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CORITA KENT

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Corita Kent, also known as Sister Corita, gained international fame for her vibrant serigraphs during the 1960s and 1970s. A Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, she ran the Art Department at Immaculate Heart College from 1964 until 1968 when she left the Order and moved to Boston. Corita's art reflects her spirituality, her commitment to social justice, her hope for peace and her delight in "the world that takes place all around us."

Corita was born Frances Kent in 1918 in Fort Dodge, Iowa. She grew up in Los Angeles and joined the Order of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1936, taking the name Sister Mary Corita. She graduated from Immaculate Heart College in 1941 and then taught grade school in British Columbia. In 1946/47 she returned to Immaculate Heart College to teach art. In 1951, she received a master's degree in art history from the University of Southern California; it is also the year she exhibited her first silkscreen print.

Corita's earliest works were largely iconographic; known as "neo-gothic" they borrowed phrases and depicted images from the Bible. By the 1960s, she was using popular culture (such as song lyrics and advertising slogans) as raw material for her meaning-filled bursts of text and color. Corita's cries for peace in the era of Vietnam were not always welcome. In 1965 her "Peace on Earth" Christmas exhibit in IBM's New York show room was seen as too subversive and Corita had to amend it. However her work continued to be an outlet for Corita's activism—in her words: "I am not brave enough to not pay my income tax and risk going to jail. But I can say rather freely what I want to say with my art."

By then Corita was the chairman of the famous Immaculate Heart College Art Department. Buckminster Fuller described his visit to the department as "among the most fundamentally inspiring experiences of my life." Other influential friends of hers included Charles Eames, Ben Shahn, Harvey Cox and the Berrigan brothers.

August was Corita's time for her own art making. During the three weeks between semesters, she and her students would work round the clock printing new serigraph designs by the hundreds. Corita's chronic insomnia no doubt made some of this possible, but it was often accompanied by a bleak depression.

In 1968 Corita decided to devote herself entirely to making art. She left the Order and Los Angeles, and moved to Boston's Back Bay. She made numerous commissioned works (Westinghouse Group W ads, book covers and murals) and continued to create her own serigraphs (over 400) in the next 18 years. Still using exuberant splashes of color, the tone of her work became more generally spiritual and introspective. Watercolor plein air paintings and great floral silk screens dominated her later works.

Corita remained active in social causes and designed posters and billboards for Share, the International Walk for Hunger, Physicians for Social Responsibility and Amnesty International. The Boston Gas tank on the Southeast Expressway still bears her famous 150-foot rainbow swash, which is a similar to her design for the 1985 Love Stamp. On Sept. 18, 1986 Corita finally lost her battle with cancer and died in her own home.

Corita's works appear in the permanent collections of over 40 major museums including the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. The Corita Art Center has over 600 of Corita's 800 original serigraphs for sale and an extensive archive collection of articles and memorabilia available for researchers.

– Sasha Carrera, Los Angeles.

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SISTER MARY CORITA KENT

Born Frances Elizabeth Kent, 1918 in Fort Dodge, Iowa, USA
Died 1986, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

EDUCATION

1951 MA, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA
1941 Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles, USA

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2018 *Corita Kent: Get With The Action*, Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft, Ditchling, England
Corita Kent: The Alchemy of the Moment is Happening, Windward School, Los Angeles, California, USA
Sister Mary Corita Kent, Selected Works, Davidson Galleries, Seattle, Washington, USA
Pop Up Art Festival - Corita Kent at The Oakes, California Museum, Thousand Oakes, USA
Power Up: Corita Kent's Heavenly Pop, Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, USA
Vitrine de la collection : Corita Kent, Frac Ile-de-France Le Plateau, Paris, France
Damn Everything But the Circus, Exile Books, Miami, Florida, USA
Corita Kent and the Begotten Word, ArtReach Gallery, First Congregational United Church of Christ, Portland, Oregon
2017 *Corita Kent,* BLITZ, Valletta, Malta
We Can Make It: The Prints of Corita Kent, Haggerty Museum of Art, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA
Mass Appeal: The Art of Corita Kent, California Museum of Art Thousand Oaks, Thousand Oaks, CA, USA
Corita Kent, Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, USA
2016 *Corita Kent: Spiritual Pop,* Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon, USA
In the Beginning was the Word: Works by Corita Kent, Patricia and Philip Frost Art Museum, Miami, FL, USA
Corita Kent and the Language of Pop, Berkeley Art Museum, USA / San Antonio Museum of Art, USA
Sister Corita's Summer of Love, City Gallery Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand
Love is Here to Stay and That's Enough: Prints by Sister Corita Kent, Robert & Karen Hoehn Family Galleries, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA, USA
2015 *Sister Corita: Summer of Love*, Govett Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand
Resurrection of the Spirit, Galerie Allen, Paris, France
Someday Is Now: The Art of Corita Kent, Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland / The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, USA
2014 *Let the Sun Shine In*, Circleculture Gallery, Berlin, Germany
But, There is Only One Thing That Has Power, Galerie Allen, Paris, France
Someday Is Now: The Art of Corita Kent, Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, USA / Tang Museum, NY, USA
2013 *The Gospel According to Corita Kent*, Parson House Gallery, Assonet, MA
The Corita Kent Exhibition, The Herb Alpert Educational Village, Santa Monica, USA
There Will Be New Rules Next Week, Dundee Contemporary Arts Center, Dundee, Scotland
Someday Is Now: The Art of Corita Kent, Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY, USA
2012 *R(ad)ical Love: Sister Mary Corita,* National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, USA
To Believe: The Spirited Art of Corita, John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library, The Catholic University of America, Washington, USA
2011 *A Joyous Protest: The Graphic Work of Corita Kent*, The Markhausen Gallery of Art at Concordia University, Seward, USA
Sister Corita: The Joyous Revolutionary, Thornhill Gallery, Avila University, Kansas City, USA
Sister Corita Christmas, Kit Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
Tas Yard Café, Tokyo, Japan
E is for Everyone: Celebrating Sister Corita, The Museum of Craft and Folk Art, San Francisco, USA
To Create Is to Relate, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada
Celebrate Corita!, Castro Valley Library, San Francisco ; The John O'Lague Galleria at City Hall, Hayward, USA
Yobel—Jubilee: A Celebration of the Life of Corita, Buckley Center Gallery, University of Portland, Portland, USA
Sister Corita Kent, Neon Parc, Melbourne, Australia
2010 *Sister Corita: The Joyous Revolutionary*, Sordoni Art Gallery, Wilkes-Barre, PA; University of Michigan Art Museum, *Ann Arbor, MI*; Tyler Art Gallery, Oswego, NY

Corita Prints and Posters, Ufizzi Salon, Austin, USA
EveryDAY Miracles: Corita, San Pedro Chamber of Commerce, San Pedro, USA
We Can Create Life without War – The Corita Peace Project, Courtyard Gallery, Hollywood Lutheran Church, Los Angeles, USA

