WOMEN ARTISTS II

September 21—January 27, 2013

This book was published on the occasion of the exhibition

Women Artists of KMA II

Kennedy Museum of Art, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio
September 21—January 27, 2013

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Athens, Ohio 45701

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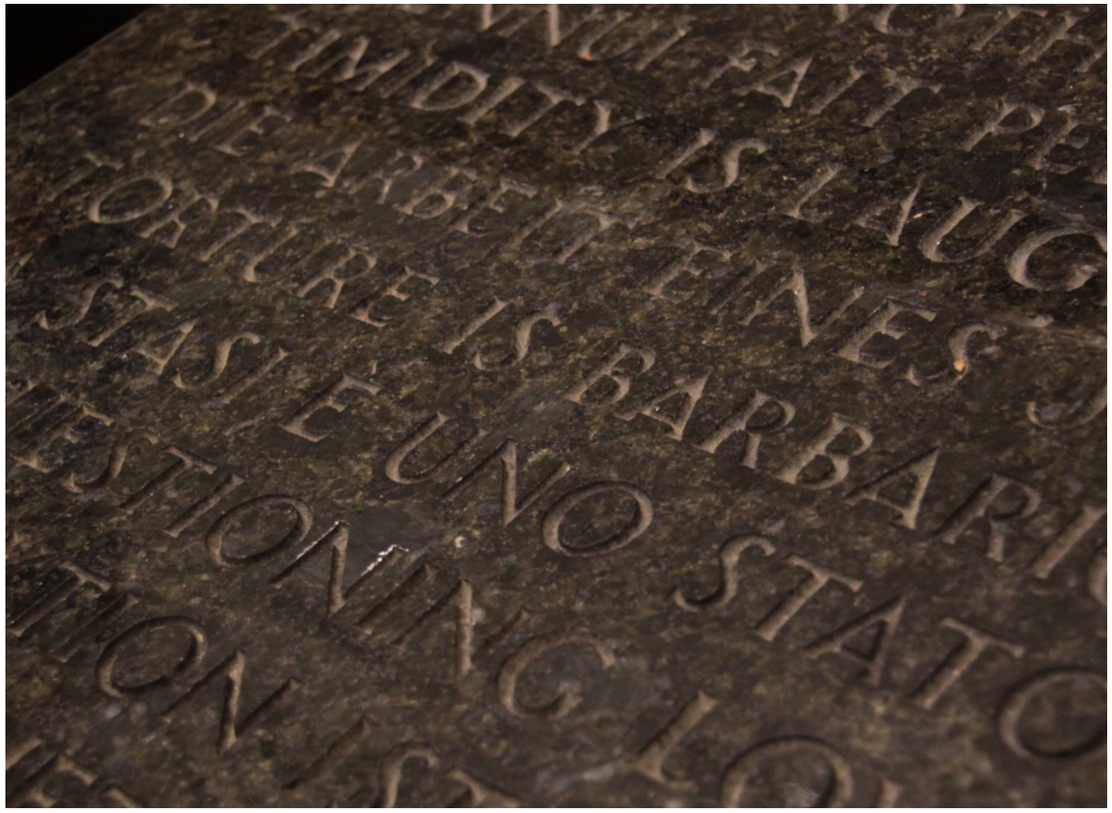
web: www.ohio.edu/museum

Design: Paula Welling
Printing: Ohio University Printing Resources



Jenny Holzer Table and Benches at Gordy Hall 1998
Photograph by Barbara Jewell

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Jennie Klein

Women Artists II is the second of a three-part exhibition that examines the art of women artists in the collections of Kennedy Museum of Art. This exhibition examines the work of artists who began their careers in the late 60s and early 70s, at the same time as second wave feminism. These artists benefitted from the increased opportunities to study art and exhibit work that were the result of the gains made by women at that time. Second wave feminism, and the feminist art movement, as it was articulated by critics such as Arlene Raven, Lucy Lippard, Judy Chicago, and Linda Nochlin, challenged the sexist assumptions of the art world, the notion that "genius" was interchangeable with male artist, and the idea that women were inherently inferior to men. As Linda Nochlin argued trenchantly in her seminal article "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," women had been systematically denied access to the necessary training and institutional support that made it possible to become a "great artist." In 1973, Judy Chicago, cognizant of the institutional roadblocks that prevented women from becoming artists, founded the Los Angeles Woman's Building, which housed the Feminist Studio Workshop (FSW), an alternative art school for women. Along with many institutions founded on utopian dreams, the FSW, which struggled to maintain funding and accreditation, was short lived. The legacy of the FSW, which was devoted to educating women to be artists and to use their art toward political/feminist ends, lives on. It is this legacy that is addressed in the second installment of this exhibition: *Women Artists of KMA Part II*.

For the uninitiated viewer, the emphasis on second wave feminism in juxtaposition with much of the work in this show might at first seem strange. Second wave feminist art as exemplified in the work of Chicago and her FSW colleagues, such as Suzanne Lacy and Sheila de Bretteville, was overtly political, addressing issues such as sexism, abortion, rape, and economic inequities. This is not the case with the work included in this exhibition, which is composed primarily of prints and paintings, along with the whimsical clay sculptures of Anne Clark Culbert. The difference between the first exhibition, which was comprised of work made prior to 1965, and this exhibition can be found in the resumes of the artists. *Women Artists II* includes art by Louise Nevelson, Nancy Graves, Jennifer Bartlett, Susan Rothenberg, Pat Steir, Elizabeth Murray, Sylvia Plimack Mangold, Nancy Holt, Alice Aycock, and Jenny Holzer. Most of these artists, with the exception of Holzer, eschewed the overtly political in favor of work that addressed the aesthetic and formal aspects of painting and sculpture. Elizabeth Murray, for example, experimented with shaped canvases, while Jennifer Bartlett has long been known for her colorful, abstract paintings, many of which cover entire walls. Nevelson and Aycock are best known for their sculptural work. Holt, the widow of Robert Smithson, has made earth art for many years. These artists have had significant careers that have spanned many decades. They have been included in a number of important exhibitions, been awarded solo exhibitions and major commissions, and been written about in most of the major art publications. Significantly, most of them, with the exceptions of Holt, Plimack Mangold, Graves, and Bryson Shahn, were the partner of a more famous male artist. For the most part, these women artists were much better known and more celebrated than their male partners.

Another motivating factor in curating this three-part exhibition was our desire to explore regional manifestations of art making by women who lived outside of New York or Los Angeles. To this day, the history of art, even one that is written from a feminist perspective, is slanted toward developments in major metropolitan centers. *Women Artists I* included work by artists who were based in New York City, such as Helen Gerardia, Gertrude Greene, Helen Frankenthaler, Elaine de Kooning, and Joan Mitchell. The work of Isabel M. Work and Katherine McQuaid-Steiner, both of whom received their Master's degrees from Ohio University, was exhibited alongside the work of their more famous counterparts. Both McQuaid-Steiner and Work made abstract art. Clearly, they were not unaware of the prevailing taste for abstraction in New York City during the 30s, 40s, and 50s. Indeed, Work organized a number of trips to New York City in order to acquaint OU students with what was happening outside of Ohio. Athens photographer Elise Sanford, whose photograph of Anne Clark Culbert is included in this catalogue, recalled many years later how helpful those trips had been to her development as an artist.

As with *Women Artists I*, this exhibition seeks to establish connections between the work in the show and Ohio University/Athens. Several of the artists have direct or indirect connections with this area—Jenny Holzer, whose last name is familiar to those who use the Holzer Clinic here in Athens, earned her BFA from Ohio University in 1972. Holzer's LED display and table and benches installation *Truisms* in Gordy Hall (1998) was funded through the Ohio Arts Council's initiative Percent for Art, as was Alice Aycock's *Energy of Spin* (2004), a wall sculpture in Putnam Hall. Nancy Holt's *Star Crossed* (1979) was installed at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Based on the observation that true (astronomical) north and magnetic north meet at the longitude in Oxford, *Star Crossed* consists of a reflecting pool, a tunnel for walking, and an observation tunnel. Louise Nevelson's black assemblage sculpture *Untitled* (1978) is located at the Dayton Art Institute. *Women Artists II* also features two artists with local connections: Anne Clark Culbert and Bernarda Bryson Shahn. Clark Culbert, whose eccentric ceramic sculptures of animal-headed humans often commented on social inequities, was originally born in New York City and educated at Bennington College, Vermont. One of the founders of *17*, Clark Culbert found herself in Athens after marrying Taylor Culbert, who taught English at Ohio University. Shahn, wife of the well-known social realist painter Ben Shahn, was a native of Athens, Ohio. She returned to Athens frequently. Two of the prints by Shahn that are in the exhibition, *Sunday Creek After the Flood* (n.d.) and *Three Men on a Bench* (n.d.), are about Athens, Ohio.

