



**A  
WOMAN'S  
RIGHT  
TO  
PLEASURE**

Dr. Marashi, OBGYN

Forewords by Roxane Gay and Erica Jong

**BlackBook**



This volume is published in conjunction with the exhibition “A Woman’s Right To Pleasure” at BlackBook Presents gallery in Brooklyn, New York and online at BlackBookPresents.com and artsy.net beginning in September 2020.

The book and accompanying exhibitions are made possible by Dr. Amir Marashi, BlackBook, and LELO.

Published by BlackBook Publishing  
Alexandra Weiss, Editor in Chief  
Adam George, Designer  
Annie Tcheng Rosen, Designer  
Ellen Leach, Copyeditor  
Vivian Cheng, Assistant Editor  
Alexandra Leo, Audience Development

Production by BlackBook  
Print Production by Nicholas Freeman  
Image acquisitions and permissions by Alexandra Weiss

Curated by BlackBook

Typeset in Mānuka, Adieu, and Adobe Caslon Pro  
Printed on 170 gsm LumiSilk  
Custom sheetfed printing in the United Kingdom

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[www.blackbookmag.com](http://www.blackbookmag.com)  
[www.blackbook-creative.com](http://www.blackbook-creative.com)

Distributed by ACC Art Books, New York

Front covers: Penny Slinger, *Read My Lips*, from *Mouthpieces*, 1973  
Photo collage

© Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / DACS, London. 2020.

Cass Bird, *A Bird in the Bush*, 2015

© Cass Bird. Courtesy of the artist.

Previous page: Jenny Holzer, Selection from *Truisms: If you have many desires...*, 2015

Labradorite Light footstool

17 x 25 x 16 in. / 43.2 x 63.5 x 40.6 cm.

© Jenny Holzer, member Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY. 2015.

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Special thanks to Lisa Ballard at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, The News Project, and Diana Reeve at Art Resource.

ISBN: 978-0-578-61383-3  
978-0-578-75193-1

**BlackBook**   
PUBLISHING





*A Rose for the Bride*, 1973  
Color photograph  
16 x 12 in., 40.6 x 30.4 cm.

**PENNY SLINGER**

*Embrace the Base/The Matriarch*, 2014  
Polystyrene, wax, leather, blood  
68.9 x 68.9 x 55 in., 175 x 175 x 140 cm.

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All works courtesy of The Estate of Carolee

Schneemann and P·P·O·W, New York

© Carolee Schneemann.

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Courtesy of Tschabalala Self Studio.

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All works © Joan Semmel/Artists Rights Society

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**PENNY SLINGER**

*Read My Lips*, from *Mouthpieces*, 1973. Cover, 2.

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All works © Artists Rights Society (ARS),

New York / DACS, London. 2020.

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*Maya #6*, 2014. © Mickalene Thomas / Artists

Rights Society (ARS), New York. 2020. 20, 21.

*Origin of the Universe #4*, 2012. © Mickalene

Thomas / Artists Rights Society (ARS),

New York. 2020. 22.

*Origin of the Universe #2*, 2012. © Mickalene

Thomas / Artists Rights Society (ARS),

New York. 2020. 23.

*Portrait of Maya #8*, 2015. © Mickalene Thomas

Courtesy of the artist, Galerie Nathalie Obadia,

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All images courtesy of Betty Tompkins,

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Images courtesy of Ellen Von Unwerth /

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All works © Carrie Mae Weems. Courtesy of the

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Excerpt from *The Beauty Myth* by Naomi Wolf.

© 1991 by Naomi Wolf. Used by permission of

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**LUO YANG**

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**CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN**

Carolee Schneemann was an experimental artist whose practice often employed her own body as a means of narrative storytelling—her now-legendary 1975 performance, *Interior Scroll*, saw Schneemann reading a feminist manifesto from a scroll she removed from her own vulva. Throughout her career, she explored themes of sexuality, identity, and the female body, as well as sexism within the art world, leading her to become a pivotal figure in the history of feminist art.

**TSCHABALALA SELF**

Tschabalala Self is a painter from Harlem. Using paint, fabric, and media from previous pieces, she creates Black female figures inspired in part by her own life. Her work has been exhibited internationally.

**JOAN SEMMEL**

Joan Semmel is an American artist whose painting practice centers around issues of the female body, from desire to aging, as well as those of identity and cultural imprinting. Her large-scale pieces often depict her nude body from her own perspective, looking down.

