

CLAGS

ALICE WALKER and ADRIENNE RICH

welcome you to

the formal inauguration of

**THE CENTER FOR LESBIAN AND GAY STUDIES
AT THE GRADUATE CENTER
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**



Friday, October 4, 1991

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

The Graduate Center, The City University of New York
33 West 42nd Street



works by lesbian and gay artists
curated by Liz Dalton and Cindy Smith

ALL GROWN UP

All Grown Up is being shown in conjunction with the formal inauguration of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at The Graduate Center of The City University of New York. We intended the exhibition as celebration of the many people who have worked over the years to see to it that lesbian and gay studies would come of age in this country. It is a tremendous accomplishment for lesbians and gays to have at last secured an official place for ourselves within a distinguished academic institution.

Organizing an exhibition around issues of sexuality presented many of the same problems we expect are encountered by lesbian and gay studies generally. Should all the participants be lesbian or gay? Should all of the work have a specifically gay content? And, perhaps most importantly, how much sex can we all get away with? The first two questions are at the heart of what constitutes gay and lesbian work. The last question reminds us of our responsibilities as negotiators—of the need to achieve some understanding between ourselves and others, but never at the expense of compromising our sexual identities.

This exhibition is further defined by the theme of growing up. The artists gathered here engage their own personal histories, some looking for clues about their sexuality, some revisiting awkward scenes and outcast roles. For several artists, the reality of the gay adult in the straight world is superimposed on the figure of the child. In David Wojnarowicz's Untitled piece, the future hangs like a pall around the photo of a young boy, as the text surrounding the boy's image warns of the rights that will be denied him. In a series of xeroxes, the lesbian collective Fierce Pussy assigns grown-up words to little people, giving the effect of kids dwarfed by too-big clothes; the viewer tries to connect, for instance, the little girl with bangs and the "muffdiver" the group claims her to be. And in a piece that refers to growing up perhaps only according to our biology-friendly interpretation, Cynthia Madansky intercuts anatomical drawings with both myths and facts about lesbian immunity to AIDS, offering the viewer a more developed relationship to the lesbian body.

The viewer's relation to lesbian and gay identities is explored in the work of Clarke-Schorr, David Bussell, Bruce Eves and Daphne Fitzpatrick. Clarke-Schorr's piece, with the phrase "YOU PIG" written in needlepoint above a childlike drawing on a hand held mirror, is on one level quite rude to the viewer (here viewers are understood to be both gay and straight), and, on another level, disarming because of its childish sense of humor. The viewer is reminded that this is one childish phrase that transfers to an adult usage that is potentially vicious and divisive in a way that another childish epithet, for instance, "cooties," is not. Viewers are left to wonder how much of the adult usage is intended

for them. And what is the viewer to make of Daphne Fitzpatrick's drawing of a penis? Is the drawing ironic, appreciative, pornographic? And if it's pornographic, then whose desires are being addressed and why? Similarly, David Bussell conjures a scene of laws with the simple words "Stop" and "Go," suggesting that many of us fall outside their simple application.

The artists in this exhibition confront their own personal expectations as well, along with the expectations of their families and friends. Tracy Mostovoy looks at some of her own childhood writing in which she talked about what she "wanted to be" in the context of a mixed media collage of erotic images she's more recently produced and a popular press account of a lesbian story. Simon Leung explores the masculinity of fathers, imaging the father as part mystery, part monster, and, all in all, decidedly partial.

Ken Day, G.B. Jones, Don Reid and Bill Shackelford all make narrative images of gay and lesbian desire. Their work carves out a place for non-heterosexual representations of sexuality, race and gender roles in the figurative tradition. Don Reid looks at gender's ambiguities in his exuberant collages, presenting gender as puzzle rather than problem, while G.B. Jones's drawing of two young dykes, reminding us of the good parts in *Love and Rockets*, claims ground for butch intimacy. Bill Shackelford presents bathroom sex perhaps as shared personal history among young men of different races, and St. Sebastian, always gay, gets updated anyway by Ken Day. Checking in with another kind of narrative, Sarah Rapson, Shelley Marlow and Ed Rogers put a spin on childhood, and each knocks something off balance in the process. Also, regarding Hilton Als and Darryl Turner, we can only say at this time that they have assured us that their piece will be produced "in accordance with the rules of the exhibition."

