Feminism at 40

Recent overlapping exhibitions in New York City and East Hampton explored first-generation feminist art and its legacy.

BY CAREY LOVELACE

Mary Beth Edelson:* Some Living American Women Artists / Last Supper, *1972, original paste-up for poster, 32 by 46 inches; in "Personal & Political" at Guild Hall, East Hampton, and "Goddess" at Galerie Lelong, New York.

An important historical survey of what is arguably the late 20th century's most significant art movement was mounted last summer and fall at Guild Hall Museum in East Hampton, in the leafy far reaches of Long Island. "Personal & Political: The Women's Art Movement, 1969-1975" was but one of a cluster of shows that sprouted up seemingly out of nowhere, after 22 years of sparse coverage of first-generation feminist art.[1] Also appearing on the summer scene was Galerie Lelong's "Goddess" in Chelsea, followed in September by "Gloria: Another Look at Feminist Art of the 1970s" at White Columns in Greenwich Village; later in the fall, a sequel, "Regarding Gloria," showed a selection of work by emerging women artists.[2]

Guild Hall's Simon Taylor and co-curator Natalie Ng gathered together 51 works, mostly paintings, sculptures and videos, by 34 artists, from the famous to the overlooked. The show was a noble attempt to deal with the complex web of issues surrounding this idealistic movement that changed the world and certainly art. (In a curious bit of timing, Taylor was fired toward the end of the exhibition's run.[3])

Taylor's dense, 22-page catalogue essay with 143 footnotes traces the history of women-centered political movements and how they played out in the art world, particularly on the East Coast.[4] The exhibition itself, however, didn't attempt a chronological display. Rather, it grouped work according to a few themes featuring key artists represented by one or two pieces. The birth of feminist art from 1960s anti-war activism was made evident, for example, by works such as May Stevens's painting *Top Man* (1975), from the "Big Daddy" series she began in the late 1960s. In this critique of U.S. imperialism, a fat, middle-aged power broker, his head shaped like a wrinkly penis, is wrapped in an American flag, a bulldog jutting phallicly from his lap.

A large gallery titled "Cultural Feminism" featured work by the era's formative art activists. In the early 1970s, Taylor writes, women were breaking away from 1960s radical politics, attempting to integrate what was then known as Women's Lib into mainstream culture. Likewise, artists were taking feminism's innovations—the revalorizing of women's traditional crafts or the rediscovery of historic women of achievement—and merging these with standard art practices and subjects. In the first work of "femmage" by Miriam Schapiro, her canvas *Lady Gengi's Maze* (1972),[5] large squares of fabric seem to float in a hard-edge abstraction, like colorful invaders. Adjacent were Judy Chicago's studies for 1973-74 lithographs inspired by historic females, *Compressed Women Who Yearn to Be Butterflies*.

Emblematic pieces by Faith Ringgold, Joyce Kozloff, Harmony Hammond, Joan Snyder and other central figures hung next to works selected by the curators to represent various groups or phenomena. Included were abstract paintings by Mary Grigoriadis, co-founder of A.I.R., the first all-woman co-op gallery; one of Michelle Stuart's earth-rubbed scrolls, representing Post-Minimalism; Photo-Realist work by Audrey Flack; and Valerie Jaudon's handsome acrylic painting featuring interlocking Celtic patterns, exemplifying the late-'70s Pattern and Decoration movement.

Ng and Taylor, both born in the mid-1960s, came of age during second-generation feminism, which eschewed many of the pioneers' ideas, branding them as "essentialist" (after the belief that female-

How should curators address once-raging debates such as whether feminist art can operate within a capitalist system, whether there is a "female esthetic," whether institutions should become egalitarian and pluralistic?

ness is intrinsic rather than socially constructed). A second room, "Reversing the Gaze," gave a nod to later deconstructive approaches stemming from French psychoanalytic theory, which became the vanguard in feminist thought in the mid-1980s.[6] The works here were crafted in the innocent days before the power-wielding "masculine gaze" was widely recognized. In her "role reversal" paintings, Joan Semmel's unromanticized postcoital *Intimacy/Autonomy* (1974) depicts a couple lying in bed, as seen from the perspective of the woman gazing down a slight, alienating gap between their bodies. In Sylvia Sleigh's art-historical switcheroo *Philip Golub Reclining* (1971), the painter depicts herself like Velázquez in the background recording a languorous nude, here a long-haired youth who regards himself in the mirror, à la the *Rokeby Venus*.

