

The Feminist Responsibility Project
Beverly Semmes



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Beverly
Semmes



Carwash, 2011. Ink on paper. 10.75 x 7 in.



FRP Edit #4, 2011. Ink on paper. 10.75 x 5.75 in.

FRP: An Induction

Ingrid Schaffner

What is the Feminist Responsibility Project? And why is Beverly Semmes in charge of it? By the time Semmes emerged as an artist, the first wave of Feminism had already subsided, transformed from a political form of activism to a cultural form of reference. Semmes is part of a generation who made their mark during the early 1990s with a Feminist take on Minimalist art of the 1960s. Think of the monumental, monochromatic, mostly metal, always hard monoliths of such artists as Donald Judd, Carl Andre, and Richard Serra. Now apply fabric, fashion, the body, craft, appetite, desire, excess, because that's exactly what Semmes—along with such peers as Janine Antoni, Polly Apfelbaum, Kiki Smith, Jessica Stockholder—seemed to be making sculpture with, for, and about.

For instance Semmes's Red Dress, 1992, now in the collection of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. As big as the wall, and attached to it by a hanger, this gargantuan velvet gown cascades to the floor, where it pools and pushes us out of the way like a coming tide, a red tide. Get it? The metaphors and imagery of Beverly Semmes's art typically flow in this direction: from the female body and out into the landscape. Dresses are to be seen as vessels, as Semmes's pots made out of glass and clay demonstrate. Like cartoon images of "making a pot," these sculptural objects are gruntingly physical embodiments of the touch, the craft, the pleasure, and work that goes into building even the most elemental of forms. Whether it's pots or dresses, Semmes's works are environmental in sensibility and scale, billowing, icy, earthy, aqueous, or luminous, depending on material and color, which are always superabundant and sensational.

There is also a performance aspect to Semmes's work. The dress sculptures

can appear as costumes, worn by gallery attendants as part of an exhibition, or by models in Semmes's photographs and videos. The latter are usually family members and friends. (Getting people you care about involved with your work is always important.) Semmes too performs on occasion. She sometimes dons wig and sunglasses to deliver a talk, or, even, while working. As an artist-in-residence at Pilchuk Glass School, Semmes must have struck a glamorous note, hanging around the glory hole (as the fire center of the foundry is called) in a patently 70s get up.

The seventies was, of course, also the heyday of Feminism, which brings us back around to the original question. The Feminist Responsibility Project—or, to use the artist's acronym, FRP—makes its debut here at Rowan University Art Gallery in the form of a gallery installation with video, sculpture, photography, and two performers. The immediate impression is of a set-up so highly stylized and strange that it must stand for something. But what? The floor is covered in a foamy sea of white chiffon fabric, in the midst of which two women in voluminous gowns sit on chairs, facing one another. One woman's gown is striped, the other's a kind of canine camouflage, all-over-dog print. As identified by their attire and other insignia, the women are characters, the "Super Puritan" and "Bitch." They are doing a picture puzzle, spread out on a table between them. Overhead hangs a beautiful chandelier, hand-crafted of clear molten crystal; it is lusciously globular.

There are pictures on the walls. A projection covers one (like Warholian wallpaper, a picture that moves) with a video of a woman's feet, kicking a potato over a frozen lake. The potato, painted pink, messes the ice and makes a dull thudding noise that fills the gallery space. On the other walls hang a series of pictures that come straight from the core of Beverly Semmes's Feminist Responsibility Project.