Women Artists II was conceived and installed in the space of a few short months. We would like to thank the following people who helped us realize this exhibition. The staff of KMA, including curator Petra Kralickova, associate curator Jessica Law, curator of education Sally Delgado, and registrar/preparator Jeff Carr, met with us multiple times over the summer, pulled art work out of storage so that we could decide which pieces were to be included in the exhibition, and helped with publicity and the scheduling of events. Elise Sanford and Danielle McCullough generously provided information and images of Anne Clark Culbert. Jonathan Shahn took the time to speak with Alana Bowman Kidder about his mother, providing a great deal of information. The Honors Tutorial College provided a generous grant that permitted Barbara Jewell to work exclusively on this exhibition, while Alana Bowman Kidder was funded through the summer stipend program offered by the Graduate School at Ohio University. Paula Welling proofed the entire catalogue multiple times, designed much of the publicity, and designed this catalogue as well. Finally, we would like to thank the College of Fine Arts and the School of Art.

– Jennie Klein, Alana Bowman Kidder, and Barbara Jewell
September, 2012

Anne Clark Culbert
Ship of Fools
Ceramic. n.d.
Collection of Kennedy
Museum of Art

Anne Clark Culbert
Trial By Jury
Ceramic. n.d.
Collection of Kennedy
Museum of Art

ANNE CLARK CULBERT

1940—2007

Anne Clark was born in New York City in 1921. She received a Bachelor of Arts in literature from Bennington College in 1941 and a master's degree in English and Creative Writing from the University of Michigan in 1949. Between 1966 and 1976, she studied art at the graduate level at Ohio University in Athens. She began working as a writer and a teacher and then developed a successful career as a professional artist. She created a unique style of sculptural expression that captured her love of poetic storytelling in three dimensional forms.

Culbert worked in New York as the associate editor of *Seventeen Magazine* between 1944 and 1947. She taught children's art classes at the Union Settlement in East Harlem, was co-author of an etiquette book for teenage girls, and published several articles and poems.[1] After her marriage to Taylor Culbert, she moved to Athens, Ohio, where she lived for the rest of her life. She taught in local city and county schools under the National Endowment for the Arts "Artists in the Schools" program. She was also the Athens county 4H advisor in Creative Arts and Conservation for over 25 years.[2]

Culbert experimented with a variety of media including watercolor and oil paint, woodcuts, jewelry, batik and silkscreen. She was primarily interested in ceramic and bronze sculpture.[3] Her sculptural work is figurative and thematic, each telling a story or illustrating a theme. Culbert had a lifelong interest in dance and nature, which is reflected in the curvilinear forms and fluid appearance of her work, which often depicts anthropomorphized animal/human forms set in man-made environments. Her work exhibits a mixture of critical and humorous commentaries on human nature, religion, and personal experiences.

Her sculptures included in the exhibition exemplify this kind of imagery. *Trial by Jury*, for example, was inspired by Culbert's experience of being chosen as a jury member in a rape trial while she lived in Athens.[4] The courtroom setting of the piece is occupied by both humanoid figures and exotic or imaginary animals. Some figures even seem to be a mixture of animal and human, revealing both the seriousness and absurdity she witnessed in the courtroom.[5] Another piece included in the exhibition, *Ship of Fools*, provides a kind of tongue-in-cheek commentary on human nature. The passengers of the ship seem to twist and move as they occupy themselves with various interests. They appear unconcerned with the course of the ship and oblivious to the danger represented by a hydrogen bomb and an exploding atom on the mast of the ship.[6] This piece, like her other work, is packed with literal and symbolic imagery that tells an evocative story through the viewpoint of the artist's singular sense of humor.

Anne Clark Culbert was the recipient of several awards throughout her career including the OAC Grant used to fund a four part slide show Athens County, Past and Present (1976), the National Endowment for the Arts Grant for the Artists in the Schools Program (1978 and 1979), the Award of Excellence from the Festival of Worship and the Arts in Athens, Ohio (1980), and Best in Show of the Autumn Arts Open in Lancaster, Ohio (1985). Her work has been widely exhibited throughout Ohio and West Virginia as well as in the Museum of American Art in the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. An exhibit of her work was held at the Kennedy Museum of Art in 2004-2005. This exhibition, curated by graduate student Danielle McCullough, combined Culbert's sculptural work and her personal text she wrote about each piece.

–Alana Bowman Kidder

1 Anne Clark Culbert, Resume, Kennedy Museum of Art, Athens, Ohio.
2 "Anne Culbert," The Athens Messenger, Athens, Ohio, September 21, 1994.
3 Alvi McWilliams, "Work of Athens Artist is at Smithsonian," Columbus Citizen-Journal, November 28, 1981, 18.
4 Danielle McCullough. "Le Boudoir Fantastique: Selections from the Work of Anne Clark Culbert," Ohio University Kennedy Museum of Art Exhibition Statement, 2004.
5 Ibid.
6 Anne Clark Culbert, "Anne Culbert – Porcelain Sculptures," Artist Statement. Ohio University Kennedy Museum of Art, 1982.

Bernarda Bryson Shahn
Flood on Sunday Creek
Copper Plate Etching. n.d.
Collection of Kennedy
Museum of Art

Bernarda Bryson Shahn
World Egg Over Sand Hill (Thebes)
Oil on Canvas. n.d.
Collection of Kennedy
Museum of Art

BERNARDA BRYSON SHAHN

1903—2004

Bernarda Bryson was born in 1903 in Athens, Ohio. She studied painting and printmaking at several institutions, including Ohio University, Ohio State University, Western Reserve University, and the Cleveland School of Art. She enjoyed a long and diverse career, working as a printmaker, illustrator, teacher, writer, and painter.

She began teaching printmaking and lithography at the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts School in 1931. During this time she also worked as an editor and writer for local newspapers, including the Columbus Southside Advocate and the Ohio State Journal. She traveled to New York in 1933 to interview Diego Rivera, where she met his assistant Ben Shahn. Shahn later became her husband, as well as her artistic collaborator on a large number of artistic projects. In 1934, Bryson moved to New York, where she co-founded an unemployed-artist foundation called the Artist Union and became the editor of its monthly newspaper, *Art Front*.[1]

She and Shahn then moved to Washington D.C. to work under the Special Skills Division of the Resettlement Administration. This program was created by President Roosevelt in an effort to assist the rural poor and preserve their cultural heritage.[2] She set up her own lithographic printing studio, where she began a series of lithographs that documented the people and conditions of the working class she called The Vanishing American Frontier. After the birth of her first child, the project was abandoned, leaving nine lithographs in the series completed.[3]

Bryson Shahn and her husband moved to New Jersey, where they spent the next several years working together on several large-scale mural projects of the New Deal era, including New Jersey Homestead at the Roosevelt Public School in Roosevelt, NJ, and See America Working at the Bronx General Post Office Annex. Bryson Shahn created illustrations for several magazines, including Fortune, Harper's, and Scientific American. She also wrote and illustrated several children's books such as *The Twenty Miracles of St. Nicholas* (1960), *The Zoo of Zeus* (1964) and *Gilgamesh* (1967).[4] The couple established a relationship with the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine, where they both taught until Ben Shahn's death in 1969. After her husband's death, Bryson Shahn became more involved in painting. She produced several series of paintings inspired by her interest in mystery and the unknown, which included wooden mannequins or hooded figures in enigmatic surroundings.[5] One image included in the exhibition is *World Egg over the Ancient Hills*, which features a giant egg floating in the sky above a hilly landscape. Bryson Shahn created a series of these paintings that defy reality with a hint of the ridiculous. This painting shows the combination of the artist's interest in surrealism with her splendid sense of humor.[6]

Though painting became her primary medium, Bryson Shahn also continued with her lifelong passion for printmaking. Several of her prints explored her interest in the Cult of the Goddess. Her mother was a professor of Greek and Latin at Ohio University. This influence sparked her interest in ancient civilizations at a young age.[7] After a trip to Malta in the early 1980s, Bryson Shahn created several drawings and prints of Malta landscapes and artifacts. She also created many prints that commemorate her connections to Athens, Ohio. Two of the prints included in the exhibition, *Three Men on a Bench* and *Flood on Sunday Creek*, represent personal memories and family connections to her home town.[8]

Bryson Shahn was given the Outstanding Achievement in the Visual Arts Award from the Women's Caucus for Art in 1989; she was a board member of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture; and in 1993 she was given an honorary doctorate from Ohio University in Athens. Her work has been included in the permanent collections of several institutions, such as the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Lincoln, NE; the Maier Museum of Art, Lynchburg, VA; and the Montclair Art Museum, NJ.

