



JUDY CHICAGO

"Los Angeles - 1970's"

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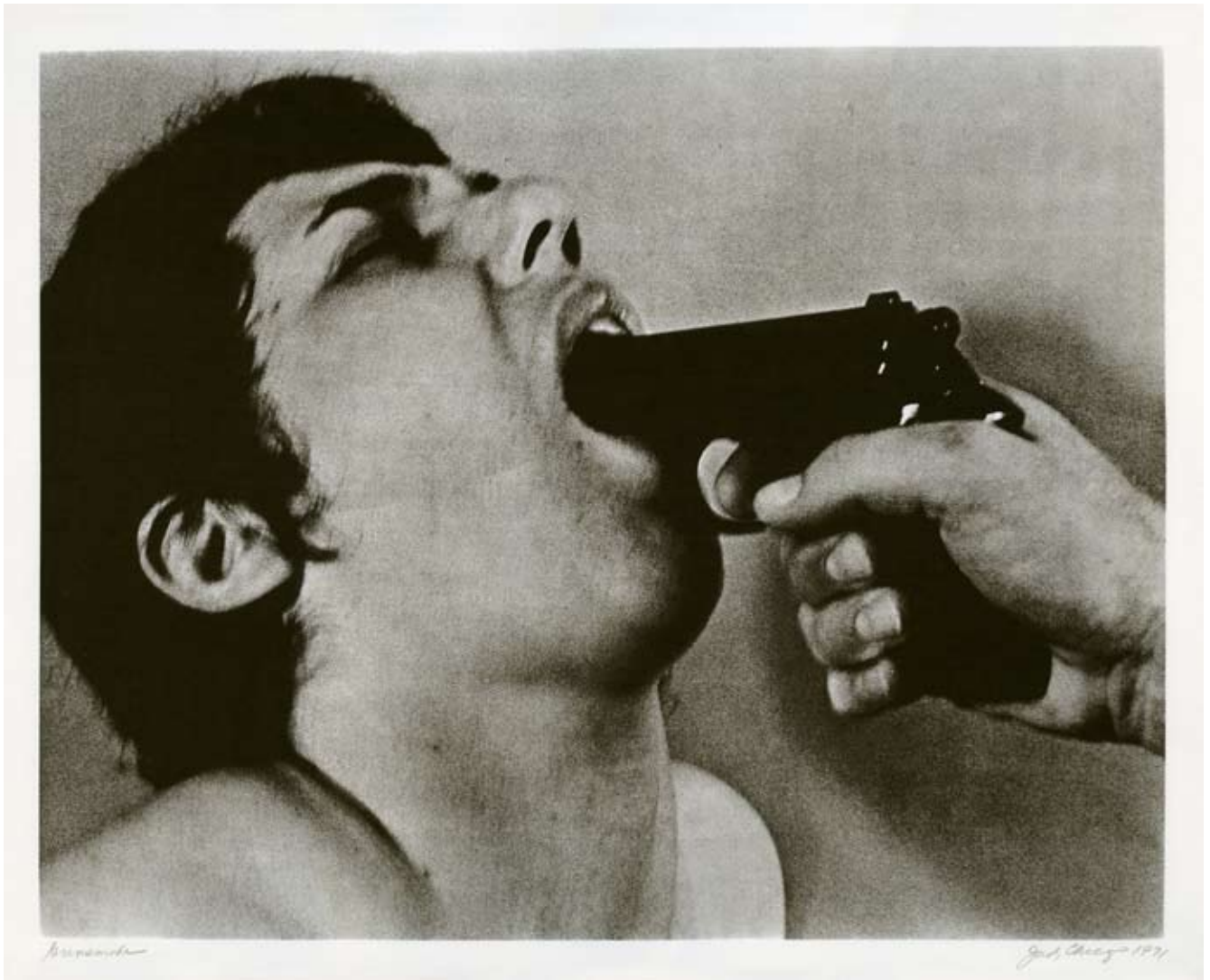
“Los Angeles - 1970’s”

February 18 - March 17, 2012

JANCAR GALLERY

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Essay by Micol Hebron 2012
“Judy Chicago: Experienced”

