

# **Feminist Artists and Practice**



Betty Friedan leading a group of demonstrators outside a Congressional office In 1971 to show support for the Equal Rights Amendment



Lucy Lippard protesting in front of Whitney Museum of Art, demanding a 50% representation of women and nonwhite artists in the Whitney Annual. 1970.

Key events that launched the Feminist art movement in the U.S.

1968	Young feminists protest Miss America pageant by throwing their bras into trash can (NOT burning them!)
	Valerie Solanas writes the <b>SCUM Manifesto</b> and shoots Andy Warhol and Mario Amaya for losing her manuscript, <b>Up Your Ass</b>
1969	Whitney Annual included 8 women out of 143 artists
1970	Women artists protest the Whitney Annual
	Survey reveals that 50% of practicing American artists are women while only 18% of New York's commercial galleries show the work of women artists
	Judy Chicago founds the first feminist studio art course at Fresno State University
	Los Angeles Council of Women Artists protest exclusion of women artists in LACMA show <b>Art and Technology</b>
	First publication of <b>Our Bodies, Ourselves</b>
1971	Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro found Feminist Art Program at Cal Arts
	Linda Nochlin's <b>"Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists"</b> published
1972	Congress passes <b>Equal Rights Amendment</b> ; but by 1962 it had only been ratified by 35 states (three short of becoming law); has been reintroduced into every session of Congress since
	LACMA exhibit - <b>Four Los Angeles Artists</b>
	<b>Womanhouse</b> - first feminist exhibition
1973	Supreme Court legalizes abortion in <b>Roe v. Wade</b>
1976	Linda Nochlin and Ann Sutherland Harris curate first historical exhibition of women artists at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art - <b>Women Artists: 1550 - 1950</b>
1979	U.S. National Weather Service begins naming storms for women <i>and</i> men



Helen Frankenthaler, June Wayne, Alma Thomas, Leo Krasser, Nancy Graves, Georgia O'Keeffe, Louise Nevelson, M. C. Richards, Louise Bourgeois, Lila Katzev, Yoko Ono

1. Agnes Martin, 2. Jane Mitchell, 3. Sarah Hartigan, 4. Yvoni Basso, 5. Harriet, 6. Alice Neel, 7. Jane Wilson, 8. Judy Chicago, 9. Cindy Niren, 10. Sally Farnon, 11. Marian Shapiro, 12. Lee Bostick, 13. Sylvia Stone, 14. Chrissy, 15. Shiloe Beck, 16. Carolee Schneeman, 17. Lisetta Wodol, 18. Audrey Flack, 19. Buffy Johnson, 20. Vera Simon, 21. Helen Parkkin, 22. Susan Lewis Williams, 23. Ruelle Strick, 24. Ann McCoy, 25. J. L. Knight, 26. Mild Sanford, 27. Joan Baldo, 28. Merta Mimile, 29. Rosemary Knight, 30. Cynthia Bickler, 31. Laura Gregory, 32. Agnes Deney, 33. Mary Beth Edelson, 34. Irene Siegel, 35. Nancy Grossman, 36. Hannah Wilke, 37. Jennifer Bartlett, 38. Nan Carter, 39. Eleanor Latta, 40. Jane Kaufman, 41. Marci Cantante, 42. Susan Cello, 43. Anne Ryan, 44. Sue Ann Childress, 45. Patricia McNamara, 46. Dina McCann, 47. Alice Stueben, 48. Lois Kat, 49. Joan Davidson, 50. Nina Citron, 51. Faith Ringgold, 52. Sheron Grant, 53. Davis Derek, 54. Nina Tachowitz, 55. Rachel Bai Cohen, 56. Lovetta Huhelman, 57. Kay Brown, 58. Deborah, 59. Nina Colby, 60. Martha Edwards, 61. Jackie Bylles, 62. Melalee Jaker, 63. Susan Williams, 64. Judith Bernstein, Rosemary Hayes, 65. Madi Kott

