

**THIS  
WILL  
HAVE  
BEEN**



# ART LOVE & POLITICS 1980s



265948

This book is published on the occasion of the exhibition **This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s**, organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and curated by Helen Molesworth.

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago  
February 11–June 3, 2012

Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston  
June 30–September 30, 2012

Walker Art Center  
October 26, 2012–January 27, 2013

Lead support for **This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s** is provided by the Harris Family Foundation in memory of Bette and Neison Harris: Caryn and King Harris, Katherine Harris, Toni and Ron Paul, Pam and Joe Szokol, Linda and Bill Friend, and Stephanie and John Harris.

Major support is provided by  
The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts  
and Helen and Sam Zell.

Additional support is provided by Neil G. Bluhm; Andrea and Jim Gordon, The Edgewater Funds; Dakis and Lietta Joannou; Susan and Lew Manilow; the Pritzker Traubert Family Foundation; Agnes Gund; David C. & Sarajeen Ruttenberg Arts Foundation; Marilyn and Larry Fields; The Broad Art Foundation; Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin; Glenstone; Luhring Augustine, New York; and Per Skarstedt.

## AmericanAirlines®

Official Airline of MCA Chicago

The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization accredited by the American Association of Museums. MCA Chicago is generously supported by its Board of Trustees, individual and corporate members, private and corporate foundations, and government agencies including the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. The Chicago Park District generously supports MCA programs. Air transportation is provided by American Airlines, the Official Airline of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

© 2012 by the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and Yale University. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopy, recording, or any other information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

J 11/27

Produced by the Design, Publishing, and New Media Department of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. Designed by James Goggin, Director of Design, Publishing, and New Media, and Scott Reinhard, Senior Designer. Edited by Sarah Kramer, Associate Editor, with Kate Steinmann, Director of Publications and Senior Editor.

Typeset in Futura ND

Color separations by  
Professional Graphics Inc., Rockford, Illinois

Printed in Belgium by Die Keure

ISBN 978-0-300-18110-4

Library of Congress Control Number  
2011942376

Individual works of art appearing in this catalogue may be protected by copyright in the United States of America or elsewhere and may not be reproduced in any form without the permission of the copyright owners listed on pp. 434–35.

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago  
220 E. Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60611  
mcachicago.org

Yale University Press  
P.O. Box 209040  
New Haven, Connecticut 06520-9040  
yalebooks.com/art

# CONTENTS

9

## Exhibition Lenders

10

## Director's Foreword

Madeleine Grynsztejn

12

## Acknowledgments

Helen Molesworth

14

# THIS WILL HAVE BEEN

## Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s

Helen Molesworth

48

# THE END IS NEAR

50

## Undead Painting: Life After Life in the Eighties

Frazer Ward

- 65 Dotty Attie
- 66 Jean-Michel Basquiat
- 68 Robert Colescott
- 72 Robert Gober
- 74 Jack Goldstein
- 77 Peter Halley
- 79 Mary Heilmann
- 81 Candy Jernigan
- 82 Mike Kelley
- 84 Martin Kippenberger
- 89 Louise Lawler
- 93 Sherrie Levine
- 95 Christian Marclay
- 96 Allan McCollum
- 97 Matt Mullican
- 101 Peter Nagy
- 102 Raymond Pettibon
- 107 Stephen Prina
- 110 Martin Puryear
- 113 Gerhard Richter

- 117 David Salle
- 120 Doug + Mike Starn
- 121 Tony Tasset
- 126 James Welling
- 127 Christopher Wool

132

# DEMO- CRACY

134

## Where the Streets Have No Name: A Democracy of Multiple Public Spheres

Kobena Mercer

- 148 Charlie Ahearn
- 151 John Ahearn
- 153 Gretchen Bender
- 154 Dara Birnbaum
- 158 Black Audio Film Collective
- 160 Jennifer Bolande
- 161 Gregg Bordowitz
- 164 Eugenio Dittborn
- 170 General Idea
- 171 Leon Golub
- 174 Gran Fury
- 175 Group Material
- 181 Guerrilla Girls
- 183 Hans Haacke
- 186 David Hammons
- 187 Keith Haring/  
Tseng Kwong Chi

