

**NEWS,**  
*SURPRISE &*  
**NOSTALGIA**

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**MA ALUMNI EXHIBITION  
1952 - 1981**

**ALICE AYCOCK, FRANCES BARTH, ARLYNE BAYER,  
HOWARD BUCHWALD, JEAN FEINBERG, MIKE GLIER, DANA GORDON,  
ANITA JANOFF-KATJANELSON, MEL KENDRICK, SCOTT PFAFFMAN, ALAN SONFIST,  
CAROLEE THEA, JOAN THORNE, CLOVER VAIL, BARBARA ZUCKER**

Curated by  
Tracy L. Adler, Matthew Garrison, Urszula Lazowski  
Members of the Graduate Program in Art, Hunter College

September 14 through October 21, 1995

**THE BERTHA AND KARL LEUBSDORF ART GALLERY  
HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the tasks of the galleries at Hunter College is to provide this institution with a sense of its own history. Since presenting the large exhibition *The First Decade of the MFA Program, 1981-91* we have wanted to revisit the work of the alumni from the earlier MA Program that existed prior to the establishment of the MFA in 1981. As part of our curatorial assistantship program, three graduate students took on the task of attempting to organize such a show. They were immediately confronted with a major obstacle in that the college did not have complete and accurate records of all those who had graduated from the program. They reconstructed a list of alumni from MA Theses that were on file in the library. This provided a fairly accurate list of those who graduated from the MA Studio program and the MA Art History program, but did not give us present addresses and occupations. Moreover, we discovered that this did not include a large number of alumni from the MA TEP program, who as students did not file a thesis in the library. And so we must issue this disclaimer: the exhibition is a selection made by these graduate student curators from the information they had or were able to gather during the short period of one semester that they had to organize the exhibit. We hope this show will be a stimulus to further exhibitions devoted to the art of our distinguished alumni.

The curators wish to thank all the past and present faculty who responded to their questionnaire and who helped in the gathering of information. They especially thank Professor Ron Gorchov who in an interview gave them insight into the history of the program. We thank Julio Hernandez-Delgado of the Hunter College Library Archives, Marianne Hall of the Art Department Office who was crucial to the organizational effort and current MFA student Ana Golici who was responsible for the catalog design. We thank Ms. Susan Edwards, the curator at Hunter College, for her professional assistance. The curators wish to express their thanks and appreciation to all the artists in the exhibition: Alice Aycock, Frances Barth, Arlyne Bayer, Howard Buchwald, Jean Feinberg, Mike Glier, Dana Gordon, Anita Janoff-Katjanelson, Mel Kendrick, Scott Pfaffman, Alan Sonfist, Carolee Thea, Joan Thorne, Clover Vail and Barbara Zucker. They generously made themselves and their work available to us. The studio visits the curators made to the artists were crucial to the success of the program.

Professor William Agee and I served as faculty advisors and project sponsors for these students who were exceptionally motivated, extremely professional, and always a pleasure to work with throughout the mounting of the show and the producing of the catalogue. And so we thank Tracy L. Adler, MA candidate, Matthew Garrison, MFA candidate, and Urszula Lazowski, MA candidate, for their outstanding work and a memorable exhibition.

SANFORD WURMFELD  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Art

The concept and title for this exhibition developed naturally from John Graham's definition of beauty as "news, surprise and nostalgia". We felt this quote aptly applied to a show we were developing of new work by alumni artists who received their masters degree before an MFA program was instituted in 1981, and it became the criteria by which we chose artists' work. We approached the term 'beauty' in the abstract as did Graham, applying it to artistic excellence in general. In a pragmatic sense, the works chosen were to be informative, engaging, and reflective of the excellence of Hunter College's Art Department. The show reveals the diversity of ideas, materials and subject matter that made up the work of the student body then as it does now, and reacquaints us with the rich tradition of the arts that belongs to Hunter College.