"The body," which became a locus of so much academic theorizing, was represented in works such as *Carving: A Traditional Sculpture* (1972) by Eleanor Antin, a photo sequence of the artist, naked, at various stages of a diet. Shifting the terms of power to the "female gaze," women artists focused on the male anatomy, and at Guild Hall, penises were everywhere—limp, erect, attached to bodies or as solo subjects. On either side of an ornate fireplace, 12½-foot-high scrolls each bore a busy charcoal rendering of an immense, hairy screw thrusting upward. This was Judith Bernstein's witty *Two Panel Vertical* (1973). As (literal) "pendants" nearby, Louise Bourgeois's wicked, phallic cast-bronze sculptures limply hung by wire from the ceiling, the double-faced *Janus Fleuri* and *Hanging Janus with Jacket* (both 1968). Curiously, the architectural quality of the phalluses made this one of the few exhibitions at Guild Hall to compete successfully against the sometimes-intrusive personality of the building's vaulted ceilings and Beaux-Arts detailing.

A small room was devoted to video and documentation of performances. In general, it would seem that images were selected mainly from books. But all in all, this brave little show set a benchmark for the future.

In the entry to White Columns's quietly brilliant, lighthearted "Gloria" was a monitor playing vintage video featuring Linda Carter undergoing a "swirl" that transforms her again and again from a workaday female to a tiara-bedecked, sequin-clad superhuman. Dara Birnbaum's *Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman* (1978), a loop edited from TV clips, wistfully spoofs the aspiration at the heart of Women's Lib to unleash the inner

May Stevens:* Top Man, *1975, acrylic on canvas, 60 by 40 inches. Photo courtesy Mary Ryan Gallery, New York.

Amazon, to repel bullets and charge with amazing speed (and perhaps to look sexy in the process).

"Gloria" was gleefully revisionist. The exhibition title referred simultaneously to Gloria Steinem, the liberal daughter Gloria Stivik in "All in the Family," Patti Smith's version of "Gloria," and a John Cassavetes film of the same name. This information was noted in a curator's statement in the pink-bannered, newspaper-style catalogue that accompanied the show; the catalogue, fashioned after the funky alternative publications of the counterculture era, included statements by '70s artists and critics about what they think of today's feminism.

Curators trying to present an overview of 1970s feminism face thorny issues. Early activists rebelled against notions of quality, holding that such rankings were used by the dominant culture to exclude; thus works that have historical resonance within the movement are not necessarily the most esthetically successful, and vice versa. Women have warred, and still do, often bitterly, over what art qualifies as "feminist." Categories abound and contradict one another. How should curators address once-raging debates such as whether feminist art can operate within a capitalist system, whether there is a "female esthetic," whether institutions should abandon all hierarchy to be egalitarian and pluralistic?

Guest curators Catherine Morris and Ingrid Schaffner assembled an unusual collection of works, mostly performative or on paper, by 22 artists, some of whom, like Yoko Ono, Barbara Kruger, Joan Jonas and Cindy Sherman, are not normally associated with feminist art. Assembled here were some very good works that are a lot of

Miriam Schapiro:* Lady Gengi's Maze, *1972, mixed mediums, 72 by 88 inches. Works this spread in "Personal & Political."

fun to look at and that simultaneously show how the movement laid the groundwork for many subsequent trends.

Vitrines displayed an array of fascinating ephemera from early political groups such as New York's Ad Hoc Committee and Women Artists in Revolution (WAR) and from alternative institutions like the Los Angeles Women's Building. There were announcement cards, playbills and copies of magazines such as *Chrysalis* and *Heresies*. The material was drawn from the Women's Art Registry Collection at Rutgers University, which houses critic Lucy Lippard's personal archives.

Ironically, it appears that 1970s feminist art's most enduring legacies aren't the things it labored so hard at—vaginal iconography, nonhierarchical modes of collaboration, alternative art-world power structures. One legacy is surely the jokes, visual one-liners and parodies—tactics that, as later perfected by the Guerrilla Girls, make feminism's bitter pill go down more smoothly. In her deadpan video *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975), a knife-wielding Martha Rosler presents, one by one, a litany of alarmingly lethal kitchen implements, handling each with delicious implications of violence. In Mierle Laderman Ukeles's series of dictums framing housewifery in the heightened rhetoric of workers' rights, her *Manifesto for Maintenance Art* (1969), there is a brilliant conflation of Groucho and Karl Marx: "After the Revolution, who will pick up the garbage?" (Ukeles went on to address the garbage question in her many works with the New York Sanitation Department.)

