

## Martha Wilson I have become my own worst fear

September 9 – October 8, 2011  
Opening Reception: Friday, September 9, 6-8pm



**P·P·O·W** is proud to present new work by Martha Wilson in her first solo exhibition since joining the gallery in May, 2011. The works in the exhibition are embedded in the ideas which have concerned the artist for four decades. A new work, *I have become my own worst fear*, consists of a photo/text image, to be shown with a videotape made by the artist in 1974. Works on view will consist of nine new photo/text works created since 2008, and two early photo/text works, *Alchemy*, from 1973 and *My Authentic Self* from 1974.

*New York Times* critic Holland Cotter, in reviewing a 2008 exhibition of Martha Wilson's early work, described her as one of "the half-dozen most important people for art in downtown Manhattan in the 1970s." In Moira Roth's introduction to the [Martha Wilson Sourcebook: 40 Years of Reconsidering Performance, Feminism, Alternative Spaces](#), being published this fall by Independent Curators International, he adds: "Wilson is a wonderful artist, whose smart and witty 1970s photographic self-portraits in various 'feminine' guises— passive beauty, punk upstart—helped very early on (way before Cindy Sherman) to demonstrate that the gendered roles we play are largely invented for us. It's the artist's job to take charge of that invention so that we see it in action, which Wilson did in those amazing and still-under known pictures."

Martha Wilson is Founding Director of Franklin Furnace Archive, Inc., an alternative space she established in her TriBeCa storefront loft in lower Manhattan which, since its inception in 1976, has presented and preserved temporal art: artists' books and other multiples produced internationally after 1960; temporary installations; and performance art. Franklin Furnace "went virtual" on its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, taking the Internet as its art medium and public venue to give artists the freedom of expression they had enjoyed in the loft in the 70s. Ms. Wilson lectures widely on the book as an art form, on performance art, and on "variable media art."

Martha Wilson is trained in English Literature and was teaching at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design when she became fascinated by artworks created at the intersection of text and image. In New York, she founded DISBAND, the all-girl punk band of artists who couldn't play any instruments. Since DISBAND disbanded in 1982, she has performed in the guises of Alexander Haig, Nancy Reagan, Barbara Bush, and Tipper Gore. In the spring of 2008, she had her first solo exhibition in New York at Mitchell Alguo Gallery, *Martha Wilson: Photo/Text Works, 1971-1974*.

In an essay published in *Camera Obscura* in 2001, Art Historian Jayne Wark writes, "In her conceptually based performance, video and photo-text works, Wilson masqueraded as a man in drag, roamed the streets with her face painted red, catalogued her various body parts, manipulated her appearance with makeup, and explored the effects of 'camera presence' in self-representation. Although this work was made in isolation from any feminist community, it has been seen to contribute significantly to what would become one of feminism's most enduring preoccupations: the investigation of identity and embodied subjectivity."

Upcoming Exhibition: Katharine Kuharic, *Pound of Flesh*, Project 2 Lynne Yamamoto, *Genteel*, October 13 - November 12, 2011.  
Please contact 212-647-1044 for photographic requests