Over the past eight years and shown for the first time in this exhibition, Semmes has been diligently collecting and correcting images from what she refers to as "gentlemen's magazines." This is a ladylike (Semmes hails from the South with roots in Arkansas and Alabama) reference to her sources: vintage Hustler and Penthouse magazines, the pornography of which she has masked with strategic coats of paint. And if the five FRP works included at Rowan are anything to judge by, this project is much less straightforward than it may sound. For one thing, despite Semmes's "corrections" it's completely obvious that we are being confronted with shots of classic American porn. Splayed, spread, sucking on things, the women are more masked than concealed by paint-jobs that only amplify their objectification. Now things get tricky and funny, too, since the female objects on view are now simultaneously crude consumer objects of male desire and highly crafted feminist works of art. Focus on the painted parts and you see these silhouettes, the scale and shapes of which look a lot like Semmes's sculptures: tactile, over-sized, sensual, scatological, enveloping, grotesque, humorous, basic. If you grabbed any one of these painted forms and set it on the floor, you would see one of Semmes's pots or dresses. Masked in color, all of Semmes's forms specify the body as something elemental with a hole in the center.

The provocation of the hole lies at the center of the FRP installation. Note that the female attendants sit inside an erogenous "O" of fabric on the floor. (And of course, in porno-parlance, women are just holes.) So what is the puzzle that the Bitch and the Super Puritan are piecing together? It's an FRP image that Semmes sent to a company in Germany that will turn any picture into a jigsaw puzzle. Speaking of puzzles, now seems like a good moment to introduce some of Beverly Semmes's own notes about her installation. The use of fabric and craft, she writes, are intended to reference first wave

Feminist art practices with their infusion into the mainstream of women's work and decoration. The potato-kicking feet are flat-footed Freudian phallic symbols. Doing puzzles together is a favorite way of passing time with her mother.

Like any sacred ceremony or mystery play, Semmes's installation—with its fetish objects, icons, and acolytes—looks just sanctimonious and serious enough as to appear a little ridiculous to those of us who stand outside of it. Is this how Feminism looks today? Would only a bitch or a prig challenge the common wisdom that women have achieved equal opportunity as well as control over their own bodies? Has anyone been paying attention to Congress's gambit to slash support of Planned Parenthood? Or, on a lighter note, has anyone read Tina Fey? The most successful woman in comedy has been writing about her experiences coming up with the guys who dominate her profession. From an essay in *The New Yorker*, here is one of Fey's more pithy observations: "I have a suspicion—and hear me out, because this is a rough one—that the definition of 'crazy' in show business is a woman who keeps talking after no one wants to fuck her anymore." Caustic, funny, fearless, I love this quote: it's the Feminist Responsibility Project at work.

Taken as a whole, Beverly Semmes's FRP is a kind of camp. It disrupts the normal flow of pornography by strategically amplifying the awkward and obvious construction of the pose, the gaze, the exploitation, and the bodies that make it work. And it calls to order Feminism, along with social issues and political responsibilities that, in so-called Post-feminist culture, we may not care to embrace. Beverly Semmes' FRP shows us that Feminism retains the super bitchy, pure crazy power to prove that we are no way near finished with the project.



FRP Edit #2, 2011. Ink on paper. 10.75 x 5.75 in.



FRP Edit #3, 2011. Ink on paper. 10.75 x 5.75 in.

Beverly Semmes
“The Feminist Responsibility Project”
Catherine Liu

Male artists and novelists of the 20th century struggle with the label of “great American.” Women artists and novelists seem to be cosmopolitan and exotic—nation free. Less tortured by national traditions and identities, and yet also decidedly marginal to the great nation building projects of the 20th century, women writers and artists have been spared the kinds of critical reception that shapes national identity. Russian émigrés writing in English and living in New York City seem more likely at any moment to write the great American novel than Joan Didion or Joyce Carole Oates.

