

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sonia Landy Sheridan: Art's Passionate Pilgrim



Hanover, NH – The Hood Museum of Art announces *The Art of Sonia Landy Sheridan*, an exhibition of over eighty works by the pioneering artist best known for her experiments with the emerging forms of imaging technology that would spark the late-twentieth-century communications revolution. On view from October 10, 2009, through January 3, 2010, this retrospective exhibition of Sheridan's artistic production from the 1940s to the 1990s includes works from her important engagement with various early imaging machines, such as the first color copier by 3M and early computer graphics systems. It also features examples of her intensely creative and personal drawings and paintings.

In the late 1960s, Sheridan and her students were involved in making political broadsides and posters to distribute during the 1968 Democratic convention. Frustrated by the time required for most art processes, she sought speedier ways to create serial images. First becoming intrigued with a Xerox photocopier, and then moving on to the 3M Thermo-Fax, Sheridan brought her unique creativity to the manipulation of the machine to produce her art. Her fascination with new image-making technologies soon became a lifelong passion.

When the images she made with their machines came to attention of a 3M executive, she was invited to the company's headquarters and retained as 3M's first artist-in-residence in the summer of 1970. There, Sheridan expanded the inventors' ideas about the new "Color-In-Color" machine's capabilities. According to Sheridan, Color-In-Color was a perfect research tool, because its operation allowed for the "conceptualization of a complex order. Ideas can be generated at a previously impossible speed. To contemplate in solitude without machine interference is one kind of process. Contemplation with the systems is another experience; an experience which is very soothing to the quick mind, for every push of the button brings some fresh insight, some new vision."

This system manipulation ultimately allowed her to literally demonstrate the passage and shape of time within her art works. Ironically, she even created images with the 3M copiers that could not be duplicated, demonstrating a counterintuitive unpredictability for machine-made images. Mary Flanagan, Sherman Fairchild Distinguished Professor in Digital Humanities at Dartmouth College, concluded in her essay for the exhibition catalogue that this "gap between scientific intention and lived reality proved to be fertile ground for the artist as she went looking for the system to speak through its own accidents."

During her long career as an artist and teacher, Sheridan frequently merged the principles of science, technology, and art and, fueled by her unwavering curiosity, explored them in a variety of media. Her work resulted in a remarkably individualistic visual language of systems and processes. *The Art of Sonia Landy Sheridan* pays tribute to this model for artists in the digital age who value the new and the experimental.

The exhibition's opening celebration will feature a lecture on Friday, October 9, at 5:00 P.M. by Diane Kirkpatrick, Professor Emerita of the History of Art, University of Michigan. Kirkpatrick will discuss Sheridan's experimentation with new media and her role as a professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The lecture will be followed by a reception in the Kim Gallery.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication that is available through the Museum Shop and the University Press of New England. This fully illustrated catalogue features an essay by Diane Kirkpatrick, introduction by Katherine Hart, and afterword by Mary Flanagan. The publication and exhibition were organized by the Hood Museum of Art and generously supported by the Ray Winfield Smith 1918 Memorial Fund and the Leon C. 1927, Charles L. 1955, and Andrew J. 1984 Greenebaum Fund.

Caption: Sonia Landy Sheridan, *The Magic Finger (Self Portrait with Pointing Finger)*, 1970, 3M Color-In-Color I on paper. Gift of the artist. Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College.

Additional images available upon request.

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