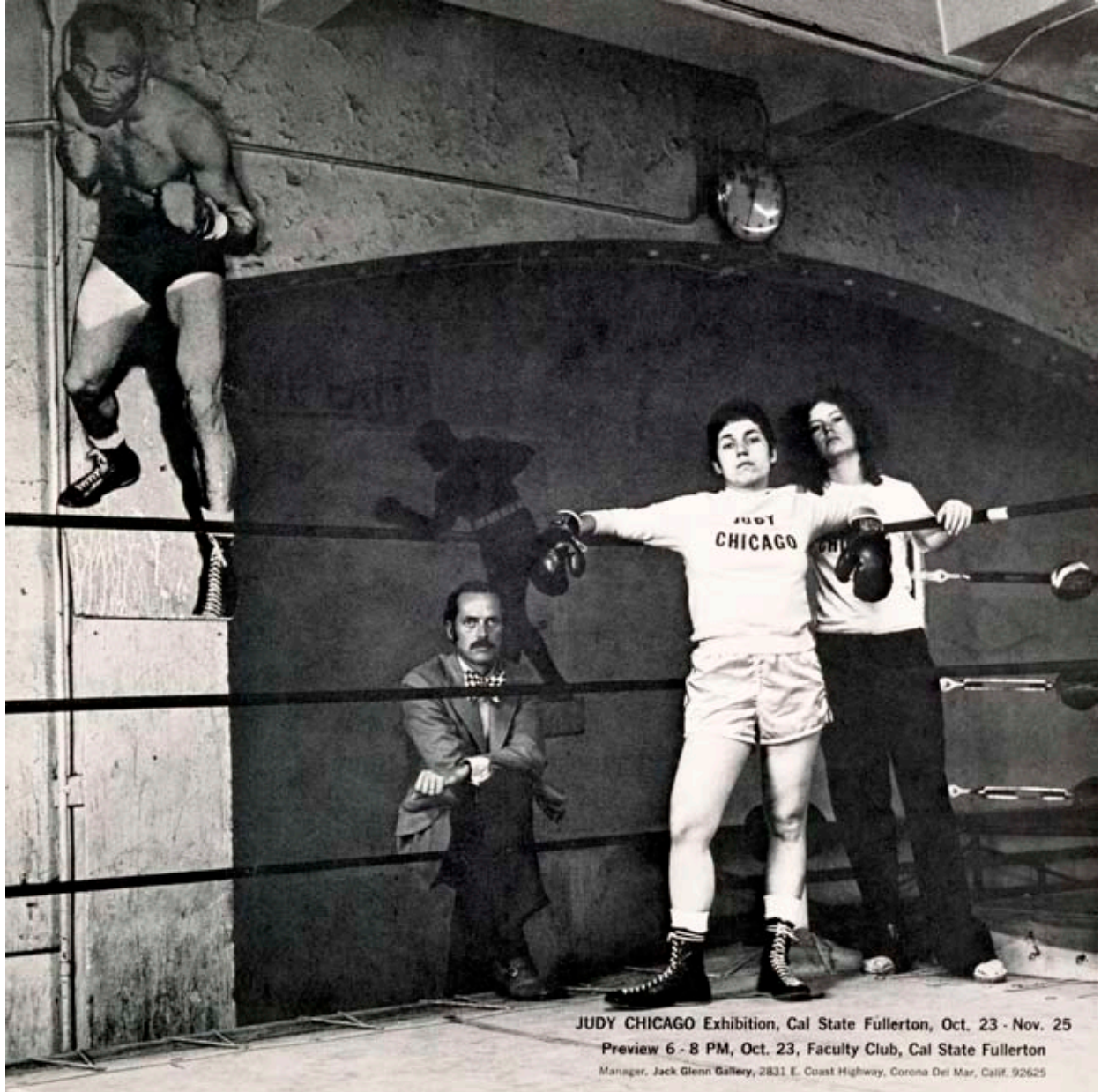




YOU ARE HERE TO SERVE YOUR MASTERS. YOUR MOUTH, YOUR BELLY AND YOUR BEHIND ARE CONSTANTLY AT OUR ENTIRE DISPOSAL. YOUR HANDS ARE NOT YOUR OWN, NEITHER ARE YOUR BREASTS, NOR, ABOVE ALL, IS ANY ONE OF YOUR ORIFICES OF YOUR BODY, WHICH WE ARE AT LIBERTY TO EXPLORE AND INTO WHICH WE MAY, WHENEVER WE SO PLEASE, INTRODUCE OURSELVES. A HASSOCK WAS PLACED AS A SUPPORT UNDER HER CHEST; HER HANDS WERE FIXED BEHIND HER BACK, HER HAUNCHES WERE HIGHER THAN HER TORSO. ONE OF THE MEN GRIPPED HER BUTTOCKS AND SANK HIMSELF INTO HER WOMB. WHEN HE WAS DONE, HE CEDED HIS PLACE TO A SECOND. THE THIRD WANTED TO DRIVE HIS WAY INTO THE NARROWER PASSAGE, AND PUSHING HARD, VIOLENTLY WRUNG A SCREAM FROM HER LIPS. WHEN AT LAST HE LET GO OF HER, MOANING AND TEARS STREAMING DOWN UNDER HER BLINDFOLD, SHE SLIPPED SIDWISE TO THE FLOOR ONLY TO DISCOVER BY THE PRESSURE OF TWO KNEES AGAINST HER FACE THAT HER MOUTH WAS NOT TO BE SPARED EITHER. IT WAS WITH HER MOUTH STILL HALF-GAGGED BY THE HARDENED FLESH FILLING IT THAT SHE BROUGHT OUT, THICKLY, THE WORDS: "I LOVE YOU." "SAY IT ONCE AGAIN. SAY I LOVE YOU." "O SAID: "I LOVE YOU."

Love Story

Judy Chicago 1971



JUDY CHICAGO Exhibition, Cal State Fullerton, Oct. 23 - Nov. 25
Preview 6 - 8 PM, Oct. 23, Faculty Club, Cal State Fullerton
Manager, Jack Glenn Gallery, 2831 E. Coast Highway, Corona Del Mar, Calif. 92625