Beverly Semmes’ work situates itself squarely in the history of American visual obsessions. Although her practice is located at the crossroads of many cultural and art historical traditions—feminist, craft, installation, performance, soft sculpture, its most bold statements are about the inescapable and powerful, even corrective and redeeming qualities of American Puritanism in both the history of American feminism and the history of American sculpture and craft. The larger than life, high collared, high waisted dresses of her work from the 1990s, their ritualistic installation and exaggerated proportions have had enormous resonance with and even influence on interpretations of costume and attire, from the austere proportions of Rei Kawakubo’s creations for modern working women, to the pools of fabric in Stanley Kubrick’s *Eyes Wide Shut*: the co-ed coven of sado-masochists drown in pools of fabric that drape and hide the exquisite bodies of the women who trained to service the New York elite’s darkest tastes. And then there

is the HBO series *Big Love*’s Chloe Sevigny with her terrifying French braids, hyperbolic ruffles and thin-lipped angry demeanor. If in the 1990s, I was trying to think through the new relationship between pop art’s mimetic relationship to commodity fetishism and a new generation of women artists, today I am struck by the ways in which popular culture has been freely borrowing and poaching from the contemporary art scene, unabashedly influenced and shaped by the aesthetics of performance and experimentation in the contemporary arts.

The originality of Semmes’ vision has had far reaching effects both inside and outside the art world, and the new project breaks ground in its full frontal assault on contemporary trends in feminist and anti-feminist performance and sculpture. From the 1970s onward, women artists have demonstrated a remarkable degree of ambivalence and creativity with regard the female nude. Putting their own bodies on display, Cosi Fan Tutti, Eleanor Antin, Hannah Wilke and Lynda Benglis invited us to look long and hard at their young and defiant bodies. Self-display as provocation has become somewhat of a cliché, artists such as Vanessa Beecroft and Nikki Lee have upped the performative ante, seeking out forms of theatricalization in degradation and fetishization aimed at destroying any principle of aesthetic or formal unity that curmudgeonly criticism might offer. Young women artists are put in a reactive position with regard to feminism and their ambitions in the art world. Evasive maneuvers notwithstanding, a young woman artist today has to deal with aesthetic decisions as a set of refusals and affirmations, as if she had to choose to accept or reject Semmes’ ironically heavy handed formulation, “feminist responsibility.”

Even though it may be intellectually and academically scandalous to cite Clement Greenberg, Michael Fried and Rosalind Krauss in one breath, it seems increasingly obvious that they have more in common with each other in their critical negativity than they do with contemporary art practice, which is more addicted to kitsch, theatricality and installation than they could ever possibly have imagined when they wrote their respective polemics against each of these techniques. Banksy's recent film *Exit Through the Gift Shop* (2010) demonstrates that in today's art world, marrying hype, celebrity and exhibitionism to superficial and facile political statements nullifies any kind of aesthetic or formal aspirations in the work of art. Semmes is channeling a parodic energy similar to Banksy's when she takes a risk with "Feminist Responsibility." While Banksy takes on the mindless aping of Warhol and its alleged commentary on commodity culture, Semmes takes on the gravity and seriousness of performance and sculpture, pointing to the ways in which they veer towards senselessness and erotic obsession.

Against Greenberg's affirmation of the formal and emancipatory qualities of abstraction, engagement with kitsch and the manipulation and reproduction of mass produced objects is a part of every art school curriculum. Against Fried's polemic against theatricality, absorption in the work is rejected in favor of ever more imaginative and theatrical ways to display lack of technical skill and formal ambition. Against Krauss, escalating sloppiness in installation accelerates. The more disjointed the better, installation is now just one part of relational aesthetics where the artist mimics a service provider: cooking, palmistry and empathy are offered in a variety of messy, hands on settings, from camping

vans and tents to full scale reproductions of domestic spaces in gallery settings.

By the 1980s, an impasse was reached in contemporary art in the once productive tensions between transgression and prohibition. The more critically viewed a practice was, the more transgressive energies migrated to such forms of art making. Certain forms of artistic activity have become completely indistinguishable from pathological forms of acting out. In the name of justifying the banalization of self-display, self-mutilation and self-preoccupation, critical theory was both embraced and rejected as an unwieldy apparatus upon which to build one's ideas about the concept of making art itself. The middle classness of feminism both inside and outside the art world inspired many male artists of my generation to regard feminism as a fundamentally blue stocking, moral uplift kind of movement, produced by the repressed to repress others. Every time, however, a critical intervention is made denouncing contemporary trends and their arcs of recognition, the trends become strengthened, not weakened. Jeff Koons aggressively took on the sculptural and political rhetoric and self-display when he married La Cioccolina and then posed with his porn star wife as part of his "work."

