



The National Women's Caucus for Art Annual Conference

PRESS RELEASE

WOMEN'S CAUCUS FOR ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HISTORIC EXHIBITIONS BY WOMEN ARTISTS

Three major exhibitions featuring the work of women artists are being held as part of the national Women's Caucus for Art 1980 Conference in New Orleans. A Decade of Women's Performance Art, opening Friday evening, January 31st, at the Contemporary Arts Center, documents the development of this contemporary form for the first time. On the same evening, two exhibitions of work by Southern women open at the Hanson Galleries in the French Quarter: Louisiana Premiere: Women Artists and Southern Exposure: Selections by Women Artists.

Surveying the rapid expansion of performance art since the late 1960s, A Decade of Women's Performance Art presents the key works of over 30 important artists through photographic murals and video tapes. Live performances, including one by Eleanor Antin, are also part of the exhibition. Organized by Mary Jane Jacob, Associate Curator at the Detroit Institute of Arts, the exhibition will be documented by an extensive catalog. Art historian Moira Roth, of the University of California at San Diego, will contribute

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an essay on women's performance art. The opening reception begins at 8 p.m., January 31st, at the Contemporary Arts Center, 900 Camp St.

Louisiana Premiere: Women Artists features works of all media in the first statewide exhibition by Louisiana women artists. Juror Lucy R. Lippard, New York author and critic, selected 84 pieces from the 235 that were submitted. Opening at 6 p.m., January 31st, at the Hanson Galleries, 229 Royal St., the exhibition runs through February 26th. It was organized by the New Orleans Chapter of the Women's Caucus for Art.

Southern Exposure: Selections by Women Artists presents nearly 100 works by women artists from 13 southeastern states. Juried by artist Dorothy Gillespie of New York City, the final selections in all media were chosen from over 400 entries. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalog and by an ongoing slide presentation. The opening also begins at 6 p.m., January 31st, at the Hanson Galleries.

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The National Women's Caucus for Art Annual Conference

January 30, 31, and February 1, 1980
New Orleans, Louisiana

THE WOMEN'S CAUCUS FOR ART NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Building on New Orleans' dazzling heritage of Jazz, street performance and Mardi Gras, the design of this year's national meeting January 30 - February 2 of the Women's Caucus for Art centers on this unique legacy in its conference focus: Art, Politics, Equal Rights. A Jazz Procession leads to the ceremony of this year's annual awards to five women for outstanding achievement in the visual arts; the entire conference is conceived as total performance which embraces political action and strategies and expresses them through the sensibility of the visual artist in a series of interrelated panels, workshops, media events and exhibitions.

Organized in 1972 and numbering nearly 3,000 women in the visual arts nationwide, the Women's Caucus for Art was established in conjunction with the College Art Association. Now it operates as a separate organization (which maintains affiliate status with the CAA) and works to overcome discrimination in the art field, bringing greater recognition to women artists and serving the need for parity for women artists, art historians, and museum professionals.

This year's conference continues the ongoing tradition of providing a support structure for women in the arts as follows:

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT/BOYCOTT This national conference will act like a reflecting lens, mirroring and collecting the energies of women throughout the nation to help focus on the struggle for ERA passage in Louisiana, as well as the needs of women in the South for professionalism in the arts. Since Louisiana is not an ERA-ratified state, an economic boycott will be maintained through sanctions on commercial housing, food and entertainment.

Suzanne Lacy's River Meeting:Lives of Delta Women, a dinner/performance event, serves to involve conference goers and their hostesses in private homes with a network of community participants to celebrate contributions of women. E. M. Broner, author of A Weave of Women and Rosemary Daniel, poet-author of Fatal Flowers: On Sin, Sex and Suicide in the Deep South, add a literary dimension to this event; Mary Beth Edelson, New York artist, contributes a ritual performance. A rotating pattern of small dinner meetings throughout January prepares for this River Meeting.

AWARDS This year's awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Visual Arts honor: Anni Albers, weaver/designer/printmaker; Louise Bourgeois, sculptor; Caroline Durieux, graphic artist; Ida Kohlmeyer, painter; Lee Krasner, painter. Two of these women, Durieux and Kohlmeyer, are from New Orleans; all of these artists contributed in quite distinctive ways to American art of the '40's and '50's and continue to experiment and develop their work in new directions. The Awards Ceremony emphasizes both their achievements and their roles as models and examples for younger colleagues.

The mayor of New Orleans, Ernest N. Morial and Sybil Morial, who are strong supporters of the arts and ERA, will participate in the ceremony at Gallier Hall. Helen Milliken, National Co-Chair of ERAmerica will deliver an address.