**SOME LIVING AMERICAN WOMEN ARTISTS**

Mary Beth Edelson © 1972

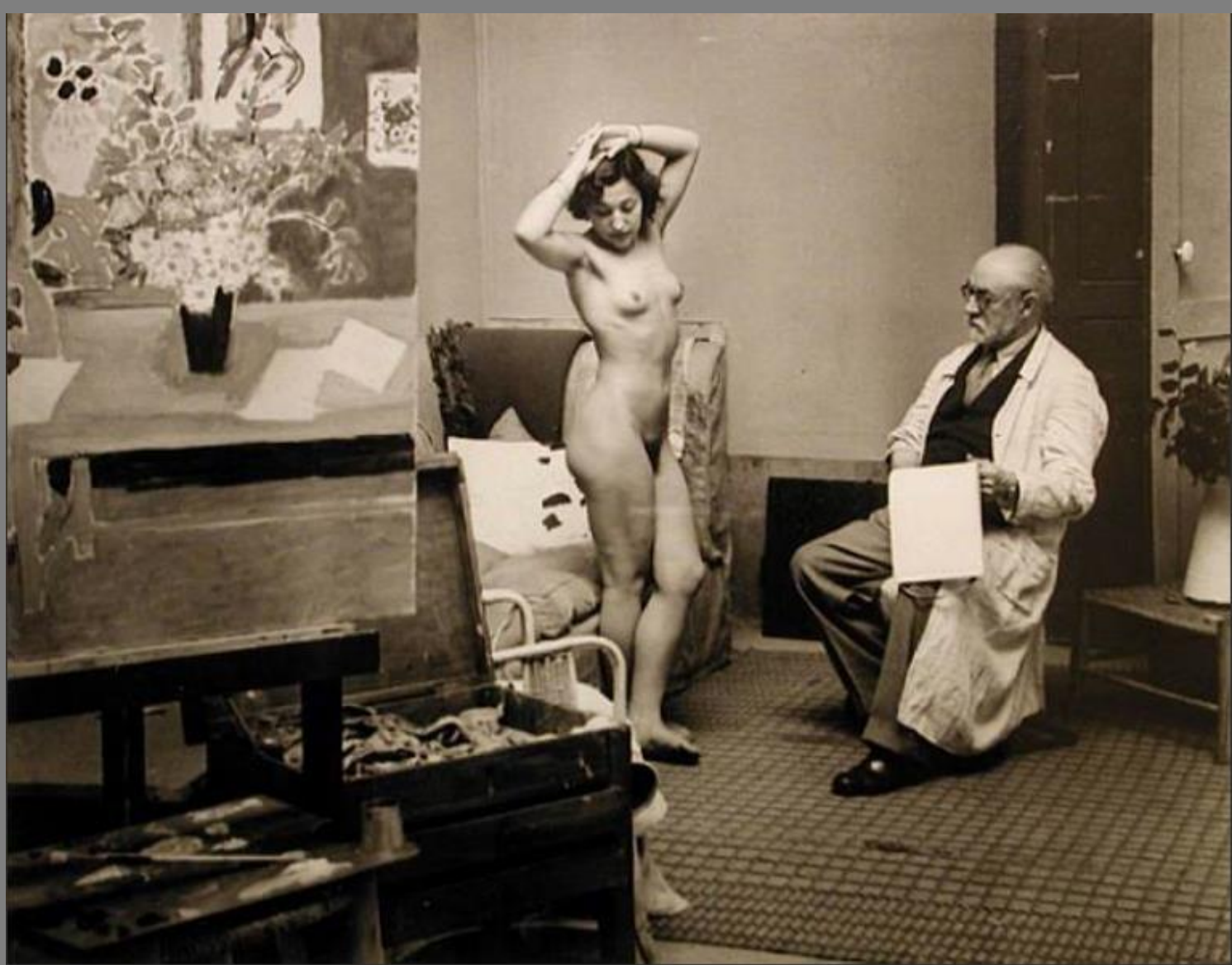
Mary Beth Edelson Some Living American Women Artists 1972

Reclaiming the  
Role of Artists

Challenging the  
historical gender  
roles:

Male – active  
“subject”

Woman -- passive  
“object”



Brassaï, Henri Matisse and Model,  
1939

Sylvia Sleigh,  
Philip Golub Reclining, 1971



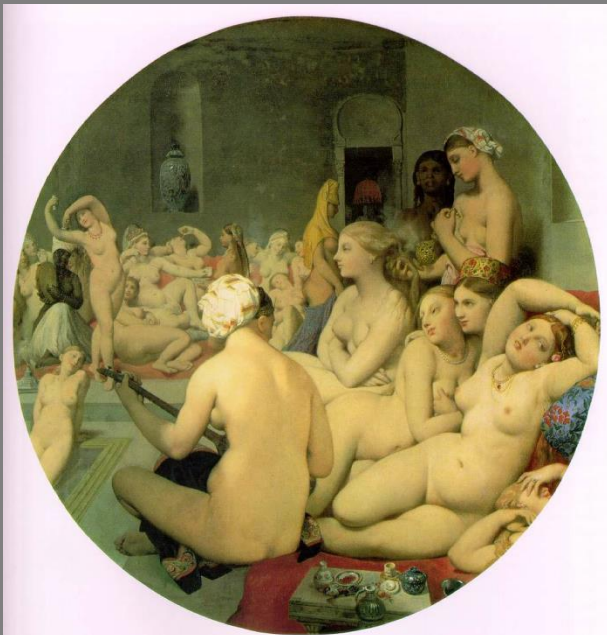
Velazquez, Venus at her Mirror,  
1649-51.



Sylvia Sleigh

Imperial Nude , 1977

Oil on canvas, 106 x 152 cm



Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres,  
Turkish Bath, 1862, Louvre



Sylvia Sleigh  
"The Turkish Bath"  
1973



“In some respects this reflects her attraction to bohemianism, which celebrated individuality and the artist life (absorbed in Greenwich Village in 1960s) but it also shows the way in which Social Realism evolved into an art of the human condition – albeit a human condition imagined as lively and social.”