The obscenity promoted by alleged working class maleness drew its energies from its projected other – nagging middle class feminist, hyper-intellectualized adversaries, many of whom were academically oriented and invested in something once known as "theory." Very quickly, feminist artists were seen as Academicians, pedantic in their sexual and aesthetic politics, even when the artists themselves had claimed self-exposure and the cloacal areas as their very own areas of preoccupation.

It was Mike Kelly against Mary Kelly. Richard Prince against Carolee Schneeman. These dramas are played out against an angry anti-elitism that might actually have taken a page out of Barbara Ehrenreich's work on middle class anxiety married to Norman Mailer's notorious essay, "The White Negro," with brainy white women trying to protect their recent advances into art world representation while white men slumped it as deadbeat dads and collectors of Playboy bunny mudflaps. An African-American woman artist like Kara Walker in the meantime, took on American history. Her understanding of craftsmanship and hucksterism and low entertainment has been a profound intervention in the fabric of contemporary art practice, but recently, the most visible artists of color end up coming from a Third World elite.

In the 1970s and early 80s, there was something vaguely proscriptive about the use of "gaze" theory as a way of castrating if not truncating the gaze: Laura Mulvey may be British, but the iconophobic impulses in her critique of the "male" gaze were definitely flowing from Protestant sources. Catholicism, the Baroque aesthetic and cults of Mary embrace excessive visual display of the compassionate maternal figure. Mulvey sort of told us it was wrong to look at women and desire them. There should be a different gaze the 1970s feminists suggested, a gaze that recognizes and empathizes with the other. There is nothing empathetic about Semmes' Super Puritan. The Feminist Responsibility Project represents a new strategic move on the chessboard of aesthetics and feminist politics. Semmes is calling out the historical associations between the political power of American feminism and the moral power of American Puritanism, whose energies she has obviously found a way of channeling.

The sense of surveillance is uncanny in Semmes' work, but in the Feminist Responsibility Project responsibility is crossed with the pleasures of Puritanical censure AND erotic voyeurism. Putting porn under erasure, Semmes "appropriates" and then violently marks up images of women twisted in acrobatic display of their genitals. We get a hint of fingers inserted into shaved orifices, mouths yearning and pulsating with exhibitionist desires. Ritualized and violent formal arrangements still characterize this work, but a primitive, raging ambivalence about the powers of the image of the female body course through its conceptual disposition.

The American relationship to the pleasures of seduction and the seduction of images is rife with contradiction: a disciplined relationship to visual pleasure seems to have been the end game of not just Calvinism, but feminism as well. And yet the countercultural drive for hedonism, self-indulgence and immediacy sets the stage for a monumental battle of the wills. In Semmes' work, the struggle between Puritanism and pleasure takes place within a single artwork: there is no "sex-positive" agenda in Semmes' engagement with erotic materials. Why has she been so obsessed with pornographic images? Why are her installations of fabric so sensual and lush, and yet so haunted by austere alien witnesses who seem to sit in judgment of any form of spectacle at all?

There is something tantalizingly violent and grim about the defaced porn that Beverly Semmes has produced. The work is feral: in fact, as more of this work is displayed, it is going to be quite obvious that it is a serial and obsessive displacement of both erotic and repressive energies. Whether she is working with ceramics,

glass or fabric, Semmes is always pushing the material to an excremental extreme, and then pulling back just at the point of breakdown in order to create something formally coherent and potentially uplifting. The dark side of the defaced porn is literally uncontainable – is there a moment of redemption for either porn or feminism? Does feminist responsibility produce a monstrous blob that moves out to stamp out all signs of pleasure with indelible ink? Or is Puritan vigilance the sexiest position of all?

