



Judith Leyster, Self-Portrait, 1633

AHST 2331-001 (21655)

Understanding Art

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Contemporary Feminisms



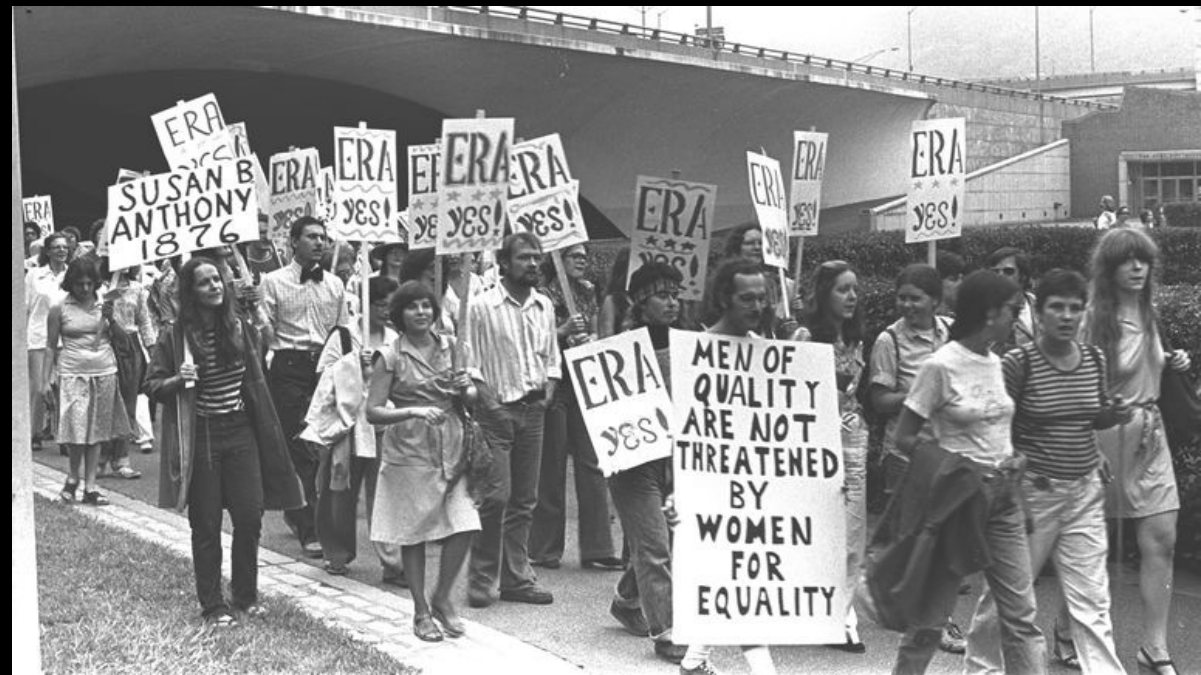
Barbara Kruger, Untitled, 1997



3 Waves of Feminism

- First wave: 1848 ~ 1915
 - Equality before the law: Vote, contract, property, legal recognition
- Second wave: ~1960 ~ 1990
 - Equality in economy, society, & politics: Jobs, pay, reproductive rights, representation, rape, image, misogyny, affirmation of womanhood
- Third wave: ~1990 – present
 - Postmodern critiques of gender as such. Emphasis on cultural, sexual diversity, queer rights.

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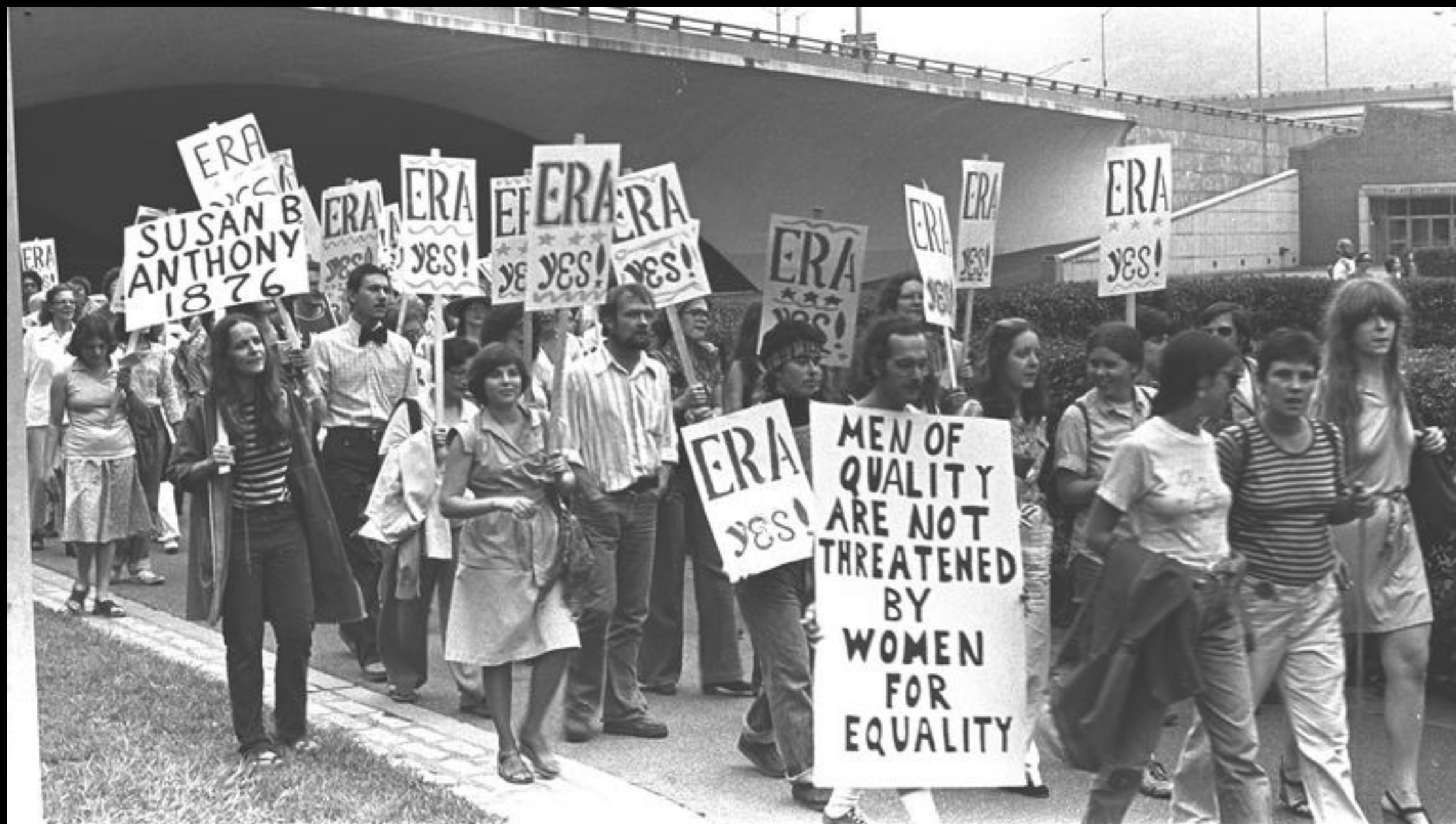
HOW TO DESCRIBE THE FOURTH WAVE OF FEMINISM

