

Laura Cottingham & *The Anita Pallenberg Story*

May 7 – June 18

At the center of this exhibition is the rarely seen movie *The Anita Pallenberg Story* (2000) by Laura Cottingham & Leslie Singer. Conceived as a satire on the contemporary art scene of the 1990s, which was defined, in Cottingham's view, by the rampant progression of a pro-market, highly individualized, and patriarchal art system, the film formulated a critical address of its moment through the lens of life backstage with the Rolling Stones, circa 1968.

In open acknowledgement of its layers of costume and citation, the feature-length film blends original footage of the Stones with nonchalant acting performances and cinéma vérité scenes of its own production. Set to a background of post-punk covers, with camera movements taken from Warhol, Fassbinder, and Godard, it presents a portrait of friends in the midst of collaboration, and an uncut study of the modes of appropriation and subjectivity that are contested in cultural production. In a blur of fiction and fact, historical narratives are challenged, and their protagonists transformed, attesting to Cottingham's claim that, in New York, "we are, in a sense, already living in a movie, breathing in a myth, sustaining ourselves on fantasies, manipulating the plot, and believing against all realities in happy endings."

In 1998, Laura Cottingham completed her video essay *Not For Sale: Feminism and Art in the USA during the 1970s*, an account of the groundbreaking works of art produced by feminist artists in the United States in the 1970s. At the time, this history remained marginalized and fractured, and Cottingham's scholarship and inventive research contributed greatly to the reappraisal and recognition of many women artists from the period. Her experiment in lens-based criticism offered a brave and unusual break from her then-established roles—those of

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critic, historian, teacher, curator—as she sought to realize an altogether riskier and unconventional type of cultural analysis. Working in close collaboration with filmmaker Leslie Singer, and pursuing help from other artist peers as well as her students from Cooper Union, Cottingham began to conceive of *The Anita Pallenberg Story*.

Photographs taken during the making of the film by members of cast and crew, including Aaron Cobbett, Rainer Ganahl, Lucas Michael, Ken Okiishi, and Cottingham herself, are also on display. The film and photographs are complemented by a revised edition of Cottingham's essay *Love, Sex, Fame and The Life of the Image* (1999-2000), which details personal and analytical disclosures about the film's production.

Laura Cottingham & Leslie Singer
The Anita Pallenberg Story, 2000
Digital video, 76 min

Laura Cottingham & Leslie Singer
Production Still Series, 1999-2000
C-prints, framed

Clockwise, top to bottom, from
entrance:

*A Shelf From The Anita Pallenberg
Story Library*
Photo: Laura Cottingham

Performance: Play With Fire (Laura)
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

Backstage: Keith, Mick, and Anita
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

*After Jean-Luc Godard: Setting Up the
Shot (Gavin, Laura, Leslie, Ken, Cosima,
Laura, Aaron, Nicole)*
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

The Actor Directs From Bed (Laura)
Photo: Ken Okiishi

*Robert Fraser Rehearses His Lines With
Starbucks (Colin de Land)*
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

*Just the Usual Family Situation Comedy
(Steven, Amy, Laura, Cosima, Chuck,
Nicole)*
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

*Mick Wants Drugs Not Pizza (Peter
Norton, Laura, Patterson)*
Photo: Aaron Cobbett

Brian and a Bong (Laura)
Photo: Aaron Cobbett

*Anita Always Clad in Fur (Laura and
Cosima)*
Photo: Lucas Michael

Aladdin Sane and a Cubist Painting
Photo: Aaron Cobbett

*Between Takes: Still Playing the Part
(Laura and Nicole)*
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

*After "Die bitteren Tainen der Petra von
Kant": Anita at The New York Hilton
(Cosima)*
Photo: Laura Cottingham

Brian Has the Music (Laura)
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

*Socrates and the Corruption of Youth:
Mick and Bowie (Laura and Patterson)*
Photo: Ken Okiishi

Performance: Happy (Laura and Nicole)
Photo: Rainer Ganahl

All works courtesy Laura Cottingham