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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**MEDIA PREVIEW**  
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**MOCA TO PRESENT FIRST MAJOR EXHIBITION TO EXAMINE  
THE FOUNDATIONS AND LEGACY OF FEMINIST ART PRODUCED  
INTERNATIONALLY FROM 1965 TO 1980**

***WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution***  
**At The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA March 4–July 16, 2007**



Martha Rosler, *Nature Girls (Jumping Janes)*, from the series *Body Beautiful or Body Knows No Pain*, 1966–72, photomontage, variable size, courtesy of the artist

**Los Angeles—The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)** presents the first international survey of a remarkable body of work that emerged from the dynamic relationship between art and feminism in and around the 1970s. ***WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution***—on view at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA **March 4–July 16, 2007**—brings together the work of 119 artists from 21 countries to examine how the feminist movement fundamentally changed the way we see and understand art. More than eight years in the making, *WACK!* is organized by The Museum of Contemporary Art and curated by Ahmanson Curatorial Fellow Connie Butler—curator at MOCA for 10 years (1996–2006) and current Robert Lehman Foundation Chief Curator of Drawings at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. MOCA Director Jeremy Strick notes that, “MOCA is a most fitting institution to organize this groundbreaking exhibition given its tradition of mounting scholarly, ambitious, and risk-taking thematic surveys.” Following its debut at MOCA, the exhibition will tour to the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. (September 21–December 16, 2007); P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in Long Island City, New York (Winter 2008); and the Vancouver Art Gallery in British Columbia, Canada (Summer 2008).

MORE

MOCA GRAND AVENUE | THE GEFFEN CONTEMPORARY AT MOCA | MOCA PACIFIC DESIGN CENTER

In the late 1960s through the '70s—a period marked by the resurgence of feminism—a fundamental shift in women's perceptions of their own social roles began to have an impact on contemporary art practices. As reflected in the exhibition's title, *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* focuses on the intersection of art and feminism during this era and recaptures the idealism of the feminist movement. "WACK" is not an acronym in itself, but was chosen by curator Connie Butler to recall the acronyms of many activist groups and political communities from this time whose activities focused on women's issues and cultural production.

While the term "feminism" can be broadly defined, scholar and author Peggy Phelan states, "Feminism is the conviction that gender has been, and continues to be, a fundamental category for the organization of culture. Moreover, the pattern of that organization favors men over women." Embracing this definition, *WACK!* argues that feminism was perhaps the most influential of any postwar art movement—on an international level—in its impact on subsequent generations of artists.

In the past few decades, a canonical list of American artists have become identified with the feminist movement. The exhibition dismantles this canon through the inclusion of women of other geographies, formal approaches, socio-political alliances, and critical and theoretical concerns. The artists in *WACK!* do not necessarily all identify themselves or their work as feminist. Nonetheless, as artist Susan Hiller has said, "Art practice with no overt political content may, nevertheless, be able to sensitize us politically." The globalized model adopted by *WACK!* acknowledges the importance of artists working in their own communities and/or connecting with artists elsewhere and recognizes that while individual artists may work in relative isolation, their practice—and worldview—comes together through discourse, affinity, and relationship.

Influential proto-feminist work produced by artists in the years immediately prior to the florescence of the '70s is also featured, including work by important figures who were active through that crucial decade and beyond, but whose contributions in the mid-'60s anticipated new feminist aesthetics that took hold during the '70s. The scope of the exhibition also allows for the inclusion of the early work by such artists as Cindy Sherman and Lorraine O'Grady, representing a division between essentialist work of the '70s—which hypothesized a universal way to portray female experience—and a more theory-driven approach adopted during the '80s—which accounted for concepts like race, class, and sexual orientation.

Rather than following a chronological sequence, *WACK!*'s thematic organization encourages a dialogue between individual works from a wide range of media—including painting, sculpture, photography, film, video, and performance art. The themes are: Abstraction, Autophotography, Body as Medium, Body Trauma, Collective Impulse, Family Stories, Female Sensibility, Gendered Space, Gender Performance, Goddess, Knowledge as Power, Labor, Making Art History, Pattern and Assemblage, Silence and Noise, Social Sculpture, Speaking in Public, and Taped and Measured.

### **Exhibition Catalogue**

*WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue. Each artist in the exhibition is represented by a short biographical text and a selected bibliography. An extensive chronology offers an essential overview of the period. In addition to a significant curatorial essay by

Connie Butler, the catalogue presents new scholarship on individual artists and subjects related to feminism in art. Contributing authors include the highly respected scholars Connie Butler, Judith Russi Kirshner, Catherine Lord, Marsha Meskimmon, Richard Meyer, Helen Molesworth, Peggy Phelan, Nelly Richard, Valerie Smith, Jenni Sorkin, and Abigail Solomon Godeau. Design is by Lorraine Wild and Green Dragon Office, Los Angeles.

### **Public Programs**

MOCA will host a variety of related programs in conjunction with the exhibition, including an in-depth lecture series, round-table discussions, workshops, an extensive film series, and an independent web site. Taken as a whole, the components of this project will initiate new dialogue about feminist art and will provide a forum for scholarly reconsideration of one of the most influential movements in American art of the postwar period.

*WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* is organized by The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. The exhibition curator is Connie Butler, former curator at MOCA and current Robert Lehman Foundation Chief Curator of Drawings at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. At MOCA, the exhibition is coordinated by Corrina Peipon, Curatorial Assistant and Project Coordinator.

*WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* is made possible by the Annenberg Foundation. Additional support is provided by Geraldine and Harold Alden; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; the National Endowment for the Arts; The Peter Norton Family Foundation; Audrey M. Irmas; The Jamie and Steve Tisch Foundation; The MOCA Contemporaries; Vivian and Hans Buehler; the Barbara Lee Family Foundation Donor Advised Fund at the Boston Foundation; Étant donné: The French-American Fund for Contemporary Art; The Broad Art Foundation; the Hugh M. Hefner Foundation; Peg Yorkin; Merrill Lynch; the Fifth Floor Foundation; and The Cowles Charitable Trust.

Major support is also provided by Susan Bay Nimoy and Leonard Nimoy with the members of the *WACK! Women's Consortium*: Contemporary Collectors—Orange County; Mandy and Clifford J. Einstein; Lois G. Rosen; Carol and David Appel; Drs. Arie & Rebecka Beldegrun; Pamela and Roger Birnbaum; Fabrizio and Lorraine Bonanni; Blake Byrne; Christie's, Inc.; Leslie and John Dorman; Gil Friesen and Janet Reinstra; Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro; The Karan-Weiss Foundation; Suzanne Nora Johnson and David G. Johnson; Dr. and Mrs. Kihong Kwon; Lyn and Norman Lear; Mesdag Family Foundation; B.J. Russell Mylne; Brenda Potter and Michael Sandler; Jennifer and Manfred Simchowicz; Catharine and Jeffrey Soros; Elizabeth Swofford; David Teiger; Lauren and Bobby Turner; The Unterman Family; Joe and Susan Wingard; and the Wolff Family Private Foundation.

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