–Alana Bowman Kidder

1 Susan Teller Gallery, "Bernarda Bryson Shahn (1903-2004)," http://www.susantellergallery.com/cgi/STG_art.pl?artist=bryson accessed July 11, 2012.
2 Jake Milgram Wien, The Vanishing American Frontier: Bernarda Bryson Shahn and her Historical Lithographs Created for the Resettlement Administration of FDR (New York: Wien American, 1995), 1.
3 Ibid., 3.
4 Susan Teller Gallery, "Bernarda Bryson Shahn," accessed July 11, 2012.
5 Ibid.
6 Jonathan Shahn, Telephone Interview with the Author. July 11, 2012.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.

ALICE AYCOCK

1940—

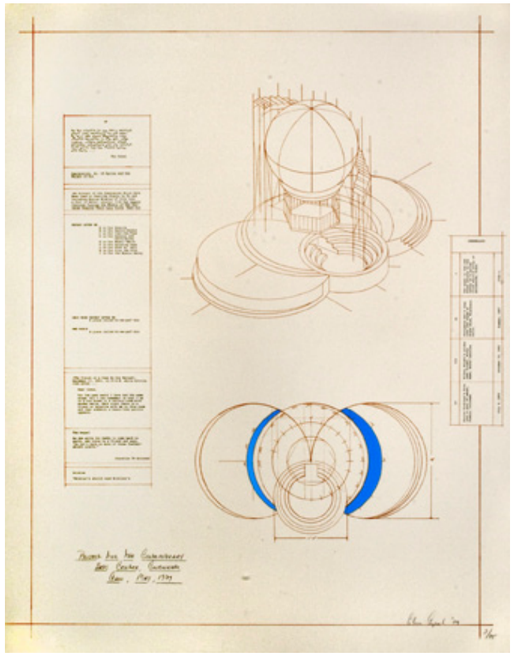
Alice Aycock was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Aycock's father worked first as a construction engineer on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and then went into business for himself. Growing up, she watched him design and build intricate scale models for his houses. She received support from her mother as well, even working with her for one of her first land pieces, Low Building with Dirt Roof for Mary in 1973. Further underpinning Aycock's career was the artist's paternal grandmother, a well-read and esteemed member of the family, who sparked Aycock's use of titles as a clever compliment to the visual body of her work. Aycock received a B.A. from Douglass College at Rutgers University in New Jersey in 1968. At Douglass College she studied with the feminist art historian Linda Nochlin. She earned her MA from Hunter College in 1971 where she studied with Robert Morris, one of the best known Minimalist and Land Artists in the U.S.

Since the 1960s, Aycock has developed "phenomenologically site-orientated" works that point to notions deeper than their strong and always solid structures. A unified current in Aycock's work is the openness for the possibility of viewer experience: She begins with assumptions that we take as established "truths" and draws our attention closer to the cracks within. In opening viewer awareness, her sculpture itself has no defined self, but rather it serves as the catalyst for our individual process of thought. Aycock's work is always aware of contemporary scientific and industrial developments and science's relationship to the individual. She focuses on the site of interaction between part and whole, person and machine. It is site and development of a relationship that she depicts—an image growing ever more complex with time, experience, and elaboration: "The whole cannot be comprehended at once. It can only be remembered as a sequence."[1]

Maze, at Gibney Farm near New Kingston Pennsylvania (destroyed in 1974), was Aycock's first outdoor installation. A labyrinth made of concentric dodecagonal rings and six-foot high planks; it held the historical weight of similar structures found in Minoan and Mayan civilization. By recalling the purpose of mazes as a prison, Aycock hoped to rock the viewer's perception of self in relationship to this object, and through acute fear, unknowing, and anxiety, invite the viewer to participate in expanding his or her awareness: "The work satisfies my need to deal with both ideas and physical things and my megalomaniac and somewhat destructive need to take on more than I can handle."[2] In fact, much of her work references her extensive travel to the American Southwest, the Mediterranean, England and Mexico. Her second landscape work, Low Building with Dirt Roof for Mary 1973, mentioned above, was installed not far from Maze. Aycock intended to manipulate the viewer in this piece, explaining that "the body posture for anyone moving into the building ranges from a crouched hands-and-knees to a flat horizontal position on the ground. The sense of claustrophobia inside is increased by the knowledge that the exterior surface of the roof is covered by a mound of earth (approximately seven tons)."[3]

Aycock's work evolved from the outdoor, wood-constructed earthworks of the 1960s and early 1970s to mechanical, industrial, and steel construction in the 1980s. In her work, Aycock aimed to "act upon the perceiver at the same time as the perceiver acts on or with the structures." She suggests that "the spaces are psychophysical spaces. The works are set up as exploratory situations for the perceiver."[4] Rather than explain her work, her texts often complicated the meaning of the work, providing a fantastical springboard from which to view it. Aycock's creations are catalysts for higher thought, and with her words as guide, and we are left to fill in the space. Though her constructed spaces, at least in the early earthwork years, seem to be feminine and even womb-like in nature, Aycock has not immediately identified herself as a feminist artist, instead explaining that she "just wanted to be, quite frankly, the greatest artist of the latter part of the twentieth century on all levels. I didn't want to be called the greatest woman artist, or the greatest feminist artist or whatever, I just wanted to be hands down really good."[5]

The lithograph included in the exhibition is a project plan for "Explanation, An. Of Spring and Weight of Air. An Account of the Substances Which Have Been Used to Describe Events



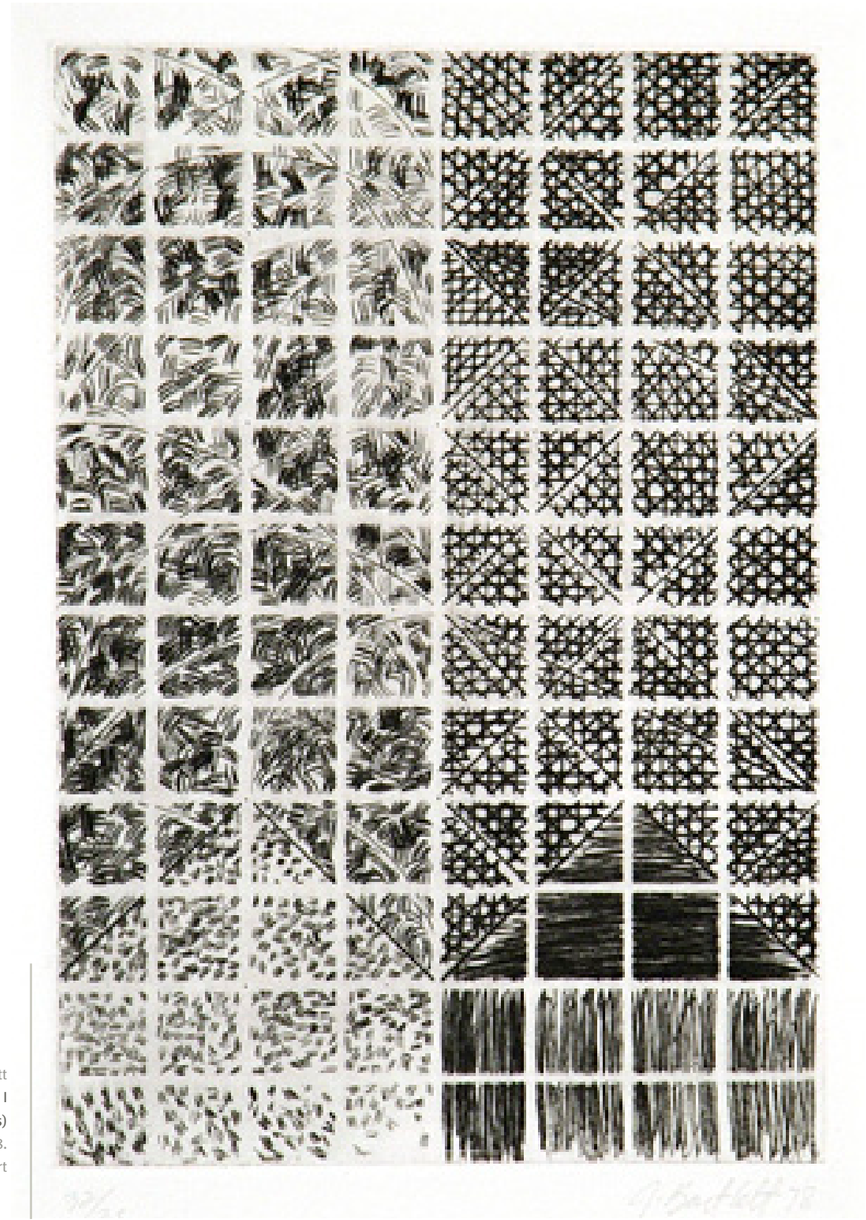
Alice Aycock
Project for the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio
Lithograph, 1979
Collection of Kennedy Museum of Art