- Fourth wave feminism is not universally acknowledged as a real thing among feminists, but it can be used to refer to any sort of feminism that wasn't a feature of third wave feminism.
- Some consider online activism a form of fourth wave feminism, and some consider the man-bashing, "rape culture" brand of feminism to be fourth wave.
- Like most cultural movements, we probably won't know until we're out of it.



Feminism in Four Waves

- First Wave Feminism 1792-1900s: catalyzed by Mary Wallstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (Wallstonecraft = mother of Mary Shelley); equal contract rights; women's suffrage, property rights and political candidacy
- Second Wave Feminism 1949-1980s: catalyzed by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*; unlike First Wave Feminism, this wave dealt more overtly with sexuality, family, the workplace, reproductive rights, inequalities in practice, and official legal inequalities
- Third Wave Feminism 1990s-2008: catalyzed by Anita Hill's televised testimony in the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearing; greater diversity in the feminist movement; micropolitics of gender; feminist punk subculture
- Fourth Wave Feminism 2008-present: feminist collectivity catalyzed by social media, especially starting in 2012; action against sexual harassment and gender violence; #metoo





Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman, authors of the original Equal Rights Amendment in 1923

Equal Rights Amendment

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

DECEMBER 13, 1923.

Mr. ANTHONY introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and ordered to be printed.

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled*
3 *(two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the*
4 following article is proposed as an amendment to the Con-
5 stitution of the United States which shall be valid, to all
6 intents and purposes, as part of the Constitution when
7 ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several
8 States:

ARTICLE XX.

10 "Men an women shall have equal rights throughout
11 the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction.

12 "Congress shall have power to enforce this article by
13 appropriate legislation."



Your body

is a

battleground

Barbara Kruger, Untitled (Your body is a battleground), 1989

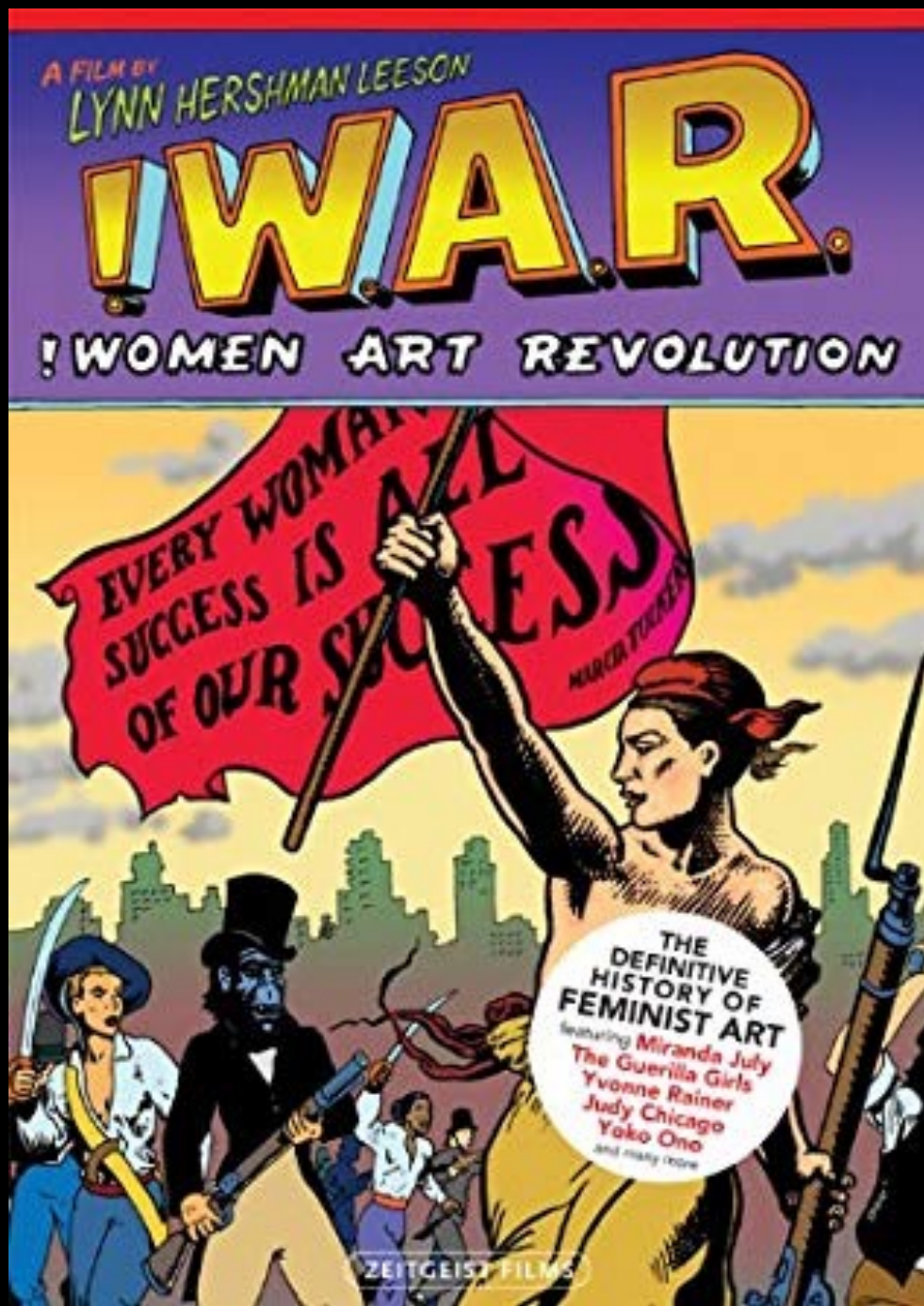
Feminine but not feminist?

