

Exhibition checklist:

Bus Rider series

All works black-and-white photograph,
image: 7 3/16 x 5 inches, paper: 10 x 8
inches. All images courtesy of the artist
and Metro Pictures Gallery, New York

Untitled, 1976/2000
Edition 17/20

Untitled, 1976/2005
Edition 1/20

Untitled (Secretary), 1978, sepia-toned black-and-white photograph, 14 x 11 inches.
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures
Gallery, New York

Untitled, 1975, 13 black-and-white
photographs, 9 3/4 x 45 inches.
Collection of Elizabeth and Frank Leite,
Prescott, Arizona

Untitled, 1975, 23 hand-colored black-and-white photographs, 20 1/2 x 33 1/2 inches.
Collection of Dorothy and Peter Waldt, Glen
Ridge, New Jersey

The Fairies, 1976, black-and-white cut-out
photographs mounted on paper,
10 x 23 inches.
Collection of Elizabeth and Frank Leite,
Prescott, Arizona

Untitled (Mini), 1976, black-and-white cut-out
photographs mounted on paper, 16 1/4 x 39
1/4 inches.
Collection of Elizabeth and Frank Leite,
Prescott, Arizona

Doll Clothes, 1975, film stills, 16mm film
transferred to DVD, 3 minutes in length.
Courtesy of the artist

Exhibition Catalog:

A catalog published by the Contemporary accompanies the exhibition and includes an essay by New York-based independent curator and writer Catherine Morris and a foreword by the Contemporary's Director, Paul Ha. The 56-page publication includes over 16 reproductions. D.A.P. (Distributed Art Publishers, Inc.) in New York will distribute the catalog internationally.

The Contemporary would like to give special thanks to the lenders of the exhibition, Metro Pictures, New York, Margaret Lee, Artists Rights Society, Sperone Westwater, New York, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, and of course, Cindy Sherman. Additional thanks to Catherine Morris and Kate Wagner.

Cindy Sherman: Working Girl is organized by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis and is co-curated by Cindy Sherman and Paul Ha.

Allegiant Funds, Allegiant Asset Management Company, and National City Private Client Group are the Lead Sponsors of the Cindy Sherman: Working Girl exhibition and catalog.

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CINDY SHERMAN: WORKING GIRL

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CONTEMPORARYARTMUSEUMSTLOUIS

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Untitled (Secretary), 1978, sepia-toned black-and-white photograph, 14 x 11 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures Gallery, New York



Untitled, 1976/2005, edition 1/20, black-and-white photograph, image: 7 3/16 x 5 inches, paper: 10 x 8 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures Gallery, New York

Cindy Sherman: Working Girl

The Contemporary is thrilled to present Cindy Sherman: Working Girl, as our inaugural Decade Series exhibition. In this series, a contemporary artist who has made a significant contribution to the dialogue of contemporary art is invited to develop an exhibition devoted to a moment in their career that has had a particular resonance. This solo exhibition of Cindy Sherman features a little-known selection of small-scaled works by this leading contemporary artist. Culled primarily from the artist's family members and her own collection, this exhibition comprises early black-and-white, hand colored, and sepia toned photographs created by Sherman as a young, emerging artist.

Cindy Sherman: Working Girl includes rarely seen works from the beginning of her career in the mid-1970s, including work created while Sherman was an art student at Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York (1972-76). These early works from 1975-1978 demonstrate Sherman's conceptual approach to photography and foretell the career that would launch her into the art world in the late 1970s. On view, a grid of twenty-three hand colored headshots, Untitled, 1975, depict the transformation of Sherman's appearance achieved through layers of heavy make-up that results in the progressive transformation from a boyish look to glamour girl. These student works express Sherman's interest in exploring her own identity and how she could radically alter her appearance through the simple use of make-up. In another set of thirteen serial headshots, Untitled, 1975, Sherman morphed her appearance by contorting her face into exaggerated expressions, pinned back her hair, and applied subtle make-up. The result is a visual account of Sherman maturing before our eyes from a little girl to an adult.

Sherman shifted from the previous headshot series to whole-body characterizations in which she created a sequential arrangement of paper doll cutouts of herself. In Doll Clothes, a three-minute silent animated video from 1975, which is being exhibited for the first time, Sherman appears as a paper doll that has come to life and tries on clothes stored in their clear plastic sleeves. In the exhibition catalog, author Catherine Morris states "Rather than make a film in which she actually appears, Sherman chooses to make a film about photographic representation of herself in arrested moments of movement. The removal of herself as subject, while retaining her body as a backdrop for an imaginary construction, characterizes that her mature work has begun." Following the film came photographic assemblages of paper doll-like cutouts arranged and glued together depicting

Sherman wearing a mini dress and striking various feminine poses. The piece, Untitled (Mini), 1976, exemplifies Sherman's exploration of the stereotypical constructs of femininity.

A selection of twelve photographs from the Bus Rider series was completed soon after Sherman graduated accompanies the student works. As indicated in the title, Sherman portrayed a range of people she observed riding the bus in Buffalo. In these staged photographs, Sherman appears wearing a broad range of outfits and employs common props to represent diverse individuals and the fragmented moments captured during their journey. In this series, Sherman explored portraiture and role playing to present a multitude of urban identities: young and elderly, male and female, and various ethnicities. This is one of the very few bodies of work in which Sherman depicts herself as a man. Soon after this work was completed she focused only on the image and portrayal of women and stated that "it was difficult to identify sufficiently with the feelings of a man."

In 1977 Sherman moved to Manhattan and began her working life as an artist. Untitled (Secretary), 1978, is one of many links between Sherman's early work and the photographs that would become her first work as a mature artist, the Untitled Film Stills. This snap-shot of Sherman dressed-up as a secretary was taken on site at Artists Space, an alternative gallery in New York City where Sherman worked as a receptionist. As stated by Catherine Morris, "Untitled (Secretary) announces Sherman's transition from student to working girl and closed the chapter on Cindy Sherman's formal education." This exhibition offers a unique glimpse into the early development of Sherman's artistic practice and how these early photographs informed the work that has positioned her as one of the most significant artists of our time.

One of the most respected and influential artists of her generation, Sherman's work has been collected and exhibited by major museums throughout the world since 1980. She has been the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation fellowship grant (also known as the "genius" award), a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, and the Guild Hall Academy of the Arts Lifetime Achievement Award for Visual Arts. Cindy Sherman currently lives and works in New York City.

Andrea Green
Curatorial Assistant



Doll Clothes, 1975, film stills, 16mm film transferred to DVD, 3 minutes in length. Courtesy of the artist