2009 *Corita Kent*, Zach Feuer Gallery, New York, USA
Corita Retrospective, Los Angeles Cathedral, Los Angeles, USA
The Corita Show, LouWe Gallery, Pasadena, USA
A Passion for the Possible: The Works of Sister Corita, cur. Aaron Rose, California State University, Northridge, USA
Sign Language: The Pop Art of Sister Corita, cur. Ted Hughes, Missoula Art Museum, Missoula, USA
Corita: A Retrospective 1951-1985, Judson Studio Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
Sister Corita: The Joyous Revolutionary, Richard F. Brush Art Gallery, Canton, NY; Crown Center Gallery, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, USA
Corita – Breaking (All) the Rules, Jundt Galleries, Gonzaga University, Spokane, USA
Corita: Serigraphs and Watercolors 1951-1985, The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles, USA

2008 *Sister Corita*, Kalfayan Galleries Thessaloniki, Athens, Greece
Inspired Images, Breslin Fine Art Gallery, East Greenwich, RI
What's in it for you? Plenty! The practice of Sister Corita, cur. Signal, JET, Berlin, Germany
Sister Corita, Kalfayan Galleries, Athens, Greece; Thessaloniki, Greece
Corita: A Retrospective 1951-1985, Judson Gallery of Contemporary and Traditional Art, Los Angeles, USA
Power Up: Serigraphs by Corita Kent, cur. Fr. Thomas Lucas, Thacher Gallery at the University of San Francisco, San Francisco, USA
We Can Create Life Without War: A Retrospective Exhibit of the Works of Corita Kent, Breslin Fine Arts, Inc., East Greenwich, USA
A Passion for the Possible: The Works of Sister Corita, cur. Aaron Rose, Circle Culture, Berlin, Germany; Monster Children Gallery, Sydney, Australia
Power Up: Sister Corita, DCA Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland
Power Up—Have a Hippy Holiday, Barneys, New York, NY

2007 *Bright Bird: The Art of Sister Mary Corita Kent*, Spirit Room Gallery, Fargo, USA
Yes People Like Us: Prints from the 1960s by Sister Corita, cur. Julie Ault, Museum Ludwig, Ludwig, Germany
Corita Kent: Serigraphs, The Snite Museum of Art, Notre Dame, IN
Corita Kent Serigraphs, LouWe Gallery, Pasadena, CA
Wet and Wild: The Spirit of Sister Corita, Signal Center for Contemporary Art, Malmo, Sweden

2006 *Corita's Love of Life,* San Luis Obispo Art Center, San Luis Obispo, USA
Sister Corita: Works from the 1960s, cur. Julie Ault, Between Bridges, London, UK

2005 *A Passion for the Possible: Serigraphs by Corita*, St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego, USA

2004 *The Power of Corita, A Retrospective*, Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, USA

2000 *The Big G Stands for Goodness: Corita Kent's 1960s Pop*, cur. Michael Duncan, Luckman Gallery, LosAngeles ; Norah Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University; Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA UTSA Art Gallery, University of Texas, San Antonio; Beaver College (Arcadia University) Art Gallery, Glenside, USA

1981 *Corita Kent*, Suzanne Brown Gallery, Scottsdale, USA

1980 *Corita: A Retrospective,* De Cordova Museum, Lincoln, USA

1967 (Maybe 1965) Morris Gallery, New York, USA

1965 *Peace on Earth*, I.B.M. Storefront, New York, USA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018 *A Cris Ouverts*, 6th Annual Les Ateliers de Rennes Contemporary Art Biennale, France
Citoyennes paradoxales, Palais du Tau, Reims, France
Collecting on the Edge, Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State Univeristy, Logan, Utah, USA
Just to Live is Holy: Women Religious and a Tradition of Art, Faith and Justice, Dubuque Museum of Art, Iowa, USA
Sign of the Times: The Great American Politial Poster 1844 - 2012, Reading Public Museum, Pennyslvania, USA
Nine Moments of Now, The Ethelbert Cooper Gallery of African and African American Art, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA
Half the Picture: A Feminist Look at the Collection, Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA
JE MARCHE DONC NOUS SOMMES, Magasin des Horizons, Grenoble, France
Give a damn, Frances Young Tang Museum and Art Gallery, Saratoga Spring, New York, USA
The Future is Female, Parts Project, Den Haag, Netherlands

Cloud busters: Intensity vs. Intention, 17th Tallinn Print Triennal, Tallinn, Estonia
Generations: Female Artists in Dialogue, Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany
California: Designing Freedom, Stedelijk Museum of Contemporary Art & Design, 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands
Artists Take Action! Recent Acquisition from the Davis, The Davis at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA
FEMINAE LA Typographic Voices of Women by Women, Hoffmitz Milken Center for Typography at ArtCenter College of Design, Pasadena, California, USA
Arts & Nature Social Club, Circle Culture, Berlin, Germany
"Smash the control images": Idiosyncratic Visions in Late Century American Art, The Gund Gallery at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio
Beginning with the Seventies: GLUT, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada

2017 *be of love and other stories : Contemporary Highlights from the Permannt Collection*, Newport Art Museum, Newport, USA
Get with the Action: Political Posters from the 1960s to Now, San Francisco Museum of Art, USA
California: Designing Freedom, Design Museum, London, England, UK; Helsinki, Finland
10th Annual California Hall of Fame Artifact Exhibit, California Museum, Sacramento, CA, USA
Yes yes yes yes: Graphics from the 1960s and 1970s, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
Broad Stripes and Bright Stars, Ely Center of Contemporary Art, New Haven, Connecticut, USA
Typeface to Interface: Graphic Design from the Collection, SFMOMA, San Francisco, CA, USA
Hippie Modernism: The Struggle for Utopia, Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, CA, USA
Woe men - keep going, Mary Boone Gallery, New York, USA

2016 *Politiques de l'art,* Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
You Say You Want a Revolution? Records and Rebels 1966-1970, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, UK
Hippie Modernism: The Struggle for Utopia, Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfiels Hills, Michigan, USA

2015 *Hippie Modernism: The Struggle for Utopia*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
When Artists Speak Truth…, The 8th Floor, Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, New York, NY, USA

2013 *Tell It to My Heart: Collected by Julie Ault*, Museum fur Gegenwartskunst, Basel, Switzerland; Culturgest, Libson, Portugal; Arists Space, New York, NY
Decade of Dissent: Democracy in Action 1965-1976, Santa Monica Art Studios, ARENA 1, Santa Monica, CA
Letters from Los Angeles: Text in Southern California Art, Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles, CA
Air de Pied-à-terre, Lisa Cooley Gallery, New York, NY
Elements, Rudiments, and Principles, Boston University Art Gallery, Boston, MA
Doing as You Like, Grafikens Hus, Mariefr, ed, Sweden; Hein Onstad Art Centre, Oslo, Norway