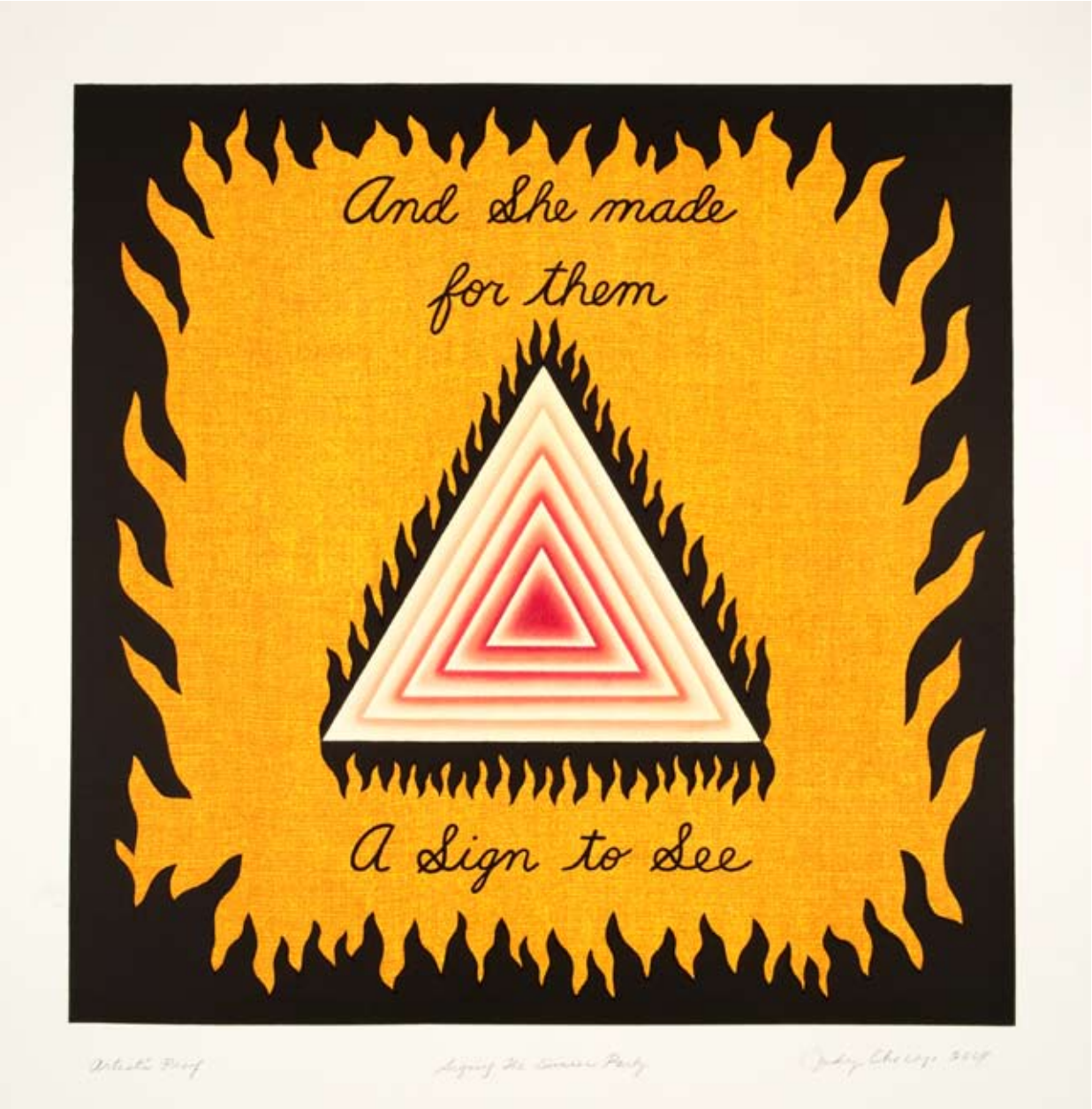
RED FLAG | *Lithograph* | 1971



STUDY FOR BIGAMY HOOD | *Acrylic on Paper* | 1965 / 2011



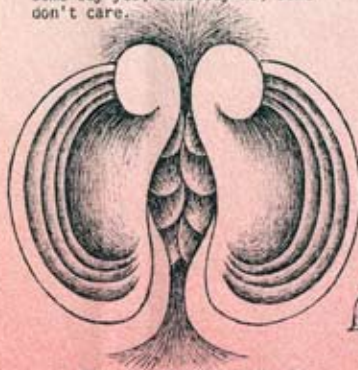
STUDY FOR FLIGHT HOOD | *Acrylic on Paper* | 1965 / 2011



SIGNING THE DINNER PARTY | *Lithograph* | 1979 / 2009

Feminist art is all the stages of a woman giving birth to herself

"What is it?" they ask her wherever she goes. "Yes, what is it?" they say. "Does it have a size or a shape, a form or a color. How will we know it?" they ask. "Do you know you're doing it when you do it?" they demand. "What does it feel like to do it?" "Is there such a thing?" they inquire wherever she goes. Some say yes, some say no, some don't care.



What is feminist art? It is art that reaches out and affirms women and validates our experience and makes us feel good about ourselves. Feminist art teaches us that the basis of our culture is grounded in a pernicious fallacy - a fallacy which causes us to believe that alienation is the human condition and real human contact is unattainable. This fallacy has divided our feelings from our thoughts, this fallacy has caused the planet to be divided as are the sexes. Feminist art is art that leads us to a future where these opposites can be reconciled and ourselves and the world thereby made whole.



As she walked up the familiar steps guarded by the ancient stone lions, she could feel her heart pound in anticipation of the delights she would find on the walls of the art museum. She checked her coat and climbed the marble stairs to the upstairs galleries. The rows of pictures stared at her and then, as she slowly passed through the crowded rooms, a curious thing began to happen. She felt her vision of the world receding before the power of so many images which distorted her body, denied her mind and asserted her womanliness only as a passive presence, never as an active force.

Stopping in the section of recent American abstraction, she gazed at the thrusting brush strokes and cold surfaces of the paintings. She could not relate to dominating a surface like these painters had done or hiding so much of their real feeling behind a smugly painted facade. She could not bear the arrogance implied in work that presented the environment of the canvas as a place to be shaped and conquered, not to be caressed. For her, the implications of acting so aggressively upon a painting were connected to male aggression in the world. The world imaged in this way seemed a world to be molded, formed, pinned.

For her, the canvas represented her own being and the process of making art was symbolic of the life process itself. It was to be discovered, not manipulated; nourished, not controlled. And yet there was beauty here also, the beauty of the human spirit and despite all the pain these paintings caused her to experience, the artist in her was forever moved by the art, however flawed the consciousness which created it.

Why was it that she could see all the world's values reflected in the art she saw? Weren't art and life separate? Like men and women, good and evil, body and mind?



What is Feminist Art?

4/5/77

Judy Chicago 1977

Judy Chicago: Experienced

by Micol Hebron

Judy Chicago's prolific career as artist and writer has spanned more than five decades. She has made work in nearly every medium – painting, drawing, sculpture, lithography, embroidery, ceramic, china painting, photography, performance, glass – and has written twelve books. Her most renowned work, *The Dinner Party* (1974-1979), introduced a complex and critical response to the canon of patriarchal modernism, and incited fervent discourse among poststructuralist feminists about the relationships between form, feminism, and art¹. Chicago had made a large, and less frequently discussed, body of work before *The Dinner Party*, and it was these earlier works (many of which are included in *Judy Chicago "Los Angeles – 1970's"* at Jancar Gallery) which not only paved the way to *The Dinner Party* and her subsequent practice, but also served as important precedents for well known works by other artists in every decade from the 70s until present day. Many of Chicago's works from the 60s and early 70s have not been written about or frequently shown until now.

The tenets of historical Modernism assert that the artists whom culture values most are those who are the most “original”, those who create unique, one-of-a-kind, never-before-seen works of art. We remain seduced by the notion of a Promethean savant who can concoct something from nothing. The boastful claims of precedent or superlative can automatically infuse a work of art with value: “the first__”, “the best__”, “the most__”... fill in the blanks. If we apply these same standards to

¹ For an excellent and thorough articulation of Chicago's strategic use of central core imagery, as it refutes and subverts simplistic claims of essentialism, see Amelia Jones' essay “The Sexual Politics of the *The Dinner Party*: A Cultural Context” in “Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* in Feminist Art History” (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1996) 82-125

Chicago's practice, we will see a notable number of acts of originality and influence. This essay will illuminate some of the ways in which Chicago's works in this exhibition foreshadowed and inspired a broad range of artworks from diverse genres including activist art, conceptual art, earthworks, performance, and relational aesthetics.

Whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be though half as good.

Luckily, this is not difficult.

– Charlotte Whitton

Judy Chicago began art lessons at the Art Institute of Chicago at age 5. She later earned her MA in painting and sculpture from UCLA (1964) while in her mid twenties, and before she was 30, had formulated her ideas for a feminist art practice that would fuel the historic Feminist Art programs that she started at Fresno State College (1970-71) and California Institute of the Arts (in 1971 with Miriam Shapiro), as well as the Feminist Studio Workshops at the Women's Building (in 1972, with Sheila de Bretteville and Arlene Raven). For most of her career, Chicago worked in her studio 6 or 7 days a week for a minimum of 7 hours a day and worked out daily for 90 minutes. Now in her 70's her studio schedule is not quite as long though her exercise schedule remains the same. She still has a lot to say. In both her art and her writing, Chicago probes topics that remain underrepresented and unprecedented in art and art history – women's history, the experience of birth, the disfiguring affects of power, the Holocaust, and human-animal relationships among them.

