist signature.[20] Stuart placed plaster casts of heads and other body parts in boxes during the sixties, but later abandoned the practice as "too personal." Winsor's predilection for simple geometric shapes during the 1970s—the cube, the circle, the grid—was preceded by a series of photographs of the human body in which explorations of the body as form took precedence over body as subject. These were succeeded by a group of latex and polyester resin sculptures (five of which Lippard selected for an exhibition that toured the country in 1968) that she kept body-size in order to convey physicality and tensile strength through the contrast between the soft, smooth, skin-like texture of the rubber and the rigid shapes underneath.[21]

Winsor's early work links a notion of physicality derived from the work ethic (necessity) that literally enabled life in the isolated villages of rural Newfoundland where she spent her childhood, a personal involvement with gymnastics, and the influence of Yvonne Rainer's pioneering dance performances of the sixties, with their focus on the distribution of energy in the execution of a series of movements.[22] Rainer's 1968 performance

lecture, "The Mind is a Muscle," also pointed toward ways of registering the body in abstraction and using motion to create a shape. Her work also informed Dorothea Rockburne's first attempts to infuse the cerebral language of mathematical set theory with a more human content, "trying to make work that fulfilled some inner need in myself...trying to deal with my brain and my guts and my soul." Attracted to the "emotional" qualities of set theory (she had studied with mathematician Max Dehn at Black Mountain College in the fifties) in the late sixties, Rockburne started relating the surfaces of the body to the surfaces of the cardboard she was beginning to subdivide into carefully creased subunits.[23] Though no longer dancing herself, she equated her decision to work both sides of her material to the visibility of all sides of the body in dance, the plotting of pictorial markings to the ways that dancers often worked in relation to a grid on the floor.

Benglis's work also addressed issues of physicality and abstraction—exploiting the tension between skin-like surfaces and underlying forms—as she moved away from minimalism in the later sixties. Emily Wasserman noted of *Bounce*, a latex floor piece included in a group show at the Bykert Gallery in 1969, that the piece signaled the emergence of "a kind of painting entirely freed from an auxiliary ground or armature," a free gesture gelled in space.[24] Benglis joined Alan Saret, Richard Serra, and Keith Sonnier in transposing Abstract Expressionist gestural mark-making activity from easel to environment. But unlike her male colleagues, when Benglis liberated the gesture from materiality, she simultaneously mimed and challenged a history in which the artist's mark functions as a sign for male subjectivity.[25]

In 1969, the Whitney Museum gave a groundbreaking one-woman exhibition to Nancy Graves.[26] Graves's camels challenged other boundaries, specifically those between the formal languages of natural history and art.[27] While the artist asserted that the camels "do not find their organization in the real world but are the result of my experience," critic Alfred Frankenstein observed that Graves had effectively eliminated the artful discrepancies that distance representation from the subject as originally perceived: "She really brings art and its subject in a single experience. This is the most subversive thing that has happened to art since the early modernists abolished the subject altogether, and it is equally upsetting to our habits of thought."[28]

The rejection of Greenbergian formalism and the desire to embed meaning within social, cultural, and historical relationships occurred during a decade shaped by idealism and social activism: from the Civil Rights Movement and Martin Luther King's theology of a "beloved community," to the internationalism of the Peace Corps, and the liberationist rhetoric of the Black Power and women's movements.[29] Although the search for greater social connectedness took place among women working relatively independently of one another, and in an artistic context still dominated by the rhetoric of Abstract Expressionism, it would challenge modernist belief in the autonomy of art in ways not seen in American art since the thirties.[30]

By the end of the decade, uglier realities—assassinations, the Tet offensive, the U.S. invasion of Cambodia, and the Kent State killings—would penetrate even the relatively isolated New York art world. It was in 1969 that the *Whitney Annual* opened with a mere eight women among its 143 artists, and women took to the streets in protest. Over the next 12 months, they organized and demonstrated, demanding greater representation in museum shows and a voice in educational and curatorial policy.[31] The year 1969 marked a kind of watershed: the historical moment at which the terms that defined the art world as male, white, and privileged were challenged by women's demands for a new set of artistic and social realities. The ensuing clash, or rather series of clashes, would reshape the territories of both art and sexual politics.

In 1970, after the New York Art Strike Against War, Racism, Fascism, Sexism, and Repression, organized by the Art Workers' Coalition, closed New York museums for one day in May, women artists in New York formed the Ad Hoc Women Artists' Committee, a loosely organized group that challenged the number of women in *Whitney Annuals* and founded the Women's Art Registry.

Winsor, Stuart, Rockburne, Miss, and Ferrara attended meetings; all have remarked on the relief they felt on meeting other professional women, many of whom remain friends to this day.[32] Levels of involvement with organized feminism varied widely among them—from Graves's disavowal of interest to Stuart's active role as a founding member of the collective that began publishing the feminist art and cultural journal *Heresies* in 1975—but all of the women had experience of the inequities and inconsistencies of the art world's treatment of women.

As the women's movement coalesced around a commitment to social activism and a desire to locate and define a "feminine sensibility" in the early seventies, some women found the focus on "the personal" confining. Strongly individualistic, committed to working within mainstream structures, and resistant to overtly political content, they chose either to avoid the direct imaging of the "personal" in their work (Winsor, Graves, Rockburne, Ferrara, Miss, Stuart, Morton) or to subvert the stereotypically feminist through humor, parody, or masquerade (Benglis, Wilke).

"When I think about things like feminism," Winsor remarked recently, "it seems to me a political moment that supported the life I've had....I support it 100 percent although I have no real interest in it in my work." Rockburne and others viewed the movement as a positive force, but found themselves disinterested in works that had to do with what they termed "women's issues." "They bored me," Rockburne later commented. Benglis, on the other hand, having watched older women like Helen Frankenthaler and Joan Mitchell categorically reject issues of sexual politics and gender, decided to confront the rhetoric of women's liberation directly in her work. Despite their individual differences, the women's movement had a demonstrable impact on the careers of many of these artists around 1970. And the subsequent consolidation of their mature styles coincided with a period when the movement was urging women to publicly assert their differences from men, and to define these differences in terms of materials, process, and form.

The 1970 *Whitney Annual* (devoted to sculpture that year) included Ferrara, Graves, Miss, Rockburne, and Winsor, in addition to Betye Saar and Via Celmins; the museum's Drawing Annual featured the work of Ree Morton. Winsor acknowledges that her inclusion, as well as that of many other women artists, was due to the concerted efforts by the curators to include more women following the previous year's embarrassing public demonstrations (a perception shared by Benglis and others).[33] The exhibition, important in focusing critical attention on the work of these artists, was followed by the first of a series of museum exhibitions devoted to the work of women, as well as by a number of one-person shows in New York galleries.[34]

Benglis sustained the psychological and emotional resonances of her first latex pours in a series of wax paintings and poured pigmented foam sculptures that begin around 1970 and that index the body.[35] Wilke and, a few years later, Mendieta began to affirm the body as the site of cultural meanings in the early seventies. Graves, Winsor, Morton, Ferrara, Rockburne, Stuart, and Miss combined perceptual concerns with an investigatory information-driven inquiry into materials, process, and site in ways that emphasized layerings of information and meaning. Miss, Stuart, and Ferrara sought to extend their practices in public directions in ways that often redefined notions of audience.

Graves characterized the seventies as defined by "an immediate access to information allowing for the contemplation of infinite time and space, whether it be evolutionary, ethnographic, or geophysical."[36] Her interest in referencing archaeological and anthropological content is evident by 1970 in works like *Shaman* and *Variability of Similar Forms*. The latter—36 camel leg bones made of steel, wax, marble dust, and acrylic—articulated her interest in variability and repetition as a formal problem challenging the internal logic of armature as support by dispersing, scattering, and propping the elements around the gallery.[37] These works reveal an intuitive balancing of scientific rationality and mythopoetic allusion, and a seeking after "cultural synthesis" that is also evident in the work of other women around this time.[38]

Benglis's mounded polyurethane foam pours, begun in the late sixties, also conveyed multiple associations: from the personal and excremental to the volcanic and terrestrial. Her formal manipulations recalled Helen Frankenthaler's stained canvases and Claes Oldenburg's soft sculpture, but the skin-like tensile quality of her material and the palpable rise of the shapes again led to stereotypical identifications of the female agent of the gesture with nature: "the pull of gravity, the turbulence of crashing waves, the melted terrain of a primeval landscape."[39]

Around this time, inspired by the tall, thin forms of the African sculpture she had begun to collect, Benglis began rolling sheets of bunting into long tubes using aluminum screen as an armature. She called the shapes "totems" and their anthropomorphic references persist in later works like *7 Come 11: Ocho* (1976).[40] Ferrara, who began making fetish-like objects using fur, then flax and cotton batting during the sixties, exhibited an abstract sculpture made out of batting with a dense fall of tangles, strings, and knots in the 1970 *Whitney Annual*. The work resonated with personal and psychological content, leading Pincus-Witten to comment a few years later that, "The advent of feminist activism (and I don't mean by this that Ferrara was an activist) gave a political value to the private history and mythology of women, a mythology capable of being exteriorized in a talismanic fetishistic art...."[41] Pincus-Witten's remarks underscore the growing annexation of much of this work to feminist critical contexts during the early seventies.

Winsor's choice of rope as an alternative to resin (a material whose toxicity had made her seriously ill) around 1970 was also accompanied by a conscious exploitation of the material's properties, its "gutsy" qualities. "What I wanted the piece to bring out," she remarked of her only live performance, *Up and/or Down* (1971), "was the kinesthetic relationship between the muscularity of the rope, and the changing quality of the rope as it was being moved."[42]

Winsor's deliberate choice of adjectives suggests a challenge to a growing critical and linguistic investment in sexual difference. In the early seventies, words like "muscular," "masterpiece," and "monumental" were identified as masculine in feminist critiques directed at the language of art history and art criticism. This politicizing of art critical discourse took place in the context of debates (often not confined to feminist circles) over whether or not it was possible to isolate and define conceptual or formal characteristics as "feminine."[43] In her introduction to *Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists*, one of the first exhibitions devoted to the work of contemporary women, Lippard stated that the exhibition was about the ways that women were challenging the status quo in their rejection of formalism and their engagement with materials, processes, and conceptual issues, but acknowledged her belief in discernible differences in "sensibility" between men and women.[44]

The following year *Gedok: American Women Artists*, the first major international exhibition devoted to women's work, opened at the Hamburg Kunsthaus. In 1973, viewers saw *Unmanly Art* at the Suffolk Museum in Stony Brook, New York, and *Women Choose Women* at the New York Cultural Center. April Kingsley reviewed the latter in *Artforum* in March 1973, noting that the very existence of such a show made it impossible not to raise the question of a "feminine style"; "Every woman artist I've spoken to hates the whole concept of feminine art, possibly because, as Lucy Lippard suggests, women's conditioning has been to the effect that 'women's art has been, and is, by definition, *inferior* art.'"[45] In conclusion, Kingsley suggests that none of the often advanced theses concerning "women's imagery" hold up under close scrutiny. Her disavowal of a generalized female "sensibility" or imagery took place, however, in the midst of energetic efforts to prove otherwise.

"Female Sensibility," an article written by artists Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, and published in the journal *Womanspace* in 1973, affirmed the self-conscious investigation of female subjectivity through images of the body as one way to celebrate female knowledge and experience. "What does it feel like to be a woman? To be formed around a central core and have a secret place which can be entered and which is also a passageway from which life emerges?" the authors asked.[46] Lippard also identified a series of possible female characteristics in art: "A uniform density, an overall texture, often sensuously tactile and often repetitive to the point of obsession; the preponderance of circular forms and central focus...layers or strata; an indefinable looseness or flexibility of handling; a new fondness for the pinks and pastels and the ephemeral cloud-colors that used to be taboo."[47]

Almost as soon as the issue was formulated, the idea of a biologically determined imagery began to be challenged.[48] Benglis and Wilke were among the first women artists to directly exploit the tensions between early feminism's adherence to a fixed language of the body, and femininity as a set of assumed conventions. Benglis's experiences in Southern California, where Schapiro and Chicago were then teaching, provoked her to try to inject a greater degree of humor into feminist rhetoric.[49] The series of sexual parodies that followed (and that included the 1973-74 videotape *Female Sensibility*)[50] explored the limits of gender in art language, parodied the attire and attitudes of male genius from Picasso to Duchamp, exposed the "tabooed," and played with male/female sexual positioning. "All my art is erotic, suggestive....It is all about female sexuality, about being a woman," Benglis was quoted in a 1975 article titled "The New Sexual Frankness: Good-by to Hearts and Flowers," that opened with a description of her controversial *Artforum* ad (in which she had posed nude, clutching an enormous dildo to her loins) and a nod to the popularity of Erica Jong's recent bestseller, *Fear of Flying*.[51]

Challenges to the language of "feminine sensibility" are evident in the work of both Benglis and Wilke by 1973. That year Wilke began the series, *Needed-Erase-Her* (1973-77). She used erasers, folded or twisted into shapes that read as vulva, womb, or wound, arranged in gridded or random patterns on wood grounds. These forms, which Lowery Sims has called her "signature cunt/

scar forms," also conveyed multiple significations: rubbing, tactility, pleasure, erasure, scarring, but also the ritual or healing potential that Wilke calls "another kind of therapy...touch."[52]

Wilke's mimicry of conventional poses of femininity, her use of her own nude body, and her model-like good looks often led to conflicted readings of her work. She and Benglis were among the first women artists to enact their sexuality on their bodies in ways that linked their practice to the body art of male artists. Yet while body art by men was customarily discussed in terms of the exploration of taboos surrounding the human body, women's practices were almost always contextualized within issues arising from early feminist theory. Often, they were absorbed into ongoing attempts to define differences between masculinity and femininity that seldom went beyond cultural stereotypes that reinforced the dualistic model on which western patriarchal culture is based.[53]

Foregrounding bodily experience often left women artists open to charges of narcissism, though such charges were seldom, if ever, lodged against their male contemporaries. And male critics often praised women for qualities that were aligned with femininity.[54] Benglis and Wilke were not alone in intervening in ongoing debates about sexual difference by appropriating, and in the process destabilizing, categories of masculinity and femininity during the early seventies. Winsor's resistance to stereotyped inscriptions of sexual difference, and her interest in energy transformations, led her to explore East Indian female deities from Pavarti to Kali. These figures, which she regarded not as essentialized aspects of "femininity," but as expressions of an energy source that she saw as yin-yang, active-passive, creative-destructive."[55]

Rosalind Krauss's suggestion that the body becomes an externalization of the self in process-based work, a way of exploring the externality of language and therefore of meaning, has relevance for the work of a number of these artists.[56] Determined to produce forms that were quiet, but retained signs of the body's contained energy, Winsor began a group of works that concentrated on accretion, repetition, and an obsessive time-consuming construction process. About *Fence Piece* (1970), she has said, "I liked the feeling of being in a small, confined area while I was making it and the time period involved. I just got up and nailed all day."[57]

The drawings Rockburne showed in her first one-person exhibition at the Bykert Gallery in 1970 were arranged intuitively in the gallery space to encourage personal connections and associations between works. Although critics responded to the abstract and conceptually-based content, and used words like "serenely perfect" to describe their effect, Rockburne saw their cerebral quality as based in a physical process in which she ground her own pigments by hand, and laid on the oil that stained the cardboard surfaces herself.[58] "I relate a lot of that to my body in some way," she has said. "I'm doing the things to the material that when I danced I did with my body—you know, and felt."[59]

A consuming interest in imprinting experience and influence on the work encouraged Rockburne to continually look outside her own historical and cultural context. Like Benglis (who has said "traveling for me was the significant way I could learn about the world"), Ferrara, Stuart, Winsor, and Graves, she traveled widely in the early seventies. These excursions led to new awareness of the interconnectedness of abstract form and cultural meaning. Relationships between abstraction in architecture and the landscapes of South America and Egypt affirmed her personal search for connections between mathematical and intuitively formed relationships. Her spare, balanced compositions invoke Boolean algebra, the Golden Section, Italian Renaissance composition, and the kinds of content contained in these otherwise conceptual systems. Though Rockburne continued to work with mathematical theory during the seventies, critics increasingly saw subjective content as she departed from the basically mathematical premises of conceptual artists like LeWitt and Bochner.[60]

Rockburne's interest in topology, originally a mathematical concept, was shared by Graves and Stuart. Topology, polarity, repetition, information, unity, and disunity characterize the paintings based on satellite photographs that Graves began in 1971. In these works, monumental stippled patterns on pale grounds chart the surfaces of the Earth, Moon, and Mars, as well as undersea terrain and meteorological themes.[61] In 1969, the year of the moon landing, Stuart had begun making large drawings and constructions—some in sequential form, and some with chance formed additions of "currents" or magnetic forces constructed with string—based on geological survey maps of the surface of the moon.

The choice of intellectual and conceptual systems as raw material also aligned these artists with feminist challenges to conventionally gendered divisions of labor; though in several cases their decisions to strike out in new directions predated feminism's call. Characterizing themselves as "explorers" and "travelers," they made the world, and the disciplines through which it is represented, their subject. Fascinated by expeditions to distant places, Stuart collected travel narratives and 19th-century photographs of surveys and expeditions. Trips to Mayan sites in Mexico and Central America, and subsequently to Asia (source of an interest in Tibetan Buddhism that continues to this day), led to an interest in physical journeys as mirrors of spiritual journeys. She kept detailed notebooks (including research into the history, sociology, economics, changing topography, and cultures of the areas where she worked, as well as into geology, botany, minerals, fossils, nests, animal tracks, petroglyphs, and stone tools) and referred to them in her work, and especially in the artist books that she began in 1977.

While Graves and Stuart expanded their investigations into the physical world, and Rockburne mapped the physical body onto pure concept, Ree Morton gradually evolved a personalized narrative out of her allegiance to minimalism's stripes, grids, and repeating forms. Drawings and notebooks from the late sixties reveal the gradual unfolding of grids into maps and plans. By the early seventies, her main medium was found wood, bits and pieces of used lumber and logs that she altered and arranged in mysteriously evocative *Wood Drawings*. A slightly later piece, *Paintings and Objects* (1973) combines wood and canvas, acrylic and pencil, in a site-specific installation that, despite its abstract qualities, retains anthropomorphic references in its human scale, child-like drawing, and leg-like extensions.[62]

The use of wood and other materials found in nature, and the gradual shifting of notions of site from the studio and the gallery to the public realm, link the practices of Morton, Miss, Ferrara, and Stuart during the early seventies. The move into the landscape, while certainly not gender specific, would lead to expanded definitions of "public" in which women played formative roles.[63] Miss and others have acknowledged a debt to the women's movement's role in changing notions of "public," in encouraging a more activist, interventionist spirit, and in linking arts activity to other movements for social change.[64] During the seventies, the availability of institutional sponsorship (from university residencies to Art in Public Places funding) fostered a climate in which working in public became for many female artists, a viable alternative to a gallery system (with its marketing of "art stars") which they had long seen as marginalizing women.

Miss's *Stake Fence* (1970) was among a group of early works in which she connected her reading of engineering, landscape history, and architecture with personal memories of crossing the country with her family as child. During these long trips she had experienced the expansive landscape of the American West (where she spent much of her early childhood) as broken into discrete perceptual units by miles of fences. She has characterized this early experience of the land as an intimate one, and it left its mark on the scale at which she chose to work as an artist, as well as on her attitude toward her subject. Rather than imposing monumental forms on nature, as many of her male colleagues did in the early seventies, she instead emphasized a complex layering of visual, experiential, and psychological data, working between perceptions of space and her conceptions of remembered images: "In a way, I felt that the thing that interested me was a more intimate engagement with the landscape because I felt that almost anything you put into the landscape was going to be overwhelmed by it...instead of trying to make a mark upon it, I was trying to find ways to bring people into contact with it so that they would be aware of their relationship with it."

Miss admits to the influence of *both* Constructivism and Surrealism in her early structures. She designed built forms with a Constructivist's eye for simple shapes and good craftsmanship, and a Surrealist's insistence on engaging the audience emotionally and psychologically. She later said, the idea is to make places that reveal themselves slowly over time. Her work has retained the principles of simplicity and respect for the landscape that are associated with the tranquillity and repose of Japanese temple architecture and sacred gardens. "I want to see how one can integrate all the things that inflect a site, and make those elements accessible—emotional, physical, sexual, spiritual layering."[65]

Like Rockburne, Ferrara works with modules, unitary sequences, and conceptual systems, approaching her work with the rigorous exactness and clarity of a mathematician. In 1973, doing most of the labor herself, she remodeled her lower Manhattan loft into a serene, minimalist environment with something of the feel of a Japanese interior. This built environment echoed in forms and feeling her first wooden stepped and pyramidal sculptures. Maintaining a feeling of relatedness between the sculpture and the outside world would continue to form an important aspect of her subsequent production, as would the careful balancing of visual clarity and conceptual complexity within forms that adhered to minimalist geometries. Her adherence to principles of formal and conceptual coherence and interconnection can be observed in the close similarities between her architectural drawings and her proposals for sculpture.

By 1974, Ferrara was working with plywood, chipboard, and lengths of dressed pine in works that, while they retained the simple geometries of minimalist sculpture, departed from that movement's interest in inert form, glossy surfaces, and industrially fabricated materials. Instead she stressed spatial ambiguities. *Truncated Pyramid* and *Curved Pyramid* (both 1973) were followed by *Stacked Pyramid*, her first outdoor commission and almost the first wood piece she did. The piece led Ferrara to visit sites, take measurements, and directly relate subsequent pieces to their environments. When she saw someone begin to climb *Stacked Pyramid*, considerations of function

and safety entered her work. Her elementary assemblies of modular units often suggest stairways, towers, and pyramids, and the artist admits to searching for timeless universal forms, even as she denies directly appropriating existing structures; "I'm amazed when people see ziggurats, Mesoamerican pyramids, or mastabas in my pieces. I'm a very ahistorical person."[66]

Artpark, the New York State funded arts complex on the banks of the Niagara River at Lewiston, was the location for a rich series of site specific installations and earthworks during the seventies. Installations by Miss, Stuart, and Morton layered information and forms derived from the site with more experiential content. Stuart's *Niagara Gorge Path Relocated* (1975) began with drawings and research about the ancient Indian settlements at the site and the geological aspects of the gorge and escarpment during the period (some 12,000 years) when Niagara Falls had worked its way from there to its present site six or seven miles upstream. The finished "piece" used pulverized red Queenstone shale, the rock native to that area, rubbed onto a "fall" of paper that ran 420 feet down the side of the Niagara gorge at a spot where water had once fallen.[67]

Sayerville Strata Quartet (1976) and *Tompkins Cove Quarry* (1977) contain a range of subtle and rich colors as actual evidence of different layers of geological strata uncovered at their sites. The word strata perfectly evokes the works' simultaneous evidence of painterly illusion, tactile surfaces, and sculptural reality. "At exhibitions," Stuart says, "people creep up and touch....As the paper becomes worked, to me it feels like skin, the most delicate, soft, and warmest of surfaces."[68]

In 1976, Lippard noted that Stuart and Graves were among a group of women who had pioneered in a new form of landscape art, making work that was both specific and general, confined to an object and at the same time implying gigantic spans of geological time, and macro- and micro-cosmic views of nature. Their methods, she observed, included notation, fragmentation, mapping, and an obsessive relationship to the earth and the sea, "not as places to conquer, but as places to identify, and perhaps to identify with, forming an associative web of factual and visual material."[69]

The following year, the work of Graves, Hesse, Stuart, and Winsor appeared in an exhibition (aptly titled *Strata*) at the Vancouver Art Gallery. The exhibition, and Lippard's catalog essay, emphasized the critical links between the exploration of ideas, the boundaries of visual expression, and the limitless expanses of the human mind. Lippard's 1977 essay, "Quite Contrary: Body, Nature, Ritual in Women's Art," contained her strongest assertion of women's contributions to a unique synthetic expression that drew on a set of rich and wide-ranging cultural associations with the feminine.[70] Lippard was also one of the first critics to write about the work of the young Mendieta.

In 1972 Mendieta (who had come to the United States from Cuba as an adolescent), realizing that painting was not "real" enough to convey what she sought ("...by real I mean I wanted my images to have power, to be magic"), began carrying on a dialogue with the landscape and the female body based on her own silhouette.[71] At the time she made this remark, the artist was still in graduate school at the University of Iowa. Her first works using her own body—its traces, outline, blood—became a way of marking cultural and personal dislocations through imprinting signs of her presence/absence, location/dislocation directly on the earth. Using gunpowder, fire, candles, mud, etc., she traced her fugitive passage across multiple landscapes from North America to Mexico and Europe in works like *Silhueta de cenzias* (1975) and *Burial of the Nanigo* (1976) with their rich overlays of spiritual beliefs, bodily investiture, and geographic tracings.

Deliberately drawing on the embodied and the experiential, the artists in *More Than Minimal* have played important roles in opening minimalism to more conceptual practices. They moved toward personalizing forms, materials, and actions (without reverting to the directly illustrative or figurative) in ways that would leave their mark on a wide range of artistic practices in the seventies. Engaging audiences viscerally as well as visually, they kept alive the notion of an artistic practice informed by notions of community and interrelationship in ways that both intersected with, and departed from, the concerns of the women's movement.[72]

The inclusion of the work of Benglis, Hesse, Rockburne, and Winsor in *A View of a Decade*, a major survey held at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago in 1977, suggested that the work of women artists was indeed being accepted in the broader art world as innovative and important as the work of their male colleagues. A year later, April Kingsley, writing in *Arts Magazine*, noted that now that the pioneering days of working in the landscape are over, women appeared to be making most of the truly innovative moves in this genre...."[73]

Within a few years, the art world would find itself caught up in the search for new styles, and new heroes. Expressionism would be claimed as "new" and male. Marcia Tucker and others would begin to question just exactly what had changed for women since 1970.[74] Yet despite growing evidence that gains won are to be measured against gains lost, the work in *More Than Minimal* stands as testimony to women's contributions to articulating a modernist territory that registers the signs of ambition *and* compassion, individuality *and* community, intellect *and* spirit. We could do worse than to end with the words of Dorothea Rockburne: "Life is to do your work and to be happy."

Whitney Chadwick has written widely on surrealism, feminism, and contemporary art. Her books include *Myth in Surrealist Painting* (1980), *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement* (1985), *Women, Art, and Society* (1990), and *Significant Others: Creativity and Intimate Partnership* (coedited with Isabelle de Courtivron).

Much of the material in this essay was drawn from conversations with the artists that took place in October and November 1995. I would like to thank Lynda Benglis, Jackie Ferrara, Mary Miss, Dorothea Rockburne, Michelle Stuart, and Jackie Winsor for sharing their stories and their insights with generosity and good humor. Unless otherwise stated, direct quotations are taken from these interviews. Joyce Kozloff read and commented on a draft of the manuscript; Katherine Russell contributed valuable research support; Susan Stoops and Carl Belz of the Rose Art Museum provided invaluable support and encouragement. My thanks and appreciation to all who shared in this enterprise.

1. Cited in Anne M. Wagner, "Another Hesse," *October* 69 (summer 1994): 83.

2. There are, of course exceptions to this polarization, and interesting discussions of the possible relationship between gender and modernist abstraction are provided by Briony Fer, "What's In a Line: Gender and Modernity," *The Oxford Art Journal* 13 (1990): 77-88; Anna C. Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts Magazine* 64 (December 1989): 44-63; and Ann Gibson, "Color and Difference in Abstract Painting: The Ultimate Case of Monochrome," *Genders* 13 (spring 1992): 123-152.

3. Lucy Lippard borrowed the psychological term "body ego" to refer to the viewer's visceral response to form and material that registered in this way; she was one of the first to point out these connections.

4. See, for example, Carrie Rickey, "Why Women Don't Express Themselves," *The Village Voice* (November 2, 1982), with its indictment of the exclusionary politics of a group of recent international exhibitions; also, Mira Schor, "Backlash and Appropriation," in *The Power of Feminist Art*, 248-263, and Marcia Tucker, "Women Artists Today: Revolution or Regression," in *Making Their Mark: Women Artists Move Into the Mainstream, 1970-1985* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), 197-202. Few of the women in the present exhibition are included in *The Power of Feminist Art*, eds. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Abrams, 1994), the most comprehensive account of the movement's impact on the visual arts to date, and only the work of Lynda Benglis, Ana Medieta, and Hannah Wilke (who directly imaged the female body) is reproduced. And in a recent essay on public art, a genre in which at least half the artists working today are women, Michael Brenson reaffirmed a decidedly one-sided historical model when he noted that, "None of the artists in 'Culture in Action' is known as an object-maker. All are known for collaborations. All are activists. Almost all belong to the tradition of socially based community or interactive art that includes the Russian Constructivists, Joseph Beuys, the Situationists, Alan Kaprow, and Christo—a tradition that has never been fully at home in galleries and museums"; *Culture in Action*, eds. Mary Ann Jacob, Michael Brenson and Eva M. Olson (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).

5. I am thinking here of feminist narratives that assume that a shift from abstraction to figuration accompanies the search for a more "personal" content as, for example, when Miriam Schapiro and Judy Chicago moved from a use of abstraction that they identified with a male-dominated modernism to more specifically referential styles in the early seventies. It is also worth noting in this context that the close identification between figuration and feminist content has led to some notable exclusions from recent feminist histories. In a review of *The Power of Feminist Art*, the most comprehensive account of the movement's impact on the visual arts to date, Ann Lee Morgan notes that despite 16 essays, two interviews, and nearly 300 illustrations, the book "fails to acknowledge much of the most significant and innovative women's art of the decade....work that deviates from male-derived models but also validates women's ability to achieve at a level that equaled men's in originality, aesthetic sophistication, and visual power"; *The Art Journal* (winter 1995), 103.

6. The contributions of artists of color, for example, have yet to be fully integrated into accounts of post-World War II American modernism. Yet during the sixties and seventies, heated debates about the relationship between style and content, and the relevance of abstract styles derived from European art to the African-American struggle, occurred. A case in point is the response of many African-American critics to Barbara Chase-Riboud's abstract work when it was exhibited in the *Whitney Annual* in 1970; see Mary Schmidt-Campbell, ed., *Tradition and Conflict: Images of a Turbulent Decade, 1963-1973* (New York: The Studio Museum in Harlem, 1985). In her 1980 catalog introduction to *Dialectics of Isolation: An Exhibition of Third World Women Artists* (New York: A.I.R. Gallery, 1980), Ana Mendieta noted another set of exclusionary practices: "During the mid to late sixties as women in the United States politicized themselves and came together in the Feminist Movement with the purpose to end the domination and exploitation by the white male culture, they failed to remember us. American feminism as it stands is basically a white middle class movement."

7. Benglis defines humanism as "the ability to see things of one particular context in relation to other contextual situations"; "Interview: Linda Benglis," *Ocular* 4 (summer 1979): 35.

8. Young women artists were often scarcely aware of the presence of other women; "There weren't any women in New York in 1967," Jackie Winsor observed, looking back at the period of her arrival in the city. For Dorothea Rockburne, who had been living and working in New York since the late fifties, invisibility had its liberating side. "Since women weren't allowed to show, I just thought I was making (it for) myself," she recalled of the period around 1966 when she switched from creasing metal to using more impermanent materials like paper and board; "...since it's never going to sell, what the hell."

9. One way the impact of the women's movement might be measured is in the subsequent tendency to assign all of the artists in *More Than Minimal* to a generation of women artists who are seen as having "emerged" professionally around 1970, despite considerable variations in chronological age and exhibition histories. Moreover, the career patterns of women seldom parallel those of their male colleagues as can be observed, for example, in the prevalence of mid-career retrospectives for male artists and the number of women (including Louise Bourgeois, Lee Krasner, and Alice Neel) who receive similar recognition only when they reach their sixties and seventies.

