

SPRÜTH MAGERS

PRESS RELEASE

Eau de Cologne

Barbara Kruger, Louise Lawler, Jenny Holzer, Cindy Sherman, Astrid Klein, Rosemarie Trockel, Marlene Dumas, Kara Walker

HART Hall, H Queen's, G/F, 80 Queen's Road Central, Central, Hong Kong

March 26 – April 12, 2019

SPRÜTH MAGERS PRESENTS *EAU DE COLOGNE* FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ASIA
CONTINUING THE DISCOURSE AROUND ART, FEMINISM AND POWER THROUGH
THE VOICES OF EIGHT SEMINAL FEMALE ARTISTS

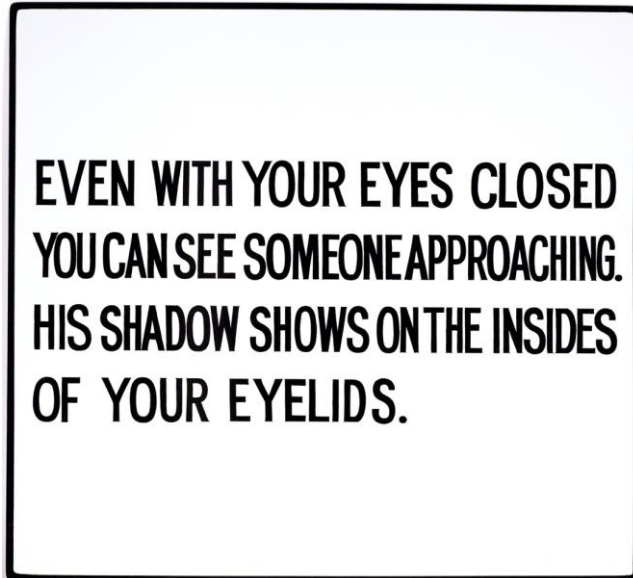


Installation view: '*Eau de Cologne: Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Louise Lawler, Cindy Sherman, Rosemarie Trockel*',
Sprüth Magers Los Angeles, 2016, Photography: Joshua White

(Hong Kong - January 24, 2019) *Eau de Cologne* began as a series of exhibitions and three publications, organized by Monika Sprüth between 1985 and 1989, which sought to create a new dialogue around contemporary art. The exhibitions introduced a select group of young women artists, each of whom individually represented powerful attitudes and practices. Through *Eau de Cologne*, they established a discourse around art, feminism and power that continues to be profoundly relevant. Then, as now, their work tackled questions of authority, messaging and influence in society in subtle and expansive ways, and today they count among the best-known artists working internationally. It is with great pleasure that Sprüth Magers stages a new iteration of this celebrated project in Hong Kong at H Queen's — *Eau de Cologne*'s very first presentation in Asia.

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This exhibition features five of the artists who participated in the original project in 1985 in Cologne, Germany, and who have been represented by the gallery ever since: Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Louise Lawler, Cindy Sherman and Rosemarie Trockel. Holzer's text-based works, in the form of signs, plaques, and posters, as well as Kruger's iconic blend of text and image, often presented in stark black and white, challenge viewers with statements about life and society that demand we rethink concepts as essential as truth, power, love, and belief. Trockel likewise investigates cultural codes and social roles, as well as the longstanding hierarchy between craft and fine art that materializes in her vibrant wool paintings. Roles and subversion are equally the domain of Sherman, whose photographs feature the artist in series of identity-bending costumes and situations. Lawler, also through photography, questions the very nature of art objects by examining how their presentation affects their reception and meaning.



(From left to right) Jenny Holzer, *Even with your eyes closed... Text: Living Series (1980-1982)*, 1981, Enamel on metal, hand-painted sign: black on white 53.3 x 58,4 cm 21 x 23 inches © 2019 Jenny Holzer, member Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY Courtesy Sprüth Magers; Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #579*, 2016, Dye sublimation metal print, 148,6 x 118,7 cm, 58 1/2 x 46 3/4 inches, 152,8 x 123 x 5,1 cm (framed), 60 1/8 x 48 3/8 x 2 inches (framed) © Cindy Sherman, Courtesy the artist, Sprüth Magers and Metro Pictures, New York.

In addition, this chapter of *Eau de Cologne* includes work by three equally potent artists, all of whom are closely connected to the project either via their inclusion in past iterations or through their close affinities with the gallery and the artists above. Like them, Astrid Klein has been working since the late 1970s in a broad range of media, creating images that question notions of gender and power structures in society. Her early collages from the late 1970s and 1980s present individual figures and fragments excised from extensive textual and pictorial material from mass media, reduced to a stark black-and-white palette, and they highlight Klein's ongoing investigation into the confrontational relationship between image and text. An attention to power and control also appears in the work of Kara Walker, whose forceful videos and works on paper have established her as a leading voice in American art today. Walker's works frequently feature silhouettes of black and white characters in violent, sexual, and even everyday situations, which together scrutinize the institutions, national narratives, and cultural beliefs of the United States as filtered through its painful legacy of slavery. Marlene Dumas' editions, which are formed of amalgamations of people both known and unknown in the public eye, echo the representational investigations of Cindy Sherman in their examination of how identity intersects with public and private personae. Included in this exhibition are a selection of prints featuring highly recognisable subjects such as the late British singer Amy Winehouse.

As in its previous presentations, *Eau de Cologne* clarifies that among the most powerful voices in contemporary art are those of women, who each present compelling messages about the social, political and cultural environments in which we all live. Today, the context for art made by women has improved significantly since the 1980s: more women artists receive attention from arts institutions and collectors and are able to sustain their careers. Yet there are still gaps between the support given to male and female artists, and obstacles to overcome in the effort to include more voices and approaches within contemporary art discourse. This exhibition continues this ongoing discussion, while presenting some of the most formidable art being made today.

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About Sprüth Magers

Sprüth Magers is an international gallery dedicated to exhibiting groundbreaking modern and contemporary art. Since its inception in 1983, it has expanded from its roots in Cologne, Germany, and now has galleries located in Berlin, London and Los Angeles, as well as an office in Cologne and an outpost in Hong Kong. Its early shows in the 1980s featured a number of today's most influential artists, who continue to exhibit with the gallery to this day, including John Baldessari, Bernd and Hilla Becher, George Condo, Thomas Demand, Peter Fischli / David Weiss, Andreas Gursky, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Louise Lawler, Andreas Schulze, Cindy Sherman, and Rosemarie Trockel, among many others. The gallery currently works with over 60 artists and estates and regularly broadens its program with up-and-coming younger artists. Sprüth Magers is known for its rigorously curatorial approach to its program and for an enduring devotion to its artists, many of whom regularly exhibit at the world's most prestigious cultural institutions. Its founders, Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers, appear consistently in Art Review's 'Power 100' list of the most influential people in the art world.

Eau de Cologne

Public reception: March 26, 6 - 8pm

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 7pm

For further information and press enquiries, please contact:

Sutton

Candy Sum | candy@suttonpr.com | +852 9419 7189

Sprüth Magers

Silvia Baltschun | sb@spruethmagers.com