Can we be feminine feminists?

Can we be masculine feminists?

Can we be sexually ambiguous feminists?

In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex* was published. There she famously wrote, "One is not born, but becomes a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society: it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between, male and eunuch, which is described as feminine."



Civil Rights Movement + Feminist Art



DEMOCRACY AT WORK



Socialist Feminism March, c. 1963

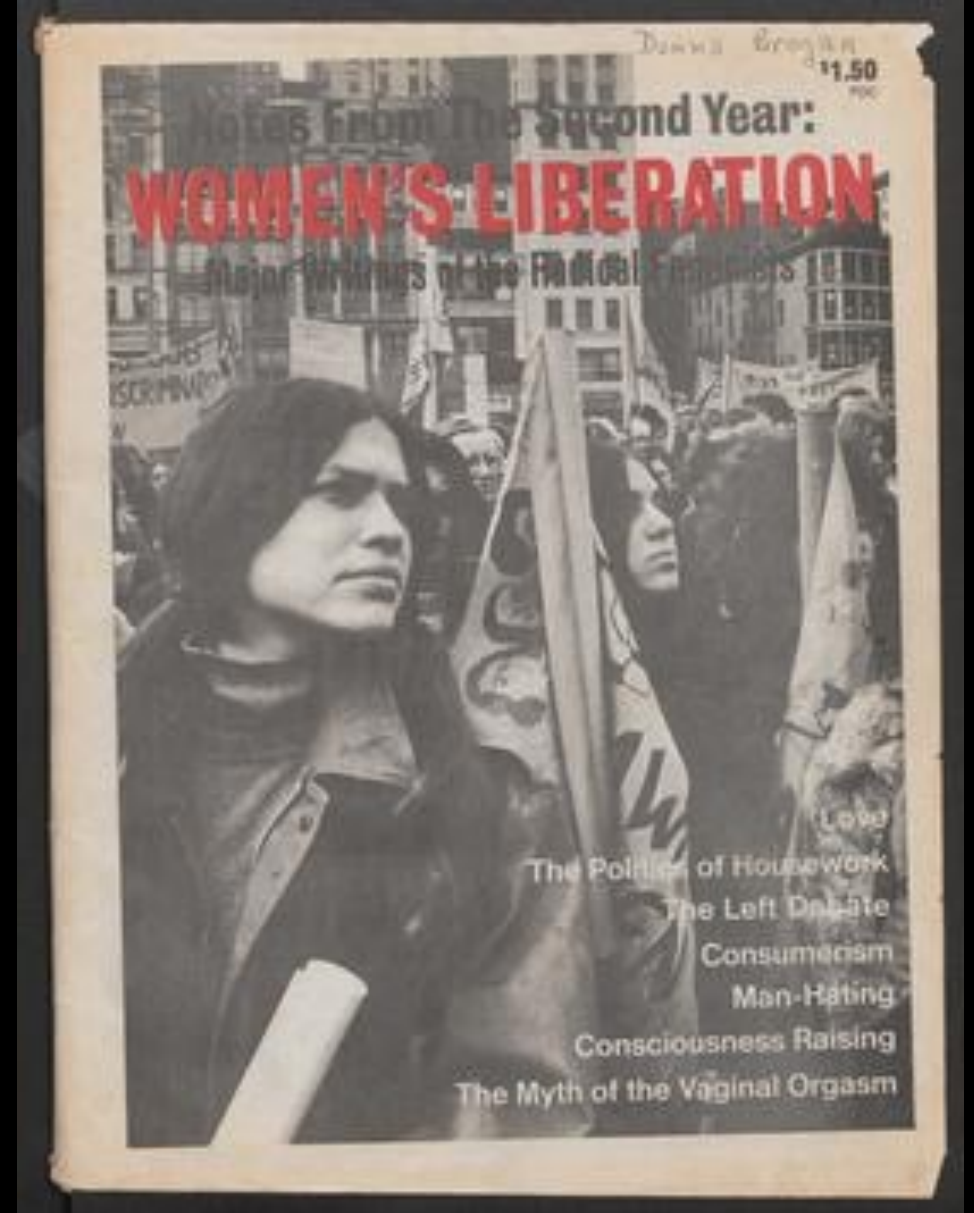


Civil Rights March on Washington, 1963



The Personal is the Political vs. Cult of True Womanhood

"The Personal is the Political" was the title of an essay written by Carol Hanisch. With this phrase, Hanisch identified the idea that problems that many women take to be personal – a lack of self-confidence, failure to advance in their careers, unhappiness over their bodies – is part of a larger political system that oppresses women as a class.



The essay first appeared under the title "The Personal is Political" in *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation* (1970).



WOMANHOUSE

(January 30 – February 28, 1972)

Judy Chicago b. 1939

Miriam Schapiro
1923-2015



WOMANHOUSE

(January 30 – February 28,
1972)

Judy Chicago b. 1939

Miriam Schapiro
1923-2015

One of the first collectively feminist art projects was Womanhouse of 1972. Judy Chicago had started a feminist art program in 1970 at Fresno State University, a program built upon a theory of feminist art education, articulated in four principles: 1.) Witness to women's common experience through consciousness-raising 2.) Building a female environment 3.) Presentation of positive female role models 4.) Granting permission to students/artists to be themselves and make art out of their experience as women.