193 Jenny Holzer  
196 Alfredo Jaar  
200 Barbara Kruger  
201 Louise Lawler  
206 Cildo Meireles  
207 Donald Moffett  
212 Lorraine O'Grady  
213 Paper Tiger Television  
217 Adrian Piper  
219 Lari Pittman  
221 Tim Rollins  
and K.O.S.  
226 Christy Rupp  
226 Doris Salcedo  
230 Juan Sánchez  
233 Carrie Mae Weems  
237 Christopher Williams  
239 Krzysztof Wodiczko

242

## GENDER TROUBLE

244

**A Few Troubles  
with "The Eighties"**  
Johanna Burton

258 Leigh Bowery  
260 Tony Cragg  
262 Jimmy De Sana  
266 Carroll Dunham  
268 Jimmie Durham  
271 Eric Fischl  
274 Robert Gober  
275 Nan Goldin  
280 Mike Kelley  
283 Paul McCarthy  
286 Annette Messager  
289 Cady Noland  
292 Albert Oehlen  
293 Julian Schnabel

296 Cindy Sherman  
298 Lorna Simpson  
301 Rosemarie Trockel  
301 Jeff Wall

308

## DESIRE & LONGING

310

**How Soon Is Now: Longing  
and Desire in the Art of  
the Late Twentieth Century**  
Elisabeth Lebovici

322 Judith Barry  
325 Ashley Bickerton  
326 Deborah Bright  
330 Sophie Calle  
331 Marlene Dumas  
335 Rotimi Fani-Kayode  
338 Félix González-Torres  
339 Peter Hujar  
346 G. B. Jones  
348 Isaac Julien  
349 Mary Kelly  
355 Silvia Kolbowski  
358 Jeff Koons  
362 Louise Lawler  
363 Jac Leirner  
366 Sherrie Levine  
369 Robert Mapplethorpe  
373 MICA-TV/Cindy Sherman  
376 Richard Prince  
380 Marlon Riggs  
385 David Robbins  
385 Laurie Simmons  
391 Haim Steinbach  
393 David Wojnarowicz

400

## A BACK- WARD GLANCE

**Video in the 1980s**  
Bill Horrigan

414

## MAKING LOVE MAKING ART

**Living and  
Dying Performance  
in the 1980s**  
Sarah Schulman

426

**Contributors**

428

**Exhibition  
Checklist**

433

**MCA Chicago  
Board of Trustees**

434

**Reproduction Credits**

436

**Index**



**THIS  
WILL  
HAVE  
BEEN**



**ART  
LOVE &  
POLITICS  
1980s**



## **Essays by**

Johanna Burton

Bill Horrigan

Elisabeth Lebovici

Kobena Mercer

Helen Molesworth

Sarah Schulman

Frazer Ward

## **Contributions by**

Claire Grace

Kevin Lotery

Jennifer Quick

Trevor Stark

Jordan Troeller

**Helen Molesworth**

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago  
in association with Yale University Press,  
New Haven and London

**THIS WILL  
HAVE BEEN:**

**ART, LOVE  
& POLITICS  
IN THE 1980s**

# CONTENTS

9  
**Exhibition Lenders**

10  
**Director's Foreword**  
Madeleine Grynsztejn

12  
**Acknowledgments**  
Helen Molesworth

14

## THIS WILL HAVE BEEN

**Art, Love & Politics  
in the 1980s**  
Helen Molesworth

48

## THE END IS NEAR

50  
**Undead Painting:  
Life After Life in the Eighties**  
Frazer Ward

65 Dotty Attie  
66 Jean-Michel Basquiat  
68 Robert Colescott  
72 Robert Gober  
74 Jack Goldstein  
77 Peter Halley  
79 Mary Heilmann  
81 Candy Jernigan  
82 Mike Kelley  
84 Martin Kippenberger  
89 Louise Lawler  
93 Sherrie Levine  
95 Christian Marclay  
96 Allan McCollum  
97 Matt Mullican  
101 Peter Nagy  
102 Raymond Pettibon  
107 Stephen Prina  
110 Martin Puryear  
113 Gerhard Richter