10. The terms originate with Lucy Lippard, Robert Morris, and Robert Pincus-Witten. The tendencies were first identified in the exhibitions *Abstract Inflationism and Stuffed Expressionism* at the Graham Gallery and *Eccentric Abstraction* at the Fischbach Gallery. The exhibition at the Fischbach Gallery was organized by Lucy Lippard, whose curatorial, activist, and critical activities over the next few years would contribute mightily to establishing a place for women artists in an aesthetic that opposed an expanded repertory of sculptural materials and a set of quirky, process-oriented methods stressing fluidity and indeterminacy to minimal art's fixed geometries and obsession with the object. The convergence of Lippard's interest in anti-form or process work, and her growing commitment to the women's movement, had important implications for the careers of many of the artists in *More Than Minimal.* She not only identified new sensibilities and conceptualized emerging tendencies in a series of formative exhibitions and publications, she also committed her activist politics to effecting social change for women in the

art world. Her voice and her example are everywhere evident in the events that defined new roles for women artists' in the early seventies. Critic Robert Pincus-Witten soon offered the term post-minimal to encompass the divergent attitudes and styles of artists from Lynda Benglis, Mel Bochner, Eva Hesse, and Sol LeWitt to Robert Morris, Bruce Naumann, Dorothea Rockburne, Richard Serra, and Keith Sonnier.
11. Lippard's monograph, *Eva Hesse* (New York: New York University Press) appeared in 1976, six years after the artist's death from a brain tumor and four years after the first retrospective of her work, *Eva Hesse: A Memorial Exhibition* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1972); for a more recent critical perspective, see *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992).
12. Cited in Wagner, 29.
13. Lippard, *Eva Hesse*, 113.
14. Wagner, 63. It is, as Wagner observes, difficult if not impossible to consider women's deployment of the body independently of the meanings assigned to the female body by feminism. Yet much of this work predated feminism.
15. Ibid, 57.
16. *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 201-224; Hesse's last remarks may reflect a consciousness of her status in relation to current art world issues shaped by inclusion in her first major museum exhibition. Curator Marcia Tucker, after noting that our assumptions about art include strong notions of the artist as someone who creates order from the chaos of experience, suggested that; "The present exhibition challenges this supposition. We are offered an art that presents itself as disordered, chaotic, or anarchic. Such an art deprives us of the fulfillment of our aesthetic expectations and offers, instead, an experience that cannot be anticipated nor immediately understood"; *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1969), 26.
17. Benglis's remarks appeared in a special number of *ART News* in 1971 on the subject of "Women's Liberation." She was one of eight contemporary artists invited to respond to Linda Nochlin's groundbreaking essay, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" Her observations are consistent with Hesse's earlier remarks in response to Nemser's question as to whether she thought in terms of female and male forms: "I don't see that at all. I'm not saying female/male when I work at it and even though I recognize that is going to be said, I cancel that....If sensitivity means female, yes, it's female. I think my work is very strong and yet sensitive so there you have both so-called masculine and feminine;" cited in Lippard, *Eva Hesse*, 206.
18. Bruce Nauman's *Wax Impressions of the Knees of Five Famous Artists*, Alan Saret's tangled rubber and mesh conglomerations alluding to metaphysical and spiritual quests, and Richard Serra's lead splashes, among other works, all sought to infuse material with a new content, often based in the body, at this time.
19. See Leslie C. Jones, "Transgressive Femininity: Art and Gender in the Sixties and Seventies," in *Abject Art* (New York: The Whitney Museum of American Art, 1994), 33-57.
20. Joanna Freuh, *Hannah Wilke: A Retrospective* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 99, note 3; Freuh argues that, "It was Wilke, not Judy Chicago as some believe, who originated vaginal imagery, as signature, as feminist statement, and as universal symbol"; 15. The work of women artists of earlier generations anticipates this development, but it is worth noting that O'Keeffe felt obligated to deny corporeal references altogether, Louise Bourgeois's work had not yet entered the critical discourse in a significant way, and issues of the body were largely disregarded in a critical rush to annex Lee Bontecou to modernist models as an exceptional woman.
21. Called *Soft and Apparently Soft Sculpture*.
22. See Dean Sobel, "Jackie Winsor's Sculpture: Mediation, Revelation, and Aesthetic Demoncracy," in *Jackie Winsor* (Milwaukee: The Milwaukee Art Museum, 1991), 17-45.
23. Rockburne regarded set theory as a mathematical concept that marked the moment when mathematicians ceased thinking in terms of discrete units and began taking into account a kind of global sense of the world. This view aligns her work with that of other women of her generation who sought broader cultural connections while employing the language of abstraction.
24. *Artforum* 8 (September 1969): 60-61.
25. "I saw it was a big macho game," she later said, "a big, heroic, Abstract Expressionist, macho, sexist game. It's all about territory. How big?"; cited in Robert Pincus-Witten, "The Frozen Gesture," *Artforum* 13 (November 1974): 54-59; see also Rosalind Krauss's discussion in "The Double Negative: A New Syntax for Sculpture," in *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992), 243-288.
26. The Whitney was responding, at least in part, to pressure from women's groups. Exhibitions of the work of Louise Nevelson and Georgia O'Keeffe had (belatedly some would say) already been scheduled for 1970.
27. Abstraction may have been the dominant language of modernist sculpture in 1969, but an important acknowledgment of new concerns with figuration is evident in the previous year's *Realism Now*, organized by Linda Nochlin at the Vassar College Art Gallery. See also *Nancy Graves: A Survey 1969/1980* (Buffalo: The Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1980). Essay by Linda Cathcart; *Nancy Graves: Sculpture/Drawings/Films 1969-1991* (Aachen: Neue Galerie im Alten Kunst, 1971); *The Sculpture of Nancy Graves: A Catalogue Raisonne*. New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1987.
28. The Graves quote is in *Nancy Graves: Camels* (New York: The Whitney Museum of American Art, 1969): n.p.; Frankenstein's review appeared in the *San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle* (6 April 1969); a related view was expressed by Martin Cassidy of the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology at The American Museum of Natural History in New York, who wrote in 1971 that the skeletons were "beyond osteology....haunting structural evocations which go beyond the elementary relationship of their individual parts"; the text of his letter is reprinted in *Nancy Graves: Sculpture/Drawings/Films 1969-1971*.
29. "I don't think art is either male or female...," Benglis later remarked. "I wanted to see something that didn't have to do with geometry, that had to do with organic phenomena...and I didn't see that happening."
30. Lippard notes that Hesse was aware of the fact that the legacy of Abstract Expressionist heroics left no place for the woman artist; in the same paragraph, Lippard quotes Sol LeWitt as saying: "She was very hurt by this first confrontation with art politics and anti-feminism, which was so obvious." "The critical neglect of Hesse's achievements and refusal to take her as seriously as the other artists," (in *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials*) Lippard observed, "can probably be ascribed to the fact that as a woman, she couldn't *be* the 'new' Pollock." (Lippard's italics); *Eva Hesse*, 137.
31. The first of the activist women's groups, among them Women Artists in Revolution (WAR) and Women Artists and Students for Black Art Liberation (WASABL) also date from this period.
32. Miss, who had picketed the Whitney Museum shortly after arriving in New York in 1969, joined Stuart and Ferrara in working on the Women's Art Registry (one of their activities was to apply for grants in support of Lippard's many projects that included women).
33. *Ocular*, 26.
34. Benglis has acknowledged that she is aware that in the beginning her work was often selected for exhibitions because of the activities of the early women's movement. She feels this was also true of the feature article that appeared in 1970, which also featured the work of Eva Hesse, Richard Serra, and Richard Van Buren; see David Bourdon, "Fling, Dribble, Dip," *Life Magazine* 68 no. 7, (27 February 1970): 62-66.
35. See Kane, *Lynda Benglis*, 40.
36. Cited in Lucy Lippard, "Distancing: The Films of Nancy Graves," *Art in America* 63 (November-December, 1975), 79.
37. Robert Arn observed that Graves's drawings of the early seventies "are like geological sedimentary layers covering an ancient site and drawn over with the graffiti of succesive cultures up to the present; "The Moving Eye...Nancy Graves Sculpture, Film, and Painting," *artscanada* nos. 188/189, (spring 1974), 45.
38. Ibid.
39. Kane, 26; there is some irony in the fact that Benglis's point of reference here was Pollock's environmental gesture. Pollock's often-quoted remark "I am nature" aligns nature with masculinity, a point often lost in early feminist analyses.
40. "They are spiritual," she has said of these forms. "What interested me in the totems and the knots that followed was the quality that I found in African sculpture....That quality was the repose and the tension inherent in the form." *Ocular*, 41; see also *Lynda Benglis, Keith Sonnier: A Ten Year Retrospective 1977-1987*. Essay by Carter Ratcliffe (Alexandria, Louisiana: Alexandria Museum of Art, 1987). This cross-cultural search for abstract forms invested with spiritual/emotional content, and the subsequent appropriation and recontextualization of those forms, recalls earlier modernist, i.e., cubist and expressionist, borrowings. Whether we view it as a

late manifestation of what James Clifford and others have called "the West's desire to collect the world," or as anticipating post-modernism's obsession with the appropriated image, is perhaps less important than that we recognize that it took place in a social context that encouraged a global search for affinities.
41. Pincus-Witten, "Jackie Ferrara: The Feathery Elevator," *Arts Magazine* (November 1976): 108. Pincus-Witten overlooks here a broad category of surrealist objects that fit his description equally well. A closer source comes from Eva Hesse, whose work Ferrara had seen at the Owens-Corning Fiberglass Center in New York in 1970. At the time she was impressed by Hesse's use of modular, irregular forms and offbeat materials.
42. In the performance, a female performer dragged a quarter ton of rope (which had a tensile strength of a quarter-million pounds) thirty feet across the floor of the basement and fed it up through a small circular hole to a male performer poised above. He made a pile of it, and then lowered it back down onto the now reclining female performer so that she was completely covered; see Lisa Bear, "An Interview with Jackie Winsor," *Avalanche* (spring 1972): 11.
43. By 1974, critics would increasingly complain about the gendering of women's productions. "I am tired of people's one-sided involvement with Hannah Wilke's art," Edit de Ak wrote in 1974, "of their protestations that it is so erotic, so sexy....Of course, Wilke's art *is* sexy and erotic, and she *does* make feminine art, but what if we look at her art as *art*, as regular art—the way we look at male art..."; *Art in America* vol. 62, (May/June 1974): 110.
44. "The restriction to women's art has its obviously polemical 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," Lippard argued in her introduction to the catalog of *Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists* (Ridgefield, Connecticut: The Aldrich Museum, 1971).
45. Kingsley, 69-73.
46. Although critics writing from the perspective of the eighties often linked central core imagery to the search for essential biological differences between women and men, from the beginning Chicago and Schapiro warned against the dangers of failing to take into account the ways that female experience is socially and culturally shaped, rather than biologically determined. In "Female Imagery," they cautioned that the imagery they described should not be viewed simplistically as "vaginal or womb art," but should by understood as providing a framework within which to reverse devaluations of female anatomy in patriarchal culture; *Womanspace* (spring 1973).
47. Lippard, "What is Female Imagery?" originally printed in *Ms.* 3 no. 11, (May 1975); reprinted in *From the Center: Femnist Essays on Women's Art* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1976), 81.
48. While Chicago and Schapiro pointed to prototypes in the work of O'Keeffe and other women artists, other critics argued against celebrating difference in the terms in which it had already been laid down.
49. *Ocular*, 34; "I felt feminist was going to be a distraction to the larger body of my work, but I thought it was a distraction I could see through."
50. *Female Sensibility* was one in a series of videotapes that Benglis made in the 1970s, the first of which was *The Amazing Bow-Wow* (made at Artpark with filmaker and video artist Stanton Kay and featuring Benglis wearing the costume of a conspicuously hermaphroditic dog with large, brightly painted double-sexed genitalia), which Benglis described as "about the repression of humanism using sexuality as a medium (*Ocular*, 35). Likewise, both *Document* and *Now* were concerned with the binary relationship between male and female, and a presentation of eroticism as metaphorically male and female, slave and master.
51. Dorothy Seiberlin,"The New Sexual Frankness: Good-by to Hearts and Flowers,"*New York Magazine* (17 February 1975), 42.
52. *Hannah Wilke: A Retrospective* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 20.
53. See, for example, the review of Wilke's first one-person exhibition at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, Inc., in *Arts Magazine* 47 (November 1972): 72; also, Mark Savitt, "Hannah Wilke: The Pleasure Principle," *Arts Magazine* 50 (September 1975): 56-57; Cindy Nemser, "Four Artists of Sensuality," *Arts Magazine* 49 (March 1975): 74. Lippard also attempted to isolate the distinctions between male and female body art in her article, "The Pains and Pleasures of Rebirth: European and American Women's Body Art," *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (New York: Dutton, 1976), 121. When asked to address the question, "What is feminism and what can it become?" Wilke responded with a poster emblazoned with the slogan "Marxism and Art: Beware of Fascist Feminism," below an image from the *S.O.S.* series of chewing-gum forms used as beauty marks *cum* scarifications. Male artists like Chris Burden, who had himself shot in the arm by a friend in 1971, and Vito Acconci, who masturbated under a wooden gallery floor in *Seedbed* (1971), were often applauded for stretching limits—both of art and of the body. Women tended to attract very different critical responses. For critics like Max Kozloff, Burden's and Acconci's voluntary embrace of extreme states of physical punishment was testimony to the male body's capacity for strength and endurance. In contrast, he positioned women's body art as an inquiry into surface and appearance, and suggested that Wilke's and Benglis's performances were styled "to conform to the image of the glamorous sex object—with the usual glorified epidermis"; Max Kozloff, "Pygmalion Reversed," *Artforum* 14 (November 1975): 30.
54. See note 53, above. In a 1972 review of an exhibition of Wilke's vaginal shaped sculpture, her work was described as having an "overriding sense of delicacy and taste that restrains them in a state of overt, decorative pubescence;" *Arts Magazine* 47 (November 1972): 72. Citing Benglis's statement that her latex pour sculptures were related to masturbation, critic Cindy Nemser posited a clearly and biologically defined masculinity and femininity, and advocated a celebration of the vaginal and recognizably female as a way to combat the privilege assigned to the phallus; "Four Artists of Sensuality," *Arts Magazine* 49 (March 1975): 74. I am grateful to Maureen Branley, M.A. candidate in art history at San Francisco State University, for pointing out this critical tendency.
55. Benglis, who has looked to Greece and India for alternative social models of gender, has described the wax paintings she executed concurrently with the foam pours as "like masturbating in my studio, nutshell paintings dealing with male/female symbols, the split and the coming together. They are both oral and genital. But I don't want to get Freudian; they're also Jungian, Yin-Yang"; "Frozen Gesture," 151. Much has been made of Benglis's reference to masturbation, but the association seems clearly intended as an ironic commentary, a feminized process of stroking the wax on over and over that parodied Renoir's often-quoted remark, "I paint with my prick," and part of an ongoing attempt to appropriate and subvert the gendered mark of male histories.
56. "Sense and Sensibility: Reflections on Post '60s Sculpture," *Artforum* (November 1973): 49.
57. Winsor's attention to physical process has often elicited feminist readings suggesting a self-conscious articulation

of aspects of female domestic work, which are repetitive and labor-intensive. The artist, however, insists that she was instead motivated by the connection between physical activity and the emotional experience of being alive, seeking through repetitive physical activity a sense of connectedness with the world outside.
58. See Robert Pincus-Witten, "Mel and Dorothea: Rehearsing One's Coolness," *Eye to Eye: Twenty Years of Art Criticism* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1984), 207-228.
59. "Excerpts from a Conversation with Chuck Close and Dorothea Rockburne," in *Dorothea Rockburne: The Transcendant Light of Geometry* (Easthampton: The Guild Hall Museum, 1995), n.p.
60. *Artforum* (February 1971): 75. The works in her 1971 exhibition at the Bykert Gallery dealt with relationships and oppositions summed up in the terms Intersection, Union, Complementation, Disjunction, Substitution, and Synthesis. Rockburne's concerns were echoed in 1976 when an exhibition of items from Hesse's estate took place at the Droll/Kolbert Gallery. It included many early drawings with titles that suggest not only an ongoing interest in time, but also in linking and connection (*Accretion*, *Expanded Expansion*, *Connection*, *Contingent*, *Sequel*, *Repetition*, etc.).
61. Lippard saw evidence of scientific detachment in them, "from which emerges sheer pictorial splendor and grandeur; see "Distancing: The Films of Nancy Graves," *Art in America* 63 (November 1975): 78-82.
62. The mysteriously allusive quality of these wood pieces led Roberta Smith to conclude that Morton had turned installation art into "gently constructed rather humorous meditations on the difference between art and nature, sculpture and drawing, abstraction and narrative;" *The New York Times* (12 August 1988).
63. Robert Smithson, Dennis Oppenheim, Walter De Maria, and others, encouraged by Conceptualism's rejection of the art object as commodity and by the emerging environmental movement, were also working in public spaces by the end of the 1960s.
64. For a fuller elaboration of these connections, see Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).
65. Quoted in *Sitings*, 108.
66. Cited in Phil Patton, "Sculpture the Mind Can Use," *ARTnews* (March 1982): 108.
67. See Corinne Robins, "The Paper Surfaces of Michelle Stuart," *Arts Magazine* (December 1976): 62-66; describing the results of Stuart's rock drawings as "fields of light made from grinding down pieces of the earth," Corinne Robins has related Stuart's glowing surfaces to Rothko's and Newman's abstract sublimity. Living in Albuquerque on a Ford Foundation printmaking grant, Stuart visited prehistoric Indian sites and contemporary pueblos, and read travel, archaeology, and anthropology books about the area. In the course of a subsequent summer in New Hampshire, she worked out the concept of putting earth and rocks on the surface of the heavy muslin-backed paper that she was using while at the site, smashing the rocks into the paper and rubbing the residue for extended periods of time with her hand until its colors were imprinted into the fibers of the paper.
68. Ibid., 111.
69. *Ms. Magazine* (1976); reprinted in *From the Center*, 109-120, 110.
70. "Quite Contrary: Body, Nature, Ritual in Women's Art," *Chrysalis* 2 (1977): 31-47.
71. Cited in Petra Barreras del Rio, "Ana Mendieta: A Historical Overview," *Ana Mendieta: A Retrospective* (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1987), 28-51; Irit Rogoff, "Terra Infirma: Geographies and Identities," *Camera Austria* no. 43-44, (1993): 70-81.
72. In 1977, in one of the first feminist essays to address the issue of the role of abstraction in feminist art, artist and critic Harmony Hammond observed that of the many articles written on feminist art that tried to define a feminist sensibility, few went beyond the recognition that feminist art is based on the personal experiences of women. Acknowledging that the identification of formalist criticism with an exclusionary modernism had often resulted in feminist writings devoted solely to political issues, she argued that abstract art might also have a feminist, and therefore political—rather than elitist—basis. Although abstraction has often supported myths of the artist as an alienated and isolated (male) genius, and has absorbed an illusion of apolitical objectivity," Hammond suggests that if one were to look broadly enough across histories and cultures, another kind of history of abstract form might be written, one in which women's cultural productions—from weaving to basketry—play a central role.
73. "...male 'earthworks' are public objects that externalize the values of society in the traditional ways art has always done, whereas the women's works are private places made for interiorizing values and universal experiences....One senses a rapport with their site and their materials, rather than a victory over them....Finally, while most of the well-known works by men spring from Minimal sensibility, those by women lean toward an Expressionist or Surrealist aesthetic instead. Rarely do they pit the man-made against nature in a simplistic way"; "Six Women At Work in the Landscape," *Arts Magazine* (April 1978): 108.
74. "Women Artists Today: Revolution or Regression?" in *Making Their Mark*, 200.

From Eccentric To Sensuous Abstraction: An Interview With Lucy Lippard

Susan Stoops: In the introduction to From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art *(1976), you declared that "the women's movement changed my life in many ways, not the least being my approach to criticism." Several of the artists interviewed for this project commented on the extreme isolation of their experiences as young artists in New York in the late sixties when a consciousness of women artists was virtually nonexistent. Equally vivid were their memories of the dramatic changes that occurred circa 1970, with their first awareness of one another and sense of an extensive community of working women artists. They also remarked upon the importance of your early support in a variety of roles—as writer, curator, and activist.*

Looking back, how would you characterize your own situation as a woman in the art community in New York during that time and the changes that occurred circa 1970? What contemporary cultural developments circa 1970, crystallized in particular works, people, or events, impacted your sense of a shift in the status (and visibility) of feminism in art? How was your own work as a writer impacted by your exchanges with this generation of women artists in New York?

Lucy Lippard: In 1969 I resisted the invitation to join the first feminist art group I ran into—WAR, Women Artists in Revolution, which was associated with the Artworkers Coalition. I'd been raised to take the side of the "underdog" but I had never seen myself as *being* one. As a kind of tomboy, I had also grown up understanding that women were cut out of a lot of the action, and perceived as inferior. So I didn't really think I was one of *them* either, even though I had the greatest admiration for many women I knew. (We were all "exceptions.") My mother was a strong, intelligent woman, and a good writer. But after World War II, she stopped working and opted not to "do" anything aside from civic volunteerism. It was a model I was determined not to follow. By the time I got out of college (in 1958), I saw myself as a "person" rather than a woman (ironically, since I later spent a decade arguing against that kind of gender-vagueness).

By 1969 I'd been publishing for over four years. As a freelance writer, I was never aware of discrimination per se, since I never knew what jobs I didn't get, what the men were being paid. I loved writing and made enough to live on and to support my kid. I hung out with pop, minimal, and conceptual artists. I was having a fine old time. My record on writing about women wasn't bad, especially considering how few women were showing then. I knew and respected a number of women artists (among them Eva Hesse, Jo Baer, June Leaf, Nancy Graves, Lee Bontecou, Lee Lozano, Ruth Vollmer, Nancy Holt, Christine Kozlov, Dorothea Rockburne) and of course, I knew the work of Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Georgia O'Keeffe, as well as the "second generation abstract expressionists" like Grace Hartigan, Helen Frankenthaler, and Joan Mitchell. But I wasn't really aware how hard things were for my women artist friends until a feminist analysis came to light. They themselves, of course, had a clearer picture, but they didn't talk about it in political terms; I suspect they were conflicted the same way I was—identifying with men rather than women even as men were excluding them.

The women's movement had been happening for two or three years by 1969 but news hadn't reached many of us stuck in the art world. I had literally never heard of it until WAR brought the word. (Nancy Spero, Vernita Nemec, Jackie Skiles, Dolores Holmes, and Juliet Gordon were some of the women active in WAR.) I'd recently become an activist opposing the Vietnam War and racism. Sexism seemed an embarrassing addition, but at least I understood the need to support the women in WAR politically before I identified with them emotionally. They didn't really push me, but they did tell me I was the kind of woman who should be with them. I just didn't get it yet.

At the same time I was kind of preparing myself on some subconscious level. I find myself often looking back to *Eccentric Abstraction,* the first exhibition I curated, in 1966. It included Eva Hesse, Louise Bourgeois, and Alice Adams (with Bruce Nauman, Frank Lincoln Viner, Keith Sonnier, Don Potts, and Gary Kuehn). Given a good dose of hindsight, I can see now that I was looking for "feminist art." I was looking for sensuous, even sensual, abstraction, an off-center, three-dimensional imagery that shared

minimalism's bluntness and presence but didn't cut off all content, all kinesthetic and emotional associations. After 1966 so-called "process art" emerged, reintroducing change and touch. I got more and more involved with a "dematerialized" conceptual art that was supposed to avoid commodification and reintroduce content. Again, with hindsight, that led directly into feminism and performance.

Anyway, in early 1970, I spent a few months in an isolated fishing village in Spain (of all places) with my 5-year-old son and wrote a novel (*I See/You Mean*, published nine years later by Chrysalis Press). That was really what brought me around to feminism. I'd planned the book as a rather contrived conceptual game, very much influenced by the art I was writing about at the time. (It was going to be nothing but descriptions of group photographs and an index and the poor reader was supposed to pore over these "clues" to the plot.) But I was away from the art world and the book took on its own life. The characters began to tell their own stories, and only the framework ended up "conceptual." It wasn't autobiographical but there was a character I definitely identified with. As I was writing her, or she was writing me, which is what it felt like, a lot of stuff started to seep through the cracks of my resistance to the women's movement. I found that I was writing about a *woman* (surprise surprise), and I was forced to explore what that meant to me, intellectually and sexually. (I fantasized all kinds of gender mixes and mirrors, which John Kaufman has recently written about as proto post-modernism!) I think what really happened was that writing the book gave me the courage to become a feminist, to kick some of the old conditioned habits in life and in writing. Conceptual ideas had already freed up my writing considerably. I did collaborations with artists, trying to stretch criticism to the point where I was sometimes accused of being an artist.

When I got back to New York in June 1970, Kent State and the bombing of Cambodia had happened. The Artworkers Coalition had spawned Art Strike. Everybody was in a furor and the women were getting madder and madder as they began to understand the lousy deal the art world was handing them. (The AWC has started as an artists' rights organization.) In the fall Brenda Miller and Poppy Johnson got me and Faith Ringgold to join them to do something about it. By then I was finally ready. We made a list of all the working women artists we could think of (horrifyingly few) and started the Ad Hoc Women Artists' Committee. We began to unearth the women who weren't showing, the women working in studios in the city and in the suburbs, who had been working away since art school with little hope of ever getting anywhere in the art world. When they presented their work, some of them were scared to say they were married, or had children, because it would make them look like dilettantes, not "serious artists." In Ad Hoc, I began to hear the stories, the insults and indignities and downright tragedies that were happening in art schools, galleries, museums. They were almost incredible to me (I'd gone to a women's college), and then enraging. And that was the second lightning bolt, the beginning of "sisterhood."

We began Ad Hoc primarily to protest the paucity of women in the *Whitney Annuals*. I've written about that—the weekly protest, the faked press release purporting to be from the Whitney, saying how proud they were to be the first museum to have a show that was 50 percent women (and 50 percent "non-white"), the faked invitations to the opening, the attempt to show women's slides on the outside of the museum and the sit-in at the opening....

We started the Women's Art Registry so when the institutions told us, as they constantly did, "There are no women who....(make sculpture, do conceptual art, work with technology, etc. etc.)," we could throw a huge batch of images at them and say, "Oh yeah? Take a look at this." When word of the Registry got out, women artists came out of the woodwork and it was absolutely fascinating to see the work that they were doing. A great deal of it was abstract, although it turned out sometimes that the same women also did much more private, personal, less neutral work, but didn't show it, didn't send it out.

If you're missing Theory in all this, it's because I've always been far more driven by lived experience. As in the past, my major influence was the artists themselves—their work and the issues they raised about art and life, the personal and the political. The energy around women and women's work at the time was electrifying. After 1970 I did, of course, begin reading a lot of feminist authors. They reinforced and complicated what I was hearing in meetings and consciousness raising, but I based most of my own writing on what I was seeing in the art world from day to day. Linda Nochlin's writing was particularly important within the art world because it was so well argued, so persuasive coming from such a respected art historian.

I hate it when people inaccurately assume that I "found feminism" and dumped my minimalist husband and friends. When I became a feminist I'd already split up with my husband, Robert Ryman, several years before. I continued to love his work and continued to be close to minimalist/conceptualist friends, especially Sol LeWitt. I was writing a book on Ad Reinhardt, who had died in 1967, though it wasn't published for over a decade. And I was living with Seth Siegelaub, the organizing genius of the decentralized conceptual exhibition and the artist's book as art or art show. A lot of the women who came to the Ad Hoc meetings were already friends from that milieu. They were working in more or less minimalist styles, painting especially. But they were giving the dominant styles a different twist, or many different twists, like the women in *Eccentric Abstraction*.

I was trying to do the same in my criticism, to make it more compatible with the art I was writing about. Where conceptualism had loosened up my style, the women's art loosened up my feelings. I forced myself to let my defenses down, to say things that could be attacked, that would put me in the same vulnerable place that their work (and our activism) was putting them. It was scary and exhilarating to become a "woman-identified woman" (a phrase coined by and for lesbians but defined expansively, as gender, so that other feminists could also adopt it, as I did, because it expressed exactly where I was at.) I used to compare becoming a feminist to jumping off a building and deciding half way down that it wasn't such a good idea. Too late.

S.S.: In 1971, you published Changing: Essays in Art Criticism*, devoted largely to what you have described as "male minimalism" and conceptual art. Certain women were mentioned in various essays but the monographs were devoted exclusively to male artists. "I knew women artists whose work I respected immensely, but somehow I hadn't gotten around to writing about them yet." Throughout the text you defend art that deviates from modernist orthodoxy and formalist norms: eccentric abstraction, irregular structures, the absence of order, organic or erotic metaphor, and a general broadening of aesthetic experiences. The reader also can detect in your observations a sense of urgency and discontent, as in your declaration that it was "time that the word intuitive regained its dignity and rejoined the word conceptual as a necessary aesthetic ingredient" and in your considerations of the public nature of art and criticism.*

What were the initial responses to the essays in Changing*? In retrospect, do you see a continuity between the detours from orthodox modernism you explored in* Changing *and those which you came to identify as feminist practices during the seventies?*

L.L.: I don't remember much about responses to *Changing*. I think it was favorably reviewed. Certainly there was a definite connection between my dissatisfaction with the art world and my feminism, although *Changing* was in press before I became a feminist. The two apparently contradictory threads in that book were Dada and Surrealism—my first loves—and Minimal abstraction. Both involved a certain iconoclasm and rebellion. One was about frantically taking things apart, about fragments; the other was about wholes, creating a tabula rasa in a different way. These were the two poles that I was trying to synthesize in *Eccentric Abstraction*. I was also beginning to think about public art, audience, communication. The populist I was to become was buried under there.

I had always defended the intuitive and had always been accused of being "illogical" and "irrational," which I was unreasonably proud of. Maybe I admired the blunt, hard-edged, obdurate side of minimalism and the cerebral, sometimes mathematical side of conceptualism because they were temperamentally foreign to me. Opposites attract, or something. What I didn't like was the exclusivity, the inaccessibility, the disregard for the audience. Women's work seemed much more open—to interpretation and communication, and on a formal level as well.

S.S.: In that same year, 1971, you curated Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists *(Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art), one of the first exhibitions predicated on the gender of the artist, and in doing so, you publicly acknowledged feminism as a necessary critical component of your work. In terms of the collective "wisdom" of the male-dominated and modernist set of standards at the time, what were the assumptions made about this curatorial departure and the art in the exhibition (*More Than Minimal *artists included were Mary Miss and Jackie Winsor)?*

L.L.: I think *Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists* may have been the first institutional all-women show in the framework of new feminism. There was at least one WAR show before that, at "Museum"—a loft space on Broadway where the AWC met. And then there is the history of academic women's art associations going back to the 19th century.

To spare myself too many heartbreaking choices, I included in *Twenty-six Women* only those who hadn't yet had a solo show in New York. Many of them worked in relatively "minimal" styles, including Jackie Winsor and Mary Miss (who are in your show), Alice Aycock, Howardena Pindell (who made a soft grid wall sculpture that captured just the kind of synthesis I was thinking about), Merrill Wagner, Dona Nelson, Mary Heilmann...Adrian Piper was just beginning to abandon conventional conceptual art and begin her totally original Catalysis works; she did one at the opening.

Larry Aldrich publicly disavowed the *Twenty-six Women* show, after treating some of the artists very badly. (I never knew why he wanted to do it; probably at the urging of his curator, Dottie Mayhall.) And it barely got reviewed. This was not a big surprise. There were all the usual silly arguments about all-women shows...as though we hadn't been seeing all-men shows for decades. Aside from an increasing number of women and

some male artist friends who were very supportive all through this period, the art world generally had a hard time seeing this work except through the lenses of male-dominated trends. Some people (mostly women), however, were beginning to be able to perceive the elements of women's lives beneath the surfaces of women's work, to recognize the ways this work differed from men's work that might look superficially similar.

S.S.: Following the publication of two influential texts in 1976, your first anthology of feminist essays in From the Center *and* Eva Hesse, *the first monograph on the artist, you organized the exhibition* Strata: Nancy Graves, Eva Hesse, Michelle Stuart, Jackie Winsor *(Vancouver Art Gallery, 1977). What was the curatorial/critical impulse behind this exhibition? Did* Strata *and the catalog essays reflect a convergence of cultural issues, aesthetic practices, and artists you had been exploring for several years?*

L.L.: I had by then written on all these artists and saw them as continuing the theme that started with *Eccentric Abstraction* and was leading into my book *Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory*. Winsor, Graves, and Stuart were all interested in "nature" (whatever that is). Their introduction of "natural" materials, forms, and processes into abstract frameworks subverted purism and conventional modernism. (Ree Morton was doing some similar things with natural and humanmade materials, and handwritten texts, although within a looser, more installational format that was very important but never "minimal"). Although Eva was decidedly a city girl and was coming from a different, interior place, her works, too, could be read as biomorphic and organic on some level. Her use of latex, which she knew would not have a long life, which would wilt or "go by" like plants, seemed particularly poignant in view of her cancer and death. Jackie's emphasis on wrestling rough or recalcitrant materials, either natural or industrial, into simple but evocative forms rejuvenated some exhausted ideas. Nancy had been working with maps, always fascinating in their pictorial beauty and abstraction of physical data. Michelle is into maps, too. I've felt a special connection to her work for years. We just like the same things—rocks, plants, dirt, maps, women travelers, old books, old photographs. Her process was a model for a lot of feminist artists, and she shared it with Hesse and Winsor—that obsessive and repetitive *caressing* of the materials and surfaces, an implied eroticism. Benglis's work, and Mendieta's much later non-photographic work, also incorporated an eroticism that underlay so much feminist art in the seventies. Sexuality was so much a part of both "female sensibility" in the arts and political "liberation" in feminism that it would have been strange if it hadn't been a major factor in the visual art as well. Visualizing and making are sensuous activities in themselves.

S.S: In an article published in 1980, "Sweeping Exchanges: The Contribution of Feminism to the Art of the 1970s," you announced, "Feminism's greatest contribution to the future of art has probably been precisely its lack of contribution to modernism." And in your recent introduction to The Pink Glass Swan: Selected Feminist Essays on Art *(1995) you offer the observation that "throughout the seventies, the way away from modernism was being paved by feminist mistrust of modernism's misogynist and authoritarian history and its alienation from audience."*

Is it accurate to say, then, that both your feminist writing and the feminist art practices you wrote about during the seventies were generated by a retreat from the formalist ideology of modernism? Did this necessarily imply a conscious distancing within feminist practices from abstraction? Would you go so far as to say that the dismantling of modernism was due to the contributions of feminism to contemporary culture?

L.L.: I certainly wouldn't call it a retreat from formalism. We just left it behind... or put it to the side, or relegated it to the bottom layer. Which did not mean that *form* was ignored, only *formalism.* (Hardcore minimalists also saw themselves as "anti-formalists" in their rejection of composition and a certain seductiveness or "sublimity" that was associated with "post-painterly abstraction"; their work was concrete rather than abstract.) When I was learning from life on the fringes of the art world in the early sixties, Clement Greenberg was king of formalism. He became the monkey on all independent critics' backs and his arrogance and exclusive power to define "quality" was particularly onerous for women. For me it eventually effaced his acknowledged brilliance. (He wrote his last important article in 1962.) We younger women critics dealt with it in our own ways. I finally entered the lion's den and publicly confronted him at a Museum of Modern Art lecture. (His opener was classic for those days, around 1967: "Oh, you're Lucy Lippard. I thought you were a schoolteacher from the Bronx.") That experience sort of exorcised his power for me. He hated everything I was into—pop art, Ad Reinhardt, minimalism, conceptualism. (He once said in an interview with a friend of mine that things were so bad in the art world by the late sixties that "somebody like Lucy Lippard can be taken seriously.") I can only imagine what he had to say about feminism. By then I wasn't listening any more.

I can't speak for the artists, but for me any conscious rejection of formalism was not so much aesthetic as political. It wasn't formalism so much as the formalists, who were so sure they were great, that no woman could make art as well as they did. For a lot of feminists, formalism represented the patriarchy—male authority, male ideas, and male rule, as well as a kind of neutralized, dehumanized art. It was the formalists who scoffed at the formal innovations of women's art—the new materials, processes, performance, narrative, activism; the uses of fabric, pastels, and decoration in very "feminine" ways; the in-your-face sexuality of artists like Bourgeois, Schneemann, Benglis, or Wilke. I guess it was all pretty threatening, and male art teachers, in particular, reacted with a viciousness that sometimes took our breath away. Sculptors tended to be especially nasty, and often didn't let their women students learn techniques like welding.

Judy Chicago, for instance, was a strong abstract artist in the mid- to late-sixties, doing well in the art world as an abstract sculptor competing with the men. Then she courageously rejected the formalist doctrines by introducing content, in order to dig deeper into her female self and experience. That was how she became a model for a great many younger women artists. And boy, was she punished for it, banished from the art world straightaway.

Feminism was one of many aesthetic and social forces that combined to undermine modernism. It's possible to look back and see a dismantling of modernism (insofar as modernism was conflated with formalism) as a conscious strategy in feminist art and performance. It wasn't as self-conscious or theorized as it became in the eighties, though. In the seventies, it was more from the gut, more constructive than deconstructive. I don't think the forms of modernism have actually been transcended yet, but the theoretical armature has been pulled out from under them, and feminism helped in that process.

By the seventies, Jo Baer had already made her distinct contribution to the "edge-and-picture plane" debate. Jackie Ferrara was using fiber and felt in ways Robert Morris would never have thought of. Dorothea Rockburne was synthesizing process with geometry. Brenda Miller was deconstructing the grid with rubber stamps. Loretta Dunkelman's pastel colors, Jane Kauffman's jeweled surfaces, Joan Snyder's visceral paint quality, also subverted or overrode minimalism on its own turf, as did Pindell, Norvell, Fishman, Harriet Korman, Rosemarie Castoro, and Joyce Kozloff in other ways. I could go on and on with lists of New York feminist artists who chose abstraction as a way of undermining the prevailing dogmas and dominations. And there is another whole list to be made from the West Coast, from Chicago, from Houston—from the women who were the mainstays of the West East Bag (WEB) network in the early seventies.

