

Art Basel  
June 11 – 16, 2019  
Booth D7

P.P.O.W

P.P.O.W is pleased to present historical and contemporary works by Carolee Schneemann, Betty Tompkins, Robin F. Williams and David Wojnarowicz. We are also delighted to present Martha Wilson's *Halifax Collection, 1971-74* at Art Basel Unlimited, in collaboration with mfc-michèle didier.



Carolee Schneemann (1939-2019) activated the female nude with a multidisciplinary practice that spanned sixty years and includes painting, assemblage, performance, and film. By connecting the kinetic nature of her early paintings and assemblages to her radical performances and films, Schneemann's work has made a permanent mark on the history of art. P.P.O.W will present a collaged painting and vintage photographs documenting her now iconic 1964 performance, *Meat Joy*. Performed in Paris, London, and New York City, this group performance famously incorporated raw fish, chickens, sausages, wet paint, plastic, rope, and shredded scrap paper into what the artist described as "an erotic rite - excessive, indulgent, a celebration of flesh as material." We will also present a selection of vintage prints from the series *Eye Body: 36 Transformative Actions for Camera, 1963*, in which Schneemann merged her body with her painting-constructions. Permeating boundaries between image-maker and image, seeing and seen,

this series represents the first time Schneemann incorporated her physical body into the form of her work. In More than Meat Joy, 1979, Schneemann wrote, "In 1963 to use my body as an extension of my painting-constructions was to challenge and threaten the psychic territorial power lines by which women were admitted to the Art Stud Club. [...] I was using the nude as myself -- the artist -- and as a primal, archaic force which could unify energies I discovered as visual information." Schneemann's work has been exhibited at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art and The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Tate Modern, London; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; and The Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid; among others. *Carolee Schneemann: Kinetic Paintings* recently traveled from Museum der Moderne, Salzburg (2015) to the Museum fur Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany (2017) and MoMA PS1, New York (2018). In 2017, she was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 57<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale.

In a career spanning five decades, Betty Tompkins (b.1945) has been celebrated and scorned for her provocative feminist iconography. By appropriating imagery created for male self-pleasure, Tompkins has reframed long-held taboos by challenging critical discourses around content, style and scale. P.P.O.W will present *Cow Cunt #1, 1976*, a monumental grisaille painting depicting a common dairy cow resting atop a vagina. This beguiling image exemplifies Tompkins' signature painting style and her enduring wit, as well as her mutual affinities for confrontation and whimsy. We will also present four new works that unify her *WOMEN Words* series with her signature airbrushed paintings. By combining text and image, Tompkins responds to ongoing political and cultural debates about inequity, harassment and violence. One such painting reads: "Men are better at art than women. Just look at art history." Our presentation will highlight that tension with patriarchal conventions continues to both stymie and stimulate Tompkins' work. In 1973, two significant paintings from her *Fuck Paintings* series were seized by French customs and, in April 2019, Tompkins' Instagram account was deleted after she posted an image of a catalog



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reproduction of *Fuck Painting #1*, 1969, which is now in the permanent collection of the Centre Pompidou. In a 2017 New York Times article, Rachel Corbett wrote, "Part of what makes Tompkins' work so enduringly potent today, and what made it too shocking for its time, is not just its frank sexuality: It's that the art [...] seethes with lust, ego, wisecracks and profanity. [She] demanded attention the way men did – through shock and awe." Tompkins' recent solo exhibitions include *Fuck Paintings, etc.*, J Hammond Projects, London, U.K. (2019); *Will She Ever Shut Up?*, P.P.O.W (2018); and *Betty Tompkins*, Ribordy Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland (2018). Her work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including *Half the Picture: A Feminist Look at the Collection*, The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY (2018); *Histórias da sexualidade*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil (2018); *Black Sheep Feminism: The Art of Sexual Politics*, Dallas Contemporary, Dallas, Texas (2016); and *Elles*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2011), among others.



Robin F. Williams (b. 1984) utilizes a variety of techniques, including oil, airbrush, and the staining of raw canvas, to create figurative paintings that are at once puzzling and familiar. Challenging systemic conventions of representation in both art history and commercial advertising, as well as recent market impulses, Williams refers to her women as "zombie nudes" – figures that are sentient, yet ambiguously generated. Confronting the viewer with a crazed, almost terrifying smile, *Here's Betty*, 2019, reimagines Richter's *Betty* as a grown-up odalisque who survived *The Shining*. Another recent painting, *Swamp Thing*, 2019, zooms-in on the mysterious bather from Manet's iconic *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, revealing a self-pleasuring siren luring the viewer into the apparently toxic biome to which she's been resigned. Taken together, these works humorously update outmoded art historical depictions of women and femininity while simultaneously exemplifying Williams' mastery of a medium long defined by male authorship and female subjection. With three solo exhibitions at P.P.O.W, Williams has garnered critical recognition for her contribution to

figurative and feminist painting, noting the complexity of her compositions, technical virtuosity and the psychological depth of her narratives. In her review of Williams' 2017 exhibition *Your Good Taste is Showing*, Roberta Smith of the New York Times wrote: "These painting are timely, but they are also enigmatic, off-putting and out there in rewarding ways." Williams received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and has been included in numerous exhibitions nationally and internationally. Williams has been honored as the Josephine Mercy Heathcote Fellow at The MacDowell Colony.

David Wojnarowicz (1954-1992) was among the most incisive and prolific American artists of the 1980s and 90s. P.P.O.W will recreate part of Wojnarowicz's influential 1989 exhibition *In The Shadow of Forward Motion*, his first exhibition with the gallery which featured many of the photographic works the artist is best known for today. Images such as *Untitled (Buffalo)*, 1988-89, present a visual metaphor for the notion of societal progress by channeling, according to the artists' notes, "a sense of impending collision contained in the acceleration within the structures of civilization; speed of consumption; speed of transport and mixing of cultures." *Untitled (Ant Series)*,



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1988-89, comprised of 6 photographs, depicts tiny fire ants indiscriminately scuttling across symbols of our most cherished and agonizing social constructs: control, desire, language, spirituality, time / money, and violence. The installation also includes the mixed-media sculpture *Cradle of Civilization*, 1989, which depicts a small child's chair growing in the forest. On its seat is a clay fetus clutching a battery whilst lying in a bird's nest and, slithering between the chair legs, is a map-collaged snake. As an installation, this symbolic dreamscape exemplifies the salient cultural criticism and profound sensitivity of Wojnarowicz's groundbreaking work. In his essay for the accompanying exhibition catalog, Felix Guattari wrote, "When everything seems to be said or repeated at this point in Art History, something emerges from David Wojnarowicz's chaos which confronts us to our responsibility to intervene in the movement of the world."

David Wojnarowicz's work has been exhibited at The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; The American Center, Paris, France; The Busan Museum of Modern Art, Korea; Centro Galego de Art Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain; The Barbican Art Gallery, London; and the Museum Ludwig, Cologne. His work is represented in the permanent collections of major museums nationally and internationally and his life and work have been the subject of significant scholarly studies. Wojnarowicz has had retrospectives at the galleries of the Illinois State University, curated by Barry Blinderman (1990) and at the New Museum, curated by Dan Cameron (1999). A third retrospective, *David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night*, co-curated by David Kiehl and David Breslin, opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in July 2018. The widely acclaimed exhibition was reviewed in Artforum, The Guardian, The New York Times and The New Yorker, among others. The retrospective opened at the Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid in May 2019 and will travel to the Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg City in November 2019. A concurrent exhibition of Wojnarowicz's films and photographs was presented at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin in February 2019.