Throughout her entire career, Chicago has made work from her perspective as a woman. Like the notion of gender itself, this is a far more complicated and nuanced endeavor than it initially sounds. What does it feel like, look like, sound like, to be female? To experience being a professional, a mother, or a lover, as a female? To be a female in the male-dominated canon of art and art history? How does one manifest the physical and psychological experience of being female in relatable forms? Perhaps it is the very difficult, ineffable, and polymorphous nature of this task that accounts for the

virtual omission of this perspective in art and art history. Chicago discussed her early sexual experiences during a period that denied women's sexual agency – or needs. Her desires entirely contradicted the social attitudes of the time which led to an ongoing interest in fashioning erotic images from a feminist perspective, one that asserted women's sexual agency. She aimed to right the imbalance of representation, and to refigure the negative, Freudian notion of the female as “lacking”, and proposed instead that she be one of positive presence and significance. While studying at UCLA in the 60s Chicago created work that laid the foundation for a lengthy and formidable body of art that has been characterized by a feminist perspective.

This trajectory was not without its obstacles, however. While attending UCLA, Chicago was surrounded by male students and professors who were not receptive to her imagery or ideas about a centralized female experience, and as a survival tactic, she excised all content that overtly involved central core imagery or direct reference to female experience, turning instead to a coded and economical language of form and color (which would go on to hold an important place in the discourse about the male-centric and emotionless characteristics of Minimalism as it had been historicized²).

The works that Chicago created at this time do not appear to directly represent the body or a universal female experience. They do retain circular forms, domes, and layers of color and meaning. Consider the implications of Chicago's introduction of biomorphic forms and polychrome hues into the harshly rectilinear and drab vocabulary of Minimalist art³. While California had its own version of Minimalism — the Light and Space movement — the sensual glossy surfaces of lacquer and resin that graced the sculptures by John McCracken, Robert Irwin or De Wain Valentine were so flawless

² For more on this topic see Saul Ostrow's catalogue essay for the exhibition at Nye+Brown, “Judy Chicago: Deflowered” (Los Angeles: Nye+Brown, 2012)

³ Jenni Sorokin's essay “Minimal/Liminal: Judy Chicago and Minimalism”, written for the exhibition that she curated, “Judy Chicago Minimalism, 1965-1973” (Santa Fe: LewAllen Contemporary, 2004) offers an insightful analysis of Chicago's use of color and form in her early works.

they were industrially artificial, inhuman. It would take the likes of Judy Chicago and Lynda Benglis to subvert and undermine the seemingly impenetrable façade of Minimalist finish fetish.

Los Angeles was an important place for Chicago to have initiated her art career and develop her feminist ideology. The socio-political and cultural environments of the California art scene in the 60s and 70s directly affected Chicago's feminist consciousness. "Los Angeles was a place of exploration and self-definition"⁴ and it was this atmosphere that eventually made it possible for Chicago to define the feminist practice and pedagogy that she would pursue for the rest of her career.

In 1970, Chicago presented two iconic images in Artforum as advertisements for her exhibition at Jack Glenn gallery at California State University, Fullerton: *Name Change Ad*ⁱ, and the *Boxing Ring Ad*ⁱⁱ. The conception of the latter image was also inspired by the fact that Chicago was, at that time, like "one of the guys" by association. She studied and socialized with the Ferus gang (including Billy Al Bengston, Ed Moses, Robert Irwin, John Altoon, etc...), and hung out at Barney's Beanery, the Hollywood bar that was immortalized by Ed Kienholz's eponymous art installation. However, the Artforum ad made it clear



Judy Chicago, *Name Change Ad*, *Artforum*, Oct., 1970

that she was forging her own identity and was ready to come into the ring fighting. She could hold her own with the boys who were dominating the art world. Chicago was not seeking to simply attain a position in the art world that was comparable to that of her male counterparts, she was looking to assert an alternative perspective, a female consciousness for consideration and recognition. It was a strategic and effective move to adopt the space of an Artforum ad as a venue for criticality. Artforum was then, and remains now, a benchmark



Judy Chicago, *Boxing Ring Ad*, Announcement in *Artforum* for Jack Glenn Gallery, 1970. Photo by Jerry McMillan.

⁴ Interview between Judy Chicago and the author, Belen, New Mexico, December 28-29, 2011.

by which status and hierarchy in the art world are assessed⁵. While simultaneously rejecting her given names which had patriarchal lineage, Chicago was also asserting her new identity in the context of a male dominated art world.

Just four years later, in 1974, Lynda Benglis would also adopt the art magazine as a forum for discourse, and she presented two performative, photographic advertisements in Artforum that critiqued gender stereotypes. In the first imageⁱⁱⁱ she is posing with masculine coolness and confidence next to a car. She is wearing sunglasses, short hair, and a blazer, with one hand on her hip,



Lynda Benglis, Advertisement in Artforum magazine, April 1974



Lynda Benglis, Artforum magazine, 1974.

and the other on the car hood. In this image Benglis is emulating the photo documentation of the artists of the Ferus Gallery (the “Cool School”) in Los Angeles, or that of the New York school, picturing herself, as Chicago did in *Boxing Ring Ad*, as one of the boys. In the second image^{iv} Benglis is nude (except for her sunglasses), as she holds a giant dildo protruding from her crotch, purporting to assume the power and self-confidence that having a phallus affords⁶.

Chicago’s Artforum advertisement can also be thought of as a precedent for Chris Burden’s *Chris Burden Promo* video, in 1976^v. Like Chicago and Benglis, Burden appropriates mass media – now using television rather than publishing – as the canvas for his self-promotional artwork. In a 30-second commercial spot, Burden lists his own name at the end of a series of names of very famous male artists (Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent Van Gogh, etc...). In each of these artworks by Chicago, Benglis, and Burden, there are notions of humor,



Chris Burden, *Chris Burden Promo*, 1976. Video stills

⁵ In 2011 issues of Artforum average a 4:1 ratio of full-page ads for male artists to full-page ads for female artists.