The collage aesthetic, in which I saw a nonhierarchical metaphor for women's lives and arts, has been inflated into a sometimes monstrous postmodernist theoretical construct, or deformed into pastiche. Collage (which isn't just a way of putting together materials) has its origins long before feminist art, but its revolutionary potential for taking things apart and putting them together in a different way attracted women artists from the beginning.

S.S.: While the past decade has seen a dramatic increase in the availability of material about the women's movement and art, it has consistently failed to address the issues of feminism and abstraction, and to acknowledge the contributions of a generation of women artists, many of whom are included in More Than Minimal *and have been featured in numerous of your essays and exhibitions over the years. In your words, they were artists who "were more subtly rearranging the minimalist mainstream to fit female experience," and "working in a more symbolic or abstract parallel to their experiences." This includes artists whose lives and art were empowered by feminist ideas, but who neither disavowed their gender nor chose to address women's issues ideologically or propagandistically.*

First, would you comment on an apparent "official" feminist program that has developed over the past two decades and on this problematic omission in recent feminist scholarship in the arts?

And second, how has this "more symbolic or abstract" work by women contributed to a broad feminist revision of contemporary culture? What connections do you see between this innovative work of the seventies and the work of younger artists in succeeding decades?

L.L.: There was no "official feminist program" that I know of. Certainly not one against abstraction. The feminist art movement as a theoretical construct was begun on the West Coast, by an abstract artist, Judy Chicago, who then teamed up with another abstract artist, Miriam Schapiro, in the influential Cal Arts Feminist Art Program. Simultaneously women artists in New York were, at first, more concerned with the political issues on one hand and the actual making processes on the other. Aside from WAR and Ad Hoc, there were artists' consciousness raising groups, among them a particularly lively one focused on abstract art that included Louise Fishman, Harmony Hammond, Patsy Norvell, Sarah Draney, and Jenny Snider.

In fact, the mainstream has always preferred its women artists abstract, and its feminism abstracted, or diffused, defused....The only all-women's show the Museum of Modern Art (or any major art museum in Manhattan) has ever done

included only abstract artists (Lynn Zelevansky's, *Sense and Sensibility: Women Artists and Minimalism in the Nineties* in 1994). Until recently Louise Bourgeois was the closest New York's institutional one-woman shows ever came to the real tough core of feminist art (and Louise perversely doesn't always call herself a feminist). I can't speak for recent feminist scholarship as I'm out of that theoretical loop, but as I became more and more involved in issue-oriented feminist art from the mid-seventies on (the 1976 founding of the Heresies collective, when I became an unabashed socialist feminist, was a watershed for me), I wrote less about abstract art because there was less there to get my teeth into, given my own preoccupations. I still enjoy a lot of that work but it became harder and harder to write about, given the political framework I'd chosen. This may be a problem for younger critics, too.

Maybe what you're talking about is a certain resentment that surfaced sometimes in the seventies about relatively successful women artists who either disavowed feminism, or kept it out of their art, or didn't support other women. We were all very involved in taking risks for the sake of transformation or social change and there was a certain prejudice against "neutral" art, which wasn't necessarily abstract. When content was absent or totally elusive, some felt that the cause of forging a new women's art was impeded. Others felt that very subtle work made its own contribution. The bottom line is about seeing women's art in a feminist *context*, or not. If the artist was unwilling to talk about her work in that context, it was not considered feminist art, which seemed a reasonable enough way of making distinctions. Then again, sometimes the work spoke for itself and seemed to contradict what its maker was claiming.

I don't think much symbolic or abstract work contributes directly to a feminist revision of contemporary culture, but indirectly it provides the vehicle for an underlying transformation and insights into women's lives. The obsession with the body that has dominated women's art in the late eighties, into the nineties, was very much part of seventies feminist art. It's just harder to see the subversions and the confrontations in an abstract framework, even when the artist is politically supportive of feminism. Harmony Hammond is someone who has managed to combine abstraction and accessible content about women's lives, especially lesbian lives, through sensuous surfaces, evocative objects, obsessive markings, and powerful scale. (She should have been in your show.)

In the seventies we talked a lot about "female sensibility" and "body identification" in abstraction, about tactility and transparency and layering as ways in which women's work could be distinguished from men's. It seemed that a feminist independence from previous history, theory, and value systems, were perceptible in all conscious women's work. In the nineties, in fact, it began to look as though a lot of younger women had been studying the feminist art of the seventies, although in some cases they may have just been reinventing the wheel, since that kind of feminist art was pretty well hidden through the eighties. Hesse, however, remained visible (it always helps to be dead); there was a show of her work traveling around the world, and it's hard not to see her ghost in the work of any number of younger artists—Petah Coyne, Ava Garber, Rona Pondick, Kiki Smith among others, even as they are doing their own thing.

S.S.: Words such as "pioneer" and "rebel" have been used to describe your career as well as those of the artists in More Than Minimal. *Empowered by feminism, each of you early on refused to be told what were appropriate subjects or permissible practices for your work. Each of you have been committed not only to an uncompromising self-identity but to the communicative effectiveness of your work and to the connectedness from the individual to the world.*

Recently you characterized your place amidst the currently divided factions of feminism—deconstructionists, essentialists, ecofeminists, cultural feminists, social feminists—as a "moving target" and said, "Today I am more interested in the nature of the differences than in their comparative values, and I am resigned to living in the gaps between many different positions." Which of your projects during the seventies do you see as being most meaningful to a younger generation of feminists?

L.L.: From what I'm told face to face, *From the Center* changed some lives, along with Chicago's *Through the Flower.* Judy told the story of one woman's breakthroughs and provided a much-needed role model, and my essays (as well as those by other feminist critics) broadened that dialogue by raising a variety of issues and offering a diverse group of role models. Also, I often get told how much my book on Eva Hesse (which is still in print) has meant to a couple of generations of women artists, which of course is due to the undiminished power of her work. Feminism was a major component in the lived experience that was the basis of *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America,* which is used in classrooms all over the place.

The collective work has been just as important. For instance, the Women's Art Registries we set up around the country through WEB (West East Bag), forced the institutions to acknowledge the existence and high quality of women's art. And I'm especially proud of my part in the Heresies Collective. (Michelle Stuart and Mary Miss and I were all in the founding group; Ana Mendieta worked on some later issues.) We provided a new framework for radical critical ideas and images and evolved our own style of design, which has since been much copied. It was the first place I published where I felt that my writing was part of the fabric instead of a dissonant note. In the seventies and early eighties we did issues of the magazine on lesbian art, on Third World women, on ecology, on propaganda, on the goddess, on racism, on sex, on the traditional arts, and community arts, on film, performance, and video, on aging....I hope young women will continue to get their hands on issues of *Heresies*. There's no better vantage point from which to look back at the second half of the seventies.

Lucy Lippard is a writer and activist, author of 17 books on contemporary art including *The Pink Glass Swan: Selected Feminist Essays on Art* (New York: The New Press, 1995), which provides a more detailed view of all these issues.

Body Doubles

Anne M. Wagner

1. "...the younger generation of twig artists"

The changes in the traditional protocols of artistic technique and fabrication—the moves that produce allowable and adequate form—have been so decisive, and by now so long established that it is hard to believe that anyone could still bother to object. Regret for the departure of bronze and the body: when is it sounded? By politicians and interest groups and figurative artists confounded by the emergence of abstraction and its often heretical materials as malign rivals to "positive" form. Rivalry often concerns value in its several meanings—not least, the values long attributable to traditional sculptural technique.

These changes have been gradual and cumulative: think back to Degas, seeking out accessories—ribbons and slippers and a wig—for his *Little Dancer of Fourteen Years*; or to Camille Claudel, electrifying her carving of a woman at a fireplace to give the hearth an ersatz glow. There is Picasso with his appropriated household objects (bicycle parts, a colander, a toy car), and David Smith with his blow torch, welding together industrial scavengings—playing Dr. Frankenstein with leftovers from the late Machine Age, albeit with rather less monstrous results. This is the history of 20th-century sculpture—the standard textbook account.

An opinion to the contrary is worth remarking, as so often when values are at stake. Take for one example an interview with Walter Erlebacher collected in 1991 for inclusion in the Archives of American Art. Erlebacher made his mark as a figurative sculptor—Philadelphia's *Rocky* is perhaps his best known work—and, born in 1933, he is also part of the same generation as the oldest of the artists—Dorothea Rockburne (b. 1934), Eva Hesse (1936-1970), Michelle Stuart (b. 1936)—included in this exhibition. Erlebacher's path through the sixties took his art away from abstraction—by the end of the decade he was spending many hours drawing from the model—and he also left old associations and friendships far behind. He had lost touch with Eva Hesse sometime before her death in 1970 (minimalism helped drive in the wedge), and in 1991 had not yet come to terms with her success. His language labors to find a footing with her art and reputation.

"She was not a sculptor. You realize that. She was trying to be a painter... Eventually she was sort of—there's no way to categorize it. She had no sense of materials. All of her work seems to be falling apart. She did have a kind of vision though. But my thesis is that it came out of the ideas that she was listening to all around her... Her work is not very artful, in the traditional sense, even in the traditional 20th-century sense. So that you could trace through her, the younger generation of twig artists... the hanging ropes, and all of the 'fake ethnic stuff,' what I call the fake ethnic stuff."[1]

What surprises about Erlebacher's comments, given their generally dyspeptic tone, are the points he manages to raise about Hesse, her moment and her art. He takes these points as counts against her and her so-called followers (he seems to have artists like Nancy Graves, Ree Morton, and Jackie Winsor in mind); the result is "non-art art"; but the fact remains that in worrying about the fates of sculptural tradition and an artistic generation, Erlebacher has (perhaps despite himself) latched on to something real.

Erlebacher has stumbled (grumbled?) up against some of the most salient aspects of the art and careers of a key group of makers: their hybridization of a new set of professional norms and invention of their own "family tree." To a woman, these artists went to art school; like Hesse they often studied painting, not sculpture; yet this initial training presents an apparent paradox, since it often ceded to a "sense of materials" so ad hoc and exploratory as to be antipathetic to "standard, professional" norms, even decades after the fact. While Erlebacher was retrofitting himself with the basics of armatures and lost wax casting, the artists in the present exhibition were wrapping and hanging and pouring and dripping and folding and piling and binding and scraping and gouging and threading and chewing and scattering and stacking—the list could go on and on. (Perhaps it reaches a kind of climax point with *burning* and

exploding—treatments to which Winsor eventually subjected her reinventions of the minimalist cube.)[2] But it should be noted, lest these verbs seem too homespun and task-like, active though to no particular end, that the objects of these actions—latex, rope, rubber, muslin, earth, wood, wire, concrete—are equally innovative in their range.

What is striking about this moment, at least in retrospect, is how promptly a new generation—Erlebacher's "younger generation of twig artist," so called—was able to come to the fore: the insult is a badge of honor, given that success. While the first Eva Hesse retrospective was hanging in the Guggenheim Museum early in 1973, gallery floors elsewhere in the city were full of grids and series, while their ceilings dripped with filmy translucent shapes. The resemblances are still apparent—they were lost on no one at the time. If we turn back to Douglas Crimp's "New York Letter"—the spread is taken from *Art International* for March 1973—the illustrations look like a photo essay laid out to make that point. The viewer gets her instructions: "Start with Hesse. Consider these connections." Joel Shapiro, Lynda Benglis, Ida Horowitz, and Mildred Stanley make up the list. (In this same brief essay occurs Crimp's thoughtful characterization of the chief characteristic of Hesse's art: "Hesse's strategy was to get beyond the sense of rightness of reductivist art to something whose authority defied the possibility of rules.")[3]

It might be tempting to follow Erlebacher one step further and "trace through" Hesse a younger generation. Both her early death and her work's strength provide motivations for such genealogizing, if for rather different reasons. How comforting it always is to find a point of origin in a single artist's work: first was Cézanne, the "Father of Cubism"; now comes Hesse, the Mother of "Twig Art."

But giving into temptation produces its own problems: who or what was Father or Mother to the Mother? Jackson Pollock? Helen Frankenthaler? Agnes Martin? Claes Oldenburg? Robert Morris? Robert Smithson? Minimalism? This list is a reasonable record of some of the possibilities, if only some. Behind it stand the particular enthusiasms and responses of individual artists to their contemporaries and predecessors. It invokes both small gallery shows and major retrospective exhibitions. (Pollock had one in 1967, Frankenthaler in 1969; we know that Lynda Benglis, for example, saw both, and that these experiences mattered to her art. That she also saw Hesse's model for *Schema* (1967) in Sol LeWitt's studio, had other consequences for her work.)[4] The list points further to artistic climate and innovation and influence. But it does not point in any single direction: to Hesse more than Benglis, to Morton more than Graves, to Wilke more than Winsor. What makes this particular moment of postwar American art so remarkable is that it seems applicable to a whole set of artists; it seems remarkable for women above all. The sense of their relationship to and transformation of an existing artistic language is unavoidable: access and skill and visibility are all now (finally) in place. And practices of negation were still alive and well. These artists seem to be aiming, to paraphrase Crimp's "Letter," at authority without rightness, as expressed by or as defiance of the possibility of rules.


NEW YORK LETTER

DOUGLAS CRIMP

Art International, March 1973, 40-41

2. Dedifferentiation

"Authority without rightness." "Defiance of the possibility of rules." The problem is giving such phrases some purchase on particular visual form. One way of doing so is through recourse to a concept that in the late sixties had a certain imaginative sway. Its author, Anton Ehrenzweig, crops up, for example, among Robert Smithson's readings, and the concept itself—dedifferentiated visual tension—is one of the principles formative of Nancy Graves's art.[5] Dedifferentiation concerns perception, particularly as it involves the action of the eye; but it names phenomena, not activity: the complexity, placement, and number of parts that will permit an unspecialized scanning. Dedifferentiation *provokes*, in other words: it stimulates perception as bodily response. It is the effect of multiplicity and uniformity and repetition. Its province is sequential or serial elements: one chief habitat is the grid. Yet the order need not be pure system: absolute regularity may well be kept at bay.

Dedifferentiation, dematerialization: uniformity, disembodiment. It is hard to name two ideas more important for art 25 years ago. Their meaning comes not just from the prefix *de*, with its annulling or privative force. As in all negations, in these two examples meaning stems from what *de* denies: from matter and difference.

To speak of dedifferentiation and dematerialization in reference to the objects in this exhibition is to use the critical language of their day. It is not to say that they *do away with* matter and difference—this is clearly not the case. Yet in instance after instance, certain substitutions for the bodily and the material—for substance and difference, for bodily material—are systematically proposed. Such substitutions do not occur as mere equivalents: the language of one work in this exhibition (or at this artistic moment) is evidently not the same as the next. Looking from Hesse's *Sequel* to any one of Wilke's *Needed-Erase-Her* series, from Benglis's *For Carl Andre* to Mendieta's *Body Tracks*, from Morton's *Paintings and Objects* to Graves's *Variability of Similar Forms*, it is clear that a gamut of visual responses is in play. Order is dispersed, yet remembered; the bodily is proposed, yet dispelled; the grid is drawn up, but deflected; authority finds its main footing in multiplicity. In such specialized activities of vision, unfamiliar matter and new kind of difference now seem to be having their day.

3. Body Doubles

Defining the procedures of this artistic generation is a matter of description, though not of *mere* description, as is clear. The risk is that a proposed coherence will settle like smothering glue. What makes this particular group of artists stand together? Do their works cohere?

One answer to that question as Douglas Crimp suspected, concerns their attitudes to the possibility of rules. Defiance demands the invocation of system, order, and scheme, just as "down with" needs to name an object to make the phrase complete. And this is what minimalism had to offer, in substantively visual terms. Minimalism's great advantage was to propose its order *as material representation*—in the regularity of the grid, in the substance and presence of the cube's volume, in the interior it hides from view. The sheer uncanny power of this terminology was there to be experienced as "obdurate identity"; critical unease with that endless presence is a hallmark of the best writing of the day.[6] As a gift (an inheritance?) it may not have come unentailed—it didn't transform the user into a firstborn son—but that impossibility was certainly part of the point.[7]

In disordering minimalism—softening and scattering its parts, bursting open its boxes, returning its materials to the earth—these works made identity less obdurate than it had hitherto been thought to be. Whose identity? That of the object, primarily: the excesses of these works propose connections that lead outside the

minimalist frame. They mean to link up with structures and bodies that are not those of art at all. For Mary Miss, it might be the plowed field or the prison: her work's increasing pessimism (here conveyed relentlessly by the untitled 1977 wall piece) makes the second the more usual case. It might be the prison interior, or even the charnel house: look at Mendieta's *Body Tracks*, and see where they take you. Or it might be "bad" building, as invoked by Winsor's lathe and picket cubes: the work of a stay-at-home handy-(man), they declare that she "did it herself."

This litany could continue with injunctions that point further to works collected in this show: to the falsely limp knot of Benglis's aluminum *Ocho*, which hangs like a sausage casing with the stuffing knocked out; to Ferrara's *Truncated Pyramid I*, whose evenly climbing striated sides suggest the handiwork of a whole colony of specially meticulous builder ants; to Graves's precarious forest of towering ersatz bones. These "bones" are made of steel, wax, acrylic, and marble dust. Marble dust: this powdery trace of an artistic material is like a secret ingredient. We can mix it in here as a reminder of these objects' double effects. The claims they make of likeness and relationship to other "identities" are claims they utter as art. They are claims about the grid and the wall and the cube: to what they are connected, and how they can be made to mean. Even Mendieta's *Body Tracks*—the most "bodily" of the works in the show—invokes "the artistic" as a main ingredient of its meaning. The tracks trace their way down the white wall of the gallery: the wall is a part of the piece. And the red residue—these bodily markings—refuses to declare its gender as only that of its maker; in this it shares much with other key instances of modernist protest art.

Anne M. Wagner teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. Her book, *Three Artists (Three Women): Modernism in the Art of Hesse, Krasner, and O'Keeffe* (University of California Press), is in press.

Notes

1. Interview with Walter Erlebacher by Anne Schuster Hunter, January 19, 1991. Unmicrofilmed typescript, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
2. Dean Sobel, *Jackie Winsor* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum, 1991), 36-40.
3. Douglas Crimp, "New York Letter," *Art International* (March 1973): 40.
4. Susan Krane, *Lynda Benglis: Dual Natures* (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1991), 21-4.
5. Anton Ehrenzweig, *The Hidden Order of Art: A Psychology of Artistic Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 19; as cited in E.J. Carmen, et al, *The Sculpture of Nancy Graves* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1987), 63. Smithson's reading is testified to by his writings, as collected in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*, ed. N. Holt (New York: New York University Press, 1979). The references to Ehrenzweig have been indexed in a new edition of Smithson's writings. See Jack Flam, ed., *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 103, 110, 190, 199, 231.
6. Michael Fried's remarkable, endlessly suggestive essay "Art and Objecthood," is the most substantive of this group. Its influence was redoubled by having been reprinted in G. Battcock, *Minimal Art* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1968); reprinted 1995 by the University of California Press, with a new introduction by Anne M. Wagner. Fried quotes the phrase "obdurate identity," from Donald Judd's essay, "Specific Objects," *Arts Yearbook*, no. 8, 1965; reprinted in *Complete Writings 1959-1975* (Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975), 181-89.
7. Anna C. Chave's essay "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts Magazine* 64:5, (January 1990): 44-63, has gone furthest to explore minimalism's relations to the corporate language of its day, and many of her hypotheses warrant further exploration. What her account does not address, however, is the question of why minimalism's rhetoric proved such a productive point of departure for artists like the ones in the current exhibition. For another, equally suggestive view of Minimalism's relationship to power, see Hal Foster, "The Crux of Minimalism," *Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art*, H. Singerman, ed. (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), 162-83.

A Feminine Subject for Minimalism?

Kate Linker

Art history's periodizing habits and formalist bias have clouded the accomplishments of minimalism. Derided throughout the sixties for its blankness and nihilism, minimalist art was discussed in the seventies in terms of "abstract reductivism"; in the eighties, critical activity attended to its elucidation of context as the binomial "other" of form.[1] In the process, the scope of minimalism's assault on the ideology of modernism along with its philosophical concept of the human subject has been obscured. Equally important, however, such limiting focuses have masked the achievements of many women artists working within the general period of minimalism. For example, those women whose organized practice began around 1970 have been described as shaped by the abstract, reductive sensibility of minimalism; on the other hand, their art frequently has been consigned to another art historical category—"post-minimalism." Thus, writing in the catalog of a recent exhibition, curator Lynn Zelevensky remarked that "if the minimalism of the first half of the sixties was largely a male preserve, post-minimalism, which coalesced toward the end of the decade...was in part defined by women," observing that its different manifestations achieved "the feminizing of the material stuff of minimalism."[2] Such aesthetic approaches ignore the philosophical analogies that link the male-executed minimalist work from the mid-sixties to the art, often produced by women, that was collected in the seventies under the rubric of post-minimalism. A retrospective examination indicates that this work, considered as a whole, may have more to do with a rejection of the modernist subject, based in an a priori self, than with the visual nuances of subject matter or sensibility. My remarks in these pages are therefore directed at two interrelated questions: "What is that subject that emerges during the 'time' of minimalism?" and "What is its model of meaning?"

The period under consideration witnessed a broad recognition of the implications of feminism. It coincided with the organization and expansion of the women's movement, which emerged as the collective framework in which the problematic of the feminine subject would be defined. It contained, as well, a dawning recognition on the part of continental philosophers and writers in the human sciences of the positional role of women's struggles in postmodern thought.[3] And, concomitant with and not independent of the latter, the period experienced the gradual breakdown of the modernist paradigm and of the metaphysical vision of the subject that supported it.[4] The centered, controlling, and individual consciousness that is the core of the modern concept of the self achieved both its apogee and its destruction in the postwar period; the fragmented and contingent forms of seventies art configure the erosion of its organizing principle of autonomy. This modern self, controlling and masculine, is the true subject of modernism, and it is not unlikely to find in the dwindling of its imperatives an event with promise for feminism.

History's sharp chronologies make havoc of philosophical changes. Thus, in comments from 1976, Jackie Ferrara observed of her exquisitely modulated progressions and repetitions of form that she "began to make work in 1972 that was more suitable to 1965."[5] Ferrara's phrasing of her historical position is comprehensible if one considers the unevenness and inconsistency associated with periods of rupture; the embarrassment that accompanied her statement is justified only if one considers art history as a seamless continuum of incremental progressions. Writing in support of a cultural consideration of feminism, Griselda Pollack has suggested that its rise should be examined against the background of a corresponding questioning of modernism in the visual arts. As Pollack has observed in a book titled *Framing Feminism*:

The conjunction of a new wave of feminism and the challenges in art to modernism took place with the additional support of an expansion in the field now called cultural studies. A new understanding of the politics of culture was one of the legacies of the New Left Movements of the late 1950s and early 1960s, which had been forced to develop a more sophisticated analysis of the complexity and depth of modern forms of social control in advanced societies. The question of the ways in which, in a more affluent society, consent is secured for the maintenance of an unequal and exploitative society led to a reassessment of the effects of...the whole spectrum of those social practices which, producing meaning and images of the world for us, shape our sense of reality and even our sense of our own identities.[6]

Pollack concludes by emphasizing the need to acknowledge the women's movement at the levels of both cultural practice *and* cultural politics, attending not only to the production of meanings but also to the production of subjects for those meanings, as our identities are shaped by the "spectrum of social practices."

Pollack's diction announces a new "subject" for feminism. Her insistence on the expansion of cultural studies, however, merits a digression, by way of explanation, from the specificities of women's practices to some of the enfolding circumstances that, retrospectively, appear to have shaped them. The term "cultural studies" encompasses a broad range of endeavors that examine the phenomenon of meaning, extending from Michel Foucault's scrutiny of the discourses of sexuality through Jacques Derrida's deconstruction of philosophical bias, to the elaborate meditations on literary signification undertaken by Roland Barthes. Of these, it is Barthes's work, which was widely translated into English during the early seventies, that most deserves attention here for its rethinking of the model of the artistic sign. Indeed, through its focus on non-artistic, task-like production, serial forms, and repetitive gestures, as well as its focus on the external, social practices that produce meaning, much art of the seventies can be seen as recognition of Barthes's famous argument that the author could no longer claim to be the unique source of the meaning of the work of art. As the late critic Craig Owens observed, Barthes's essay, "The Death of the Author," is a reflection of the "crisis" of artistic authorship that swept through the cultural institutions of the West in the mid-sixties.[7] This event was impelled by a growing recognition of the field of language and representation as the primary element in the production of the work. Reacting against the tenets of traditional criticism, which assigned a fixed content or meaning to a given form, Barthes argued in favor of mutability and polyphony; he accorded to the reader/viewer the role of producing the meaning formerly embedded by the author in the work. In a noted reversal of aesthetic philosophy, he observed that "a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination."[8] Barthes's statements do not proclaim the literal death of the author; instead, they herald a shift in the *author-function.* Nevertheless, in a series of pronouncements, he announced a radical shift in art practice: "The author never produces anything but presumptions of meaning, forms, and it is the world which fills them."[9]

Implicit in Barthes's writings is a seminal rebuke to terms pivotal to aesthetic philosophy—the "expressive" artist, the "autonomous" artwork, "immanent" meaning, and, with them, the hermeneutic role of the reader/viewer, engaged in "uncovering" the meaning of the work. More importantly, they signal a movement away from the inner-directed models of the modernist period to consideration of the *externality* of meaning, stressing the social nature of artistic production and reception. The early seventies witnessed a transformation in semiotic theory, previously dominated by a focus on "meaningful" structures, to attend to the structuring of meaning *in and through* a given object. In this transformation, the notion of a visual language with its structures already in place, its viewer firmly positioned outside, cedes to a more complex and imbricated concept; the boundaries surrounding the object dissolve into surrounding space, now understood as a space of representations that the viewing subject traverses freely.[10] Indeed, it is this space between artwork and viewer that now assumes prominence as the place of the meaning(s) of the work of art. Barthes summarized this transformation from the closed, classical sign to the newly open model as a shift from "work" to "text."

The transposition of Barthes's terms to the visual arts involves a shift from "work" to "frame," from the enclosure of the modernist object to the perceptual and social context, in which the work is received, and in which its meaning is constructed. In one of the most forceful interpretations of the period, Rosalind Krauss has argued against the separation of minimalism from post-minimalism, stressing their common staging of a space of confrontation between the artistic sign and its viewer. For Krauss, the central import of minimalism lies in its acknowledgment of this inherently public and conventional space as the locus of meaning, rather than the psychological or "private" space of the previous period. Minimalism, she suggests, implies both a model of the self and a model of meaning,[11] and for this reason its accomplishments are less formal or even aesthetic than philosophical and, in particular, epistemological: "The significance of the art that emerged in this country in the early sixties," she wrote about one decade later, "is that it staked everything on the accuracy of a model of meaning severed from the legitimizing claims of a private self."[12] Opposing the idealist space of the traditional object, with its reference to an intentional or private center, the minimalist artwork, in contrast, pointed to the externality of experience, indicating how "our gestures are themselves formed by the public world, by its conventions, its language, the repertory of its emotions, from which we learn our own."[13]

Minimalism's blankness, its adoption of industrial materials or readymade objects and neutral, procedural modes of operation, are thus means to enforce this idea of simple externality; its repeated elements arranged in serial progressions contrast with a tenet of modernist ideology, by which the panoply of surface incident is seen to emanate from an organizing core, the inner motor of form. Minimalism, then, defeats a long-standing habit of aesthetics where external form is thought to be "physiognomic" to its interior structure. Its use of conventional ordering systems, mathematical progressions, and process-based structures (akin to the task-orientation of contemporary dance) counterpose impersonal, material transformation as the organizing logic of work. This is as evident in Ferrara's pyramids and polygons of meticulously stacked wood and cotton batting as in Jackie Winsor's wrapped or interwoven artworks, fabricated out of rope, twine, plywood, or lath. Each exposes the material processes by which it is made. In works such as Winsor's *Bound Frame*, 1972, for example, the center is not presented as a plenitude, but rather as a void; the sculpture, in effect, is all "frame." All of these works, then, point to a concept of art from which the organizing center has been forcefully occluded.

Benglis's poured polychrome sculptures, Stuart's multifaceted works that straddle the boundaries between drawing, painting, and sculpture, as well as Rockburne's process-based "drawings that make themselves" are unthinkable outside of the breakdown of aesthetic categories that engulfed the seventies, as the purity of media became contaminated by relations with other forms. This direction can be perceived as questioning the innerness or transcendent interiority of modernism, opposing its century-long pursuit of the irreducible essences that separate each medium from others. Inasmuch as these changes are not unmotivated but instead, reflect altered philosophical circumstances, it is important to note that the erosion of faith in the autonomy of media was accompanied by atrophy of the notions of personal and artistic individuality that were fundamental to modernist ideology. The attention to the "decentered" or postmodern subject at roughly the time of the emergence of minimalism, may involve a recognition of the self's inscription in, rather than transcendence of, the same external or historical forces from which the modernist self sought refuge. The sixties and seventies witnessed broad philosophical recognition of the power of representation, or of the various received languages that organize the terrain of social space. In this manner, the controlling self that fashions its own destiny was found to be controlled and fashioned by those very forces it once designated as "outside." And, in this manner, the constitutive outside entered the terrain of philosophy in a way that has bearing on the subject of feminism.

Although organized political feminism in the United States in the seventies did not espouse the position and despite the fact that the artists under consideration in this exhibition were not affirmed proponents, it is significant that a new and corresponding description of the feminine subject emerged concurrently with the minimalist and post-minimalist period. Refuting the dominant view of the self as pre-existing, essential, or biologically-based, this "social constructionist" position proposed that the key role in the constitution of the subject is played by representations, which offer the self *images* of what it might become. "Representation" here serves as a general term for those signifying systems—cultural, institutional, familial, and so forth—that circulate through social space at any given time; it is most appropriate, however, to our media-saturated period in which a new and powerful cultural landscape appears to define the horizon of activity. The construction of the subject through these signifying systems parallels the construction of meaning in poststructuralist textual reading. Characterizing the position is an insistence that the structures of subjectivity (and, in particular, of sexuality) are not natural and, hence, unchangeable, but rather imposed, arbitrary, and, in consequence, historically variable. It is from this potential mutability of signifying structures that political feminism derives its impetus. For its account of the development of sexed subjectivity in language and representation, some social constructionist theory drew on the difficult and often maddeningly elusive writings of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. One of Lacan's statements might serve as its watchword: "Images and symbols *for* the woman cannot be isolated from images and symbols *of* the woman. It is representation...the representation of feminine sexuality...which conditions how it comes into play."[14]

Lacan described sexuality as an assignment, an ordering that is always mediated by signs—a perspective that has bearing on a feminist visual arts practice. However, Lacan's writings were only part of a broad shift in feminist thinking that assumed shape in the seventies under the aegis of poststructuralist thinking. The period saw the translation into English not only of Lacan and Barthes, but also of the French political philosopher Louis Althusser, whose theory of subject positioning, or "interpellation," was fundamental to contemporary theories of ideology. In his many writings Althusser insisted that ideology involves not only the production of ideas and meanings but also the construction of *subjects* for those meanings. Juliet Mitchell's *Woman's Estate*, published in 1971, was followed by her pioneering *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* in 1974. In England, a group of artists, filmmakers, and thinkers organized around the film journal *Screen* to examine the sexual

agendas and constitutive power of mainstream media forms. In 1973, American-born, British-based artist Mary Kelly began *Post-Partum Document* (1973-79), a 163-part visual arts work, informed by Lacanian psychoanalysis and semiotics, that examined the inscription of her child into the social orders of language and sexuality. In spring 1973, filmmaker and writer Laura Mulvey presented her seminal article, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," at the French department of the University of Wisconsin, thereby participating in a new receptiveness on the part of the American academic community to psychoanalytically-informed studies of sexuality and gender. As the film critic Constance Penley remarked, Mulvey's article was "the first feminist consideration of the play and conflict of psychical forces at work between the spectator and the screen";[15] it participated in a general interest in the productive, constitutive, or formative textual space opened up between the observer and the artwork. On the American West Coast the initial issue of *Camera Obscura* appeared in 1976, published with the declared intention of working on "cinematic representation and the signifying function of women within this system." These events, only a few of many, were thus part of a growing attention to a critical view of the development of feminine subjectivity in relation to the structures of patriarchal culture.

Judith Butler has written of the various poststructuralist positions on this "constitutive outside" as indicating "how politics is...obliged to move beyond an analysis of what is already given."[16] The brunt of Butler's attack is the essentialist perspective, which conceives of a fixed, universal, transhistorical feminine subject as the irreducible ground for women's individual experience and for their collective political struggle. Butler instead argues for a "denaturalizing" critique that exposes the contingent nature of what passes for foundational (for example, she would agree with Diana Fuss, who observes that "there is no essence to essentialism, [since] essence *as* irreducible has been *constructed* to be irreducible"[17]). "Feminine experience," based in a putatively "real" or pure body, is not as homogenous or unified as the position presumes; it is cut through by axes of difference, including class, ethnicity, and nationality, and thus is negotiated constantly through a range of social, economic, and cultural forces. Furthermore, inasmuch as the body is a concept, subject to continuous change, it is an inadequate ground for a notion of women's experience. Although the organized feminism of the seventies adhered to a body-based, essentialist position, the attention to race, class, and social positioning evident in the political art of the eighties and nineties grew out of the materialist focus on difference enabled by constructionist theory. More pertinent, however, is the fact that, if considered in non-formal, non-aesthetic terms, feminist artwork of the seventies shows close parallels to the epistemological tenets of constructionist theory.

If the body is not considered as the origin of a "feminine discourse," there can be no assumption of a given gender identity. Similarly, if the artwork is not considered as the repository of a meaning *or* as the reflection of a specifically feminine sensibility, its signification is a function of its surround, of the signifying practices that historically circumscribe it and, in consequence, that comprise it. This is why Derrida has observed that the illusion of the subject's autonomy is always a function of the frame—of the institutional forces that, at any given time, impose meanings on their objects.[18] And this is why, in describing this multiple, identity-deferring, productive field, Derrida has spoken of the *dis*semination of meaning, opposing it to the *in*semination performed by the author-function in our (masculine) Western metaphysical model.

I close with a comment by the late Eva Hesse, who in one of her notebook entries made the following observation on Claes Oldenburg: "As eroticism, his work is abstract. The stimuli arise from pure sensation rather than direct association with the objects depicted."[19] Hesse's remarks, which privilege the plural, meandering, indirect play of meaning over its one-to-one correspondence with a given object, point to the importance of the space of encounter with the artwork. They articulate what might be called "an erotics of engagement,"[20] alluding to a sexuality that is not immanent so much as produced in and through the relationship between the artwork and its viewer. Sexuality is not a function of the object's inherent qualities—of "breast-like forms," "womb-like imagery," "flesh-like textures," and so forth—so much as of the complex and highly sexualized relations we entertain with it, relations that may begin in vision but are not confined to it, often passing into fantasy. What is important is not what is in the object but what passes outside of it, in its enframing surround, made up by the multiple, changing, and frequently inconsistent locations occupied by the viewing subject, often simultaneously. This space is one of mutual animation; it is constitutive of both subject *and* object. Perhaps the major accomplishment of the art of the minimalist period may be to have brought it into our view.

