

Women.Now

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Adriana Czernin
Ines Doujak
Béatrice Dreux
Titanilla Eisenhart
Maria Hahnenkamp
Heidi Harsieber
Sabine Jelinek
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Eva Schlegel
Claudia Schumann
Joan Semmel
Betty Tompkins
Martha Wilson

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CHRISTINE MOSER

Foreword

History and Her Story

100 years ago – in 1918 and 1920, respectively – women in Austria and in the U.S. were given the right to vote, a milestone in political equality. In the U.S., this past year has seen women’s grand resurgence, in politics, the art world, and Hollywood alike. Female artists’ presence in shows at galleries and museums, in the media and in the art market has risen significantly.

As for Austria: Renate Bertlmann, a leading feminist avant-garde visual artist and winner of the Grand Austrian State Prize in 2017, will be the first female artist to represent Austria with a solo show at the Biennale di Venezia in 2019. (Bertlmann’s work was already on display at the ACFNY as part of the exhibition *Self-Timer Stories* in 2014.)

Both historic developments set the stage for the group exhibition *Women.Now*. Renowned Austrian curator Sabine Fellner has assembled seventeen contemporary female artists based in Austria and the United States: Uli Aigner, Sevda Chkoutova, Adriana Czernin, Ines Doujak, Béatrice Dreux, Titanilla Eisenhart, Maria Hahnenkamp, Heidi Harsieber, Sabine Jelinek, Ellen Lesperance, Margot Pitz, Frenzi Rigling, Eva Schlegel, Claudia Schumann, Joan Semmel, Betty Tompkins, and Martha Wilson. Showcasing works that engage with a wide range of topics and exploring historical narratives, questions of individual freedom, sexuality, craftsmanship, and cultural constructions, the show is a powerful commentary on women's roles in society and the arts today.

I am also grateful to art critic Wendy Vogel for sharing her, U.S. American, take on a *conditio humana revisited*.

ADRIANA CZERNIN

Adriana Czernin (b. 1969 in Sofia, Bulgaria) places ornaments, patterns, and irregularity at the core of her work, and uses these elements to reflect on conformity and the power of the abnormal. Her drawings have been featured in solo exhibitions at the Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) in Vienna (2018) and at the Structura Gallery in Sofia (2018). Czernin has also participated in multiple group shows in Aachen, Berlin, Cairo, and Vienna. The artist lives and works in Vienna and Rettenegg, Styria.



Selfportrait, 2018

Watercolor, pencil, colored pencil on paper

15 x 10.8 inches (38 x 27.5 cm)

Courtesy Galerie Martin Janda/Photo: Anna Konrath

BETTY TOMPKINS

Betty Tompkins (b. 1945 in Washington, D.C.) reflects on cultural taboos in an often defiantly honest and straightforward way. A striking example are her large-scale *Fuck Paintings*, in which she depicts realistically painted close-ups of sexual intercourse, or *Women Words* (on display at *Women.Now*), where Tompkins exposes sexist stereotypes still prevalent today. She is the recipient of multiple grants and her work has been featured extensively in the past two decades in New York, Florida, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, and France. The artist lives and works in New York and Pennsylvania.

In 2002 Tompkins asked the public to send her various terms for “woman,” a request that she repeated in 2013. She received thousands of words and phrases that speak volumes of the widespread stereotypes still held. The submissions ranged from “mother” to “tart,” “slut” to “idol.” She printed these on loose notebook pages and small canvases, pointing attention to the kind of vocabulary that dominates the negotiation of female identities.



From the series *Women Words*, 2016 (ongoing)
Installation, acrylic on paper, acrylic on canvas
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and P-P-O-W, New York

The Authors

Sabine Fellner is a curator living and working in Vienna. She has contributed to a variety of publications on Austrian art of the 19th and 20th century as well as everyday culture and (co-)curated exhibitions for Austrian venues such as LENTOS Kunstmuseum Linz, NORDICO Stadtmuseum Linz, Forum Frohner in Krems, Leopold Museum Vienna, the Jewish Museum Vienna, and the Belvedere Museum Vienna. In addition to *Women.Now*, recent shows include *Rabenmütter/Mother of the Year* (2015–2016), *The Better Half: Jewish Women Artists Before 1938* (2016–2017), and *Aging Pride* (2017–2018).

Wendy Vogel is a writer and curator based in New York. A former editor at *Art in America*, *Modern Painters*, and *Flash Art International*, she contributes to a variety of art and culture publications, including *Artforum*, *art-agenda*, *Art Review*, *The Guardian*, and *Mousse*. She has curated or co-curated projects at Bard College's Hessel Museum of Art, Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral, Abrons Art Center, Baxter Street CCNY and VOLTA NY, among other venues. She is a 2018 recipient of a Creative Capital/Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant in Short-Form Writing.

Christine Moser was director of the Austrian Cultural Forum New York from 2013 to 2018. Exhibitions realized under her leadership include international group shows such as *Self-Timer Stories* (2014), *Display of the Centuries. Frederick Kiesler and Contemporary Art* (2015), *DIS-PLAY/RE-PLAY* (2016), *Constructing Paradise* (2017), *Wild West* (2017–2018), and *The Projective Drawing* (2018). In 2016, she established a series of solo exhibitions of emerging Austrian artists that were reviewed in a wide variety of media outlets, including *The New York Times*, *Hyperallergic*, and *Artforum*.

Imprint

This publication documents the exhibition

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