Finally, we chose some work that opens up the lesbian and gay community and makes connections with the community at large. In a six-part installation, youth who testified at the Board of Education Hearings on the Condom Availability Plan offer both testimony and information, addressing the urgent need for AIDS education in city schools. Félix González-Torres is represented here by some work that he did for the book *Out There*, which connects gay and lesbian concerns with multicultural ones. González-Torres assembled childhood photographs of everyone who worked on the book, addressing the histories of the identities brought together by the project.

The exhibition will be on display from Oct. 7th 1991 through Nov. 1st 1991 in the Mina Rees Library at The Graduate Center. We would like to thank all the artists, lenders, Scott Catto, Catherine Tedford, Ray Ring and Adam.

CINDY SMITH
LIZ DALTON

CATALOG OF THE EXHIBITION

Hilton Als and Darryl Turner

Ganz in Weiss or The Unintelligent Ones are Dying Out, 1991

Xerox, 30 x 40 inches

Courtesy of the artists

David Bussell

Untitled, 1989

Photographs mounted on foamcore, 14 x 28 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Clarke-Schorr

YOU PIG, 1991

Hand held mirror with needlepoint, 6 x 12 inches

Courtesy of the artists

Ken Day

Saint Sebastian, 1991, 14 x 9½ x 1 inches

Untitled, 1991, 16¼ x 11 x 1½ inches

Untitled, 1991, 14 x 10 x 1 inches

Acrylic on canvas

Courtesy of the artist

Bruce Eves

Self-Portrait #2, 1991

Canon laser copy with paint, 20 x 16 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Fierce Pussy

Untitled, 1991

Xerox, dimensions variable

Courtesy of Fierce Pussy

Daphne Fitzpatrick

Untitled, 1991

Charcoal and pencil on paper, 11 x 14 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Félix González-Torres

Out There: Marginalization an Contemporary Cultures

Edited by Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever and Trin T. Minh-ha and Cornel West

Forward by Marcia Tucker

Published by The New Museum of Contemporary Art and the MIT Press

Félix González-Torres selected and organized the visual materials for the book

1990

Courtesy of The New Museum of Contemporary Art

Don Reid

The Encounter, 1991

Acrylic, mixed media

3 at 9 x 12 inches

Courtesy of the artist

G.B. Jones

Skateboard Girls, 1990

Pencil on paper, 8½ x 6¼ inches

Courtesy of *Feature*

Simon Leung

Father's Journal (Detachments), 1989

Photocollage, 6 parts at 12 x 17½ inches each

Courtesy of the artist

Cynthia Madansky

Myths, 1991

Blueprint, 24 x 40 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Shelley F. Marlos

Wooden Movie, 1989

Oil, glow in the dark paint and pen on wood, 10½ x 9 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Tracey Mostovoy

I Wanted to Be Me, 1991

Mixed media, photography and newspaper, 16 x 20 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Sara Rapson

Untitled, 1991, 24 x 30 inches

Untitled, 1991, 10 x 8 inches

Untitled, 1991, 10 x 8 inches

Paint and chalk on canvas

Ed Rogers

Bushes of Beachwood, 1991

Caran D'Ache, china marker and acrylic on paper, 30 x 40 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Bill Shackelford

Seafoam Lavatory, 1991

Canon laser copy, 40 x 30 inches

Courtesy of the artist

David Wojnarowicz

Untitled, 1991

Photostat, 30 x 40 inches

Courtesy of P•P•O•W

Tatum Benn, Novia Condell, Erika DeJesus, Theresa Francis, Mary L. Jean, Brownie Johnson, Shamika Jones, Joe Liotta, Fitzcarl Reid, Orlando Robles, Steve Schiff

Seen and Heard, 1991

Mixed media installation

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artists

**THE CENTER FOR LESBIAN AND GAY STUDIES
OCTOBER 4, 1991 RECEPTION**

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A Different Light Bookstore; Steven Chudney; Cheryl Clarke; *Conditions*; Farrar, Straus Girou; Norman Laurila; Lawrence D. Mass; Ben McCormick; Publishing Triangle; Quality Paperback Book Club; Robert Riger; David Rosen.