

LYNN HERSHMAN LEESON

Origins of the Species

February 19 - April 5th, 2015

Bridget Donahue will open its inaugural exhibition at 99 Bowery (second floor) on Thursday, February 19, 6-8 pm with works by pioneering American artist and filmmaker Lynn Hershman Leeson.

Long before the digital revolution and the virtualization of everyday life, Lynn Hershman Leeson created surrogate personas to investigate relationships between humans and technology, and the media's potential as a tool to counter censorship and political repression. *Origins of the Species* traces these prophetic concerns in works that span from 1968 to 2014, including photography, collage, sculpture, and interactive installations. The exhibition maps Hershman Leeson's early gestures toward the split self, her notion of "Self Portrait as Another Person" exercises, and her parsing of the double bind of voyeurism and surveillance that has, in recent decades, become increasingly fraught.

Works exhibited include, among others: *Breathing Machine* (1968); photographic documentation from *Suicide Pieces* (1968); *Roberta Breitmore Construction Chart* (1973); surveillance photos from the Roberta Breitmore performance archive; the interactive media sculptures *CyberRoberta* (1994) and *A Room of One's Own* (1990-1993). Select series will be on view such as *Hero Sandwiches* (1981-1994), which cross-pollinates male and female celebrity headshots, and *Phantom Limb* (1988), which merges images of female bodies with those of cameras and monitors. The exhibition will also feature new work by Hershman Leeson, including *The Infinity Engine* (2014), which aims to expose the social and ethical implications of genetic manipulation as the ultimate form of surveillance, *Bio Printer Ear* (2013), and a dense archive of digital photos depicting stranger-than-fiction genetically modified animals and plants and the labs in which they are created.

This solo gallery exhibition runs concurrently with the artist's first museum retrospective at ZKM in Karlsruhe, Germany (running until April 6, 2015). A comprehensive monograph with contributions by Peter Weibel, Andreas Beutin, Pamela M. Lee, Peggy Phelan, Laura Poitras, B. Ruby Rich, Kristine Stiles, and Tilda Swinton, among others is due out in March, published by Hatje Cantz.

Hershman Leeson will lead a discussion titled "The Future of Humanity" with Karen Archey, Aimee Mullins, Oron Catts, Melissa Logan, Patricia Maloney, Luke Massella, Aimee Mullins, Keith Murphy, Anicka Yi, and Dr. Josiah P. Zayner at MoMAPS1's Sunday Sessions on February 22, 2015.

LYNN HERSHMAN LEESON (B. 1941) Over the last four decades, Lynn Hershman Leeson has made pioneering contributions to the fields of performance, sculpture, photography, video, film, and interactive and web-based installations. She holds a distinctive place for possessing a rare fluency in digital technology as its technical and formal vocabulary evolved. Her work has been shown in over 200 large-scale exhibitions throughout the world and is featured in the public collections of the Museum of Modern Art (New York), Tate Modern (London), Lehmbrock Museum (Duisburg), Los Angeles County Museum of Art, National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), Whitworth Art Gallery (Manchester), and Berkeley Art Museum. Her investigations of identity and various modes of surveillance ranges from *Roberta Breitmore* (1973-79), the fictional character that she, then three subsequent female personas, enacted in real time and space, using artifacts of the time, to *Lorna* (1983/84), one of the first interactive projects on video disc, to the feature-length film *Teknolust* (2002) which addressed cyber-identity, artificial intelligence, cloning, and the decoupling of sexuality from human reproduction. In her most recent works, Lynn Hershman Leeson includes robots, mass communication media as well as the latest scientific developments in the field of genetics and regenerative medicine, including 3D bioprinters that create human body parts. A strong feminist voice, Hershman Leeson released the groundbreaking documentary, *!Women Art Revolution*, feature-length films: *Strange Culture* (2007), *Conceiving Ada* (1997), and *Teknolust* (2002) – all featuring actress Tilda Swinton. Her films have won many awards and have been featured at the Sundance, Berlin, and Toronto International Film Festivals.

...IN THE OFFICE

JESSI REAVES

Jessi Reaves has designed custom furniture for the office, which, going forward, will serve as her showroom. Polar fleece and ergonomic mesh augment the skeleton of a Rashid chair for Target. Alongside the chairs is a bright, laminate kidney-bean table atop further fleece-clad shapes. Jessi Reaves (b. 1986) lives and works in New York.

WALTER SMITH: RAG CINEMA

Walter Smith's new works, a continuation of his series of hand-rendered script over stuttering digital images on cotton rag paper, relates to the function of internet memes and emerges from the artist's interest in 'cinefication'. Smith's firm insertion of degraded pictures serves what are ultimately formal compositions. Hollywood films and icons of the dominant culture are elevated and explored. Walter Smith (b. 1980) lives and works in New York.