Up to and Including Eunice Winkless's Dive into a Pool of Water (From The Angels Continue Turning the Wheels of the Universe Part III) 1979, Lithograph. The actual installation was constructed in 1979 from wood and stands 18 feet wide, 36 feet long and 19 feet high at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio. The construction contemplates a mechanical device used to study the heavens and our relationship with the heavens—Aycock adds a necessary whimsy to the scientific. The Alice Aycock piece *Energy of Spin* (2004) on Ohio University's Athens Campus is located in Putnam Hall, home to the university's School of Dance. *Energy of Spin* is an indoor piece with motorized parts and large blue electrical globes, suspended by wires from the rafters and ceiling outside of the building's ground floor entrance to the Shirley Wimmer Dance Theater.

Aycock has been visiting professor at universities, including Hunter College, Williams Colleges, Rhode Island School of Design, Princeton University, and the San Francisco Art Institute with international installations in Israel, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, and Japan and at numerous locations in the United States, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1977), the San Francisco Art Institute (1979), Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (1983). She has served as professor at the School of Visual Arts since 1991 and continues to create work today.

–Barbara Jewell

1 Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, ed. Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 560.
2 Ibid., 558.
3 Ibid., 559.
4 Ibid., 558.
5 Christine Filippone, "Alice Aycock: Sculpture and Projects by Robert Hobbs," Review of Alice Aycock: Sculpture and Projects by Robert Hobbs, Woman's Art Journal 27, no. 1 (2006), 61.



Jennifer Bartlett
Day and Night I
(from Day and Night Series)
Etching. 1978.
Collection of Kennedy Museum of Art

JENNIFER BARTLETT

1941—

Jennifer Losch Bartlett grew up in Long Beach, California. She received her BFA from Mills College in Oakland, CA in 1963, then her MFA from Yale School of Art and Architecture in 1965. Her instructors at Yale included James Rosenquist, Jim Dine, Robert Rauschenberg and Al Held.[1] She was strongly influenced by the abstract expressionists of the 1950s as well as more contemporary movements such as Minimalism, earth art and conceptual art.[2] Her work is often abstract, with an intermixing of recognizable landscapes and figural motifs.

Bartlett's body of work includes painting, drawing and print-making. She is best known for her large-scale murals, which are created from a module based on one foot square steel plates. These individual plates are coated in enamel, silkscreened with a light grey grid pattern, and hand painted. Bartlett developed this unique technique from her earlier drawing style as a student. She has continued to use this method through today.[3] Her work reveals the various methods of expression made possible by this exclusive selection of materials and technique. Her most famous piece, *Rhapsody*, was constructed using this method. *Rhapsody* is a mural constructed of 987 steel plates spanning nearly 8 feet tall and 153 feet in length.[4]

She created several works constructed in this manner, using her meticulous sense of order and mathematical organization to create a kind of rambling narrative composition. Though she uses both figural and abstract imagery, she often employs recurrent themes of the ocean and nature in her work. She mixes geometric, abstract forms with more recognizable representations such as houses, trees and mountains. This kind of mixture is used in *Day and Night* (1978), the series of etchings included in the exhibition. Basic house structures are represented on either side of the composition, while varying geometric lines represent the sky. On each panel, one side displays curved lines and gestural textures while the other uses straight, rigid lines and sharp angles. The underlying grid pattern is visible to varying degrees throughout each piece. The result is an enigmatic landscape that depicts the shifting mood of darkness and light, softness and rigidity.[5]

Bartlett continued to experiment with steel plates, creating several more large-scale murals. The grid remained prominent in these as well as in her paintings on canvas, drawings and lithographs. She made several pieces that explored the possibilities of pattern and color within the order and regularity of the grid. In 2003, she introduced text into her steel plate paintings, represented by dots of color within the grids. Her most recent work has been primarily large scale oil on canvas paintings of her trademark subject matter of houses and oceans. These paintings exhibit a thick, more painterly technique of color application while still incorporating her characteristic grid.[6]

Bartlett has enjoyed a lucrative and prolific career as a professional artist. She has been featured in several solo exhibitions in the Reese Palley Gallery, New York; the Paula Cooper Gallery, New York; the Saman Gallery, Genoa, Italy; and the Tate Gallery, London. Her work has also been included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of Art, New York; and the Smithsonian Art Museum, Washington D.C. Her publications include 24 Hours: Elegy (1993), Jennifer Bartlett (1999), New Paintings (2002), and Amagansett (2008).

–Alana Bowman Kidder

1 Elizabeth Murray, "Jennifer Bartlett," Bomb 93, (Fall 2005): 56.
2 Brenda Richardson, "What If?" in Jennifer Bartlett: Early Plate Work, ed. Joseph N. Newland (Andover, MA: Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, 2006), 15.
3 Allison N. Kemmerer, "Connecting the Dots," in Jennifer Bartlett: Early Plate Work, ed. Joseph N. Newland (Andover, MA: Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, 2006), 10.
4 Vincent Katz, "Bartlett Shows Her Colors." Art in America 95, no. 1 (Jan 2007): 109.
5 Josephine Novak, Jennifer Bartlett: Selected Works (Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, 1980), 4.
6 Katz, "Bartlett," 111..

Nancy Graves
Muin
Etching. 1977
Collection of Kennedy
Museum of Art

NANCY GRAVES

1939—1995

Nancy Graves grew up in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where her father was an accountant for a local museum. She studied liberal arts at Vassar College, graduating with a BA in English in 1961. She participated in the Yale Summer School of Music and Art in Norfolk, Connecticut, leading to her enrollment Yale School of Art and Architecture for a joint BFA/MFA in '64 (Graves would later receive a Yale Arts Award for Distinguished Artistic Achievement in '98 and in '92 an honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the school). Graves continued her formal artistic education through a Fullbright-Hayes Grant to study painting in Paris in 1964, followed by a year in Florence, Italy. She was briefly married to Richard Serra from 1965-1970.

The year in Italy was extremely important for Graves. At the city's natural history museum, La Specola, was an exhibition of the eighteenth-century anatomist Clement Susini's body of to-scale wax figures of people: "The visual presentation was bizarre, something on the order of a morbid Botticelli: wax women laid out on pink satin with bows in their hair, smiling while flayed from throat to crotch. It prompted me to think of introducing a form from natural history into an art context." From here, Graves delved into sculpture as means to "break out on [her] own terms" and part from the traditional practices of painting, to which she had adhered previously in her practice.[1] The many days she spent in and around the museum had a clear impact on her work as a professional artist: Graves used a wide variety of media to produce a vast body of work rich for its characteristic hybrid of scientific and historical homage. She is honest when describing the museum's influence in fueling her work, much of which plays strongly off of the "degree of illusion involved in presenting natural-history objects."[2]

