



**For Immediate Release  
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**Ground-breaking International Survey Inaugurates  
Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum**

Brooklyn, NY — *Global Feminisms*, a large-scale international survey of contemporary art, will inaugurate a major new exhibition and study center devoted to art created from a feminist perspective. Signaling an intent to take the study of new, often-critical visual expressions in new directions, the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, the first facility of its kind in the United States, ventures far beyond American and European borders for the inauguration presentation.

On view from March 23 through July 1, 2007, the exhibition has been made possible, in part, through the generous support of the Altria Group, Inc.

*Global Feminisms* assembles works in a range of media by more than 100 women artists, most of whom are under 40 and two-thirds of whom have never before presented work in New York. Some 50 countries are represented, including a good number that seldom figure in the contemporary art discourse, such as Sierra Leone, Kenya, Russia, Yugoslavia, Costa Rica, Afghanistan, Indonesia and Taiwan.

The joint enterprise of two scholars, Maura Reilly, Curator of the new Center, and Linda Nochlin, Lila Acheson Wallace Professor of Modern Art at the New York University Institute of Fine Arts, the survey coincides with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first major exhibition to explore the role of women in the history of Western art. Organized by Dr. Nochlin, with Ann Sutherland Harris, *Women Artists: 1550-1950* was presented at the Brooklyn Museum in 1977.

"In *Global Feminisms*, we are attempting to construct a definition of 'feminist' art that is as broad and flexible as possible," says Reilly. "Linda and I kept asking what it means to be a feminist in radically different cultural, political, and class situations. And we found not one definition, but many; hence, the term 'feminisms.'"

"Since *Woman Artists* opened in San Francisco 30 years ago, gender studies has penetrated all ways of looking at art. So even though it is true that many aspects of society have not changed much, or enough, in

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the intervening years, it is also true that, consciously or unconsciously, people now make work that was impossible before feminism," says Dr. Nochlin.

### **Life Cycles / Identities / Politics / Emotions**

Despite real differences in the life situations and preoccupations of the artists, several threads of thought emerge as themes in *Global Feminisms*. One is an interest in *Life Cycles* that transforms rather sclerotic conventional conceptions of a woman's life into visual experiences that more closely mirror life as it is lived—and dreamed—today. Among the works featured in this section is a huge photograph by the London-based artist Melanie Manchot, featuring the artist's mother nude from the waist up, and laughing against a background of sky so blue it could grace a Hallmark card. In another work, a large-scale color photograph, the California-based artist Catherine Opie displays herself as she is, a woman whose appearance is far from the Madison Avenue ideal, nursing her son in a portrait of vulnerability and strength as guileless and true as any example of the Christian "mother and child" iconology in art history.

Dr. Reilly and Dr. Nochlin also found artists around the world exploring *Identities*, whether it be racial identity, gender identity, or concern with the concept of self. In this section, viewers will find a number of artists skewering notions of exoticism with deliciously hyperbolic send-ups of, for example, the contented Spanish peasant woman (Pilar Albarracín of Madrid); the butch lesbian in a never-ending ritual of binding (Mary Coble, Washington D.C.); and the hot, hip Asian chick doing karaoke as performed and documented for video by Taiwanese-born artist Hsia-Fei Chang. Mequitta Ahuja of Chicago is represented by a huge oil-on-canvas entitled *Boogie Woogie* (2005) in which an African tribal dancer, a blue-eyed, bearded black man-woman, seems to charge across the picture plane full-tilt—breasts, horns, tail and all.

Nowhere can the incalculable differences among women be grasped more clearly than in the section focusing on the recurring theme of *Politics*. Regina José Galindo is seen trailing a bloody footprint with each step as she walks from the Court of Constitutionality to the National Palace in Guatemala City, in memory of murdered Guatemalan women, in her performance videotape, *Who Can Erase the Prints?* (2003). Irani artist Parastou Forouhar's digital wallpaper is seen to be filled with sketches of figures performing different actions, as lively as those to be found in a Ukiyo-E woodblock; yet closer inspection reveals that these men and women are being acted upon, tortured in a variety of horrible ways. And Tania Bruguera, who lives in Cuba and the U.S., asks the viewer to consider the meaning of a Cuban flag woven of hair from countless anonymous Cubans. She entitled the 1995/96 work, "Estadística (Statistic)."

