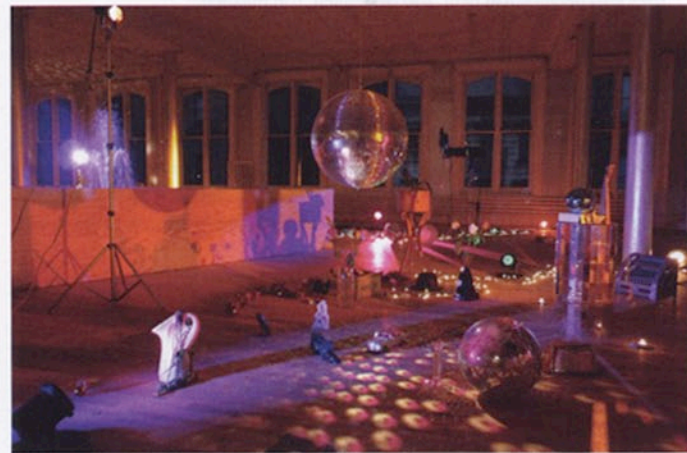


Marc Camille Chaimowicz

ARTISTS SPACE

This past summer, under the new direction of Stefan Kalmár (formerly at the Kunstverein Munich), the venerable nonprofit Artists Space underwent a significant physical transformation. Calling on architects ifau & Jesko Fezer in collaboration with common room (Lars Fischer, Todd Rouhe, and Maria Ibañez de Sendadiano), Kalmár—taking into consideration a related site-specific project Michael Asher proposed for the space in 1988—had all interior walls and all existing lighting removed, and the floor sanded down and left unfinished. To establish spatial coordinates while retaining transparency, the architects used floor-to-ceiling wooden posts (like frames without drywall) to make legible the non-gallery areas (entrance, office, bar/bookshop, and study room), and installed a bench in the space where the director's office had previously been.

Having given the institution a new body, Kalmár then revisited its founding year, inviting Marc Camille Chaimowicz to install *Enough Tyranny*, the artist's expansive, floor-based, post-Pop, critique-of-consumer-culture-meets-Paradise-Garage installation, first shown at London's Serpentine Gallery in 1972. The work, which comprises barbed wire, fresh-cut flowers, a desk lamp, a plastic candleholder, Christmas decorations, a fox fur, and two water pools, each with a school of goldfish, among some two hundred other elements, was here retitled *Enough Tyranny Recalled, 1972–2009*, and took up the entire gallery; its sprawling electrical wires, reflective surfaces, and pulsating lights implicated the viewer as yet another constituent formal component. Chaimowicz's design calls to mind the post-Minimalist strategies of his near-contemporaries such as Robert Morris, Dan Flavin, Barry Le Va, and Group Zero, who likewise set out to destabilize personal and public space with reflective surfaces, self-illuminated sculptures that altered phenomenological conditions, floor-based displays, and kinetic light installations that highlighted objects within the space. In this updated version of *Enough Tyranny*, as in its original sister installation *Celebration? Realife* (also 1972), the viewer observes herself in the mirrors placed within the work as a two-dimensional image among the commercial detritus, her own shadow casting her body's form across—and therefore altering—the tonal qualities of other objects in the room. Time is also indeterminate for Chaimowicz, and as I stood alone amid the splay of half-used goods and trimmings, with Roxy Music's self-titled album coming through the speakers, it was not clear whether I had arrived too early or was looking at the tailings of last night's party, if not one that took place thirty-seven years ago.



View of "Marc Camille Chaimowicz," 2009.

When discussing his choice to begin his tenure with an old work by an older artist, Kalmár has rejected the notion of categorization by age or experience, adding that he sought to support the emerging interests of a vital sector of New York's artists. Indeed, although this exhibition marked the first solo presentation of Chaimowicz's work in an American institution, one need only consider the work of Wolfgang Tillmans, Jutta Koether, Scott Lyall, Clegg & Guttman, or Ei Arakawa to recognize the elder artist's influence as formidable.

Across the length of two gallery walls ENOUGH TYRANNY appeared in thick letters, hand-drawn in black paint. When Chaimowicz first exhibited this work, the words cast an open-ended reference to British relations with Northern Ireland. In today's context, the particular meaning was less pointed, but in an environment of corporatized New Museums and X-initiatives in which the emphasis feels weighted toward assertions of cultural power rather than the concerns of practicing artists and committed art viewers, this incarnation of Artists Space appears to be taking Chaimowicz's message to heart.

—Caroline Busta

WORCESTER/BOSTON, MA

Rona Pondick

WORCESTER ART MUSEUM/HOWARD YEZERSKI GALLERY

Rona Pondick first garnered attention in the late 1980s with her primal and disquieting assemblages of disembodied part-objects and prostheses, such as shoes, baby bottles, or mouths. Since 1998, however, the New York-based artist has taken a different tack, fashioning her own body parts in stainless steel and bronze and mating the results with a variety of flora and fauna, from muskrats to monkeys; for *Pyracantha*, 2005–2006, for example, she cast an exotic evergreen bush in stainless steel, replacing its pines with minuscule self-portrait busts. Such hybrids formed the core of "Rona Pondick: The Metamorphosis of an Object," an ambitious site-specific installation at the Worcester Art Museum, which traced the artist's enduring fascination with physical and psychic transformation as well as her long-standing interest in the history of sculpture. To foreground the latter enthusiasm, Pondick, collaborating with curator Susan Stoops, arranged fourteen works among twenty-nine figurative sculptures from the museum's holdings (in effect rendering the exhibition itself a hybrid). Spanning a variety of scales, styles, media, and cultures from the primitive through twentieth-century collections, the historical objects included a cinerary urn, a bronze portrait head of a lady, and an eleven-headed wooden statue; they were arranged to echo the stance, textures, and form of Pondick's own pieces. With hopes that the sculptures would shed their historical references and "take on more physical, emotional, and visceral relations with the viewer," the artist and curator left off identification labels, offering a fully illustrated checklist to those who wished to identify the objects. An additional display, "Pondick and Technology," explained the ways in which the artist combined traditional sculptural processes (life casts, modeling, and carving) with high-tech methods (3-D-scanning and printing, digital resizing) to make *Cat*, 2002–2005, a reclining, stainless-steel sphinxlike creature, whose porous, human-scale hands are fused to a highly polished tiny feline body capped with the artist's miniaturized head.

"Rona Pondick: The Metamorphosis of an Object," 2009, is also the title of a limited-edition portfolio of nine offset lithographs printed on the occasion of this exhibition and presented, individually framed, at the Howard Yezerski Gallery in Boston. Each of the nine prints matches elements from Pondick's sculptures with corresponding details from historical objects originating in Thailand, Italy, Mexico,