WOMANHOUSE

(January 30 – February 28, 1972)

Judy Chicago b. 1939

Miriam Schapiro
1923-2015

Central to the Feminist Art Program was the establishment of a women's studio where women could meet in a shared work environment and take part in the group processes of collaborative performance art and feminist consciousness-raising. After a year, Chicago moved to the California Institute of the Arts in LA to continue her program and her vision with the assistance of the artist Miriam Schapiro and a group of artists from Fresno. As a result, Womanhouse became the first tangible product of the CalArts Feminist Art Program and arguably the first public exhibition of 'feminist art.' It was a collaborative art piece that reflected on the difficulties women experience in making art.



Miriam Schapiro with Sherry Brody, *The Dollhouse*, 1972

Judy Chicago, *Menstruation Bathroom*, 1972
[Judy Chicago, *Red Flag*, 1971]

Chicago directed 21 students in renovating and repairing the mansion while they generated ideas for transforming 17 rooms into art installations. Each room in Womanhouse was transformed into a virtual diary of women's experience.



Scene from the documentary
Womanhouse Is Not a Home (1972).
Courtesy of director Lynne Litman.



Judy Chicago, Menstruation Bathroom, 1972



Miriam Schapiro with Sherry Brody, *The Dollhouse*, 1972



Miriam Schapiro with Sherry Brody, *The Dollhouse*, 1972

parlor, a kitchen, a Hollywood star's bedroom, a "harem" room, a nursery, and, on the top floor, an artist's studio



Camille Grey, Lipstick Bathroom, 1972



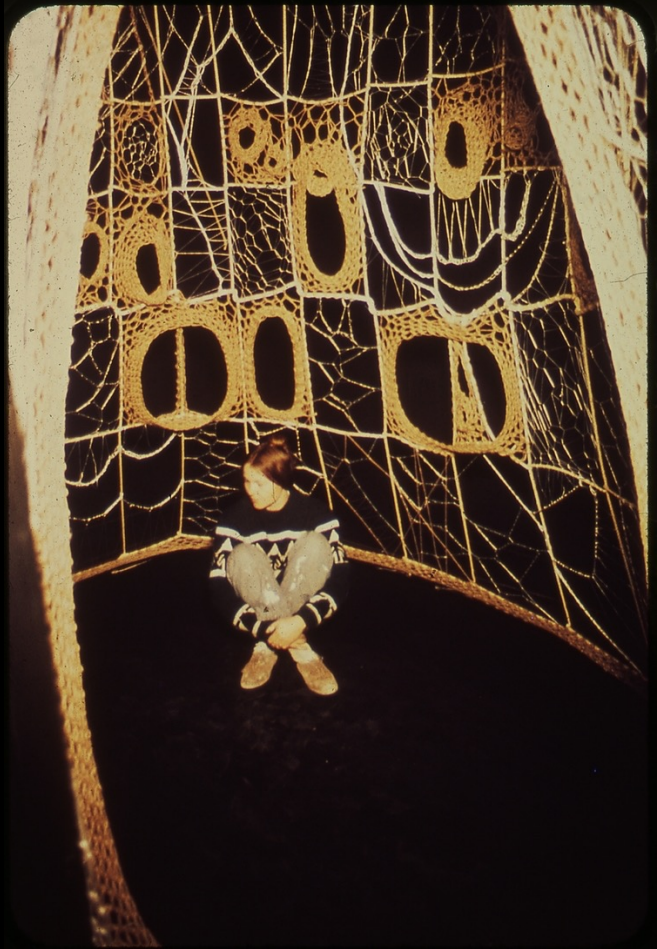
Kathy Huberland, Bridal Staircase, 1972



Marcel Duchamp, Nude Descending a Staircase 2, 1912



Kathy Huberland, Bridal Staircase, 1972



Faith Wilding, Web Room,
crocheted environment, 1972



-- Later titled Womb Room, 1996



“Womanhouse posed a critique of domestic space as a technology of production and domination of the feminine body while highlighting the institution of marriage and sex as a regime of enclosure and discipline.”

<http://lemagazine.jeudepaume.org/blogs/beatrizpreciado/2013/10/03/revisiting-womanhouse/>

Sandra Orgel, Linen Closet, 1972



Vicky Hodgetts, Susan Frazier, Robin
Weltsch, Eggs to Breasts Kitchen: Nuturant
Kitchen, 1972

An entirely pink space in which fried eggs
invade the walls as breasts...



“The Dinner Party” comprises a massive ceremonial banquet, arranged on a triangular table with a total of thirty-nine place settings, each commemorating an important woman from history. The settings consist of embroidered runners, gold chalices and utensils, and china-painted porcelain plates with raised central motifs that are based on vulvar and butterfly forms and rendered in styles appropriate to the individual women being honored. The names of another 999 women are inscribed in gold on the white tile floor below the triangular table.”

