

## SKIN TRADE

*an in-depth look at the surface of things*

June 27th – July 27th, 2013

Opening Reception: Thursday, June 27, 6-8pm

Curated by Martha Wilson and Larry List

Liu Bolin • Nancy Burson • COLORS Magazine • Adele Crawford • Nancy Davidson • Margi Geerlinks • Kathy Grove • Heide Hatry • Stephen Irwin • Elana Katz • Suzy Lake • Lynn Hershman Leeson • Robert Mapplethorpe • Katy Martin • Beverly McIver • Ana Mendieta • Marilyn Minter • Lorraine O'Grady • ORLAN • Hunter Reynolds • Bonnie Rychlak • Alison Saar • Joan Semmel • Jeanne Silverthorne • Betty Tompkins • Robin Williams • Martha Wilson • Veruschka Lehndorff & Holger Trülzsch • Dolores Zorreguieta • Barbara Zucker



**P·P·O·W** is pleased to present *Skin Trade*, an exhibition curated by Martha Wilson and Larry List that explores the use of skin as a subject or metaphor in art. The exhibition encompasses thirty-one artists of varying generations, with works that span from Joan Semmel's *Intimacy – Autonomy* and Ana Mendieta's *Sweating Blood*, 1974 to the work of Elana Katz, *Color Me Clear* and Robin Williams, *The Artist as Future Self*, 2011.

In slang, the term "skin trade" refers to "any or all aspects of the burlesque, exotic dance, pornography or prostitution industries." However, when taken in parts, "skin – trade" can imply many types of exchanges - often intimate and almost always dealing with beauty, identity, mortality, or eros. Grouped according to these four designations and displayed throughout the gallery, the works of *Skin Trade* speak to the creative potential behind this surface of initial contact. Through photography, sculpture, paint, and video, the included artists address the potential impact of skin; what it means when focus is drawn to this meeting place between a person and the rest of the world.

Skin may be displayed, offered, or denied in return for affection, pity, acceptance, or love. Skin can be offered to show vulnerability or defiance. Skin may be enhanced in hopes of attaining greater beauty, social privilege, or advancement. It may be otherwise altered to fit in, camouflage, disguise, or even disappear for survival's sake. Taken to extremes, skin can be distorted to create an entirely new identity. It is both a cliché and a durable truth that "first impressions are lasting ones," and so it is of no surprise that the artists of *Skin Trade* continue to use this surface as a form of creative expression.

In recent years, Neo-burlesque performance, as a conduit of self-expression and empowerment, has been fueled by heightened interest in performance art, identity, gender, and queer studies. Parallel programs of live performances by Xandra Ibarra (aka la Chica Boom) at Wild Project Theater and by Jo Weldon and friends, of New York School of Burlesque, are being planned to accompany the exhibition.

Many thanks to collaborators and lenders: Alexander Gray Associates, NY; Betty Cunningham Gallery, NY; Brooklyn Museum, NY; Clamport, NY; Eli Klein Fine Art, NY; Galerie LeLong, NY; Gallery Paule Anglim, CA; Georgia Scherman Projects, Inc., Toronto; Invisible Exports, NY; LA Louver Gallery, CA; The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, NY; New York School of Burlesque (Jo Weldon); Salon 94, NY; Sean Kelly Gallery, NY; The Studio Museum, NY; Stux Gallery, NY; Xandra Ibarra; The Wild Theater Project, NY.

A catalog essay by Larry List and illustrated checklist will be available as a free, downloadable PDF @ [ppowgallery.com](http://ppowgallery.com)

Upcoming exhibition: Sandow Birk, *American Qur'an II*, September 7 – October 12, 2013