Sylvia Sleigh:* Philip Golub Reclining, *1971, oil on canvas, 42 by 60 inches.

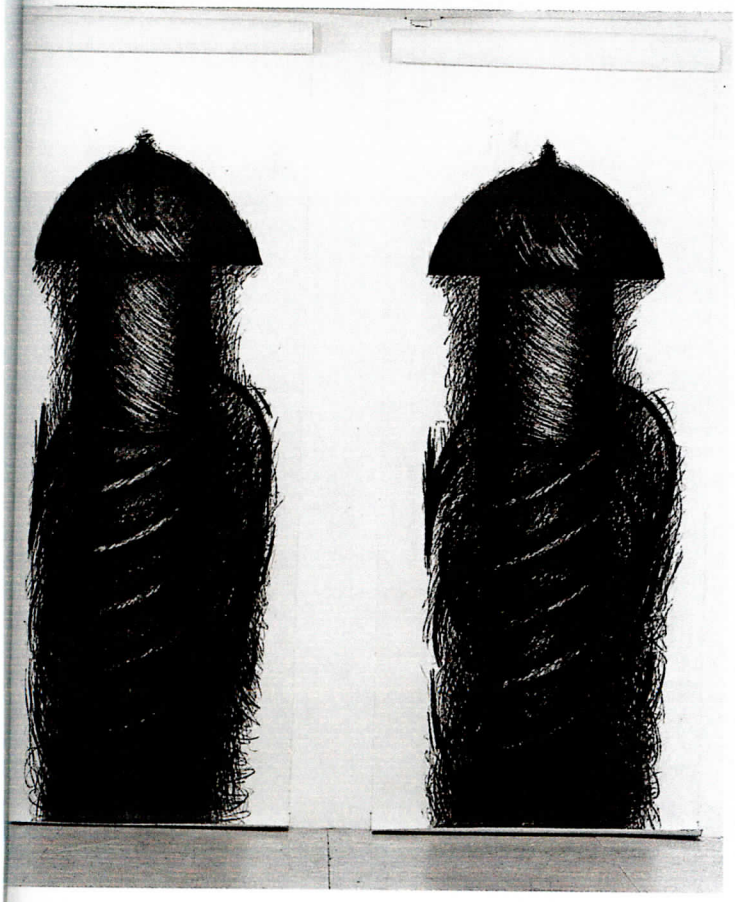
Hannah Wilke was never a participant in the movement, but she has since been adopted as a feminist hero. In *So Help Me Hannah* (1978), six posters show the late, great body artist, with her sleepy bedroom eyes, in black-and-white photo images of faux chase scenes—running naked over a steam-engine contraption, holding a toy gun, seemingly cornered—each image with an authoritative quote over it. In one, where she is surrounded by bathtub toys and fake ray guns, her legs spread open, the overlying text queries, "What does this represent? What do you represent?"[7]

A number of women besides Wilke were looking their personal best. Carolee Schneemann is photographed crouching nude as she extracts the long, snakelike *Interior Scroll* (1975) from her vagina; the famous image is captured in a large, urine-and-beet-juice-stained 40-by-77-inch print. And from a far room glowered the leather-clad, spiky-haired, machine-gun-toting Valie Export, wearing her *Action Pants: Genital Panic* (1969/2001)—leather trousers with the crotch cut out.

In an alcove was a veritable shrine's worth of artifacts commemorating Lynda Benglis's notorious November 1974 *Artforum* ad in which, her tanned body oil-slicked in the manner of porno pics, she posed nude sporting a huge fake penis in order to (among other things) spoof gallery ads featuring male artists in macho poses.[8] (A vitrine offered an outraged letter from several of *Artforum*'s associate editors decrying the "brutalizing" nature and "extreme vulgarity" of the image.[9])

There were many other instances of women wielding sexuality like a well-aimed weapon. Indeed, Wilke and Benglis, both seen as politically incorrect in their day, are the spiritual parents to postfeminist artists such as Tracey Emin, her art tent decorated with the names of *Everybody I've Ever Slept With*, and Vanessa Beecroft, with her humiliated-looking battalions of whippet-thin naked females standing on display.

