

## Guerrilla Girls set to rattle some cages at Rauschenberg Gallery in January

December 19, 2018.

Florida South Western State College will be presenting *GUERRILLA GIRLS: Rattling Cages Since 1985* from January 17 through March 23.

Sited in the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery, the exhibition will be a site-specific survey and newly-commissioned, interactive installation.

The Guerrilla Girls is an internationally-renowned feminist advocacy and art collective which assiduously maintains its anonymity while confronting and addressing systemic problems of gender and racial parity in the art world.



Since their formation in 1985, the Guerrilla Girls have done more than 100 street projects, posters and stickers in cities ranging from New York, Los Angeles and Minneapolis to Mexico City, Istanbul, London, Bilbao, Rotterdam and Shanghai. They have also done outrageous projects and exhibitions at museums, attacking them for their bad behavior and discriminatory practices right on their own walls. Of these, their stealth project on the façade of the Whitney Museum in 2015 stands out as a very public and publicized excoriation of income inequality and the extent to which the super-rich have hijacked art.

In this latter vein, the Guerrilla Girls have designed a participatory chalkboard installation for visitor “complaints” and covered the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery floor-to-ceiling with an immersive selection of the group’s most notable public art/protest poster campaigns.

According to a piece in *The Art Story*, the Guerrilla Girls’ posters in particular were highly effective in getting their messages out. In the words of one critic, their posters “were rude; they named names and they printed statistics. They embarrassed people. In other words, they worked.”

Today, the posters are highly-valued works of art. But their oeuvre is far more expansive, consisting of billboards, performances, protests, lectures installations and limited edition prints.

But who are these intrepid women?

“Our anonymity keeps the focus on the issues, and away from who we might be,” the Guerrilla Girls point out. “We wear gorilla masks in public and use facts, humor and outrageous visuals to expose gender and ethnic bias as well as corruption in politics, art, film, and pop culture. We undermine the idea of a mainstream narrative by revealing the understory, the subtext, the overlooked, and the downright unfair. We believe in an intersectional feminism that fights discrimination and supports human rights for all people and all genders.”

Their decision to remain anonymous operates as a poignant metaphor for the experience of women in art. At the time of the group’s formation, many art history courses taught at colleges and universities around the world failed to include a single female artist.

Their approach has actually served to glamorize feminism. In this regard, New York Times art critic Roberta Smith argued that the Guerrilla Girls took “feminist theory, gave it a populist twist and some Madison Avenue pizzazz and set it loose in the streets.” In admitting only women to the group, exclusively by invitation, “the group mirrors power circles in the male-dominated art world,” adds The Art Story.

**Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?**

**Less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female**

Statistics from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, 1989

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guerrillagirls.com

Humor is and has always been an integral part of their stratagem. Not only are the gorilla masks light-hearted and downright comic. They serve to dispel the notion that feminists have no sense of humor. But it is their wry slant of current events and sardonic assessment on the status of women in modern society that resonates with both women and men across demographic lines. For example, they commented in a 2012 interview, “We’ve been working on a weapon, an estrogen bomb... If you drop it, the men will drop their guns and start hugging each other. They’ll say, ‘Why don’t we clean this place up?’ In the end, we encourage people to send their extra estrogen pills to Karl Rove; he needs a little more estrogen.”

But wearing the mask is also liberating.

“Wearing this mask gives you a certain kind of freedom to say whatever you want,” adds Guerrilla Girl Frida Kahlo, who adopted the late, great Mexican artist’s name as a nom de guerre in her honor. “[If] you’re a little afraid to speak, puta mask on... You won’t believe what comes out of your mouth!”

The subject of recent retrospectives in Europe and a traveling U.S. museum exhibition (Guerrilla Girls: Not Ready To Make Nice) and as guests on The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, the Guerrilla Girls have been speaking up and speaking out to demand change for more than three decades. And they show no signs of letting up any time soon.

**This exhibition and an adjunct billboard project have been made possible by the generous support of the Diamond District and The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel.**

**For additional information please call: 239-489-9313 or visit [www.RauschenbergGallery.com](http://www.RauschenbergGallery.com).**

**YOU'RE  
SEEING  
LESS  
THAN  
HALF  
THE  
PICTURE**

**WITHOUT THE VISION OF WOMEN ARTISTS AND ARTISTS OF COLOR.**

Please send \$ and comments to: **GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD  
Box 1056 Cooper Sta. NY, NY 10276

**GUERRILLA GIRLS'  
DEFINITION OF A  
HYPOCRITE.**

*(hip' o-crit) An art collector  
who buys white male art at  
benefits for liberal causes,  
but never buys art by  
women or artists of color.*

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