2012 *Arthur Rainbow*, Air de Paris Gallery, Paris, France
Decade of Dissent: Democracy in Action 1965-1976, Center for the Study of Political Graphics at West Hollywood Library, West Hollywood, CA; Santa Monic Art Studios, ARENA 1, Santa Monica, CA
Purely Observational/Everyday Political: Artwork of and Inspired by Corita Kent, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA
Trienal Poli/Gráfica de San Juan: América Latina y el Caribe, El Panal/The Hive, Puerto Rico
You, Me, She, We, Fleisher/Ollman Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
Doing What You Want: Marie Louise Eckman, Corita Kent, Mladen Stilinovic and Martha Wilson, Testa Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden
Decades of Dissent: Democracy in Action 1960 – 1980, Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles, CA (Organized by the Center for the Study of Political Graphics)
Amateurism, Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg, Germany
Pull Everything Out, Spike Island, Bristol, United Kingdom

2011 *1.85 Million*, cur. Joseph Allen Shea, Campbelltown Arts Center, Sydney, Australia
For Love Not Money, Tallinn Print Triennial, Tallinn, Estonia
Women and Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America, The National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, Dubuque, IA; Center for *History*, University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College, South Bend, IN; Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, CA
California Design, 1930 – 1965: Living in a Modern Way, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA
The Personal is Political: Women Artists from the Collection, The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA
Civic Virtue: The Impact of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and the Watts Towers Arts Center, Municipal Gallery at Barnsdall Art Park and the Watts Towers Arts Center, Los Angeles, CA
Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles 1945 – 1980, ONE Archives Gallery and Museum, West Hollywood, CA
Proof: The Rise of Printmaking in Southern California, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, CA
Pacific Standard Time, Los Angeles, CA

2010 *You Can Heal Your Life!* Circus Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Pieces of 9: Reframing the Collection, University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach, CA

The Joyous Revolutionary, Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts, Lubbock, TX
Power Up: Female Pop Artists, Kunsthalle Wein, Vienna, Austria
Women and Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America, S. Dillon Ripley Center at the Smithsonian, Washington, DC; Statue of Liberty National Monument/Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York, NY; Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, Cleveland, OH
Messaging: Text and Visual Art, Chadron State College, Chadron, NE; Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln, NE
Corita and Friends: 40 Years of Heart Tales, fINdings Art Center, San Pedro, CA
California Design Biennial: Action/Reaction, Pasadena Museum of California Art, Pasadena, CA
SWELL: Art 1950 – 2010, Nyehaus, Friedrich Peztel Gallery, and Metro Pictures, New York, NY
Freedom of Speech, Hamburg, Germany
The California Endowment, Sacrament, CA

2009 *Women and Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America*, Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, OH; The Women's Museum, Dallas, TX
*Signs of Change: Social Movement Cultures, 1968-present, c*ur. Josh MacPhee, Miller Gallery, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
Divine Abstractions, Gallery 92 West, Fremont, NE
Connections: LA Printmaking 1962 to 1973, cur. Donald Krieger, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery at Barnsdall Art Park, Los Angeles, CA
Winter, State Farm Insurance Building, Los Angeles, CA
I Am. Amen., Trahern Gallery, Austin Peay State University, Clarksburg, TN

2008 *That was Then…This is Now*, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, NY
Signs of Change: Social Movement Cultures 1960s to Now, cur. Josh MacPhee, Exit Art, New York, NY; Miller Gallery, Carnegie Mellon, Pittsburgh, PA
246 and Counting, Recent Architecture and Design Acquisitions, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
Made in the USA, The LA Brewery, Los Angeles, CA
That L.A. Desire (Part 1), Galerie Dennis Kimmerich, Dusseldorf, Germany
Social Space Between Speaking and Meaning, White Columns, New York City, NY
Flower Power: A Subversive Botanical, New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM
Dissent! 1968 & Now, Laband Art Gallery, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA
HouseGuest, Armand Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA
We Have Never Met Before […], Standard (Oslo), Oslo, Norway
Brussels Biennial 1, Brussels Biennial, Brussels, Germany

2007 *If Everybody Had an Ocean: Brian Wilson, an Art Exhibition*, cur. Alex Farqueharson, CAPC Musee d'Art *Contemporain de Bordeaux,* Bordeaux, France; Tate St. Ives, Cornwall, England
The Believers, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams, MA (Curated by Jerome Grand and Nato Thompson)
Uneasy Angel/Imagine Los Angeles, Sprueth Magers, Munich, Germany
Darling Take Fountain, Kalfayan Galleries, Athens, Greece
Endless Western Sunset, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York City, NY
Two Years, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City, NY

2006 *Dissent!*, Fogg Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Herd Instinct 360, Greene Naftali Gallery, New York City, NY

2005 *Just do it!*, The Subversion of Signs from Marcel Duchamp to Prada Meinhof, Lentos Art Museum, Linz, Austria

2000 *Power Up, Sister Corita and Donald Moffett, Interlocking*, Armand Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA (Curated by Julie Ault)

1962 *American Printmakers 1962*, Emily Lowe Art Center, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

1959 *Religious Subjects in Modern Graphic Arts*, New York City, NY (circulated by Smithsonian Institution)

1955 *Southern California Serigraphs*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA

1954 *Young American Printmakers*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

1952 *American Water Colors, Drawings, and Prints*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY

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COLLECTIONS

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, CA
Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA
Albion College, Albion, MI
Armand Hammer Museum, Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
Art Institute of Zanesville, Zanesville, OH
Beaver College, Glenside, PA
Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France
Brauer Museum of Art, Valparaiso University, IN
Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, Memphis TN
California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, CA
Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH
Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX
Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH
FRAC Pays de la Loire, France
Free Library of Philadelphia, PA
Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA
Gutman Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Harvard Art Museums, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, IL
Library of Congress, Department of Prints, Washington, DC
Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France
Lindenwood College, St. Charles, MO
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA
Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles, CA
Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany
Luckman Gallery, California State University, Los Angeles, CA
Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY
Mills College, Oakland, CA
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA
Museum Fine Arts, Boston, MA
Museum Fine Art, San Francisco, CA
Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
New York Public Library, New York, NY
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC
Oregon State College, Corvallis, OR
Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA
Philbrook Art Center, Tulsa, OK
The Print Club, Philadelphia, PA
Queensland Art Gallery/ Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
Schlesinger Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, CA
Seattle Public Library, Seattle, WA
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE
Stanford University, Stanford, CA
Tang Museum, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY
Texas Wesleyan College, Fort Worth, TX
Thiel College Collection, Greenville, PA
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK
University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

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Kent, Sister Mary Corita with Elizabeth Bugenthal. Ugo Betti Book and Portfolio. Immaculate Heart College.
Kent, Sister Mary Corita. Footnotes and Headlines. Herder & Herder.
Kent, Sister Mary Corita with Gerald Huckaby. City, Uncity. Doubleday & Co.
Kent, Sister Mary Corita with Joseph Pintauro. To Believe in Things. Harper & Row.
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Above:
Sister Mathias (IHC choral director) leading Mary's Day Parade,
Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles 1964
Reproduction permission of the Corita Art Center,
Immaculate Heart Community, Los Angeles