ARTS FOR ERA To raise funds for the ERA, works have been donated for a raffle by nationally prominent artists: Jennifer Bartlett, Romare Bearden, Isabel Bishop, Christo, Audrey Flack, Mary Frank, Nancy Graves, Sol LeWitt, Alice Neel, Philip Pearlstein, James Rosenquist, Theodore Stamos, Michelle Stuart, William T. Wiley. The original works of art (prints and drawings) will be exhibited at the Hanson Gallery in the French Quarter. Tickets at \$2 will be available from local WCA chapters and in New Orleans. The raffle follows the Awards Ceremony at Gallier Hall; winning tickets will be drawn from one of Bella Abzug's hats (also to be raffled) by Helen Milliken and Mildred Jeffrey, Chair, National Advisory Board of the National Women's Political Caucus.

EXHIBITIONS Three exhibitions are key aspects of the WCA's support structure for women in the arts. At the Hanson Gallery, Louisiana Premiere: Women Artists, juried by Lucy Lippard, and Southern Exposurers: Selections by Women Artists, with Dorothy Gillespie as juror, focus on art from the South.

At the Contemporary Art Center, A Decade of Women's Performance Art is the first historical survey of the contribution of women to performance art, which as a new medium in the visual arts began to expand rapidly in the late 1960's. Women have been particularly active in this medium which as an art form raises important issues in contemporary art related to the rise of content and narrative, the use of the self in autobiographic works and the place of political statements in art.

A Decade of Women's Performance Art consists of photographic murals and videotape documentation as well as live performance. Participants are: Laurie Anderson, Eleanor Antin, Jackie Apple, Nancy Buchanan, Betsy Damon, Mary Beth Edelson, Lynn Hershmann, Poppy Johnson, Leslie Labowitz, Suzanne Lacy, Linda Montano, Pauline Oliveros, Yvonne Rainer, Carolee Schneeman, Bonnie Sherk, Barbara Smith and others.

This exhibition will be available to travel across the country for the next several years. Mary Jane Jacob, organizer of this exhibition, who is Associate Curator at the Detroit Institute of Arts, wrote the catalog forward. The catalog also features an introduction by New York art critic Lucy Lippard and a critical essay by Moira Roth, art historian, University of San Diego.

WORKSHOPS/PANELS/DIALOGUES Author/artist Kate Millett, author of Sexual Politics, will discuss her sculpture The Cages, forerunner to her recently published book, The Basement, as well as present an exhibition of her art work. As Millett's work extends beyond the visual into the literary arena, so Mildred Jeffrey extends vision into politics with her Winning! ERA and Women in the Political Arena. Jeffrey, who is currently Chair of the Advisory Board of the National Women's Political Caucus and National Chair of NWPC, 1977-79 (NOW's Feminist of the Year, 1978), will also deliver the keynote address of the conference.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL SPEAKERS AT CONFERENCE

Prominent literary and political figures are appearing in New Orleans this month during the national conference of the Women's Caucus for Art.

Kate Millett, author of Sexual Politics and The Basement, is speaking at the Contemporary Arts Center on Wednesday, January 30th at 11 a.m. She will talk about her sculptural work "The Cages." An informal discussion and lunch follows.

Mildred Jeffrey, Chair of the Advisory Board of the National Women's Political Caucus, is featured in a day of dialogues at the Contemporary Arts Center, Thursday, January 31st. She will speak on "Winning! ERA and Women in the Political Arena" at 2 p.m. Ms. Jeffrey, NOW's Feminist of the Year in 1978, is nationally recognized as a political and labor leader.

Other women professionals in the arts, literature, politics, and education are participating in Thursday's dialogues. Topics include "Southern Exposure: Concerns of Southern Women" and "There Ought to be a Law: Legislative Action and Art."

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The public is invited to attend these and other conference events. For information and a complete program contact the Contemporary Arts Center, 900 Camp St., New Orleans, beginning January 29th. Telephone 523-1216.

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Author of Sexual Politics and The Basement, Millett is speaking at the Contemporary Arts Center on Wednesday, January 30th at 11 a.m.

The following day features a talk by Mildred Jeffrey, head of the National Women's Political Caucus. She will address "Winning! ERA and Women in the Political Arena."

Altogether, more than 20 leading women in the arts, literature, and politics are appearing on Thursday's program.

For information contact the Contemporary Arts Center, 900 Camp St. beginning January 29th. Telephone 523-1216.

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BOYCOTT IN NEW ORLEANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Armed with a boycott, the Women's Caucus for Art is arriving in New Orleans this month.

"Art, Politics and Equal Rights" is the keynote of their national conference beginning January 30th.

Throughout the 3-day meeting, an economic sanction will be maintained on commercial lodging, food, and entertainment. In a massive effort of support, Louisiana women will provide alternative housing and food for the visitors.

By action and protest, all of these women are joining together to underline the need for Equal Rights today.

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