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Notes

1. For a discussion of different historical readings of minimalist art see, for example, Hal Foster, "The Crux of Minimalism," in *Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art, 1945-1986* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), 162-83.
2. Lynn Zelevansky, *Sense and Sensibility: Women Artists and Minimalism in the Nineties* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1994), 7.
3. One such philosopher is Jean-Francois Lyotard. In his article "Some of the Things at Stake in Women's Struggles" (*Sub-Stance*, no. 20 [1978]: reprinted in *Wedge*, no. 6 [winter 1984]: 28-29) he observes that "we Westerners must rework our space-time and all our logic on the basis of non-centralism, non-finality, non-truth."
4. For a discussion of the breakdown of this controlling and individual subject of modernism as applied to abstract painting, see my "Abstraction: Form as Meaning" in *Individuals*, *op.cit.*, 30-59.
5. As quoted in Robert Pincus-Witten, "Jackie Ferrara: The Feathery Elevator," in Pincus-Witten, *Postminimalism* (New York: Out of London Press, 1977), 135.
6. Griselda Pollock, "Feminism and Modernism," eds. Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Framing Feminism: Art and the women's movement 1970-1985.* (London and New York: Pandora Press, 1987), 79.
7. Craig Owens, "From Work to Frame, or Is There Life after 'The Death of the Author'?" in *Implosion: A Postmodern Perspective* (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1987), 207. My reading of the artistic shift from work to frame is largely drawn from Owens's own.
8. Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 148.
9. Barthes, "Preface," *Roland Barthes Critical Essays*, trans. Richard Howard, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), xi.
10. For a discussion of this change as it applies to theories of vision, see my "Engaging Perspectives: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Paradigm of Vision" in *Art and Film* (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1996).
11. This theme is dominant in a number of Rosalind Krauss's writings. See, for example, the discussion of her study of the implications of minimalism in Foster's "The Crux of Minimalism," *op.cit.*, 163, 170. My citations are taken from her "The Double Negative: A New Syntax for Sculpture" in Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (New York: The Viking Press, 1977), 243-87.
12. Ibid., 266.
13. Ibid., 270.
14. Jacques Lacan, "Guiding Remarks for a Congress on Feminine Sexuality," (1958) reprinted in *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne*, ed. Juliett Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, trans. Jacqueline Rose, (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Co., 1982), 90.
15. Constance Penley, "The Lady Doesn't Vanish: Feminism and Film Theory," in Penley, ed., *Feminism and Film Theory.* (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1988), 6.
16. Judith Butler, "For a Careful Reading," in Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, Drucilla Cornell, and Nancy Fraser, *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange.* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995), 142.
17. Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference.* (New York and London: Routledge, 1989), 4.
18. The relevance of Derrida's thought to art has, needless to say, achieved broad attention. See Owens, *op.cit.*, and my essay "When a Rose Only Appears to be a Rose: Feminism and Representation" in the same *Implosion* catalog, 189-94.
19. As quoted in Pincus-Witten, "Eva Hesse: More Light on the Transition from Post-Minimalism to the Sublime," in *Postminimalism*, *op.cit.*, 52.
20. My reference is to Jane Gallop's term, as discussed in her essay, "Carnal Knowledge," in Gallop, *Thinking Through the Body* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 135-178. Gallop's is a remarkable voice in contemporary critical studies, and her discussion of a materialist perspective on the body as it applies to literature, philosophy, and the visual arts contains many points worth exploring. Her use of the term "erotics of engagement" is relevant both to her readings of Barthes's notion of the photographic *punctum* and to Freud's brief psychoanalytic writing on art, as well as to progressive applications of psychoanalytic criticism to the visual arts in general.

Catalog of the Exhibition

Lynda Benglis

Lynda Benglis's recent remark that it was simply "by accident" that she was a female and later found herself riding the "wave of feminism" during the seventies, belies the expressive authority, social consciousness, and self-styled feminist rebellion which has shaped her art and identity since the late sixties.

"After I moved from New Orleans to New York, my friend Gordon Hart—whom I later married—helped me set up my basement studio. What I really needed was discipline. I couldn't call myself an artist yet, and I think at that time it was difficult for me being with another artist in a relationship where it was assumed that the man was the artist and I wasn't...I needed to make statements about feminism because of a certain frustration and anger I felt toward the self-consciousness that existed. However, the formal aspects of the work occurred through my early associations with the so-called minimal artists....

I felt that in the minimalist tradition there was no sense of theater. There was a puritanical quality of the work ethic...there was still the idea of the 'heroic gesture' in some way. Having been involved in logic, I wanted to make something that related to the body, that was humanistic, and not machine-like.... I was interested in a non-logical, contained activity." [1]

Memories of her childhood travels with her grandmother to her ancestral home in Greece, formal studies in painting and philosophy (a particular interest in logic), and an ironic infatuation with the excessive gestures and heroics of abstract expressionism, conceptually coalesced for Benglis circa 1969-70 in the radical gestures of her poured latex and polyurethane foam environments. Swollen and sinister, the corner eruption, *For Carl Andre* (1970), was one of Benglis's earliest foam pieces. (Her first poured polyurethane corner piece in 1969, *Untitled (King of Flot)*, was "for" another minimalist peer, Robert Morris, whom she had not yet met but knew in terms of his "anti-form" aesthetic as a sculptor and writer.)[2] Offering an experience of both desire and disgust (Benglis likened its "flow" to orgasm) and its scale roughly human, the piece intentionally hugs the corner of the room it spills into. Benglis said, "I wanted it to be very primal, suggestive but not too specific; very iconographic but also very open."[3] While Benglis was an admirer of the work of the minimalist sculptor for whom she named the piece, and she has said that she wanted "to approach organic form in a very direct way, in the way that he approaches geometric form," the irony of Benglis's gesture is not lost on any viewer who knows both artist's signature styles.[4] In recalling the homage of this piece, Benglis remembered her response to a particular Andre floor piece, *Lever* (1966): the "room was female" and his piece was "a male protrusion into it." Clearly, Benglis sympathized with the minimalist identification of the body's role in our perceptual experiences of the world, but she intentionally explored how those experiences are determined by what she called the complete "body-mind" and thus, how they are gendered.

"I began to think about who the artist was in relationship to the object/work."[5]

Peter Schjeldahl wrote in 1979 that "the abstract references of her work to physical being and its suggestion of certain mind-body states (most strikingly a curious blend of anxiety and ecstasy)... invite recognition, whether in the mind, at the fingertips, or in the gut, of sensual feelings that might be mild and pleasant or wrenching and grotesque, but are in any case humanly true."[6] In 1972,

Benglis embarked on a series of anthropomorphic knots that she conceived as "a family of convoluted forms"—cylindrical limbs (approximately the width of her arm) the artist tied and contorted into suggestive poses and mannered attitudes. Alone or choreographed by Benglis into groups across a wall, delicately covered in sparkles or sheathed in an allover metalized spray, the knots such as *Ocho* mimic the artist's physiological self-awareness, gesturing in response to one another and to each of us. "People recognize themselves in the knots."[7] The knots have also been read as "a kind of abstract handwriting that reflected intrinsic identity—as does an autograph," but Benglis is even more specific in her references, saying that "The Peruvian Quipu was an alphabet of knots, which was both mathematical and syntactical. Early Chinese writing also began with knotting and mapping."[8]

Benglis's art met unusually early and widespread critical attention by 1970 and although it took many forms in numerous media during the decade, her reference point remained constant—her experience of the female body and what Maurice Merleau-Ponty theorized as the body's "ambiguity of its being at once lived from the inside and observed from the outside."[9] Benglis's self-identity clearly fashioned her particular emphasis on the female body's inherent contradictions. As Susan Krane observed, "Benglis's dual sense of the body's internal, felt being and its external observation and objectification...the cognizance of being seen that permeated her art—was colored by her acute awareness of social facades, assumed gender roles and body language. As a southern woman, recently graduated from an elite women's college to the primarily male art scene of New York...she was perhaps inordinately aware of these dichotomies and increasingly inclined to manipulate them."[10]

In the sculpture, Benglis looked to the traditions of abstraction and the physical properties of materials to address intuitively the issues of eroticism and gender that influenced her imagery. During the early seventies, she would publicly distance herself from a collective feminist ideology and consciously position herself and her feminist inquiry as an independent, "..one that underhandedly addressed issues of power, desire, and femininity—in ways that often conflicted with the accepted practices and dogma of the women's movement at the time."[11] Her frequently flamboyant methods and perverse preference for glitter and synthetics "violated the decorum of the mainstream avant-garde" while clearly situating her objects into the vernacular of cultural experience—not the ideal, "everyday" perceptual experience of minimalism.

Her relation to these issues became more overt and politicized when she began working with video in 1972, where she would address "issues of identity, control, androgyny, and sexual ambiguity," at times casting herself in roles that conflate stereotypical positions of subject and object, director and performer, male and female.[12] Benglis the artist, however, is consistently and unmistakably the agent of meaning. She recounts an incident from the mid-sixties, in which Andy Warhol asked her and her boyfriend to make love on camera in one of his films—although "fascinated by 'the fact that it was an area of consideration,'" Benglis refused the invitation, which she saw as an "intrusion, declaring, 'I wasn't interested in being the object of someone else.'"[13] Videos such as *Now* (1973), *Female Sensibility* (1973), and *How's Tricks* (1976) would confirm Benglis's approach to her art (in any medium) as a position of challenge to any notion of "authority" whether that of patriarchy, modernism, the media, or feminist ideology.

Much of this material and all quotes, unless otherwise noted, are drawn from a conversation with the artist in November 1995.

1. Quoted in Ned Rifkin, "Lynda Benglis," *Early Work* (New York: The New Museum, 1982), 9, 10-11.
2. Susan Krane, *Lynda Benglis: Dual Natures* (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1991), 19, note 18.
3. Krane, 26.
4. Quoted in Rifkin, 11.
5. Ibid., 14.
6. Peter Schjeldahl, "Lynda Benglis: Body and Soul," *Lynda Benglis: 1968-78* (Tampa, University of South Florida, 1980), 4.
7. Not surprisingly, Benglis is no stranger to dance; she loved studying ballet as a child and recently produced a video for MTV examining the facial movements of dancers.
8. Krane, 35-6.
9. Ibid., 15.
10. Ibid., 15.
11. Ibid., 17.
12. Ibid., 36.
13. Ibid., 58.

For Carl Andre

1970
pigmented polyurethane foam
56 1/4 x 53 1/2 x 46 3/16 inches

Collection Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Forth Worth, Texas
The Benjamin J. Tiller Memorial Trust

7 Come 11: Ocho

1976
aluminum screen, cotton bunting, plaster, sprayed copper
60 x 18 x 7 inches

Collection of the artist
Photo: courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

Jackie Ferrara

The influential experiences Jackie Ferrara recalls most from the sixties and early seventies are not those of exotic travels or radical politics, but "going dancing at discos," a greatest-hits list of movies that she considers "the way another might a trip to India or a special book or a particular exhibition," and ongoing activities such as weekly poker games (since 1957), solving math and logic puzzles, and reading mysteries.

"I don't know if it's clear that I rarely, if ever, seek out places, exhibitions, books, concerts, films, etc. to find source material for my work. Mostly what happens is that some unexpected detail of a new piece interests me and I pursue that detail in the next piece. I'm not averse to the idea of experiencing something that could influence me. However, I don't deliberately look for it."

Since the stacked "pyramids" and "stairways" she introduced in the early seventies, Ferrara's inclination toward the matter-of-fact has been intimately connected to a responsiveness to idiosyncratic details. Even the works' titles—*Curved Pyramid*, *Truncated Pyramid*, *Box of Zs*—alert us to both the obvious and the deviant. And it is in this capacity that Ferrara's art manages to function in the realm of the magic of mathematical progressions while always acknowledging the incidental disruptions of lived experience.

Ferrara's move to New York in 1952 initiated a series of experiences (some pedestrian, others "events") that she considers noteworthy in terms of her aesthetic: "I remember all the times before I started making my own work, when I was in the audience absorbing information, usually in a dark room, so whatever I was watching was framed by the darkness."[1] Those included listening to jazz in clubs, watching dance and theatre productions at the Henry Street Playhouse where she worked from 1955 to 1959, attending the experimental dance performances at the Judson Church, and seeing movies with serious regularity. Her history for happening upon rather offbeat materials goes back to the sixties when she was making simple geometric box constructions embellished with pigeons, nails from chicken feet, remnants of fur, torn-up coats, rope, flax (a material she discovered on the Lower East Side as special packing material for lemons from Israel), and cotton batting (a grayish color fabric she tracked down after seeing it on the street in SoHo, it is made of recycled rags and manufactured as filler for movers' quilts and would become a material central to her first critically recognized work in the early seventies). She even recalls making a hanging piece from strips of the linen remnants of her boyfriend's paintings. Ferrara's methods were practical, her means modest: the sculptor's tools included a hand saw, a knife, and her boyfriend's small table saw.

"I became a sculptor because I like working with my hands. Early on I liked to build bookshelves and closets, and at some point I was able to incorporate that skill into my work."[2]

In 1971, when she moved to the Prince Street loft she still occupies, Ferrara spent a year renovating the interior structure, which she reminds us, "I did by myself."[3] Subsequently, a geometric vocabulary developed in her art: "My sculpture cleaned up and changed....I started to make modules out of cardboard or old wood that I found in the neighborhood, and that's when the work became very systemic. I would have many lengths of wood that were the same size, and I would cover them with cotton batting and arrange them so I had a stepped pyramid shape."[4] In her 1973 solo show at A. M. Sachs Gallery (which friend and colleague Dorothea Rockburne helped Ferrara install), Ferrara introduced a series of "stacks," "stairways," and "pyramids" whose geometric precision was disrupted by the apparently soft surfaces of cotton batting (the raw batting was gradually hardened with coats of water-saturated glue). While these early examples of Ferrara's signature structures shared certain obvious formal affinities with classic minimalist sculpture, they exist on very different terms with the viewer and their emphases are far from

the austere and unyielding temperament of minimalism. All of the eight works shown at Sachs, including *Truncated Pyramid I*, were sheathed in cotton batting, a material Ferrara was attracted to, she recalled, because it was "irregular, lumpy, mysterious, and vulnerable" yet it "looked like concrete from a distance." (It turned out to be extremely fragile, so much so that Ferrara would abandon it after 1973 and today, many of the works no longer exist.) The works were read in terms of their architectural shapes and processes—a "stacking" of "bricklike units."[5] Their scale kept them in both the realm of the human body (within Ferrara's reach) and the architectural model whose repetitions and proportions are "capable of infinite extension."[6] But they also urged a more disquieting reference to the body as the batting suggested readings as "skins" or "dressing."

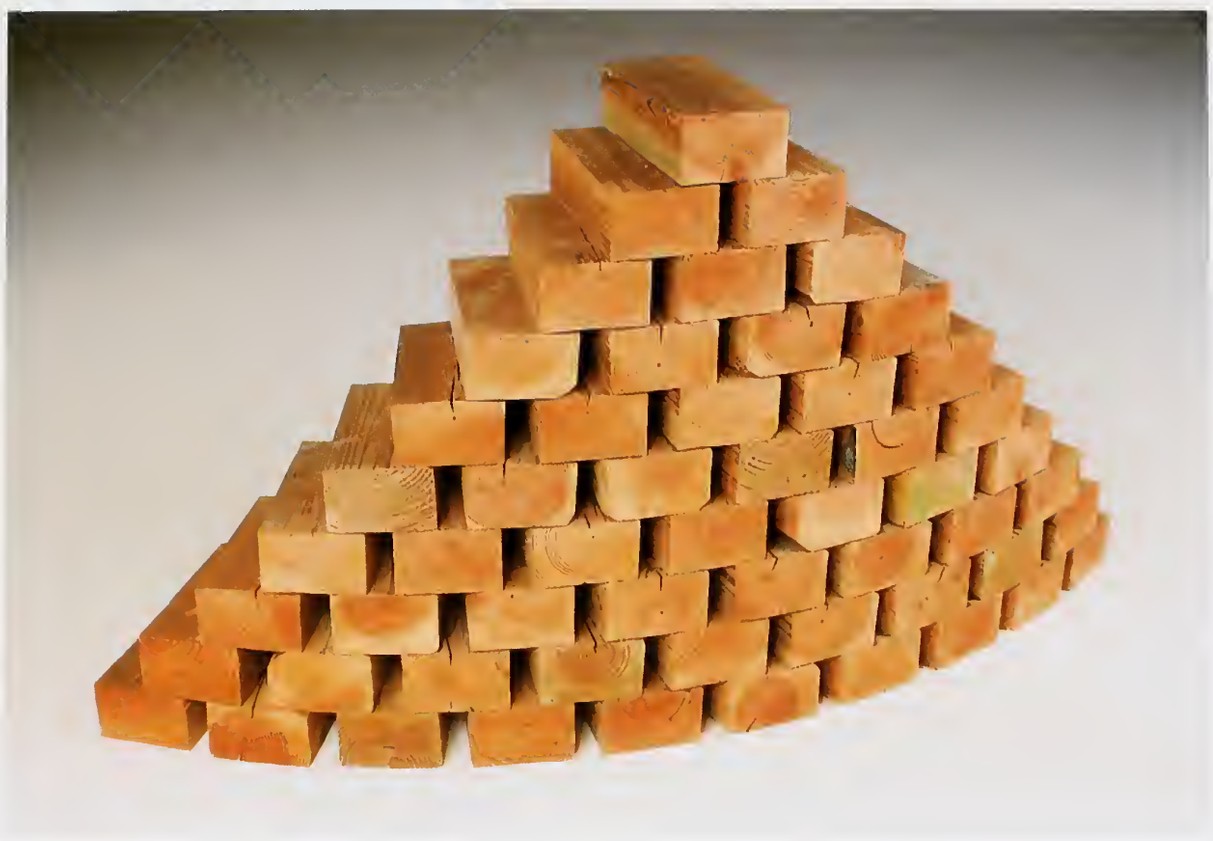
In effect, Ferrara's creation of a place where geometric representation and human experience might touch positioned her aesthetic at what critic David Bourdon later designated as the "mannerist-type culmination" of minimalism.[7] Bourdon would ally her aesthetic with the "formal eccentricities that characterize a great deal of the most interesting recent art," specifically mentioning work by Stella, Noland, Mangold, Andre, and LeWitt as the "type of art [which] obviously signals an important change in sensibility."[8] But nowhere does he attribute to that "sensibility" the role of female subjectivity and the contributions of Ferrara's female colleagues. Critic Robert Pincus-Witten would indirectly relate Ferrara's artistic coming of age with the "advent of feminist activism" and changing expectations for women: "Only in the early seventies, at last divested of human entailments and domestic encumbrances and dedicated fully to sculpture in her own place, her own loft—it's the only way," did Ferrara begin "to produce work congruent with the major sculptural options of the moment."[9]

While Ferrara was neither "hooked into feminist ideology" nor politically motivated in her art, she is quick to acknowledge that she "benefited enormously" from the visibility and sense of community that resulted circa 1970 from the feminist movement. "Out of boredom" (due to broken hands), she decided to attend meetings which not only resulted in assisting with the Women's Art Registry, but also meeting colleagues including Miss, Rockburne, Stuart, and Winsor. Another meeting of artists who had participated in the 1972 German exhibition, *Gedok: American Women Artists*, developed into a regular group of about 12 women who not only shared experiences of various inequities they encountered but shared a common ambition and strategies for countering what Ferrara described as "programmed modesty" and succeeding professionally in the art world. Most importantly, the feminist movement in the seventies provided legitimization, in Ferrara's words, "to be yourself in your work."

When Ferrara abandoned the cotton batting in 1973, she turned to lengths of wood which she would cut and stack, leaving the surfaces in their natural states. In one of the earliest, *Curved Pyramid*, the warm, natural coloration and exposed delicate grain of the fir as well as the illusion of elegantly curved faces introduced signature materials and concepts (asymmetrical deviations), which Ferrara would continue to explore throughout the decade. Juxtaposed against the strong rectangular orientation of the individual units of wood, the uninterrupted lengths of grain, and the stepped formation of the lateral walls, are the opposing convex and concave faces that reveal a repeated pattern of annular bands exposed by Ferrara's cross-cuts. We encounter the explicit rawness of the wood, the variations of its color, the visible signs of its age, and the human inexactness of its curved configuration. Ferrara's conscious consideration for such subtleties of appearance and "natural" occurrences in an otherwise systematic approach keep us connected to the work and the artist's intimate relationship to her materials and imagery. We tend to want to come close to a work like *Curved Pyramid*, responding to its building-block clarity with a combined sense of familiarity and wonder.

Much of this material and all quotes, unless otherwise noted, are from conversations and correspondence with the artist in October and November 1995.

1. Quoted in Ileen Sheppard-Gallagher, "Interview With Jackie Ferrara," *Jackie Ferrara Sculpture: A Retrospective* (Sarasota: John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, 1992), 13.
2. Ibid., 14.
3. Ibid., 12.
4. Ibid., 12.
5. Laurie Anderson, *Artforum* (January 1974): 80.
6. Ibid., 80.
7. David Bourdon, "Jackie Ferrara: On the Cutting Edge of a New Sensibility," *Arts Magazine* (January 1976): 91.
8. Bourdon, 91.
9. Robert Pincus-Witten, "Jackie Ferrara: The Feathery Elevator," *Arts Magazine* (November 1976): 106.



Curved Pyramid

1973
fir
35 x 60 x 18 inches

Collection
Rose Art Museum,
Brandeis University,
Waltham, Massachusetts,
Rose Purchase Fund
Photo: Harry Bartlett

Truncated Pyramid I

1973
cotton batting, glue on cardboard
72 x 24 x 24 inches

Collection Lannan Foundation,
Los Angeles, California
Photo: Susan Einstein

Nancy Graves

Writing about Nancy Graves's colleague Eva Hesse, Robert Storr noted the following incident: During the period when Hesse was working on her last piece, *Untitled* (1970), an ensemble of seven L-shaped forms variously referred to as seven "poles" or "feet," she "visited Nancy Graves who was then in the process of fabricating the milling and skeletal legs of her *Variability of Similar Forms* (1970)."[1] What Storr points to as a "confluence of distinct aesthetics" seems all the more notable here because it illustrates a more significant intersection in the work of these two distinguished post-minimalist peers—a convergence of the conceptual sort between natural phenomena and abstraction, repetition and heterogeneity, which transcends related subject matter. Hesse's organic permutations of geometric forms and Graves's engineered reproductions of camel bones functioned similarly to fulfill the artists' desires to articulate connections and linkages—from part to whole, from observation to experience, from the individual to the world.

Much has been written about Graves as a child frequenting the Berkshire Museum where her father worked in their hometown of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and there experiencing the collections and practices of both the arts and natural sciences. This early exposure to an interdisciplinary approach to the visual world seems to have guided her aesthetic practice throughout her distinguished career as a painter, sculptor, printmaker, and filmmaker until her recent death in 1995. In her deliberate allusions to both natural history and art history, Graves would acknowledge the contextual complexities of the perceptual process.

In her introduction to a catalog for Graves's work in 1972, another of Graves's minimalist-inspired colleagues, choreographer and filmmaker Yvonne Rainer, emphasized "the need for an authenticity of source [such as]...Nancy's fabrication of a bone" not only as a method of mediating between the artist's imagination and her production, but also as a way of becoming "connected to the world."[2] In Graves's idiosyncratic choices of camels and bones circa 1968-71, Rainer observes that the sources "often do not have any aesthetic consistency but reflect the diversity and randomness of nature." The impetus for her camel sculptures—the work of the 18th-century anatomist Clemente Susini whose life-size wax studies Graves saw during 1965-66 while in Italy—came from the world of natural history, but would compel Graves to reconceptualize and represent this natural form within the context of contemporary art. In 1969, at the age of 29, Graves introduced to the public at the Whitney Museum (in the first one-woman show at this institution) three life-size constructions of camels whose "naturalism" was met with equal excitement and controversy. Writing about the work years later, Roberta Smith recalled that "they seemed as accurate as a natural history display....Closer examination, however, revealed myriad distortions of both form and surface, as well as deliberate signs of handwork, so that the ultimate effect was strangely abstract."[3]

For Graves, the camels and bones were fundamentally abstract elements, chosen not for their shocking exoticism in the context of contemporary minimalist sculpture but as obviously fabricated "archaeological" evidence that ultimately referred not to camels but to the "anatomy of sculpture making."[4] She was concerned not with the "duplication" of a model of reality or the idea of "camelhood," but rather with "objecthood" and how given facts and literal forms are precariously balanced between the abstract and the figurative in the process of construction and perception. To Graves, her perceptual investigations seemed a logical response to those raised by her minimalist colleagues during the sixties: "Graves has wedded the unconventional methods of process art, in a seemingly unlikely direction, to the tangible

replication of forms of organic life, and her interest in permutation has led her to the serial reproduction of these forms."[5] Following the production of more than two dozen full-scale camel constructions between 1965 and 1970, Graves made a number of works that dissected the camel and its skeletal form. The works are rich with allusions to paleontology, prehistoric cave paintings, mummies, and shamanistic forms and provided Graves with a specific, natural subject with which to explore more abstract sculptural issues. She has commented, "By going inside and using the bones as a point of departure or illusion, I was questioning a post-Brancusi, post-Andre, late sixties notion of armature."[6]

In 1970, Graves embarked on the seminal sculpture, *Variability of Similar Forms*, 36, free-standing, life-size, skeletal camel legs, constructed from sculpted wax formed over a steel rod armature, then colored with marble dust and paint. Each leg has three elements, the lower element is similar in all 36 units, the others vary from leg to leg, as do the angles and positions of the legs.[7] Although minimal in its formal simplicity and matter-of-fact presentation, it is a complex gathering of Graves's conceptual considerations of difference, the distribution of part to whole, armature (both sculptural and skeletal), and movement.

"Most floor pieces which I have made have to do with similar forms, in some way varied. The form itself is very simplistic, so that one can immediately find some access to the gestalt....How the mind received visual material and observes it....You can absorb the whole, but you can't define it in terms of something rational."[8]

Although immediately recognizable as "bones," any meaningful connection of these fabricated skeletal remains to their "former" selves as the hind or fore legs of a camel is effectively disrupted by Graves, who causes us instead to concentrate our perceptual energies on the process of recognizing what is shared and what is variable from leg to leg. Writing about the piece in 1972, Martin Cassidy said, "Given sufficient distance, we might take this work for a crowd of gawking stick figures gossiping among themselves. In terms of Graves's preoccupations, this work may be regarded as an opportunity for the spectator to participate in the lively and experimental process of perception."[9]

In this and several other sculptures from 1970 to 1972, as well as five films made from 1970 to 1974 that the sculpture anticipated, Graves's interests in variability and repetition compelled her to consider the illusion of motion. It is not surprising that the artist's positioning of the legs in *Variability of Similar Forms* was influenced by the sequential photographs of humans and animals in motion by Eadward Muybridge. As the title of her first 16mm film suggests, *200 Stills at 60 Frames* (1970) shares the matter-of-fact presentation of both Muybridge's photographs and Graves's sculpture. While "movement" in the sculpture is provided by the viewer physically moving around the piece and mentally registering slight variations in the legs' positions as "motion," two subsequent films, *Goulimine* (1970) and *Izy Bouikr* (1971), recorded the unaltered movement, repetition, and variation of camels filmed on location in Morocco. In both media, Graves successfully disrupts any interpretation of the subject according to conventional aesthetic criteria, effecting a "dysfunction of the familiar" that ultimately connects the concrete world of natural phenomena to the conceptual realm of abstraction.[10]

If her works contributed to a knowledge of the place of the feminine within the social, it was in terms of what Graves perceived as the conceptual gap between the natural and the constructed. Because the camels and bones are representations of a female fabricating natural evidence ("redoing" nature by hand), Graves's constructions are profound examples of female agency as well as conceptual disruptions in the traditionally exclusive and gendered realms of nature (that which "can only be expressed, not changed," i.e., "feminine") and culture (that which is unfixed, capable of variation, i.e., "masculine").[11]

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1. Robert Storr, "Do the Wrong Thing: Eva Hesse and the Abstract Grotesque," *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992), 98.
2. Yvonne Rainer, "On Nancy Graves," *Nancy Graves: Sculpture and Drawing 1970-1972* (Philadelphia: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1972).
3. Roberta Smith, "Nancy Graves, 54, Prolific Post-Minimalist Artist," *The New York Times*, (Tuesday, 24 October 1995).
4. Michael Shapiro, "Inside-Out/Outside-In: The Anatomy of Nancy Graves's Sculpture," in *The Sculpture of Nancy Graves: A Catalogue Raisonne*, (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Museum, 1987), 26.
5. Ibid., 26.
6. Quoted in Linda Cathcart, *Nancy Graves: A Survey 1969/1980* (Buffalo: Albright Knox Art Gallery, 1980), 14.
7. Ibid., 38.
8. Quoted in Emily Wasserman, "An Interview with Nancy Graves," *Artforum* (October 1970), 45.
9. Martin Cassidy, "The Work of Nancy Graves," *Nancy Graves: Sculpture and Drawing 1970-1972* (Philadelphia: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1972).
10. Cathcart, 38.
11. Peter Wollen quoted in Marcia Tucker, "Women Artists Today: Revolution or Regression," *Making Their Mark: Women Artists Move into the Mainstream, 1970-85*, ed. Randy Rosen and Catherine C. Brawer (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), 200.

Variability of Similar Forms

1970
steel, wax, marble dust, acrylic, 36 units
84 x 216 x 180 inches overall

Courtesy the Estate of Nancy Graves (extended loan to the Detroit Institute of Arts)

Eva Hesse

"A woman is sidetracked by all her feminine roles from menstrual periods to cleaning house to remaining pretty and 'young' and having babies...She's at a disadvantage from the beginning...She also lacks conviction that she has the 'right' to achievement. She also lacks the belief that her achievements are worthy...There are handfuls that succeeded, but less when one separates the women from the women that assumed the masculine role. A fantastic strength is necessary and courage. I dwell on this all the time."[1]

Because of Eva Hesse's relatively early success and premature death in 1970, her career is often seen as the symbolic culmination of an era or as a prelude to the feminist movement rather than coinciding with the coming of age of feminism and the other women of her generation. Thus, it is important to remind ourselves that the body of work and persona we have come to identify and celebrate as that of "the mature Hesse" was the production of only five years (circa 1965-70) by a woman who was in her early thirties and still struggling to establish her confidence as an artist.

"Do I have a right to womanliness? Can I achieve an artistic endeavor and can they coincide?"[2]

It is true that Hesse did not live to experience (or expand upon) the full effect of the feminist revisions she and others of her generation helped to shape through the uncompromising choices they made everyday in the privacy of their studios. And, like many of her female artist and critic colleagues at the time (before 1970), she did not regard herself as a feminist and resisted any gender-based reading of her work. But to categorize Hesse's challenges and successes as a female artist as "pre-feminist" or mere "prototype," rather than those of an in-the-trenches participant, ignores the critical fact that her choices occurred in the collective context of the cultural revolution of the late sixties—those volatile and experimental years in which the male-dominated aesthetic of minimalism began to unravel at the hands of the emerging impact of feminism.

It is also worth recalling that Hesse was supported in her decisions at the time by friends and colleagues who included feminist critic Lucy Lippard and artist Sol LeWitt. While the obsessional permutations of LeWitt's geometric structures provided an important aesthetic model for Hesse, Lippard's critical acknowledgment of Hesse's work within the emerging antiformalist aesthetic she identified in 1966 as "eccentric abstraction," placed Hesse clearly within the center of a critical dialogue that introduced indirect affinities between the abstract structures of minimalism and the "incongruity" and frequent sexual content of surrealism, which Lippard identified as "body ego."[3] Lippard featured Hesse's work in *Eccentric Abstractions* (1966) and *Soft Sculptures* (1968), two major exhibitions that signaled a growing feminist awareness and, as Lippard observed,"included more women than was my habit or anyone else's at that time."

