

## PRESS RELEASE

Here's a list of questions often asked for Press releases for art Exhibits

**1. Who**: is doing this? This is an art Exhibit by **Kembra Pfahler**, founder of the n.y.c. based theatrical rock band "The Voluptuous Honor of Karen Black". Other longtime members will be seen in the archival posters and drawing and polaroids on view, like co-founder and Guitarist Samoa Moriki.

**2. What**: will happen at this show? There will be new photos as well as historical works. Kembra has been doing this band project since 1990. Before that she and Samoa spent a decade together doing performance and films in New York. There will be scheduled talks and live performances in July at the gallery space. (It's me Kembra writing this press release...) Stay in touch about scheduling.

**3. Where**: is it? This show is at **EMALIN** gallery. 1 Hollywell Ln. to reach people about this show... Leopold@Emalin.com or Angelina@Emalin.com or Kembra1@yahoo.com —thankyou—

**4. Why**: ARE you doing this? This is my 3rd solo exhibit at Emalin, a gallery I really love doing things at. This show is called "SOUND-OFF" which is a phrasal verb that means "to voice one's opinions freely and vigorously" So while I still can, I will be happy to share these new and old works with you all. Much love Kembra T V H K B

*On The Record,  
Off The Record:  
Sound Off*  
Kembra Pfahler

09 July – 27 August 2022

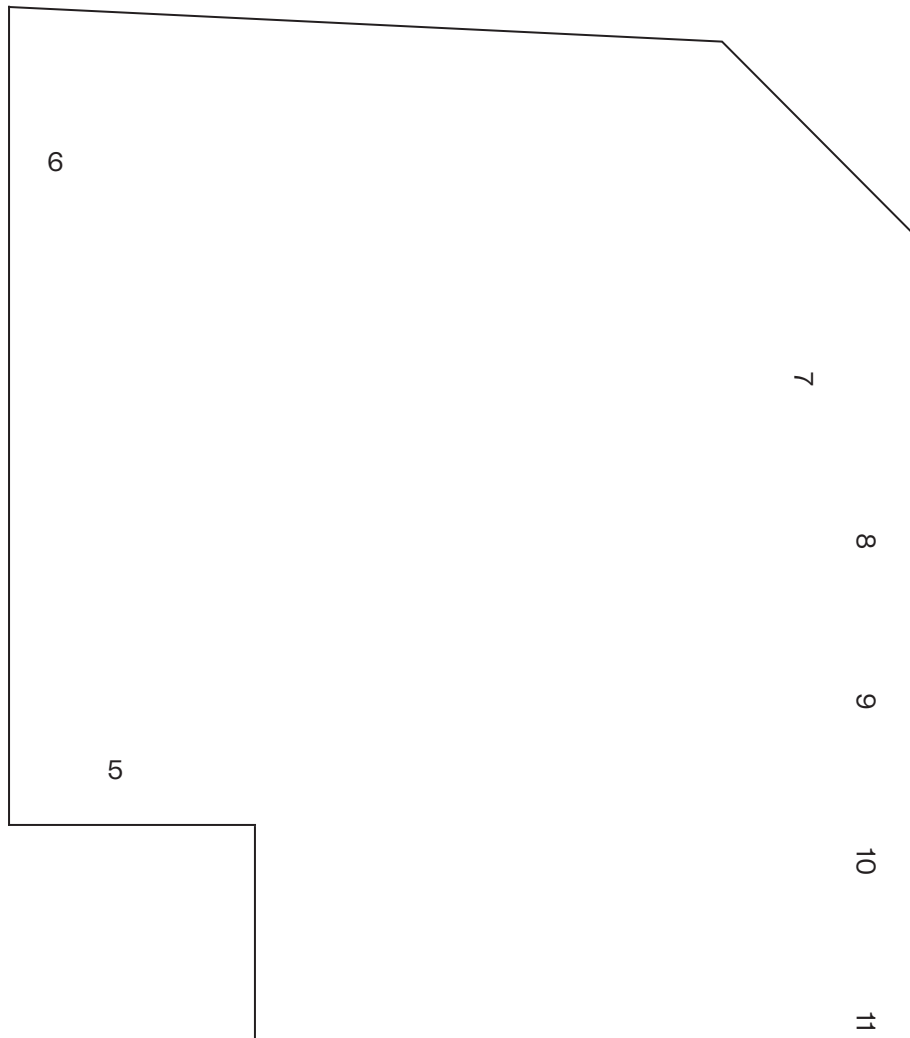
Emalin is pleased to present *On The Record, Off The Record: Sound Off*, a solo exhibition of new and archival works by American artist Kembra Pfahler, the artist's third at the gallery. The exhibition comprises never-before-seen collages made for the artist's performances in the 1990s across the venues of New York's underground scene, alongside a selection of recent drawings. *Sound Off* is the third of Pfahler's *On The Record, Off The Record* trilogy, following live performances at New York's Pioneer Works earlier this year and at Participant Inc in 2021. A recording of the Participant Inc performance, livestreamed last year due to pandemic restrictions, is screened on the ground floor.