⁶ This second ad is widely perceived as Benglis’ playful response to Robert Morris’ hypermasculine announcement card image for his Castelli-Sonnabend exhibition, also in 1974.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/25/arts/design/25benglis.html>

critique, and context that play equally in the delivery of their message.

*Why do people say, “Grow some balls”? Balls are weak and sensitive! If you really
wanna get tough, grow a vagina! Those things take a pounding!*

– Betty White

As Burden’s video attests, the male artist inherits the perspective of one who has agency and legacy. He is born into a position of advantage and can assume that he has a voice with which he can engage in cultural discourse. He can also expect an audience. While Chicago could certainly hold her own – at the bar and in the studio – with the Ferus boys, there were fundamental differences in her perspective that made it impossible for her to simply emulate the tactics of her male peers while developing her practice. Listening to their conversations (picture Chicago sitting between Ed Moses, Joe Goode, and Robert Irwin) she realized that when one of the men behaved offensively, the others would call him a “cunt.” Now imagine that time stops, like on the clock heads in Kienholz’s installation, and Chicago contemplates the fact that the male perspective held that “the worst thing you could be was a cunt”. She then asks, “So what do you do if you *have* one?”⁷

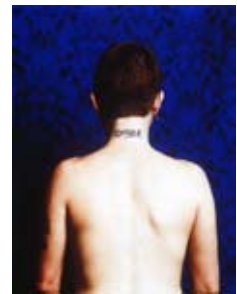
This realization was a significant catalyst for Chicago’s return to imagery that she had previously edited out of her practice while studying at UCLA. She thus resumes her construction of a visual lexicon of a female experience – through the reintroduction of central core imagery – and infuses her work with vibrant, pulsating images of vulvas, vaginal openings, butterflies, and clitorises, as visual depictions of the female experience. She uses a meticulous system of color and value gradients that cause forms to radiate, throb, and shift⁸. In this exhibition, *Tender Buttons #4, Private Landscape*,

⁷ Judy Chicago. “Judy Chicago: A Conversation With Her Younger Self” October 9, 2011. Pomona College. Claremont, CA

⁸ The ideas and color theory that Chicago uses to articulate these perceptual experiences are also clearly evident in the numerous additional early works that are on view in the exhibition at Nye + Brown gallery in Los Angeles, “Judy Chicago: Deflowered”, from February 18-March 31, 2012, which runs concurrent with the exhibition at Jancar gallery.

and Through the Flower #3 (1977) are representative of this return to previously excised imagery in Chicago's oeuvre.

Chicago sets out to reclaim the “cunt” as something positive and empowering. At Fresno State College, Chicago emphasizes a context that encourages her students to be and celebrate their own womanhood. In 1971 her students formed the Cunt Cheerleaders, who engaged in a happy, exuberant, and proud reappropriation of the word. By revoking authorship of such a term from the misogynist male perspective, and returning it to the female, she can thus reclaim agency and empowerment. Chicago's courageous reclamation of a derogatory term is precedent for a tactic that returns to the art scene more commonly in the 80s and 90s, in the wake of the culture wars and in the midst of art engaged in identity politics. Famous examples can be found in Catherine Opie's portrait *Dyke*^{vi}, 1993, or Tracey Emin's appliquéd blanket, *Psycho Slut*, 1999.



Catherine Opie, *Dyke*, 1993

Anonymous was a woman. – Virginia Woolf

Chicago's consideration of language plays an important part of the development of her feminist ideas and artworks in other ways as well. While the word “cunt” was used as an epithet, and the term “feminist art” simply did not exist. The history of women in the arts, and in culture in general, is one of omission. It is therefore not surprising that a term for “feminist art” did not exist, even as late as the 1960s. But a thing must be named, if it is to be referenced, valued, and preserved in society and in the annals of history. To name someone/thing gives it voice, dignity, identity, and a place in the community.

After spending two years in a self-guided study, immersing herself in the history of women's art and literature along with readings in women's history and biographies, Chicago emerged from this pedagogical room of her own with ideas on how to formulate a feminist art program. In so doing, she

gave name, image, and structure to feminist art. Interestingly, Linda Nochlin’s essay “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists” was published in 1971, a year after Chicago started her Feminist Art program at Fresno State College, a program that fostered a number of prominent women artists including Suzanne Lacy and Faith Wilding.

Don't Ask, Don't Tell. – US Military, 1993

If you see something say something. – Department of Homeland Security, 2010

Chicago directly articulates her musings on what constitutes a feminist art in *What is Feminist Art*, 1977. In *Peeling Back* (1974) Chicago describes and visualizes her experiences of being rejected during studio visits with prominent curators because she was a woman. And in *Love Story* (1971) she deliberately pairs an explicit image with an intense prose that articulates and acknowledges the physical and psychological violence imposed upon women as a result of misogynistic attitudes and actions. In this piece Chicago reprints an excerpt from the Pauline Rage’s “Story of O” below an image of a gun being thrust into a woman’s buttocks, to create an indexical testimony of the degree of emotion and trauma inherent in these violations. The artistic tactic of coupling intense imagery with strong texts was employed



Hannah Wilke, *So Help Me Hannah: What Does This Represent/What Do You Represent*, 1978

again in the work of the 1980s, as the culture wars and AIDS crisis evoked ire from the artist community. David



David Wojnarowicz, *When I Put My Hands On Your Body*, 1990

Wojnarowicz’s powerful combinations of image and text directly recall Chicago’s poignant pairings^{vii}. In *Gunsmoke*, Chicago presents the image of a woman (herself) violently compromised and objectified, the gun an impersonal phallus thrust down her throat. This juxtaposition of forceful

weapon and vulnerable body is echoed in Hannah Wilke’s later series *So Help Me Hannah: What Does This Represent / What Do You Represent* (Reinhart), 1978–1984^{viii}, in which Wilke appears

naked, in a corner, surrounded by toy guns. One can also find similarities between Chicago's text/image pieces and Barbara Kruger's artwork especially with regard to the use of first and second person pronouns to implicate the viewer directly. Kruger began her text/image collages in the late 1970s. It is also possible to draw parallels between Chicago and Duane Michals, who included handwritten anecdotes or phrases on his black and white photographs in the 1970s^{ix}. Not coincidentally, it is during the 1970s that MOMA director John Szarkowski's efforts to affirm photography as fine art effect a paradigm shift with regard to how contemporary artists used photography in the United States at that time⁹.