"It was my friendship with Eva that made me aware of the problems that women artists face in a world dominated by a male hierarchy (critics, editors, museum and gallery administrators). There seems to be an implicit rule (even among female critics, etc.) that a woman can never be considered the dominant practitioner of a style or idea."
Sol LeWitt [4]

It is only recently that feminist historians such as Linda Norden have begun to consider what she referred to as "the generative impact of Hesse's art on her peers—the ways in which her insistently personal artistic decisions and resistance to the more orthodox aesthetic constraints of minimalism helped to open up its structural potential..."[5] LeWitt has described Hesse's fundamental expressivity and humanist orientation as critical to her

eventual disruption of the modular and serial framework of minimalism: "There was an impetus at the time that she benefited from, but it would have happened anyway. It just enlarged the scope of her own inquiry....She had to wrap her own statement around some idea—e.g., a cube—but she subverted the minimalist unity that they were born with."[6]

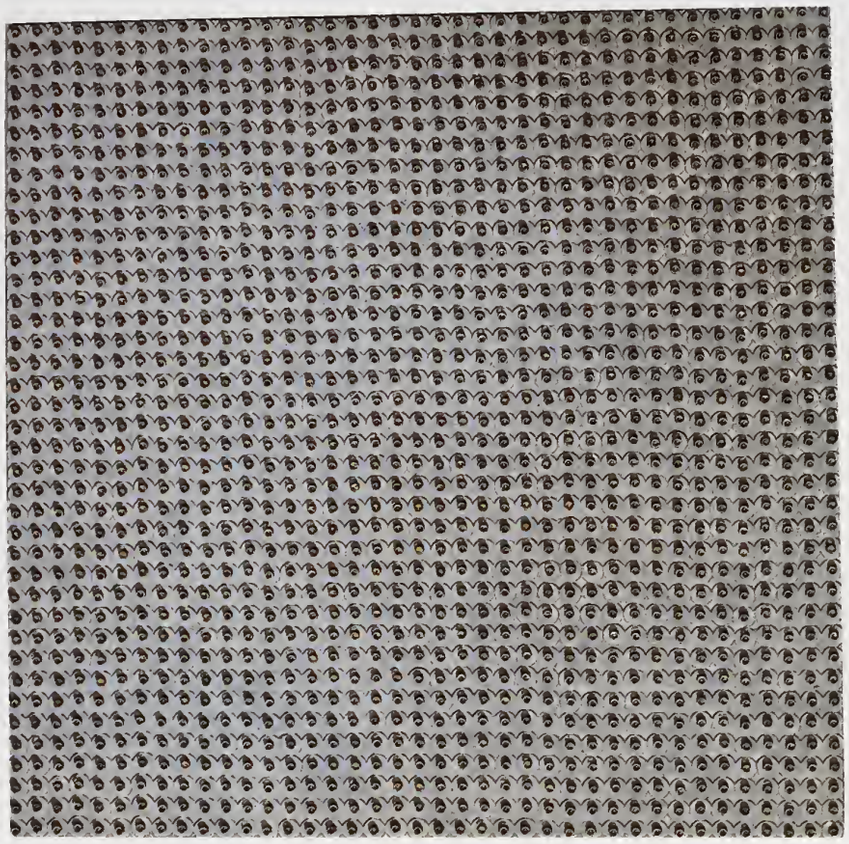
In two 1967 wall sculptures, *Compass* and *Range*, in which Hesse's signature grid of concentric circles occurs as literal rows of steel washers and aluminum grommets, the intimacy of scale and subtle veiling effect of sculpt-metal keep what is orderly and systematic far from the formulaic. At other times, Hesse undermined the methodology of a serial system with apparent abandon, deliberately submitting her "armature" of repetition to "curious alterations" and deliberate imprecision, thwarting our expectations in the process so that, as Lippard observed, "often the fact that the units are at first glance identical is the only order in the piece."[7] In *Sequel* (1967-68) we encounter a disorderly mass of nearly 100 imperfect little spheres huddled on a latex mat: unattached, blemished with lumps, their vulnerability exaggerated by tiny gashes on their surfaces. While their casual placement on the floor and intimate scale might suggest a moment of abandon from a more deliberate "play," in the end Hesse's unabashedly subjectivized embrace of repetition and randomness becomes an eloquent metaphor for human relatedness and transformation. As critic W. S. Wilson has observed, Hesse "could see how separate pieces could become parts of a system, as in the interdependencies of parts in an organic wholeness—a single living system—and she could see then that the pieces lost their separateness when they functioned within such a system...Her point-of-view on systems is her perspective on how parts are to be *with* each other."[8]

Hesse's dual desires for a connectedness to others and autonomy have been said to reside especially "in her extensive use of cords and strings—the material most prevalent in her art." Taut or tangled, cut or wrapped, anchored or dangling loose, in this element "she found a metaphor for the ties that bound her, for good and ill, to others."[9] The negative impressions of two breastlike forms in *One More Than One* could be read as an example of the "introverted, repeatable, 'not-self' expression" Hesse sought to achieve.[10] But here they occur on a rectangular shaped body whose surface has been animated by the imprint of Hesse's fingertips and pierced by two languid cords, which eventually not only wrap around one another but reach out onto the floor and into our space. From the simple fact of a rectangular box, two half spheres, and two cords, *One More Than One* becomes an inscription of Hesse's femininity in a "compellingly allusive yet insistently abstract" form.[11]

In most ways, Hesse's challenges and choices paralleled the concerns and goals of the feminist movement that came into full force just as her brief life came to an end. In her journal in 1964 she quoted a passage from Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*: "What woman essentially lacks today for doing great things is forgetfulness of herself; but to forget oneself it is first of all necessary to be firmly assured that now and for the future one has found oneself."[12] As critic Peter Schjeldahl insightfully wrote upon the occasion of Hesse's posthumous retrospective exhibition at the Guggenheim in 1973, "The ethical lesson of her career—which makes her an ethical heroine—is one of self-acceptance."[13]

"She figured out a way—I don't know whether it was conscious or not—to work within the minimalist language and then there is this subject matter, which is the antithesis of minimalism. So she is attacking it while she is embraced by it. It took many years for people to talk about the real issues in her work. If they were looking at it through the rhetoric of that time, they might not have talked about the subject....Minimalism is not about metaphor, and Hesse's work is." Rona Pondick[14]

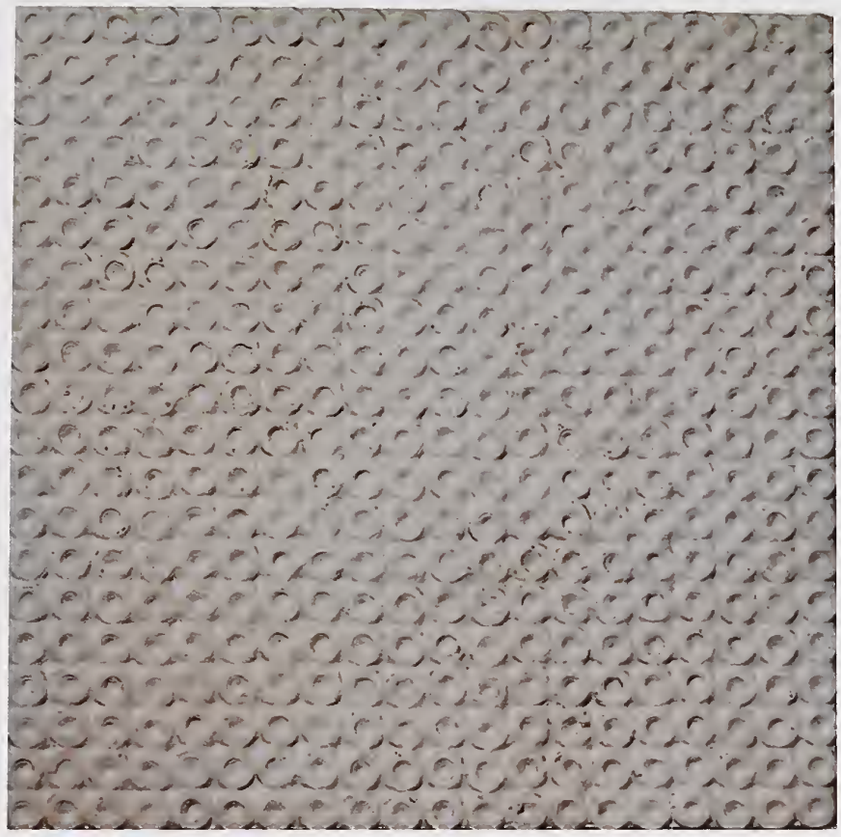
1. Hesse to Ethelyn Honig, 1965, *Eva Hesse*, Lucy Lippard (New York: New York University Press, 1976), 205.
2. Diary entry from 1965 cited in Lippard, 34.
3. Lucy Lippard, "Eccentric Abstraction," *Art International* (November 1966).
4. Quoted in Linda Norden, "Getting To Ick," *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992), 54.
5. Norden, 55.
6. Norden, note 48, 73.
7. Lucy Lippard, "Eva Hesse: The Circle," *Art in America* (May 1971).
8. W. S. Wilson, "Eva Hesse: 'Alone and/or Only With," *Artspace* (September/October 1992), 40.
9. Linda Shearer quoted in Anna Chave, "Eva Hesse: A 'Girl Being a Sculpture,'" *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective*, 105.
10. Norden, 66.
11. Kim Levin, "Eva Hesse: Notes on New Beginnings," *Art News* (February 1973): 73.
12. Lippard, "Eva Hesse: The Circle."
13. Peter Schjeldahl, *Art in America* (March 1973): 99.
14. Quoted in an interview transcript, "In the Lineage of Eva Hesse," ed. Marc Strauss (Ridgefield: Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, 1993), 7.



Range

1967
aluminum grommets and
sculpt-metal on cardboard
12 x 12 x 1 inches

Collection
Marilyn Fischbach,
courtesy Rosen
& van Liere,
New York, New York



Compass

1967
steel washers and sculpt-metal on wood
10 x 10 x ¼ inches

Collection
Marilyn Fischbach,
courtesy Rosen
& van Liere,
New York, New York

One More Than One

1967
acrylic, paper-mache,
plastic cord, and wood
8½ x 15½ x 5½ inches

Collection
Stephen Antonakos
and Naomi Spector
Photo: Patricia Holdsworth

Sequel

1967-68
latex mixed with
powdered white pigment
30 x 32 inches sheet;
2 5/8 inches each sphere

Collection Lannan
Foundation,
Los Angeles, California
Photo: Susan Einstein

Ana Mendieta

"I have been carrying on a dialogue between the landscape and the female body (based on my own silhouette). I believe this has been the direct result of my having been torn from my homeland (Cuba) during my adolescence. I am overwhelmed by the feeling of having been cast from the womb (nature)....This obsessive act of reasserting my ties with the earth is really the reactivation of primeval beliefs...[in] an omnipresent female force, the after-image of being encompassed within the womb, is a manifestation of my thirst for being."[1]

We come upon Mendieta's art like witnesses before the evidence of a private ritual, an identity in the making. We understand Mendieta's silhouette outlined in candles, flowers, earth, or blood as a subjective site. There, we begin to understand how Mendieta's lived experience of loss—her adolescent exile from her family and home in Cuba in 1961—guided her artistic efforts to reinvent herself as place. During her brief career she would produce a series of unforgettable icons of the body which, in the same gesture, capture a self who belongs to the world and signal its release from this life. In her simple yet overwhelming transformations of the language of private ritual into an effective public aesthetic, Mendieta achieves a complete externalization of self that is equally dependent upon the artist's sense of empowerment and her intentional relinquishing of that authority.

As a young artist in the early seventies, in Hans Breder's new graduate program in Multimedia and Video Art at the University of Iowa, Mendieta found an unusually experimental environment in which she would discover the site of her own body as the primary vehicle for her work in performance, installation, photography, video, and film. As the only female major in the department, Mendieta was aware of but not inhibited by a gender-division that sometimes alienated her from her colleagues. As she recalled those days, "I was working with blood and with my body. The men were into conceptual art and doing things that were very clean."[2] Critic John Perreault observed, "Although Mendieta was not strictly a pioneer in any of the forms she began to synthesize quite brilliantly in the early seventies," her work would mature within the revisionist context of postminimalism: "Mendieta's earth/body pieces...are not unrelated to minimalism and antiform art...both subvert composition by utilizing single-image presentations or repetitions ordered by schematic placements rather than by taste. Earth art is minimalism writ large upon the landscape; body art is the earth art of the flesh. In both cases...questions of ephemerality and distribution became paramount."[3]

Mendieta's development and experiments also coincided with those of the feminist movement and an awareness of a growing number of artists who would consciously address issues of female subjectivity in both privately and publicly directed formats. In a 1975 article in *Ms.*, Lucy Lippard would be one of the first to write about Mendieta's work and place it in the context of "artworks by women with the self as subject matter." Perreault wrote that, "Mendieta was ambitious for her art, and with good reason. She was well on her way to proving that a woman artist, an artist with Third World roots, and a so-called minority artist could establish herself as an innovator."[4] Mendieta said that even in high school art functioned as a source of "self-affirmation" and empowerment, and she recalled, "At the time...I looked very much at the Mexican muralists" whose fusion of indigenous heritage, politics, and art in a public arena was an inspiration to the young feminist.[5]

Mary Jane Jacob's research has revealed that Mendieta's identity was marked by a "strong matriarchal family line dominated by her maternal grandmother, Elvira, the daughter of General Carlos Maria de Rojas, a leader in Cuba's war for independence (1895-98). Her grandmother's home, itself an historic landmark that had served as refuge to the general's soldiers...was the gathering place for all the relatives on each family occasion. The house played a key role in Mendieta's developing identity

with Cuba and her innocent early years, which were forfeited when she was forced to grow up quickly in a new society. She suffered the loss of this family home and the grandmother who had bound generations to this house, to each other, and to Cuba."[6] Throughout her career, Mendieta drew inspiration from Santeria, a cultural mixture of religious beliefs and practices from Africa and the Americas. According to the artist's sister, it was as a child that Mendieta "first heard its mysterious stories in her parents' household from the servants, African-Cubans and Santeria believers.... Mendieta spent afternoons in the kitchen or the servants' quarters listening to tales of the *orishas* [lesser gods], their powers, magic, and spells."[7] Later, as a young artist and feminist, Mendieta would identify with the Santeria as a belief system of her ancestors in which the female—as deity, priestess, and believer—had a significant and active role.

"In the winter of 1971, I went with Ana to her studio where she showed me her latest works, a series of idolos *(idols) painted on large sheets of paper and taped to the walls. Ana said she wanted to develop a single image and infuse it with magic and power so that it would become "the type of icon that inspires worship."* Raquel Mendieta Harrington[8]

As early as 1972, Mendieta turned from the limitations of the canvas to the "living" format of performance and the unconventional medium of blood. "I started thinking I would have to act it out and work from my own experience, my own sources....I started immediately using blood, I guess because I think it's a very powerful magical thing. I don't see it as a negative force."[9] Symbolically, blood would function as a "primal paint" in many of Mendieta's pieces—an element of life, magic, power, violence, and sacrifice, all common to the rituals of Santeria with which Mendieta became absorbed. In the cultural context of the seventies, the material would be read as an empowering metaphor furnished by the female body and would act to diminish the conceptual and physical distance between the artist and her art.

In March 1974, Mendieta filmed her performance *Body Tracks*, where in one motion she made the sweeping mark of her blood-covered arms and hands on a wall as she went from a standing to a crouching position. This work was restaged and executed on paper during a performance at Franklin Furnace, New York, in 1982, resulting in the three drawings designated as *Body Tracks (Rastros Corporales)*. On both of these occasions, Mendieta used blood combined with tempera as "a spiritual and primal ink for the making of marks, symbolic gestures."[10] The drawings act to register the corporeal presence and subjective intentions of Mendieta who, facing away from the gaze of the camera, repeated this matter-of-fact and deliberate action twice, varying the position of her arms from open to closed and back to open again with the two remaining sheets. As Mary Jane Jacob has observed, compared to "Yves Kleins's use 10 years earlier of the female body as a 'living brush,' a dehumanized and easily manipulated marker," Mendieta's use of her own body exists at the other extreme.[11] In these self-directed traces of Mendieta's blood-stained arms and hands, she declares herself as both creative agent/subject and image/object. Mendieta's unexpected fusion of minimalist sparseness and repetition with the abstract representation of her own body (in an image of natural correspondence—a *pair* of arms and hands) suggests a range of possible feminist intentions regarding difference, wholeness, interdependency, and autonomy.

During the mid-seventies, Mendieta began to turn from the specific image of her body to arranging repeated elements (including stones, fireworks, sand, flowers) in the shape of her silhouette. And by doing so, the work immediately seemed to embrace a more archetypal conceptualization of "body" and "figure." Her subjectivity, in the abstract form of the "silueta," would give testimony to "an intelligence of the body where the entire sense of meaning is delivered without separation or detachment from the impulse of direct experience."[12] Mendieta would use "the measurements of her five-foot form to measure the world. She became her own method of composition, imposing her outline" on fragments of floor or earth.[13]

In an installation from 1976, *Burial of the Nañigo*, Mendieta's silhouette is described by repeated candles. Open and unfixed, it is both figure and sign designated not by the presence of sculptural mass but by our perception of its absence. Here, Mendieta inscribes herself within a Santeria-inspired event specifically evoking the secret rituals of the male "Nañigo" cult. Unlit, the candles are repeated cylindrical units whose schematic arrangement temporarily indicates an image/place. Burning, both site and silhouette come alive with the votive magic of Mendieta's ritual, all the while measuring their own inevitable passage into dormancy and shapelessness. Much more than a gesture of ephemerality, the literal duration embodied in the burning candles, each melting at its own pace, recaptures Mendieta's initial "private" intentions and connects them to our experience of the sculpture, safekeeping them, if only for a moment, in our time and space.

1. Quoted in John Perreault, "Earth and Fire: Mendieta's Body of Work," *Ana Mendieta: A Retrospective* (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1987), 10.
2. Judith Wilson, "Ana Mendieta Plants Her Garden," *Village Voice*, 13-19 (August 1980): 71.
3. Perreault, 10, 13.
4. Ibid., 13.
5. Wilson, 71.
6. Mary Jane Jacob, *Ana Mendieta: The "Silhueta" Series, 1973-1980* (New York: Galerie Lelong, 1991), 8.
7. Jacob, 4-5.
8. Raquel Mendieta Harrington, "Ana Mendieta: Self Portrait of a Goddess," *Review: Latin American Literature and Arts* (January-June, 1988): 38.
9. Wilson, 71.
10. Jacob, 11-12.
11. Jacob, 12.
12. Robert C. Morgan, "Ana Mendieta," *Arts Magazine* (March 1988): 111.
13. Perreault, 13-14.

Body Tracks
(Rastros Corporales)

1982 restaging of
original 1974 performance
blood and tempera paint
on paper, 3 sheets
38 x 50 inches each

Collection
Rose Art Museum,
Brandeis University,
Waltham, Massachusetts,
Rose Purchase Fund
Photo: Harry Bartlett

Burial of the Nañigo

1976
candle silhouette
79 x 39 x 10 inches

Courtesy the Estate
of Ana Mendieta
and Galerie Lelong,
New York, New York
Photo: courtesy
of Galerie Lelong,
New York, New York

Mary Miss

Identifying recurrent elements in Mary Miss's sculptural vocabulary from the seventies reads like a journey through the landscape of her childhood in the West: corrals, fences, stakes, ropes, ladders—repeated linear demarcations in space, "which were both airy structures, suggestive of vast extent, and barriers, space-enclosing forms."[1] As Miss's self-described "prairie sensibility" developed during the decade, her vocabulary would include topological markers such as fortresses, gates, wells, gardens, towers, trellises, windows, pits, and pools—references to built interventions in the landscape, "vernacular images, common to daily surroundings," and although abstract, intended by Miss "to encourage a heightened sensitivity to the visual dimensions of the contemporary world."[2]

Miss's father's career as a military officer meant that the family moved constantly, living in California, Texas, Colorado, and Washington. She has said, "It seems like my whole childhood was spent looking out the car window," fascinated by literal boundaries like the fences along the highways, as well as the perceptual layers of spaces both experienced and remembered. "Perhaps because I was never in any place for very long, the sense of making definite places is very important to me."[3] Whether working indoors or in the landscape, it was her desire to create an individual engagement with rather than a monolithic mark upon a space that has driven Miss's aesthetic: "It's not about the monument for me."

For the viewer, an engagement with Miss's work evolves over time, and may involve both perceptual and experiential knowledge as well as the overlapping of emotional and psychological responses. At all times the work has had, in her words, "a realistic physical motive rather than an abstract or conceptual basis. It uses particular instances of situations and material objects; the pieces are not dreamt up or away from circumstances....Many of the things are in fact based upon very practical objects....Though there is a very physical basis to my sculpture, the desired result is not to make an object. I am dealing with individual experiences of reality rather than grids or formulas, and the resulting works are traces of these experiences."[4] Although an indoor piece, *Untitled* (1977) intentionally suggests "the possibilities of other boundaries." A wooden door or gate-like structure is the outermost of three superimposed facades hanging against the fourth plane, an existing interior wall. Openings in a window-like grid generate the sensation of another "interior" and lead us into the activity of "looking in." And while the object's literal dimensions are known, the dialectic of alternating open and solid layers focuses our attention not on its "objecthood" but lure us into what is merely indicated, a place beyond the wall of the room.

For several years after arriving in New York in 1968, Miss worked in what she described as true isolation. At the time, in her words, "there was very little interest in my work. I was under no pressure to do things that pleased anyone else, and the isolation allowed time for the work to develop."[5] Working in a tiny basement studio, Miss began exploring spatial sensations in room-size installations, works which almost no one else would see before she took them down in order to have room to construct a new piece. About pieces like *Knots in a Room* (1969), *Room Size Rope* (1969), or *Stake Fence* (1970), Miss said, "I wanted to suggest a space of infinite arrangement, a space that would continue beyond a small room."[6] In those early works, Miss worked with materials, including wood, string, wire mesh, canvas, and glass, that were economic and easily maneuvered, clearly identifiable yet allusively rich. Kate Linker has noted that they were chosen for "the directness of their construction, so alien to sixties industrial finish. But they were also chosen for their general cultural accessibility, indicating a focus on the viewer."[7]

In *Stake Fence* we find Miss's intervention in space as both an "extremely clear situation" and the conduit for an open-ended experience. Coming into contact with its 30 wood stakes leaning informally at alternate angles against a knee-high, sporadically whitewashed fence, one is immediately aware of the structure as a barrier—negotiable rather than confrontational, but physically declaring your position as either on this side or that side of its expanse. *Stake Fence* does not dictate one's movement around it so much as it communicates the possibilities of various physical and perceptual experiences: walking along its length, leaning across or even climbing over it, gazing down the sightline of Vs it creates, or considering the perimeters of the space it occupies. The dynamics of obstacle or path are intentionally unfixed as they depend not only upon each viewer's perceptual inclinations and physical limitations but also upon the piece's orientation in and relation to the environment in which it stands. In this and other works of the period, Miss "gives us the parameters, the cues, the opportunities that allow us to tap our own memories, to hone our awareness, to re-create our own repertoire of idiosyncratic spaces."[8]

During these years, Miss was well aware of the minimalist aesthetic and acknowledges it as an important influence, in particular the experiential emphasis directed toward the viewer in the works of Robert Morris and Donald Judd. But minimalism would prove to be most significant as a point of departure. "Minimalist artists attempted to divest their work of associative and referential content, and content was important to me, from very early on....For the most part, they [Andre and Judd] were making large, boxlike forms...I had this strong anti-monolithic, anti-monumental tendency. But the Minimalists did put a focus on space, and that was important to me. Judd, for example, focused on objects in space by his repeated intervals between them. I took that notion and developed it."[9]

"I think my early involvement with women artists and our struggle to gain credibility has made me very concerned about the content of my work. The idea of doing work that is public, outside the restricted cultural zones of galleries and museums, is very important to me.

"The women's movement in the art world brought me contacts, friends, and opportunities to be seen. I certainly benefited from the picketing for better representation at the Whitney. Yet there was also a sense 10 years ago of being criticized for not doing something with specific female content, being requested to make feminist statements with our art."[10]

By 1970 Miss was clearly invested in an alternative engagement with space and viewers and deeply committed to what Kate Linker described as "her own, content-oriented production."[11] That year, Miss moved downtown, started to meet other artists, and became involved with several women artists' efforts, including the Ad Hoc Women Artists' Committee. *Stake Fence* was included in the prestigious 1970 *Whitney Sculpture Annual* and marked the first public appearance of her sculpture. A year later, Lucy Lippard included Miss's work in the Aldrich Museum's landmark exhibition, *Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists*. During that time, she followed the experimental dance of Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown, Twyla Tharp, and Meredith Monk as well as the performance work of Joan Jonas. In the seventies, Miss also began photographing vernacular architecture and "engineered structures" she encountered on travels that supplemented her reading about gardens and other "landscape interventions."

Finding no gallery support in the early seventies, Miss let her sense of aesthetic direction and autonomy lead her to take an unusual risk at the time and develop her work independent of the usual gallery representation. Conscious of the complexity of sensations and associations her works generate from one viewer to the next, Miss's feminist orientation also led her to consider how she most meaningfully might extend that experience, or in her words, how she might "bring art back into the social sphere." Miss's self-identified "sixties social consciousness" led her and a number of her female colleagues during the seventies, including Jackie Ferrara, to take another, more public route, and to work directly in a landscape or architectural setting, and regularly outside the museum/gallery context.[12]

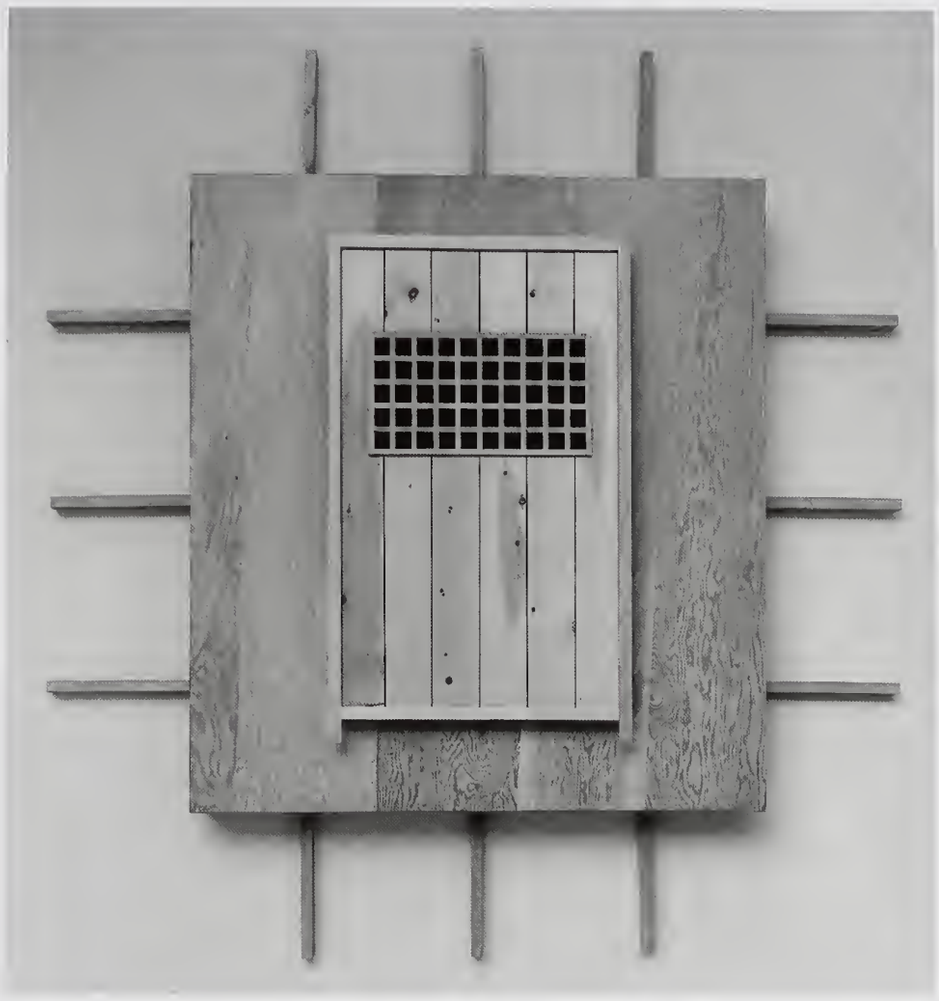
Much of this material and all quotes, unless otherwise noted, are from a conversation with the artist in October 1995.

1. Kate Linker, *Mary Miss* (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1983), 129.
2. Ibid., 130.
3. Avis Berman, "Space Exploration," *ARTnews* (November 1989): 130.
4. Lucy Lippard, "Mary Miss: An Extremely Clear Situation," *Art in America* (March/April 1974): 76-77.
5. Berman, "A Decade of Progress, But Could a Female Chardin Make a Living," *ARTnews* (October 1980): 77.
6. Phyllis Tuchman, "An Interview with Mary Miss," *Mary Miss: Interior Works 1966-80* (Bell Gallery, List Art Center, Brown University and Main Gallery, University of Rhode Island, 1981), 6.
7. Linker, 128.
8. Ronald Onorato, "Illusive Spaces: The Art of Mary Miss," *Artforum* (December 1978): 32-33.
9. Berman, *ARTnews* (November 1989): 132.
10. Berman, *ARTnews* (October 1980): 77.
11. Linker, 128.
12. According to Miss, for many women the public art/commission route has proven to be far more equitable in terms of dollars and opportunities.

Stake Fence

1970
wood
48 x 48 x 252 inches

Collection
Rose Art Museum,
Brandeis University,
Waltham, Massachusetts,
Rose Purchase Fund
Photo: Harry Bartlett



Untitled

1977
wood
108 x 114 x 12 inches

Collection Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York, Theodoron Purchase Award, through funds contributed by Mr. and Mrs. Irving Rossi, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Singer, The Thodoron Foundation and the Walter Foundation, 1977
Photo: David Heald, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York

Ree Morton

"BE
a place
do
a place
find
a place

PLACE
an image
bend
an image
delay
an image
forget
an image

imagine
a poem."[1]

On a page in Ree Morton's sketchbook from 1973-74, embellished with her signature "dot and dash patterns, configurations which she had also 'drawn' in sculpture," is the following quote credited to the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard: "Each one of us, then, should speak of his roads, his crossroads, his roadside benches: each one of us should make a surveyor's map of his lost fields and means...thus we cover the universe with drawings we have lived."[2] Embodied in those lines are the sentiments and images that led Morton to her decision in 1963, as a mother of three and already in her late twenties, to pursue a career as an artist. During the late sixties, Morton was "working literally behind the washer/dryer in the basement of this suburban house in Philadelphia."[3] By 1970 she would have her B.F.A., M.F.A., and a divorce. Nothing about the rather ordinary facts of her biography would lead you to believe that she would make an extraordinarily unorthodox and in many ways prophetic contribution to the art of her time, but everything (or so it seems in retrospect) about her responsiveness to the relations and places in her life points to how she would come to do just that in the seven years of her brief career (she died in 1977) and the extent to which that work would map the experiences she lived.

"My career [as an artist] probably began at the age of three, when I took up watching ant hills and protecting ladybugs. This caused a long interruption in my artistic progress, because my family read it as an interest in science, and directed me to nursing."[4]

Although clearly aware of the dominant aesthetic discourse at the time, Morton showed little interest in working within minimalism's formalist confines. Perhaps in spite of it, she immediately disregarded the boundaries between painting and sculpture and embarked on a path of abstraction which would accommodate the persistence of her narrative. While she frequently (albeit loosely) employed the systems of repetition and schematic compositions of minimalism, her additive impulses and insistently allusive materials served to subvert any notions of exclusivity or "reductivism." For Morton, the "unnecessary" would be deemed the essential elements of her art, while the impractical and non-functional would structure its meaning.[5] The range of media and spaces her works occupied was their hallmark early on: combinations of painting, drawing, and construction; organic and manufactured objects; elements extending from the wall to the floor; color applied and natural.

While the works from the early seventies were clearly sculptural in their orientation, rarely did Morton's intentions result in a single object or structural mass. Rather she defined sculptural space as "place," often partially enclosed and generally designated as unfixed. What Marcia Tucker identified as Morton's decisions "that sculpture could be nonsubstantive...that it could exist as a whole series of activities in a time and place," were critical to her particular revisions of the conventions of sculpture and formalist abstraction.[6] The connection Morton made with the metaphor of the "map" lead her to conceptualize her installations in terms of objects and marks located in a "diagrammed space" and "based upon relations such as proximity, separation, succession, closure (inside-outside), and continuity."[7] When reading these works of the early seventies, the recurrent allusions to paths, the possibility of placement, and the designation of empty spaces as though "reserved" for future use have been seen as responses to events in her life, in particular, when her children moved to live with their father in Virginia in 1972 and Morton subsequently began a new life in New York. "Shortly after her arrival 'for the selfish purpose of meeting people,' she joined a woman's consciousness raising group, which then consisted of other visual artists and a few writers."[8]

"...the work becomes a marker for where you are and what you think. And if it's exactly where

you are at that time, then it's fine...I see a lot of the work I do as being an event..."[9]

Wood Drawings (1971) is an obsessive series of small, playful objects crudely constructed from scraps of found wood. Individual components are hybrids of drawing and sculpture (complete with Morton's signature "notations" of dots, broken lines, and grids) that "originally existed as curios, strategically positioned in 'unexpected places throughout her Philadelphia home' like personal markers or icons."[10] When installed together (as they were when first exhibited in 1974) the work commands (rather than contains) a significant amount of wall space while the individual units retain their intimate scale. The components first exist individually as informal occurrences of drawing and variations on the ubiquitous minimalist "grid," and only when they are discovered to be elements of a larger system do we begin to read and know them in relation to one another. But here, as in all of her works, the system is open to reconfiguration and interpretation; it is a process that has its basis in social systems of interaction and mutuality. According to Morton, "...probably the only thing that I absolutely insist on is that you can't see it wrong."[11]

While the term "feminist" was not regularly assigned to her practice at the time, it was in the context of a feminist erosion of modernist principles that her aesthetic was shaped. As critic Helen Lessick noted about the artist's practice in response to a 1994 reinstallation of Morton's work from the seventies, "in the hegemony of seventies art theory, placing the societal on a par with the intellectual was a bold and feminist stance." Her art has been said to be "totally appropriate to the decade of Ree Morton's activity. The sixties had determined absolute positions. One had to be either for or against: the war in Vietnam, racial integration, equality for women....But in the seventies attention deflected to, and judgment developed on, the individual...Morton's art seems to me perfectly attuned to that shift. It is inclusive, seeking its various tangible forms and their changing relation to one another in the natural and social circumstances of its time. No precise boundaries—either physical or conceptual—are drawn. Ultimately, its meaning depends on the diverse experiences of the viewers who acknowledge it."[12] If one of the hallmarks of minimalist sculpture was the shift of content toward the physical experience of the viewer, Morton's innovations in sculptural installations pushed that experience into the subjective realm. We are encouraged to see and feel ourselves as creative subjects who are, in the artist's words, "involved with very immediate, tactile emotional response to what's there. I mean it should trigger associations that you have because of who you are and that's exactly what I want to allow you."[13]

In another series of hybrid works called *Paintings and Objects* (1973), we encounter a place and situation conceived as a site of social interaction. There are several relations to note: Morton and her cast of objects; the viewer and Morton's installation; and the "internal dialogue" between the three drawn silhouettes of sibling-like figures who are held within the parent-field of canvas. In this human scaled and modestly fabricated piece (unusually pared down by Morton's theatrical standards), Morton's conceptual preoccupations with the relations between two- and three-dimensional existence, between states of temporariness and permanence, and with the repetition of related but never identical elements are exposed as physically vulnerable and emotionally internalized. A tiny rectangle of canvas, anchored by a smaller pair of wooden "legs" propped in playful mimicry of the larger versions lying on the floor, tentatively mirrors the form and language of its parent as though, in one critic's words, "finding its feet" within the worlds of both "paintings and objects."[14] It is work so simple and apparent in its making that you can retrace Morton's process; it is sculpture so nonsubstantive that you could dismantle it in a matter of minutes and walk away with the five elements under your arms; and it is an image of relations so psychologically and emotionally invested that you will be tempted to stay until you have unraveled its cryptic narrative.