Below:
Immaculate Heart College Art Department, Los Angeles
c1955
Reproduction permission of the Corita Art Center,
Immaculate Heart Community, Los Angeles

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CORITA KENT
earth as a sign, 1962
sérigraphie sur papier
64.77 x 77.79cm

CORITA KENT
manifest as language, 1963
sérigraphie sur papier
64.77 x 77.79cm

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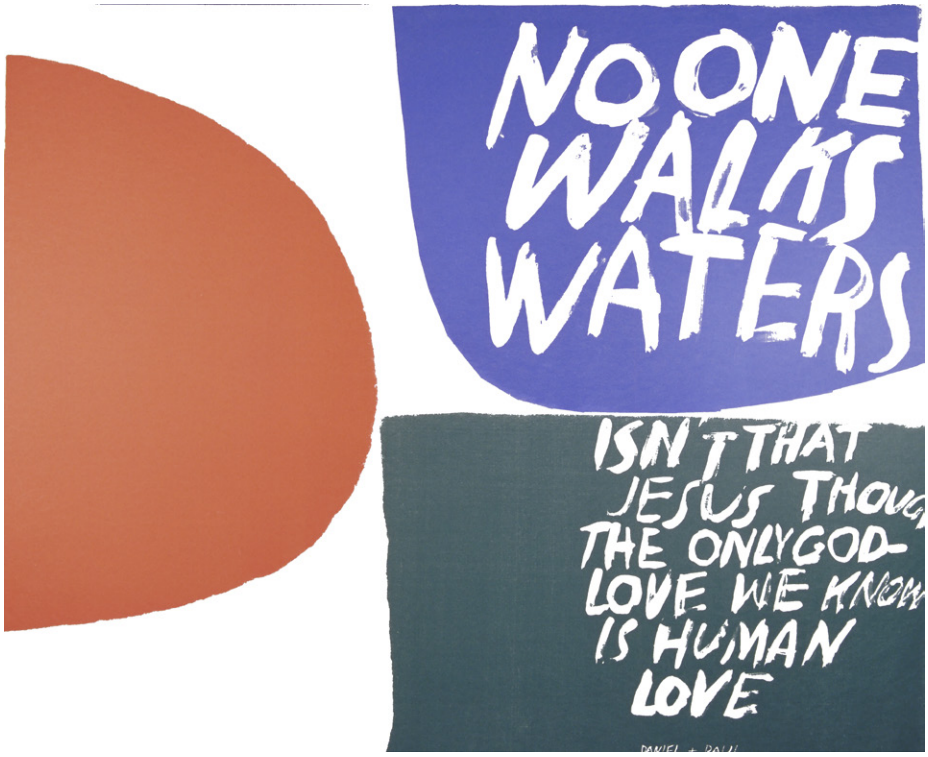
CORITA KENT
help the big bird, 1966
sérigraphie sur papier
76.2 x 91.44cm



CORITA KENT
manifest as language, 1965
sérigraphie sur papier
76.2 X 91.44

GALERIE
ALLEN

CORITA KENT
the sure one, 1966
sérigraphie sur papier
76.2 x 91.44cm

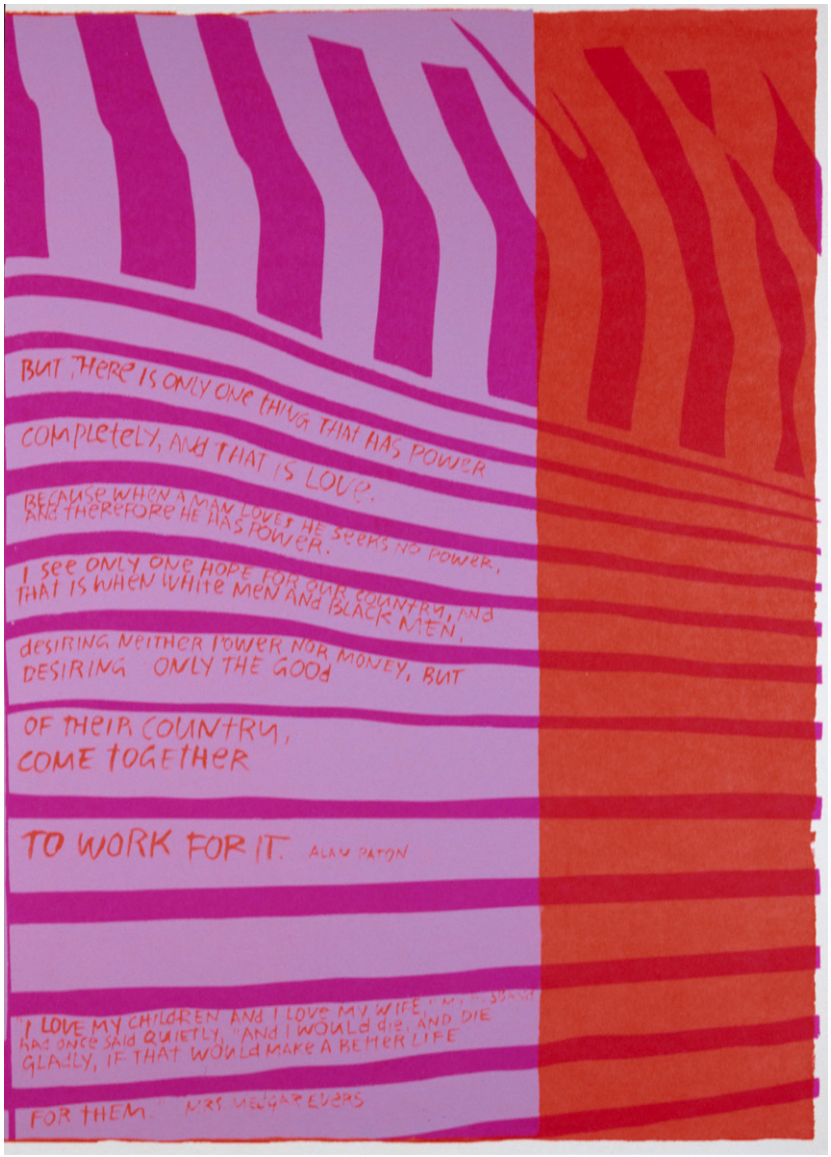
CORITA KENT
morning, 1966
sérigraphie sur papier
45.72 X 76.2

GALERIE
ALLEN

CORITA KENT
handle with care, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
58.42 x 88.9cm

CORITA KENT
don't back up, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
75.565 x 91.44cm