**Morgan Falconer**

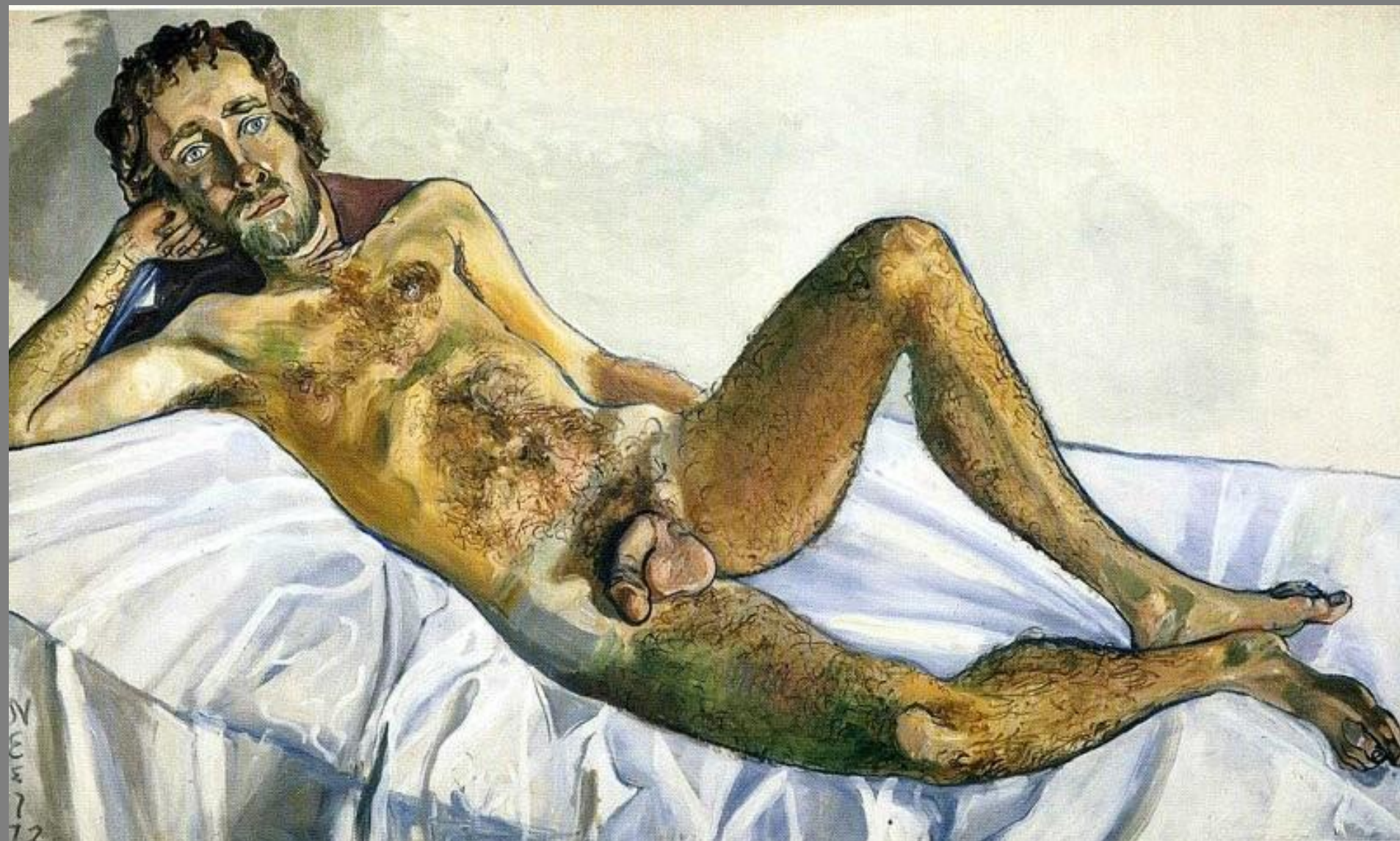


Andy Warhol (1970) by Alice Neel





Linda Nochlin and Daisy  
1973



Alice Neel, John Perreault, 1972  
Whitney Museum



Alice Neel, Pregnant woman

Lynda Benglis produced a series of work, beginning in 1968, that upset contemporary notions of what was acceptable as high art





Lynda Benglis's 1971 installation "Phantom" is a series of five spilled polyurethane foam

Lynda Benglis courtesy of Paula Cooper Gallery copyright © 1974 Photo Arthur Gribba



Lynda Benglis. 'Artforum Advertisement in:  
Artforum, November 1974, Vol. 13, No. 3, S. 3-  
4' 1974



## Lynda Benglis

Her *Artforum* advertisement parodied conventional images of the artist as "macho man"



Robert Morris, Exhibition Ad, 1974



Lynda Benglis, *Artforum*, 1974

## Lynda Benglis

Would a woman be taken seriously if she played up her femininity?



Betty Grable, 1943



Lynda Benglis, *Artforum*, 1974

## Woman as Object of Representation

Feminist artists and art historians also began to question the way women are depicted in art

# Do women have to be naked to get into U.S. museums?

Less than **3%** of the **artists** in the Met. Museum are women, but **83%** of the **nudes** are female.

Statistics from modern and contemporary galleries, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2001



**GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD  
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## Stereotypical Roles

