

BEN MALTZ GALLERY - MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JUNE, 2006

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Images available

Ben Maltz Gallery at Otis College of Art and Design is pleased to present

The Moral Museum: Selections from the Bick Archive

January 20-March 31, 2007
Reception Saturday, January 20:
4pm walk-through with the artist
followed by a reception until 7pm.



The Moral Museum: Selections from the Bick Archive is a multi-media installation created by New York artist Cindy Smith that began as a critical examination of Frank Capra's classic 1946 film "It's a Wonderful Life" and ends as a compelling reflection on the birth and history of the movement for Women's Rights in America—a battle raging with renewed vigor today.

Smith gives "naughty girl" Violet Bick, played by Gloria Grahame, the limelight and has created a fictional life history that takes Violet from the filmic "Bedford Falls" to the actual town of Seneca Falls in New York (home to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the first Women's Rights Convention in 1848) that Capra used as his model for the location of the movie. Stepping in rhythm with artists like Jeffrey Vallance and authors like Gregory Maguire, Smith has produced both a past and future for Violet by including people and events outside of the period and social constraints of the film. The multi-media exhibition offers an illustrated timeline via objects, photographs, letters, film clips and interviews, of Violet's life from her days as a humble dress shop owner to becoming a successful continental businesswoman fighting for Women's Rights in the 1960s and 70s.

This installation is organized by Meg Linton, Director of the Ben Maltz Gallery and is part of the nationwide celebration of the significant influence of women artists on contemporary art orchestrated by the Southern California Women's Caucus for Art (SCWCA), the Southern California Council of the National Museum of Women in the Arts (SCC NMWA), and TheFeministArtProject. Cindy Smith is on site installing the exhibition in the gallery for three weeks in January 2007 and giving several public presentations about the life and times of Ms. Violet Bick.

Cindy Smith

A native of Syracuse, NY Cindy Smith attended Hobart and William Smith Colleges, The School of Visual Arts, The Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Study Program, and received an MA from the University of Rochester in Visual and Cultural Studies.

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Smith has been making interdisciplinary, project-based work since the early 1990's that has explored the role of gender in American history and popular culture as a subject for artistic practice. Her investigations have been manifested in installations, museum exhibitions, curatorial projects, writings, lectures and publications throughout the United States and Europe. Her work has been included in numerous exhibitions at Artists Space, The Huntington Beach Art Center, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, The Wexner Center, White Columns, PS1 Center for Contemporary Art, The Irish Museum of Modern Art, and Accademia Filarmonica Romana, among others. She lives and works in Brooklyn, NY and South Windham, VT.

Location: Otis College of Art and Design, 9045 Lincoln Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045

Parking & Admission: Free. Visitor parking in structure on La Tijera.

Hours: Tue-Sat, 10am-5pm / Thu, 10am-7pm. Closed Mondays and major holidays (Feb 17-19)

Gallery Office Hours: Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm

Information: 310.665.6905, galleryinfo@otis.edu, www.otis.edu/benmaltzgallery

Gallery Tours: 310.665.6909 to schedule tours for school, museum or other groups.



Images from *The Moral Museum: Selections from the Bick Archives*, 2006:

Top: Violet's Arrest #1-3, 1946, Film stills

Bottom L to R: Banner circa 1900; Peace Encampment buttons, circa 1970; *4 Jills In A Jeep* book by Violet Bick, circa 1944.

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