

Press Release



Betye Saar (American, born 1926). *Liberation of Aunt Jemima: Cocktail*, 1973. Mixed-media assemblage, 12 x 18 in. (30.5 x 45.7 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Purchased with funds given by Elizabeth A. Sackler, gift of the Contemporary Art Committee, and William K. Jacobs, Jr. Fund, 2017.17. © Betye Saar and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California

Brooklyn Museum

Brooklyn Museum announces 96 recent acquisitions by female artists

In conjunction with *A Year of Yes: Reimagining Feminism at the Brooklyn Museum*, marking the 10th anniversary of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, the Museum welcomed 96 works by female artists into the Sackler Center and Contemporary Art collections. Acquired as the Museum celebrated a decade of groundbreaking feminist exhibitions and programs from late 2016 to early 2018, they include notable works by Emma Amos, Beverly Buchanan, the Guerrilla Girls, Marilyn Minter, Betye Saar, Miriam Schapiro, and Betty Tompkins, among others.

“The Brooklyn Museum is excited to have added numerous works from ancient times to the present to its collection over the past year and, after a concerted effort to broaden our historic narratives, among them are nearly a hundred works by women artists, all of whom have contributed significantly to our times,” said Anne Pasternak, the Museum's Shelby White and Leon Levy Director. Elizabeth A. Sackler added, “I would like to thank the dozens of people who participated with me in the acquisition of the 96 works for the benefit of the Sackler Center and the Brooklyn Museum as a whole.”

“Adding significant works by established and emerging artists to the Brooklyn Museum collection through both gifts and acquisitions is the culminating event for our yearlong celebration marking the tenth anniversary of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art.

We are extremely pleased to announce these important additions to the collection by many of the artists who participated in *A Year of Yes: Reimagining Feminism at the Brooklyn Museum*,” said Catherine Morris, Sackler Senior Curator for the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art.

During *Beverly Buchanan—Ruins and Rituals* (2016–17), the inaugural exhibition of *A Year of Yes*, the Sackler Center collection received the generous gift of Buchanan’s *Untitled (Frustula Series)* (circa 1978) from Arden Scott. The first work by Buchanan to enter the Museum’s collection, this paradigmatic example of her *Frustula* series of cast-concrete sculptures places the concise forms of Post-Minimalist art in dialogue with the realities of urban decay and social displacement. *Untitled (Frustula Series)* was included in both *Ruins and Rituals* and *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85* (2017).

At the close of *A Year of Yes*, two subsequent acquisitions from Buchanan’s best-known series, her small-scale shack sculptures examining the vernacular architecture of the American South, were brought into the Contemporary Art collection, thanks to the William K. Jacobs, Jr. Fund. These exceptional examples from her shack series, *Lillington NC Harnett Co.* (2007) and *To Prudence Lopp* (n.d.), explore the relationship between personal, historical, and geographical memory.

Multiple works have been acquired by additional artists included in *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85*. Betye Saar’s *Liberation of Aunt Jemima: Cocktail* (1973) was brought into the Sackler Center collection by a generous donation from Elizabeth A. Sackler and funds from the Contemporary Art Committee and the William K. Jacobs, Jr. Fund. Combining the iconography of the Black Power Movement, political violence, and aspirational middle-class American culture, the assemblage critiques the racist stereotypes of black femininity and speaks to the revolutionary aims of Black liberation movements. Emma Amos’s *Flower Sniffer* (1966), the first major work by the artist to be acquired by the Museum, was brought into the Contemporary Art collection through the William K. Jacobs, Jr. Fund. In this self-portrait, Amos presents herself alone in an abstract field of paint, enjoying the fragrance of flowers while steadily returning the viewer’s gaze, asserting and defining her own place within her work.

On the occasion of Marilyn Minter’s retrospective *Marilyn Minter: Pretty/Dirty* (2016–17), the Sackler Center collection acquired *Smash* (2014) as a generous gift from the artist and Salon 94 Gallery. One of Minter’s best-known forays into video art, the work was commissioned by the Brooklyn Museum for its 2014–15 exhibition *Killer Heels: The Art of the High-Heeled Shoe* and was the concluding piece in *Pretty/Dirty*. Minter’s foreboding video of a model dancing to a pulsing, minimalist soundtrack highlights many of her long-term concerns regarding how women are represented in art and culture, and presents an alternative enacting of empowerment and agency.

Three other significant acquisitions enriched the Sackler Center collection during *A Year of Yes*, thanks to generous gifts. More than 50 posters by the Guerrilla Girls and Guerrilla Girls Broadband, Inc. were gifted by the Guerrilla Girls Broadband. Miriam Schapiro’s *Tapestry of Paradise* (1980) was a gift from Robert Sugar, and Betty Tompkins’s *Fuck Painting #6* (1973) was a gift from Robert Gober and Donald Moffett.

Additional works by Eleanor Antin, Nancy Azara, Andrea Bowers, Judy Chicago, Mary Beth Edelson, Lauren Ewing, Nona Faustine, Harmony Hammond, Deborah Kass, An-My Lê, Nikki S. Lee, Park McArthur, Diane Neumaier, Dread Scott, Joan Semmel, Sylvia Sleigh, Joan Snyder, Nancy Spero, Jana Sterbak, May Stevens, Athena Tacha, Adejoke Tugbiyele, June Wayne, and Martha Wilson were also acquired throughout *A Year of Yes*.