117 David Salle  
120 Doug + Mike Starn  
121 Tony Tasset  
126 James Welling  
127 Christopher Wool

132

## DEMO- CRACY

134  
**Where the Streets Have  
No Name: A Democracy of  
Multiple Public Spheres**  
Kobena Mercer

148 Charlie Ahearn  
151 John Ahearn  
153 Gretchen Bender  
154 Dara Birnbaum  
158 Black Audio Film Collective  
160 Jennifer Bolande  
161 Gregg Bordowitz  
164 Eugenio Dittborn  
170 General Idea  
171 Leon Golub  
174 Gran Fury  
175 Group Material  
181 Guerrilla Girls  
183 Hans Haacke  
186 David Hammons  
187 Keith Haring/  
Tseng Kwong Chi



193 Jenny Holzer  
196 Alfredo Jaar  
200 Barbara Kruger  
201 Louise Lawler  
206 Cildo Meireles  
207 Donald Moffett  
212 Lorraine O'Grady  
213 Paper Tiger Television  
217 Adrian Piper  
219 Lari Pittman  
221 Tim Rollins  
and K.O.S.  
226 Christy Rupp  
226 Doris Salcedo  
230 Juan Sánchez  
233 Carrie Mae Weems  
237 Christopher Williams  
239 Krzysztof Wodiczko

242

## GENDER TROUBLE

244

**A Few Troubles  
with "The Eighties"**  
Johanna Burton

258 Leigh Bowery  
260 Tony Cragg  
262 Jimmy De Sana  
266 Carroll Dunham  
268 Jimmie Durham  
271 Eric Fischl  
274 Robert Gober  
275 Nan Goldin  
280 Mike Kelley  
283 Paul McCarthy  
286 Annette Messager  
289 Cady Noland  
292 Albert Oehlen  
293 Julian Schnabel

296 Cindy Sherman  
298 Lorna Simpson  
301 Rosemarie Trockel  
301 Jeff Wall

308

## DESIRE & LONGING

310

**How Soon Is Now: Longing  
and Desire in the Art of  
the Late Twentieth Century**  
Elisabeth Lebovici

322 Judith Barry  
325 Ashley Bickerton  
326 Deborah Bright  
330 Sophie Calle  
331 Marlene Dumas  
335 Rotimi Fani-Kayode  
338 Félix González-Torres  
339 Peter Hujar  
346 G. B. Jones  
348 Isaac Julien  
349 Mary Kelly  
355 Silvia Kolbowski  
358 Jeff Koons  
362 Louise Lawler  
363 Jac Leirner  
366 Sherrie Levine  
369 Robert Mapplethorpe  
373 MICA-TV/Cindy Sherman  
376 Richard Prince  
380 Marlon Riggs  
385 David Robbins  
385 Laurie Simmons  
391 Haim Steinbach  
393 David Wojnarowicz

