

PRESS RELEASE

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Susan Mogul

What becomes a Legend most?

August 4–October 30, 2022

Susan Mogul's solo exhibition at Zachęta—National Gallery of Art in Warsaw, Poland takes a closer look at her innovative creative practice from 1971 to the present. The presentation of the work of the American artist—who was born in New York but has lived and worked in Los Angeles since the 1970s—includes video productions as well as her most recent films, objects and works on paper.

The show features nearly twenty works selected from the artist's versatile and complex oeuvre. They touch on important issues such as the position of women, social changes, family ties and the artist's relationship with her mother. The main theme of Mogul's art is memoir with a feminist perspective. Her works are characterized by conceptual rigor and a sense of humor. The artist often draws upon the language of advertising, film and the mechanisms of wider promotion, which in the visual arts does not necessarily translate into commercial success.

Although Mogul's oeuvre includes mainly video and film works, her art seeks to break through and transcend the boundaries of this medium, in which text, both spoken and printed, play an important role alongside images that have a narrative function. This is the nature of the Mogul works of 2022, premiered at the Zachęta. *What becomes a Legend most?* a series of three semi-nude self-portraits in Polish, English and Yiddish, is a take off on the mid-century ad campaign for "Blackglama", featuring older women celebrities wrapped in the company's mink coats. The artist's critical reflection on the question of age, and the late recognition of women's achievements resounds here.

With an even more performative and narrative dimension are the paper shopping bags (2019) and the 36 panel installation, *Tales from the Mogul Archive* (2022). These are intimate statements, combining images and text in carefully composed arrangements, investigating the complex relationship between life and art.

Having been involved with video since the early 1970s, Susan Mogul is a pioneer of the medium. Initially producing an important series of humorous and staunchly feminist performance videos, her practice quickly expanded to more complicated and experimental forms of narrative, including feature length work. Mogul has received grants including: Guggenheim Fellowship, ITVS commission, National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, Getty Trust Fellowship, and Center for Cultural Innovation grant. Mogul's video art has been featured in historic exhibitions: "California Video" at The Getty Museum, "Los Angeles: Birth of an Art Capital" at the Pompidou, and at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Mogul's video/film retrospective was presented at "Visions du Reel" Film Festival in Switzerland in 2009. "Driving Men" a feature length documentary, screened in international competitions in Japan, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland, India. Mogul was the keynote speaker at a national conference in Zurich on film and autobiography; lectured in the series "Critical Issues in Contemporary Art" at the Henry Gallery in Seattle, and presented a "lecture" at the Wattis Center for Contemporary Art in San Francisco on comedy and performance. In 2020 a major essay about Mogul's work and its significance to the history of feminist art and Los Angeles art was published in X-TRA, a prestigious arts quarterly. Mogul's first solo museum exhibition—a major survey of her work- opened August 4, 2022 at the Zacheta National Gallery of Art in Warsaw, Poland.

Exhibition curator: Michał Jachufa

Exhibition producer: Karolina Jezierska-Pomorska

Partners of the exhibition:

Video Data Bank at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

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