Duane Michals, *The Unfortunate Man*, 1976



Carolee Schneemann, *Bloodwork Diary* (detail), 1972

Chicago again uses photography to create a direct representation of female experience in *Red Flag*, 1971, which is the first photo-based depiction of menstruation that occurs in art history. The image is a close-up of a hand pulling a bloody tampon from a vagina. *Red Flag* was soon followed by Carolee Schneemann's pieces *Bloodwork Diary*, 1972^x, and *Interior Scroll*, 1975¹⁰. *Bloodwork Diary* consists of five panels of tissues blotted with menstrual blood, and *Interior Scroll*^{xi} was a performance in which Schneemann pulls and reads a scroll from her vagina¹¹. Over forty years after these pieces were made, we now live amidst a preponderance of overt sexuality in the media, frequent



Carolee Schneemann, *Interior Scroll*, 1975

⁹ Chicago uses photography infrequently in her practice after the 70s. When asked about the fact that her husband, photographer Donald Woodman, works predominantly in the one medium that she uses the least in her artwork, she joked "...together we make one perfect person". Judy Chicago, interview with the author, Belen, New Mexico, December 28-29, 2011.

¹⁰ In 1976, Mary Kelly's *Post Partum Document* was exhibited at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London, and newspaper headlines derided the notion of "dirty nappies as art".

¹¹ We can only conclude that historical amnesia accounts for the fact that Tracey Emin's use of menstrual blood in her installations (such as *My Bed*, 1998) has been discussed as though it were without precedent.

“accidental” celebrity crotch shots, and myriad ways to have one’s pudendum decorated at the salon (rhinestones, feathers, temporary tattoos). There is no end to the objectification and aestheticization of the female body, and yet sincere, earnest images about the lived female experience are nonetheless rare and discomfiting. The image of the vagina, the overt depiction of feminine sexuality and bodily functions, remain red flags in the contemporary visual lexicon¹².

In addition to her photo/text pairings, and fusions of photography and painting in collaboration with her husband Donald Woodman¹³, Chicago has employed numerous other mediums in her practice, including auto-body painting and pyrotechnics. Chicago has always been invested in the physical craft of each body of work, and she frequently references her formal training in painting and sculpture. However, her practice in the 1960s presaged that of post-modern, post-studio artists in that she did not focus her practice on one medium, but instead moved fluidly through a variety of materials.

The Finish Fetish movement was prominent in the Los Angeles art scene in the 1960s and shared a reciprocal influence between the surf and car cultures. Chicago went to auto-body school to learn to paint cars, and in 1964 she presented her first painted car hoods, nearly 20 years before Richard



Richard Prince, Car Hoods, installation view

Prince would also work with car hoods^{xii}. Chicago embellished her hoods with graphical, totemic, and symmetrical imagery, as seen in the studies for *Bigamy Hood*, *Flight Hood*, and *Birth Hood*. By overlaying corporeal content upon the hoods, Chicago invaded and undermined the machismo of the formalist aesthetics that were promoted in the artwork of her male

¹² Though not referenced in this exhibition, it should be mentioned that Chicago’s installation *Menstruation Bathroom*, 1972, at Womahouse, also sought to dismantle the secrecy and fetishism of menstruation. Priscilla Monge’s *Room for Isolation and Restraint*, 2001, an installation of a detainment cell padded with unstained menstrual pads, showed at the Brooklyn Museum (where *The Dinner Party* is now permanently housed) as part of the Global Feminisms exhibition in 2007.

¹³ Chicago and Woodman collaborated for 8 years on the *Holocaust Project: From Darkness Into Light*, 1985-1993, which merges photography and painting.

contemporaries and in the proto-modernist writings of Clement Greenberg and Hilton Kramer. She had once again infiltrated the “boys club”, working with the same materials as the male artists did, while simultaneously subverting the masculine formalist paradigms by applying imagery that depicted female experiences.

As the 1960s turned into the 1970s, Minimalism gave way to earthworks as artists critiqued the gallery system and object fetishism of the art world, and again, Chicago was there with precedent-setting projects. Her atmospheric and pyrotechnic, site-specific installations and performances that occurred



Allan Kaprow, *Fluids*, from *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, 1967.
Photo by Dennis Cooper

between 1969 and 1974 were created as temporary paintings of sorts, feminizing and beautifying the



Wolf Vostell, *De-Coll/age Happening*, 1964

landscape. Working with dry ice, road flares, and fireworks, Chicago’s ephemeral *Atmospheres* acted as beautiful and peaceful antidotes to the aggressive, large-scale and more permanent marks made upon the earth by artists such as

Michael Heizer or Robert Smithson. On January 21st of 2012, Chicago performed *A Butterfly for Pomona*, which

resumed a series of fireworks pieces that she last performed for the Oakland Museum in 1974 with *A Butterfly for Oakland*. This beautiful fire painting, strategically performed in the middle of a football

field, was concordant with her ongoing objective to depict feminine consciousness and experience, and the yonic butterfly glowed and pulsed and ecstatically erupted, multiple times, with multicolored sprays of fire. While it’s possible to claim that Chicago’s *Atmospheres* have precedents in Allan Kaprow’s *Fluids*, from *18 Happenings in*



Cai Guo-Qiang, *Fetus Movement II: Project for Extraterrestrials No. 9*, Munden, Germany 1992

6 Parts, 1959^{xiii} or Wolf Vostell's *De-coll/age Happening*, 1964^{xiv}, one could also consider her *Atmospheres* to be the antecedents to Cai Guo Qiang's numerous pyrotechnic paintings and performances from the 90s to the present^{xv}.

The rich histories and insights of Chicago's works in this exhibition, and of the works in *Judy Chicago: Deflowered* at Nye + Brown Gallery, Los Angeles, resonate throughout the last half a century, and will no doubt be influential and impactful for decades and generations to come.