We can better understand through the defaced pornography how throughout her career, Semmes has been revising the American Gothic and remaking it as the American grotesque. Giant dresses, blobs of fabric, blobs of ink are all out of proportion, celebratory and horrifying at the same time. In the most recent body of work, the performer as witness is a Puritan is hybridized with a feminist. This figure is a visionary, capable of calling us to arms when it comes to slavery and class oppression: she is a pioneerswoman with enormous inner resources. Her presence itself indicates that judgment awaits us all. The drive, however, for self-indulgence and immediacy sets the stage for a monumental battle of the wills, played out in Semmes' work against a horizon of political and formal innovation. The Puritan watches over us all, both outraged and satisfied by the agonies of feminist responsibility.



FRP Edit #5, 2011. Ink on paper. 10.75 x 5.75 in.



FRP Edit #1, 2011. Ink on paper, 10.75 x 6.5 in.

Beverly Semmes

Born Washington, DC
Lives and works in New York, NY

Education

Yale School of Art, MFA, 1987
New York Studio School, 1983–84
Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, 1982
Boston Museum School, Tufts University, BA, BFA, 1982

One–Person Exhibitions

2011

The Feminist Responsibility Project,
Rowan University Art Gallery,
Glassboro, NJ
Starcraft, Hunter Museum of
American Art, Chattanooga, TN
(traveling exhibition)

2008

*Just What Is It That Makes Today's
Homes So Different, So
Appealing?*, (Collaboration with
Ingrid Schaffner), Testsite,
Austin, TX
Pink Arms, Pairs and Bumps, Dunn
and Brown Contemporary,
Dallas, TX

2007

Galleria Marabini, Bologna, Italy
*Certainly (Chartreuse) / Really
(Red)*, Galerie Bugdahn und
Kaimer, Düsseldorf

2006

Blood Shot Pot, Shoshana Wayne
Gallery, Santa Monica, CA

2005

Hole/Pot/Dot, Nina Freudenheim
Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Ice Queen, Galerie Bugdahn und
Kaimer, Düsseldorf
La Flor del Paraiso 2, Leslie
Tonkonow Artworks + Projects,
New York
Editions Copenhagen, Copenhagen,
Denmark

2004

Neuberger Museum of Art,
Purchase, NY
La Flor del Paraiso, Kunsthallen
Brandts Klaedefabrik, Odense,
Denmark

2003

In the O, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks
+ Projects, New York

2002

Sea Green Petunia, Galerie
Bugdahn und Kaimer,
Düsseldorf

2001

Leslie Tonkonow Artworks +
Projects, New York

2000

GINZA ArtSpace, Shiseido Co.,
Tokyo
Watching Her Feat, The Fabric
Workshop and Museum,
Philadelphia

1999

Photographs, Susan Inglett,
New York
Super-8 Films, GAGA, New York
Kunstverein Ulm, Germany
Ezra & Cecile Zilkha Gallery,
Wesleyan University,
Middletown, CT
Galerie Bugdahn und Kaimer,
Düsseldorf, Germany
Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Santa
Monica, CA

1998

Galleria Marabini, Bologna, Italy

1997

Stuffed Cat, Wexner Center for the
Arts, Columbus, OH

1996

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture
Garden, Washington, D.C.
Beverly Semmes: Big Silver,
Smith College Museum of Art,
Northampton, MA
Norton Gallery of Art, West Palm
Beach, FL

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts,
Richmond, VA

Galerie Bugdahn und Kaimer,
Düsseldorf

Irish Museum of Modern Art,
Dublin

She Moves, Whitney Museum of
American Art at Philip Morris,
New York

Big Silver, Michael Klein Gallery,
New York

1995

Kemper Museum for Contemporary
Art and Design, Kansas City, MO
Baxter Gallery, Maine College of
Art, Portland, ME
The Museum of Contemporary Art,
Chicago

