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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Amy Hood
Getty Communications
(310) 440-6427
ahood@getty.edu

Blake Zidell (The Kitchen)
Blake Zidell & Associates
(718) 643-9052
blake@blakezidell.com



Parasite Lily, Mike Kelley, 1980. Performance at The Kitchen, New York. Photo by Paula Court. All Mike Kelley works Estate of Mike Kelley. Courtesy of the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts. The Kitchen Archive, c. 1971-1999. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles

**GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE ACQUIRES THE KITCHEN ARCHIVES
SPANNING NEARLY 30 YEARS OF INNOVATIVE ART AND PERFORMANCE**

*The Archive Surveys the Art, Dance, Music, Performance, and Video Work of the New York-Based
Alternative Space from 1971-1999*

LOS ANGELES—The **Getty Research Institute** (GRI) announced today the acquisition of the archive documenting the first three decades of [The Kitchen](#), one of the leading alternative art spaces devoted to performance art, dance, music and video. The large and extremely well-preserved archive includes thousands of videotapes, audio tapes, photographs, posters and other archival materials documenting the exhibitions, performances and events presented by The Kitchen between 1971 and 1999.

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“The Kitchen’s extensive material represents the foremost archive documenting experimental art produced in New York City in the 70s, 80s, and 90s,” said Thomas W. Gaehtgens, director of the Getty Research Institute. “The GRI already has very strong holdings that detail the intersections of avant-garde performance, music, dance and video art, but the Kitchen Archive will have a transformative effect in fostering new research in this area.”

Added Andrew Perchuk, deputy director of the GRI, “Growing up in New York in the 1970s and 1980s, The Kitchen was the most exciting place to be. It was the only place that you could see a concert by the Talking Heads, a performance by Laurie Anderson, and a film by Yvonne Rainer in the same week.”

The Kitchen is one of New York City’s oldest nonprofit alternative art spaces, showing innovative work by emerging and established artists across disciplines including dance, music, performance, video, film, visual art and literature. Founded as an artist collective in 1971 by pioneering video artists Woody and Steina Vasulka and incorporated as a nonprofit two years later, The Kitchen has since been an exceptionally successful staging ground for experimental art forms that cross multiple genres and media. Many prominent artists created their most formative and influential work at The Kitchen, including Vito Acconci, Laurie Anderson, Karole Armitage, Dara Birnbaum, John Cage, Lucinda Childs, Merce Cunningham, Philip Glass, Karen Finley, Simone Forti, Mike Kelley, Joan Jonas, Bill T. Jones, Sherrie Levine, Robert Mapplethorpe, Christian Marclay, Nam June Paik, Cindy Sherman, Bill Viola, and Robert Wilson, among many others. All of these artists and many more are represented in the archive.

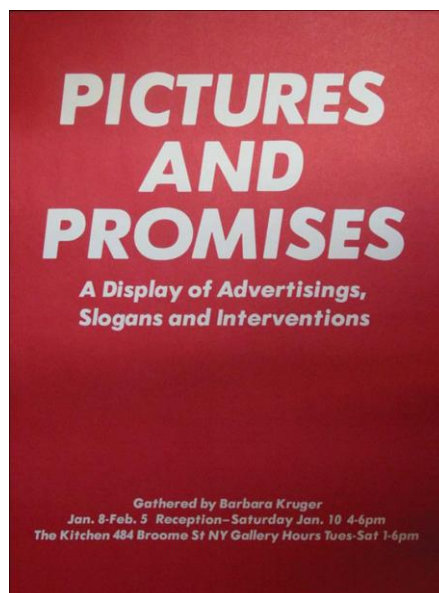
Nearly every performance presented at The Kitchen has been professionally documented with photography, video, and/or audio recording. Over the past ten years, The Kitchen has undertaken significant efforts to preserve, digitize, and remaster these historic recordings, most of which had rarely been available for scholarly use.