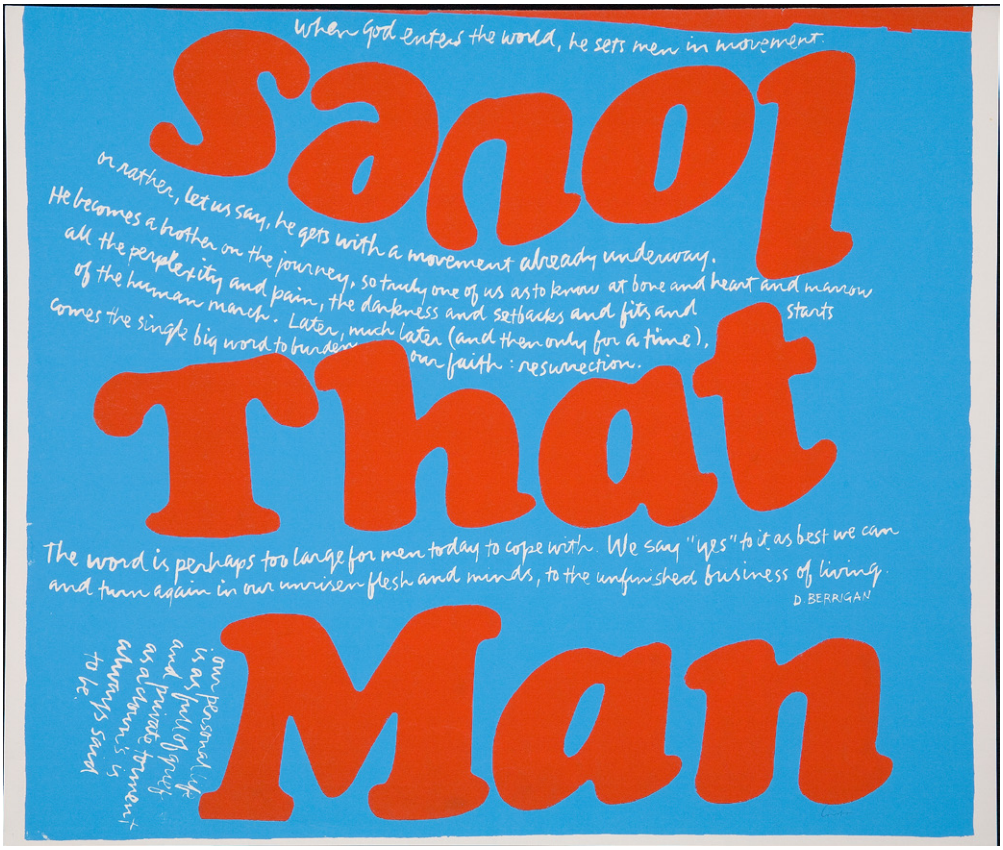
GALERIE
ALLEN



CORITA KENT
but, there is only one thing that has power, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
58.42 x 45.72cm

GALERIE
ALLEN

CORITA KENT
come alive, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
33.66 x 58.42cm



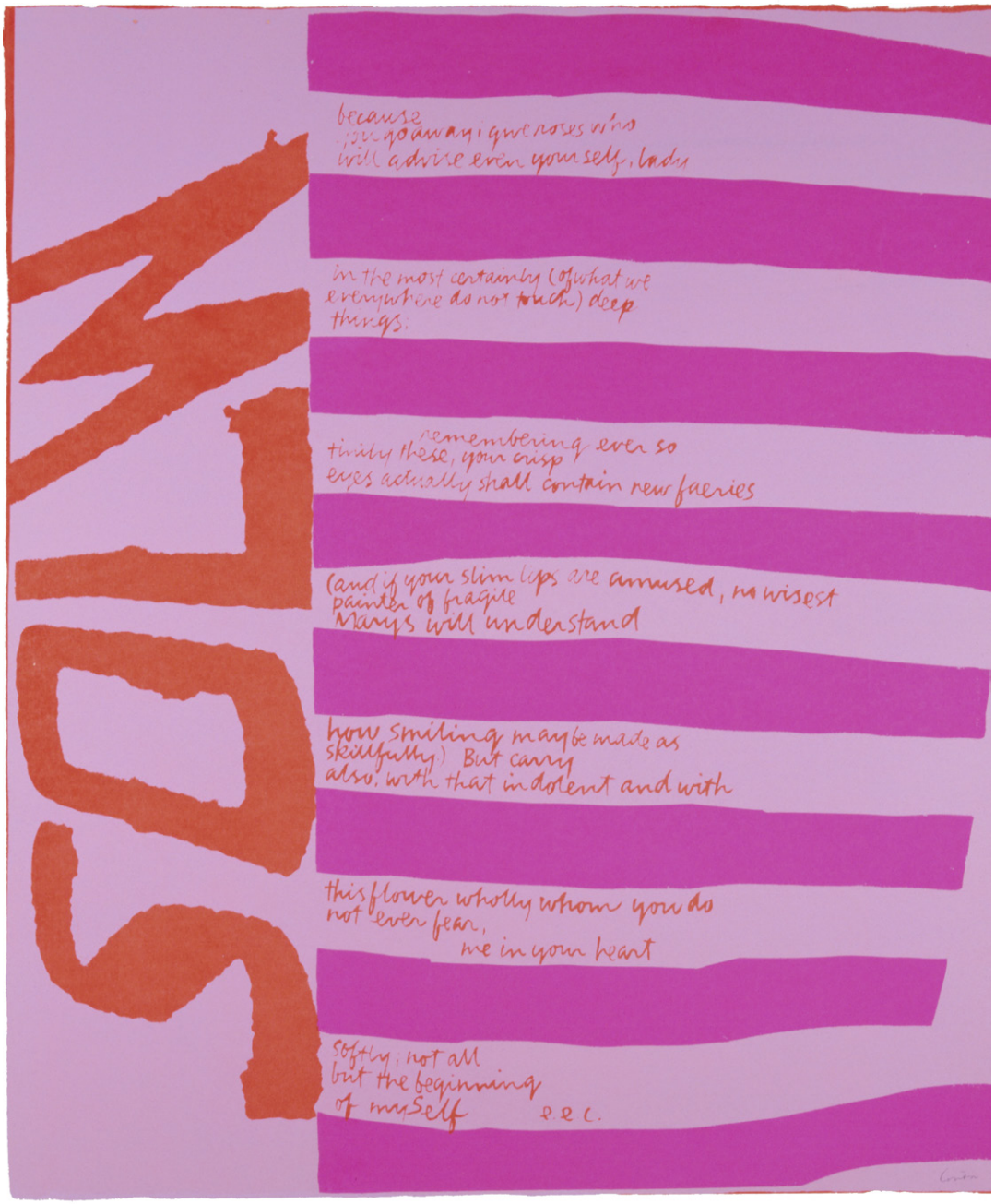
CORITA KENT
that man loves, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
49.53 x 58.42cm

GALERIE
ALLEN

CORITA KENT
with love to the everyday miracle, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
58.42 X 88.9