1994

Michael Klein Inc., New York
Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris
Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea
Luigi Pecci, Prato, Italy
James Hockey Gallery, WSCAD,
Farnham, UK
Southampton City Art Gallery,
Southampton, UK
Camden Arts Centre, London

1993

The Institute of Contemporary Art,
Philadelphia
5501 Columbia, Contemporary
Culture Inc., Dallas, TX
South Eastern Center for
Contemporary Art, Winston-
Salem, NC

1992

The Sculpture Center, New York

1990

Special Projects, P.S.1 Museum,
Long Island City, NY
Artists Space, New York

Selected Group Exhibitions

2011

*Nicole Cherubini and Beverly
Semmes*, Samson Projects,
Boston, MA

- 2009
Dirt on Delight, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, PA and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN
- 2008
Great Women Artists: Selections from the Permanent Collection, Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY
Focus: The Figure, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO
- 2006
The Bong Show (Or This is Not a Pipe), Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, NY
DressCode, Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum, St. Gallen, Switzerland
Transitional Objects: Contemporary Still Life, Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY
- 2005
An Inner Glow, Kunstverein Kunsthalle, Linden, Germany
ME-tissages, Museum voor Industriële Archeologie en Textiel, Ghent, Belgium
- 2004
On Conceptual Clothing, Musashino ART University and Library, Tokyo
About Sculpture, The Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY
- 2003
New Material as New Media: The Fabric Workshop and Museum at 25 Years, The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, PA
- 2002
Art Unlimited, Basel 2002, Basel, Switzerland
Rapture: Art's Seduction by Fashion 1970–2002, The Barbican Centre, London, UK
- 2001
Recent Acquisitions, The Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.
Sonsbeek 9: Locus/Focus, Arnhem, The Netherlands
The First 10 Years: Selected Works from the Collection, The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin
Selections from the Permanent Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami
- 2000
Beauty Now, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany
- 1999
Regarding Beauty, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.
The Rubell Family Collection of Contemporary Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
A Space to Grow, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin
- 1998
L'entrelacement et l'enveloppe, La Villa du Parc, Annemasse, France
Cathedral City, St. Ann's Church, Manchester, UK
Pusan International Contemporary Art Festival, Pusan Metropolitan Art Museum, Pusan, South Korea
- 1997
Angel, Angel, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria; Galerie Rudolfinum, Prague, Czech Republic
Art/Fashion, Guggenheim SoHo, New York
International Istanbul Biennial, Turkey
The Hirshhorn Collects: Recent Acquisitions, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.
- 1996
A Labor of Love, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York
Biennale di Firenze: il tempo e la moda, Florence, Italy
Container '96: Art Across Oceans, Copenhagen, Denmark
- L'art au Corps, le corps exposé de Man Ray à nos jours*, Mac Galeries contemporaines des Musées de Marseille, Marseille, France
- 1995
Material Dreams, Takashimaya Gallery, New York
Currents 95: Familiar Places, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston
- 1994
Bad Girls, Wight Art Gallery, U.C.L.A., Los Angeles
Bad Girls, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York
From Beyond the Pale, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin
- 1993
First Sightings, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO
Extravagant: The Economy of Elegance, Russisches Kulturzentrum, Berlin
- 1992
Empty Dress: Clothing as Surrogate in Recent Art, Independent Curators Inc. (traveling exhibition)
- 1991
Plastic Fantastic Lover (Object A), Blum Helman Warehouse, New York
Emerging Sculptors, Sculpture Center, New York
- 1990
Drawings, Althea Viafora Gallery, New York
- 1989
Eccentric Natures, Art Awareness Gallery, Lexington, NY
- Selected Bibliography**
2011
Liu, Catherine. "Feminist Responsibility Project," (exhibition catalogue)