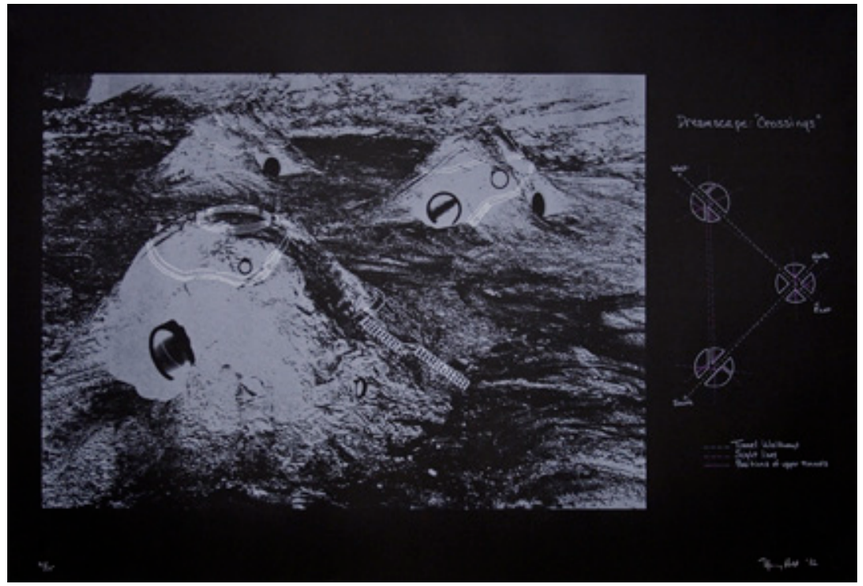
In 1969, Graves exhibited her sculptural epic *Camels* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, making history as the first woman to have a solo show at the museum. Apart from the often complex layering of imagery and process, Graves grounded her palimpsestic creations by consulting the annals of natural science, anthropology, and art history; her imagery selected "ten percent for its history, ninety percent for its form."[3] Graves selected the camel for its "enigmatic" aspects, as well as its rare appearance in the history of Western art. *Camel VI*, *VII*, and *VIII* (composed primarily of steel, burlap, hide, wax, and paint) stand as life-sized replications of the real things. Graves employed the technical method of taxidermy to connect the scientific with the artistic.

Around 1972, Graves turned to more abstract presentations of the environment and its phenomena and began interpreting satellite photographs and maps into massive paintings and prints. She began with the original photographs, which fed a larger, final composite of what would be presented by scientists as the surface of the moon or the ocean floor, and then re-coded the colors used by NASA and left the final print keyless. Demonstrating the evolution of Graves' work in all mediums, her lunar map motif grew more abstract the further she delved into the lunar map as a motif, leading to the *Synecdoche Series* of prints made at Tyler Graphics in 1977: "The Tyler prints are actually an abstraction—the bare bones, so to speak—of my earlier paintings, washes, prints, which in turn are abstractions from actual Lunar Orbiter satellite imagery. Of course, all of this leads to the fundamental question, What is abstraction? What are dots? What is the Moon?"[4] *Toch* and *Saille,* selected prints from this series, represent the reinterpretation and further abstraction of her earlier lunar maps.

–Barbara Jewell

1 Thomas Pardon, Nancy Graves: Excavatgions in Print: A Catalogue Raisonné J. Carter Brown, foreword (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1996), 36.
2 Ibid., 37.
3 Ibid., 28.
4 Ibid., 42.

Nancy Holt
Star-Crossed
1979
Miami Universty Art Museum,
Oxford, Ohio



Nancy Holt
Dreamscape–Crossings
Lithograph. 1982
Collection of Kennedy
Museum of Art

NANCY HOLT

1938—

Holt, born in 1938, grew up in New Jersey and attended Tufts University, graduating with a degree in biology in 1960. After graduation, she moved to NYC, where she remained until 1995. She was well connected in the city's contemporary art scene, collaborating with Eva Hesse (1936-1970), Claus Oldenberg, Richard Serra, Richard Morris, and critic Lucy Lippard (who would discuss Holt's work in her book Overlay).[1] Holt was married to Robert Smithson for 10 years, until his death in 1973.

In the 1960s, the production of earthworks represented a shift away from the "unnatural" placement of work seen in the strict context of a museum to a more organic, experiential-based interaction of art with its environment. Holt takes a phenomenological approach to her work. She calls on the perceptive faculties of the viewer in order to involve him or her with the structure of the work. "In order to understand and perceive my works, one has to walk through them, in and out of them, so that the work exists in durational time... they are not just objects one sees in an instant."[2] She plans for the unpredictable by giving unlimited space for her participants to interact with and within her sculpture, encouraging what she calls "visual questioning," a constant recalculation of time and place in a piece on the part of the viewer.[3]

Holt's work addresses the expansive and rural lands of the American West. Holt is a true interdisciplinary artist, exploring various media including drawing, poetry, film, video in addition to her signature earthwork sculpture. Holt's work demonstrates a unique approach to creation that intersects sculpture and architecture, time, space, and an acute awareness of our planet within our solar system: "Even when we think in celestial terms, there is still indefiniteness. I feel that the need to look at the sky—and at the moon and stars—is very basic, and it is inside all of us. So when I say my work is an exteriorization of my own inner reality, I mean I am giving back to people through art what they already have in them."[3] Holt is not indifferent to the placement of her sculpture, but sometimes spends years planning works by consulting astrologists, architects, city planners, and the residents of an area before she finalizes her plans.

Probably her best known work is *Sun Tunnels*, created from 1973 to 1976, in the Great Salt Lake Desert near Lucin, Utah, on land Holt herself purchased. It consists of four concrete tubes that are 17 feet long and nine feet in diameter, arranged in an open X configuration. Each tube has a pattern of holes bored into the sides that permit the sunlight to make 4 different constellations on the floors of the tunnels. Viewers who enter the tunnels literally walk on the stars. And like the constellations themselves, her small-scale reproductions change with the position of the sun. Holt placed the tunnels methodically, each with "a significant alignment; either to the sunrise or to the sunset on the summer or winter solstice."[4] The circular openings of the tunnels frame particular landscapes in the vast desert. The massive proportions of these tunnels serve as a refuge from the blazing desert sun. Holt addresses her preference for land sculpture, denying that "the 'best' thing that can happen to a traditional sculpture is that it is bought by a museum. It is then usually put into storage and not even the artist can get to see the piece. A work like *Sun Tunnels* is always accessible— it's as accessible as the Grand Canyon."[5]

Holt's earthwork *Star-Crossed* can be found about two hours from Athens in Oxford, Ohio. Oxford, the home of Miami University, is one of the few places in the world where the magnetic north and geographic north align. The sculpture (figure X), created in 1979 and '81, features two cement tunnels, one placed on top of the other at an angle, with the diameter of the mound at 40 feet high. In front of the tunnel lays an oval pool, which fits exactly into the view framed through the small tunnel. Also reflected in the pool is a view of the sky that is not visible without looking down to the aiding reflection of the water: "Here again I am bringing the sky down to earth— the sculpture inverts the world. One can see in reflection what one cannot see in reality." The lithograph *Dreamscape-Crossings* (1982) was printed as part of Ohio University's Trisolini Print Project. This project, initiated in 1978 by Henry Lin, then the University's Dean of the College of Fine Arts and the father of the artist Maya Lin, invited contemporary artists to visit the School of Art's print workshops as artists in residence.

–Barbara Jewell

1 Lucy Lippard, Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory (New York: The New Press, 1995).
2 Janet Saad-Cook, Charles Ross, Nancy Holt, and James Turrell, "Touching the Sky: Artworks Using Natural Phenomena, Earth, Sky and Connections to
3 Astronomy," Leonardo 21, no. 2 (1988): 127.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., 128.

JENNY HOLZER

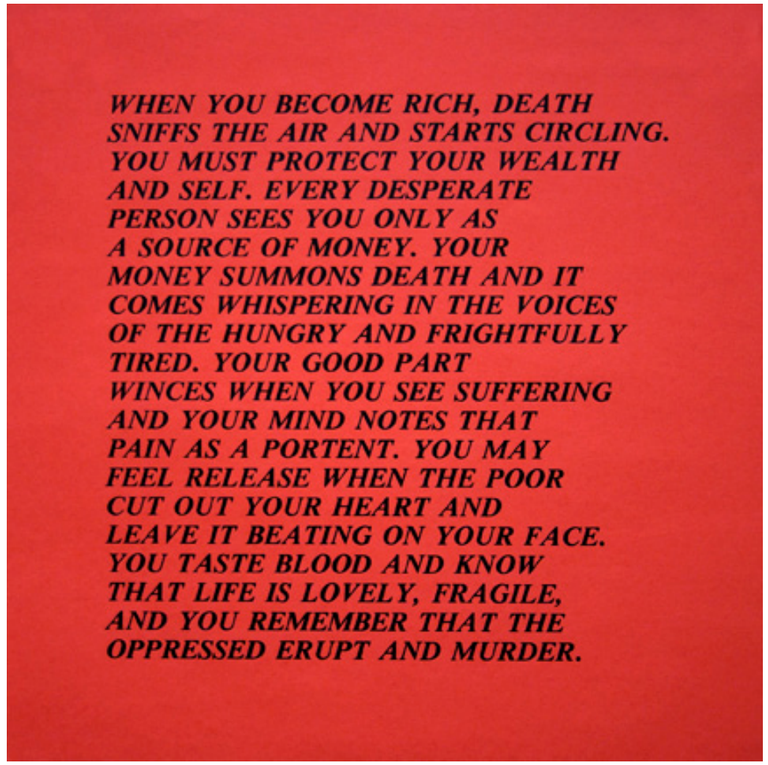
1950—

Jenny Holzer was born in Gallipolis, Ohio. She studied painting, printmaking, and drawing at Duke University and University of Chicago and returned to southern Ohio to graduate with a BFA from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio in 1972. Holzer completed her MFA at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1977. In 1993, Holzer was awarded an honorary doctorate from Ohio University. In 2003, she was given the same award from Rhode Island School of Design. Holzer currently resides in New York City.