400

## A BACK- WARD GLANCE

**Video in the 1980s**  
Bill Horrigan

414

## MAKING LOVE MAKING ART

**Living and  
Dying Performance  
in the 1980s**  
Sarah Schulman

426

**Contributors**

428

**Exhibition  
Checklist**

433

**MCA Chicago  
Board of Trustees**

434

**Reproduction Credits**

436

**Index**



# EXHIBITION LENDERS

Addison Gallery of American Art,  
Philips Academy  
Charlie Ahearn  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
Autograph ABP  
The Baltimore Museum of Art  
Judith Barry  
The Estate of Gretchen Bender  
Barbara Bluhm-Kaul and  
Don Kaul  
Jennifer Bolande  
Ted Bonin  
The Brant Foundation  
Deborah Bright  
British Film Institute  
The Broad Art Foundation  
Gayle and Andrew Camden  
Creative Time Archive, Fales  
Library & Special Collections,  
New York University  
Dallas Museum of Art  
Davis Museum and Cultural  
Center, Wellesley College  
The Jimmy De Sana Trust  
Des Moines Art Center  
David Doubilet  
Mark Dubrovsky  
Stefan T. Edlis and  
H. Gael Neeson  
Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI)  
Feature Inc.  
Marilyn and Larry Fields  
Frameline  
General Idea  
Alex Gerry  
Glenstone  
Alexander Gray Associates

Guerrilla Girls  
Harvard Art Museums/  
Fogg Museum  
Harvard Art Museums/  
Busch-Reisinger Museum  
Wil and Sally Hergenrader  
Hirshhorn Museum and  
Sculpture Garden  
Jenny Holzer  
The Peter Hujar Archive  
Alfredo Jaar  
Candy Jernigan Foundation  
for the Arts, Inc.  
Anne Katzenbach  
Mary Kelly  
Barbara Lee  
Leslie-Lohman Gay Art Foundation  
Margaret and Daniel Loeb  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation  
Christian Marclay  
Matthew Marks Gallery  
Paul McCarthy  
Jennifer McSweeney  
Stephen Mindich and Maria Lopez  
Donald Moffett  
Matt Mullican  
Musée départemental d'art  
contemporain de Rochechouart  
Museum of Contemporary Art  
Chicago  
The Museum of Contemporary Art,  
Los Angeles  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York  
Peter Nagy  
Nationalgalerie,  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Paper Tiger Television  
Pow Wow Productions  
Penny Pritzker and  
Dr. Bryan Traubert  
Private collection  
The Rachofsky Collection  
Rubell Family Collection  
Christy Rupp  
Juan Sánchez  
San Francisco  
Museum of Modern Art  
Jack Shainman Gallery  
Laurie Simmons  
Skarstedt Collection  
Smoking Dogs Films  
The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi  
Video Data Bank  
Wadsworth Atheneum  
Museum of Art  
Walker Art Center  
Jeff Wall  
James Welling  
Whitney Museum of American Art  
Andrew Witkin  
Krzysztof Wodiczko  
Catherine de Zegher



# DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

In art museums, few endeavors are as rewarding as launching a landmark exhibition. With the premiere of *This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s*, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is privileged to be doing just that. It is with exhilaration that we have watched the exhibition's extraordinary curator, Helen Molesworth, Chief Curator of the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, work with a group of graduate students at Harvard University over the past year to pull together this compelling study of the artistic production of the 1980s, an important decade that is only now beginning to seem distant enough to be viewed through a historical lens.

The first major US museum retrospective devoted to the art of this transformative era, *This Will Have Been* looks at the years 1979 to 1992, acknowledging that history does not unfold neatly in easily assimilable, ten-year episodes. The exhibition's aim is not to establish a canon of 1980s art or to provide a definitive chronological survey. Instead, *This Will Have Been* argues for a complex and inevitably fragmentary, contingent, and partial understanding of the decade, one that views its artistic production not only in relation to previous and subsequent trends and movements in art but in tandem with the interconnected social and political events that informed it—and, perhaps most importantly, one that shows the critical role art played in shaping the period.

Jeff Wall once said in a discussion of the art of the 1980s that "properly written history is not very good when it comes to the lived texture of things. That lived feeling is something that disappears with us, probably, except when it's preserved in art." Because art has always operated in a larger social field as both agent and recorder of change, it offers historical information—visual and textual, in a range of nuances, tonalities, and gradations—that can't be

gotten at in any other way. To engage with the art of the 1980s is thus not only to approach an understanding of the art itself but also to gain unique perspective on the larger histories of the decade. In this exhibition and catalogue, we present a diversity of written histories of the period alongside opportunities for direct encounters with a range of its artistic production; our ambition in doing so is to offer a rich array of materials with which readers and visitors may engage within the themes of the exhibition. And while *This Will Have Been* aspires to contribute significantly to historical narratives about the 1980s, at the level of art and well beyond, it also seeks to situate contemporary art and politics in the context of recent history by offering new avenues of insight into problems of the eighties that continue to affect us profoundly today.