- Sims, Patterson. Beverly Semmes, Hunter Museum of Art, (exhibition catalogue)
- Edith Newhall, "Semmes at Rowan," Philadelphia Inquirer, May 8
- 2009
- Feldman, Melissa E. "Dirt on Delight," Frieze Magazine, Summer
- Bloemink, Barbara J. "Dress Codes: Clothing as Metaphor," Katonah Museum of Art (exhibition catalog)
- Gschwandtner, Sabrina. "Motion Blur; American Craft," Gustavsbergs Konsthall (exhibition catalogue)
- Schaffner, Ingrid and Porter, Jenelle. "Dirt on Delight," ICA (exhibition catalogue)
- 2008
- Douberley, Amanda. "Beverly Semmes + Ingrid Schaffner," ArtPapers, Summer
- "Beverly Semmes at Dunn and Brown," The Dallas Morning News, January 21
- Schaffner, Ingrid, "Just What Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?," Testsite 08.2, (exhibition brochure)
- 2007
- "Dialogo Arte, Moda: Beverly Semmes," Espoarte, June/July
- "The Bong Show," Time Out New York, January 18–24
- McCormick, Carlo. "The Bong Show: New York Artists Hit the Pipe," High Times, April
- 2006
- "Itinerary: Neuberger Museum of Art," Sculpture, December
- Harper, Glenn, and Moyer, Twylene, Eds. A Sculpture Reader: Contemporary Sculpture Since 1980, (ISC Press)
- Myers, Holly. "Crystal, chiffon, ceramics at play," Los Angeles Times, May 26
- 2005
- Lingen Kunststahle, Lingen, Germany, pp. 48–51
- Rexer, Lyle. "Romancing the Stone," Art on Paper, Sept/Oct
- Smith, Roberta. "Beverly Semmes," The New York Times, April 8
- Harris, Jane. "Beverly Semmes," TimeOut NY, April 7–13
- 2004
- "Beverly Semmes," Black Book Magazine, December
- Burkard, Lene; Luis Pérez Oramas, Beverly Semmes, La Flor del Paraiso, Kunsthallen Brandts Klædefabrik, (exhibition catalog)
- On Conceptual Clothing, Musashino art University Museum and Library (exhibition catalog)
- 2003
- Glueck, Grace. "Beverly Semmes: 'In the O,'" Art in Review: The New York Times, April 4
- Princenthal, Nancy. "Semmes at Leslie Tonkonow," Art in America, June p. 117
- 2002
- Art Unlimited 2002 (exhibition catalogue) Basel, p. 114f. illus.
- Senie, Harriet F. Sculpture, October, Vol. 21, No. 8, p. 95
- Stillman, Whit. "Form and Uniform," in Rapture, Art's Seduction by Fashion, London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 103–07
- 2001
- "Beverly Semmes", The Village Voice, March 20
- Bal, Mieke; Fruchtl and Zimmermann. "Mise en Scene", Ästhetik der Inszenierung. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, pp. 201–202
- Johnson, Ken. "Beverly Semmes", The New York Times, Friday, March 9
- Levi Strauss, David. "Beverly Semmes", Artforum, May, p. 178
- 2000
- Epifanie, Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Gent (exhibition brochure)
- Hoet, Jan; Delrue, Mark; Koenot, Jan. Epifanie, Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Gent (exhibition catalogue)
- 1999
- Benezra, Neal, and Olga Viso. Regarding Beauty, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, (exhibition catalogue)
- Zeitung, June 7 Kitschen, Frederieke. "Beverly Semmes", Kunstverein Ulm, Germany (exhibition brochure)
- Schaffner, Ingrid. Heavenly Body, Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University (Exhibition Brochure)
- 1998
- Cathedral City, St. Ann's Church, (exhibition brochure)
- "Dall' Europa agli USA: Art-Fashion", Italian Vogue, May
- Enwezor, Okwui. "Translating Cultures", Siksi, the Nordic Festival, Pusan Metropolitan Art Museum, (exhibition catalogue)
- 1997
- Celant, Germano; Sischy, Ingrid; Asbaghi, Pandora Tabatabai. Art/Fashion, Biennale di Firenze, (exhibition catalogue)
- Demetrian, James. The Hirshhorn Collects: Recent Acquisitions, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (exhibition catalogue)
- Martinez, Rosa. On Life, Beauty, Translations and Other Difficulties, 5th International Istanbul Biennial (exhibition catalogue)
- Princenthal, Nancy. "Semmes at Michael Klein and Whitney Museum at Phillip Morris," Art in America, Feb., p.107
- 1996
- Camhi, Leslie. "Big: Beverly Semmes", Village Voice,