In fact, the show unobtrusively demonstrated connections to an overwhelming amount of later work. Schneemann's extraction of her internal text, for example, brought to mind Kiki Smith's sculptures involving extrusions of fluids from bodily orifices. Robert Gober's body art also falls into this lineage. In addition, the critical impulse in 1970s women's art—its desire to poke fun, decode sexist messages, challenge the canon—laid the groundwork for the more theoretical and deconstructive antiauthoritarian postmodern critiques (including Sherrie Levine's and Allan McCollum's), which subsequently dominated the art world.[10]



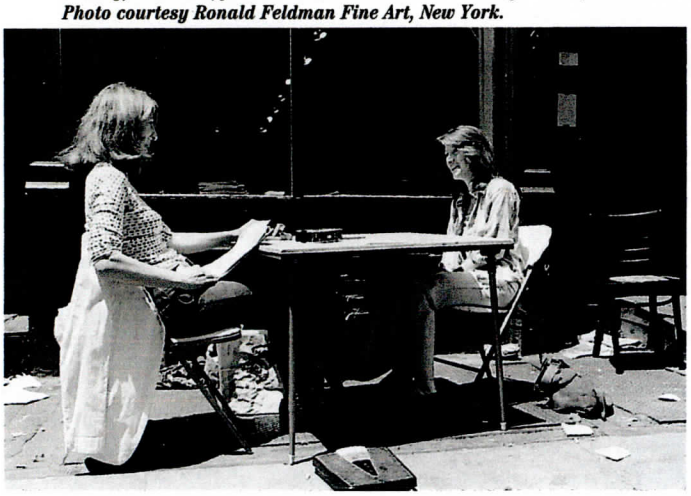
Judith Bernstein:* Two Panel Vertical, *1973, charcoal on paper, two scrolls: 150 by 60 inches each.

Near White Columns's entrance hung two of Nancy Spero's enigmatic "Codex Artaud" scrolls, *XXVIII A* and *B* (1972), tiny hieroglyphics fusing male and female figures. These pieces signify how society silences artists, as it did the "hysterical" Artaud; it's an allegory, too, for how women are muffled.

In three early (1978-79) Sherman "film stills,"

Still from Dara Birnbaum's* Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman, *1978, color video, 5¾ minutes. Works above and below in "Gloria" at White Columns, New York.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles (left) performing* Art Interviews *at A.I.R. Gallery, New York, from the "Maintenance Art Activity" series, 1973-74. Photo courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Art, New York.



sly satires of objects of male desire in 1960s foreign films, the feminist subtext seems especially strong. Standing beside an unlit hearth at crotch level, she smokes dreamily. In another, foodstuffs tumble out of her spilled grocery bag. The confrontational approach of Jenny Holzer's "Inflammatory Essay" posters (1979-82), which were plastered, guerrillalike, on city walls ("Don't be polite to me. Don't try to make me feel nice. I'll cut the smile off your face . . .") suggests a different reading for her "Truisms," not mimicry of the neutral tone of authority.

Mary Kelly's *Primapara* (1973/1997) represented the art world's embrace of critiques grounded in theories of language, the psychic/linguistic structure in which culture is seen as a text to be decoded. Twelve small black-and-white photographic prints document her son's first bath and manicure. This is a satellite work to her groundbreaking *Post-Partum Document*, that 135-piece magnum opus so instrumental in introducing into the art world the philosophical neo-Freudianism of Jacques Lacan. This work was a critical inquiry, following Lacan's views, into the construction of gender identity. Indeed, a number of works in the show employing mirrors may refer to Lacan's "mirror stage." Among them are Adrian Piper's "Food for the Spirit" series (1971), in which the artist photographed her image in the mirror as she read Immanuel Kant and fasted. In Joan Jonas's video *Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy* (1972), one of several mirrors is smashed in midperformance.

