

KIENHOLZ

EXCHANGE OF VALUES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Opening Reception
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6 - 8 p.m.

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VENICE, CA – L.A. Louver is pleased to present *Kienholz: Exchange of Values*, an exhibition of text-based artworks by Edward Kienholz and Nancy Reddin Kienholz. Renowned worldwide for their collaborative assemblage works and immersive tableaux installations, this presentation is a unique illumination of the creative interchange between the couple in their respective art practices. Consisting of seventeen watercolors by Ed and nineteen lenticular works by Nancy, *Exchange of Values* places emphasis on the conceptual and relational underpinnings of Kienholz.

Edward Kienholz (1927-1994) began his artistic career in Los Angeles in 1952 and became a central figure in the L.A. art scene through his founding of the Ferus Gallery with the curator Walter Hopps in 1957. Ed developed a distinctive aesthetic that was enhanced and solidified in his collaborative practice with Nancy Reddin Kienholz (1943-2019), who he met in 1972. The Kienholzes may be best known for their ambitious freestanding and installation-oriented assemblage works that both indicted and reflected the human condition, which incorporated found materials and cast human figures, and were coated with an application of resin that was the artists' final painterly act. Beyond their unflinching aesthetic, Kienholz is distinguished through a conceptual interest in unambiguous communicative exchanges which inspire deeper contemplation about social and political systems and the roles we play within these structures.

The element of exchange is clear in Ed Kienholz's barter works, a project began by the artist in 1969. In exchange for tools needed to finish repairing a rifle, Ed created and then bartered a watercolor painting with text in the center: "FOR 9 SCREWDRIERS." From there began a series of watercolor works each in a metal frame constructed by Ed which followed the same format: 12 x 16 inches with a pastel-colored aquarelle wash, stamped text, and Ed's thumb print verification. In the years that followed, some of these watercolor works continued to be exchanged literally and others, like *For a Fur Coat* (1974) and *For a Trip to Rome* (1986), included in this presentation, were aspirational.

Following the same formal template, Ed created series of watercolor works stamped with the dollar amount for which the artwork should be exchanged. A selection of these works, ranging from \$601 to \$615, are featured in this exhibition and highlight Ed's interest in economic exchange and commodity value, an expansion on the art historical precedent of Yves Klein. Like Klein, Ed insisted upon the individuality of these works, despite their visual similarity, to emphasize the subjective relationship between monetary value and physical objects.

Nancy's works in this exhibition are similarly marked with the artist's hand through her own cursive script, in a familiar address to her audience. Lenticular printing allows for multiple images to be contained in a single object through specific refractions of light dependent on the position of the viewer. In the text-based lenticular works showcased in *Exchange of Values*, Nancy cleverly



Edward Kienholz
For a Fur Coat, 1974
aquarelle and ink on paper in artist-made frame
12 x 16 in. (30.5 x 40.6 cm)



Nancy Reddin Kienholz
Love - Hate, April 2, 2007
lenticular (mixed media)
18 x 18 in. (45.7 x 45.7 cm)

layered associative dualities which offer completion and separation, union and individuality, conflict and resolution, to the concepts these words represent. On the West wall, a grid of twelve lenticulars – *Love-Hate*, *Courage-Fear*, *Joy-Sorrow* – inspire contemplation of the relationships each of these dichotomies have to each other and provide physical evidence of disparate notions existing in the same place at the same time. Three more dyads – *Yes-No*, *True-False*, *Sweet-Sour* – present choices, provocative in their allusion to the power words have in determining our reality. On the North wall of the gallery hang lenticulars reading *Honky-Tonk*, *Jazz-Jive*, *Hip-Hop*, and similar pairings that play on learned semantic and musical associations

The creative exchange which occurred between Ed and Nancy as artists manifests clearly in this exhibition. This is seen in the similarities and, perhaps more so, the differences between their approaches to serial conceptual works physically grounded in text. Where Ed, a painter at heart, displayed his theoretical interests through watercolor, Nancy, at her essence a photographer, chose the elegant metamorphosis of the lenticular medium to convey her messages. Where Ed's series' both questions and creates value through monetary and commodity exchange, Nancy's lenticular works require the viewers' dynamic visual exchange and contemplation of her text-based statements about ethical values and feeling central to human experience.



Nancy Reddin Kienholz, *Sweet - Sour*, February 2008, lenticular (mixed media), 18 x 18 in. (45.7 x 45.7 cm)

Edward Kienholz (1927-1994) and Nancy Reddin Kienholz (1943-2019) have been the subject of numerous major exhibitions worldwide. In 1996, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York organized a retrospective which traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (1996-1997). Recent museum exhibitions include *Kienholz: Five Car Stud* at Fondazione Prada (2016-2017); *Kienholz: The Signs of the Times* at Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt and Museum Tinguely, Basel (2011-2012); *Edward Kienholz: Five Car Stud Revisited at the Los Angeles Museum County of Art*, Los Angeles and Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek (2011-2012); *The Hoerengracht* at The National Gallery, London and Amsterdam Historical Museum, Amsterdam (2009-2010); *KIENHOLZ* at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK and Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney, Australia (2005-2006). Their work can be found in public collections internationally. Select institutions include Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Fondazione Prada, Milan, Italy; The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; The Menil Collection, Houston, TX; Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Francois Pinault Collection, Venice, Italy; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Scenes from a Marriage: Ed & Nancy Kienholz – the first museum exhibition featuring their work in Southern California in over a decade – is on view at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 29 January – 21 May 2023.