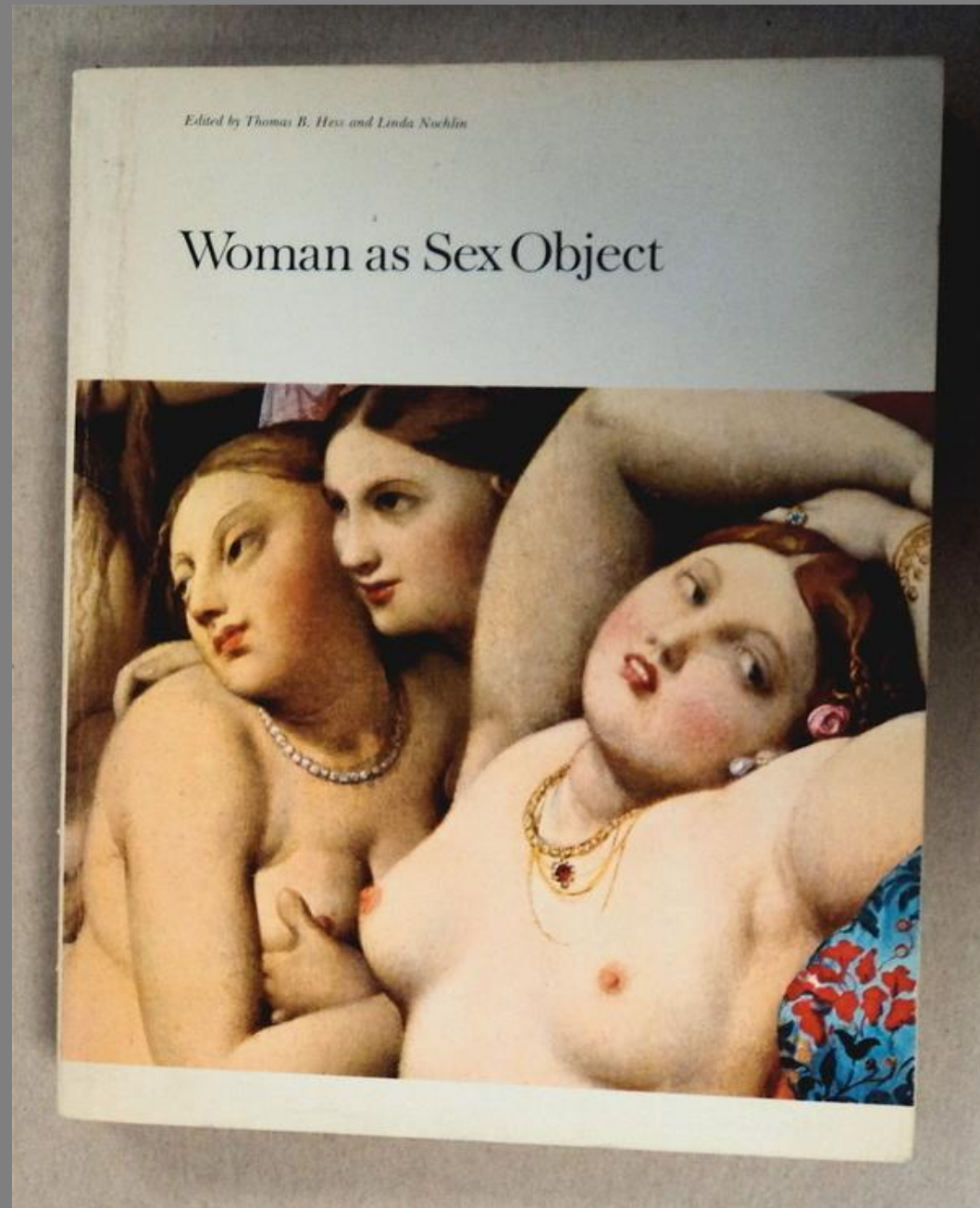
1. Woman as sex object
2. Woman as ideal mother
3. Woman as savage witch



Representations of women portray them as “objects” rather than “subjects”

“The erotic element in European painting is not an expression of the model's sexuality but of those who have access to the picture” –  
Linda Nochlin

Linda Nochlin and Thomas B. Hess,  
Woman as Sex Object, 1972



## Woman as Sex Object

“The imagery of sexual delight or provocation has always been created *about* women for men’s enjoyment, by men.”

Linda Nochlin, “Eroticism and Female Imagery in Nineteenth Century Art” 1972



Barbara Kruger, cover design for W magazine's "The Art Issue" November 2010

## Woman as Sex Object

“It is arguable that, despite her ubiquitous presence, woman as such is largely absent from art. We are dealing with the sign ‘woman,’ emptied of its original content and refilled with masculine anxieties and desires.”

Lisa Tickner, “The Body Politic: Female Sexuality and Women Artists Since 1970,” *Art History*, 1 (June 1978), 236-251.



Willem De Kooning *Woman I*, 1950-52



Joan Semmel, *Mythologies and Me*, 1976



## Joan Semmel



"Living *in* a female body is different from looking *at* it, as a man."