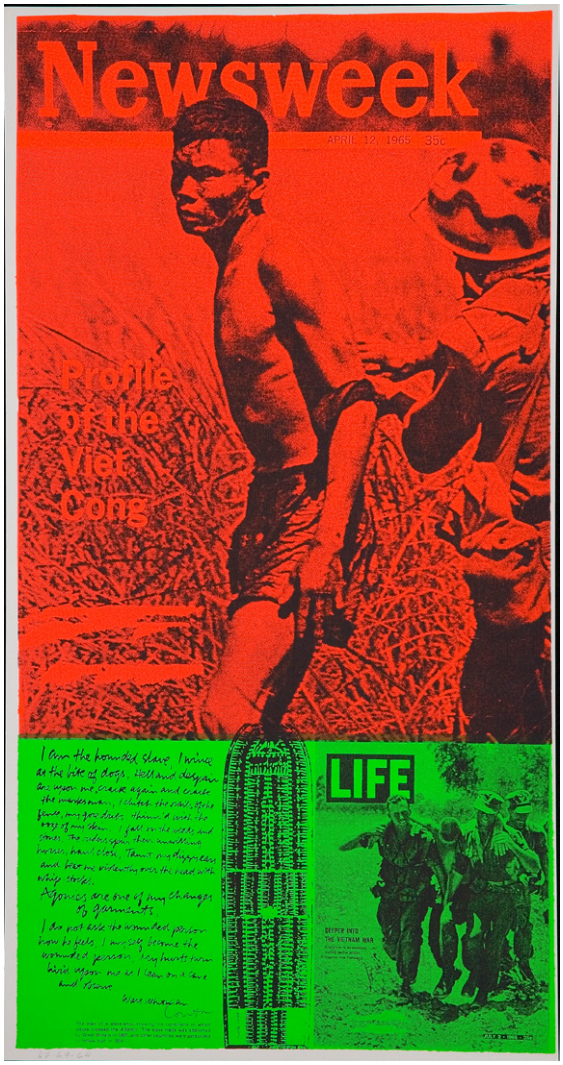
CORITA KENT
wet and wild, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
45.72 X 58.42

GALERIE
ALLEN

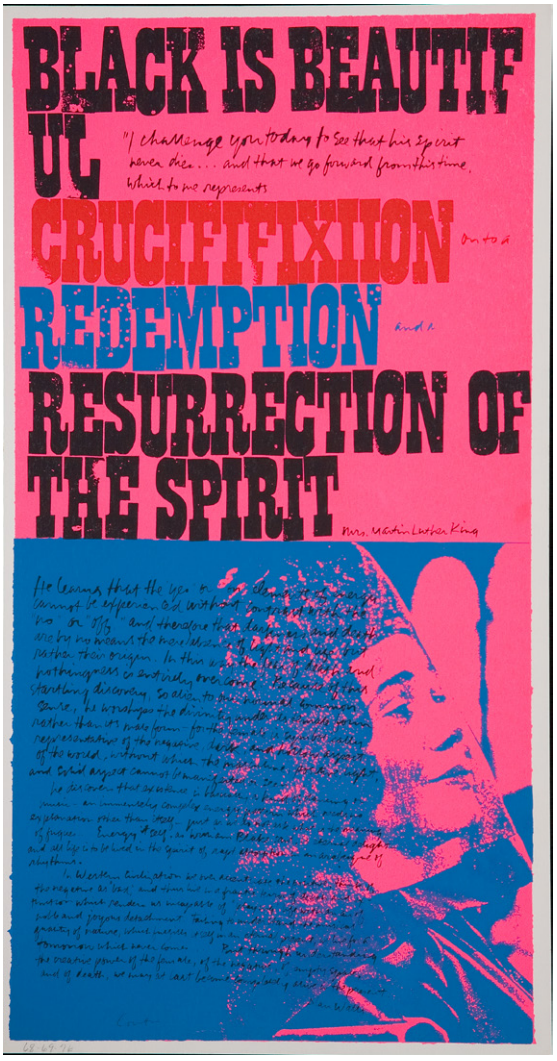


CORITA KENT
solw, 1967
sérigraphie sur papier
58.42 X 47.63

GALERIE
ALLEN



CORITA KENT
news of the week, 1969
sérigraphie sur papier
29.21 x 57.15cm



CORITA KENT
if i, 1969
sérigraphie sur papier
29.21 x 57.15cm

GALERIE
ALLEN

CORITA KENT
only you and i (part 1 and 2), 1969
sérigraphie sur papier
29.21 x 57.15cm

The LAist, 22 May 2017
"Inside the Hammer's Newly Digitized Corita Kent Archive"
by Julia Wick

Inside The Hammer's Newly Digitized Corita Kent Archive

BY **JULIA WICK** IN **ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT** ON MAY 22, 2017 8:50 AM

Corita Kent. (Photo courtesy of the Hammer Museum)

Corita Kent—a screenprinting nun who played a seminal role in the Los Angeles art world of the 1960s—blended faith and social activism to create a groundbreaking body of work. Kent, whose early art predated Andy Warhol (though he would later become an influence on her), was considered "an early adopter of serigraphy, or silk-screening—considered a sign painter's lowly tool at the time," according to The New York Times.

From 1947 to 1968, Corita taught classes in the art department at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles. Characterized by striking combinations of bold graphics and poignant texts, Kent's Pop Art serigraphs were as likely to include an advertising slogan as a snippet of philosophical and theological text. She "sought out revelation in the everyday, exploring grocery stores, car dealerships, and the streets of Hollywood for inspiration," according to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland.

The LAist, 22 May 2017

"Inside the Hammer's Newly Digitized Corita Kent Archive"

by Julia Wick

Dubbed the "joyous revolutionary" by artist Ben Shahn, Kent's iconic prints found their way into Civil Rights and anti-war protests. Legendary architect and designer Buckminister Fuller described his visit to Kent's studio as "among the most fundamentally inspiring experiences of my life."

At the height of her popularity—a year before Sister Corita left the order to work as an artist full-time—she appeared with a collage of her work on the cover of Newsweek under the headline "The Nun: Going Modern." Upon her death in 1986, Kent donated her personal art collection (totaling more than 1,400 objects!) to the UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts. A vast array from that collection has now been digitized by the Hammer Museum, with the generous cooperation of the Corita Art Center, and is wonderfully available online for all to see.

The digital archive includes preparatory materials that offer unique insight into her work. For example, take a look at the trio of images below that shows the process behind Kent's 1968 "you shoot at yourself, america."

Corita Kent, *Untitled*, 1968

Corita Kent, *Untitled*, 1968

Corita Kent, *you shoot at yourself, america*, 1968

Click the image to enlarge.

"you shoot at yourself, america" was created—like many of Kent's works—by layering material from myriad sources. According to the Hammer, Kent first took a photo of a statue from the Immaculate Heart College's folk art collection and then tore a small hole into the forehead of the statue (far left), which she combined with a poem by the Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko that she cut out and collaged onto a separate piece of paper (middle).

The Hammer Museum's digital Corita Kent archive features a gallery of more than 600 completed screenprints, along with sketches and watercolors. Here's a look at what's inside:

The LAist, 22 May 2017

"Inside the Hammer's Newly Digitized Corita Kent Archive"

by Julia Wick

The Hammer Museum's digital Corita Kent archive features a gallery of more than 600 completed screenprints, along with sketches and watercolors. Here's a look at what's inside:

come alive 1967
Medium: Screenprint
(Courtesy of the Collection UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Hammer Museum. Corita Kent Bequest.)