Carrie Reichardt as *Super Vag*, 2011
Photo by Neelum Bassall

In a public lecture on October 9, 2011, Chicago cited British artist Carrie Reichardt's performance *Super Vag*^{xvi} as an example of a return to central core imagery in contemporary practice. "Feminist theorists are very fond of saying that gender is a changing construct. That may be true theoretically, but in terms of most women's lives, it's not – as reflected by the fact that many young women artists are taking up the same themes of the 70s.... Because for them the cunt is the same kind of impediment it was for me when I was young, and like me, they want to overcome that, and they want to be proud of who they are."¹⁴

Micol Hebron

-Los Angeles, 2012

¹⁴ Judy Chicago. "Judy Chicago: A Conversation With Her Younger Self" October 9, 2011. Pomona College. Claremont, CA

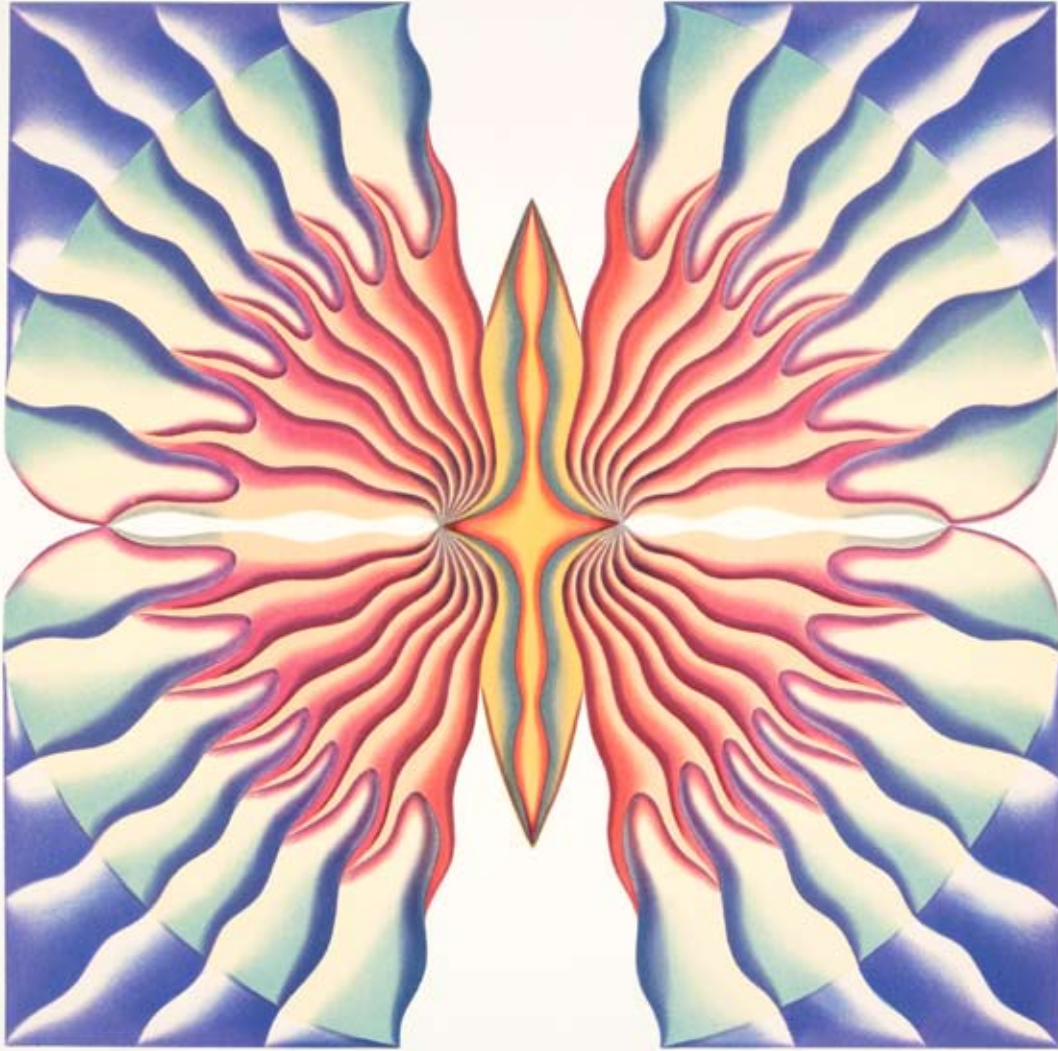
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- ⁱ Judy Chicago, *Name Change Ad*, *Artforum*, Oct., 1970
- ⁱⁱ Judy Chicago, *Boxing Ring Ad*, Announcement in *Artforum* for Jack Glenn Gallery, 1970. Photo by Jerry McMillan.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Lynda Benglis, Advertisement in *Artforum* magazine, April 1974
- ^{iv} Lynda Benglis, *Artforum* magazine, 1974
- ^v Chris Burden, *Chris Burden Promo*, 1976. Video stills
- ^{vi} Catherine Opie, *Dyke*, 1993
- ^{vii} David Wojnarowicz, *When I Put My Hands On Your Body*, 1990
- ^{viii} Hannah Wilke, *So Help Me Hannah: What Does This Represent/What Do You Represent*, 1978
- ^{ix} Duane Michals, *The Unfortunate Man*, 1976
- ^x Carolee Schneemann, *Bloodwork Diary* (detail), 1972
- ^{xi} Carolee Schneemann, *Interior Scroll*, 1975
- ^{xii} Richard Prince, *Car Hoods*, installation view
- ^{xiii} Allan Kaprow, *Fluids*, from *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, 1967. Photo by Dennis Cooper
- ^{xiv} Wolf Vostell, *De-Coll/age Happening*, 1964
- ^{xv} Cai Guo-Qiang, *Fetus Movement II: Project for Extraterrestrials No. 9*, Munden, Germany 1992
- ^{xvi} Carrie Reichardt as *Super Vag*, 2011. Photo by Neelum Bassrall