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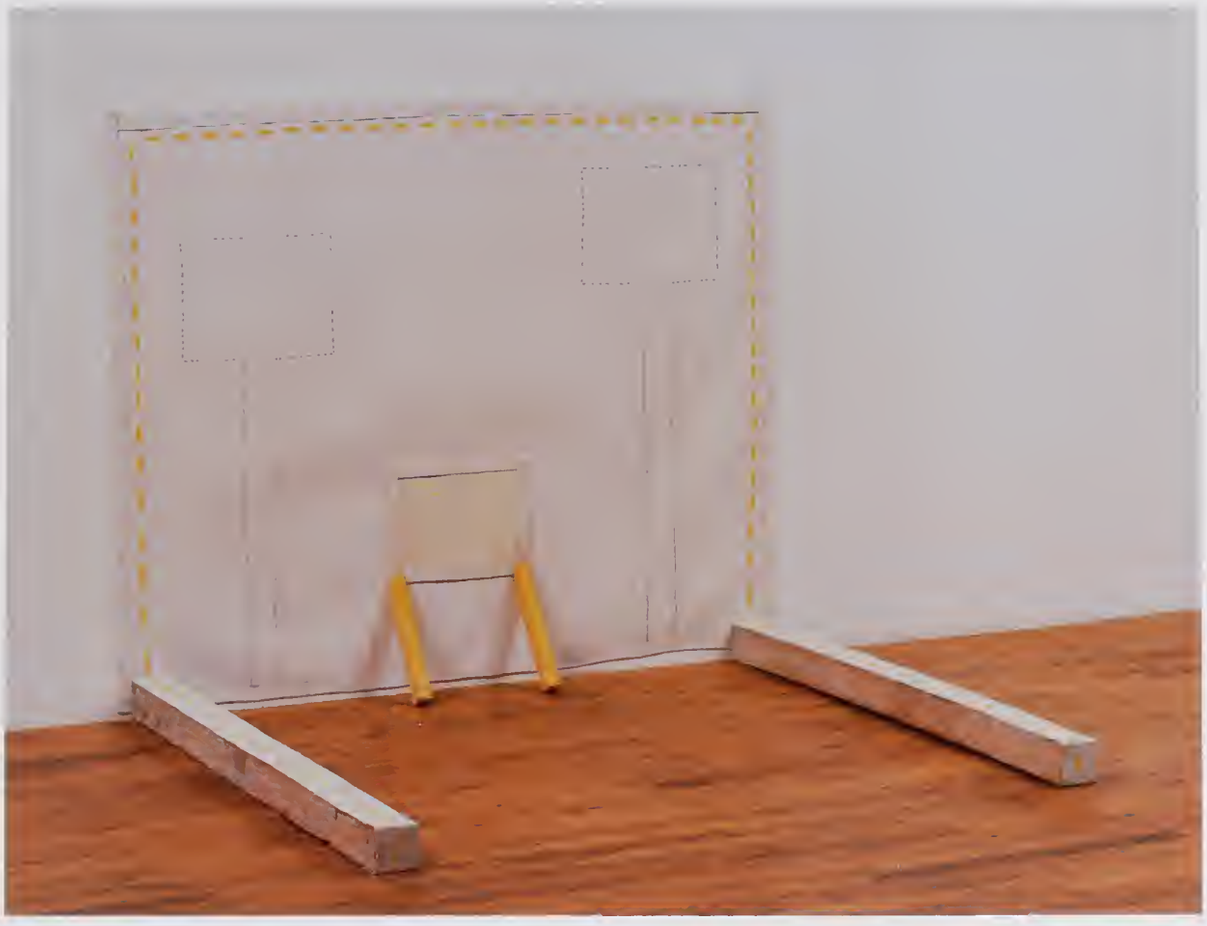
1. Notebook entry from 1973, quoted in Allan Schwartzman and Kathleen Thomas, *Ree Morton: A Retrospective 1971-1977* (New York: The New Museum, 1980), 25.
2. Ibid., 36.
3. Ibid., 10.
4. Quoted in Mary Delahoyd, "Ree Morton," *Artforum* (May 1980): 61.
5. Rosemary Mayer, *Arts Magazine* (February 1973): 72.
6. Schwartzman and Thomas, 19.
7. Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Existence, Space, and Architecture* (New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 18.
8. Schwartzman and Thomas, 23.
9. Quoted in Delahoyd, 62.
10. Schwartzman and Thomas, 13.
11. Delahoyd, 63.
12. Ibid., 65.
13. Ibid., 61.
14. Paul Mattick, Jr., "Ree Morton at Brooke Alexander," *Art in America* (September 1993).

Wood Drawings

1971
felt-tip pen, pencil, clay, acrylic, sponge and hardware on wood, 16 units, various sizes

Courtesy Alexander and Bonin, New York, New York
Photo: D. James Dee



Paintings and Objects

1973
acrylic and pencil
on canvas and wood in
6 parts
53 3/4 x 66 x 60 1/2 inches
overall

Courtesy Alexander
and Bonin, New York,
New York
Photo: D. James Dee

Dorothea Rockburne

Notes to Myself on Drawing

"'When we see a Line we see something that is long and bright, brightness as well as length is necessary to the existence of a Line; if the brightness vanishes the Line is extinguished. Hence all my Flatland friends—when I talk to them about the unrecognized Dimension which is somehow visible in a Line—say, "Ah, you mean brightness": and when I reply, "No, I mean a real Dimension," they at once retort, "Then measure it, or tell us in what direction it extends"; and this silences me, for I can do neither.' (Flatlands, *E. A. Abbot)*

1) How could drawing be of itself and not about something else?
2) Construct an investigation of drawing which is based on information contained within the paper and not on any other information.
3) Thought acts upon itself.
4) It seems reasonable that paper acting upon itself through subject imposed translations could become a subject-object."[1]

In his characterization of Dorothea Rockburne's installation work in 1972, fellow artist Mel Bochner noted how her "works do not become objects but instead record the experience of how ideas infiltrate practice. They are records in the same sense that language is when it is transformed from the purely mental space of our thoughts and feelings and given this form on this page."[2] Early in her public career, Rockburne developed a method of visualizing that experience, which involved the application of a conceptual "language." Though it was not the expected domain of young women it was nonetheless one in which she was proficient and personally invested—the principles of mathematics.

"My interest in Set Theory is not that set theory has to do with art, because it doesn't. I am an artist and it is one of my tools, the way graphite is. The usage of it comes from personal experience. In college I had the good fortune to meet a theoretical mathematician.... Max Dehn....He introduced me to math as a consistent history of thought, the thing I responded to in art.

Then, too, I was angered by the fiction I read, because to read novels...requires some level of empathy with the people who are being portrayed. Women are usually depicted as plodders, fools, or victims. I couldn't in any sense identify with them, and started to read books on mathematics. Math, by contrast, was straight, simple thinking and it never enclosed its own situation.... I knew, though, that I was an artist and not a mathematician."[3]

The logic inherent in Rockburne's method has encouraged readings of the work as "rigorous" and "sparse" and "intellectual." But any limitation of the nature of the work's experience to the coded realm of objectivity is to neutralize the metaphorical richness of the relationships with which she is concerned and to deny the persistence of Rockburne's female subjectivity. Critical to the meaning of Rockburne's art is understanding how "layers of correspondence" between the intellectual and physical processes that she engages correspond to her experience in the world and, by extension, our own.

I'm interested in the ways in which I can experience myself, and my work is really about making myself."[4]

In 1966, Rockburne met friends and colleagues Mel Bochner, Sol LeWitt, and Robert Mangold, with whom she would share many theoretical concerns but with whom she would part ways in terms of the overt physicality and sensuality her art would explore. The works from the seventies involve successive interactive states—conceptual and physical—of materials such as paper, cup grease, crude oil, and carbon paper occurring in series of operations involving layering, rolling, and folding. In his reading

of Rockburne's floor piece, *Intersection* (1971), as a "bed at the corner of the floor with paper cylinders at the head and foot," which he found "intellectually stringent, yet personal," Robert Pincus-Witten touched on an aspect of her work that would most separate it from related work by her minimalist peers: its embrace of sensual experience.[5] Here the intellectual "purity" of interrelatedness as concept quickly slides into the multisensory mire of the physical: geometric layers of plastic, paper, and chipboard penetrated by a liquid sheet of crude oil. In recalling the original installation of *Intersection*, Rockburne savors the memory of the "incongruous smell of a garage within the pristine space of the museum." The work was literally an "intersection" on many levels: it occurs where floor and wall meet; it is the synthesis of the parts of two previous pieces, *Group/And* and *Disjunction/Or*, and it is a complex marriage of materials that interact but nonetheless retain their individual identities.

"Materials are always a direct reflection of me."[6]

Rockburne cites very specific autobiographical incidents, especially those as a young mother in New York in the late fifties and early sixties, which she understands now as life's preludes to significant areas of work that she would explore in the following decade. For example, it was the birth of her daughter that led Rockburne to read Jean Piaget's developmental theories and eventually respond to his observations in her *Conservation Drawings*. In the routine yet delicate moment between a mother and child decorating a cake with candied violets, the artist recalls her 5-year-old cutting a pie-shaped piece out of the rectangular cake—a visual observation that would trigger Rockburne's explorations of mathematical topology and conventions of the rectangle. On another apparently routine occasion, Rockburne had bought what she thought would be "cheap entertainment" for her daughter while they were traveling—it was a typical waitress's pad with carbon paper layers. From the simple observation of the carbon paper "activating" a drawing of "itself," Rockburne would later embark on her extensive considerations of the conventions of drawing in the unprecedented *Drawing Which Makes Itself* series.

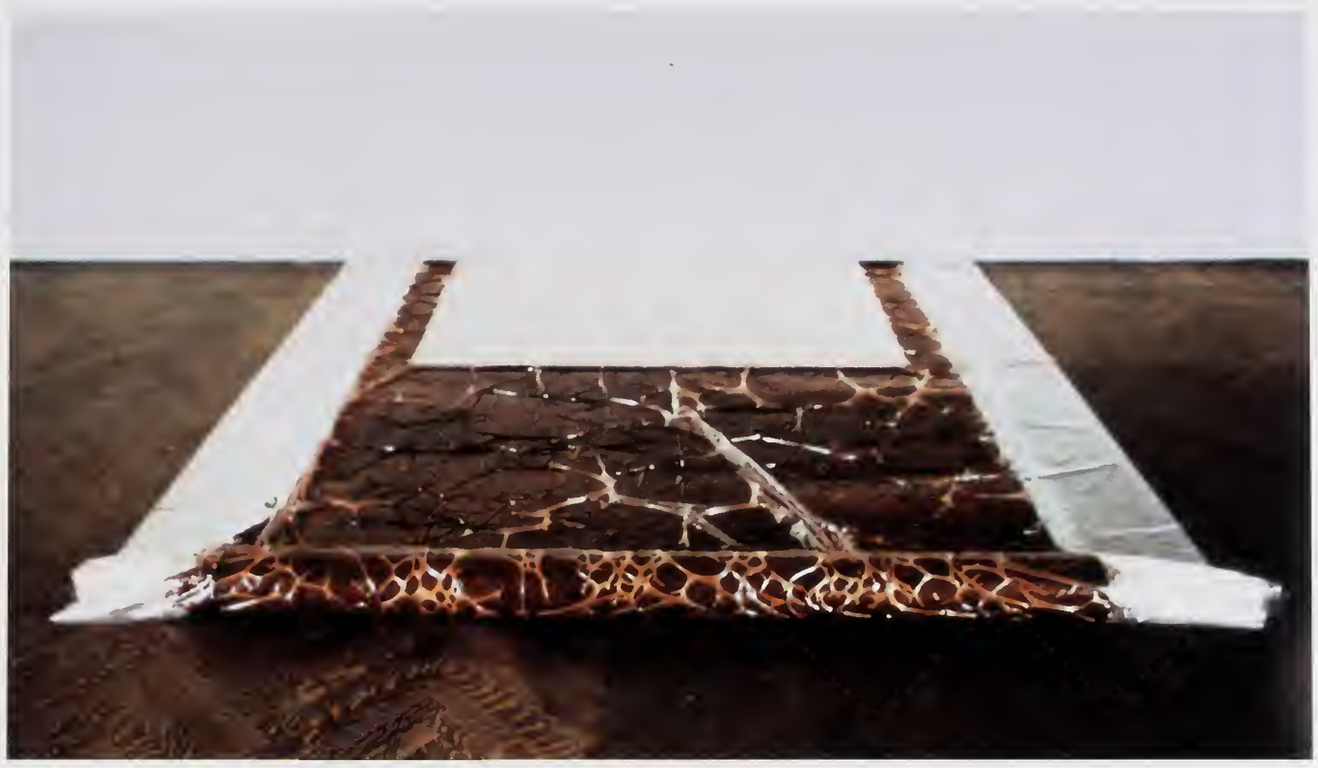
"...a white sheet of paper which has an axis drawn on it: the paper then is folded in relation to this axis. The paper by copying the edge of where it has been leaves the trace of its own decision."[7]

In the *Drawing Which Makes Itself* installations and their related indication drawings from 1972-73, Rockburne approached the transitive properties and physical boundaries of paper (carbon or transparent vellum) as "a *body* of material engaging itself in the world of experience."[8] As Bruce Boice observed, our experience of any *Drawing Which Makes Itself* will be, first, in terms of "how the work is made...for it is obvious in every case that these are not a bunch of arbitrary, impulsive, or formalist creases and pencil lines. They are a product of a logic internal to the works which, however, simple, is nevertheless elusive."[9] The carbon paper's movements, plotted by Rockburne on the wall or page like the notations of a choreographer, might be understood as paralleling those of the artist's own body performing physically and socially through the space of her life.

What we come to understand as meaning in the utter clarity of Rockburne's abstract articulations of embodied knowledge and instances of memory, is their correspondence not only to Rockburne's subjective process of "making herself" but the transformational nature of social relations generally.[10] The fact that you and I are rarely able to reconstruct the succession of movements that lead to the final complexity of relationships in these works is a significant departure from the self-evidence and closure of minimalist systems. In the end, it is this "imperfect" aspect of their making that anchors Rockburne's work to the subjective realm of human experiences. Looking at the "subject-object" of Rockburne's *Drawing Which Makes Itself* is like studying the cumulation of facts you see in the mirror: locating the external traces of life's experiences and relationships yet never being able to recall the exact process of becoming you.

Much of the material and all quotes, unless otherwise noted, are from conversations with the artist in November and December 1995.

1. Artist's notes, 1973.
2. Mel Bochner, "A Note on Dorothea Rockburne," *Artforum* (March 1972): 28.
3. Quoted in Jennifer Licht, "An Interview with Dorothea Rockburne," *Artforum* (March 1972): 36.
4. Quoted in Licht, 34.
5. Robert Pincus-Witten, *Artforum* (June 1971): 80.
6. Quoted in Roberta Olson, "An Interview with Dorothea Rockburne," *Art in America* (November/December 1978): 142.
7. Diary entry cited in Naomi Spector, "Dorothea Rockburne," *Bochner, LeVa, Rockburne, Tuttle* (Cincinnati: The Contemporary Arts Center, 1975), 28.
8. Jeff Perrone, "Working Through, Fold By Fold," *Artforum* (January 1979): 47.
9. Quoted in Bruce Boice, *Dorothea Rockburne* (Hartford: Hartford Art School, 1973), 7.
10. Rockburne sees her aesthetic considerations of Set Theory during the seventies not in isolation but in terms of a general cultural interest at the time in its principles, especially in terms of how they paralleled certain aspects of Marxist theories of social relations.



Intersection

1971
crude oil, paper,
chipboard, plastic on floor,
and charcoal line on wall
15 x 92 x 92 inches

Courtesy of
Dorothea Rockburne

1973
carbon paper and
carbon lines on paper
52 x 40 inches

Courtesy of
Dorothea Rockburne

Michelle Stuart

"The places that interest me most have always reminded me of how I saw my own land."[1]

Stuart's autobiographical attitude toward nature and her identity with the landscape have been distinguishing features of her work since the late sixties and have had the effect of extending an otherwise abstract imagery into extremely personal terrain.[2] With any serious consideration of Stuart's artmaking, you embark on a journey, of sorts, through the places, events, dreams, and childhood memories that spawned a consistent body of work, which often blurs the conventional distinctions between sculpture, drawing, painting, installation, and land art. Her lifelong interests in archaeology, geology, the environment, and the survival of indigenous cultures have evolved into an alternative genre of landscape-related art. And although many of Stuart's works are conceptualized and fabricated as multiple units, it is in their articulation of connectedness that we experience the insistent humanity underlying her vision and practice.

Michelle Stuart recalls being mesmerized as a 6-year-old girl by the "ecosystem that existed in a palm tree outside my house in Los Angeles." She remembers spending childhood hours reliving her emigrant parents' extensive travels, listening to their adventures at sea and then locating on the family map the far away places they had visited; she heard stories about many relatives who had lived and traveled all over the world ("each generation of my family having been either colonists in New Zealand and Australia or marked rebels in France, Ireland, and Scotland").[3] Observing that her "horizons were never narrowed" but regularly expanded by her parents, Stuart fondly remembers accompanying her father, a water-rights engineer, on treks around her native Southern California. As a young artist Stuart started out "wanting to do socially oriented art, but soon realized it wasn't my voice." During the sixties Stuart began to investigate in earnest the "correspondences" that existed between her immediate history and that of the California landscape around her. Stuart's pervasive sense of self as an extension of place, which began at an early age, would be sustained throughout her life by her travels and her art.

"Her work illuminates the western travel tradition in which the voyager is the artist, personified, peering through a cultural lens. This tradition had been particularly important to women, and the 19th century—which sometimes seems to be Stuart's nomadic soul's home—saw many incongruous, rebellious women striking out for anyplace that wasn't the stifling, repressive societies they knew."
Lucy Lippard[4]

It was during the late sixties that Stuart's mature political orientation coincided with an emerging feminist movement. "Though I believe I was brought up as a feminist, I became involved with the anti-war movement, out of which came my involvement in the women's art movement." Those activities began with "several women artist groups that were political in nature. 'Ad Hoc' was the main one and my involvement with the 'Ad Hoc' group continued throughout the main part of the seventies, particularly with the Women's Art Registry." Over the decade, Stuart participated in numerous gatherings of female art professionals in New York City and during 1976-77 helped found *Heresies*, a feminist publication devoted to art, politics, and history. In recalling those days and a generation of female colleagues, Stuart has remarked that "nobody wanted the work to be read in gendered terms, but as strong and individual women, the work is imprinted with their identity."

Stuart's mature work dates back to constructions and drawings from the late sixties and early seventies when her interests in the land turned temporarily to the moon's surface in response to recently published NASA photographs and U.S.

Geological survey maps. However, dissatisfied with mere depictions of the landscape (whether earthly or lunar), Stuart turned to her own experience of the land, letting it guide her formally and conceptually. Initially making earth and rock rubbings of the surface of the ground with a graphite stick, Stuart devised a laborious process of gradually transferring visual information from the site to the paper. During 1974, Stuart began a series of large monochromatic drawings whose images were realized through smashing, pulverizing, rubbing, and imprinting into the surfaces of scroll-like sheets of heavy muslin-backed paper various samples of loose soil and rock collected from sites she visited. With these monumental works Stuart would redefine traditional notions of landscape and drawing, female subjectivity and abstraction.

"Men are always measuring themselves against the world."

Stuart recalls that it was Charles Simmonds who "led me to a quarry in New Jersey named Sayreville Quarry where I used the earth for *Sayreville Strata Quartet.* I returned there many times." In this majestic yet silent site of four monumental paper scrolls impregnated with the subtleties and range of colors of the quarry's strata (each unit colored by a different geological layer of the site), Stuart has created a geological calendar whose serial form bears the marks of time, the elements, and her own labor. As Lippard remarked, "Ritual-like processes, hour after hour of grinding and polishing...frees the mind to remember, the women have always remembered while working at such monotonous tasks..."[5] With *Sayreville*, Stuart achieved an exceptionally complex yet seamless marriage of image and process, past and present, body and earth that would continue to shape her art. As one critic wrote at the time, "The impress of Stuart's pieces gives them the texture of skin, makes them records of live, porous, breathing things in the same way that time and weather score the earth."[6] Its ambitious scale, innate color, and overt materiality have located the work somewhere between drawing, painting, and sculpture. In its physical embodiment of the earth, Stuart's works on paper provide an understated but unusually accessible parallel to the ambitious but frequently temporary landworks that came to characterize much of the landscape-related art of the period. (Stuart's own contributions included *Niagara Gorge Path Relocated* of 1975, a "drawing" in the landscape in which a cascading 460-foot scroll of paper conformed to the contour of the site.) At the time, Lawrence Alloway wrote about the work's "interrelation of scale and space" noting that as "the paper hangs down, tugged by gravity, curling a little according to the paper's memory of earlier rolling during the work process, it enters the plane that the spectator occupies."[7]

Stuart is an avid reader and book collector, and during the seventies her preoccupation with the form and meaning of the book resulted in a number of book-sculptures (often referred to as "rock books"). Wordless, sometimes sealed or tied closed, these bundled pages are to be "read" formally as self-contained objects and understood symbolically as records of occurrences both cultural and natural, historical and geological. At times, Stuart placed larger rectangular stacks of rock and earth-impregnated pages directly on the floor. We read *Tomkins Cove Quarry* (1977-78), a mound of unbound sheets whose exposed edges are worn and frayed, literally as a physical site re-relocated and metaphorically as an earth-diary that reveals only the contents of the most recently formed page. Stuart recalled visiting the quarry site of Tomkins Cove, New York, and making the piece "at that quarry from many different visible strata formations, in other words the piece contains strata that range across millions of years in time. It is a site specific compendium of earth time."

Feminist principles are at the heart of Stuart's practice of seeing the world in manifold relations rather than as isolated objects. As Patricia Phillips recently observed of her works from the seventies, "When first produced, Stuart's work was quietly maverick. Although spare, the caressed, obsessive surfaces were far too agitated to be called Minimalist."[8] In retrospect, Stuart's alternative landscape practices are lauded not only because, in Phillips's words, they "paradoxically place engaged experience at the center of abstract representation" but because they exist as subjective sites that are ambitious yet selfless, historically inclusive yet autobiographical.

Much of this material and all quotes, unless otherwise noted, are from a conversation with the artist in November 1995.

1. Quoted in Frederick T. Castle, "To Reify the Earth," *Michelle Stuart: Voyages* (Greenvale: Hillwood Art Gallery, Long Island University, 1985), 62.
2. For an overview of the artist's career see Susan L. Stoops, "Michelle Stuart: A Personal Archaeology," *Woman's Art Journal* (fall 1993/ winter 1994).
3. Castle, 62.
4. Lucy Lippard, *Michelle Stuart: The Elements 1973-1979* (New York: Fawbush Gallery, 1992).
5. Lucy Lippard, *Strata: Nancy Graves, Eva Hesse, Michelle Stuart, Jackie Winsor* (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1977), 18.
6. Corinne Robins, "Michelle Stuart: The Mapping of Myth and Time," *Arts Magazine* (December 1976): 85.
7. Lawrence Alloway, "Michelle Stuart: A Fabric of Significations," *Artforum* (January 1974): 65.
8. Patricia C. Phillips, "Michelle Stuart: Fawbush Gallery," *Artforum* (February 1993): 99.

Sayreville Strata Quartet 1976
earth on muslin, mounted on rag paper, 4 units
144 x 266 inches overall
(144 x 62 inches each)

Courtesy the artist
Photo: Harry Bartlett

Tomkins Cove Quarry

1977
earth on muslin, mounted
on rag paper
24 x 30 x 7 inches

Collection
Rose Art Museum,
Brandeis University,
Waltham, Massachusetts,
Hays Acquisition Fund
Photo: Harry Bartlett

Hannah Wilke

Beginning in the sixties, Hannah Wilke determined to devote her aesthetic energies to what she would describe as "the creation of a formal imagery that is specifically female, a new language that fuses mind and body into erotic objects that are namable and at the same time quite abstract. 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 close to laughter, making love, shaking hands...."[1]

Early in that decade, Wilke created a series of "sculpted clay boxes which represented more or less specifically genital forms."[2] Although they were clearly a daring departure in terms of a female sexual iconography, their ultimate invisibility and marginalization within the art world was not surprising, as Wilke's comments after a 1966 exhibition of this work made clear: "The shapes were very sexy, like little tiny genitalia. But nobody noticed them. If you do little things and you're a woman, you're doomed to craft-world obscurity....Being an artist is difficult, an unbelievable risk, and making a female sexual statement is even riskier."[3] During the following decade, Wilke continued to defy art world standards and developed a successful yet controversial "feminist symbolic system."[4] In addition to making abstract sculptures, Wilke sought to objectify the personal through extremely public gestures in performance, video, and photographs. Insistently feminist in principle, Wilke's aesthetic practice in all formats challenges us to explore with her the boundaries between public and private, pleasure and pain, voyeurism and vulnerability, individualism and relatedness.

In what have become signature vulvar icons, Wilke exploited the erotic possibilities of unconventional materials including lint, kneaded erasers, and chewing gum and her simple yet allusively rich process, a repeatable "single-gesture" fold. Unusually cognizant of abstraction's metaphorical power and the psycho-sexual implications of its ambiguity, Wilke established an "aggressive sensuality," repossessing and reconstructing the language and image of her own body. Writing about Wilke's unique body language, Lowery Sims observed, "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."[5] With abstraction as her sculptural language and lived experience as her subject, Wilke sought to position the female (in all its multiplicities) as symbolic of humanity.

"It was Wilke, not Judy Chicago as some believe, who originated vaginal imagery, as signature, as feminist statement, and as universal symbol. Using a single piece of the chosen material, Wilke folds or twists it with one gesture into a shape that reads as vulva, simultaneously as vulva and womb, or as tiny wounds, identified with feminine pleasure and pain, but not limited to female experience. (Sexual pleasure is universal. Likewise, anyone can be made to feel like a cunt, a whore. Anyone can be raped.)" Joanna Freuh[6]

From 1973 to 1977, Wilke created a series of kneaded eraser sculptures, memorably titled *Needed-Erase-Her*, in which multitudes of the little erasers are folded and affixed to either square wooden boards or old postcards. Although clearly minimalist-inspired in their repetition, literal materiality, and frequent geometric structuring, Wilke's self-described "one-fold gestural objects" are imprinted with a sense of aliveness that invites rather than discourages interpretive readings. Insistently insignificant in scale and material (by contemporary sculpture standards), Freuh observed that Wilke's series "'dirties' Minimalist purity with the metaphoric, the organic, and the sexual, ironically cleansing Minimalism's supposedly existential pristineness of the historically and critically ignored 'neutrality' that disguised male privilege."[7] Deliberately dispersed with either obsessive order or playful chaos, the erasers form collectives of vulvar forms—minimalism's *other* "primary structures"—whose

cultural erasure Wilke rejected and whose multiple existence she objectified and exalted in a single gesture. Much of the raw emotional and humanist content in the *Needed-Erase-Her* series resides in Wilke's sensitivity to the singularity of related but never identical units of abstract form. Finding in repetition a visual method of exposing and exaggerating subtle variations and imperfections, Wilke encourages us to recognize in her humble yet tenderly rendered objects an affirmation of our own individualism. "In this light, Wilke's signature cunt/womb sculptures are statements of positive narcissism. They resist the nothingness that is slavery, bondage to the fact that what is valued in one sex—genitals as a sign and metaphor of power, narcissism itself—is denigrated in the other."[8]

"I want work that one can feel, of the body as well as the mind—I'm tired of looking at such impotence. Why is there such hostility in the art world towards feeling good?....

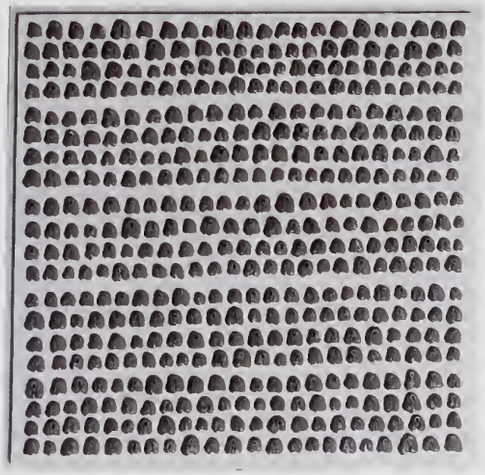
"Claes Oldenburg once said to me, 'They'll eventually accept baked potatoes, but I don't know if they'll ever, ever be able to accept your making female genitals—although visually they look very similar.'"[9]

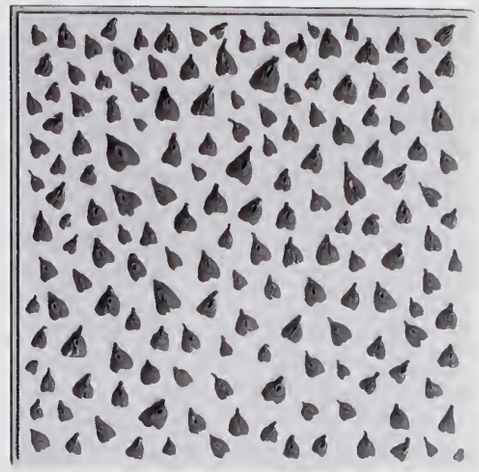
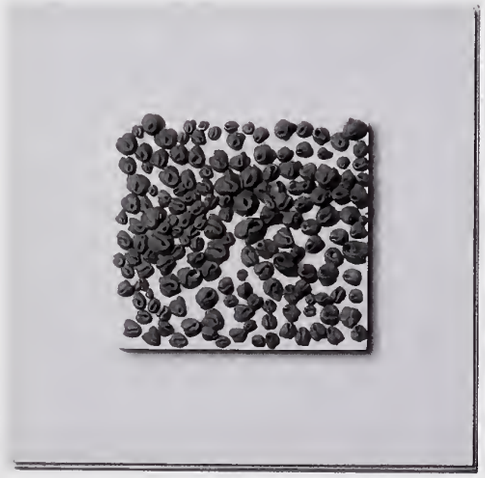
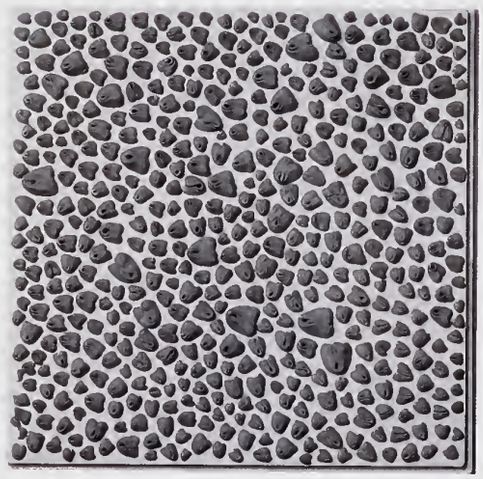
Looking at the discourse surrounding Wilke's abstract sculptures, it becomes clear that the artist's image-oriented works and performances, in which Wilke frequently appeared in various states of undress, colored the lens through which the minimalist-inspired sculptures were seen. As critic Edit deAk asked in 1974, "what if we look at her art as *art*, as regular art—the way we look at male art...in spite of the excellence of her work, people talk about *her*...."[10] To some, Wilke was "fundamentally a sculptor who shares some concerns with the minimalist and conceptualists of her generation, though shaped into a feminist ideology."[11] Writing about the sculpture, another critic suggested, "You can either read them as metaphors for genitalia or as Process sculpture—one fold, two fold and so on. Wilke would clearly like both."[12]

In a series of poured latex wall sculptures from 1971 to 1977, which includes *Pink Champagne* (1975), Wilke assembled multiple layers of thin, flesh-tinted rubber into flowering clusters held together with metal snaps and casually pinned to the wall. In a flamboyant display of sensuous materiality (like the cheap thrill of a young girl and a bottle of pink champagne), Wilke's objects reveal themselves to us as sites of obsession, beauty, and contradiction. Described variously by critics as "fleshy," "wet," "organic," and "vulnerable," the latex pieces functioned for Wilke as representations of the complex layering of physical and psychic dimensions of female sexuality and, as she said, a way to "combine toughness and softness. This effect is frightening to some people, but I like the shiny, gritty nastiness and the fact that the snaps make the structure possible—as well as vulnerable. You want to unsnap the piece, but that would destroy the shape."[13] But that temptation implies much more than the destruction of the sculpture's formal integrity. As critic Douglas Crimp observed in a 1972 review, "beyond wanting to touch, one wants to unsnap—to violate. This metaphor of sensuality mixed with vulnerability is frank and touching."[14] In her recent monograph on Wilke, Joanna Freuh offers an eloquent feminist reading of the works' "labial structure" and their allusions to "flowers, as well as excited vaginal and clitoral flesh." Freuh sees Wilke's repeated gestures and forms as "a multiplicity of lips, beautiful objects that speak not of Otherness, the position into which a male-dominant society has cast women, but rather of sameness and difference in the forms, of the likenesses and unlikeness among women themselves. The works also address female sexual pleasure, its plurality in terms of orgasms, the overall responsiveness of the female body as well as the many locales of sensitivity in her external and internal anatomy."[15]

The extraordinary challenge that Wilke personally undertook as feminist and artist, is one which her art passes on to a new generation: "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."[16]

1. From artist's statement for videotape performance of *Intercourse With...* (1977) cited in *Hannah Wilke: A Retrospective*, ed. Thomas H. Kochheiser (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 139.
2. Lowery Sims, "Body Politics: Hannah Wilke and Kaylynn Sullivan," *Art & Ideology* (New York: The New Museum, 1984), 46.
3. Quoted in Barbara Rose, "Vaginal Iconology," *New York* (11 February 1974): 58.
4. Sims, 45.
5. Ibid., 45.
6. Joanna Freuh, "Hannah Wilke," in Kochheiser, 15.
7. Ibid., 20.
8. Ibid., 65.
9. Quoted in Gerit Henry, "Views from the Studio," *ARTnews* (May 1976), 35.
10. Edit deAk, *Art in America* (May/June 1974): 110.
11. Sims, 45.
12. James Collins, *Artforum* (June 1974): 71.
13. Quoted in Barbara Rose, "Hannah Wilke: A Very Female Thing," *New York* (11 February 1974): 58.
14. Douglas Crimp, *ARTnews* (October 1972): 83.
15. Freuh, 18.
16. "Visual Prejudice," artist's statement for *American Women Artists* (Sao Paolo: Sao Paolo Museum, 1980) cited in Kochheiser, 141.




Needed-Erase-Her Series 1974
kneaded erasers on wood, 6 units
13 x 13 x 2 ½ inches each

Collection Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, Hays Acquisition Fund (top right)

and Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts Inc., New York, New York (all others)
Photo: Harry Bartlett

Pink Champagne

1975
latex and snaps
54 x 18 x 7 inches

Courtesy Ronald Feldman
Fine Arts, Inc.,
New York, New York

Jackie Winsor

"...basically, you make things out of the structure of who you *are."*[1]

If an artist's work is a construction of "who" she is at any given time, the intentional physicality and perceptual clarity of Winsor's sculptures throughout the past 25 years suggest a strong, uncompromising figure. Coupled with resoluteness, however, is an honest presence—readable in her choice of raw materials such as rope, wood, nails, bricks, and cement and a basic vocabulary of shapes including the cube, sphere, cylinder, and pyramid. The obsessive physical interaction between artist and object, most readable as repeated labor—nailing, gouging, wrapping, coiling, stacking—is brutally exposed, so much so that in its final state, a Winsor object is saturated with embodied experience.

"It is a potentiality the viewer begins investigating while engaging with her abstract sculptures, in seeing what is visible and what is covered or hidden, in recognizing what is open and discovering what is closed or interiorized. These recognitions and shifts in perception return the viewers to themselves; they ask what their seeing tells them....Rather than picking up where the Minimalists left off and making sculptures based on "pure" systems (Sol LeWitt) or "pure" abstract sculpture (Donald Judd), Winsor began her career by examining the differences between seeing and knowing, between being seen and not being known."
John Yau[2]

Over the years, Winsor has displayed unusual insight and care wedding the literalness of material, shape, and process to the evocative realm of interpretation. It is as though she trusts that her commitment to exploring the inherent nature of these sculptural elements will release a latent meaning which we, too, can know. In works from the early seventies, a structure is accrued by an obvious process—nailing, stacking, etc.—and space functions both in and around the objects. Negative space might be more accurately defined in a Winsor object as interior or contained space or simply air, for its presence not absence is a necessary component of "knowing." In his analysis of *Laminated Grid* (1974), Peter Schjeldahl refers to the presence of the grid as "interior space...'added' to a stack of glued plywood sheets through cuts with a circular saw. So integral is the stack, as a form, that we are distracted from recognizing the truth of the matter, which is that wood has been subtracted."[3] There are contradictory energies at work, too, in Winsor's regular but imprecise drawing of a grid upon the overtly fluid, "expressionist" patterning of the machine-finished plywood.