The MCA is particularly pleased to be presenting a selection of major works from its collection of 1980s art in *This Will Have Been*, an exhibition that reasserts the importance to the museum and to the city of Chicago of a decade of tremendous creativity. Chicago in the eighties was home to numerous prescient collectors, many of them MCA donors and trustees, who set an example for the larger contemporary art community with their acquisitions of the work of emerging artists who would go on to make lasting contributions—such as the Transavanguardia artists Sandro Chia, Francesco Clemente, and Enzo Cucchi, in addition to many American artists based in Los Angeles and New York. The MCA added to its own collection greatly during the eighties as well, acquiring numerous seminal works of the period, in many cases long before they became fashionable, by artists such as Leon Golub, Group Material, Adrian Piper, Richard Prince, Martin Puryear, and Haim Steinbach. Enjoying a newly enlarged space that had opened in 1979, the MCA also expanded

the scope and scale of its exhibition activity in that pivotal decade, bringing to Chicago the work of influential artists such as Vito Acconci, Dara Birnbaum, Christian Boltanski, Louise Bourgeois, Eric Fischl, General Idea, the Guerrilla Girls, Jeff Koons, Barbara Kruger, Robert Longo, Gordon Matta-Clark, the New British sculptors, David Salle, Julian Schnabel, Cindy Sherman, Nancy Spero, the Starn Twins, and many others, either as they emerged or in their first major shows. The MCA co-organized (with the Art Gallery of Ontario) the first North American retrospective of the work of Gerhard Richter in 1988. The museum also hosted a range of significant traveling exhibitions in the eighties, including the legendary retrospective of Robert Mapplethorpe's work, which was exhibited at the museum without controversy and drew the largest audience in the institution's history. The MCA was ahead of the curve in showing video and performance at the time, too, including the work of Robert Ashley, Ping Chong, and other artists. The enormous range of work the MCA engaged with in the 1980s—produced by artists of diverse backgrounds and orientations in a wide range of media—makes the institution today a strong repository for 1980s scholarship.

The MCA extends sincere gratitude to the enlightened benefactors of *This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s*, whose tremendous generosity has made an ambitious exhibition and catalogue possible. Our deepest thanks goes to the Harris Family Foundation, which has honored us with lead support for the project in memory of Bette and Neison Harris: Caryn and King Harris, Katherine Harris, Toni and Ron Paul, Pam and Joe Szokol, Linda and Bill Friend, and Stephanie and John Harris. We are enormously grateful as well to Joel Wachs and Pamela Clapp of The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and to Helen and Sam Zell, who have

provided major support, and to Neil G. Bluhm; Andrea and Jim Gordon, The Edgewater Funds; Dakis and Lietta Joannou; Susan and Lew Manilow; the Pritzker Traubert Family Foundation; Agnes Gund; Roger Ruttenberg and David W. Ruttenberg of the David C. & Sarajeon Ruttenberg Arts Foundation; Marilyn and Larry Fields; Eli and Edythe Broad and Joanne Heyler of The Broad Art Foundation; Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin; Michael P. Rales and Emily Wei Rales of Glenstone; Lawrence Luhring and Roland J. Augustine of Luhring Augustine, New York; and Per Skarstedt for their gracious additional support. We also offer warm thanks to American Airlines, Official Airline of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. Additional thanks are due to Director Olga Viso, Chief Curator Darcie Alexander, and Assistant Curator Bartholomew Ryan of the Walker Art Center and Director Jill Medvedow of the ICA/Boston for participating in the exhibition tour and ensuring the exhibition a wide audience.

