

# THE TALENT SHOW

September 30 – December 10, 2011, USF Contemporary Art Museum

In recent years, television's "reality shows" and talent competitions, along with Web-based social media, have pioneered new models of cultural participation that offer individuals a conflicted chance at fame. At the same time, governments and corporations have asserted vast new powers of surveillance, placing unwitting participants on an entirely different stage. Against this complicated and unnerving landscape, The Talent Show explores both notoriety and celebrity in our contemporary world.

Uniting works from the late 1960s and early 1970s with contemporary examples examining similar themes, The Talent Show gives viewers the opportunity to experience seminal works by Stanley Brouwn, Chris Burden, Sophie Calle, Graciela Carnevale, Peter Campus, Tehching Hsieh, David Lamelas, Piero Manzoni, Adrian Piper, Andy Warhol, and Hannah Wilke alongside works by younger artists, Phil Collins, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Amie Siegel, John Smith, Gillian Wearing, Shizuka Yokomizo, and Carey Young.

Hannah Wilke rose to prominence in the late 1960s and 1970s for photography-based works that addressed the role of the female body in contemporary art and popular culture. She posed topless for many of these images—masquerading for the gaze of the camera. But, because the camera was positioned and controlled by Wilke herself, feminists claimed that Wilke questioned conventional modes of image production. Conversely, her images were so tantalizing that she was often criticized for reiterating harmful stereotypes.

In 1987 Wilke was diagnosed with lymphoma, and continuing her examination of her own body (and even her mother's), the artist decided to document her battle with the disease. In *The Intra-Venus Tapes*, sixteen monitors show hours of Wilke suffering from chemotherapy, surgeries, and the despair of illness. Through all of it, she maintains her electric ability to reveal her body for the camera. She worked with her husband Donald Goddard to create this installation that was posthumously realized in 2008. According to Peter Eleey, curator of The Talent Show, Wilke and Goddard's collaboration foreshadows many of the confessional reality television shows we follow today.

Chris Burden is represented in this exhibition by three works that address surveillance and the power of governments to track and even extract information from citizens. *You'll Never See My Face in Kansas City*, was completed when Burden traveled to the Midwest in November 1971. He wore a ski mask throughout his stay and visitors to the gallery space were prevented from seeing him by a strategically placed wall and board. The knitted hat that Burden wore now serves a relic of the performance, a common practice from the artist, who sought out ways to represent his action-based practice to a wider audience.

In addition to staging and completing several influential performances in the early 1970s, Burden expanded his body of work to address the mechanics of everyday life by the end of the decade. He engineered and built a car in 1975, called *The B-Car*, and created this working wire-tapping system in 1977. Although the telephone and the recording device appear outdated to contemporary eyes, this piece anticipates poignant political issues during the administration of George W. Bush.

Graciela Carnevale was in her twenties during the political turmoil in Argentina in the 1960s. Although the military coup and other social changes mirrored many of the student protests in North America and Europe, most people consider that Argentine government to have been particularly harsh and brutal. Carnevale addresses this by staging an event that trapped visitors inside a locked space without aide or information. After approximately one hour of containment, one of the participants broke the glass, and one by one individuals exited the space. As Carnevale explains in a written statement, displayed by the work, *Entrapment and Escape (Encierro y escape)*, "I wanted each audience member to have the experience of being locked in, of discomfort, anxiety, and ultimately the sensations of asphyxiation and oppression that go with any act of unexpected violence." By creating a situation with definitive limitations, Carnevale was re-creating some of the affects of an oppressive regime.

David Lamelas is a noted contributor to Conceptual art in Latin America and Europe. Through decades of art making, he has made significant contributions to how video and film are displayed in art galleries, even breaking new ground by showing real-time video feeds. For other works, he has addressed fame, celebrity, and bravado with both small and large scale works.

For *Limit of a Projection I*, 1967, Lamelas creates an intriguing stage for visitors. They can stand underneath a stage light while haze fills the gallery space. Regardless of whether others are present, the pressure of attention and assumed performance enact particular stresses on the participant.

Several important cultural themes and questions emerge in the exhibition, including can participation function as a form of agency? Or does isolation develop in the face of spectacle or entertainment?

