

## PRESS RELEASE

### Marianne Wex

#### „Weibliche“ und „männliche“ Körpersprache als Folge patriarchalischer Machtverhältnisse

06.07.–09.09.2012

**Opening:** Thursday, 5 July 2012, 7 pm

**Press Preview:** Wednesday, 4 July 2012, 11 am

We are delighted to present a comprehensive solo exhibition by the artist Marianne Wex. The exhibition is dedicated to Wex's photo panels on body language from the nineteen-seventies, which are being shown in such a broad scope for the first time in Germany.

During the years 1972 to 1977 Marianne Wex photographed people and their body language along the streets of Hamburg and subsequently classified her photos into different categories. She juxtaposed women and men according to the specific positioning of arms and legs, feet, knees, elbows, hands, shoulders, and heads. She was interested in the degree to which gender-specific conditioning and hierarchy is reflected through everyday poses and gestures. In order to expand her research, Wex supplemented the approximately 5,000 photographs taken in public space with rephotographed pictures from mass-media sources and comparative historical representations from antiquity and the Middle Ages.

The artist transferred the scopious results of this research onto panels. She assembled the images and explanatory texts on each panel as collages: the upper row shows men posing as a mirror of patriarchal power structures, with the women situated below and occasionally a few exceptions. Tying into this installative form, Wex published a more extensive book titled *Let's Take Back Our Space: Female and Male Body Language as a Result of Patriarchal Structures* (1979). The panels and the book open up a gamut of photographic source material, ranging from Wex's street photographs and photojournalistic shots to advertisements, art-historical reproductions, snapshots from family albums, to even include pornographic images, photographs of celebrities, and stills from television and films.

Marianne Wex's photo project is highly conceptual. It elucidates a specific approach to the medium of photography and to the appropriation of found image material. At the same time, her work is localized within the context of the feminist movement of the nineteen-seventies, with the photo panels having been shown for the first time in 1977 as part of the exhibition *Women Artists International 1877–1977* at NGBK in Berlin. In the late seventies and early eighties, the photo panels traveled to a number of national and international exhibitions but were eventually forgotten before some of the panels being once again exhibited in 2009 at the Focal Point Gallery in Southend-on-Sea. The exhibition at Badischer Kunstverein is now showing all existing panels, which have been prepared and compiled in collaboration with Marianne Wex for their current presentation.

Co-curated by Mike Sperlinger, London.

The display structure has been developed in cooperation with artist Ruth Buchanan and architect Andreas Müller.

**Marianne Wex** (b. 1937 in Hamburg) lives and works in Höhr-Grenzhausen (Westerwald). She studied art at the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg and in Mexico City. From 1963 to 1980 Wex taught at the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg. In the late nineteen-seventies and early eighties she showed her work in national and international solo and group exhibitions (e.g., at NGBK, Berlin, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Bonner Kunstverein and ICA, London). Since 1992 she has been holding workshops and lectures on the topic of “self-healing powers.”

With special thanks to the archive bildwechsel, Hamburg, [www.bildwechsel.org](http://www.bildwechsel.org)

**Opening hours of the exhibition:**

Tuesday to Friday 11 am – 7 pm, Saturday, Sunday and Holidays 11 am – 5 pm

**Address:** Badischer Kunstverein, Waldstrasse 3, 76133 Karlsruhe, Germany  
[www.badischer-kunstverein.de](http://www.badischer-kunstverein.de)

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