*This Will Have Been* is the product of extensive, multi-institutional efforts, and I share in the immense gratitude Helen Molesworth has expressed in the acknowledgments on the following pages to the many people who have contributed time and talent to the project. I would like to extend my most heartfelt thanks to Helen herself, who has curated this thought-provoking exhibition with grace, eloquence, and profound insight into the art of an important era. She and I share the hope that the exhibition will be only the first among other major museum exhibitions on the art of the 1980s still to come, so that new voices will continue to be added to the decade's chronicles.

**Madeleine Grynsztejn**  
Pritzker Director



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The idea for this exhibition started in 2008, which means that during its long gestation period many people found themselves aiding and abetting the hubristic folly of trying to write a history of the relatively recent past. The exhibition began as a collaboration between the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the Harvard Art Museums. MCA Pritzker Director Madeleine Grynsztejn graciously asked if I would like to organize an exhibition for MCA Chicago during the period the Harvard Art Museums were closed for renovation, and I am flattered and honored by her initial invitation and steadfast commitment. Elizabeth & John Moors Cabot Director Thomas W. Lentz championed the idea that *This Will Have Been* could be a research project of the Harvard Art Museums, where I enjoyed the support of department assistant Jessica Ficken and curatorial intern Matt Jolly. Matt gave the show its melancholic and allusive title, for which I remain grateful. While at Harvard we held a two-day think tank generously funded by an Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Curatorial Research grant. The participating artists, art historians, and critics complicated the project greatly and provided a critical touchstone for thinking through problems of historicization in general and accounting for the 1980s specifically. In this capacity I gratefully acknowledge Elizabeth Alexander, Doug Ashford, Gregg Bordowitz, Rosalyn Deutsche, Peter Halley, David Joselit, Philipp Kaiser, Mary Kelly, Carrie Lambert-Beatty, Kobena Mercer, Dominic Molon, and Stephen Prina.

In 2010 I was appointed Chief Curator of the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (ICA), where Director Jill Medvedow enthusiastically agreed to join the exhibition's tour and supported my work on the project. At the ICA I am grateful to the curatorial department, who held down the fort during the time I was away at work on this exhibition.

In addition to the staff at the ICA, I was privileged to have Claire Grace, PhD candidate in the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Harvard, working as my research assistant. It is not an overstatement to say that this exhibition would have been impossible without her intellectual and psychic commitment to the art and artists involved and the (endless?) process of making an exhibition and catalogue of this scale. That she should be funny, ethical, and kind to boot means that my gratitude for her participation is without measure. She is joined as a catalogue author by her fellow Harvard graduate students Kevin Lotery, Jennifer Quick, Trevor Stark, and Jordan Troeller. They, along with Taylor Walsh, who wrote the exhibition labels, are the next generation of scholars working to realize implications of the art and politics of the 1980s.

Preparation for the exhibition entailed interviewing artists and curators. For their willingness to revisit the past, I thank Karole Armitage, John Baldessari, Cerith Wyn Evans, Eric Fischl, Ann Goldstein, Isaac Julien, Mary Kelly, Silvia Kolbowski, Barbara Kruger, Catherine Lord, Raymond Pettibon, Lisa Phillips, Lari Pittman, David Salle, Paul Schimmel, Sarah Schulman, Laurie Simmons, Haim Steinbach, James Welling, and Jane Weinstock. My previous dialogues with Louise Lawler, Allan McCollum, and Donald Moffett also contributed to my thinking about the period. So too my late 1980s days at the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program, led for decades by Ron Clark, form the deep groundwater of this project.

Huey Copeland, Claire Grace, Bill Horrigan, and Catherine Lord read the first draft of my essay for this volume and made suggestions that improved it. Gregg Bordowitz spent a day in Chicago working with me on the exhibition model, which was fun and instructive. A hearty thanks as well to catalogue essayists