https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner_party

Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party*, 1974-79



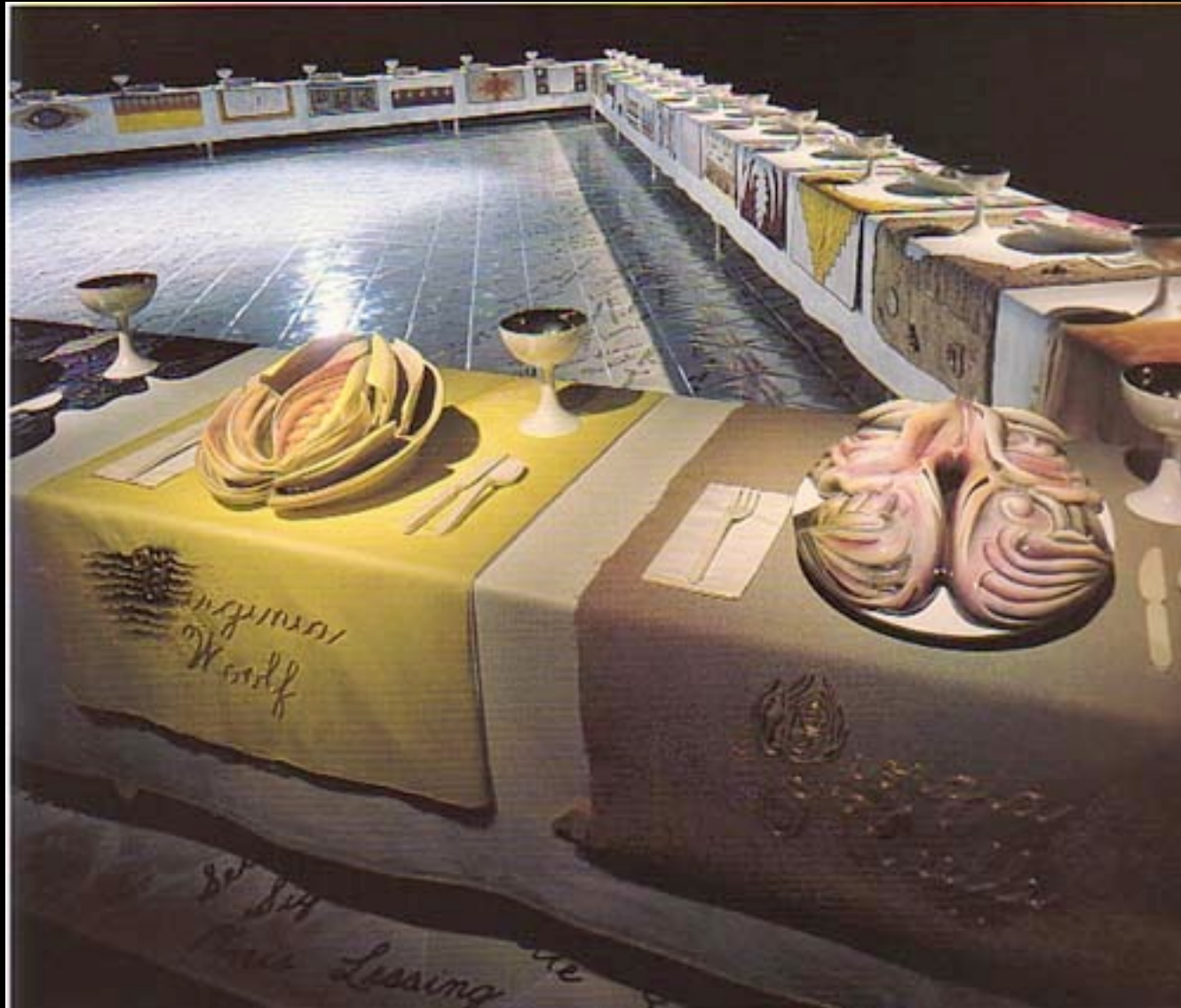
Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party*, 1974-79



Leonardo da Vinci, *The Last Supper*, 1495–98 Tempera on plaster. Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan, Italy

When Chicago began thinking of historical precedents for the table, she was immediately drawn to Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, representing Christ at his last meal surrounded by his twelve disciples. As Chicago explained, "I became amused by the notion of doing a sort of reinterpretation of that all-male event from the point of view of those who had traditionally been expected to prepare the food, then silently disappear from the picture or, in this case, from the picture plane." She began envisioning a reinterpretation of the canonical work with famous women as the honored guests.

https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner_party



From the start, Judy Chicago's aim was "to teach a society unversed in women's history something of the reality of our rich heritage."



Judy Chicago, The Dinner Party, Sojourner Truth, 1974-79

Truth was an African-American abolitionist and women's rights activist.



Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party, Sappho*, 1974-79
Sappho was a seventh-century BCE Greek poet.



Miriam Schapiro,
Barcelona Fan, 1979

Fiber Art

Pattern and
Decoration



POSTMODERNISM
FRAGMENTATION
MULTICULTURALISM
REPRODUCTION
SIMULACRA
SIMULATION
HYPERREAL

“Whence the possibility of an ideological analysis of Disneyland (L. Marin did it very well in *Utopiques, jeux d'espace* [Utopias, play of space]): digest of the American way of life, panegyric of American values, idealized transposition of a contradictory reality. Certainly. But this masks something else and this "ideological" blanket functions as a cover for a simulation of the third order: Disneyland exists in order to hide that it is the "real" country, all of "real" America that is Disneyland (a bit like prisons are there to hide that it is the social in its entirety, in its banal omnipresence, that is carceral). Disneyland is presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, whereas all of Los Angeles and the America that surrounds it are no longer real, but belong to the hyperreal order and to the order of simulation. It is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (ideology) but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real, and thus of saving the reality principle.”

— Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981)

Pictures by Douglas Crimp
Pictures Generation
Artist's Space 1977 and Metro
Pictures

“Pictures Generation”

Artists Space 1977 and Metro Pictures

What then are these new aesthetic activities? Simply to enumerate a list of mediums to which “painters” and “sculptors” have increasingly turned – film, photography, video, performance – will not locate them precisely, since it is not merely a question of shifting conventions of one medium to those of another. The ease with which many artists managed, some ten years ago, to change mediums – from sculpture, say, to film (Serra, Morris, et. al.) or from dance to film (Rainer) – or were willing to “corrupt” one medium with another – to present a work of sculpture, for example, in the form of a photograph (Smithson, Long) – or abjured any physical manifestation of the work (Barry, Weiner) makes it clear that the actual characteristics of the medium, per se, cannot any longer tell us much about an artist’s activity.

In choosing the word pictures for this show, I hoped to convey the work's most salient characteristic-recognizable images-but also and importantly the ambiguities it sustains. As is typical of what has come to be called postmodernism, this new work is not confined to any particular medium; instead, it makes use of photography, film, performance, as well as traditional modes of painting, drawing, and sculpture. Picture, used colloquially, is also nonspecific: a picture book might be a book of drawings or photographs, and in common speech a painting, drawing, or print is often called, simply, a picture. Equally important for my purposes, picture, in its verb form, can refer to a mental process as well as the production of an aesthetic object.