Lisa Ticknor, *The Body Politic*



Joan Semmel, *Knees Together*, 2003

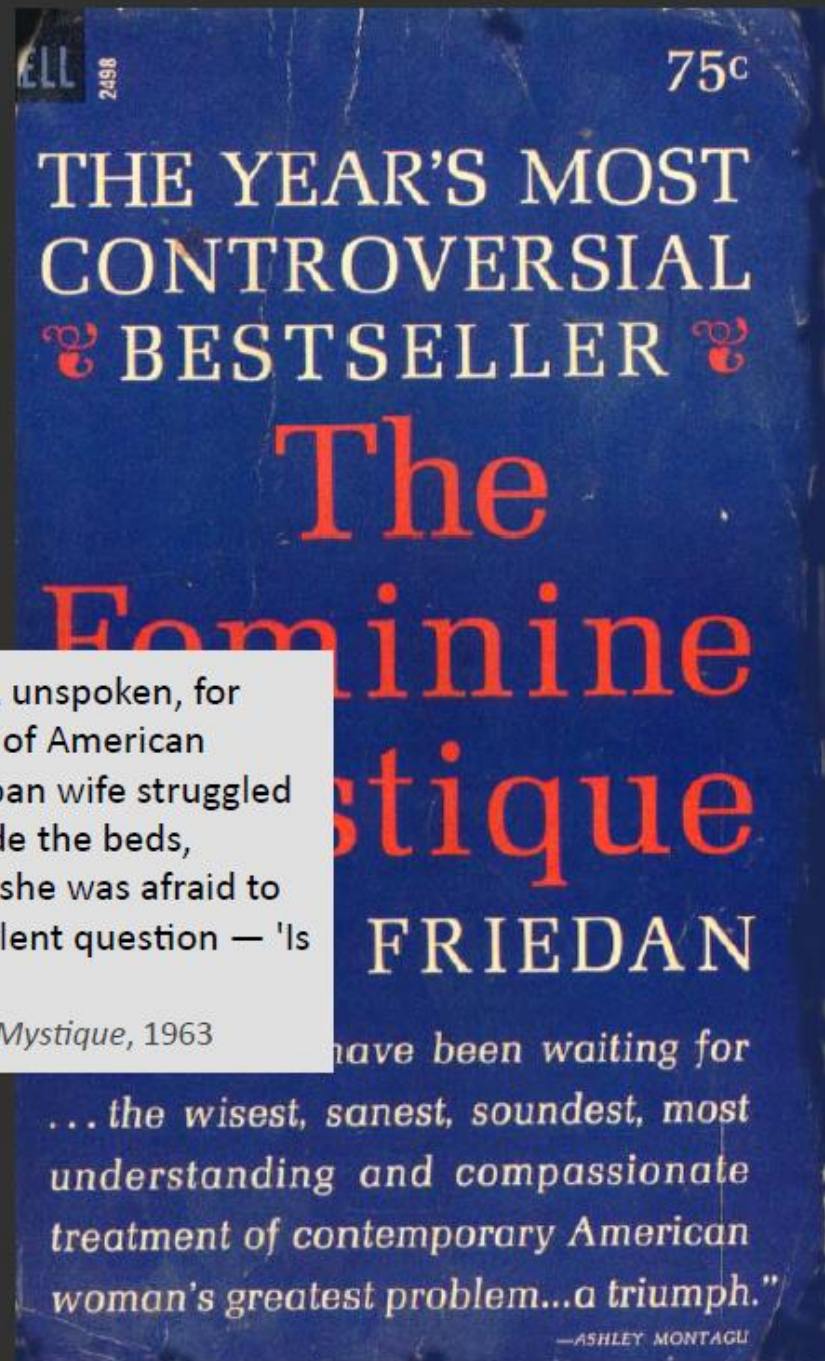
## The Feminine Mystique

Women began to question their “destiny” as wives and mothers



"The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women . . . Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries ... she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question — 'Is this all?'"

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 1963



Betty Friedan, *the Feminine Mystique*, 1963

## The Feminine Mystique

Semiotics of the kitchen: parodies cooking shows that indoctrinate women into their roles as housewives



Martha Rosler, *Semiotics of the Kitchen*, 1975

## The Feminine Mystique

"An anti-Julia Child replaces the domesticated 'meaning' of tools with a lexicon of rage and frustration."  
Martha Rosler



Julia Child's popular cooking show *The French Chef* premiered in 1963, and ran nationally for 10 years



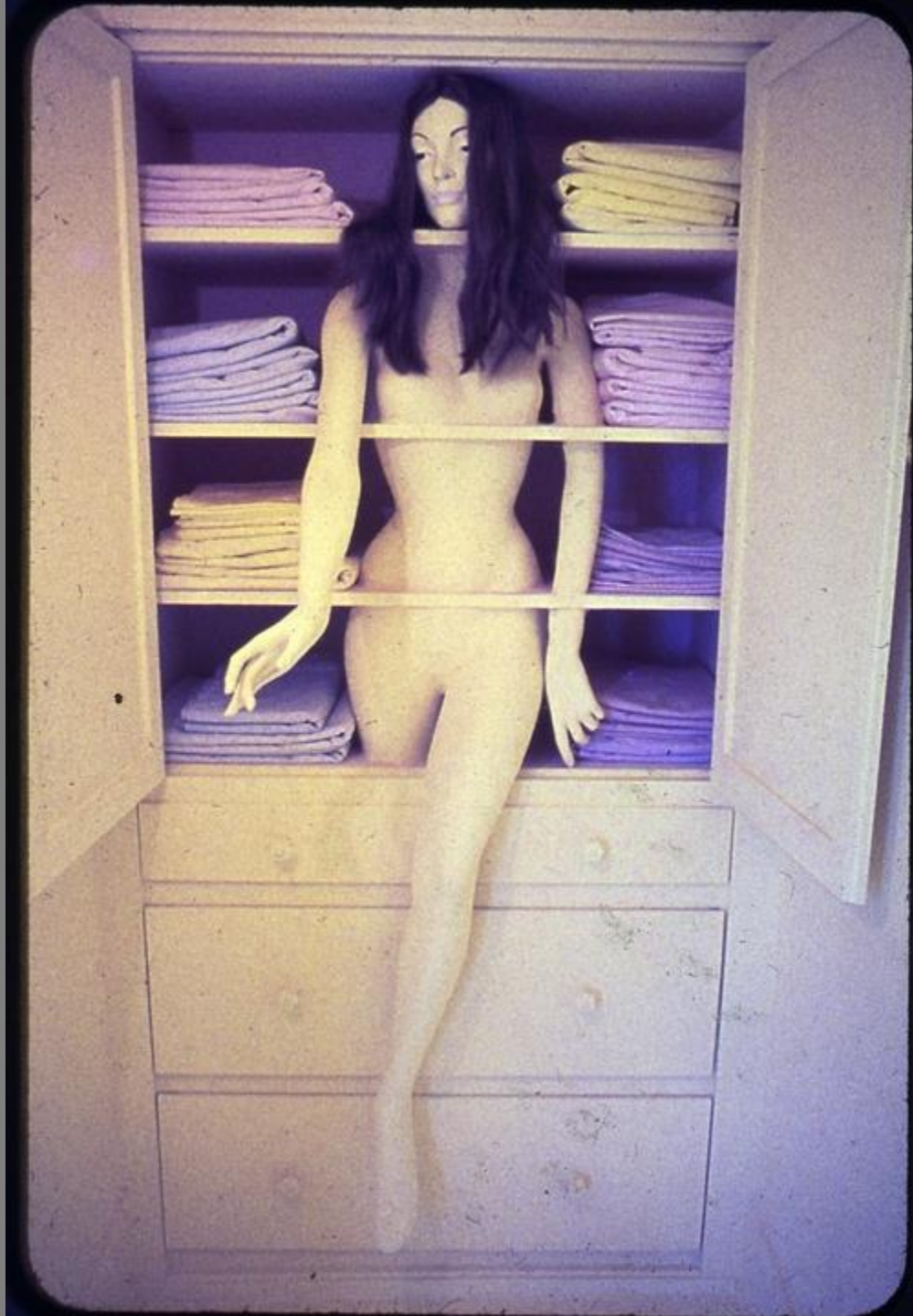
*Womanhouse* catalogue, Feminist Art Program at CalArts, 1972.  
Designed by Sheila Levrant de Bretteville



