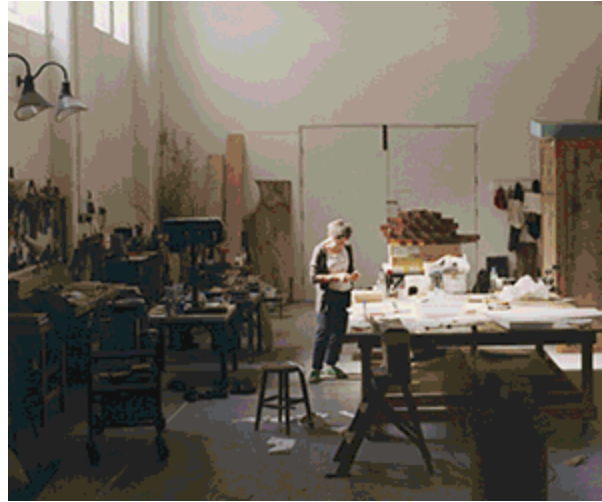


# PENNY SLINGER 50% UNBOXED

*By Mark Westall • 13 September 2022*

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Pace, in collaboration with Blum & Poe, is to present an exhibition of work by Los Angeles-based artist Penny Slinger.



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*Penny Slinger, Flying in Dreams, 1969/2014 © Penny Slinger / Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York*

On view in the gallery's first-floor library, the exhibition, titled *50% Unboxed*, will feature selections from Slinger's iconic 1971 artist's book and collage series *50% The Visible Woman*, through which the artist investigates the mapping and unveiling of the feminine subconscious. Alongside these historic works, the exhibition will also include Slinger's new photo collage series *My Body in a Box* (2020-21). Pace's presentation follows Blum & Poe's 2021 exhibition of Slinger's work, titled *50/50*, in Los Angeles.

Originally created in 1969 as a hand-constructed, snakeskin-bound book for the artist's thesis project at the Chelsea College of Art in London, *50% The Visible Woman* was Slinger's response to her discovery of Surrealism, which has had a pivotal impact on her practice. An homage to Max Ernst, the book includes photocollage and concrete poetry, artworks with which Slinger sought to rectify the fraught portrayals of women and the void of feminine authorship in the male-dominated surrealist milieu. "Having discovered the magic of Surrealism, I wanted to employ its tools and methods to create a language for the feminine psyche to express itself," the artist has said. The book's binding alternates between sheets of poetry and photocollage imagery—her poems are typed onto semi-transparent tissue paper, allowing the prose to interact directly with their visual counterparts beneath. Words take on curvilinear shapes in response to the images beneath them.

In 2021, Slinger released a new edition of her book *50% The Visible Woman*, presenting her photomontage works and poetry unabridged for the first time. The book also features a conversation between Slinger and fellow artist and friend Linder.

Among the works from this series in Pace's forthcoming exhibition is *The Dialectics* (1969), an image of a totem of dismembered, floating body parts. Some body parts appear as didactic diagrams, and others are plucked from an image of a woman in mime costume, with shadows reaching in every direction.

Slinger appropriates Surrealism's language and themes

applies them in analysis of Surrealism itself and its culture. Slinger inserts herself into this art historical lineage and takes ownership of a visual lexicon that had previously objectified her. Installed alongside her collage works is a sonic accompaniment produced in collaboration with musician Lydia Lunch.

Another highlight of the presentation is *My Body in a Box*, which Slinger created during the pandemic as part of an exploration of psychological entrapment and its attendant fears. As in her work from the 1960s, the artist uses her own image and body—photographed by her creative partner Dhiren Dasu—as subject to process a range of feelings and reactions.

## **Penny Slinger, 50% Unboxed, Sep 16th – Oct 22nd, 2022, Pace New York**

In conjunction with this exhibition, Spectacle Theater in Brooklyn will present *Alchemy & Ecstasy*, a screening series of Slinger's films. The program will feature early films produced in the late 1960s in tandem with the works in Pace's exhibition, as well as a recent animated feature. The artist will participate in a live Q&A at the theater on Saturday, September 17th.

### **About the artist**

Penny Slinger has authored and illustrated numerous publications and has exhibited her work internationally. Recent institutional group exhibitions include *Punk is Coming*, MoCA, Westport, CT (2022); *The Botanical Mind. Art, Mysticism and the Cosmic Tree*, Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2020); *Tantra: Enlightenment to Revolution*, British Museum, London, UK (2020); *Cut and Paste – 400 Years of Collage*, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, Scotland (2019); *Visible Women*, Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Norwich, UK (2018); *Virginia Woolf: An Exhibition Inspired by Her Writings*, Tate St Ives, Cornwall, UK (2018); *The House of Fame*, convened by Linder, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK (2018); *The Beguiling Siren is Thy Crest*, The Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, Poland (2017);

Women House, Monnaie de Paris, Paris, France; traveled to National Museum in the Arts, Washington D.C. (2017); History Is Now: 7 Artists Take on Britain, Hayward Gallery, London, UK (2015); Feminist Avant-garde of the 1970s from the Sammlung Verbund Collection, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany (2015); Lips Painted Red, Trondheim Kunstmuseum, Trondheim, Norway (2013); The Dark Monarch, Tate St. Ives, St. Ives, UK (2009); and Angels of Anarchy, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester, UK (2009).

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