Whereas many artists rely on captions of words, phrases, and even times and dates as compliments to their visual work, Holzer creates work composed of words and phrases, found on hundreds of neon-colored posters pasted down streets or scrolling LED billboards high above city sidewalks. Holzer's words lend power to the context of her work, but the real subject is the viewer, the interpreter of the work. There are no extraneous visual aids in these pieces, only our personal histories and understandings, which inform our experience of her text. Holzer would become known for her work with the direct adaptation of the spoken and written language, beginning with *Truisms*. Holzer addresses her interest in the most basic constructions of ideas and communication, marking the beginnings of her emphasis on writing when she "wound up being more interested in the captions than the drawings. The captions told you everything in a clean, pure way."[1] Where most artists creata "mutual support" system for caption and image, Holzer's becomes one.

Holzer's arena is public discourse. *Truisms* (1977-79) was first embodied as posters of black text on white paper that were wheat-pasted around Manhattan. We might expect an artist to present a project with a political or ideological message to an audience with all parts functioning to deliver one concise punch of information—Holzer, however, does the opposite: Truisms consists of the endless pairing of seemingly contradictory viewpoints, a seeming mess of aphorisms full of ideological discrepancies. According to Holzer, she "wanted to have almost every subject represented, almost every possible point of view."[2] Our immediate questioning of the written, posted, inscribed or scrolling messages turns inward as we contemplate which side or which shade of in-between grey we fall to—how we understand ourselves within this opinionated society. The repetition of messages is antagonist in its poster form: A solid home base builds a sense of self/A strong sense of duty imprisons you; Children are the cruelest of all/Children are the hope of the future; Absolute submission is a form of freedom/Abuse of power comes as no surprise. Holzer removes herself as the obvious manipulative hand in *Truisms*. As she put it, she wanted "people to concentrate on content of the writing and not 'who-done-it'... the work to be of utility to as many people as possible, and I think if it were attributed to me, it would be easier to toss."[3] This work, as a body of words and phrases, has been evolving in its reproductions, and today one manifestation of *Truisms* can be viewed in Gordy Hall, home to the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, on Ohio's Athens Campus (Figure X). True to the project's multiplicity of forms (including inscribed granite, LED billboard projections, and endless permutations on posters) Holzer's statements appear inscribed in the granite benches as well as on a red scrolling LED set into the ceiling of the building's first floor, with the text of the work in myriad global languages.

Holzer's phrases are at home in the public sphere; her work imitates the function of the mass media, which she critiques. The viewer might locate her work in its non-presumptuous physical form (be it a bench in a courtyard, posters the size of standard paper, or LED word stretching across Times Square) and possibly not even recognize it as an art piece. The work is disguised as an ordinary object, but in combination with her select words and phrases, the seam between the ordinary and the purposeful starts to fray. The process of recognition— of questioning— is fostered by the construction of her statements in *Inflammatory Essays*: Some lead us in gently, and others abruptly confront what we accept into our lives every day. In preparation for Inflammatory Essays, Holzer consulted the writings of Mao, Lenin, Emma Goldman, Hitler, Trotsky, and "anyone with an axe to grind," constructing her messages from the "unmentionable" and "the burning questions of the day... I made flaming statements in hopes that it would instill some sense of urgency in the reader, the passerby."[4]



Jenny Holzer
Inflammatory Essays (set of 25)
Offset Lithograph. 1978-83
Collection of Kennedy
Museum of Art

In 1990, Holzer became the first woman artist from the United States to represent the country in the prestigious Venice Biennale in its 44th year with *Mother and Child*, where she received the Leone D'Oro (The Golden Lion) for Best Pavilion. Her recent works include For 7 World Trade '06 (permanent LED installation with scrolling text in the glass lobby of 7 World Trade Center), For the Capital '07 (scrolling text the size of buildings, scrolling across the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and onto the Potomac River), and Redaction Paintings '08 ("physically overwhelming" prints composed of declassified text detailing prisoner abuse by the US government, mostly censored out, placed onto a painted background). Holzer prefers the public arena. "My main interest is still the public work. From the beginning, my work has been designed to be stumbled across in the course of a person's daily life."[5]

Her major museum exhibitions include Dia Art Foundation, New York (1989), and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1989), Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (1997), and Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (2001).

–Barbara Jewell

1 Gordon Hughes "Power's Script: or, Jenny Holzer's Art after 'Art and Philosophy'," Oxford Art Journal 29, no. 3 (2006): 425.
2 Art 21, "Jenny Holzer," http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/jenny-holzer consulted 10/09/12
3 Ibid.
4 Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, ed. Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 888.
5 Ibid., 886.

Sylvia Plimack Mangold **The Pin Oak II** Drypoint, Aquatint. 1991 Collection of Kennedy Museum of Art

SYLVIA PLIMACK MANGOLD

1938—

Sylvia Plimack Mangold was born and raised in NYC. She attended Cooper Union School of Art in Manhattan and continued to Yale University, graduating with her BFA in 1961. While studying at Yale, she met fellow student Robert Mangold, the minimalist pioneer known for his bright and geometric paintings. The two married and after graduation and moved to NYC to work among friends and sculptors Sol LeWitt, Eva Hesse, and Carl Andre. Their sculpture focused not on illusionistic references to the real world, but rather an expressing an occupation with primary form and structure, and Eva Hesse and her "anitiforms."

In the late 60s, Plimack Mangold began searching for a "visual consistency" and "a structure of a system that defined space." In 1967, she focused on interior spaces, creating photo realist paintings of her home that she shared with Mangold in NYC. She began with soft focus paintings of wooden floors, than added wadded laundry to the composition. Plimack Mangold continued painting household interiors in her realistic style, depicting floors and corners of rooms in a straightforward manner. Plimack Mangold then shifted her focus, exploring the trompe l'oeil tradition including objects such as a perfectly rendered ruler along the bottom of the page or the warped masking tape that she had used to make the painting. These objects are a startling contrast to the receding wooden floorboards, as they sit in the foreground almost on a ledge peering at the viewer, toying with the ground between illusion and what we hold as reality. Plimack Mangold suggests that these objects "perform as they did in life. A painted ruler would measure things, the painted tiles would measure space and the painted tape was remnant of what [was] required to make a straight edge," creating a diagram through paint of "how one's perspective determines perception."

In 1975, Plimack Mangold moved to the Catskill Mountains and then to the Hudson River Valley. She began painting landscapes at this time, with trees becoming very important to her work.

Mangold's contribution to this exhibition, *The Pin Oak II* from 1991, an etching/dry point/aquatint on Fabriano paper, is a meticulously rendered image of the branches of a tree in winter. As with the rest of her work, *The Pin Oak II* is deliberately anti-sentimental; a straight-forward rendering of the tree that permits the formal elements to take precedence over the contextual elements (the landscape, the tree trunk). Mangold creates both an abstract image (fitting, as her husband made a name for himself as a Minimalist sculptor) and an image based on close observation.

Plimack Mangold first exhibited in group shows shortly after she began her interior-themed paintings, including the exhibition *Realism Now*, curated by Linda Nochlin for Vassar College Art Gallery in '68. She has also exhibited in more than thirty solo shows and surveys, her pieces belonging permanently to the collections of museums including the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, and the Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, Connecticut. Her work has most recently been included in the seminal *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, curated by Connie Butler for Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles in 2007, and *Solitaire: Three Painters*, which was put together by Helen Molesworth for the Wexner Center in Columbus, Ohio in 2008.