LINEN CLOSET  
Sandy Orgel

As one woman visitor to my room commented, “This is exactly where women have always been—in between the sheets and on the shelf.” It is time now to come out of the closet.

- Sandy Orgel









Judy Chicago's Menstruation Bathroom challenged social taboos surrounding menstruation.

"Under a shelf full of all the paraphernalia with which this culture 'cleans up' menstruation was a garbage can filled with the unmistakable marks of our own animality"

Judy Chicago

Menstruation Bathroom,  
Womanhouse, 1972



## Womanhouse 1972

Collaborative installations explore and question women's domestic roles

"Womanhouse was a new kind of art-making which took private and collective female experiences as its subject matter."

Faith Wilding, "By Our Own Hands," 1977

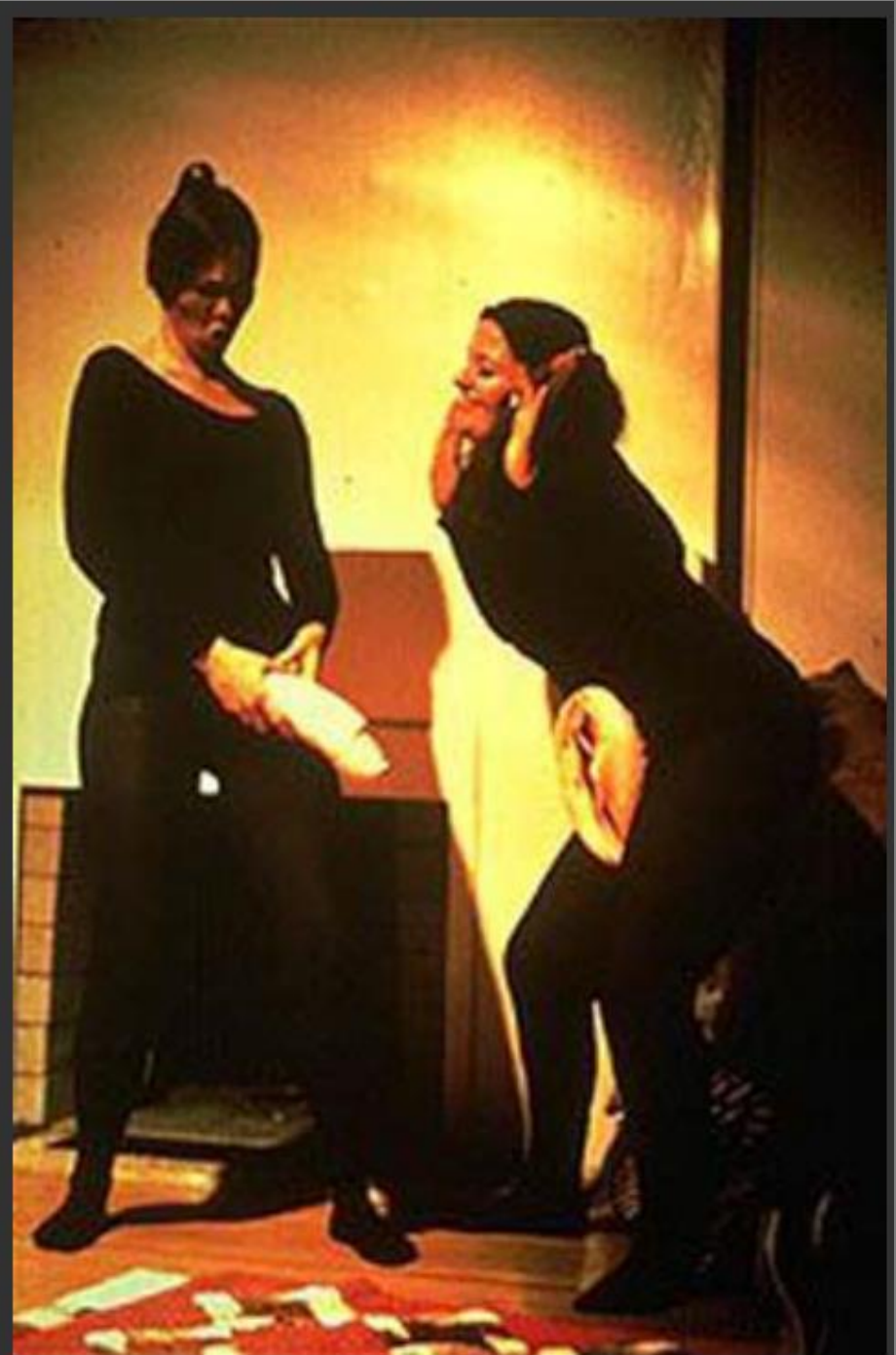
<http://womanhouse.refugia.net/>



Kathy Huberland, *Bridal Staircase*, 1972

## Womanhouse 1972

Performances also explored gender roles through role play and parody



*Cock and Cunt Play, Womanhouse, 1972*

# Judy Chicago

Judy Gerowitz began her career as a Minimalist artist



Judy Chicago, *Rainbow Pickets*, 1966

# Judy Chicago

In the 1970's she reinvented herself as  
Judy Chicago



*Judy Gerowitz hereby  
devests herself of all  
names imposed  
upon her through  
male social dominance  
and freely chooses  
her own name:*