In the years 1952-1981, a studio building had not yet been designated and this autonomy allowed artists to develop their work outside of a strict academic regimen. Critiques were held at the individual artist's studios, where students and professors gathered informally to discuss the direction of the work. This independence, nourished by a distinguished faculty of well-established artists, many of the current faculty as well as the late Tony Smith and Ray Parker, was considered to be the department's greatest strength. Scott Pfaffman, an artist included in this exhibition, said, "We never considered ourselves students. We were all artists." Ron Gorchoy, a professor of painting, commented, "The philosophy of Hunter was do it yourself. Hunter provided for those who were seeking an art community." This attitude is maintained in the department today where students have their own studios at the MFA Studio Building and are encouraged to follow their own directions as artists.

*News, Surprise and Nostalgia* represents a sampling of recent work by fifteen alumni artists. Each artist is represented in the exhibition by one to three works, depending on size constraints. Our decision to focus on a small group of artists and create an intimate exhibition gave us the opportunity to learn about these artists and explore their work in depth. Studio visits and interviews yielded interesting and humorous stories about the alumni's experiences at Hunter College and enabled us to get a sense of each artist's interests, working methods and artistic concepts. Collectively, we were responsible for planning the exhibition, choosing the artists and gathering relevant material while individually, we each conducted interviews and wrote essays on five artists. In our essays, we aimed to be true to the artists' ideals and therefore, unless otherwise noted, all quotes are excerpted from conversations with these artists or their statements. In the end, the most rewarding aspect of developing this exhibition was the enthusiasm these artists expressed for this project which facilitated our task from its earliest conception.

This exhibition conveys current aesthetic issues associated with the body, gesture, space and landscape while simultaneously introducing unexpected subject matter and materials. We strove to encompass a vast range of expression as represented in the physical, intellectual and emotional content of the artwork. But ultimately we hope to create a cohesive exhibition rooted in the artistic innovation, vitality and commitment of these artist alumni.

## INTRODUCTION

"Beauty is form precipitated. Beauty is an event of plastic form perfectly and arbitrarily organized in a unique way. An element of news, surprise and nostalgia is present. This equally applies to art and to nature. Beauty is a new marvel revealed."

John Graham, *System and Dialectics of Art*, 1937.

TRACY L. ADLER  
MATTHEW GARRISON  
URSZULA LAZOWSKI

## CAROLEE THEA

Born: Brooklyn, NY, 1946

Lives: New York, NY

MA: 1976

In her recent work, Carolee Thea probes the physical and psychological framework of social constructions, in particular the continuous narrative suggested by generations of family members. *Martha*, 1995, represents Thea's mother and is part of a series that includes *Sarah*, her grandmother, and *Fania*, her great-grandmother. These complex installations, relief-like in their attraction to and independence from the wall surface, are representative of the artist's "finally embracing (her) heritage." For Thea, the "layers of fabric are like layers of the psyche" dense with psychological drama and impact. The image poised behind the skeins of sheer fabric is constructed from photocopies of women's clothing, particularly women's undergarments, that are cut and reassembled to resemble a figure. Without a specific identity as an individual, the image becomes a paradigm of woman seeking definition through materialistic symbols of her gender.

This emphasis on the body, realized both formally and abstractly, is reminiscent of Thea's earlier site-specific installations from the late seventies and her painted relief "Constructs" from the eighties. Her installation, *For Fools and Madmen*, 1975, was influenced by her experiences at Hunter College in the mid-seventies. This piece both dares and provokes the viewer to meander through a series of pathways composed of a dense web of barbed wire. The "Constructs" from the eighties made up of found objects richly painted with animal references are like curios relating to an anthropological past. Thea said, "Whether I'm using the body visually, involved with it physically or alluding to its presence, the body has always been a central part of my work." T.L.A.



MARTHA

1995, Fabric, lace, copper, ribbons, photocopies, aluminum wire, paper,  
Dimensions variable, Courtesy of the artist

## CHECKLIST

### ALICE AYCOCK

Courtesy of John Weber Gallery

*Model for The Savage Sparkler*  
1982, Steel, sheet metal, electric  
heating elements, 15 x 72 x 48 in.