Another theme in *Global Feminisms* is *Emotions*. Japanese artist Ryoko Suzuki contributes a mural-sized installation of three photographs in which her face is bound tightly by pig's intestines—bullied into a kind of mute, anonymous submission. Bulgarian artist Boryana Rossa is among a number of artists represented in this section who wields a wicked humor, appropriating cultural clichés about women's histrionic emotions and blasting away at these assumptions, as in her video *Celebrating the Next Twinkling* (1999).. In another work, a 2004 video by Polish artist Anna Baumgart whose title translates as "ecstatic, hysteric and saintly ladies," the female protagonists are shown performing psychological and physical pathologies.

Among the other artists represented in *Global Feminisms* are Arahmaiani (Indonesia), Pilar Albarracín (Spain), Rebecca Belmore (Canada), Tania Bruguera (Cuba), Lee Bul (Korea), Tracey Moffatt (Australia), Priscilla Monge (Costa Rica), Ingrid Mwangi (Kenya), Patricia Piccinini (Sierra Leone), Jenny Saville (U.K.), Shahzia Sikander (Pakistan), Sissi (Italy), Milica Tomic (Yugoslavia), Adriana Varejão (Brazil), and Miwa Yanagi (Japan). The wide range of media employed in the exhibition includes painting, sculpture, photography, works on paper, installation, video, and performance.

### **Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art**

*Global Feminisms* inaugurates The Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, which was established in 2003 through funding from The Elizabeth A. Sackler Foundation. The Center's 8,300 sq. ft. facility on the Museum's fourth floor has been designed by one of the nation's leading architects, Susan T. Rodriguez of Polshek Partnership Architects.

Along with the opening of *Global Feminisms*, an icon of contemporary art returns to the public stage in March: Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* is to be a permanent centerpiece of the Center. Also on view, organized by Edward Bleiberg, Curator of Egyptian Art, in collaboration with Dr. Reilly, is *Pharaohs, Queens, and Goddesses*, an exhibition drawn from the Museum's renowned Egyptian collection to illuminate the role of women in Egyptian art and life.

### **Catalogue and Programs**

A fully illustrated catalogue published by Merrell will accompany the exhibition. Reflecting the global reach of the exhibition, the catalogue will feature essays by Reilly, Nochlin; N'Goné Fall, an independent curator born and raised in Senegal; Geeta Kapur, an independent art critic and curator in Delhi; Elisabeth Lebovici, Paris-based independent scholar and an art critic; Charlotta Kotik, John and Barbara Vogelstein Curator of Contemporary Art at the Brooklyn Museum; Joan Kee, independent critic, curator, and art historian specializing in modern and contemporary art of East Asia; Michiko Kasahara, Chief Curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; and Virginia Pérez Ratton, Director of the TEOR/ÉTica art project in San Jose, Costa Rica.

### **Organizers**

Maura Reilly, Ph.D. is the Curator of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art. Prior to assuming this position in 2003, Dr. Reilly taught art history and women's studies at Tufts University, as well as courses at Pratt Institute, Vassar College, and the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, where she received her Ph. D.

*Global Feminisms* co-curator Linda Nochlin, Ph.D. is currently the Lila Acheson Wallace Professor of Modern Art at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Previously she held positions at Yale University, The CUNY Graduate Center, and Vassar College. She is the author of numerous acclaimed books and articles and has lectured widely, including the Norton Lectures at Harvard University.

## **Public Programs**

A schedule of public programs related to *Global Feminisms* will be released closer to the opening date.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Admission:**

Contribution \$8; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$4. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

### **Directions:**

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

### **Museum Hours:**

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.