

# VENUS

MANHATTAN LOS ANGELES



## CUNT: VAGINA AND REPRESENTATION OF THE FEMALE BODY

By Artishock | Jul 11, 2017 | NEWS |

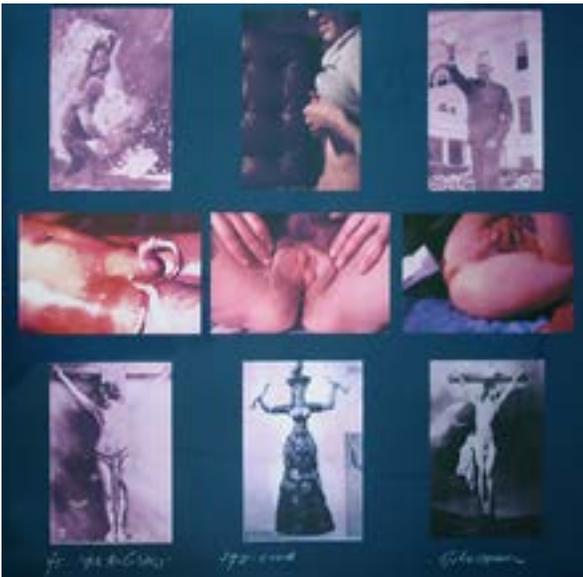


The history of women in art has been largely the story of women as subjects or as muse. A reality that seeks to put in check *CUNT*, the collective that opens this July 15 at the Venus Los Angeles gallery.

Participating artists understand their practice as a way of defending the centrality and importance of female perspectives in creative production, creating works that go against the dominant history, that is, affirming that women can be both image and creative of images.

**Judith Bernstein, VALIE EXPORT, Dorothy Iannone, Marilyn Minter, Carolee Schneemann and Betty Tompkins** present in *CUNT* some of their most emblematic works, as well as others expressly produced for the exhibition, many of them based on representations of female sexuality.

Linked by their interest in altering the way women's bodies are represented in both art and media, these artists worked -independently on one another- to create images that blatantly represent the vagina as a place of power.



*CUNT* presents works made between 1964 and the present time to situate the practices of these artists as part of a reaction against the misogyny present in the world of art in the sixties and seventies and to celebrate the strength and obstinate artistic activism that they have shared for almost five decades.

The exhibition argues that methods of representation have an impact on the interpretation of bodies and stories in a way that can challenge the prevailing understanding of female sexuality.

The artists included in this exhibition present works based on images of the body, copulation or masturbation that underline these ideas, but none of them elevates, romanticizes or subjugates female sexuality for the comfort of the viewer. On the contrary, her works amplify, repeat and glorify images of the female body - and vaginas in particular - to demand that the public understand women as both subjects and creators.





Bernstein, one of the founders of AIR Gallery , the first women-owned, women-run gallery in the United States, has participated in the Guerrilla Girls , a group of radical feminist artists dedicated to combating sexism and racism in the world Of the art since its foundation in 1985. For *CUNT* , Bernstein has conceived a new mural for the outer wall of the gallery, as well as a new series of paintings of protest of high sexual content.

VALIE EXPORT - who, at age 28, changed her name from Waltraud Hollinger to VALIE EXPORT, in capital letters, to counteract the dominant male presence on the Viennese art scene - exhibits her *Touch Cinema* and *Mann & Frau & Animal* videos ( 1970-1973).

Dorothy Iannone exhibits a collection of early and important works, including *I Was Thinking Of You III* (1975-2006), which consists of a large, hand-painted box in which a monitor reproduces a recording of the artist's face while masturbating.

Minter's oldest work on the show is a 1992 metal painting showing a woman with her legs raised, her vagina covered with white cotton panties. Also exhibited are two large format paintings of enamel on metal, with representations of vaginas in the foreground, partially invisibilizadas by fog.

Carolee Schneemann's work was one of the first to investigate the relationship between politics and gender erotica. Her practice has been acclaimed for the way she uses his body as a material to create videos, performances and situations to address the politics of the body. In this exhibition, she presents a video called *Fuses* , from 1966, in which she has sex with her boyfriend then, James Tenney. Schneemann also shows a work on paper linked to his performance *Ask the Goddess* , which makes comparisons between contemporary female sexuality and the deities of ancient cultures.

Betty Tompkins' practice has focused almost exclusively on photorealistic representations of genitalia and sexual acts. With almost absolute accuracy, Tompkins portrays vaginas and penises in large-format canvases, as well as heterosexual and homosexual relationships in the foreground. The exhibition includes a selection of her first works on paper, which have some psychedelic influence on their representations of breasts, mouths and penises.



*CUNT*

Venus Over Los Angeles, California, United States

From July 15 to September 2, 2017