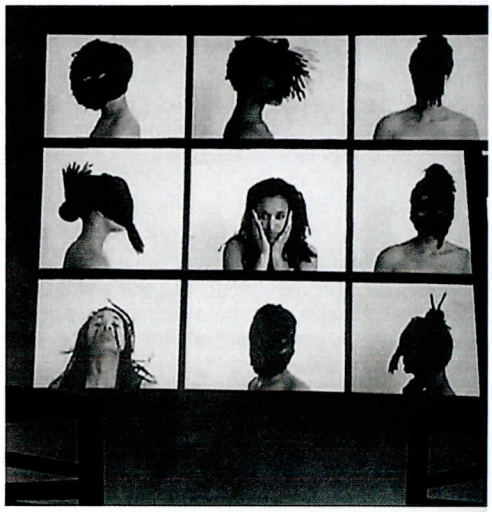
A 72-minute tape featured Yoko Ono and John Lennon's 1969 *Bed Peace*, the famous "happening" in which they celebrated their marriage by staying under the sheets and holding press conferences for one week as a peace protest. Here, though, this icon of sexual-revolution pop lore was placed in the context of domesticity, the personal becoming the political. It was next to Kelly's ruminations on her infant son and Mimi Smith's 1973-74 wall pieces of knotted string and tape measures—made while she was looking after her young children—delineating such ordinary things around her as a telephone, an open door and a window. In these surroundings, one saw how Fluxus artist Ono added yin to Lennon's rock-music yang, a revolutionary act, for it touched not just Lennon but the counterculture as a whole.

"Gloria" was culled from the best and brightest of a pathbreaking decade, and it may be unfair to compare the sequel, "Regarding Gloria," which featured 10 artists chosen from an open call by White Columns director Lauren Ross and "Gloria" curator Morris. Billed as a modern-day response to 1970s feminism, it included artists who learned well the movement's tactics of parody and transgression. In a work drawn from her "Urban Archaeology" series (1999-2002), Edythe Wright displayed a deconstructed black WonderBra—minuscule bits of padding, synthetic stuffing, black lace and support mounted on pins, like parts of a butterfly. In the comic-strip-style episodes of *How My Friend Brenda Became the Class Slut* (2002), Jackie Gendel, in oil and wax on small panels, offers stories of an early bloomer who enjoys the attention of leering boys but suffers the cattiness of the girls.

Quivering underneath much of the work, one felt uneasily, were reactionary, 1950s-style attitudes. Particularly disturbing was the fact that other women (not society or the patriarchy) often seemed to be the principal targets. In Melissa Potter's "Trophy Wives" series (2002), 18-by-12-inch digital prints with titles like *Price Per Fuck: Big Ring* and *Price Per Fuck: Big Car*, women are skewered for trading their bodies for status and consumer goods in marriage.

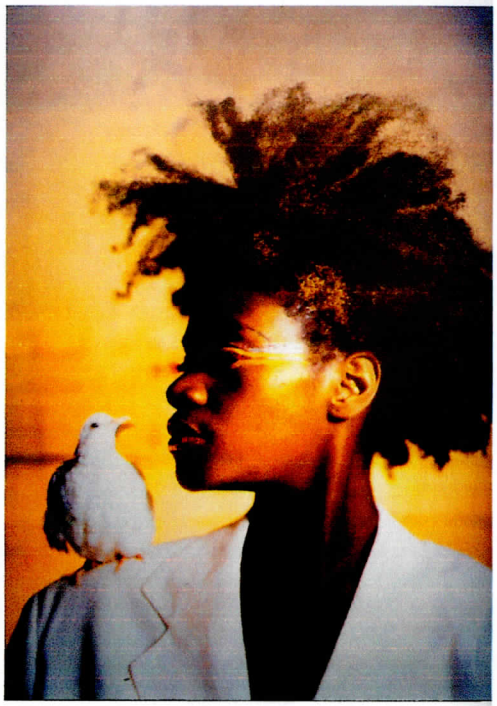
Sarah Martin's five large color photographs show Tennessee lasses hanging together, wearing swimsuits, licking lollipops, playing a guitar. According to a wall text, *Tennessee Virgins—Our Eighth Annual Photo Shoot* (2002) depicts a group who met as teenagers at church and took a vow of chastity until marriage. This work would be of little interest without the word "virgin." (Martin herself is a lapsed member.) But is it meant as celebration or ridicule of their old-fashioned values? This, like other works in the show, is weakened by unexamined intentions.

Another 1970s strategy of empowerment was to turn to the misty past and recast prehistory in a hopeful light: perhaps a Neolithic matriarchy predated the Iron Age patriarchy.



Ingrid Mwangi:* Neger—Don't Call Me, *2000, video, sound, chairs with built-in speakers, 11½ minutes. Photo courtesy Museum for African Art, Queens.

Lyle Ashton Harris/Thomas Allen Harris:* Untitled (Mother), *1998, Cibachrome, 50 by 40 inches. Works above and below in "Goddess."



