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Lynn Hershman Leeson's seminal documentary

!WOMEN ART REVOLUTION

Theatrical premiere at New York City's IFC Center on June 1, 2011

**"An invaluable historical record of the feminist art movement in the U.S."
—*The Art Newspaper***

New York, NY – **Lynn Hershman Leeson's** new film ***!Women Art Revolution (!W.A.R.)*** will have its theatrical premiere at New York City's **IFC Center** on **June 1, 2011** (one week only). *!W.A.R.* had the rare honor to screen at three prestigious festivals: the 2010 Toronto International Film Festival, the 2011 Sundance Film Festival, and the Berlin Film Festival. The film will show at Los Angeles' Laemmle's Music Hall (June 17-23) with a national release to follow.

Forty-two years in the making, *!W.A.R.* charts the history of the Feminist Art Movement in America from the 1960s to the present and illuminates how this under-explored movement radically transformed the art and culture of our times. Featuring an original score by **Carrie Brownstein** (formerly of Sleater-Kinney), the film includes appearances by countless groundbreaking figures such as **Marcia Tucker, Nancy Spero, Silvia Sleight, Carolee Schneemann, Miriam Schapiro, B. Ruby Rich, Yvonne Rainer, Yoko Ono, Miranda July, The Guerrilla Girls, Judy Chicago** and many others.

Hershman Leeson draws from hundreds of interviews with her contemporaries – visionary artists, historians, curators and critics – to present an intimate portrayal of their fight to break down the barriers facing women both in the art world and society at large. Through conversations, personal observations, art and rarely seen archival film and video footage, *!W.A.R.* traces the evolution of the Feminist Art Movement from its roots in the anti-war and civil rights forces of the 1960s through its major contributions to women's art of the 1970s. It details the emergence of The Guerrilla Girls who became the conscience of the art world, holding galleries and museums accountable for discrimination, and reveals previously undocumented strategies used to politicize female artists and integrate women into art structures. Ultimately, Hershman Leeson and her collaborators were part of what many historians now claim is the most significant art movement of the late 20th century.

Hershman Leeson says of the film, "In 1966, I borrowed a camera, figured out how to use it and shot people coming through my living room in Berkeley. Then I forgot about that footage and it was stored in boxes in my studio until I found it in 2004. I felt a tremendous responsibility to find the story inside that raw footage and to honor the women who struggled to invent themselves and who introduced the concepts of social protest, collaboration and

public art that addressed directly the political imperatives of social justice and civil rights. This film took 42 years and it needed all that time to find the optimistic and uncompromising legacy.”

To accompany the movie, legendary underground cartoonist **Spain Rodriguez** has illustrated a 100-page graphic novel depicting selected highlights of the *!WAR* history and including a 57-page curriculum guide.

In addition to *RAW/WAR*, the complete interviews from *!W.A.R.* have been archived at the **Stanford University Special Collections** and are freely available to the general public for online viewing. These include 300 hours of raw footage, providing the first-person histories of pioneering individuals who challenged the ways in which women were considered by the reigning art establishment. <http://lib.stanford.edu/women-art-revolution>.

A pioneer in the field of new media, Lynn Hershman has created several exploratory platforms that expand the scope of the documentary and contribute to create a seminal history of the American Feminist Art Movement. One of them is the live participatory archive *RAW/WAR*, that documents the achievements of women artists, filling in the gaps of *!W.A.R.*'s condensed and selective narrative. *RAW/WAR* – which premiered at Sundance in January 2011 and is currently online – invites users to access the history of the movement by shedding light on lost or invisible histories of women with Wii-powered flashlights, or to contribute to it by uploading text, images and video clips. Re-envisioning history as a project of collaborative authorship, *RAW/WAR* enables current and future generations to construct their own histories. <http://www.rawwar.org/>

!Women Art Revolution is written, directed, produced and edited by Lynn Hershman Leeson. The film is executive produced by Sarah Peter, produced by Kyle Stephan and Alexandra Chowaniec and co-produced by Carla Sacks. *!Women Art Revolution* is a Hotwire Production in association with Chicken and Egg Pictures, Creative Capital and Impact Partners.

For more information on *!W.A.R.*: www.womenartrevolution.com

For more information on future screenings:

<http://www.zeitgeistfilms.com/film.php?directoryname=womenartrevolution>

Lynn Hershman Leeson has been cited as the “most influential woman working in new media.” A pivotal artist in the context of feminist discourse and a pioneer in interactive, computer and net-based media arts, she has worked prolifically in mixed media, photography, performance, digital art, video, film, and with artificial intelligence. One of her most notorious projects includes *Roberta Breitmore*, a fictional persona, created and enacted by the artist from 1971 – 80, and which anticipated virtual avatars. Hershman Leeson has been responsible for a number of technological innovations, including the first interactive computer-based artwork with *Lorna* (1983-84.) Her work is featured in the public collections of The Museum of Modern Art, the William Lehmbruck Museum, the ZKM (Zentrum fur Kunst und Medientechnologie), The Whitworth Art Gallery, The Tate, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the National Gallery in Canada, the Walker Art Center, and The Hess Collection, among others.

Lynn Hershman Leeson's three feature films with Tilda Swinton – *Conceiving Ada* (1997),

the first movie to use virtual sets; *Teknolust* (2002); and *Strange Culture* (2007) – were shown at the Sundance Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, and Berlin International Film Festival, and won numerous awards. Most recently, Hershman Leeson received the 2010 d.velop digital art award [ddaa], the most prestigious award to be given to artists working in digital art; the 2009 SIGGRAPH Lifetime Achievement, and a 2009 Guggenheim Fellowship. She has also been awarded the prestigious Golden Nica Prix Ars Electronica, the ZKM/Seimens Media Arts Award, the Flintridge Foundation Award, the Prix Ars Electronica and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Leeson received a Creative Capital Grant for *!Women Art Revolution*.

Lynn Hershman Leeson is Chair of the Film Department at the San Francisco Art Institute and Professor Emeritus Professor at the University of California, Davis.

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