“For decades, The Kitchen’s devotion to supporting artists’ innovations has extended to the documentation of their work,” said Tim Griffin, Executive Director and Chief Curator of The Kitchen. “Placing these invaluable records in the care of the GRI honors that commitment, both by ensuring their long-term conservation and access to a broader public, and by enabling The Kitchen to pursue its mission of supporting revolutionary work among artists expanding on their remarkable precedents today.”

“The Kitchen has always understood its mission to revolve around the making and re-conceiving of art,” said Robert Soros, Chairman of The Kitchen Board of Directors. “The Getty acquisition of our twentieth-century archive allows The Kitchen to continue with its mission and represents a signal moment in its history. It ensures that artists and scholars working today will always have the opportunity to access and research The Kitchen’s dynamic legacy.”

The archive includes 5,410 videotapes, more than 600 audio tapes, 131 linear feet of archival materials, and 246 original posters. The archive is rich in photography, correspondence, ephemera, and project notes by artists. Many artists produced drawings and detailed plans for their projects, revealing fascinating background on their processes and development. The archive contains information on nearly every performance, screening, exhibition, concert, and event produced at The Kitchen, and will allow researchers to explore a history that encompasses thousands of artists.

“The history of The Kitchen is synonymous with the history of avant-garde art in New York. For more than forty years, radical and visionary artists have been re-defining their fields and creating new communities at The Kitchen. This archive is one of the most significant collections out there for the study of experimental music, dance, performance, video art, and the multitude of relationships between these disciplines” said Glenn Phillips, acting head of the Department of Architecture and Contemporary Art at the GRI.



Pictures and Promise, 1981. Poster by Barbara Kruger. The Kitchen Archive, c. 1971-1999. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

Performance Art

The Kitchen is one of the fundamental organizations in New York devoted to the development of performance art, supporting an expansive, genre-defying vision of experimental performance that often draws from the fields of avant-garde music, dance, video, theater and visual art. The Kitchen presented works by pioneer conceptual artists such as Dan Graham, Joan Jonas, and Carolee Schneemann and larger-scale multi-media works by artists such as Laurie Anderson and Robert Wilson. Anderson, Wilson and other artists, including Mike Kelley, Karen Finley, Eric Bogosian, Richard Foreman, and The Wooster Group premiered important new works at The Kitchen. Year after year, this ambitious slate of performance art included new or rarely-seen work by internationally recognized artists. The Kitchen presented major performances by Eleanor Antin, Robert Kushner, Hermann Nitsch, Rachel Rosenthal, and Tim Miller among many others.

“The Kitchen archive is a treasure that deserves preservation,” said artist and Kitchen board member Laurie Anderson. “It is the dynamic record of the reshaping of the New York world of

experimental, electronic, and live art, and now this remarkable reshaping can be seen and understood in a new historical light.”

Visual Art

Originally founded as a space to support the new medium of video art, The Kitchen has been one of the most important venues in New York for screening the work of film and video artists. The Kitchen’s screening program was international in scope, featuring curated programs of work from around the world, in addition to frequent screenings of work by New York artists.

As The Kitchen expanded focus in the mid-1970s, its gallery space became a significant exhibition venue for new art. By giving artists a fertile place to experiment with painting, photography, and sculpture as well as new media, installation and performance, The Kitchen was a testing ground for developments in inter-disciplinary art and continually presented radical new works. They hosted important early solo exhibitions and projects for nearly every artist now associated with the “Pictures Generation” including Dara Birnbaum, Barbara Kruger, Sherrie Levine, Robert Longo, Barbara Bloom, Troy Brauntuch, Jack Goldstein, and David Salle. The gallery hosted the first-ever exhibition of Cindy Sherman’s *Untitled Film Stills*, and The Kitchen presented one of the first solo exhibitions of Robert Mapplethorpe’s “Erotic Pictures.”

Media artists such as Vito Acconci, Bill Viola, Gary Hill, Dennis Oppenheim, and Michael Snow developed significant installation works there. In Acconci’s case, The Kitchen was the place where he moved from performance art into installation, producing his first sculptural installation at The Kitchen in 1976, and continuing to produce several new installations there over the years.