Artsy, 2 December 2016
"11 Female Artists Who Left Their Mark on Pop Art"
by Rachel Lebowitz

11 Female Artists Who Left Their Mark on Pop Art

ARTSY EDITORIAL
BY RACHEL LEBOWITZ
DEC 2ND, 2016 6:36 PM

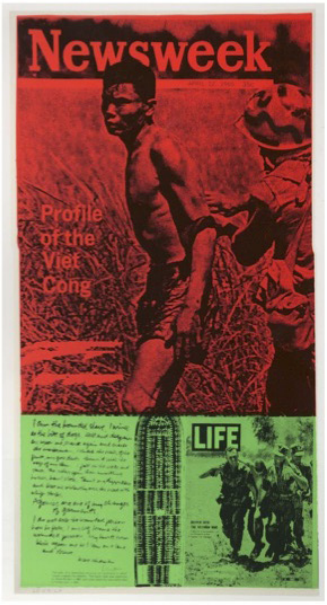
From its inception in the early 1960s, Pop Art was a boys' club. Huge names like Andy Warhol and Tom Wesselmann perpetuated the myth of the (male) artist-as-genius. The movement emerged amid the post-World War II explosions of capitalist consumerism and mass media, as artists explored new modes of mechanical production, often by taking commonplace consumer goods and pop-cultural icons as their subject matter. Associated with an unemotional, distanced attitude toward artmaking, Pop Art's codified characteristics are, in turn, stereotypically male.

For female artists participating in the movement, cultivating a persona as a so-called serious artist seemed like the only way to succeed. An alternative strategy was to (often cheekily) critique Pop Art and its workings from the inside out. In many cases, though, these strategies were interpreted as playing by the rules rather than challenging them, and, more often than not, these routes failed to reward female artists with a lasting place in the mainstream. Now, however, with the nuances of their practices better understood, female artists from around the globe are gaining more recognition for their contributions and challenges to Pop Art.

Associated with the Pop movement to varying extents, the following 11 women artists (by no means an exhaustive list) all engaged with its motivations and defining characteristics, some by expanding the genre through feminist inflection, others by working along its margins.

Artsy, 2 December 2016
"11 Female Artists Who Left Their Mark on Pop Art"
by Rachel Lebowitz

Sister Mary Corita Kent ⊕ Follow



Sister Mary Corita Kent
news of the week, 1969

Sister Mary Corita Kent
peache bread , 1964

Sometimes known as Sister Mary Corita Kent, Kent was a nun and art teacher at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles. Her departure from the school (and the order) in 1968 was partially related to tension between the order and the church over the progressive reforms of the Vatican II movement, but it was also timed with her own artistic commitments and rising renown. Throughout the '60s, she made radio and TV appearances and lectured around the country. Before Warhol made the medium famous, she was working in serigraphy (screen-printing) because it could be cheaply mass-produced and widely disseminated. Her lively, colorful works speak through graphic simplicity as they combine Bible verses, brand logos, literary quotes, and even Beatles lyrics to explore larger issues like poverty, civil rights, and the Vietnam War, ultimately to effect change. Deeply engaged with her subject matter, she remained an activist up until her death in 1986, earning the moniker "the joyous revolutionary" from photographer Ben Shahn.

The Daily Telegraph, 21 December 2016

"Sister's print art went off with a pop"

by Elizabeth Fortescue

Sister's print art went off with a pop

Senior curator Nicholas Chambers and artworks in the forthcoming exhibition.

Elizabeth Fortescue

When the Art Gallery of NSW opens its mid 20th century graphics exhibition today, it will probably be the first time that Sydney audiences have seen the work of Sister Mary Corita Kent.

Everyone knows about Andy Warhol, with his ubiquitous soup cans and Brillo boxes.

But Sister Corita, the so-called Pop Art Nun, is relatively obscure.

Warhol and Sister Corita probably never met, but they were active in America at the same time, according to AGNSW senior curator of modern and contemporary international art, Nicholas Chambers.

Both artists used advertising imagery, slogans and mass media production methods as essential tools of their art.

But Warhol's avant garde New York milieu was worlds apart from the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the Los Angeles order of nuns where Sister Corita lived and worked between 1936 and 1968.

And so Warhol and his pop art contemporaries such as Jim Dine and Roy Lichtenstein became hugely famous while Sister Corita, being a woman and a nun, did not.

"She never really went away but there's certainly been a resurgence of interest in her work in recent years," Chambers says.

Scholars have only recently reassessed the strength and originality of Sister Corita's contribution to pop art.

"She starts making pop art as early as 1962," Chambers says. "If we put that date alongside Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, she's right there at the same moment with similar ideas, but there are things in her world that are outside the world of the avant garde at the time."

References to Christian faith would be the most obvious example of this.

Sister Corita's prints are colourful and vibrant, in the spirit of the protest movement over civil rights and the Vietnam War. She was a passionate campaigner and often used images of violence from the covers of magazines such as Newsweek and Life, and quotes from Martin Luther King, in her work.

Various curators in collaboration with the Corita Art Centre in LA recently organised the first full-career survey show of Sister Corita's work. Called Someday Is Now, it toured American museums including Pittsburgh's Andy Warhol Museum of Art.

It just so happened that Chambers was working at the Andy Warhol Museum when Someday Is Now was on view there. This year (2016) he travelled to LA and acquired 11 prints for the AGNSW from the Corita Kent print archive at the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

These particular copies of Sister Corita's prints will go on show, for the very first time anywhere, in an exhibition called Yes Yes Yes Yes, Graphics from the 1960s and '70s, at the AGNSW from today.

The exhibition also includes work by artists including Joe Tilson and Eduardo Paolozzi.

Chambers says Sister Corita headed the art department at the Immaculate Heart Of Mary college in LA between 1964 and 1968.

"In 1968 she leaves the college in LA and devotes herself to art fulltime," Chambers says.