–Barbara Jewell

1 Gordon Hughes "Power's Script: or, Jenny Holzer's Art after 'Art and Philosophy'," Oxford Art Journal 29, no. 3 (2006): 425.
2 Art 21, "Jenny Holzer," http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/jenny-holzer consulted 10/09/12
3 Ibid.
4 Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, ed. Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 888.
5 Ibid., 886.

Elizabeth Murray
Snake Cup
Lithograph. c.1983
Collection of Kennedy Museum of Art

ELIZABETH MURRAY

1940—2007

Elizabeth Murray was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1940. Her early life was marred by family illnesses and frequent moves, but she found comfort in regular trips to the movies. Cartoons and newspaper comic strips were her favorite source of entertainment. She realized at a young age that she possessed an artistic talent for mimicking these cartoon figures and was encouraged by her parents to pursue art.[1] Throughout her life and career, Murray used a combination of pop culture, artistic influences, and her own brand of unique humor to create a new approach to painting.

When she began her formal education at the Art Institute of Chicago, Murray was determined to become a commercial artist. She excelled in painting, drawing and printmaking. By the time she graduated in 1962, she had decided to become a painter.[2] She was strongly influenced by the work of Paul Cezanne–especially his unconventional representations of space and color and his expressive brush strokes.[3] She was also inspired by the work of Pablo Picasso, Juan Miro and some of the new young artists, such as Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns. She received her MFA from Mills College in Oakland, California in 1964, and then moved to New York in the late 1960s. Her work at this time was already a mixture between sculpture and painting, and she was creating both large- and small-scale three-dimensional works. She was experimenting with cartoonish forms reminiscent of Pop Art, but she retained a painterly quality that mainstream Pop lacked. After the birth of her son in 1969, Murray began painting on canvas, which she described was "like coming home again."[4]

Murray is known for her dedication to painting in an era when painting was largely overshadowed by conceptual and performance art. She was one among a small group of artists in the 1960s that still believed painting had anything to offer in terms of innovation. By the early 1970s, she abandoned cartoon-influenced pop and began painting more abstractly–using boxy forms and swooping, gestural lines. In the mid-70s she decided to add another element to her abstract compositions by experimenting with the shapes of her canvases. Murray was not a follower of Minimalism, yet she used the Minimalist idea of a painting as an image-object or image-form.[5] By creating irregularly shaped canvases, her work blurred the lines between a painting as a pictorial space and a painting as an object.

Though her imagery was abstract, Murray was still using popular culture as a reference point. She used lines, shapes and colors that were similar to the cartoon characters she loved. She specifically chose forms that, though abstract, remind the viewer of a figural object.[6] In the early 1980s the figures became more clearly definable as objects. Instead of cartoons, her imagery of choice became regular household items: tables, keyholes, glasses and most often, coffee mugs. These images are sometimes easily recognizable while others appear purposefully ambiguous and open to interpretation.[7] They often depict or imply movement and action. *Snake Cup* (1983), included in the exhibit, is an example of her use of the stylized coffee mug in the act of falling. The undulating green swath of paint mimics splashing liquid, while the contrasting reddish background adds tension and a further sense of movement.

Murray's canvases progressed in the later 80s and 90s to include images of the body, body parts and references to sexuality and childbearing.[8] She also began including even more household imagery. It was a risky move for a woman to use imagery associated with the home because it was not considered serious art. But instead of shying away from feminine associations, she was very bold in using still lives. As her work became more mature, she added more depth and dimensions to her paintings, which were always cleverly composed and displayed her singular style and wit. She is credited with reinventing painting and proving that it is still a viable medium for innovation and artistic expression.[9]

Elizabeth Murray was the recipient of several awards, including the Skowhegan Medal in Painting (1986), the Larry Aldrich Prize in Contemporary Art (1993), John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Award in (1999). Her publications include the brochure for the *Artist's Choice* exhibit *Elizabeth Murray: Modern Women* at the Museum of Modern Art, Bob Holman's *Cupid's Cashbox* (illustrated by Murray), and *Notes for Fire and Rain* (1981). In 2006, she became one of only four women ever to have a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

–Alana Bowman Kidder

1 Robert Storr, Elizabeth Murray (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2005), 22-23.
2 Ibid., 26.
3 Ibid., 25.
4 Ibid., 35.
5 Stephen Westfall, "Elizabeth Murray: Scary Funny," Art in America 94, no. 1 (2006): 76.
6 Storr, Elizabeth Murray, 47.
7 Ibid., 54.
8 Ibid., 55.
9 Roberta Smith, "Elizabeth Murray, 66, Artist of Vivid Forms, Dies," New York Times, August 13, 2007. http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/13/arts/design/13murray.html?pagewanted=all Accessed August 24, 2012.

LOUISE NEVELSON

1899—1988

Louise Nevelson was born Leah Berliawsky in 1899. When Nevelson was six years of age, she and her Orthodox Jewish family emigrated from Tsarist Russia in 1905 to join her father, who had established himself in the lumber business in Rockland, Maine two years earlier. Nevelson began making art early in her life, spending her most cherished hours through grade school in the art classrooms of her youth: " I was born in a cold country and I was raised in a cold country. And I always thought the art room was warmer than all the other rooms in the school... It wasn't until years later that it dawned on me that I generated my own heat in that room."[1] As an adult, Nevelson was influenced most strongly by Cubism and Surrealism, but, as she has stated, she was just as powerfully affected by many small interactions in everyday life. She recounts once seeing a pair of antique satin yellow chairs in a furniture store window: "The shade of yellow and the touch of satin and the softness of that satin was an instantaneous healing. It cured me more than anything else could have cured me."[2]

Nevelson was based in New York. She moved to the city in the early 1920s with her husband, Bernard Nevelson, who co-owned the shipping business Nevelson Brothers Company. Nevelson studied with Hans Hoffman in Munich in 1931/32, leaving her son Mike under the care of her parents in Maine. When she returned to the United States, Nevelson worked with Diego Rivera on his mural *Man at the Crossroads* in Rockefeller Plaza in New York. Nevelson is best known for her monumental wooden sculptures, or, more aptly, "environments," which she constructed from found and collected wooden objects off the streets of New York City. In her later and most famous sculptural work, Nevelson employed a monochrome cover of paint and, by doing so, made a large-scale installation in which individual objects recede into the whole; she presents the viewer with an invitation to become a functioning facet of the sculpture, along with each purposefully arranged chair leg, doorknob, nail, and splinter of wood that stands before us. Nevelson stitches together not only these massive sculptures, but also the space in which we will interact.

Nevelson had a very long artistic career, though she struggled for most of her adult life while she continued to create and collect pieces for her assembled art, and only gained attention in the later years of her life. Her first show occured when she boldly asked the collector and gallery owner Karl Nierendorf for an exhibition in his space at the new Nierendorf Gallery in 1941, the same year she divorced her husband. Nevelson's sculpture became increasingly abstract, and, in 1947, she began to explore the mediums of etching, dry points, and aquatints without ever abandoning her primary drive for sculpture. Around 1954, Nevelson began to design the large wooden sculptures that would ultimately make her name famous in the medium. In 1956, *Moon Garden + One* was shown in Colette Robert's Grand Central Modern Gallery. The exhibition was composed of Nevelson's disparate objects, including the work *Sky Cathedral* (painted uniformly black), later purchased by the Museum of Modern Art. Nevelson's Moon Garden garnered reviews published in journals and magazines such as *Time*, *Life*, and *American Art* magazines.[3] Nevelson was also commissioned to design public buildings and spaces, including Temple Beth-El in Great Neck, Long Island, and St. Peter's Lutheran Church in New York City. Nevelson was represented in the United States Pavillion, the first woman to do so, in the 31st Venice Biennale in 1962.

