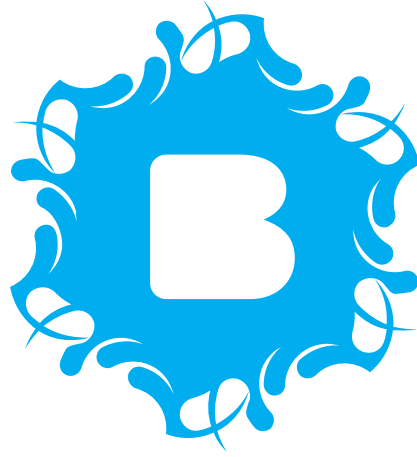


Press Release



April 2009

**Special Exhibition Featuring a New Generation of Feminist Video Artists
Videos by Cathy Begien, Jen DeNike, Harry Dodge and Stanya Kahn, Kate Gilmore, K8 Hardy
and Wynne Greenwood, Klara Liden, and Shannon Plumb**

On View in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, May 1, 2009–January 10, 2010

Reflections on the Electric Mirror: New Feminist Video presents recent videos by a new generation of feminist video artists. This exhibition will be on view in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, May 1, 2009 through January 10, 2010.

When video emerged as a new medium in the early 1970s, female artists quickly adopted its use, making it arguably the first medium to which men and women had equal access. Feminists in particular embraced it as a forum to explore issues related to their own bodies, experiences, and identities. The rather straightforward capture of the artist performing (usually alone) in front of a stationary camera served as an avenue to investigate desire, autonomy and selfhood. Pioneers of the medium included Dara Birnbaum, VALIE EXPORT, Martha Rosler, and Hannah Wilke.

Like many of their 1970s precursors, the seven up-and-coming video artists in this exhibition place greater emphasis on their performances for the camera than on complex narratives or special effects. Their videos explore a variety of themes ranging from humor and parody to intense revelation. A few of the highlights are: *Commercials*, 2002, by Shannon Plumb; *Black Out*, 2004, by Cathy Begien; and *Whacker*, 2005, by Harry Dodge and Stanya Kahn.

Plumb embraces slapstick comedy in *Commercials*; in which she captures the humor and complexity of everyday life through mock TV commercials. *Black Out*, a darkly funny and intense video, shows Begien reenacting an evening of partying and overindulgence. In the video *Whacker*, Kahn, dressed in a halter dress, heels, and sunglasses, uses a weed whacker to mow an overgrown lot. Through Kahn's deadpan delivery, *Whacker* not only plays with gender stereotypes by having a glamorously dressed woman doing yard work, but also suggests the transformative power of meditative labor.

For the exhibition, Kate Gilmore will create a new, site-specific artwork in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art. This new video installation will capture Gilmore testing her physical endurance by repeatedly moving heavy plaster cubes onto paint-covered shelves installed in the gallery. When the plaster

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cubes are placed on the shelves the paint will splatter and drip to the floor creating a visceral impression related to her physical labor. Visitors will be able to view documentation of the performance in the video as well as observe the physical remnants left in the gallery.

The exhibition title *Reflections on the Electric Mirror* is taken from an eponymous essay written in the 1970s by artist/filmmaker Lynn Hershman, examining the links between television and video art. The evocation of the mirror is an apt metaphor for work in which artists use their own images for various types of subjectivity and self-analysis, ranging from role playing to autobiography.

Early feminist videos from the 1970s will be screened in the Forum of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center through the month of May. More information will be available on the Brooklyn Museum Web site: www.brooklynmuseum.org

This exhibition is organized by Lauren Ross, Interim Curator of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, Brooklyn Museum.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:
Contribution \$10; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$6. 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.