Fence Piece (1970) is one of several sculptures made of wood lath, a material to which Winsor turned because of its inherent rawness and a quality she likened to "drawing." The repeated linear elements of lath, when nailed together like a "fence" that is wrapped around itself until it stands in the configuration of a cube, draw an external boundary while temporarily designating a contained, even private place. Winsor's perforated mass and open cube disrupts the physical and psychological absoluteness of the typically impermeable minimalist "box" and blurs the traditional oppositions between exterior mass and interior space. About *Fence Piece* Winsor has said, "I was more concerned with keeping the energy at the edge...in the lattice...and in that piece the discovery I made was really how to make it self-supporting. In making it I came to think of the inside space as a protected space, that the interior space really belonged to the piece itself."[4]

In reconstructing "who" she is, Winsor generously credits her rugged yet joyous upbringing in the rural Maritime Provinces of Canada, where a work ethic for women, men, and children alike permeated her daily experiences (she says the fact that her mother built their house was significant but not exceptional in the context of women's experiences there); and the huge scale of the land and tides and destructive force of the sea were phenomena to be reckoned with constantly. In her adult life, she acknowledges the legitimatization of the feminist movement, which made it possible for her "to make art for the rest of my life." Winsor recalls, "I had a clear idea of my invisibility" as a woman artist in New York during the late sixties; she remembers the welcome relief from those "painfully individual" and "isolated" experiences that the feminist movement's sense of community generated for her and others circa 1970.[5] Winsor is careful to describe herself then as not wanting to be "representative" of a cause or ideology and preferring to position herself at the "periphery" of the collective movement; but she is quick to add that feminist principles encouraged her inclination to do so and gives partial credit to the feminist movement for her inclusion in several important group exhibitions at the time, including Lucy Lippard's *Soft Sculpture* (1968), the *Whitney Sculpture Annual* (1970), and Lippard's *Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists* (1971).

The obvious physical demands of her early materials and the sculptures' human scale encourage us to identify in the work a "muscularity" or body-consciousness that Winsor brings to her artmaking. Lucy Lippard described this quality in 1974 as "a visceral body reaction verging on the sensual."[6] Not surprisingly, the artist has acknowledged affinities toward the non-narrative, task-oriented choreography of Yvonne Rainer during the late sixties and early seventies (especially Rainer's *The Mind is a Muscle*, 1968) and shared Rainer's interests in the distribution of energy in the execution of movement and how the body might function as shape.[7] But Winsor's strength is not limited to the realm of physicality—it defines a profound subjective dimension of the sculpture as well, more difficult to articulate perhaps but nonetheless present in the viewer's temporal experience of her work. Schjeldahl remarked, "Winsor's special distinction...has been to take Minimalism's new, empirical relation of object and viewer as the starting point for a new metaphysical poetry, a revelation of the kinship between persons and things."[8] In another characterization, Roberta Smith wrote in 1977, "Winsor's work combines aspects of so-called Minimal Art with an attitude more process-oriented, more evocative and expressive, less pure, less confident...but, unlike a Minimal artist, Winsor wants things slow to guarantee a drawn-out, intimate experience. She wants the viewer to see that each form is 'made up of something'...to contrast its singleness with myriad details, different textures and repeating units."[9] Winsor has described her interaction with her objects candidly and genuinely in terms of "reflection," "pleasure," "commitment," "affection," and "trust." In her words, "When you don't trust you manipulate and manipulation doesn't involve the heart." It is in this spirit of connection, built physically and emotionally over time, that Winsor's sculptures initiate and nourish their discourse with us.

Much of this material and all quotes, except otherwise noted, are from a conversation with the artist in October 1995.

1. Quoted in John Gruen, "Jackie Winsor: Eloquence of a 'Yankee Pioneer'," *ARTnews* (March 1979): 57.
2. John Yau, "Neither About Art Nor About Life, But About the Gap Between Seeing and Knowing: The Sculpture of Jackie Winsor," *Jackie Winsor* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum, 1991), 47.
3. Peter Schjeldahl, "The Structure of Who: Jackie Winsor's Sculpture," *Jackie Winsor* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum, 1991), 15.
4. Quoted in "A Conversation Between Two Sculptors: Jackie Winsor and Ellen Phelan," *Jackie Winsor/Sculpture* (Cincinnati: The Contemporary Arts Center, 1976), 7.
5. Robert Pincus-Witten, "Winsor Knots: The Sculpture of Jackie Winsor," *Arts Magazine* (June 1977): 130.
6. Lucy Lippard, "Jackie Winsor," *Artforum* (February 1974): 56.
7. Dean Sobel, "Jackie Winsor's Sculpture: Mediation, Revelation, and Aesthetic Democracy," *Jackie Winsor* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum, 1991): 21.
8. Schjeldahl, 13.
9. Roberta Smith, "Winsor-Built," *Art in America* (January/February 1977): 118.

Fence Piece

1970
wood and nails
49 x 49 x 49 inches

Collection
Rose Art Museum,
Brandeis University,
Waltham, Massachusetts,
Hays Acquisition Fund
Photo: Courtesy
Paula Cooper Gallery,
New York, New York

Laminated Grid

1974
plywood
8 1/2 x 47 1/2 x 47 1/2
inches

Collection Paula Cooper,
New York, New York
Photo: Geoffrey Clements

Checklist of the Exhibition

Lynda Benglis
For Carl Andre
1970
pigmented polyurethane foam
56 1/4 x 53 1/2 x 46 3/16 inches
Collection Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas
The Benjamin J. Tiller Memorial Trust

Lynda Benglis
7 Come 11: Ocho
1976
aluminum screen, cotton bunting, plaster, sprayed copper
60 x 18 x 7 inches
Collection the artist

Jackie Ferrara
Curved Pyramid
1973
fir
35 x 60 x 18 inches
Collection Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Rose Purchase Fund

Jackie Ferrara
Truncated Pyramid I
1973
cotton batting, glue on cardboard
72 x 24 x 24 inches
Collection Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles, California

Nancy Graves
Variability of Similar Forms
1970
steel, wax, marble dust, acrylic, 36 units
84 x 216 x 180 inches overall
Courtesy the Estate of Nancy Graves (extended loan to the Detroit Institute of Arts)

Eva Hesse
Compass
1967
steel washers and sculpt-metal on wood
10 x 10 x 1 inches
Collection Marilyn Fischbach, courtesy Rosen & van Liere, New York, New York

Eva Hesse
One More Than One
1967
acrylic, paper-mache, plastic cord, and wood
8 1/2 x 15 1/2 x 5 1/2
Collection Stephen Antonakos and Naomi Spector

Eva Hesse
Range
1967
aluminum grommets and sculpt-metal on cardboard
12 x 12 x 1/4 inches
Collection Marilyn Fischbach, courtesy Rosen & van Liere, New York, New York

Eva Hesse
Sequel
1967-68
Latex mixed with powdered white pigment
30 x 32 inches sheet; 2 5/8 inches each sphere
Collection Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles, California

Ana Mendieta
Burial of the Nañigo
1976
and *Silueta de cenzias*
1975
candle silhouette and slide projection
79 x 39 x 10 inches overall
Courtesy the Estate of Ana Mendieta and Galerie Lelong, New York, New York

Ana Mendieta
Body Tracks (Rastros Corporales)
1982 restaging of original 1974 performance
blood and tempera paint on paper
3 drawings, 38 x 50 inches each
Collection Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Rose Purchase Fund

Mary Miss
Stake Fence
1970
wood and rope
48 x 48 x 252 inches
Collection Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Rose Purchase Fund

Mary Miss
Untitled
1977
wood
108 x 114 x 12 inches
Collection Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York, Theodoron Purchase Award, through funds contributed by Mr. and Mrs. Irving Rossi, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Singer, The Thodoron Foundation, and the Walter Foundation, 1977

Ree Morton
Wood Drawings
1971
felt-tip pen, pencil, clay, acrylic, sponge, and hardware on wood, 16 units, various sizes
Courtesy Alexander and Bonin, New York, New York

Ree Morton
Paintings and Objects
1973
acrylic and pencil on canvas and wood in six parts
53 3/4 x 66 x 60 1/2 inches overall
Courtesy Alexander and Bonin, New York, New York

Dorothea Rockburne
Intersection
1971
crude oil, paper, chipboard, plastic (floor), and charcoal line (wall)
92 x 92 inches (floor); 15 inches high (wall)
Collection Dorothea Rockburne

Dorothea Rockburne
Polaroid construction for *Intersection*
1971
polaroid construction on ragboard
20 1/4 x 29 inches
Collection Dorothea Rockburne

Dorothea Rockburne
Polaroid construction for *Group (Intersection, Disjunction, Substitution)*
1971
polaroid construction on ragboard
20 1/4 x 29 inches
Collection Dorothea Rockburne

Dorothea Rockburne
Indication drawing for installation of the series *Drawing Which Makes Itself: Circle*
1973
carbon paper and carbon lines on paper
52 x 40 inches
Collection Dorothea Rockburne

Dorothea Rockburne
Indication drawing for installation of the series *Drawing Which Makes Itself: Whitney Piece*
1973
carbon paper and carbon lines on American etching paper
40 x 50 inches
Collection Dorothea Rockburne

Dorothea Rockburne
Indication drawing for installation of the series *Drawing Which Makes Itself: Neighborhood*
1973
colored pencil, vellum, on American etching paper
40 x 52 inches
Collection Dorothea Rockburne

Dorothea Rockburne
Indication drawing for installation of the series *Drawing Which Makes Itself: Separation*
1973
carbon paper and carbon lines on paper
40 x 52 inches
Collection Dorothea Rockburne

Michelle Stuart
Sayreville Strata Quartet
1976
earth on muslin, mounted on rag paper, four units
144 x 266 inches overall (144 x 62 inches each)
Courtesy the artist

Michelle Stuart
Tomkins Cove Quarry
1977
earth on muslin, mounted on rag paper
24 x 30 x 7 inches
Collection Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Hays Acquisition Fund

Hannah Wilke
Needed-Erase-Her Series
1974
kneaded erasers on wood, six units
13 x 13 x 2 1/2 inches each
Collection Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Hays Acquisition Fund (one unit), and Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts Inc., New York, New York
(five units)

Hannah Wilke
Pink Champagne
1975
latex and snaps
54 x 18 x 7 inches
Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, Inc., New York, New York

Jackie Winsor
Fence Piece
1970
wood and nails
49 x 49 x 49 inches
Collection Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Hays Acquisition Fund

Jackie Winsor
Laminated Grid
1974
plywood
8 1/2 x 47 1/2 x 47 1/2 inches
Collection Paula Cooper, New York, New York

Biographies and Solo Exhibition Histories

Lynda Benglis

Lynda Benglis was born in 1941 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where she spent her childhood years. She lived with her mother, a housewife, her father, an owner of a building supply company, and four siblings.

Benglis cites her education and travel experiences as the most important sources of influence on her work. Her first international travel experience was in 1953, at age 11, when she traveled to Greece with her Greek grandmother. In 1959 she attended McNeese University for a year where she studied philosophy and logic, and then transferred to the H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College for Women, Tulane University. During the summer of 1963, she attended Yale Norfolk summer School and spent the year teaching third grade.

After graduation from Tulane in 1964, Benglis moved to New York and studied painting at the Brooklyn Museum Art School. There she met numerous New York artists including Barnett Newman, Frank Stella, Bridget Riley, and Larry Poons. In 1965, Benglis earned her teaching certificate from New York University and married painter Gordon Hart (whom she was with until 1970). Also in 1965, and again in 1967, she returned to Greece with her grandmother. She worked part-time at the Bykert Gallery from 1966 to 1968 and then briefly as Paula Cooper's secretary. In May of 1969, Benglis poured *Bounce* at Bykert Gallery, which was the first public showing of her latex work.

During the seventies, Benglis taught at numerous colleges and universities, including the University of Rochester (where she first began to experiment with video in the classroom) and Hunter College. Her collaboration in 1971 and 1972 with Robert Morris resulted in her videotape *Mumble*. In 1973, Benglis moved to California to instruct a class at the California Institute of Art and the following summer took a filmmaking class. During this period, Benglis kept a studio in Venice and traveled back and forth between California and New York. Along with travels and teaching, the years between 1972 and 1976 marked a point in Benglis's life where she worked intensively in video, producing a body of overtly political work including *Female Sensibility* (1973), *How's Tricks* (1976), and *The Amazing Bow-Wow* (1976-77). In 1974, Benglis began a series of what she called "sexual mockeries" as advertisements and announcements to her gallery shows, exploring issues of sexual ambiguity, most notably the "dildo" ad in *Artforum*, November 1974.

Benglis moved to her present studio in New York in the fall of 1977. Two years later, she took her first trip to Ahmadabad, India. Benglis resides and works in New York, East Hampton, NY, and Ahmadabad, India. She is represented by Paula Cooper Gallery in New York.

Solo Exhibitions

1969
University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island

1970
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Dallas, Texas
Gallerie Hans Muller, Cologne, Germany

1971
Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts

1972
Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco, California

1973
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Video Gallery, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York
Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco, California
Portland Center for the Visual Arts, Portland, Oregon
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Jack Glenn Gallery, Corona Del Mar, California
The Clocktower, New York, New York

1974
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco, California

1975
Fine Arts Center Gallery, State University of New York at Oneonta, New York
The Kitchen, New York, New York
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas

1976
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1977
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco, California
Douglas Drake Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri

1978
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1979
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Dart Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Real Art Ways, New Haven, Connecticut
Hansen-Fuller Goldeen Gallery, San Francisco, California
Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia

1980
University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida (traveled)
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Portland Center for the Visual Arts, Portland,

Oregon
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
David Heath Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia
Chatham College, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, Michigan

1981
Museum of Art, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
Gallerie Albert Baronian, Brussels, Belgium
Dart Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Jacksonville Art Museum, Jacksonville, Florida

1982
Okun-Thomas Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Fuller Goldeen Gallery, San Francisco, California

1983
Susan Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, Michigan
Dart Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

1984
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Tilden-Foley Gallery, New Orleans, Louisana

1985
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, Michigan
Dart Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Heath Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia

1986
Fuller Goldeen Gallery, San Francisco, California

1987
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Landfall Press, New York, New York
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California

1988
Cumberland Gallery, Nashville, Tennessee
Full Gross Gallery, San Francisco, California

1989
Tilden-Foley Gallery, New Orleans, Louisana
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Michael Murphy Gallery, Tampa, Florida

1990
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Linda Farris Gallery, Seattle, Washington
Sena Galleries West, Santa Fe, California
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1991
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia (traveled)
Tilden Foley Gallery, New Orleans, Louisana
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California

1992
Heath Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia

1993
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Auckland City Art Center, Auckland, New Zealand
Tavelli Gallery, Aspen, Colorado
Gow-Langsford Gallery, New Zealand

1994
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Heath Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia
The Harwood Foundation Museum, Taos, New Mexico

1995
Boulder Museum of Art, Boulder, Colorado

Jackie Ferrara was born Jacqueline Hirschhorn in 1929 in Detroit, Michigan, where she lived with her father (a salesman for a restaurant supply firm), her mother (a bookkeeper), and her younger brother. While in Michigan, Ferrara attended Michigan State University for six months.

In 1952, Ferrara moved to New York. During her first several years there, Ferrara lived with jazz musician Don Ferrara (to whom she was married from 1955 to 1957) and spent a great deal of her time in the experimental jazz club scene. She worked at a bank, saw movies regularly, took writing classes at the New School for Social Research, and later studied leather craft and pottery. She worked in the office of Henry Street Playhouse (1955-59) and became involved with the dance and theater programs, especially the resident company of Alvin Nikolais. In 1958, Ferrara met artist Robert Beauchamp (with whom she spent nine years). In the following year they traveled to Italy where she continued developing her talent as potter/sculptor, casting her first bronze figures. In 1961, Ferrara had her first solo show exhibiting her bronze figures at Janet Nessler Gallery in New York. During the sixties, Ferrara frequently attended experimental dance performances and happenings at Judson Church, and performed in two of Claes Oldenburg's events in 1962 and 1965. In 1970, Ferrara joined other women art professionals working to create the Women's Art Registry and met Mary Miss and Michelle Stuart. The following year, she began renovating her Prince Street loft, an activity that influenced her interests in the use and construction of space, as well as the integration of building into the landscape. Ferrara cites the architecture of Louis Kahn, Luis Barragan, and Frank Lloyd Wright as especially important to her. In 1973 Ferrara created her first outdoor sculpture, *Stacked Pyramid* and with it began a successful career in public art and architecture-related projects.

But more than any other source or activity, it is movies that Ferrara cites as having the most significant impact on her work. Her own "haphazard list, in no hierarchical order" of films from the late sixties and seventies includes: "Science Fiction. Story is okay: *2001. A Space Odyssey,* 1968; *Rollerball,* 1975; *Close Encounters of the Third Kind,* 1977; *Alien*, 1979; *Mad Max,* 1979; *The Man Who Fell To Earth,* 1976. Strange Stories: *Performance,* 1970; *Don't Look Now,* 1973; *McCabe and Mrs. Miller,* 1971; *El Topo,* 1971. Disturbing Stories: *They Shoot Horses Don't They?* 1969; *Le Boucher*, 1969; *The Deer Hunter*, 1978. And Others: *Days of Heaven*, 1978; *Play Misty For Me,* 1971; *Deliverance,* 1972; *Midnight Cowboy,* 1969; *The Conversation*, 1974; *The Conformist*, 1969; *Last Tango in Paris*, 1972; *The Night Porter*, 1973. All of Sergio Leone's spaghetti westerns for their austere landscapes, minimal dialogue, and Clint Eastwood. All of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's films for their extreme stylization and excellent actors, especially *Ali: Fear Eat the Soul,* 1974; *The Merchant of Four Seasons,* 1971; and *The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant*, 1971." Ferrara currently lives in New York and is represented by Michael Klein, Inc.

Solo Exhibitions

1973
A.M. Sachs Gallery, New York, New York

1974
A.M. Sachs Gallery, New York, New York

1975
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York
Daniel Weinberg Gallery, San Francisco, California

1976
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York

1977
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York
Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

1978
Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York

1979
Glen Hanson Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York
University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island

1980
Okun-Thomas Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri
San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, California
University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts
University of Southern California at Los Angeles, California

1981
Marianne Deson Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Laumeier Sculpture Park Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York

1982
Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, Florida
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York

1983
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Janus Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Galleriet Lund, Sweden

1984
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York
Susan Montezinos Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1987
Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
San Antonio Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas
R.B. Kornblatt Gallery, Washington, D.C.

1990
Genovese Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts

1991
Michael Klein Inc., New York, New York

1992
John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Massachusetts

1993
Freedman Gallery, Albright College Center for the Arts, Reading, Pennslyvania
Hudson River Museum of Westchester, Yonkers, New York

1994
Michael Klein Inc., New York, New York

1995
Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, Kansas City, Missouri

Nancy Graves

Nancy Graves was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in 1940 where she spent her childhood. Graves attributed her initial interest in the natural sciences and fine arts to the time she spent roaming the Berkshire Museum, where her father worked when she was a child. She earned a B.A. in English literature from Vassar College in 1961 and continued her education by receiving a B.F.A. and M.F.A. from the Yale School of Art and Architecture in 1969. After receiving a Fulbright scholarship, she spent the next two years in Paris and Florence. During these trips, Graves studied Matisse and Indian miniatures, and discovered the wax models of the 18th-century anatomist Susini in Florence's museum of natural history.

While in Europe, Graves exchanged ideas with composer Philip Glass and sculptor Richard Serra (to whom she was married from 1965 to 1970). Graves moved to New York in 1966 and there met colleagues Robert Smithson, Eva Hesse, and later the choreographers Yvonne Rainer and Trisha Brown. Graves taught at Fairleigh Dickinson University from 1966 to 1968. The following year, *Nancy Graves: Camels* appeared at the Whitney Museum, the first one-woman show at the Whitney.

Along with her interest in French and American Modernists, Graves cited the work of David Smith, Claes Oldenburg, and Bruce Nauman as influential. She also felt indebted to the sequential photography of Eadweard Muybridge and writers Camus, Ortega y Gasset, and Robbe-Grillet. Over the years, Graves's interests in anatomy, anthropology, archaeology, botany, paleontology, Native American spiritualism, and ritualism would shape her aesthetic as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker.

The interdisciplinary character of Graves's art was due, in part, to her extensive travels to Germany, India, Kashmir, Morocco, and Nepal, which she continued throughout several decades. In 1972, Graves ceased making sculpture and returned to painting and printmaking. She returned to sculpture in 1976 when she was commissioned by the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, West Germany, to create a bronze version of *Fossils*. Between 1970 and 1974, Graves extended her sculptural interests by making five 16mm films, with subjects of camels, flamingos and frigate birds, and the surface of the moon: *200 Stills at 60 Frames* (1970), *Goulimine* (1970), *Izy Boukir* (1971), *Aves* (1973), and *Reflections on the Moon* (1974). In 1974, Graves moved to her Wooster Street studio where she worked, remarried, and continued to produce sculpture, paintings, and prints until her death in 1995. Her estate is represented by Knoedler Gallery.

Solo Exhibitions

1964
The Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

1968
Graham Gallery, New York, New York

1969
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York

1971
Gallery Reese Palley, New York, New York
The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada
Gallery Reese Palley, New York, New York
Neue Gallerie der Stadt Aachen, Aachen, Germany
Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, New York
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York

1972
The New Gallery, Cleveland, Ohio
Institute of Contemporary Art of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Dallas, Texas

1973
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada
The Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts
La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, California (traveled)

1974
Andre Emmerich Gallery, Inc., New York, New York
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Houston, Texas

1975
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Houston, Texas

1977
Andre Emmerich Gallery, Inc., New York, New York
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Houston, Texas
Gallerie Andre Emmerich, Zurich, Switzerland
Getler/Pall Gallery, New York, New York
Gallerie im Scholoss, Munich, Germany

1978
Hammerskjold Plaza, New York, New York
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York
Gallery Diane Gilson, Seattle, Washington
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Houston, Texas

1979
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York

1980
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York (traveled)

1981
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

1982
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York
M. Knoedler Zurich AG, Zurich, Switzerland

1983
Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara, California
Gloria Luria Gallery, Bay Harbor Islands, Florida
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Houston, Texas

1984
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Houston, Texas

1985
The Greenberg Gallery, St.Louis, Missouri
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc. New York, New York

1986
Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, New York (traveled)
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York

1987
The Fort Worth Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas (traveled)
Knoedler Gallery Ltd., London, England

1988
Associated American Artists, New York, New York
M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York, New York
Heland Wetterling Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden
Gallery Mukai, Tokyo, Japan

1989
Knoedler Kasmin Gallery, London, England
Knoedler and Co., New York, New York
Linda Cathcart Gallery, Santa Monica, California

1990
Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico (traveled)
Heland Wetterling Gallery, Gothenburg, Sweden

1991
Locks Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Meredith Long and Co., Houston, Texas
Knoedler and Co., New York, New York

1992
Irving Galleries, Palm Beach, Florida
Saff Tech Arts at Knoedler, New York, New York

1993
Margulies Taplin Gallery, Boca Raton, Florida
Fine Arts Gallery, UMBC, Catonsville, Maryland (traveled)
Knoedler and Co., New York, New York

1994
Meredith Long Gallery, Houston, Texas

1995
Brenau University, Gainsville, Florida

Eva Hesse

Eva Hesse was born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1936 to Wilhelm and Ruth Hesse. In 1938, her father, a criminal lawyer, sent Eva and her older sister, Helen, to Amsterdam and placed them in a Catholic children's home to escape Nazi persecution. Three months later, they were reunited with their parents and immigrated to New York in 1939. At age 9, Hesse's parents divorced. This, along with their relocation, put a great emotional strain on Hesse's mother and a year later, in 1946, she committed suicide.

Hesse graduated from the High School of Industrial Arts, New York, in 1952. She then attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, and graduated from Cooper Union in 1957. Following her education at Cooper Union, she continued her studies in painting at Yale School of Art and Architecture under instructors Joseph Albers, Bernard Chaet, and Rico Lebrun, receiving her B.F.A. in 1959. She then moved back to New York where she held a part-time job as a textile designer for several months.

In 1960, Hesse met artist Sol LeWitt, who would become her mentor and close friend. Through him, she was introduced to a circle of artists and writers including Mel Bochner, Nancy Holt, and Robert Smithson. The following year, Hesse met and married sculptor Tom Doyle. In 1963, Hesse and Doyle moved to the Bowery, and became neighbors with artists Robert and Sylvia Mangold and Robert Ryman, and feminist writer/critic Lucy Lippard. In the early sixties, Hesse remarked, "I have become a reader," and over the years she cited in her diaries authors such as Austen, Beckett, Brecht, Camus, Joyce, Nabokov, Robbe-Grillet, Sartre, and Stein among others. She was especially influenced by Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*, which Hesse first read in 1964 and would quote often in her personal journals.

In 1964, Hesse was reunited with her homeland when she and Doyle traveled to Dusseldorf. While in Germany she worked in an abandoned textile factory and created her first relief sculptures. While traveling, Hesse visited numerous museums mentioning in particular an Arshile Gorky drawing show and the work of Fernand Leger. They traveled for

the next year throughout Europe including Brussels, Florence, London, Paris, Rome, and Zurich. During this time, her marriage to Doyle began to dissolve. They arrived back in the United States in the fall of 1965, and in January 1966, the couple formally separated. That same year, Hesse experienced another loss when her father died. Three years later, Hesse detected the first signs of a brain tumor, which in 1970, at the age of 34, took her life. During her last five years, Hesse's work matured and received critical attention. At 32, Hesse had her first one-person show of sculpture in New York at Fischbach Gallery. Her estate is currently represented by Robert Miller Gallery.

Solo Exhibitions

1963
Allan Stone Gallery, New York, New York

1965
Kunstverein fur die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf, Germany

1968
Fischbach Gallery, New York, New York
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio

1970
Fischbach Gallery, New York, New York

1971
Visual Arts Gallery, School of Visual Arts, New York, New York

1972
Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan

1972-74
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York (traveled)

1974
James Mayor Gallery, London, England

1977
Droll/Kolbert Gallery, New York, New York

1979
Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, England (traveled)
Mayor Gallery, London, England (traveled)

1982-83
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio (traveled)

1983
Metro Pictures, New York, New York

1985
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts

1987
Pat Hearn Gallery, New York, New York

1989
Robert Miller Gallery, New York, New York

1990
Kicken *Pauseback, Cologne, Germany

1991
Robert Miller Gallery, New York, New York (traveled)

1992
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut (traveled)
Robert Miller Gallery, New York, New York

1993
IVAM Centre Julio Gonzalez, Valencia, Spain (traveled)
Gallerie Montenay, Paris, France
Barbara Gross Gallerie, Munich, Germany
Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris France

1994
Ulmer Museum, Ulm, Germany (traveled)
Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery, Nova Scotia, Canada

Ana Mendieta

Ana Mendieta was born in Havana, Cuba, in 1948 into a family of political figures. Her great-grandfather was the General in Cuba's war for independence, and her great uncle was President of Cuba in the thirties. At age 13, during Castro's revolution, Mendieta and her sister, Raquel, were forced into exile from Cuba to the United States. Although the family wanted to leave together, Ana and Raquel were sent alone because her father was detained on multiple accounts of anti-Castroism. Ana was sent to Iowa, where she lived in numerous foster homes until she attended the University of Iowa. At the university, she studied painting and received her B.A. in 1969 and M.A. in 1972. After receiving her master's degree, Mendieta re-enrolled at the University of Iowa to pursue an M.F.A. degree. She was graduated in 1977 from the new Multimedia and Video Art Program. Upon graduation, Mendieta moved to New York and joined the A.I.R. Gallery, the first cooperative gallery of feminist artists in the city.

Her reading interests included books on anthropology, history, preColumbian mythologies, and literature relating to Spain and Latin America. Her studies included the writing of Lydia Cabrera, a Cuban writer who studied and documented Santeria (a combination of the rituals of Catholicism and African Yoruban religion) in 20th-century Cuba. Her nearly annual travels to Oaxaca, Mexico, during the seventies, along with her first travel back to Cuba as an adult in 1980, led Mendieta to rediscover her heritage. Soon after her marriage to sculptor Carl Andre in 1985, Mendieta died in New York at age 36. Her estate is currently represented by Galerie Lelong in New York.

Solo Exhibitions

1971
Iowa Memorial Union, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

1976
12 Greene Street, New York, New York

1977
Gallery of New Concepts, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

1979
A.I.R. Gallery, New York, New York

1980
Colburn Gallery, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont
Kean College, Union, New Jersey
Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, São Paolo, Brazil

1981
A.I.R. Gallery, New York, New York

1982
Douglass College, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
The Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Miami, Florida
The University Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Yvonne Seguy Gallery, New York, New York

1983
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba

1984
Primo Piano, Rome, Italy

1985
Gallery AAM, Rome, Italy

1987-88
The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, New York

1988
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, California
Terne Gallery, New York, New York

1989
Carlo Lamagna Gallery, New York, New York

1990
Aspen Arts Museum, Aspen, Colorado
Pat Hearn Gallery, New York, New York

1991
Galerie Lelong, New York, New York

1992
University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, Massachusetts
Laura Carpenter Fine Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico

1993
Centre d'Art Contemporain, Ile de Vassiviere, France
Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio
University Art Gallery, San Diego State University, San Diego, California
Freedman Gallery, Albright College, Reading, Pennsylvania

1994
Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Ohio
Ruth Bloom Gallery, Santa Monica, California
Artotheque de Caen, Caen, France
Galerie Lelong, New York, New York

1996
Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland
Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago, Spain

Selected Performances

1972
The Center for the New Performing Arts, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

1973
Clinton Arts Center, Clinton, Iowa
"Freeze," The Center for the New Performing Arts, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

1974
Escultura Corporeal, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin
Unidad Professional Zacatenco, Mexico City, Mexico
The Center for the New Performing Arts, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
The Museum of Art, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

1975
The Center for the New Performing Arts, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

1976
Body Tracks, Studentski Kultruni Center, Belgrade, Yukoslavia
Body Tracks, International Culture Centrum, Antwerp, Belgium

1978
La Noche Yemaya, Franklin Furnace, New York, New York

1982
Body Tracks, Franklin Furnace, New York, New York

Mary Miss

Mary Miss was born in New York in 1944. Her childhood was spent moving around the western United States with her mother, a nurse, her father, a military officer, and her three siblings. During their travels, her father would take her to explore forts, Indian sites, and abandoned mines. In 1962, Miss studied art at the University of California at Santa Barbara. In the summer of 1963, she enrolled in a sculpture class under Herman Snyder at Colorado College. While a student, she met Bruce Colvin, who became her husband from 1967 to 1984. In 1968, she received her M.F.A. from the Rinehart School of Sculpture at Maryland Art Institute, Baltimore. In that same year she moved to New York and worked part-time on a Metropolitan Museum of Art catalog project. While working on the project, Miss created a studio space for herself in the basement of her apartment.

Throughout the seventies, Miss devoted much of her time to reading about the architecture of different cultures, gardens, and various landscape interventions. Miss cites several publications being important during that time, especially *Avalanche*, *Civil Engineering Magazine*, *Soviet Life*, and *The Village Voice*, as well as the writings of Abish, Berger, Borges, Conrad, Cortazar, Nabokov, and Soseki, and the films of Hitchcock. In the early seventies, Miss was an active participant in several women's artists' efforts. She was a follower of the experimental dance and performance art scenes, especially the works of Trisha Brown, Joan Jonas, Meredith Munk, Yvonne Rainer, Twyla Tharp, and Robert Whitman.

Worldwide travel played an important role in Miss's life. Along with her childhood adventures and a year's residence in Stuttgart, Germany (where she was introduced to medieval towns, ruins of castles, and remains of structures destroyed in the war), she visited Chaco Canyon, Canyon de Chelly, Labrador, Newfoundland, and the fortified hills of Umbria, Italy. In the seventies, she began photographing vernacular architecture and a variety of built structures and completed two film projects: *Cut-off* (1974-75) and *Blind* (1976-77). After several early outdoor projects in the late sixties, Miss resumed outdoor sculpture in 1973 at Oberlin College and Battery Park City, and embarked on a successful career of public art and commissioned projects. Miss married George Peck in 1993 and continues to live in New York.

Solo Exhibitions

1971
55 Mercer Gallery, New York, New York

1972
55 Mercer Gallery, New York, New York

1975
Salvatore Ala Gallery, Milan, Italy
Rosa Esman Gallery, New York, New York

1976
Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York

1978
Nassau County Museum of Fine Arts, Roselyn, New York

1979
Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota

1980
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York
Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

1981
David Winton Bell Gallery, List Art Center, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island
University of Rhode Island, Main Gallery, Kingston, Rhode Island

1982
Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis, Missouri

1983
Institute of Contemporary Art, London, England
University Art Gallery, San Diego State University, San Diego, California
University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, California

1984
Protetch-McNeil Gallery, New York, New York

1986
Danforth Museum of Art, Framingham, Massachusetts

1987
Architectural Association, London, England

1990
Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

1991
Freedman Gallery, Albright College, Reading, Pennsylvania

Ree Morton

Ree Morton was born Helen Marie Reilly in Ossining, New York, in 1936. Along with her four siblings, she grew up with her father, a doctor, and her mother, a nurse. Following her parents' footsteps, Morton enrolled in the nursing program at Skidmore College in 1956. Before the completion of her B.A., she met and married Ted Morton, a sailor in the U.S. Navy. While her husband was away on naval cruises, Morton and her three children resided in different locations in the United States and traveled throughout Europe. It was not until Morton and her children were living in Florida in 1960 that she decided to explore her interests and talents in studio art by taking free art classes at the Jackson Museum. In 1968, Morton divorced her husband and received her B.F.A. from the University of Rhode Island. While in Rhode Island, she met Marcia Tucker and sculptor Robert Rohm, both of whom became significant influences on Morton's identity as an artist. Shortly after, Morton and her children moved to Philadelphia, where she continued her education at the Tyler School of Art at Temple University, receiving her M.F.A. two years later.

Throughout this whole life transition, Morton did not lose her focus on her priorities as a mother. After her degree from Tyler, she accepted a job at the Philadelphia College of Art (PCA) and her close friend Cynthia Carlson, a painter from New York who also taught at PCA, moved into her residence to help care for Morton's children.

In 1972 Morton decided to move to New York and establish her career as an artist. She did not, however, stay in New York permanently; she accepted invitations for visiting artist positions at numerous universities throughout the country, including the University of California at San Diego in 1975-76 and at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1977. Along with her interest in the avant-garde, Morton was an avid reader of diverse subjects such as botany, Celtic history and heraldry, the philosophical writings of Bachelard and Piaget, and the works of Eliot, Grotowski, Norberg-Schulz, and Schechner. Two particularly inspirational sources include Russel's *Impressions of Africa* and *System of Architectural Ornament* by Sullivan. In 1977, at the age of 41, she died in an automobile accident in Chicago. Morton's estate is presently represented by Alexander and Bonin Gallery in New York.