Like her distinctive sculpture, Nevelson herself was the embodiment of her phrase, "The physical is the geography of the being."[4] She is remembered for her extravagant dress, large eyelashes, and headscarf. She was immortalized through images taken by photographers Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Avedon, and Hans Namuth. The photographer Diana MacKown, with whom Nevelson published *Dawns + Dusks: Taped Conversations with Diana MacKown* (1976), took many photographs of her as well. As a divorced woman who worked in non-traditional media in an art world dominated by men who welded, Nevelson was keenly aware of the inequities of the art world. When describing her experience in a male-dominated field, Nevelson asserted, "If women had not taken their rightful places, they were in a world that was male-oriented and it wasn't ladylike. They were taught to look pretty and throw little handkerchiefs around but never to show that they had what it takes. Well, I didn't recognize that, and I never played that role. If you play that role, you don't build an empire. But if you want to look in history, we have a lot of women who have built empires."[5]

Louise Nevelson
Untitled
Wood and black paint. 1982
The Dayton Art Institute,
Museum purchase with funds provided by
the James F. Dicke Family, 2003.7

Nevelson created environments that expanded one's thinking by muting overwhelming objects, colors, and most other stimuli in an effort to allow the viewer to become a living element of the experience. Her reverence for dance and eurythmics (cultivated with study under Ellen Kearns in New York City) is lucidly illustrated by her sculptural work's emphasis on human interaction with space. Among her national and international exhibitions, Nevelson's solo exhibition *Louise Nevelson: The Fourth Dimension* was held at the Dayton Art Institute in Dayton, Ohio from November 1980 to January 1981 (Figure X). The Institute now includes a piece of her black monochrome sculpture in its permanent collections.

–Barbara Jewell

1 Louise Nevelson, Dawn + Dusks: Taped Conversation with Diana MacKown. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), 24.
2 Ibid., 36.
3 Elyse Deeb Speaks, "Experiencing Louise Nevelson's Moon Garden," American Art 21, no. 2 (2007): 96.
4 Ibid., 13.
5 Nevelson, Dawn + Dusks, 69.

Susan Rothenberg **Pinks 1 (from Pinks Series of Two)** Woodcut and monotype. 1980. Collection of Kennedy Museum of Art. Purchased with the aid of funds from the NEA.

SUSAN ROTHENBERG

1945—

Susan Rothenberg was born in Buffalo, New York in 1945. Her painter mother and ceramicist aunt encouraged her to pursue her artistic talent at a young age. She also developed a love for animals, encouraged by her uncle who was a veterinarian.[1] She attended Cornell University at Ithaca and State University in Buffalo, New York. Her education began with an emphasis in sculpture then she switched to painting, receiving her BFA in 1967.

Rothenberg moved to New York City in the late 1960s, where she became a part of a group of artists, dancers and musicians, including Nancy Graves, Richard Serra, Philip Glass and Deborah Hay.[2] Inspired by this group, she began to experiment by participating in several of her friend's dance and performance art pieces. However, when it came to her own art, her approach was very different from that of her contemporaries. She was a figural painter in a time when mainstream art was focused on post-minimalism, conceptualism and performance art. In 1973, she made a sketch of a horse, which became her signature image for nearly a decade. She used the figure of the horse to examine the various elements of color and space within the painted image.[3] Referencing the flatness of color field painting, figure and background were often painted with the same color, separated by a thin outline. She would also split her large canvases by leaving a thin, unpainted vertical line in the center, creating an even more flattened, "open book" like surface.[4] In the late 1970s, she began dismantling the horse's body, using specific parts like the head or bones for her compositions.

By the early 1980s, she transitioned into using human heads and body parts instead of horses. In an attempt to make her paintings more personal and self-reflective, she decided to focus on the two bodily assets most important to her as an artist–her head and hands.[5] As seen in the two pieces in the exhibit, both entitled *Pinks* (1980), she juxtaposes the simplified images of head and hands to form a kind of abstract, childlike self-portrait.[6] She uses bands of color to create the thick outlines and facial features of her forms. Having so recently abandoned the horse image that had dominated her work for so long, she describes it as "all she had to work with at the time."[7] She began this series in a sequence of small crayon-on-canvas sketches and then made larger hand-painted woodcuts and acrylic paintings on canvas.

Throughout the next decade, Rothenberg expanded her bank of imagery to include dogs, birds, humans and marionettes. In the early 1990s, she moved from her apartment in New York to a ranch in New Mexico, which caused even more changes in her paintings. Her color palette became warmer and bolder, and her backgrounds became more detailed and filled with action. The flatness of her earlier work receded to give way to landscapes or interiors and depictions of narrative events in time and space.[8] Rothenberg continues to paint from her New Mexico home, reflecting in her canvases her life and experiences with animals and people.[9]

Throughout her career, she has been the recipient of several awards including the Creative Artists Public Service Grant (1976); the Guggenheim Fellowship (1980); the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Award (1983); the Cornell University Alumni Award (1998); and the Skowhegan Medal for Painting (1998). Her work is included in the permanent collections of many prestigious institutions including: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California.

–Alana Bowman Kidder

1 Joan Simon, Susan Rothenberg (Harry N. Abrams: New York, 1991), 10.
2 Ibid., 19.
3 Peter Blum, Susan Rothenberg (Basel: Basler Kunstverein, 1981).
4 Ibid.
5 Simon, Susan Rothenberg, 88.
6 Ibid., 92.
7 Ibid., 89.
8 Frances Colpitt, "Susan Rothenberg: Modern Art Museum" Art in America 98, no. 2 (February 2010): 122.
9 Faye Hirsch, "Susan Rothenberg" Art in America 99, no. 10 (November 2011): 165

Pat Steir **Panel I. From Form series (top left)** Lithograph. 1983. Collection of Kennedy Museum of Art

PAT STEIR

1940—

Pat Steir was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1940. She showed an early interest in the arts, studying drawing, music, poetry and philosophy. When she was just 16 years old, she began her formal training at Boston University in Massachusetts and the Pratt Institute in New York, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in 1961.[1] Early in her career she was encouraged by her teachers to develop her own style of making art rather than following mainstream ideas.[2] Her body of work includes drawing and installation, but a large portion of her artistic career has been dedicated to painting.

After completing her education, Steir worked as an art director for the publishing company Harper and Row in New York. She used this position and odd jobs as a book cover designer to support herself while she made art on the side.[3] The work she produced in the late 1960s and early 1970s reflected her interest in language and representation. She began addressing issues of images as symbols in her "X" paintings. In these paintings, she would create a representational object alongside abstract brush strokes, then mark through the entire canvas with a large "X."[4] These works simultaneously deny and acknowledge representation. Once a word is uttered or an object created, it cannot be unuttered or uncreated.[5] She uses these paintings to explore the irrevocability of being and the power of words and images to express this.

In the early 1970s, Steir began producing color lithographs, which she often used as studies for paintings. She began working for Crown Point Press in 1976, which allowed her further experimentation with lithography. In 1982, Crown Point sent her abroad to study in Asia where she developed a keen interest in Japonaiserie and Chinoiserie.[6] She spent a great deal of time in Japan and Hong Kong where she studied Japanese painting and calligraphy and became deeply involved with the teachings of Buddhism and Daoism. This influence inspired the work currently displayed at the Kennedy Museum. In these three color lithographs entitled *Form*, *Illusion* and *Myth*, Steir creates three representations of the same subject matter, using her own unique mixture of figural drawing, abstraction, and Japanese calligraphy. Each of these panels is devoted to the Japanese chrysanthemum, rendering the existence of the object in three varying styles. Though her marks seem gestural and spontaneous, they are logically premeditated, often planned using a grid structure.[7]

Since the late 1980s, Steir has continued to change and evolve her artistic style. Her most well-known works are her "waterfall" paintings. She uses a simple method of pouring or dripping paint directly onto the canvas, reminiscent of Jackson Pollock's action paintings.[8] Her large canvases and carefully chosen color combinations skirt the line between painterly abstractions and moody landscapes of water, mist and rain.[9] She has also created several installation projects along this vein. She continues to produce these paintings from her studio in New York.

Pat Steir has been the recipient of several distinguished awards such as the National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist's Grant (1974), the National Endowment for the Arts Art in Public Institutions Grant (1976), the Guggenheim Fellowship (1982) and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Boston University School for the Arts (2001). Her work has been included in the public collections of several institutions including: the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and the San Francisco Museum of Fine Art, California. She has also been involved in the establishment of several feminist journals, such as *Heresies* and *Semio-Text*.

–Alana Bowman Kidder

1 Jules Heller and Nancy G. Heller, eds. "North American Women Artists of the Twentieth Century: A Biographical Dictionary." Bio., H.W. Wilson, 1995. Biography Reference Bank (203054836).
2 "Biography: Pat Steir," American Art at the Phillips Collection, http://www.phillipscollection.org/research/american_art/bios/steir-bio.htm accessed August 22, 2012.
3 Ibid.
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Alice Aycock The Energy of Spin 2004, wall sculpture, Ohio University, Putnam Hall. Photograph by Barbara Jewell.

Front Cover: Elizabeth Murray Snake Cup c. 1983-1983, lithograph, Collection of Kennedy Museum of Art

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