Music

Equally groundbreaking were The Kitchen’s musical offerings, which included popular and avant-garde styles. The programming history is an astounding survey of experiments in music throughout the 70’s and 80’s, particularly with the developments following Minimalism and new forms of electronic music. Robert Ashley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, Alvin Lucier, Gordon Mumma, Pauline Oliveros, Charlemagne Palestine, and Meredith Monk performed regularly at The Kitchen throughout its history. In many cases, The Kitchen was the preferred New York venue to premiere important new work. For example, in the spring on 1975, Steve Reich presented an unfinished work involving 21 musicians and singers, a precursor to his *Music for 18 Musicians*, now considered a milestone in the history of experimental music.

At the same time, The Kitchen was supporting a younger generation of experimental musicians, such as Rhys Chatham, John Zorn, Glenn Branca, Arthur Russell, Brian Eno, and Arto Lindsay, who

were all straddling the worlds of experimental music and punk rock. Occasionally, The Kitchen also hosted popular evenings of punk and New Wave music, providing important early exposure for bands like the Talking Heads, Beastie Boys, and Sonic Youth.

Dance

The Kitchen's dance program took a similar multi-generational, multi-genre approach. The Kitchen was a prime and continual venue for important new work from the leading artists that had emerged from the Judson Dance Theater, including Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton, Simone Forti, Lucinda Childs, Merce Cunningham, Douglas Dunn, and Trisha Brown. Simultaneously, The Kitchen introduced the work of a younger generation of artists whose works were incorporating material from multiple strata of dance culture such as Karole Armitage, Molissa Fenley, Bill T. Jones, Pooh Kaye, Dancenoise, John Jasperse, and Elizabeth Streb.

Recognizing the importance of popular, urban dance traditions, the space also hosted groups like the Rock Steady Crew and Fab 5 Freddy in the early 80's—some of the first breakdancing performances ever presented in Lower Manhattan. During this same period, The Kitchen began programming events around sampling and scratching, organizing concerts that paired DJs from the Bronx with downtown artists such as Christian Marclay and Stuart Sherman, whose work explored these techniques.

The Kitchen Posters

Particularly noteworthy in the archive is The Kitchen's collection of original posters. Throughout 70's, 80's, and 90's, The Kitchen produced an exceptional series of artist-designed posters to advertise events. These posters were pasted up throughout New York City as The Kitchen's primary source of advertising and few copies were reserved for the archives, making most of them quite rare. The diverse range of posters includes those by Longo, Kruger, Sol LeWitt, and Kiki Smith. These posters are in excellent condition and many are signed by the artists.

The Kitchen Archive, c. 1971-1999, is very extensive and will come to the Getty in three installments over a two-year period, being processed and cataloged at the GRI and then made accessible to researchers. The Kitchen's archive is now part of the GRI's significant holdings in performance, music, dance and video art, which includes the archives of Carolee Schneemann, Yvonne Rainer, David Tudor, Eleanor Antin, and Allan Kaprow, as well as extensive Fluxus collections, the archives of High Performance Magazine, and the Long Beach Museum of Art Video Archives, among others.

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The Getty Research Institute is an operating program of the J. Paul Getty Trust. It serves education in the broadest sense by increasing knowledge and understanding about art and its history through advanced research. The Research Institute provides intellectual leadership through its research, exhibition, and publication programs and provides service to a wide range of scholars worldwide through residencies, fellowships, online resources, and a Research Library. The Research Library—housed in the 201,000-square-foot Research Institute building designed by Richard Meier—is one of the largest art and architecture libraries in the world. The general library collections (secondary sources) include almost 900,000 volumes of books, periodicals, and auction catalogues encompassing the history of Western art and related fields in the humanities. The Research Library's special collections include rare books, artists' journals, sketchbooks, architectural drawings and models, photographs, and archival materials.

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