

December 20, 2019 – Please include in your announcements and listings

**The Art Museum at the University of Toronto presents
the first North American exhibition of the work of Lorenza Böttner**

Presented in collaboration with Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart and La Virreina Centre de la Imatge, Barcelona, and supported by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes, Germany

Lorenza Böttner: Requiem for the Norm is the first North American presentation of the work of Chilean/German artist Lorenza Böttner. Curated by **Paul B. Preciado**, it is a retrospective for an artist whose practice persistently blurred the lines between art and life, asking whether there is any aesthetic difference between an image made with the hand and another with the foot. **Preciado**, philosopher, writer, curator, and trans activist, was the Curator of Public Programmes for documenta 14 in Kassel, where he first presented Böttner's work to an international art audience.

Born Ernst Lorenz Böttner in Chile in 1959, the artist lost both arms following an accident at the age of eight. Institutionalized in Germany, the young Ernst Lorenz rejected prosthetics. In art school, Böttner started identifying as female, taking the name Lorenza and developing a wide-ranging art practice.

In a career that spanned just sixteen years, Lorenza Böttner created over 200 individual works, painting with her feet and mouth and using dance, photography, street performance, drawing, and installation to celebrate the complexity of embodiment and gender expression.

Böttner's work is irreverent and hedonistic, filled with the artist's joy in her own body. Her self-portraits absorb the pressure placed on functionally diverse artists to prove themselves with technical virtuosity, subverting it as she flits between diverse styles, characters, and gender expressions: in her 1983 photo series *Face Art*, she constructs an endlessly changing face, turning her skin into a canvas.

Her "danced paintings" or *Tanzmalerei*, created on the street with just a piece of paper and pastel chalk, transform public space into a gallery, a place to unlearn how to look at a body or canvas. Other work documents the subaltern characters with whom she built alliances, depicting Amsterdam prostitutes, African Americans as the object of police violence in New York, and the tender bond of gay sexuality.

The videos in the exhibition, documenting Böttner's performances and life as an artist include the documentary *Lorenza: Portrait of an Artist*, a collaboration with film director

Michael Stahlberg, as well as a television advertisement Böttner produced with Faber Castell paint brand in 1992. Multiple vitrines combine Böttner's works on paper, photographs, and archival materials of her research and correspondence.

Lorenza Böttner: Requiem for the Norm

Curated by Paul B. Preciado

January 25 – March 21, 2020

Art Museum at the University of Toronto

About Lorenza Böttner

Born Ernst Lorenz Böttner in Chile in 1959, Lorenza Böttner was a Chilean/German artist whose wide-ranging art practice critiqued the way functionally diverse and trans bodies are desexualized and made invisible by a society that acknowledges them only when they aspire to a norm. Her work calls attention to how artists who create with their feet and mouths are considered separately from those who use their hands. Using her own armless body, she offers her viewers an alternative art history. She died of HIV-related causes in 1994.

About Paul B. Preciado

The Curator of Public Programmes for documenta 14, where he first presented Böttner's work, **Paul B. Preciado** is a philosopher, writer, curator, and trans activist. His work considers biopolitics and sexuality, looking at the ways technology and pornography have shaped how we think about gender in the twentieth century. He has written about Playboy, architecture, and sexuality in the 1960s (*Pornotopia*, 2014); used his experiences taking testosterone to examine the business of desire and the pharmaceutical industry's role in expanding our definitions of gender (*Testo Junkie*, 2013); and invited his readers to relinquish ideas about "natural" gender, sign a countersexual contract, and embrace the possibilities offered by the prosthesis (*Countersexual Manifesto*, 2002).

About the Art Museum at the University of Toronto:

The Art Museum is comprised of the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery (Hart House) and the University of Toronto Art Centre (University College). Located just a few steps apart, the two galleries were federated in 2014 and began operating under a new visual identity as the Art Museum at the University of Toronto, one of the largest gallery spaces for visual art exhibitions and programming in Toronto. Building on the two galleries' distinguished histories, the Art Museum originates and organizes an intensive year-round program of exhibitions and events that foster—at a local, regional, and international level—innovative research, interdisciplinary scholarship, and knowledge of art and its histories befitting Canada's leading university and the country's largest city.

Our Supporters

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