

The North Carolina Pottery Center's

**GOING, GOING,
GONE TO POTS!**

...
**Saturday
2/5/2022
from 6:00-8:30 PM**

Join us as we celebrate the Pottery Center's Annual Going, Going, Gone to Pots! Gala at **CAM RALEIGH** in downtown Raleigh. Feast on fine foods and festive drinks. Enjoy sweet music as you take in the best of North Carolina's pottery and ceramics at our silent and live auctions. This event benefits the North Carolina Pottery Center, a Seagrove-based nonprofit promoting the rich heritage and ongoing artistry of pottery in North Carolina.

You're invited! Tickets & Additional Info At WWW.NCPCGALA.ORG

EVENT LOCATION: CAM RALEIGH, 409 WEST MARTIN STREET, RALEIGH, NC

Close-ups of representative piece by Courtney Fall Tomchik.

University of North Carolina @ Greensboro

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that O'Grady's work addresses. By putting seemingly contradictory ideas into proximity and refusing the possibility of resolution, O'Grady seeks to undermine the power and hierarchy that usually attaches to such oppositions as black and white, museum and individual, self and other, West and non-West, and past and present. The exhibition's subtitle *Both/And* alludes to O'Grady's ambitious goal of dismantling the either/or thinking that forms the basis of much of Western thought and its attendant structural inequalities.

Both/And will fill all four of the Weatherspoon's second-floor galleries. Alongside each of O'Grady's foundational projects will be a critical selection of materials from the artist's personal archive, which shed light on the careful decision-making and ambitious intellectual range of her creative process. This ephemera, fastidiously preserved by O'Grady, is now housed at her alma mater, Wellesley College, and includes correspondence with Adrian Piper, Kobena Mercer, Lucy R. Lippard, and Martha Wilson, along with drafts of writings, journals, interviews, and photographs.

The exhibition begins in the Bob and Lissa Shelley McDowell Gallery, with O'Grady's 1982 performance "Rivers, First Draft", a conceptual source of many of the ideas that would go on to animate the artist's career. A one-time performance staged in a secluded corner of Central Park before a few dozen spectators, the complex event lives on as a carefully constructed photo installation. "Rivers, First Draft" draws upon practices ranging from Dada cabaret and contemporary theater to West African Vodun symbolism to narrate O'Grady's transition from child to teenager to adult artist. The performance speaks to the double bind Black women face, excluded from white spaces because of their race and Black spaces because of their gender.

A selection of the original collages from "Cutting Out the New York Times" (1977) represents O'Grady's first works of art, created in the aftermath of a medical crisis in 1977. This group of twenty-six highly personal poems is words and phrases extracted from the headlines of the Sunday edition of the *New York Times*. *Both/And* marks the first time the original collage poems are on public view. Also on view will be "Cutting Out CONYT" (2017), a recent "remix" of the 1977 "Cutting Out the New York Times", which distills the original collage poems into "haikus" in the form of diptychs.

Projects focused on O'Grady's critique of the art world's unexamined cultural assumptions and the institutional structures it has built to support them include "Mlle Bourgeoise Noire" (1980), "Art Is..." (1983) and "The Black and White Show" (1983), each of which pinpoint how the art world excluded Black people both as artists and as audiences. O'Grady made each of these works, produced between 1980 and 1983, while in the guise of her performance persona, "Mlle Bourgeoise Noire" (Miss Black Middle Class).

The character, an aging beauty queen wearing an evening gown made from 180 pairs of secondhand white gloves, appeared in O'Grady's landmark guerrilla performances at both Black and "mainstream" (white) cultural institutions in New York City such as JAM and the New Museum. In "Art Is...", she responded to a Black acquaintance's assertion that "avant-garde art doesn't have anything to do with Black people" by creating a conceptual artwork for the largest public Black space she could envision: a parade float at Harlem's annual African American Day Parade.

In "The Black and White Show", "Mlle Bourgeoise Noire" invited thirteen pairs of artists - half of them Black, half

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white - to contribute works in a black-and-white color palette to her exhibition at the important Black owned Kenkeleba Gallery. In each of these works, the artist's piercing critique of the racism and sexism of the art world established her as an active voice in the alternative New York art scene.

This gallery's installation culminates with the newly debuted work "Announcement of a New Persona" (Performances To Come!), which offers a recontextualization of the driving concepts and complex narratives that form the basis of Lorraine O'Grady's entire career. While much of the project remains secret, O'Grady says that the work consists of a four-part series of character studies in the form of life-size cartes de-visites for a performance she has been developing since 2013. Though it is a complete work in itself, the series also signals future possibilities for performances and critiques centered around the new persona.

The museum's Gallery 6 will feature the 18-minute video installation "Land-

scape" (Western Hemisphere) (2010-2012), next to which the Gregory D. Ivy Gallery will feature photo collages from the artist's series "Body Is the Ground of My Experience" (1992), including the diptych "The Clearing: or Cortés and La Malinche", "Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings, N. and Me". Perhaps one of O'Grady's most controversial and misunderstood works, it imagines even the most intimate relationships between Black and white people to be inevitably shaped by the deep history of racism and colonialism in which they occur. Finally, the Guild Gallery will offer a rare opportunity to see in its entirety "Miscegenated Family Album", one of O'Grady's best-known works.

Lorraine O'Grady: *Both/And* is accompanied by a catalogue documenting the entire span of O'Grady's artistic career, the first publication to do so. Concurrently, a volume of collected writings, *Writing in Space: 1973-2019*, edited by D'Souza for Duke University Press,

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