

First New York Survey Exhibition in Over 15 Years Devoted to American Artist Martha Rosler

Martha Rosler: Irrespective

November 2, 2018, through March 3, 2019

New York, NY, June 12, 2018 – The Jewish Museum will present ***Martha Rosler: Irrespective***, a survey exhibition focused on the influential artist Martha Rosler from November 2, 2018, through March 3, 2019. Considered one of the most important voices of her generation, Rosler weds a strong engagement with social and political issues with incisive critique, one which often focuses on mass cultural modes of representation. From her feminist photomontages of the 1960s and 1970s to her recent large-scale installations, Rosler's vital work – including photography, sculpture, installation, and video – reflects an enduring and passionate vision.

Long overdue for a survey exhibition in her native New York City, *Martha Rosler: Irrespective* will feature well-known as well as rarely seen works from 1965 to the present, shown within the context of a decades-long practice that continues to evolve and react to the shifting contours of political life. The exhibition will comprise a number of installations from across the span of her career in addition to selections from her ongoing photographic series and works on video.

"Martha Rosler's direct, unvarnished take on current social and political circumstances is rooted in her belief in the capacity of art to teach, provoke, and ultimately motivate action in the people it reaches," says Darsie Alexander, Susan and Elihu Rose Chief Curator, The Jewish Museum. "The Jewish Museum is proud to present Rosler's work in her first New York survey exhibition in over 15 years. We hope that visitors of all backgrounds will find inspiration, discover the humor, and identify the compassion that surrounds her work."

Feminism, poverty, consumerism, war, and gentrification, among other issues, have been constant themes for Rosler over her career. Rosler has traced her interests not only to her coming of age during the civil rights and anti-war eras, but also to the ethical background instilled in her by her yeshiva education. Though her political engagement began amid the Vietnam War and the women's movement, it is both a credit to Rosler's far-reaching vision and a reflection on society today that her powerful and insightful work has never felt more relevant, or more important.

The exhibition will include a wide range of Rosler's work, including her photomontage series, *Body Beautiful, or Beauty Knows No Pain* (c. 1965–72), and both *House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home* series (c. 1967–72 and 2003–08). Installations include *A Gourmet Experience* (1974), which will be recreated for this exhibition, and *Reading Hannah Arendt (Politically for an American in the 21st Century)* (2006), which attests to the significance in the post 9/11 world of the political theorist's writings on totalitarianism, censorship, and the culture of fear. Rosler's work in photography will be amply represented, including her photos of spaces of transportation and from her series *Transitions and Digressions* (1981–present), a commentary

on commodified desire. Her videos will also be on view, among them *Martha Rosler Reads Vogue* (1981), which dissects the glamorous lifestyles purveyed by fashion magazines and offers a glimpse of the female sweatshop workers producing many of the clothes featured in their pages. One of the most recent bodies of work in the exhibition is the series "Off the Shelf" (2008/2018), digitally composed photographs which present books drawn from Rosler's prodigious library.

Always attuned to the forces that shape economies, societies, and people, Rosler chronicles our time, using strategies that range from deadpan humor, as with her knife-wielding cook in *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975), or her landmark critique of photographic documentary practice in *The Bowery in two inadequate descriptive systems* (1974-75). Just as her work addresses recurring themes, she also makes use of repetition, seriality, and collage in her artwork, bringing together themes and information in an additive fashion that lends both depth and texture to her work. Rosler is also known as an accomplished writer, critic, and theorist. *Martha Rosler: Irrespective* provides a unique opportunity to see the breadth of her artistic practice and its continued resonance today.

Martha Rosler: Irrespective is organized by Darsie Alexander, Susan and Elihu Rose Chief Curator, with Shira Backer, Leon Levy Assistant Curator, The Jewish Museum, in close collaboration with the artist and her studio. The exhibition is designed by New Affiliates (Jaffer Kolb, Ivi Diamantopoulou).

Publication

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Jewish Museum and Yale University Press are publishing a 256-page, hardcover book with 300 color illustrations. The book includes an introduction by exhibition curator Darsie Alexander, with Shira Backer; essays by Rosalyn Deutsche and Elena Volpato; and a candid and insightful conversation with the artist and Molly Nesbit. Rosler also contributes an essay on performance and the feminist artists of California in the 1970s. The book will be available worldwide and at the Jewish Museum's Cooper Shop for \$50.00.

Support

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About the Jewish Museum

Located on New York City's famed Museum Mile, the Jewish Museum is a distinctive hub for art and Jewish culture for people of all backgrounds. Founded in 1904, the Museum was the first institution of its kind in the United States and is one of the oldest Jewish museums in the world. Devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, the Museum offers diverse exhibitions and programs, and maintains a unique collection of nearly 30,000 works of art, ceremonial objects, and media reflecting the global Jewish experience over more than 4,000 years.

Location: 1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street, New York City

Hours: Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 11am to 5:45pm; Thursday, 11am to 8pm; and Friday, 11am to 4pm.

Admission: \$18.00 for adults, \$12.00 for senior citizens, \$8.00 for students, free for visitors 18 and under and Jewish Museum members. Pay What You Wish on Thursdays from 5pm to 8pm. Free on Saturdays and select Jewish holidays.

Information: The public may call 212.423.3200 or visit TheJewishMuseum.org.

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