

Exhibitions

Carolee Schneemann
Painting, What it Became

Feb 21-Mar 28, 2009

Curated by Maura Reilly

Press release

P·P·O·W

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Opening Reception: Saturday, February 21, 6-8pm

Curated by Maura Reilly

with illustrated color catalog and essay

"I'm a painter. I'm still a painter and I will die a painter. Everything that I have developed has to do with extending visual principles off the canvas." - Carolee Schneemann, 1993

P.P.O.W Gallery is pleased to present *Painting, What It Became*, our third solo exhibition of Carolee Schneemann's work since 2002. Curated by Maura Reilly, the Founding Curator of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, this will be Schneemann's first exhibition that exclusively surveys her paintings.

Carolee Schneemann's paintings from the late 1950s and 1960s have been a largely overlooked aspect of her oeuvre, relegated to the margins, considered early or immature work, as opposed to ingenious corollaries to the Kinetic Theater, Judson Dance Theater, performances, films she was producing simultaneously, and/or as harbingers of what was to be produced in the decades to come. This is the first exhibition dedicated to Schneemann's paintings—the last being one in 1982 at the Max Hutchinson Gallery in NYC. Its aim is to reconsider Schneemann as a painter, who never ceased conceptualizing all her work as always related to the painterly gesture, to prying open 'the frame', and to conceiving of the body as tactile material; that is, as paint, canvas or paintbrush.

Painting, What It Became traces Schneemann's works from 1957 to the present, highlighting the transformation from traditional paintings on canvas in the lineage of Abstract Expressionism (*Summer I: Honey Suckle*, 1959), to painting-constructions (*Tenebration*, 1961, *Sphinx*, 1962, *Meat Joy Collage*, 1999), kinetic sculptures (*Fur Wheel*, 1962, *War Mop*, 1983), to performances (*Body Collage*, 1968, *Up To An Including Her Limits*, 1973-76), and films (*Fuses*, 1965, *Infinity Kisses—The Movie*, 2008). This historical trajectory through Schneemann's work aims to reexamine how each medium developed "has to do with extending visual principles off the canvas." Her most significant works, treasured by many, misunderstood by some, can be re-envisioned, then, as performative-paintings, filmic-paintings, kinetic-paintings, always with the pictorial plane of painting, however shattered and gestural it may appear, remaining as the grounding mechanism and force field.

The monumental *Four Fur Cutting Boards* 1963—the kinetic painting-construction in front of which the artist performed her famous photographic series, *Eye Body (Thirty Six Transformative Actions)*--is the centerpiece of the exhibition.

In conjunction with this exhibition Carolina Nitsch Project Room will be presenting, Carolee Schneemann, Performance Photographs from the 1970s, on view February 12 – March 28, 2009.

Carolee Schneemann will be giving a lecture, "Mysteries of the Iconographies." at Brooklyn Museum's Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, Sunday April 5 at 2 pm.

Carolee Schneemann received a B.A. from Bard College and an M.F.A. from the University of Illinois. She holds Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degrees from the California Institute of the Arts and the Maine College of Art. Her work has been exhibited worldwide, at institutions including: the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Centre

Georges Pompidou, Paris; The Reina Sophia Museum, Madrid; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the National Film Theatre, London. In 1997, a retrospective of her work entitled Carolee Schneemann - Up To And Including Her Limits was held at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. Awards received include: Art Pace International Artist Residency; two Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grants; Guggenheim Fellowship; Gottlieb Foundation Grant; National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship; Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship; and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the College Art Association. Her published books include: Cezanne, She Was A Great Painter (1976); Early and Recent Work (1983); More Than Meat Joy: Complete Performance Works and Selected Writings (1979), and Imaging Her Erotics - Essays, Interviews, Projects (2002). She has a forthcoming book through Duke University Press, edited by Kristine Stiles. She has taught at many institutions, including: New York University; California Institute of the Arts; Bard College; and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

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