Pfahler is a key figure of New York's underground scene. With a practice spanning music, performance, acting, film and visual arts since the 1980s, the image vocabulary she has built informs the countercultural aesthetics of the Lower East Side. Drawing references from monstrous fetishistic femininity, she founded the death-rock band The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black in 1990. Throughout the 1990s, TVHKB regularly performed in New York's iconic venues, including the notorious Limelight, Pyramid Club, and CBGB. Photocopies of Pfahler's handmade black and white collages were used as posters to announce these concerts and featured her collaborators such as her husband and guitarist of the band, Samoa Moriki, or the sex work activist and educator Annie Sprinkle.

The band's cult performances incorporate handmade costumes and props created along the lines of Pfahler's philosophies, tongue-in-cheek subversions of art history's attempts at categorising. 'Availabism' simply means making use of whatever is available; and 'beautalism', fostering an idea of beauty that allows for transformation, where "vanity will always be the enemy of interpretation". The ceremonial treatment of her body in transgressive acts in performances and in films - including her role in the Cinema of Transgression movement of the 1970s and 80s - is the source of a visual vocabulary that unfolds across the range of media she employs. The acts, scenarios, props and costumes re-emerge as photographs in collages, as snapshots on Polaroid, and later recur in her practice in the form of drawing, which she refers to as *Non-Fiction Illustrations*. Portraying herself and the Girls of Karen Black in the style of a 'femlin', she subverts the hypersexualised cartoons originally gleaned from illustrations in Playboy magazine, and the normative social psyche that produced them.

Visual elements like the 'femlin', symbols like the bat with breasts, or gestures such as the attachment of bowling balls to her feet, have been staple motifs in Pfahler's performances from the 1980s until today. They conjure a spirit of, at the same time, subversive protest and passionate transgression against the violence of the normative. In her own words, "I saw the bat with breasts, which is on the official Karen Black Flag, in a truck stop years ago; it was mean-spirited and I saw it as the emblem to represent our America. Fierce, female, vicious, and fun. The idea of deflating misogyny appeals to me."

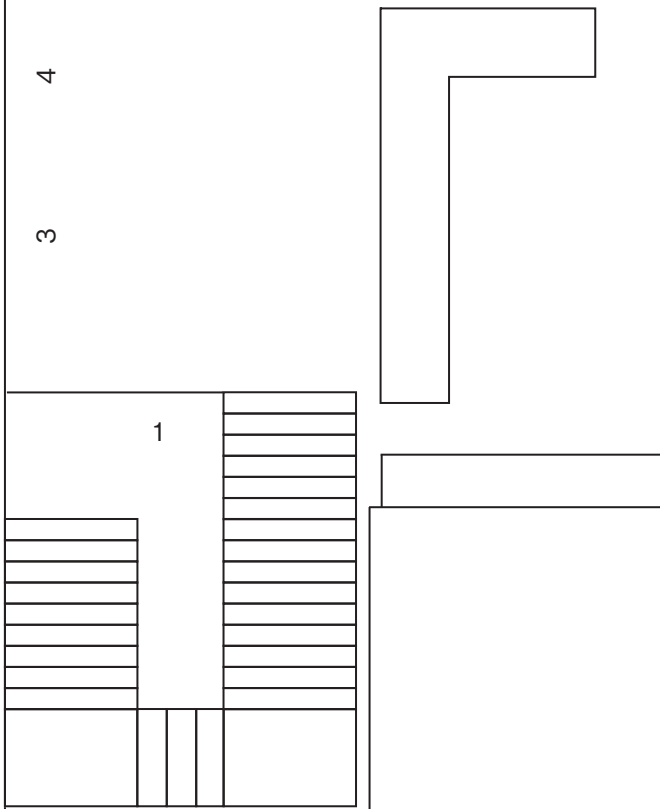
Kembra Pfahler (b. 1961, Hermosa Beach, CA, US) lives and works in New York, US. She graduated with a BFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York in 1983. Selected performances have been held at Pioneer Works, New York, US (2022); Participant After Dark, Participant Inc., New York, US (2021); Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR (2020); The Hole, New York, US (2020); The Kitchen, New York, US (2019); Mendes Wood DM, Brussels, BE (2018); Rubin Museum, New York, US (2016); Southbank Centre, London, UK (2012); Pyramid Club, New York, US (1984). Selected exhibitions have been held at Deitch Projects, Los Angeles, US (2020); Hessel Museum of Art, Hudson, US (2018); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, DE (2012); Participant Inc., New York, US (2012); Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, RU (2011); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, US (2008); Park Avenue Armory, New York, US (2008); Deitch Projects, New York, US (2008); The Swiss Institute, New York, US (2007); American Fine Arts Company, New York, US (2002); and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, US (2002). Her discography with The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black includes *Black Date* (1998); *A National Healthcare* (1996); and *Anti-Naturalists* (1995). Her appearances in film include *The Misandrists*, dir. Bruce LaBruce (2016); *Surf Gang*, dir. Katrina del Mar (2006); *Cremaster 2*, dir. Matthew Barney (1999); *Sewing Circle*, dir. Richard Kern (1992); and *War is Menstrual Envy*, dir. Nick Zedd (1992).



