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VEXING

FEMALE VOICES FROM EAST L.A. PUNK

May 18 to August 31, 2008



Claremont, CA (March 14, 2008) — The Claremont Museum of Art is pleased to present *Vexing: Female Voices from East LA Punk* from May 18 to August 31, 2008. The Museum will host an opening reception at 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 17th, with live performances by *Vexing* artists Teresa Covarrubias, Angela Vogel, Lysa Flores and Alice Bag (Museum Member's reception begins at 6 p.m.).

The burgeoning punk rock music scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s in East Los Angeles provided an electrically charged, creative climate. This scene created an atmosphere where performance mixed with poetry, and visual culture was defined by an aesthetic and an attitude. Artists and musicians interfaced and blurred the lines of actions, documentation, photography, sound and style. Taking its name from the all-ages music club The Vex, once housed within East Los Angeles' Self Help Graphics and Art, *Vexing* is an historical investigation of the women who were at the forefront of this movement of experimentation in music, art, culture and politics, while exploring their lasting legacies and contemporary practices. This documentary-style exhibition will include photo, video and audio archives of the era as well as studio work encompassing painting, installation, writings and performance.

In an artistic environment fueled by exchange and experimentation, music played a pivotal role in defining new images of self. This exhibition documents a vital moment of artistic and musical interchange in Los Angeles, with women staking out a position between and within punk rock, East LA and the downtown art scene.

Vexing not only considers their significant contributions to the cultural landscape of LA, but also examines the multiple scenes and identities they negotiated. These women have also served as a model for subsequent generations interested in alternative social movements as a platform of expression, as well as the post-identity conceptual practices of today.

Participants include musicians Alice Bag, Teresa Covarrubias, Angela Vogel, Monica Flores, musician and artist Exene Cervenka, artists Diane Gamboa and Patssi Valdez, photographers Dawn Wirth, Louis Jacinto, Linda Posnick and Frank Gargani, recording label founder of Fatima Records Yolanda Comparan Ferrer, printmakers Richard Duardo, Jesse Vidaurre and John Miner, and filmmaker Jimmy Mendiola. Representing a newer generation of artistic producers influenced by these women are musician/artist Lysa Flores, artists Shizu Saldamando and Sandra de la Loza, photographer Chris TV, performance group Butchlalis de Panochtitlan, and bands The Sirens and Go Betty Go. *Vexing* also includes special concert footage and interviews courtesy of Pete Galindo, Willie Herrón and Lysa Flores from the forthcoming documentary on The Vex, and an excerpt from the forthcoming documentary “Eastside Punks” by Jimmy Alvarado, Pat Perez and Jake Smith.

Research and reproduction support provided by the Chicano Studies Research Center at UCLA. This exhibition is co-curated by Pilar Tompkins and Colin Gunckel. A catalog will accompany the exhibition, with essays by Josh Kun, Michelle Habell-Pallán, Isabel Castro-Melendez, Colin Gunckel and Pilar Tompkins.

Accompanying *Vexing*



Zoe Crosher, 3 Images from **The Reconsidered Archive of Michelle du Bois**, 2007

The Reconsidered Archive of Michelle du Bois

In the 1970s and ‘80s, an American woman named Michelle du Bois traveled alone through cities in the Pacific Rim and documented her highly sexual and liberated lifestyle, collecting hundreds of tourist photographs, family snapshots, and risqué images of herself – and her alter egos. In ***The Reconsidered Archive of Michelle du Bois***, artist Zoe Crosher has manipulated these archived materials to elicit various narratives from within du Bois’s complex process of auto-documentation. In Crosher’s photographic groupings, Du Bois is both heroine and ingénue, toying with persona, identity, fetishism and exoticism. A distinct portrait of a woman emerges, one that is tied to the women’s and sexual liberation movements of the era, while revealing the vulnerability that accompanies the trappings of her lifestyle and her slippery identity.

Zoe Crosher is a Los Angeles-based artist. She received her MFA from CalArts in Valencia, CA and her BA from UC Santa Cruz. Selected exhibitions include: 1-Yr Later, Diverseworks, Houston and DEleanor Hardwood Gallery, San Francisco; OUT THE WINDOW (LAX) at DCKT Contemporary, NY and Small A Projects, Portland, OR; Small Things Fail, Great Things Endure, New Langton Arts, San Francisco, CA and Re-Make, Re-Model, d’Amelio Terras, New York, NY.



Maya Schindler,
I HAVE A DREAM, 2005
Formica

Blah, Blah, Blah Revolution

Frequently employing play on words, Maya Schindler’s practice ranges from the fanciful to the political. The artist’s witty, text-based sculptures and wall pieces beckon the viewer to activate the works by enunciating the phrase presented. ***Blah, Blah, Blah Revolution*** is an outdoor sculptural piece that utilizes scale and material to further the irony of a juxtaposition of apathy and activism.

Maya Schindler is a Los Angeles-based artist originally from Jerusalem, Israel. She received her MFA from Yale University and her BFA from the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem, and attended the CORE program in Houston. Recent solo exhibitions include The Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburg, THE NEW DEAL at Anna Helwing Gallery, Los Angeles, and In Confidence at South First in Brooklyn.

About the Curators

Pilar Tompkins is contemporary curator of the Claremont Museum of Art. Additionally, she is director of the Latin American branch of the Artist Pension Trust, APT: Mexico City, a program providing long-term financial planning and international curatorial opportunities to artists around the world. Recent projects include *L'Ottava Tavola: An Etymology of Contemporary Codes* in Cortona, Italy and *Latitude: Patterns for Orchestrating Domain* in Los Angeles. In 2006 she was a founding director and curator of the *MexiCali Biennial*, a bi-national art exhibition and music event transcending the socio-political and physical constraints of the US/Mexico border. Tompkins has held positions as director of leading contemporary galleries The Project, MC and Anna Helwing Gallery.

Colin Gunckel is a Ph.D candidate in Cinema and Media Studies at UCLA, and is currently completing his dissertation on the exhibition and reception of Mexican cinema in Los Angeles. He has published essays in the Duke University Press anthology *Sleaze Artists: Cinema at the Margins of Taste, Style and Politics* and in the journal *Velvet Light Trap*. Colin also works in Arts Projects at the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, as a developmental editor for both the *A Ver: Revisioning Art History* and *The Chicano Archives* series. In addition, he is the programming director for the Latin American Cinemateca of Los Angeles.

About the Museum

The Claremont Museum of Art seeks to serve a diverse public as a regional museum of international significance and breadth. Grounded in Claremont's important artistic legacy, the Museum engages artists and audiences through a compelling program of exhibitions and educational programs that connect the visual arts with contemporary life. In addition to a diverse slate of exhibitions, the museum features an eclectic store offering contemporary and unexpected gifts from around the world. A comprehensive slate of educational programming and events are offered for all ages. Claremont Museum of Art is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

Hours: Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Museum Store is open until 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and until 5 p.m. on Sunday. The galleries and store are open until 8:30 p.m. the first Friday of every month and closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Admission: \$3 for adults, under 18 are free. Free admission 5 to 8:30 p.m. the first Friday of every month.

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Top images:

Shizu Saldamando
Cindi and Asma in the Ladies Room, 2007
Colored pencil, collage on paper
Collection of Sam Lee and Karen Rapp

Louis Jacinto
The Bags, 1979
Hong Kong Café, Chinatown,
Los Angeles, CA
Black and white C-print
Courtesy drkrn Gallery

Dawn Wirth
Alice Bag, Jensen Rec Center/Silver
Lake Film Festival, 2007
Silver-halide/C print
Courtesy of the artist

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