Photographs by Laurie Anderson (left), 1975 and 1977, and Valie Export (right), 1969/2001 and 1970. Works this page in "Gloria."

Left to right, Nancy Spero's collages Codex Artaud XXVIII A *and* B, *1972, Martha Rosler's photomontage* Cargo Cult, *ca. 1972, Hannah Wilke's photo series* So Help Me Hannah, *1978; in vitrine, 1970s archival materials.*

Many 1970s women artists wielded sexuality like a well-aimed weapon. Wilke and Benglis, both seen as politically incorrect in their time, are spiritual parents to today's more polished provocateurs.

The "goddess movement" had a certain poetry, and some of its participants produced work grounded in serious scholarship. But at its worst, it was associated with fake deities, sappy New Age rituals and cloudy thinking. Galerie Lelong's tribute, "Goddess," juxtaposed photo-based art and video by two generations.

The '70s "goddess" net swept up an array of artists, effective and naive; included in this relatively spare show were the most famous. Pioneer Mary Beth Edelson staged private rituals using archeological references, from which she created evocative altered photos. *See For Yourself* (1977) is a time-lapse photograph taken in the darkness of a Yugoslavian island cave where rites were once held; it shows Edelson meditating in a fire ring amid ghostly streaks of light. Her photographic collage pasteup for a poster, *Some Living American Women Artists/Last Supper* (1972), posits the "goddess" as a role model. Pasting artists' heads onto a Leonardo reproduction, Edelson presents Georgia O'Keeffe as Jesus surrounded by apostles Benglis, Bourgeois, Elaine de Kooning, Helen Frankenthaler, Nancy Graves, Lila Katzen, Lee Krasner, Louise Nevelson, Ono, M.C. Richards, Alma Thomas and June Wayne. The border features 67 other headshots of women artists, with a caption below naming them.

Another strong inclusion was a 1980 photograph from Ana Mendieta's landmark "silueta" series, in which she traced her outline in beds of earth, sometimes using spectacular means such as gunpowder or fire. In the image at Lelong, the form resembled a homunculus bulging from a clay bank, a root running through it like an artery. Bourgeois was shown in a 1975 photograph wearing a many-breasted latex costume she made to evoke Diana of Ephesus.

While the goddess movement was often criticized for appropriating imagery from primal cultures, Lelong's younger generation, concerned with identity politics, made race very much an issue in the contemplation of the mythic goddess. In Tracey Rose's Lambda photograph, a naked *Venus Baartman* (2001) is seen crouching in the cloud-covered African bush. She represents the 19th-century "Hottentot Venus," who was displayed as a curiosity throughout Europe because of her enormous hips; after her death, her genitals were exhibited in a bottle of formaldehyde in Paris's Musée de l'Homme. An alternative view of the goddess was provided by a pair of male artists the gallery chose to include. Lyle Ashton Harris, in collaboration with his brother, Thomas Allen Harris, showed a handsome 1998 Cibachrome, *Untitled (Mother)*. A female model is posed like a mythic goddess, skin glowing copper against a golden sunset, a parrot on her shoulder.

Ingrid Mwangi, child of a German father and Kenyan mother, in her video installation *Neger—Don't Call Me* (2000), intones her anguish at being labeled white in Kenya and black in Germany as she fashions her long, kinky hair into strange geometries over and around her face, in configurations that she conceives of as masks.

The ironic stance of these later works is much more polished and cosmopolitan than their earnest and self-searching precursors—and safer, too, for so much more is known. The pioneers were starting from nowhere, groping in the dark, and their work often has the feel of experiments. Yet the work of Lelong's younger artists is, in fact, the direct progeny of the Women's Movement, extending all the way back to the very first 1970 rap sessions of Judy Chicago and her Cal State Fresno students. The primitive psychodramas they staged explored how they felt when men whistled at them on the street. That was the first time consciousness-raising fused with art. Even though in

retrospect it may appear simplistic, that particular mix of psychological inquiry, politics and art is only one of the gifts that first-generation feminism has left. It is a legacy that deserves future in-depth exhibitions. □

1. Earlier shows include "Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's *Dinner Party* in Feminist Art History" at the Armand Hammer Museum, Los Angeles [Apr. 24-Aug. 18, 1996], a quasi-survey gathering a large quantity of women's art from the 1970s to the 1990s; and "NowHere," organized by Laura Cottingham for the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark [May 15-Sept. 8, 1996], presenting work of the 1970s alongside that of the 1990s.