**GROUND FLOOR**

1.  
 Kembra Pfahler with the Girls of Karen Black (GOKB) a.k.a Caroline Mills, Alice Boy and Jackie Rivera  
*On the Record / Off the Record*, 2021  
 performance livestream video  
 duration: 24:46 min  
 Participant Inc, New York City, US, 4 August 2021

Live Performance by: Kembra Pfahler and GOKB  
 Live Music by: Samoa Moriki, Joe Darkside  
 And "The Horror Has Gone" by ANOHNI  
 Video-Direction, Lighting, and Live Edit: Glen Fogel  
 Produced by: Lia Gangitano  
 Production Manager: Jordan Strafer  
 Camera Operators: John Brattin, Isaiah Davis, Harry Kleeman  
 Audio & Video Engineer: Collin Leitch  
 Production Assistants: Harry Kleeman, Caroline Mills



## FIRST FLOOR

2. *Karen Black Flag*, 2022  
textile on found flag  
each: 90.2 × 151 cm  
(35½ x 59½ inches)
3. *Archival Poster for On the Record, Off the Record*, 2021  
pencil, pen and metal on paper  
20.5 × 22.8 cm  
(12 × 9 inches)  
framed: 45.1 × 37.3 × 3.2 cm  
(17¾ x 14¾ x 1¼ inches)
4. *First Summer of Covid*, 2020  
body paint, glitter, pencil and pen on paper  
27.5 × 38 cm  
(10⅞ x 15 inches)  
framed: 42.3 × 52.7 × 3.2 cm  
(16⅝ x 20¾ x 1¼ inches)
5. *Historical Direction of Cross*, 2021  
house paint, pencil and pen on paper  
38 × 27.6 cm  
(15 × 10⅞ inches)  
framed: 45.1 × 37.3 × 3.2 cm  
(17¾ x 14¾ x 1¼ inches)
6. *Performance prop (Vinyl)*, 2022  
acrylic paint and paper on foam board  
each: ∅ 193.4 cm x 1 cm  
(∅ 76⅞ x ⅜ inches)
7. *Historical Alaska Photo in Karen Black Poster*, 1991  
photograph and collage on paper  
44.5 × 57.3 cm  
(17½ x 22½ inches)  
framed: 69.7 × 57.9 × 3.2 cm  
(27½ x 22¾ x 1¼ inches)
8. *Annie Sprinkle Photographs in Karen Black Poster*, 1990  
photographs, paint, pen and collage on paper  
44.5 × 57.3 cm  
(17½ x 22½ inches)  
framed: 58 × 69.8 × 3.2 cm  
(22⅞ x 27½ x 1¼ inches)
9. *Fear of a Karen Black Planet*, 1994  
photograph, paint, pen and collage on paper  
44.5 × 57.3 cm  
(17½ x 22½ inches)  
framed: 69.7 × 57.9 × 3.2 cm  
(27½ x 22¾ x 1¼ inches)
10. *2 Berühmte Photos*, 1994  
photographs, paint and collage on paper  
44.5 × 57.3 cm  
(17½ x 22½ inches)  
framed: 69.7 × 57.9 × 3.2 cm  
(27½ x 22¾ x 1¼ inches)
11. *Isis Water*, 1998  
photograph and collage on paper  
44.5 × 57.3 cm  
(17½ x 22½ inches)  
framed: 73.5 × 58 × 3.2 cm  
(29 × 22⅞ x 1¼ inches)