- November 12, p. 96
- Ferguson, Bruce. Beverly Semmes, Irish Museum of Modern Art (exhibition catalogue)
- Glueck, Grace. "Beverly Semmes, 'She Moves' and 'Big Silver'", The New York Times, November 8, p. C23
- McFarland, Terence. "The Big, the Bad, and the Beautiful", Interview, June, pp. 92–94
- Smith, Roberta. "Fine Art and Outsiders: Attacking the Barriers", The New York Times, February 2, p. C18
- Smith, Roberta. "Handmade Readymades", The New York Times, March 1, p. C20
- Viso, Olga. Beverly Semmes: Directions, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, (exhibition brochure)
- 1995
- Tucker, Marcia. Bad Girls, New Museum, (exhibition catalogue)
- "Chicago, Options 50: Beverly Semmes," Flash Art, December, p. 43
- Cruz, Amada. "Options 50: Beverly Semmes", Museum of Contemporary Art (exhibition brochure)
- Gumpert, Lynne. Material Dreams, Takashimaya Gallery (exhibition catalogue)
- 1994
- "Beverly Semmes", Blind Spot, Fall, pp. 41–42
- Frankel, David; McEvilley, Thomas; McGonagle, Declan. From Beyond the Pale: Art and Artists at the Edge of Consensus, Irish Museum of Modern Art, p. 79
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Feminist Responsibility Project, (detail) 2011. Fabric, crystal, table, chairs, puzzle, performers. 7.5 x 30 x 20 ft.



Carwash, 2011. Ink on paper. 10.75 x 7 in.

Acknowledgments

This exhibition marks a turning point for Rowan University Art Gallery in its mission to bring high quality, contemporary art to South Jersey and the Rowan University community. This is the first multi-medium exhibition created specifically for the Rowan University Art Gallery that includes performance, video, sculpture, and original drawings by the artist. Over a year in the making it could not have been possible without the support, generosity, and encouragement of the following individuals: Dr. Jon Robert Cart, Dean, College of Fine and Performing Arts, Susan Bowman, Department of Art Chair, Dr. Andrew Hottle, Art History, Dr. Fred Adelson, Art History, Dr. Deb Miller, Art History, Ingrid Schaffner, Senior Curator, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, and Dr. Catherine Lui, Director, UCI Humanities Center, Film & Media Studies, School of Humanities, University of California, Irvine.

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—Mary Salvante, Curator, Gallery and Exhibitions Program Director

Colophon

Authors: Ingrid Schaffner, Senior Curator, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia

Dr. Catherine Lui, Director, UCI Humanities Center, Film & Media Studies, School of Humanities, University of California, Irvine

Design: Kloefer–Ramsey

Fine art photography: Aaron Iglar

The models in the photo documentation are Rowan University Fine and Performing Arts students: Nicolette Absil and Jenn Knoblock

Rowan University Art Gallery interns: Nicolette Absil, Ze Chen, Danielle Cook, Josh Moskowitz, Armando Ramirez, and Joanne Song

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