PRIVATE LANDSCAPE | *China Paint on Porcelain* | 1975



TENDER BUTTONS #4 | *China Paint on Porcelain* | 1975



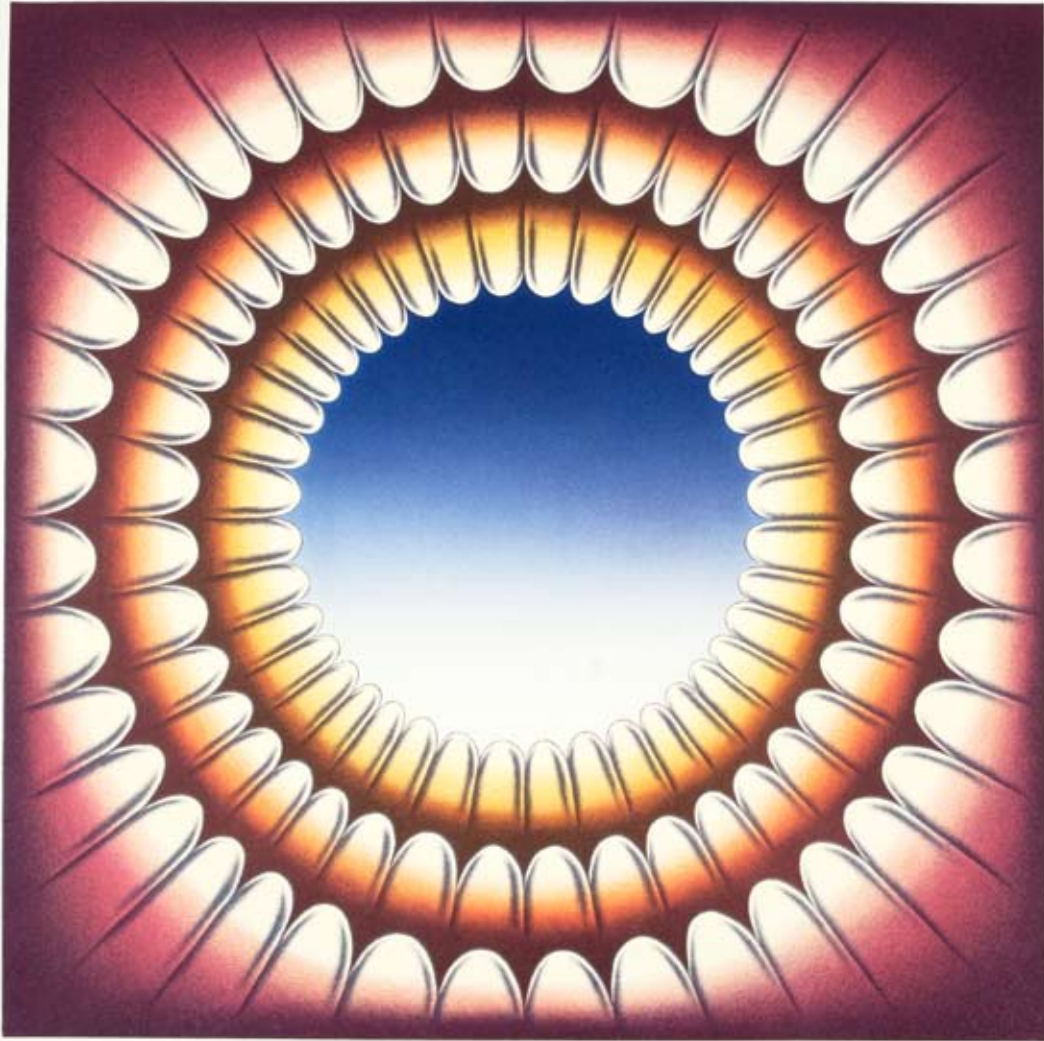
Final Proof

The Return of the Butterfly

Judy Chicago 2009



THROUGH THE FLOWER 3 | *Prismacolor on Paper* | 1972



Arbeits Proof

Escher, M.C. Lithograph

Opheylidje 2009



This is a print made from the center drawing of the *Rejection Quintet*, five works originally inspired by several experiences I had in Chicago; one with a male dealer, the other with a male collector, both of whom made me feel rejected and diminished as a woman. I decided to deal with my feelings of rejection and in so doing confronted the fact that I was still hiding the real subject matter of my art behind a geometric structure as I was afraid that if I revealed my true self, I would be rejected. In the first drawing I asked: "How does it feel to be rejected?" and answered: "It's like having your flower split open." In the last drawing I asked: "How does it feel to expose your real identity?" and answered: "It's like opening your flower and no longer being afraid it will be rejected." In this, the transitional image, I "peeled back" the structure to reveal the formerly hidden form. What a relief to finally say: "Here I am, a woman, with a woman's body and a woman's point of view."

Barbara Krueger

100/500

Barbara Krueger 1974. Printed in the United States of America.



FUSED MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS #2 WITH STAND | *Etching and Glass Paint on Fused Glass* | 1973 / 2007



GROWING PAINS, SIX VIEWS FROM THE WOMAN TREE | *China Paint on Porcelain* | 1975

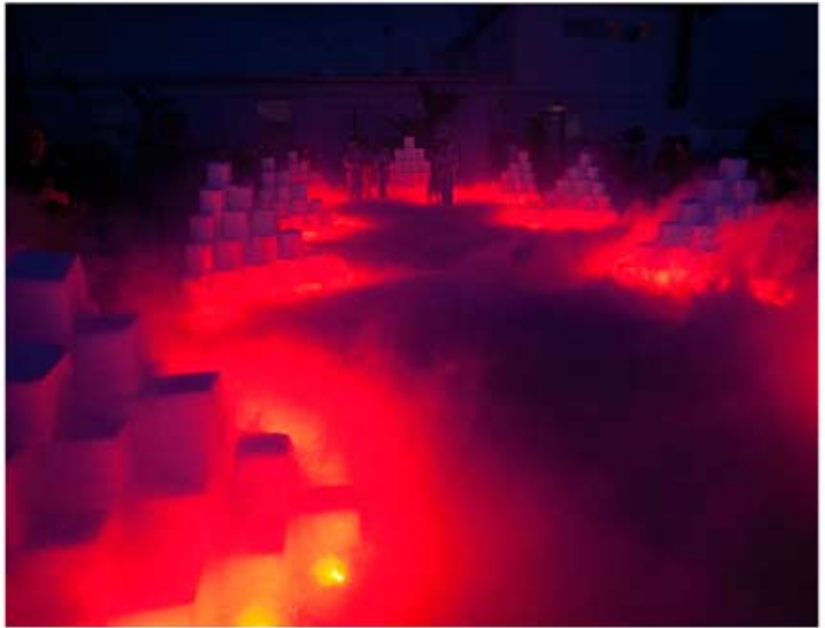


AN ANCIENT, NEW BEING, SIX VIEWS, FROM THE WOMAN TREE | *China Paint on Porcelain* | 1975



BROKEN BUTTERFLY/SHATTERED DREAM #5 | *China Painted Porcelain, Fabric, Metal
and Engraving on Wood* | 1976





JUDY CHICAGO
“*Los Angeles - 1970's*”

JUDY CHICAGO, is an artist, author, feminist, educator, and intellectual whose career now spans for almost five decades. Her influence both within and beyond the art community is attested to by her inclusion in hundreds of publications throughout the world. Her art has been frequently exhibited in the United States as well as in Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. In addition, a number of the books she has authored have been published in foreign editions, bringing her art and philosophy to thousands of readers worldwide.

Although Chicago has been an influential teacher and prolific author, the primary focus of her career has been her studio work. For over five decades, Chicago has remained steadfast in her commitment to the power of art as a vehicle for intellectual transformation and social change and to women's right to engage in the highest level of art production. As a result, she has become a symbol for people everywhere, known and respected as an artist, writer, teacher, and humanist whose work and life are models for an enlarged definition of art, an expanded role for the artist, and women's right to freedom of expression.



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