

WHITNEY

Whitney Museum
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PRESS RELEASE



Zoe Leonard, *TV Wheelbarrow*, 2001, dye transfer print, 20 × 16 in. (50.8 × 40.6 cm). Collection of the New York Public Library; Funds from the Estate of Leroy A. Moses, 2005

THE WHITNEY TO PRESENT **ZOE LEONARD: SURVEY**

NEW YORK, January 10, 2018 – A major mid-career survey of the work of Zoe Leonard, one of the foremost artists of her generation, will open at the Whitney on March 2, 2018. *Zoe Leonard: Survey* is organized by The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, where it will make its West Coast debut following the Whitney's presentation. The exhibition is the first to assess the extraordinary range of the artist's achievements over more than three decades of her career to date.

Zoe Leonard (b. 1961, Liberty, New York) has made photographs, sculptures and installations that are celebrated for their lyrical observations of daily life, as well as for their rigorous, questioning attention to the politics and conditions of image making and display. Her work is wide-ranging in both form and subject matter, and addresses themes including gender and sexuality, loss and mourning, migration, displacement, the history of photography, and the urban landscape. Using repetition, subtle changes of perspective, and shifts of scale, Leonard reframes images and objects in ways that challenge the viewer to follow her path of inquiry, and to reexamine the familiar from every possible angle.

“We are delighted to partner with MOCA in presenting a body of work that is remarkable for both its keen critical insights and expansive emotional timbre,” said Scott Rothkopf, the Whitney’s Deputy Director for Programs and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator. “Zoe’s work first entered our collection 25 years ago, and since that time we have been honored to feature her in numerous exhibitions, including three Biennials, and to recognize her achievement with the 2014 Bucksbaum Award.”

“Leonard’s photographs, sculptures and installations ask the viewer to reengage with how we see,” said Elisabeth Sherman, assistant curator at the Whitney, who is organizing the New York installation of the show in close collaboration with the artist. “Her work is both beautiful and powerful, deeply connected to the issues of our time and a counter-example to the speed and disposability of image culture today.”

Zoe Leonard: Survey will bring together about 100 key works from across Leonard’s career, dating from the mid-1980s until today. Among the installations to be presented is *Strange Fruit*, an important work of the 1990s, on loan for the first time in nearly twenty years from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Composed of banana and orange peels that Leonard stitched together, *Strange Fruit* is the artist’s response to loss during the early days of the AIDS crisis, made at a time when there were no effective drug treatments for HIV. In addition, Leonard will also be adapting *You see I am here after all* for this exhibition, presenting it for the first time since it was originally shown at Dia: Beacon in 2008. Consisting of thousands of vintage postcards of Niagara Falls, the work engages with that iconic landscape and its role in the American myth. This work has a particular resonance given the Whitney’s role as a museum of American art, and the Museum’s location and view on to the Hudson, another vista which figures large in the American imagination.

Much of Leonard’s work reflects on the framing, classifying, and ordering of vision. As she herself once commented: “Rather than any one subject or genre (landscape, portrait, still life, etc.), I was, and remain, interested in engaging a simultaneous questioning of both subject and vantage point, the relation between viewer and world — in short, subjectivity and how it informs our experience of the world.”

The exhibition will also highlight important works of photography from throughout Leonard’s career, beginning with early images of aerial landscapes, maps, and models. *The Fae Richards Photo Archive* (1993-96), a work made in collaboration with the filmmaker Cheryl Dunye for her film *The Watermelon Woman* and one of the highlights of the Whitney’s collection, will be shown alongside photographs from the 1990s that address gender and sexuality within museum displays.

The exhibition will also highlight Leonard’s most recent body of photography and sculpture focusing on vernacular image culture and its relationship to identity and migration. Included in this group will be a new sculpture, *How to Take Good Pictures*, composed of over one-thousand copies of a Kodak manual in print between 1912 and 1995.

Zoe Leonard: Survey will debut at the Whitney in the fifth floor Neil Bluhm Family Galleries from March 2 through June 10, 2018, before traveling to The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, November 4, 2018—March 25, 2019.

About the Artist

Zoe Leonard (b. 1961, Liberty, New York; lives in New York) has exhibited extensively since the 1980s. Recent solo exhibitions include *Analogue* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2015), *100 North Nevill Street* at the Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas (2013-14), and *Observation Point* at Camden Arts Centre, London (2012). A retrospective of Leonard’s photographs was organized by the Fotomuseum Winterthur (2007), and traveled to the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid (2008); Museum moderner Kunst Stifting Ludwig Wien, Vienna (2009); and the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2009). Other solo exhibitions include *You see I am here after all*, Dia:Beacon, Beacon, New York (2008); *Derrotero*, Dia at The Hispanic Society of America (2008), *Analogue*, the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio (2007); *Strange Fruit*, Philadelphia Museum of Art (1998); Kunsthalle Basel (1997); Secession, Vienna (1997); and the

Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago (1993). Leonard's works have been included in numerous group exhibitions, including Documenta 9 (1992), Documenta 12 (2007), and the 1993, 1997, and 2014 Whitney Biennials.

About the Catalogue

The exhibition catalogue, *Zoe Leonard: Survey*, by Bennett Simpson, includes contributions by Douglas Crimp, Elisabeth Lebovici, Fred Moten, Elisabeth Sherman, and Lanka Tattersall. Essays in the book range from the critical to the poetic, including in-depth examinations of key works not included in the exhibition, such as Leonard's contribution to Documenta IX (1992) and her camera obscura installations. The book, designed by Joseph Logan, and edited by Karen Kelly and Barbara Schroeder, is published by Prestel.

Public Programs

Zoe Leonard and Rebecca Solnit in conversation
Friday, March 16 at 6:30PM
Hess Family Theater

Additional programs to be announced.

Curatorial Credit

The exhibition is organized by Bennett Simpson, Senior Curator, with Rebecca Matalon, Curatorial Associate, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. The installation at the Whitney Museum is overseen by Elisabeth Sherman, Assistant Curator.

Exhibition Support

In New York, generous support for *Zoe Leonard: Survey* is provided by Diane and Adam E. Max and The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation.

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About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists at a time when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for more than eighty years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists themselves, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

Jimmie Durham: At the Center of the World	Through January 28, 2018
Laura Owens	Through February 4, 2018
Toyin Ojih Odutola: To Wander Determined	Through February 25, 2018
Experiments in Electrostatics: Photocopy Art from the Whitney's Collection, 1966–1986	Through March 2018
Do Ho Suh: 95 Horatio Street	Through January 2018
Christine Sun Kim: 95 Horatio Street	Opens January 2018

Juan Antonio Olivares: Moléculas	Opens March 2, 2018
Zoe Leonard: Survey	March 2, 2018–June 10, 2018
Grant Wood: American Gothic and Other Fables	March 2, 2018–June 10, 2018
Between the Waters	Opens March 2018
Nick Mauss	Opens March 2018
Mary Corse	Opens June 2018
Pacha, Lacta, Wasichay: Building the Indigenous Present	Opens July 2018
David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night	Summer 2018
Kevin Beasley	Opens Fall 2018
Andy Warhol	Opens November 2018
An Incomplete History of Protest:	Ongoing
Selections from the Whitney's Collection, 1940–2017	Ongoing
Where We Are: Selections from the Whitney's Collection	Ongoing
1900–1960	

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Museum hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday from 10:30 am to 6 pm; Friday and Saturday from 10:30 am to 10 pm. Closed Tuesday. Adults: \$25. Full-time students and visitors 65 & over: \$18. Visitors 18 years & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.

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