2. Other instances of the new attention to feminist art last fall were Judy Chicago's retrospective at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. [Oct. 11, 2002-Jan. 6, 2003], and an exhibition of her multimedium *The Dinner Party* [Sept. 20, 2002-Feb. 9, 2003] at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, where it will have a permanent home starting in 2004 [see article on p. 71]. Looking forward, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, is organizing an exhibition of international feminist art, curated by Connie Butler, to open in fall 2005.

3. Under conditions that remain unclear. Articles in the *East Hampton Star* and *Southampton Press* (both Oct. 31, 2002) detail the incident.

4. "The Women's Art Movement: From Radical to Cultural Feminism, 1969-1975." The catalogue also contained an essay, "Embodying Feminism," by Ng, and an essay by Kate Millet.

5. "Femmage" denoted "feminist collage," often textiles on canvas; it arose from Schapiro's experience with the landmark 1972 Womanhouse in L.A., when she, Judy Chicago and Cal Arts students converted a dilapidated Hollywood mansion into a Dadaesque "female environment."

6. Although its roots lay in the 1970s, with essays by Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous and Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and the Narrative Cinema."

7. Taken from a famous Ad Reinhardt cartoon of a male gallerygoer standing confused in front of an abstract painting, asking, "What does this represent?"

8. In particular Robert Morris, who had published a photo of himself in Nazi-inspired S&M gear as the announcement for his installation *Voice* at Castelli Gallery in 1974.

9. The protesting editors were Lawrence Alloway, Max Kozloff, Rosalind Krauss, Joseph Masheck and Annette Michelson, in *Artforum*, December 1974.

10. For a discussion of feminism's impact on postmodernism, see Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism," in Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic*, Bay Press, 1983.

"Personal & Political: The Women's Art Movement" [Aug. 10-Oct. 20, 2002], curated by Simon Taylor with independent scholar Natalie Ng, at Guild Hall, East Hampton, N.Y., featured works by Laurie Anderson, Eleanor Antin, Lynda Benglis, Judith Bernstein, Louise Bourgeois, Judy Chicago, Mary Beth Edelson, Louise Fishman, Audrey Flack, Hermine Freed, Eunice Golden, Mary Grigoriadis, Nancy Grossman, Harmony Hammond, Valerie Jaudon, Joyce Kozloff, Suzanne Lacy, Ana Mendieta, Kate Millett, Alice Neel, Adrian Piper, Faith Ringgold, Martha Rosler, Betye Saar, Miriam Schapiro, Carolee Schneemann, Joan Semmel, Sylvia Sleigh, Joan Snyder, Nancy Spero, May Stevens, Michelle Stuart, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Hannah Wilke and Martha Wilson.

"Gloria: Another Look at Feminist Art in the 1970s" [Sept. 13-Oct. 20, 2002], curated by Ingrid Schaffner and Catherine Morris at New York's White Columns, featured works by Laurie Anderson, Eleanor Antin, Lynda Benglis, Dara Birnbaum, Valie Export, Nancy Grossman, Jenny Holzer, Joan Jonas, Mary Kelly, Barbara Kruger, Ana Mendieta, Yoko Ono, Adrian Piper, Martha Rosler, Carolee Schneemann, Cindy Sherman, Mimi Smith, Nancy Spero, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Hannah Wilke and Jacki Apple & Martha Wilson.

"Regarding Gloria" [Oct. 25-Dec. 1, 2002], also at White Columns, curated by Catherine Morris and Lauren Ross, featured works by Jackie Gendel, Shannon Griffiths, M.K. Guth, Tsehai Johnson, Kathleen Kranack, Sarah Martin, Melissa Potter, Analia Segal, Edythe Wright and Cheryl Yun.

"Goddess" [June 20-July 26, 2002], at New York's Galerie Lelong, featured works by Louise Bourgeois, Renee Cox, Mary Beth Edelson, Naomi Fisher, Lyle Ashton Harris/Thomas Allen Harris, Ana Mendieta, Tracey Moffatt, Ingrid Mwangi, Tracey Rose, Carolee Schneemann, Nancy Spero and Hannah Wilke.

The "goddess movement," another early strategy of empowerment, turned to the misty past and recast history in a hopeful light: perhaps a Neolithic matriarchy predated the Iron Age patriarchy.

Author: *Carey Lovelace, a New York-based critic, is at work on a history of women's art in the 1970s.*