

HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

Lee Lozano c. 1962

Hauser & Wirth London, South Gallery

19 May – 29 July 2017

Opening reception: Thursday 18 May, 6 – 8 pm



‘Psychoanalysis, the rejection of marriage and motherhood, traditional femininity, tightly scripted roles and behaviour, an upending of what had come before, all this can be seen in the paintings and drawings she created in the early 1960s: all display an unbridled will to misfit.’

– Bob Nickas

Hauser & Wirth is pleased to present a powerful body of painting executed by Lee Lozano c.1962. These 27 works belong to the artist’s first major oils series and are stylistically distinct from the minimalist aesthetic of subsequent paintings, or the late conceptual works that brought her notoriety. Oil paint is heavily applied to vivacious figures and objects; intimate in scale, each is densely packed with sexually charged imagery and aggression. Lozano’s work and attitude radically dismantled notions of ‘the feminine’ at a time when the parameters of feminism were in their earliest stages of definition. The c.1962 paintings speak to the artist’s attempts to grapple with these boundaries. Lozano would remain an active presence in New York until 1972, when she made a dramatic withdrawal from the art world.

The exhibited paintings present male and female body parts and objects morphing together and mutating with an assortment of vessels such as paper bags, cardboard boxes and cups. The rich paint evokes a dark sexual energy, something the artist termed ‘the cosmic fuck’. The forms typically enter or emerge from one another and Lozano plays with positive and negative space to create miscellaneous orifices. Lozano also invokes gothic imagery: a set of red lips, with unusually large teeth and a set of fangs is a recurrent motif. Throughout the series the crude brushstrokes seem hastily applied, lending the works a sense of urgency and volatility.

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The objects and shapes in these paintings allude to both genders, therefore there is no sexual hierarchy. As Helen Molesworth, Chief Curator at MoCA, explains, 'It implies instead a decentred experience of the body less dependent on vision, voyeurism, spectacle and objectification... Lozano's evocation of the body is raucous, muscular and simultaneously disturbing and deeply erotic'.



In the following decade, Lozano fought to consolidate her artistic self in a realm void of systems, rules and group consciousness. She pursued a wholly independent solo studio practice which culminated in her rejection of the New York art world and association with women. First she refused to attend public functions and withdrew from the activities of the Art Workers Coalition, then relocated to Dallas. 'By refusing to speak to women', says Molesworth, 'she exposed the systematic and ruthless division of the world into categories of men and women. By refusing to speak to women as an artwork, she also refused the demand of capitalism for the constant production of private property... The strategy of rejection is a powerful one.'

About the artist

Lee Lozano's (b. 1930, Newark NJ, d. 1999, Dallas TX) art is striking for its breadth and energy, and admired for its daring physicality and tirelessness in investigating the body and issues of gender. Her oeuvre comprises a search for a truly authentic form of expression. Standing apart from the detached and rarefied conceptual art in her time, Lozano merged art and life, images and ideas together, in works characterised by a unique use of paint, language, and action. Lauded by Lucy Lippard as the foremost female conceptual artist of her era in New York, Lozano's brief but influential career remains a source of fascination.

In her lifetime, Lee Lozano's work was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York NY (1970) and was shown at Green Gallery in New York NY (1964, 1965) amongst others.

Major exhibitions include: 'Lee Lozano. Drawings & Paintings', Hauser & Wirth New York, 18th Street (2015); 'Lee Lozano. Retrospective', Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden (2010); Hauser & Wirth Zürich (2008); 'Lee Lozano. No Title. 1969', Hauser & Wirth London (2007); 'Dorothy Iannone und Lee Lozano', Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria (2006); 'Win First Don't Last/Win Last Don't Care', Kunsthalle Basel, Basel, Switzerland (2006), which travelled to Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands (2006); 'Lee Lozano. Drawn from Life: 1961 – 1971', MoMA PS1, New York NY (2004); and 'Lee Lozano. MATRIX: 135', Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford CT (1998). Her work was also presented at documenta 12 in Kassel, Germany in 2007.

Between 31 May and 25 September 2017, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain will host a survey exhibition of the artist's work.

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Lee Lozano
No title
ca. 1962
Oil on board
7 x 8.3 cm / 2 3/4 x 3 1/4 in

Lee Lozano
No title
ca. 1962
Oil on canvas
20.3 x 26.6 cm / 8 x 10 1/2 in

Lee Lozano
No title
ca. 1962
Oil on wood
8.3 x 7 cm / 3 1/4 x 2 3/4 in

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