*The Talent Show* was organized by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis and is made possible by generous support from the David Teiger Foundation and Ann M. Hatch. The exhibition was curated by Peter Eleey.

## CHECKLIST

Stanley Brouwn, *This way Brouwn*, 1964

ink on paper

9-5/8 x 12-9/16 in.

Collection Walker Art Center

Clinton and Della Walker Acquisition Fund, 2007

Chris Burden, *Disappearing*, 1971

Empty case and description card

Collection the artist

Chris Burden, *You'll Never See My Face in Kansas City*, 1971

ski mask and description card

5-1/2 x 17 x 12 in. case

Collection Gilbert and Lila Silverman, Detroit, Michigan

Chris Burden, *Wiretap*, 1977

phone and recording device

Collection the artist

Sophie Calle, *The Address Book*, 1983/2009

31 offset lithographs on paper

15-1/2 x 14 in. each

Courtesy the artist and Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles

Peter Campus, *Shadow Projection*, 1974

rear projection screen, theatrical spot light, surveillance camera, projector

196-5/16 x 236-1/4 in.

Marieluise Hessel Collection, Hessel Museum of Art, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

Graciela Carnevale, *Encierro y escape (Entrapment and escape)*, 1968

16 unframed b/w photographs and offset print on paper

Collection the artist

Phil Collins, *free fotolab*, 2009

35mm slide projection

Courtesy the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York

Philip-Lorca diCorcia, *David Theodore Lane, 27, Tucson, AZ, \$30*, 1990–1992

photograph

20 x 24 in.

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner Gallery

Tehching Hsieh, *Wanted By Immigration Service*, 1978

offset print on paper, 2 parts

8.5 x 11 in.

Courtesy the artist and Sean Kelly Gallery, New York

David Lamelas, *Limit of a Projection I*, 1967

theater spotlight in darkened room

dimensions variable

Collection Walker Art Center

T.B. Walker Acquisition Fund, 2009

Piero Manzoni, *Base Magica (Magic Base)*, 1961

exhibition copy fabricated 1996

wood

31-1/2 x 31-1/2 x 31-1/2 in.

Collection Fondazione Mudima, Milan

Adrian Piper, *Context #7*, 1970

7 black notebooks, ink, graphite, crayon, postage stamps, photograph, sugar package on paper

Collection Walker Art Center

T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund, 2008

Amie Siegel, *My Way 1*, 2009

video (color, sound); 9 min.

Courtesy the artist

Amie Siegel, *My Way 2*, 2009

video (color, sound); 12 min.

Courtesy the artist

John Smith, *The Girl Chewing Gum*, 1976

16 mm film (transferred to video)

16mm film transferred to DVD, b/w, sound; 12 min.

Courtesy the artist and Tanya Leighton, Berlin

Andy Warhol, *Robin*, 1965

16mm film transferred to DVD, b/w, silent; 4 min.

Courtesy The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh

Gillian Wearing, *Dominik*, 2008

acrylic on masonite in custom frame; ink on paper, photographs under glass

38-7/8 x 25-3/8 x 2 in. (framed)

38-7/8 x 51-1/8 x 1 in. (open)

Courtesy the artist and Regen Projects, Los Angeles

Gillian Wearing, *I Signed On and They Would Not Give Me Nothing* from

*Signs that say what you want them to say and not Signs that say what some one else wants you to say*, 1992–1993

chromogenic print mounted to aluminum

16-1/2 x 11-3/4 in.

Collection Walker Art Center

Gift of Richard Flood, 2006

Hannah Wilke, *The Intra-Venus Tapes*, 1990–1993

16-channel video, monitors; color, sound

Courtesy the Estate of Hannah Wilke and Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York

Shizuka Yokomizo, *Stranger (6)*, 1999

C-print

31-1/2 x 31-1/2 in.

Collection Leslie Cohan, Minneapolis

Carey Young, *Mutual Release*, 2008

archival inkjet print and archival ink on paper

15 x 18-3/4 x 1-1/2 in. framed

Courtesy the artist and Paula Cooper Gallery