*Judy Chicago*

*Chicago*  
**JUDY GEROWITZ**  
*woman*  
**ONE ~~MAN~~ SHOW**  
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Judy Chicago, *Exhibition announcement*

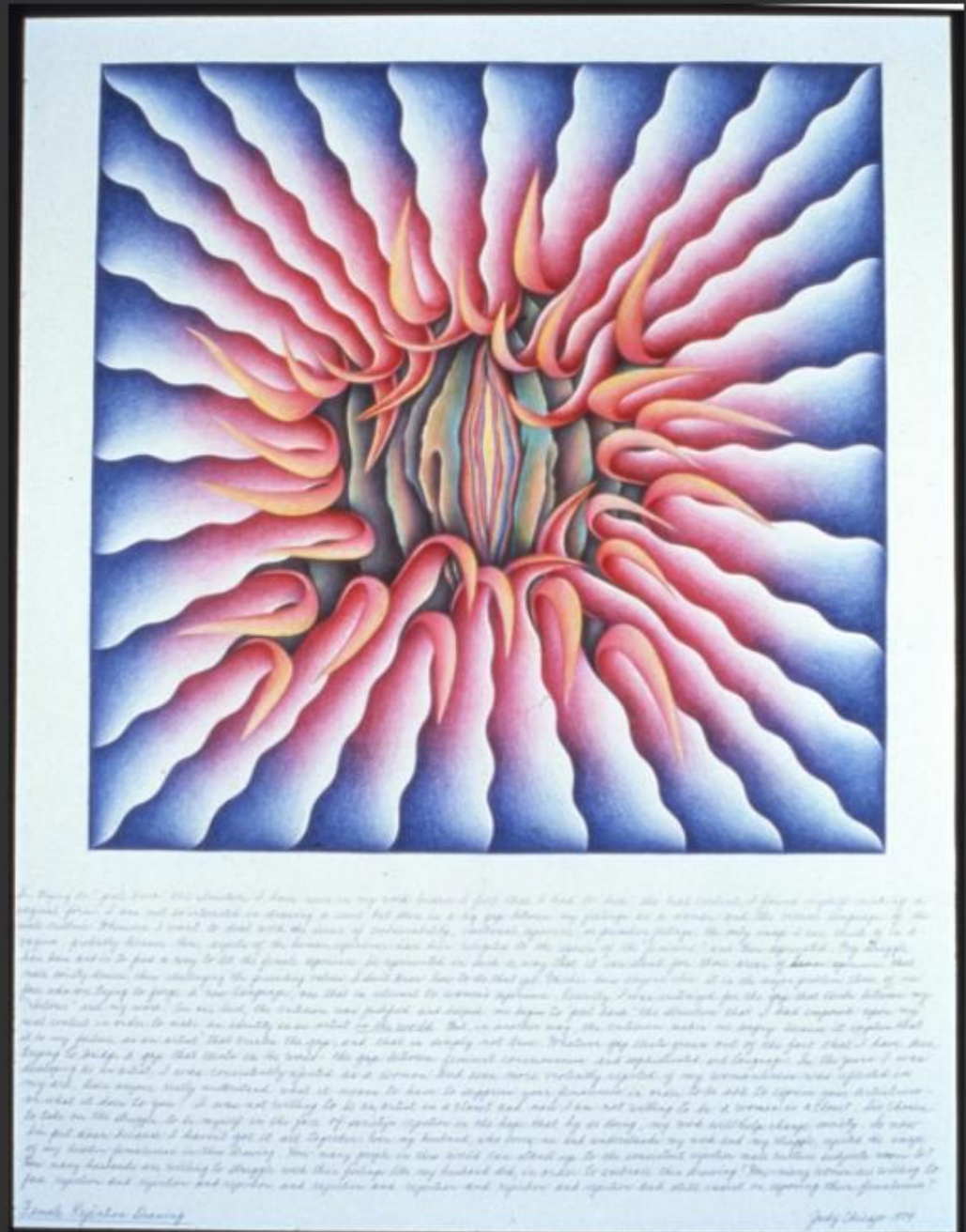
# Judy Chicago

Central core imagery

Vaginal iconology



Georgia O'Keefe, *Jack in the Pulpit*, 1930



Judy Chicago, *Female Rejection Drawing*, 1974

# Vaginal Iconography

Female nude – erases female genitals



Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, *The Source*, 1856





# The Dinner Party

39 individual place settings reclaim women's "herstory"



Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party*, 1973-79



"Because we are denied knowledge of our history, we are deprived of standing upon each other's shoulders and build upon each other's hard earned accomplishments. Instead we are condemned to repeat what others have done before and thus we continually reinvent the wheel. The goal of The Dinner Party is to break this cycle." - Judy Chicago



