

Kunsthhaus
Graz

English

Amazons of Pop!

Women artists, superheroines,
icons, 1961–1973

Space02

22.04.–28.08.2022

**FEMINISM
IS A
WORLDVIEW.
IT'S A
VIEWPOINT
THAT
DEMANDS A
RETHINKING OF
QUESTIONS
OF POWER.
MARTHA ROSLER**

Amazons of Pop! shows works by women Pop artists from 1961 on, celebrating their pioneering approach to the mass media and burgeoning consumerism. With self-confidence, sensuality and the courage to explore themselves, women artists reveal the years of revolt in the midst of the economic miracle of the Western world.

Amazons are fearless warriors. In Pop, they become superheroines, creative activists working for self-determination, peace and equality. The icons of Pop combine life with art, the aesthetics of advertising and the glamorous lifestyle of the stars with the hedonism of post-war modernism. The women artists break down stereotyped roles, showcase sexual liberation and the pleasure of powerfully staging one's own body, while highlighting the senselessness of a war that is beamed by the media straight into the kitchens of perfect housewives.

Some of the women artists featured in the exhibition were recognised in their own time, but then forgotten by history in the decades that followed. This show seeks to make a further contribution to filling in these gaps in art history and to demonstrate the need for a shift in our perspective on the period from 1961 to 1973. The aim is to rescue the history of Pop Art from the entrenched, male-dominated perception, and to place female perception on an equal footing. Here at the exhibition we find the female gaze as women artists examine their own bodies, growing consumerism and the beauty industry.

Seen through the female lens, we take a different look at historical events such as the moon landing, the arms build-up during the Cold War, the Vietnam War and the first oil crisis. The first space flight by the Russian cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova in 1963 is explored, as are the peace and civil movements, which originated in the USA and gave rise to a new wave of the women's movement. The rallying slogan 'The private is political' became an agenda in the Western world.

The exhibition examines social and political crises, but also the expectations placed on women, their stereotyped roles, rights and taboos. A key feature of Pop Art is its critical approach to the media and the growing commercialisation of the news, to mass and entertainment culture, Hollywood movies, comics and the appealing aesthetics of advertising. The use of everyday objects to create assemblages is a common design tool/medium in Europe at this time, originating in France. Objects from the home environment are discovered as materials, household objects are combined into pictures. In this archaeology of everyday life, wear and tear and usage serve as a counterbalance to the brave new world of consumerism. Plastics,

synthetic fibres and mass-produced goods also become a theme in art. The car as a symbol of autonomy and mobility became increasingly important from the 1960s onwards. Here at the exhibition, the car is given a sardonic twist in *Erotomobile*.

In the art world, women were internationally underrepresented and sought to liberate themselves from the role of muse and model. They asserted their claim to women's authority of interpretation, especially over their own bodies, but also over world events. At the end of the 1960s, the birth control pill and the miniskirt served as a catalyst for liberation from the old mindsets and stereotypes, which the Amazons use to give free rein to their own fantasies. BANG BANG! In comics we find attractive female warriors or the smart girl who knows how to handle a gun. But not everything produced by women artists at this time followed the spirit of the growing women's movement – we can also find imagery from advertising that foregrounds women as objects, or the sexualisation of the female body.

Among the 120 or so artworks from painting, performance, film, installation and sculpture

by around 40 women artists, a number of Austrian positions have been added to the show in Graz. While VALIE EXPORT has received a lot of attention in recent years and, like Kiki Kogelnik, has carved out a place for herself in the art world, the presence of Ingeborg G. Pluhar, Auguste Kronheim and Angela Hareiter fills in some of the gaps in local art history.

Featured artists and other protagonists:

Evelyne Axell, Barbarella, Brigitte Bardot, Marion Baruch, Pauline Boty, Martine Canneel, Lourdes Castro, Judy Chicago, Chryssa, France Cristini, Christa Dichgans, Jane Fonda, Ruth Francken, Ángela García, Angela Hareiter, Jann Haworth, Dorothy Iannone, Jodelle, Corita Kent, Kiki Kogelnik, Auguste Kronheim, Kay Kurt, Nicola L., Ketty La Rocca, Natalia LL, Milvia Maglione, Lucia Marcucci, Marie Menken, Marilyn Monroe, Isabel Oliver, Yoko Ono, Ulrike Ottinger, Emma Peel, Ingeborg G. Pluhar, Pravda la Survireuse, Martha Rosler, Niki de Saint Phalle, Carolee Schneemann, Marjorie Strider, Sturtevant, Valentina Tereshkova, VALIE EXPORT, May Wilson.

[Exhibition catalogue](#)

Amazons of Pop!
Women artists, superheroines, icons
1961–1973
German and English
29 €

The supporting programme of events in German can be found on our homepage.

Some works of the exhibition are offered in tactile form.
taktiles.de/de/index

Guided tours Kunsthhaus Graz
Saturdays 3:30–4:30pm,
Sundays 11–12am in German
Sundays 2pm in english language

An audio guide to the exhibition is available.



**ALL WE
DEMANDED
WAS OUR
RIGHT TO
TWINKLE.
MARILYN MONROE**

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icons 1961–1973
22.04.–28.08.2022
Space02

An exhibition by MAMAC Nice in collaboration with Kunsthalle zu Kiel and Kunsthhaus Graz and the support of Manifesto Expo.

Curated by:
Hélène Guenin & Géraldine Gourbe, (MAMAC) in collaboration with Regina Göckede & Anette Hüscher (Kunsthalle zu Kiel) and Katrin Bucher Trantow & Barbara Steiner (Kunsthhaus Graz)

Assistance curator: Alexandra Trost

Text: Monika Holzer-Kernbichler

Translation: Kate Howlett-Jones

Audioguide: Jasmin Edegger, Katrin Ebner

Programme for children and schools: Gabriele Gmeiner, Elisabeth Keler, Jana Pilz, Romana Schwarzenberger

Open House: Wanda Deutsch, Anna Döcker, Lara Almbauer

KoOgle: Jana Pilz, Katrin Ebner

Inclusion services and accessibility: Eva Ofner, Jasmin Edegger, Gabi Gmeiner

The exhibition was first shown at MAMAC Nice under the title *She-Bam Pow Pop Wizz! Les Amazones du Pop*. 03.10.2020–29.08.2021

Kunsthalle zu Kiel
02.10.2021–06.03.2022

**DON'T
BELITTLE
YOURSELF.
BE BIG
YOURSELF.
CORITA KENT**