Douglas Crimp, “Pictures,” *October*, Vol. 8 (Spring, 1979), pp. 75-88



Walker Evans, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Shields Family, 1936/39

REPHOTOGRAPHY and APPROPRIATION



L: Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Shields Family*, 1936/39
R: Sherrie Levine, *Untitled (After Walker Evans: 2)*, 1981



Walker Evans, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Shields Family, 1936/39



L: Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Shields Family*, 1936/39
R: Sherrie Levine, *Untitled (After Walker Evans: 2)*, 1981



Sherrie Levine, Untitled (President 4), 1979



Sherrie Levine, President Collage 1, 1979

Cindy Sherman, Untitled Film Still
#2, 1977





Cindy Sherman, Untitled Film Still #6, 1978



Cindy Sherman, Untitled D 1975



Cindy Sherman, Untitled Film Still #10, 1978



Your body

is a

battleground

Barbara Kruger, Untitled (Your body is a battleground), 1989



Louise Bourgeois, Maman, 1999
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_suffrage#Suffrage_movements

Simone de Beauvoir also said:

The word *female* brings up in his mind a saraband [Spanish dance] of imagery – a vast, round ovum engulfs and castrates the agile spermatozoan; the monstrous and swollen termite queen rules over the enslaved males; the female praying mantis and the spider, satiated with love, crush and devour their partners; the bitch in heat runs through the alleys, trailing behind her a wake of depraved odors; the she-monkey presents posterior immodestly and then steals away with hypocritical coquetry; and the most superb wild beasts – the tigress, the lioness, the panther – bed down slavishly under the imperial embrace of the male. Females sluggish, eager, artful, stupid, callous, lustful, ferocious, abased – man projects them all at once upon woman. And the fact is that she is a female. But if we are willing to stop thinking in platitudes, two questions are immediately posed: what does the female denote in the animal kingdom? And what particular kind of female is manifest in woman?



Louise Bourgeois, Maman, 1999

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_suffrage#Suffrage_movements

The work, *Spiders* (2001), is based on Louise Bourgeois' mother. For decades, Bourgeois has used the spider to explore issues related to memories of her mother, who died when the artist was 20. "My mother was deliberate, clever, patient, soothing, reasonable, dainty, subtle, indispensable, neat and useful as a spider," she once wrote. The largest piece, titled "Maman," includes an egg sack below its rounded belly. Constructed with steel mesh, it contains white polished-marble eggs that have an alluring, gemlike quality.



Indeed, the artist's many accounts of her family history are loaded with enough juicy details to fill a gripping novel. In 1998, she wrote in Interview magazine: "I was brought up in a dysfunctional and promiscuous family setup where no one would talk about sex. On the surface, sex simply did not exist. But in fact, we thought of nothing else. My father slept around with everyone, including Sadie, our English tutor, who lived in the house."

Louise Bourgeois
1911-2010

Photo by Robert Mapplethorpe,
1982, printed 1991



“My childhood has never lost its magic, it has never lost its mystery, and it has never lost its drama.”



Left: Louise Bourgeois with her brother, her father Louis, and Sadie Gordon Richmond, his paramour or mistress.



Lynda Benglis, Bounce, 1969 Liquid rubber spilled directly onto the floor
“I wasn’t breaking away from painting but trying to redefine what it was.”



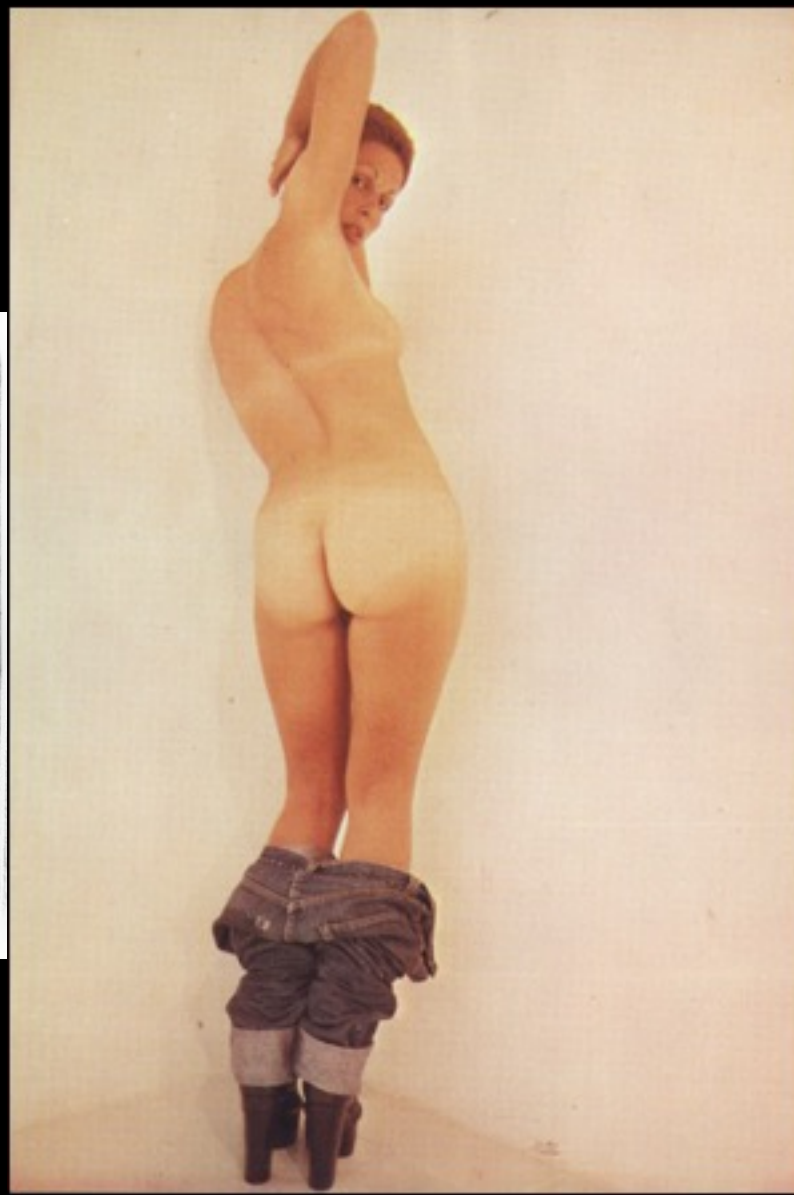
Lynda Benglis, *Adhesive Products*, chicken wire and plastic, 1971

“I wanted to build up a form so that the viewer could walk around and experience the flow of the material,” Benglis said, “a bodily extension, as you would experience a stream or a river flow with an oil slick on it.” *Adhesive Products* is a nine-piece work that was commissioned for the Walker Art Center’s Edward Larabee Barnes–designed building.