*Hoodo (Laura) (1981), 1992*  
Silkscreen print, 39 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 27 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

### FRANCES BARTH

Courtesy of the artist

*Untitled "T", 1995*  
Acrylic on canvas, 34 x 36 in.

*SeaSky, 1995*  
Acrylic on canvas, 34 x 36 in.

### ARLYNE BAYER

Courtesy of the artist

*Untitled, 1993*  
Pastel, mixed media on paper  
22 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 30 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

*Untitled, 1993*  
Pastel, mixed media on paper  
22 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 30 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

### HOWARD BUCHWALD

Courtesy of Nancy Hoffman  
Gallery

*Blind Fold: Drawn & Drowned*  
1994, Oil on linen, 44 x 26 in.

*Untitled Drawing #4, 1994*  
India ink on paper, 12 x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

### JEAN FEINBERG

Courtesy of the artist

*Untitled, 1994*  
Oil on linen and fabric  
55 x 60 in.

### MIKE GLIER

Courtesy of the artist

*The Alphabet of Lili: B, 1992*  
Charcoal, acrylic on panel  
45 x 36 in.

*The Alphabet of Lili: C, 1992*  
Charcoal, acrylic on panel  
45 x 36 in.

### DANA GORDON

Courtesy of the artist

*Untitled, 1995*  
Oil on canvas, 56 x 48 in.

### ANITA JANOFF- KATJANELSON

Courtesy of the artist

*Steamy Stella and Oh Whitney*  
1992-95, Black and white  
photograph, 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 5 in.

*There is No One Behind the Wall*  
1992-95, Black and white  
photograph, 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 5 in.

*Close "Talk Talk" at the Whitney*  
1992-95, Black and white  
photograph, 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 5 in.

## MEL KENDRICK

Courtesy of the artist

Square Hole, 1992  
Black oil, poplar, black pipe  
86 x 41 x 32 in.

## SCOTT PFAFFMAN

Courtesy of the Shell Foundation

Intervention, 1983/95  
Mixed media, Dimensions variable

## ALAN SONFIST

Courtesy of the artist

Fall Forest of Key West, 1991-92  
Mixed media on canvas  
40 x 60 in.

## CAROLEE THEA

Courtesy of the artist

Martha, 1995  
Fabric, lace, copper, ribbons,  
photocopies, aluminum wire,  
paper,  
Dimensions variable

## JOAN THORNE

Courtesy of the artist

Mociano, 1990  
Oil on linen, 49 x 59 in.

## CLOVER VAIL

Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1991-92  
Oil on paper, 22 x 15 in.

Untitled, 1992  
Oil on paper, 15 x 22 in.

Untitled, 1995  
Oil on paper, 22 x 15 in.

## BARBARA ZUCKER

Courtesy of the artist

For Beauty's Sake: Eyebrow  
Plucking, 1993  
Steel, black flocking  
2 Units: 15 x 26 x 4 in.  
17 x 27 x 15 in.

Height precedes width in all  
references to dimensions.

## CHECKLIST

**HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE CITY  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

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**THE HUNTER COLLEGE ART  
GALLERIES**

**THE BERTHA AND KARL LEUBSDORF ART  
GALLERY**

**THE ART GALLERY AT 450 WEST 41ST  
STREET**

**DIRECTOR: SANFORD WURMFELD**

**CURATOR: SUSAN EDWARDS**

**PREPARATOR: DOUGLAS DIBBLE**

**THE BERTHA AND KARL LEUBSDORF ART GALLERY**

**IS LOCATED IN THE HUNTER COLLEGE WEST BUILDING  
AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF**

**68TH STREET AND LEXINGTON AVENUE.**

**IT IS OPEN TUESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS  
FROM 1PM TO 6PM**

**THE ART GALLERY AT 450 WEST 41ST STREET**

**IS LOCATED BETWEEN 9TH AND 10TH AVENUES AT DYER STREET.**

**IT IS OPEN TUESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS  
FROM 1PM TO 6PM**

**FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL:**

**(212) 772-4991**



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