Solo Exhibitions

1969
McLennan Community College, Waco, Texas

1973
Artists Space, New York, New York

1974
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York
John Doyle Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

1975
The South Street Seaport Museum, New York, New York

1976
University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island

1977
Walter Kelly Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Droll/Kolbert Gallery, New York, New York
Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York, New York

1978
Droll/Kolbert Gallery, New York, New York

1980
The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, New York (traveled)

1982
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York

1984
Max Protetch Gallery, New York, New York

1985
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York

1986
Vanguard Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1988
Franklin Furnace, New York, New York

1989
University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida

1993
Brooke Alexander, New York, New York

1994
Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College, Portland, Oregon

Dorothea Rockburne

Dorothea Rockburne was born in Verdun, Quebec in 1934. Her mother's family were seagoing people and engineers, and her father, also an engineer, was related to George W. G. Ferris of "Ferris wheel" fame. Her childhood was spent in Montreal, where dance classes and her introduction to the writing of Blaise Pascal (in the fourth grade) would prove to be particularly inspirational to her work as an artist. Rockburne cites as a defining experience in her youth (at age 14) reading Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*, a 19th-century text she describes as an account of "conspicuous consumption in terms of how women represent men's worth," and her subsequent "intense rebellion" against the text's gender stereotypes and implications for appropriate female roles. Rockburne attended Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Montreal between 1947 and 1950 and in 1956 received her B.F.A. from Black Mountain College in Beria, North Carolina.

Rockburne moved to New York in 1956 with her 4-year-old daughter whom she raised alone while establishing herself as an artist. (Rockburne separated from her husband in 1957.) During the late fifties, Rockburne worked part-time at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Initially in sales, inventory, and bookkeeping, she eventually assisted with the cataloging of the museum's Egyptian collection. In 1970, Rockburne's first solo exhibition in New York took place at Bykert Gallery.

Traveling reinforced Rockburne's interests in formal languages of other periods and cultures (especially the Italian Renaissance and 16th-century Mannerism and Egyptian art). She made her first trip to Italy in 1967, visiting Masaccio's *Expulsion* at Brancacci Chapel in the Church of Carmine in Florence. Other excursions include a 1971 trip to Peru's Machupichu, the Nazca lines, and the ruins of Sacsayhuaman; and a 1972 encounter with Paris and the Louvre. A serious reader since childhood, Rockburne's literary sources are numerous, ranging from texts on mathematics to philosophy and aesthetics, including authors Foucault, Hegel, Husserl, Marx, Merleau-Ponty, Piaget, Vasari, Wittgenstein, and a particular favorite, Barr's *Matisse*. Today Rockburne lives in New York and is represented by Andre Emmerich Gallery.

Solo Exhibitions

1970
Bykert Gallery, New York, New York

1971
Sonnabend Gallery, Paris, France

1972
New Gallery, Cleveland, Ohio
Bykert Gallery, New York, New York
Galleria Toselli, Milan, Italy
University of Rochester Art Gallery, Rochester, New York
Galleria D'Arte, Bari, Italy

1973
Bykert Gallery, New York, New York
Lisson Gallery, London, England
Hartford College of Art, Hartford, Connecticut
Daniel Weinberg Gallery, San Francisco, California
Galleria Toselli, Milan, Italy
Galleria Schema, Florence, Italy

1974
Galleria Toselli, Milan, Italy

1975
Gallerie Charles Kriwin, Brussels, Belgium
Galleria Schema, Florence, Italy

1976
John Weber Gallery, New York, New York

1977
Galleria La Polena, Genova, Italy

1978
John Weber Gallery, New York, New York

1979
Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas

1980
Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Xavier Fourcade, New York, New York
David Bellman Gallery, Toronto, Canada
Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York ("Locus Series" Installation)

1982
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Xavier Fourcade, New York, New York

1983
Galleriet, Lund, Sweden

1985
Xavier Fourcade, New York, New York

1986
Xavier Fourcade, New York, New York

1987
Arts Club of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

1988
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, New York

1989
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, New York
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts

1990
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, New York

1991
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, New York
D.P. Fong and Spratt Galleries, San Jose, California

1992
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, New York
Galleria Schema, Florence, Italy

1994
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, New York
Fredrick Spratt Gallery, San Jose, California

1995
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, New York
Guild Hall Museum, East Hampton, New York, New York

Michelle Stuart

Born in 1933, Michelle Stuart grew up as an only child with her mother and father in Los Angeles, California. (She learned of a half-brother only as an adult.) Her parents were immigrants from Switzerland and Australia and had both spent much of their lives traveling around the world. Through her father's career as a water rights engineer in Los Angeles, Stuart became acquainted with geological surveys and the Southern California landscape.

Soon after earning her degree from Chouinard Art Institute of Los Angeles in 1952, Stuart worked as a topographical drafter for the Army Corps of Engineers. Several months later, she moved to Mexico City to study at Instituto Nacional de Bellas Arts. There she joined Diego Rivera's team of apprentices working on murals and was introduced to the work of Frida Kahlo. After a temporary residence from 1953 to 1956 in Europe (she had her first solo exhibition in Paris in 1955), Stuart settled in New York and periodically enrolled in classes at the New School for Social Research. For the next several years, she supported herself as a fashion and book illustrator.

In the sixties she was involved in the anti-war movement. This activism lead to her participation in the women's art movement, especially in groups political in nature such as the Ad Hoc Women Artists' Committee. In 1977, Stuart helped found the publication *Heresies* and played a major role in creating the Women's Art Registry. Throughout the seventies, Stuart taught at numerous universities including The School of the Visual Arts, Pratt, Parsons, and Fordham. Stuart's first solo exhibition in New York was held at Max Hutchinson Gallery in 1974.

Throughout her life, Stuart maintained a keen interest in the natural sciences and ancient cultures. She developed a collection of travel narratives from Sir Aurel Stein to Captain James Cook and 19th-century photographs of surveys and expeditions. Stuart also drew inspiration from the writings of Bachelard, Borges, Calvino, Conrad, Eliade, Kubler, Levi-Strauss, Melville, Seferis, and Wittgenstein. Her interests in relations between cultural and natural history were supplemented by her extensive traveling that began in 1950 after her high school graduation with her first trip to Mexico. Stuart has visited many locations, including Finland, the Galapagos Islands, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Japan, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Peru, Samoa, and numerous cities across the United States. These trips included extensive studies of archeological sites, Buddhist temples, indigenous nomadic cultures, and prehistoric petroglyphs, as well as the native vegetation. Over the years, Stuart has kept extensive journals and has published artist books including *The Fall* (1976) and *From the Silent Garden* (1979). Stuart currently lives and works in New York and Amagansett, Long Island.

Solo Exhibitions

1973
Douglas College, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
Windham College, Putney, Vermont

1974
Max Hutchinson Gallery, New York, New York
Gallerie Schmela, Dusseldorf, West Germany

1975
Fine Arts Center, State University of New York at Oneonta, New York
Max Hutchinson Gallery, New York, New York

1976
Gallerie Farideh Cadot, Paris, France
Gallery of Fine Arts, State University of New York at Stonybrook, New York
Max Hutchinson Gallery, New York, New York
Gallerie Schmela, Dusseldorf, West Germany
Zolla Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

1977
Gallerie Munro, Hamburg, West Germany
Gallerie Schmela, Dusseldorf, West Germany
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts

1978
Gallerie Farideh Cadot, Paris, France
Zand Gallery, Teheran, Iran
Zolla Liberman, Chicago, Illinois
Centre d'Arts Plastiques Contemporaines de Bordeaux, France
Fine Arts Gallery, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

1979
Droll/ Kolbert Gallery, New York, New York
Ehrensperger Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland
Foster White Gallery, Seattle, Washington
Gallerie Schmela, Dusseldorf, West Germany
Institute of Contemporary Art, London, England
Janus Gallery, Los Angeles, California

1980
Gallerie Ahlner, Stockholm, Sweden
Galeriet-Anders Tornberg, Lund, Sweden
Gallerie Aronowitsch, Stockholm, Sweden
Gallerie Munro, Hamburg, West Germany

1981
Gallerie Tanit, Munich, West Germany

1982
Susan Caldwell Gallery, New York, New York
Gallerie Schmela, Dusseldorf, West Germany

1983
Gallerie Ahlner, Stockholm, Sweden
Galleriet Anders Tomberg, Lund, Sweden
Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, The Netherlands
Janus Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

1984
Gallery ueda Warehouse and Ginza, Tokyo, Japan
Gallerie Krista Mikkola, Helsinki, Finland
Neuberger Museum, State University of New York at Purchase, New York

1985
Hillwood Art Gallery, C.W. Post Campus of Long Island, New York University, Greenvale, New York (traveled)

1986
Max Protech Gallery, New York, New York
Arts Club of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
The Grand Lobby, The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York
Saxon-Lee Gallery, Los Angeles, California

1987
Pfizer, Inc., New York, New York
Gallerie Aronowitsch, Stockholm, Sweden
Anders Tomberg Gallery, Lund, Sweden
Toni Birckhead Gallery, Cincinnati, Ohio
Thorden Weterling Gallerie, Gotteborg, Sweden
Gallery ueda Warehouse, Ginza, Tokyo, Japan

1988
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Scottsdale, Arizona (traveled)
Max Protech Gallery, New York, New York

1989
Fawbush Gallery, New York, New York
B.R. Komblatt Gallery, Washington, D.C.
College of Wooster Art Gallery, Wooster, Ohio
Kent State University School of Art Gallery, Kent, Ohio

1990
San Antonio Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas

1991
B.R. Kornblatt Gallery, Washington, D.C.

1992
Fawbush Gallery, New York, New York

1994
Fawbush Gallery, New York, New York

Hannah Wilke

Hannah Wilke was born Arlene H. Butter in New York in 1940. She lived with her mother, Selma, a housewife, her father, Emanuelle, a lawyer, and her older sister, Marsie. In 1961, she received her B.S. and B.F.A. from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University in Philadelphia. During the time Wilke was completing her degree at Temple University, she married. Seven months after her wedding, her father passed away.

Wilke took an exceptionally strong interest in the women's movement beginning in the late sixties. She contributed to numerous feminist publications including *Heresies* and several feminist art groups in New York and California. From 1969 to 1977, Wilke lived with Claes Oldenburg. In 1972, Wilke made her solo debut at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts in New York. After her relationship with Oldenburg ended, Wilke and Donald Goddard formed a life-long partnership.

Along with watching old musicals from the forties, Wilke was also an avid reader of books with favorites including *Monsieur Teste* by Valery, Goethe's *Elective Affinities*, and the works of author Marguerite Duras. Although Wilke traveled mostly within the United States, she also spent time in Europe and Tokyo, and in 1981 traveled to Alaska for an artists' workshop.

Wilke turned to many previous expressions in art as sources of inspiration and controversy for her own works from the art of Duchamp to Abstract Expressionism. Although she saw Duchamp's work in Philadelphia while in school, it was not until the mid-seventies that she seriously considered their shared concerns with language and sexual identity. Beginning in the sixties, Wilke worked in numerous mediums such as sculpture, video, films, and drawing. After her mother's mastectomy in 1970, Wilke began performing and photographing herself nude. From the time her mother suffered a stroke in 1978 to her death from breast cancer in 1982, she was the center of Wilke's life and art. In 1986, Wilke was diagnosed with cancer. The disease claimed her life in 1993. Wilke's estate is currently represented by the Ronald Feldman Gallery in New York.

Solo Exhibitions

1972
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California

1974
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York

1975
Gallerie Gerald Piltzer, Paris, France
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York

1976
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
Fine Arts Gallery, University of California at Irvine, California

1977
Marianne Deson Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

1978
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York
P.S. 1 Institute for Art and Urban Resources, New York, New York

1979
Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C.

1984
Joseph Gross Gallery, University of Arizona at Tucson, Tucson, Arizona

1989
Gallery 210, University of Missouri, St. Louis, Missouri
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York

1990
Genovese Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts

1994
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York

Jackie Winsor

Vera Jacqueline Winsor was born the second of three daughters in 1941 in St. John's, Newfoundland, then a rugged and rural environment of small fishing villages. Her mother was raised in a family of farmers, and her father in a family of ship captains. Her father's career as an engineer required the family to move frequently between Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and New Brunswick during the forties. In 1952, Winsor's father decided to move the family to Boston due to his ill health and his desire to provide a culturally rich environment for his daughters. On the brink of adolescence, Winsor found the adjustment from a rural environment to an urban one quite difficult—she has likened it to "being pulled from one century into another"—and during her teenage years continued to spend summers in Canada.

During high school, Winsor elected to enroll in studio art classes at the Massachusetts College of Art (MassArt) and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. After graduating from high school in 1960, Winsor enrolled in MassArt. In the summer of her junior year, Winsor attended Yale School of Art and Music in Norfolk, Connecticut. Through this experience, Winsor came in contact with numerous practicing artists from the New York area, and was particularly inspired by painter Al Held. Once she earned her B.F.A. in 1965, she took photography classes at Douglass College at Rutgers University in New Jersey. Eventually she decided to enroll in the M.F.A. curriculum and in 1967 earned her graduate degree. During this period, Winsor married artist Keith Sonnier. They separated 11 years later. In 1967, after Rutgers, Winsor, Sonnier, and their friend and painter Joan Snyder moved to Manhattan together. In 1968, Winsor made her first trip to Europe. During the next two years, she attended organizational gatherings of the women's art movement. In part, as a result of the movement's efforts, Winsor's work began to appear in a number of important group exhibitions from 1968 to 1971. Winsor's first solo exhibition in New York took place in 1973 at Paula Cooper Gallery.

While in New York, Winsor became very interested in experimental dance companies, especially the work of Yvonne Rainer. Winsor has expressed an affinity towards the introspective abstraction of artists Brancusi, Kandinsky, and Mondrian. Her traveling experiences include China, England, Germany, Haiti, India, Mexico, Nepal, Peru, Thailand, and Trinidad. Along with traveling, her interests include physical geology, gymnastics, health and nutrition, and mythology. Winsor lives in New York and, since 1972, has been represented by Paula Cooper Gallery.

Solo Exhibitions

1968
Douglass College Gallery, New Brunswick, New Jersey

1971
Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

1973
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1976
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio (traveled)

1978
Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford, Connecticut

1979
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York (traveled)

1981
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia

1982
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York
Akron Art Museum, Akron, Ohio

1983
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1985
Margarete Roedrer Fine Arts, New York, New York (with Richard Deacon)

1986
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1987
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California

1988
Centre d'Art du Domaine de Kerguehennec Bignan, Locmine, France

1989
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1991
Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (traveled)

1992
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1995
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

Eva Hesse's studio,
New York,
New York, 1970
Photo: Reproduced from Bill Barrette, *Eva Hesse: Sculpture*, Timken Publishers, Inc, New York, 1989, with permission from The Estate of Eva Hesse

A *More Than Minimal* Chronology:

Selected Events, Publications, and Group Exhibitions

1966

National Organization for Women (NOW) is founded in Washington by Betty Friedan and 30 other women in order to fight sexual discrimination.

Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture," *Artforum*, February 1966 (part 1), October 1966 (part 2).

Yvonne Rainer's *The Mind is a Muscle: Trio A* is performed at Judson Memorial Church, New York.

Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* published.

Eccentric Abstraction. Fischbach Gallery, New York. Curated by Lucy Lippard. Hesse.

Primary Structures, Jewish Museum. Curated by Kynaston McShine.

1967

Artforum magazine moves its publication from California to New York City.

Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Artforum*, June 1967.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962) reprinted.

Louise Nevelson, first solo museum exhibition (age 67). Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University. A retrospective of her prints and drawings also at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Jackson Pollock retrospective. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Art in Series. Finch College Museum of Art, New York. Hesse.

1968

Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated in Memphis.

Robert F. Kennedy assassinated after winning the California primary.

Paula Cooper opens one of the first galleries in SoHo.

Gregory Battcock, *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* is published.

Robert Morris, "Anti-form," *Artforum*, April 1968.

Annual Exhibition. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Hesse.

Anti-form. John Gibson Gallery, New York. Hesse.

The Art of the Real: U.S.A. 1948-1969. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. MOMA's debut of Minimalism.

Soft and Apparently Soft Sculpture. American Federation of Arts. Traveled. Curated by Lucy Lippard. Hesse, Winsor.

1969

The first moon landing, July.

Woodstock concert.

Stonewall uprising in Greenwich Village launches massive grassroots gay liberation movement.

Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* is published.

Helen Frankenthaler retrospective (age 41). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Anti-Illusion: Procedures/ Materials. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Organized by Marcia Tucker and James Monte. Hesse.

Art in Process IV. Finch College Museum of Art, New York. Benglis, Hesse.

557,087. Seattle Art Museum. Traveled. Curated by Lucy Lippard. Hesse.

Nancy Graves: Camels. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. This is the Whitney's first one-woman exhibition as well as Graves's first one-person museum show (age 29).

New Media, New Methods. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Traveled. Hesse.

When Attitudes Become Form/Works- Concepts- Processes- Situations- Information. Kunsthalle, Bern. Traveled. Hesse.

1969 Annual Exhibition: Contemporary American Painting.Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Benglis.

Other Ideas. Detroit Institute of Arts. Benglis.

Square Pegs in Round Holes. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Hesse.

1970

Eva Hesse (age 34) dies.

Earth Day celebrated.

Four students at Kent State University slain by National Gaurdsmen.

Women Artists in Revolution (WAR) protests the Whitney Museum of American Art against the low number of women included in the 1969 *Annual Exhibition*. In the summer, Women in the Arts picket the Whitney and The Museum of Modern Art to call attention to the unequal representation of work in their exhibitions.

Women's Art Registry founded by the Ad Hoc Women Artists' Committee.

Nancy Graves's studio, New York, New York, 1970
Courtesy Nancy Graves Studio

Lynda Benglis at work on *Adhesive Products* at Walker Art Center, 1971

1971

Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* is published.

Trisha Brown's *Walking on the Wall* performed at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Michael Heizer's *Double Negative* and Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* completed.

Adrian Piper executes *Catalysis*, a series of unannounced performances in public places throughout New York City.

Robert Morris retrospective (age 39). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Organized by Marcia Tucker.

Frank Stella retrospective (age 34). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Organized by William S. Rubin.

Vision and Television. Organized by the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. This was the first museum exhibition devoted to illustrating the potential of television as an art form. Curated by Russell Connor.

Drawing Annual. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Morton.

Information. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Graves.

Paperworks. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Rockburne, Hesse.

Permanent Collection-Women Artists. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Hesse.

Sculpture Annual. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Ferrara, Graves, Miss, Morton, Rockburne, Winsor.

In Washington, the Corcoran Biennial is devoted exclusively to male artists. Female artists picket. In expiation, the Corcoran agrees to host a Conference on Women in the Arts the following year.

Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro initiate the Feminist Art Program at California Institute for the Arts.

National Endowment for the Arts' Museum Program begins.

Women in the Arts (WIA) forms to plan, among other activities, gallery actions against owners who do not exhibit women artists.

Women in Art Quarterly founded.

Elizabeth Baker's "Sexual Art-Politics" and Linda Nochlin's "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" are published in *ARTnews*, January, in a special issue devoted to women.

Everywoman publishes observations by Judy Chicago, Miriam Schapiro, and Faith Wilding on "central cavity" imagery, theorizing a feminine aesthetic.

Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* is published.

Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran's anthology, *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies of Power and Powerlessness* is published.

Lucy R. Lippard, *Changing: Essays in Art Criticism* is published.

Lucy Lippard's "Sexual Politics, Art Style" appears in *Art in America*, September.

Art and Sexual Politics, edited by Thomas B. Hess and Elizabeth C. Baker, is published; it includes Nochlin's essay, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," and 10 replies, including "Social Conditions Can Change" by Benglis.

Depth and Presence. The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Graves, Hesse, Morton.

Directions 3: Eight Artists. Milwaukee Art Center. Traveled. Benglis, Hesse.

Documenta 5. Kassel, Germany. Graves, Hesse, Rockburne, Wilke.

Envois, Biennale de Paris. Parc Floral, Paris. Graves.

Masters of Modern Art. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Rockburne.

Materials and Methods: A New View. Katonah Gallery, New York. Hesse.

New Works for New Spaces. Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Benglis.

Projected Art: Artists at Work. Finch College Museum of Art, New York. Hesse.

Six Sculptors. Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Graves, Hesse.

Twenty-six by Twenty-six. Vassar College Art Gallery, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York. Benglis, Morton, Rockburne, Winsor.

Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists. Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut. Curated by Lucy Lippard. Miss, Winsor.

Jackie Winsor
Virginia Piece
1972 (no longer extant)
wood and hemp
96 x 96 x 96 inches
(approximately)
Photo: Courtesy the artist

Dorothea Rockburne
Installation of the series
Drawing Which Makes Itself: Neighborhood,
1973, at The Museum of Modern Art,
New York, New York
107 x 150 inches
(approximately)
Photo: Courtesy the artist

1972

Break-in at Democratic headquarters at the Watergate office building, Washington, D.C.

Shirley Chisolm runs for president.

Richard Nixon re-elected president.

Congress passes Equal Rights Amendment.

The Women's Caucus for Art (WCA) of the College Art Association (CAA) is founded.

In Washington, the Corcoran hosts the Conference on Women in the Arts.

Feminist artists picket The Museum of Modern Art in New York to protest the number of woman artists exhibited there.

In New York, A.I.R. Gallery, the first women's cooperative gallery since the short-lived Gallery 15 in 1958, is founded.

Feminist Art Journal (1972-77), a quarterly, commences publication.

Ms. magazine begins official publication.

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, English translation (1953) reprinted.

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* published.

Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (1969), English translation published.

Laura Dean's *Circle Dance* performed.

Yvonne Rainer makes *This is the story of a woman who...* (performance).

American Women Artists. Kunsthaus, Hamburg. Benglis, Graves, Hesse.

Documenta V. Neue Galerie, Kassel, Germany. Graves, Hesse, Rockburne.

Eva Hesse: A Memorial Exhibition, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; essays by Linda Shearer and Robert Pincus-Witten.

Gedok: American Women Artists. Kunsthaus Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany. Benglis, Ferrara, Graves, Hesse, Miss, Wilke, Winsor.

Grids. Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Hesse.

Painting and Sculpture Today, 1972. Indianapolis Museum of Art. Benglis, Graves.

Painting Annual. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Graves.

Thirty-second Annual. Art Institute of Chicago. Benglis.

1973

In the case of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court rules that women had an unrestricted right to abort a fetus during the first trimester of pregnancy.

In New York, the women's co-op gallery Soho 20 is founded.

Sarah Lawrence College offers first graduate program in Women's Studies.

Robert Smithson (age 35) dies in a plane crash while inspecting *Amarillo Ramp* site.

Women's Building founded in Los Angeles.

Gregory Battcock, *Idea Art* is published.

Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, "Female Imagery," published in *Womanspace Journal* 1.

Rosalind Krauss's "Sense and Sensibility: Reflections on Post '60s Sculpture" published in *Artforum*, November.

Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972* published.

Cindy Nemser, "The Women Artists' Movement," *Feminist Art Journal* 2, winter 1973-74.

Agnes Martin retrospective (age 61). Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

American Drawings, 1963-1973. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Graves, Hesse, Morton, Rockburne.

Biennale de Paris. Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Winsor.

Biennial Exhibition. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Benglis, Ferrara, Graves, Miss, Morton, Wilke, Winsor.

Contemporary American Drawings 1963-1973. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Graves, Morton.

Four Young Americans. Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Ohio. Miss, Morton, Winsor.

Images. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Winsor.

Options 73/30. Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati. Benglis, Rockburne, Wilke.

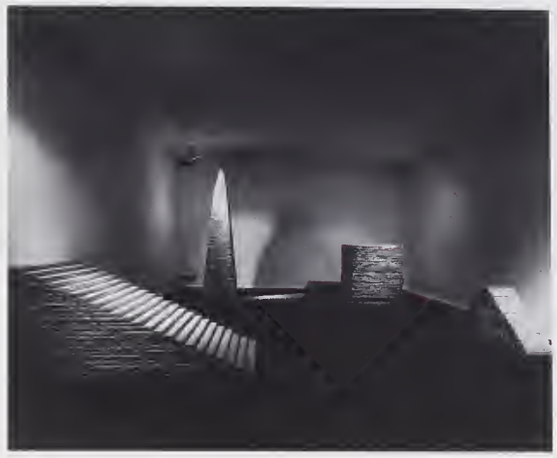
3D into 2D: Drawing for Sculpture. New York Cultural Center. Graves, Hesse.

Whitney Annual. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Rockburne.

Women Choose Women. New York Culture Center. Catalog by Lucy Lippard. Organized by Women in the Arts. Stuart, Wilke.

Mary Miss
Untitled, Battery Park Landfill, New York, New York
1973
66 x 144" each unit, 50 foot intervals
Photo:
Courtesy the artist

Installation View of Jackie Ferrara's first solo exhibition at A.M. Sachs Gallery, New York, New York, 1973



1974

Richard Nixon resigns, August 9. He is pardoned by Gerald Ford.

Special Public Art Issue, *Art in America*, May-June.

Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* published.

Laurie Anderson's *Duets on Ice* performed on the streets of New York City.

Eight Contemporary Artists, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Organized by Jennifer Licht. Rockburne.

Line as Language: Six Artists Draw, Princeton Art Museum. Essay by Rosalind E. Krauss. Rockburne.

Painting and Sculpture Today, 1974. Indianapolis Museum of Art. Ferrara, Stuart, Wilke, Winsor.

Paperworks. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Stuart.

Seventy-first American Exhibition. Art Institute of Chicago. Graves, Rockburne, Winsor.

Some Recent American Art. International Council of The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Traveled. Hesse, Rockburne.

1975

Fall of Saigon.

In New York, *Women Artists Newsletter* (1975-91), commences publication. Over its life it will streamline its title to *Women Artists News.*

Carol Duncan's "When Greatness is a Box of Wheaties" published in *Artforum*, October.

Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," published in *Screen* 16, no. 3.

Cindy Nemser, *Art Talk: Conversations with Twelve Women Artists* (including Hesse) is published.

Lucinda Childs's dance, *Congeries on Edges for 20 Obliques*, performed.

Mel Bochner, Barry LeVa, Dorothea Rockburne, Richard Tuttle. Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinatti.

Fourteen Artists. Baltimore Museum of Art. Benglis, Rockburne.

Group Exhibition. 112 Greene Street, New York. Mendieta.

Primitive Presence in the '70s. Vassar College Art Gallery. Graves, Morton.

37th Corcoran Biennial. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Rockburne.

The Year of the Woman. Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York. Benglis, Wilke.

1976

Jimmy Carter elected president.

Franklin Furnace Archive for artists' books founded in New York by Martha Wilson.

In New York, *womanart* (1976-78) magazine, a quarterly, commences publication.

Lawrence Alloway's article "Women's Art in the '70s" published in *Art in America*, May-June.

Helene Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa (1975)," English translation published in *Signs* 1 (summer).

Lucy R. Lippard, *Eva Hesse* published.

Lucy R. Lippard, *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* is published.

October published by Rosalind Krauss, Annette Michelson, and Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe.

Laurie Anderson's *For Instants* performed at the Whitney Museum's performance program.

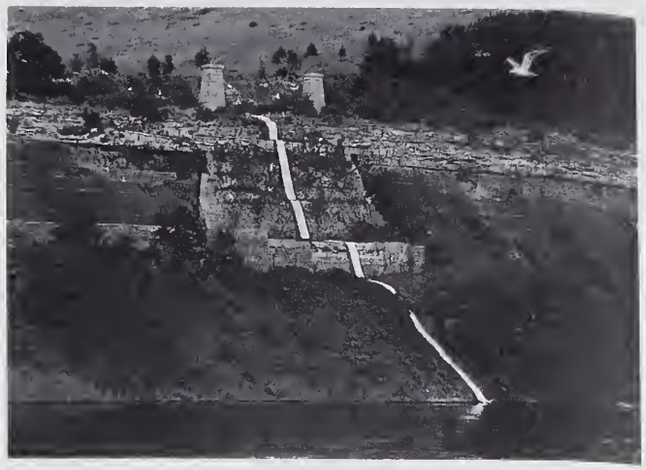
Women Artists: 1550-1950, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; organized by Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin. Traveled.

Contemporary American sculptors not included in the Whitney Museum's concurrent Two Hundred Years of American Sculpture Exhibition. Stamford Museum and Nature Center, Connecticut. Benglis.

Drawing Now. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Organized by Bernice Rose. Traveled. Hesse, Rockburne.

Four Artists. Museum of Art, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts. Ferrara, Miss.

Hannah Wilke with one-fold gestural ceramic sculptures before firing, 1973
Photo: courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York



Michelle Stuart
Niagara Gorge Path Relocated, Artpark, Lewiston, New York
1975
Rocks, earth (red iron oxide) on muslin laminated rag paper
460 feet x 62 inches
Photo:
Courtesy the artist

1977

Handmade Paper: Prints and Unique Works. Member's Penthouse, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Traveled. Benglis, Stuart.

The Liberation: 14 Women Artists. Organized by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., and the Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark. Traveled. Benglis, Graves, Winsor.

Seventy-second American Exhibition. Art Institute of Chicago. Rockburne.

Sydney Biennale. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. Benglis.

200 Years of American Sculpture. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Graves, Hesse.

Ree Morton (age 41) dies.

The New Museum founded in New York by Marcia Tucker.

Womanart (winter/spring 1977) publishes issue devoted to the question, "What Ever Happened to the Women Artists' Movement?"

In Los Angeles, *Chrysalis* (1977-80), a quasi-quarterly, commences publication.

Heresies: a feminist publication on art and politics begins publication.

Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," (1968) in *Image-Music-Text*, translation published.

Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower: My Struggle As a Woman Artist* is published.

Rosalind Krauss's *Passages in Modern Sculpture* is published.

Robert Pincus-Witten's *Postminimalism* is published.

Artists Bookworks. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Stuart.

Biennial Exhibition. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Morton, Rockburne, Winsor.

Contemporary Women: Consciousness and Content. Brooklyn Museum Art School Gallery, Brooklyn, New York. Benglis, Hesse, Morton, Stuart.

Documenta 6. Kassel, Germany. Graves, Hesse, Rockburne, Stuart.

Drawings of the '70s. Art Institute of Chicago. Stuart.

Extraordinary Women. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Rockburne.

1978

Feminist Statements. Women's Building, Los Angeles. Mendieta.

Maps. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Stuart.

Nine Artists: The Theodoran Awards. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Miss.

Nothing But Nudes. Whitney Museum of American Art, Downtown Branch, New York. Wilke.

Strata: Nancy Graves, Eva Hesse, Michelle Stuart, Jackie Winsor. Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia.

A View of a Decade: 1967-1977. Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Benglis, Rockburne, Winsor.

Women in Architecture. Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York. Miss.

Gregory Battcock, *New Artists Video*, is published.

Lisa Tickner's article "The Body Politic: Female Sexuality and Women Artists since 1970" published in *Art History* vol. 1.

Architectural Analogues, Downtown Branch, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Ferrara, Miss.

Indoor/Outdoor. P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York. Ferrara, Winsor.

Made by Sculptors. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Benglis, Hesse, Winsor.

1950 to the Present. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Winsor.

Personal Visions. Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York. Wilke.

The Sense of Self. Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, New York. Wilke.

1979

Fall of Phnom Penh, Cambodian capitol, and collapse of Pol Pot regime.

American hostages seized in Iran, November 4th.

Three Mile Island nuclear reactor accident, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Germaine Greer's *The Obstacle Race* is published.

Biennial Exhibition. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Ferrara, Rockburne, Winsor.

By the Sea: 20th Century Americans at the Shore. Queens Museum, Flushing, New York. Mendieta.

Contemporary Women in the Visual Arts. Smith College Museum of Art, Northhampton, Massachusetts. Wilke.

Portrait of Ree Morton, 1975
Photo: Estate of Ree Morton, Courtesy Alexander and Bonin, New York, New York

Ana Mendieta
Body Tracks
Photograph taken during her performance at Franklin Furnace, New York, New York, 1982

1980

The Decade in Review: Selections for the 1970s. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Winsor.

Expressions of Self: Women and Autobiography. Douglass College, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Mendieta.

Minimal Tradition. Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut. Ferrara, Miss, Rockburne, Winsor.

The 1970's: New American Painting. organized by The New Museum of Contemporary Art. Traveled. Morton.

The Presence of Nature. Whitney Museum of American Art, Downtown, New York. Stuart.

Jackie Winsor: Retrospective (age 38). The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Ronald Reagan elected president.

John Lennon of the Beatles shot dead in New York City, December 8.

Woman's Art Journal (1980-present), a scholarly semiannual edited by Elsa Honig Fine commences publishing.

Kay Larson's "For the First Time Women are Leading Not Following" appears in *ARTnews*, October.

Lucy Lippard's "Sweeping Exchanges: The Contribution of Feminism to the Art of the '70s" appears in *Art Journal* (fall/winter).

Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (eds.), *New French Feminisms: An Anthology* is published.

Drawings: The Pluralistic Decade. 38th Biennale, Venice. Traveled. Benglis, Ferrara, Graves, Miss, Rockburne.

The 1970s: New American Painting. The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. Traveled. Morton, Rockburne.

Painting and Sculpture Today, 1980. Indianapolis Museum of Art. Ferrara, Miss.

Ree Morton: Retrospective 1971-1977. The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

Sculpture on the Wall: Relief Sculpture of the Seventies. University Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Benglis.

With Paper, About Paper. Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo. Traveled. Benglis, Rockburne, Stuart.

Women/Images/Nature. Tyler School of Art. Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Traveled. Mendieta.

Works by Women. University Gallery, Southern Methodist University, Dallas. Traveled. Benglis.

1981

Reagan nominates Judge Sandra Day O'Connor as first woman on Supreme Court.

Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine (ed.), *The Future of Difference* is published.

Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* published.

Biennial Exhibition. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Benglis, Miss.

Developments in Recent Sculpture. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Benglis.

Directions 1981. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Traveled. Stuart.

Transformations: Women in Art, 1970-1980. New York Feminist Art Institute, New York Coliseum. Mendieta, Wilke.

1982

After a 10 year fight for ratification, the Equal Rights Amendment dies in Congress.

Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard's *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany* is published.

Jane Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction: Feminism and Psychoanalysis* is published.

Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (ed.), *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the Ecole Freudienne* is published.

Louise Bourgeois retrospective (age 71). The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

A Century of Modern Drawings. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Rockburne.

Currents: A New Mannerism. Jacksonville Art Museum, Florida. Traveled. Benglis, Winsor.

New York Now. Kestner-Gesellschaft, Hanover, West Germany. Traveled. Benglis.

The New York School: Four Decades, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Rockburne.

PostMINIMALism. The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut. Benglis, Ferrara, Rockburne, Stuart, Winsor.

Seventy-fourth American Exhibition. Art Institute of Chicago, Benglis.

Women of the Americas: Emerging Perspectives. The Center for Inter-American Relations and Konkos Gallery, New York. Benglis, Graves, Mendieta.

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