Lynda Benglis sought a “more sensuous kind of surface” after a few years practicing painting. The piece is the result of the artist’s site-specific experimentation. In a two-week period, Benglis built armatures of chicken wire and plastic, which were suspended from the gallery walls, then poured liquid polyurethane over them to create cascading sculptures that hover above the ground.

<https://walkerart.org/magazine/lynda-benglis-discusses-adhesive-products>





Lynda Benglis, Ad in ArtForum,
November 13, 1974



A few months later, Robert Rosenblum wrote to *Artforum* with a proposal: "Let's give three dildos and a Pandora's Box to Ms. Lynda Benglis, who finally brought out of the closet the Sons and Daughters of the Founding Fathers of the Artforum Committee of Public Decency and Ladies' Etiquette. Too bad they weren't around to protest when Dada and Surrealism let those arty people run amok and do all those unspeakably vulgar things."

Lynda Benglis, Ad in *ArtForum*,
November 13, 1974



Lynda Benglis, Eat Meat, 1975 silver aluminum



Show all



"I Don't Get It"— Getting comfortable with some of Crystal Bridges' challenging artworks: Lynda Benglis's "Eat Meat"

December 16, 2013



Museum guests respond to Lynda Benglis's "Eat Meat."





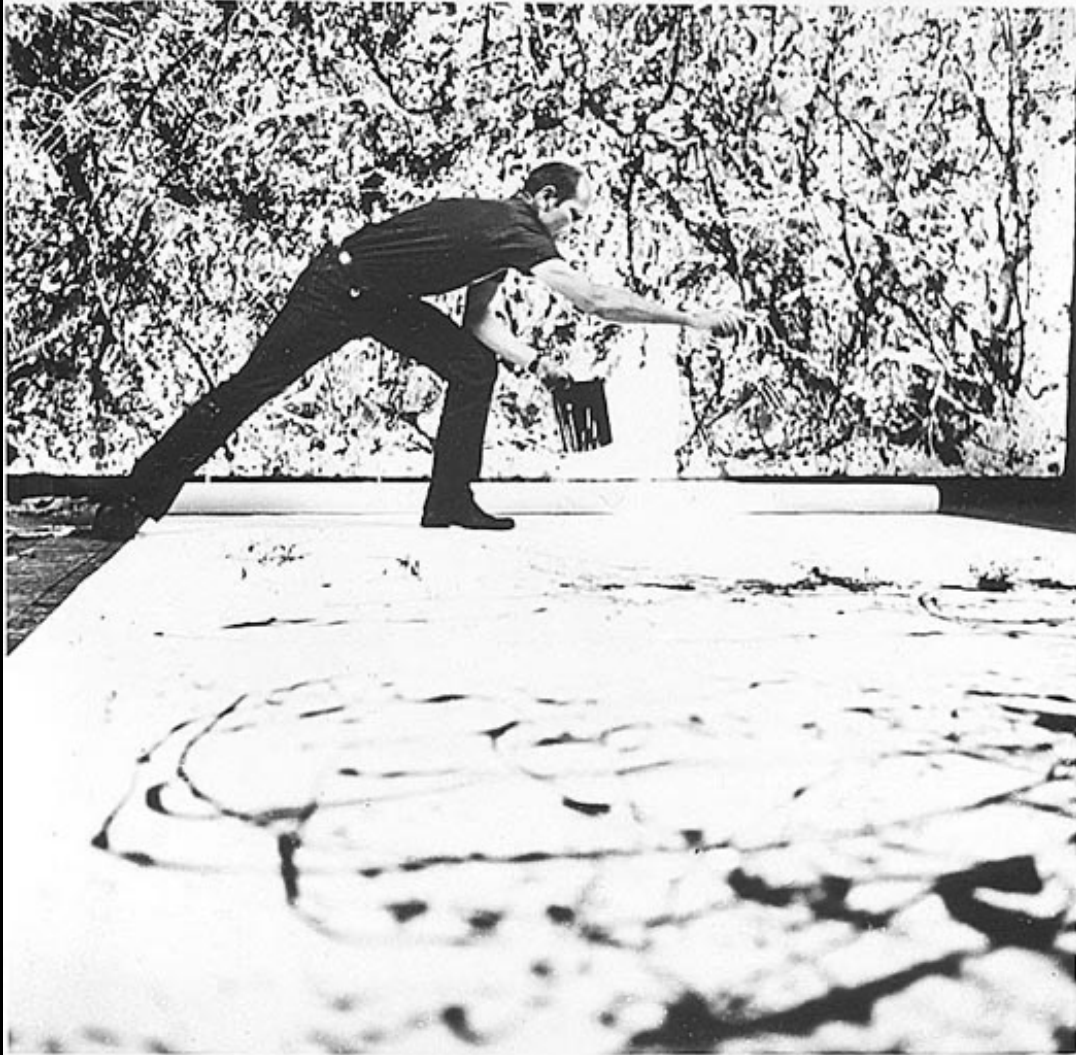
Lynda Benglis Retrospective at the New Museum, NYC, 2011



Lynda Benglis, Phantom, 1971 – Installed in Lynda Benglis Retrospective at the New Museum, NYC, 2011



Kubota Shigeko, Vagina Painting, 1965



Jackson Pollock, c. 1951



Shigeko Kubota, Vagina Painting, 1965



Carolee Schneemann, Interior Scroll, 1975





Ana Mendieta, The Silhueta Series, 1973-1980







Ana Mendieta, Rupestrian Sculptures, Cuba, 1981



Faith Ringgold, Tar Beach, 1988



The issue of racism and sexism in the art world is a continuing problem that most people know very little about. Citizens don't demand equal rights for artists of color and women in museums and public funding agencies. Most people think if you're good enough, you'll make it to the top and so they don't urge their appointed officials to canvass the museums and other cultural institutions to see if they are spending public money to represent the best art done by artists regardless of race and sex.

Ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of the significant art production of men and women of color is ignored by the major art institutions in this country and only token representation is given to the rest. I'd like to see that end—and it will. But right now the art world continues to have a field day and for the most part the only team players are white men.

Despite all of these obstacles, it has never occurred to me to stop, give up, and go away—even though I know that is what oppression is designed to make me do. I continue to look for alternative routes to get where I want to be. That is why I have worked the performances and story quilts in the 1980s; and so far in the 1990s the writing and illustration of children's books, the rewriting of history in *The French Collection*, and this autobiography (1995). These things have given me a constantly expanding audience and the flexibility I need to continue working in the face of adversity.

-- Faith Ringgold



Kara Walker, The
End of Uncle Tom
and the Grand
Allegorical Tableau
of Eva in Heaven,
1995



Kara Walker, Untitled, 1998

Walker described the seminude figure as "your essentialist-token slave maiden in midair."

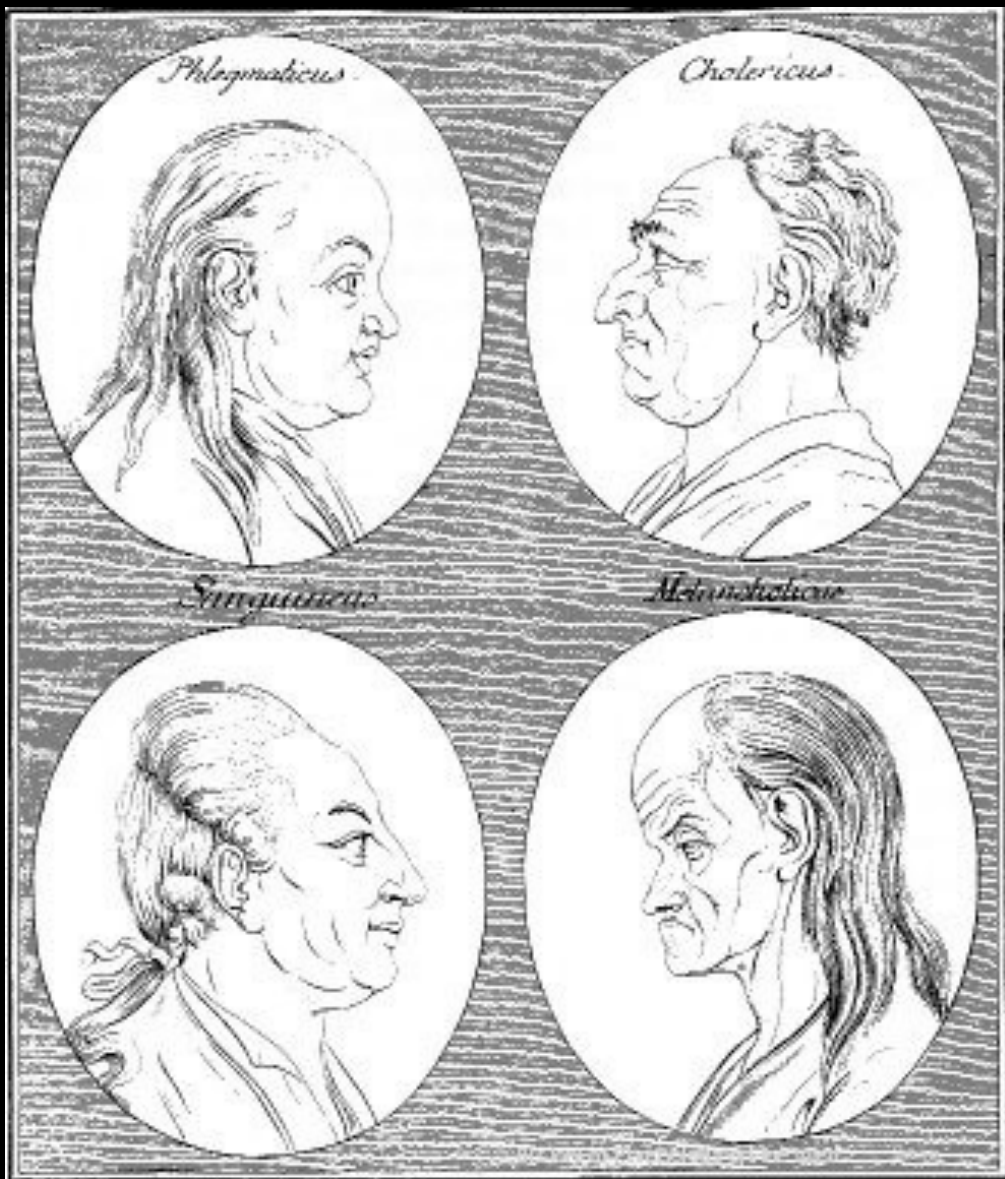


Anon., Erasmus Darwin (left) and his Father Dr. Erasmus Darwin (right) at Chess, c. 1800



Anon., Tertius Galton, with his children, Adèle, Erasmus, Emma, and Bessie, 1817

Disseminated by *The Pocket Lavater*, so popular did Lavater's "science" become that silhouettes burgeoned. During Dr. Erasmus Darwin's and Tertius Galton's lifetimes, they were the most prominent form of portraiture and one to which they both subscribed. Not only did Dr. Erasmus Darwin commission silhouettes of his wife and himself but also of himself playing chess, while Tertius Galton commissioned portraits of himself with his children...Following Lavater's semiotics, the prominent aquiline noses, long receding foreheads, and curvular craniums crisply delineated in these silhouettes, without any sign of "weak" concavities, would have revealed the immense strength and high intelligence of the Darwin and Galton family. Furthermore, the very projection of Dr. Erasmus Darwin's nose and its continuous line with the slope of the forehead, following Lavater's nasal index, would have signified that he was not only brilliant but also commanding. As these silhouettes displayed the heredity of ability in the Darwin and Galton families, this was no doubt why they were chosen for display alongside the chart and the portraits in the First International Eugenics Exhibition. (133-34)



The 'four temperments' from Lavater's *Physiognomische Fragmente*. vol. 4, 1778 The four-temperament theory is a proto-psychological theory which suggests that there are four fundamental personality types: sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic

Wedgwood
Portrait
Medallions