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Blasfemme: A Reverence for Renegades at Turner Carroll Gallery

SANTA FE, NM – [February 5, 2024] – **March 1 through April, 2024**. Camille Claudel, Monica Lundy, Angela Ellsworth, Nadya Tolokonnikova, Judy Chicago, Swoon, Meridel Rubenstein, Hung Liu, Kara Walker, Louise Bourgeois, Leonora Carrington, and Kiki Smith in the exhibition *Blasfemme*.

The exhibition *Blasfemme* is a testament to the enduring impact of women artists who challenged conventions throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. This exhibition unveils a mosaic of creative rebellion over multiple generations, and showcases groundbreaking talents whose bold work defies artistic norms and is finally rippling through the art world. *Blasfemme* is a homage to the legacy of women who have dared to be "blasphemous," and who have dared to break the rules and carve out spaces for themselves and others.

At the forefront of this revolutionary showcase is Camille Claudel, a sculptor who has emerged as a powerful force in her own right despite living in the shadow of Rodin. Her work, deemed superior to Rodin's by many, explores form, emotion, and the essence of sculptural expression. But more important than her relation to Rodin is her breaking free from the constraints of her time. Claudel became a renegade in her pursuit of artistic truth, and paid the price for her non-conformity with involuntary institutionalization for the last 30 years of her life.

The Art Institute of Chicago and the J. Paul Getty Museum have jointly undertaken the ambitious task of presenting a career survey of Claudel's oeuvre in 2024, and these shows are accompanied by a monumental monograph that seeks to do justice to her extraordinary contributions. Camille Claudel's sculpted work, often eclipsed by the tragic arc of her life, is now rightfully receiving the recognition it deserves.

Judy Chicago, often hailed as the Godmother of Feminist Art, presides over a cadre of "adopted art daughters" who share a common thread of challenging societal norms through their groundbreaking work. Chicago's impact reverberates not only through her artistic creations but also through the nurturing of a new generation of artistic provocateurs. The avant-garde ensemble includes Pussy Riot founder Nadya Tolokonnikova, and the trailblazing street artist Caledonia Curry (a.k.a. Swoon), who together have created a symphony of voices that refuses to be silenced. The dynamic trio, Chicago, Tolokonnikova, and Swoon embody a collective spirit that transcends generations.

Nadya Tolokonnikova's journey is a testament to the power of activism and resilience. The founder of Pussy Riot was imprisoned in Siberia for two years due to her unyielding

commitment to challenging oppressive systems. Tolokonnikova's art is a powerful tool of dissent, a visual language that speaks volumes about the indomitable spirit of those who refuse to bow to authoritarianism. In an interview with *The Art Newspaper*, by Maurita Cardone, Tolokonnikova says, "I still believe that art can be more powerful than tanks and bullets sometimes because bullets can only penetrate your body, art can penetrate your mind."

Caledonia Curry (a.k.a. Swoon) has graffitied her name into art history as the first female street artist to shatter the glass ceiling of museum collections. Her work, marked by its social commentary and ephemeral, wheat-pasted beauty, expands the traditional boundaries of art space by using the city itself as a gallery.

Louise Bourgeois, a matriarch in her own right, explored the intricacies of the human psyche through deliberately provocative sculptures. Leonora Carrington, who was also involuntarily committed, wrought feminist visions from the male-dominated world of surrealism. Meridel Rubenstein, Kiki Smith, and Monica Lundy form a triumvirate of artistic dissent, each contributing a unique voice to the chorus of defiance. Rubenstein's interdisciplinary approach blends art and ecology, and asks us to reconsider our relationship with the natural world. Kiki Smith's explorations of the female form and spirituality resonate as powerful statements of autonomy, while Monica Lundy's audacious mixed media creations push the boundaries of conventional art.

The legacy of these influential female artists is not confined to the walls of galleries but reverberates through time, and inspires the next generation of creatives to embark on their own journeys of artistic rebellion. *Blasfemme* is a call to action.

ABOUT TURNER CARROLL

Turner Carroll Gallery + Art Advisors exhibits international contemporary art by established and emerging museum-track artists. Founded in 1991 by Tonya Turner Carroll and Michael Carroll, the gallery embodies extensive knowledge of the history of art and vast experience in all aspects of the art world. Turner Carroll authors artist monographs, serves on boards of art museums, foundations, manages artist estates, curates museum and art space exhibitions internationally, and advises private and corporate art collections. Turner Carroll Gallery artists are featured in top private and museum collections worldwide. Turner Carroll has curated museum and institutional exhibitions for artists from the United States, Eastern European countries, Mexico, Italy, Ireland, Argentina, and China.

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