**CINDY SHERMAN**

Cindy Sherman is an experimental artist whose oeuvre consists completely of photographic self-portraits. In her work, she often takes on the role of different characters, exploring themes of identity, sexuality, the absurd, and the grotesque, using herself and her body as a means of exploring the objectification, commodification, and sexualization of women. Her work has been exhibited at the Broad Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the National Portrait Gallery, and Kunsthaus Zurich.

**SONIA SIEFF**

The daughter of artist Jeanloup Sieff, Sonia Sieff is a French photographer who works across art and fashion. Her work has appeared in *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue*, as well as in her first book, *Les Françaises*, which explores the female body as architecture, but natural and man-made.

**PENNY SLINGER**

Penny Slinger is a British-born artist who works across painting, sculpture, film, collage, and photography. Her work explores the feminine subconscious and psyche, using her own body to examine the relationship between sexuality, mysticism, and the feminine ideal. Her work has been featured in numerous exhibitions, including most recently at Sotheby's S|2 Gallery, as well as at Blum and Poe Gallery, Sadie Cole's, and Richard Saltoun Gallery in London.

**NATASHA STAGG**

Natasha Stagg is a New York-based writer. Her debut novel, *Surveys*, and recent book, *Sleeveless: Fashion, Image, Media, New York 2011–2019*, explore Stagg's recurring themes of celebrity, the internet, sexuality, and beauty.

**STOYA**

Stoya has been working with sexuality for over a decade. As an adult performer, she has acted in and directed numbers films, including on her site *Zerospaces.com*. As a writer, she has been published in the *New York Times*, the *Guardian*, *Slate*, and *Playboy*.

**MAIRI-LUISE TABBAKH**

Mairi-Luise Tabbakh is a photographer whose erotic photographs capture the raw essence of womanhood at its core. Through her black-and-white portraits, she explores themes of sexuality, desire, fetish, and intimacy from a distinctly female gaze.

**MICKALENE THOMAS**

Mickalene Thomas is a contemporary artist known for her mixed-media collages and paintings. Combining rhinestones, acrylic, and enamel, she draws on art history and popular culture to examine how identity, gender, and sense of self are informed by the ways women—and so-called feminine spaces—are represented in art. Her work is included in collections at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum, and MoMA PS1.

**NADYA TOLOKONNIKOVA**

As a founding member of Pussy Riot, Nadya Tolokonnikova first made headlines in 2012 when she and two other members of the activist group were imprisoned in Moscow following a political performance. Since then, she has continued her activism, using art, music, and writing as her primary tools for challenging corruption, censorship, and inequality.

**BETTY TOMPKINS**

Betty Tompkins is an American painter whose photorealistic works of sex and female anatomy have made her an influential figure in the feminist art canon. Her controversial works explore the line between objectification and appreciation, eroticism and pornography.

**ELLEN VON UNWERTH**

Ellen Von Unwerth is a German photographer and director whose bold photographs celebrate female sexuality and empowerment. Her work has appeared in *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *Interview*, and *Playboy*, and on album covers for artists including Duran Duran, Janet Jackson, Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, and Rihanna.

**SOPHIA WALLACE**

Sophia Wallace is a New York-based conceptual artist. Her viral project, *CLITERACY*, addresses sexual autonomy and female pleasure as a human right through propaganda-style posters. Her accompanying TED Talk, *A Case for Cliteracy*, has been viewed over 500,000 times.

**CARRIE MAE WEEMS**

Carrie Mae Weems combines photography, installation, audio, and text. Considered one of the most influential contemporary American artists, she explores family relationships, cultural identity, sexism, class, political systems, and the consequences of power. In 2012, Weems was presented with one of the first US Department of State's Medals of Arts in recognition for her commitment to the State Department's Art in Embassies program. Her work is represented in public and private collections around the world.

**HARLEY WEIR**

London-born photographer Harley Weir shoots intimate portraits that transcend the world of fashion, becoming fine art. Throughout her career, she has shot campaigns and lookbooks for major labels including Balenciaga, Céline, Stella McCartney, Hugo Boss, Calvin Klein, and Jacquemus. She's also co-published five original photography books, most notably *Father*, published with IDEA in 2019.

**LUO YANG**

Luo Yang is a Chinese photographer whose work highlights the contemporary Chinese female experience. Showcasing what she calls "a new generation" of Chinese creatives, artists, musicians, writers, and women born after the protests in Tiananmen Square, she documents a subculture whose identities and lived experiences differ greatly from that of their parents, showing female freedom—and agency—in its purest form.