*Travis Halperin of Salerno*

*Isabelle of Champagne*

*Herrad of Landsberg*

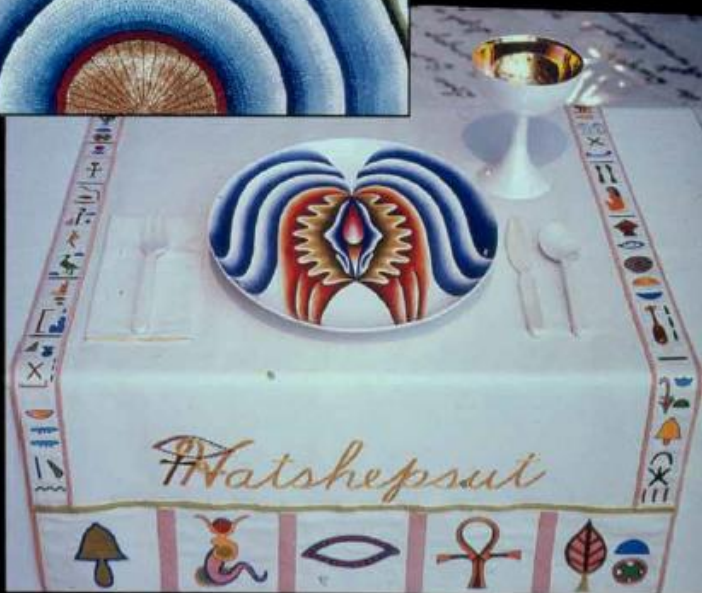
*Alice Kyteler*

*Victoria Jane*

*Henriette of Aquitaine*

*Waldemare*

*Gertrude de Marston*







The Dinner Party core group at the exhibition premiere at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1979





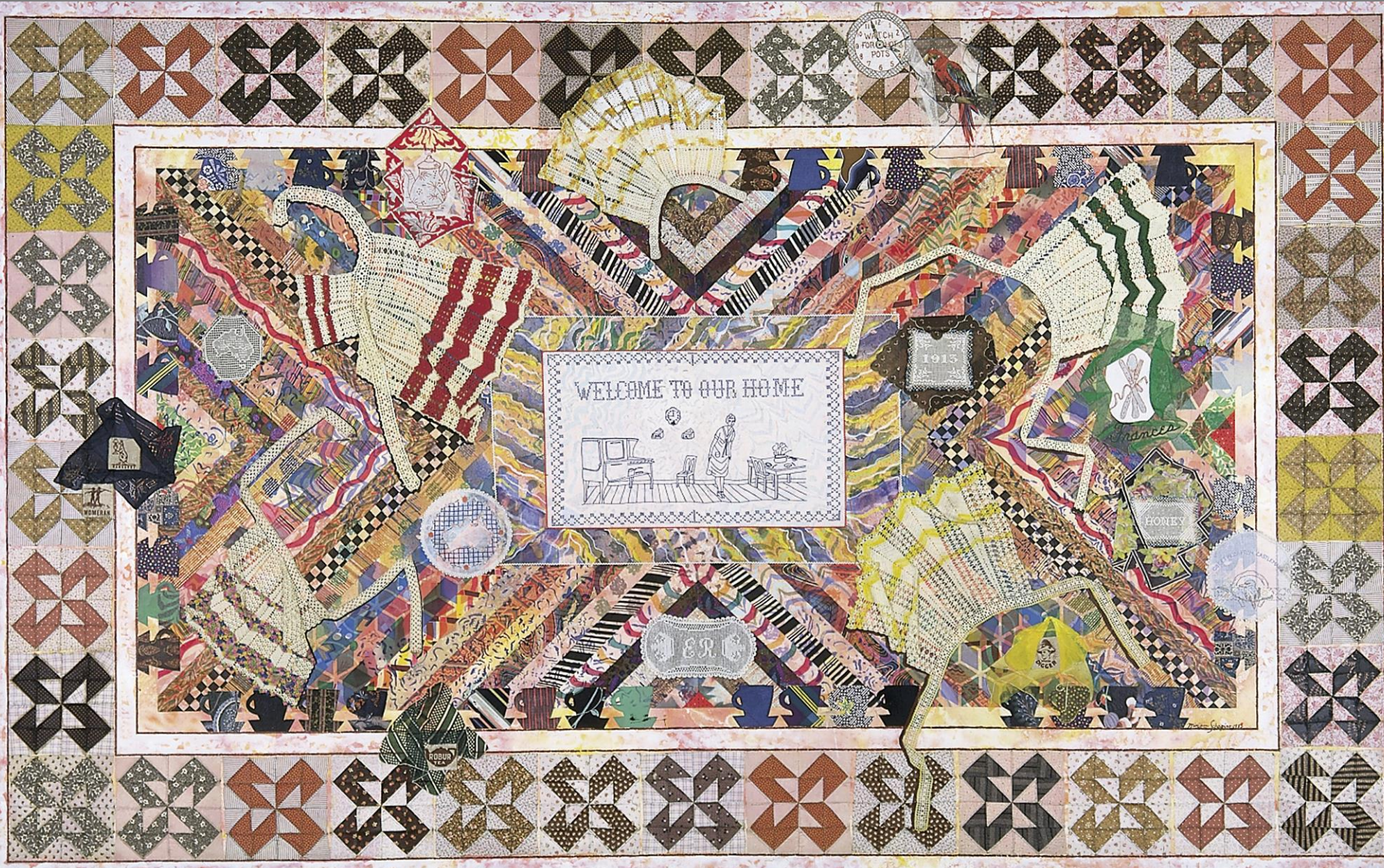


Femmage: collage using “feminine” materials and procedures

"I wanted to validate the traditional activities of women, to connect myself with the unknown women artists who made quilts, who had done the invisible 'woman's work' of civilization. I wanted to acknowledge them, to honor them."



Miriam Schapiro,  
Anonymous Was a Woman, 1976



Miriam Schapiro, Wonderland, 1983

Kimonos: embrace non--western traditions

Miriam Schapiro,  
Paris Vesture Series 2, 1979