Yes Yes Yes Yes: Graphics From The 1960s And 1970s, Art Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery Rd, Sydney; today until Feb 19, 2017, free, artgallery.nsw.gov.au

Bard's classics reflect today's political unrest and shif

Naomi White

HE political uncertainty and

Ryan, who plays Marcus Brutus in Julius Caesar and directs Antony and Cleopatra, says they were a natural

Christopher Stollery (left) and

women in leading roles see Julius Caesar, Cassius, Cas and Octavius Caesar all pl by women — a transition

Artpress no. 431, March 2016

"Corita Kent - Galerie Allen"

by Philippe Ducat

PARIS

Corita Kent

Galerie Allen / 10 décembre 2015 - 25 janvier 2016

Des dragons en carton coloré dans un cortège, portés par des enfants, par des Américains blancs de la *middle class*, par des jeunes gens parés de couronnes de fleurs. Des slogans de paix, d'amour pour son prochain, fichés sur des bâtons et brandis bien haut, sont sérigraphié – sacrément bien fichus graphiquement. Ça a le goût de la pop culture, la couleur des rassemblements hippies, mais ce n'est pas une fête d'avant festival pop californien. C'est une simple marche pour la paix menée de main de maître par des religieuses de la congrégation des Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Los Angeles) – dont l'artiste, assimilée au pop art alors qu'elle en est l'une des précurseurs, Corita Kent (ou « Sister Mary Corita Kent »), née Frances Elizabeth Kent, fait partie. C'est ce qu'un film en double écran donne à voir dans la galerie, projeté au milieu de ces ultra graphiques sérigraphies militantes réalisées par la même Corita Kent dont, à l'aveugle, on serait incapable de dire si elles sont de la main de Saul Bass, d'Emory Douglas, Randy Tuten ou Wes Wilson – bien que ce soit beaucoup plus sophistiqué, raffiné et inventif. Plus *arty*. Plus spirituel aussi.

L'art de Kent dépasse le simple moyen de communication (affiche, tract, pochette de disque, etc.). Le message peut être brouillé, sans réel souci d'efficacité ou de lisibilité. La composition graphique passe avant le souci de lisibilité. La typographie est choisie avec un goût très sûr et très singulier, souvent à base de caractères en bois encrés, de type mécanes, accompagnée d'un texte poétique manuscrit dont le style n'est pas sans rappeler l'écriture du jeune Warhol illustrateur. Les couleurs sont vives et franches. Les images traitées au trait, passées à la photocopieuse, sont redoutablement efficaces. La technique du collage, ou du moins de la juxtaposition d'éléments provenant de sources différentes, est quasi systématiquement utilisée. C'est impeccable. Avec toute la fraîcheur et l'urgence que permet le médium sérigraphie. Le style même de l'écriture est plutôt du côté de celui de Gertrude Stein ou bien de E. E. Cummings.

Les messages de la série présentée à la galerie Allen sont plus sombres que ceux que Corita Kent a l'habitude de délivrer. Contrairement au film dans lequel on ne voit que des Blancs, il est ici souvent question de la cause noire, de Martin Luther King, du *Black is Beautiful*. Le Vietnam est évoqué également, ainsi que l'appel à « La Révolution ».

« With love to the everyday miracle » 1967. (Image du film documentaire de B. Glascock)

Comme une activiste standard, Sœur Mary Corita démontre un authentique engagement politique – d'autant plus étonnant du fait de sa condition de religieuse au sein d'une communauté catholique. Son militantisme lui vaudra d'ailleurs, et inévitablement, les foudres de l'archevêché de Los Angeles qui la mèneront à prendre en 1968 un congé et à ne plus jamais revenir à l'Immaculate Heart Communauty. Elle s'installera à Boston et se consacrera entièrement à son art militant en toute liberté. Un cancer l'emportera à 67 ans, en 1986. L'« Heart of Art » continue à battre sur les murs de la galerie Allen.

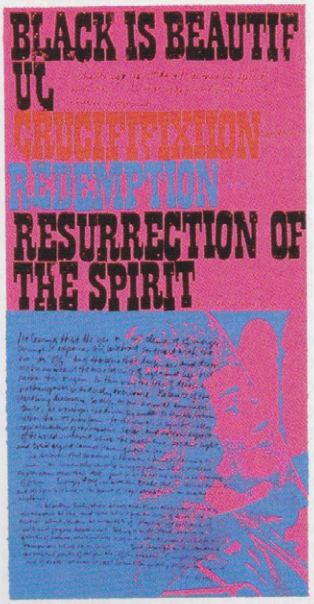
Philippe Ducat

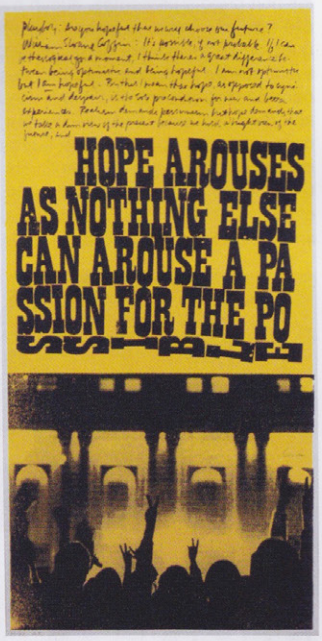
Colorful cardboard dragons carried in a cortege by children, by white, middle class Americans, young people bedecked with crowns of flowers. Posters acclaiming peace and love attached to wooden staffs held high appear in silk-screens that are seriously good graphically. It all seems like pop culture—the colors are truly hippy— but this is not a 1960s California be-in. It's a march for peace in Los Angeles skillfully lead by members of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, including the artist, often considered an adept of Pop Art but in fact one of its precursors, Corita Kent (aka Sister Mary Corita Kent), born Frances Elizabeth Kent. We see this procession in a double-screen film projection in the middle of Kent's highly graphic, politically engaged serigraphs. If we didn't know better, we might think they were by Saul Bass, Emory Douglas, Randy Tuten or Wes Wilson, even if these works are much more sophisticated, refined and inventive. More arty, one may say. And more spiritual.

Kent made silkscreen much more than a utilitarian medium (posters, leaflets, album covers, etc.). The message might be a bit fuzzy, since she was concerned not so much with telling us something specific but more with graphic composition. She chose her typography carefully and with her own singular good taste, often using woodblock Caslon characters, accompanied by a handwritten poetic text, a style reminiscent of Andy Warhol's work as a young illustrator. The colors are vivid and fresh. The images—photocopied line drawings—are strong. Almost always these pieces are collages or at least involve the juxtaposition of elements from different sources. The result is impeccable, with all the freshness and urgency that the medium of serigraphy allows. Even the writing style is close to that of Gertrude Stein or e.e. cummings.

The messages in the silkscreens on view at the Allen gallery are more somber than is generally the case in Kent's work. Unlike the film showing an entirely white world, these pieces often take up the civil rights and black liberation movements. Vietnam is here, too, as is a call for "Revolution." An activist to the core, Sister Mary Corita's politics are especially surprising given that she was a nun who spent much of her life living and working in the Immaculate Heart religious community. Not surprisingly, this engagement brought harsh criticism from the archbishop of Los Angeles. In 1968 she left the order and moved to Boston, where she was able to devote herself to making art. She died of cancer at the age of 67 in 1986. Her "Heart of Art" continues to beat on the walls of the Allen gallery.

Translation, L-S Torgoff





De haut en bas/*from top:* « Passion for the possible ». 1966 « If I ». 1969. (Images du film documentaire de B. Glascock)

art agenda

Art Agenda, 20 January 2016

"Corita Kent's 'Resurrection of the Spirit"

by Mara Hoberman

by MARA HOBERMAN January 20, 2016

Corita Kent's "Resurrection of the Spirit"

GALERIE ALLEN, Paris

December 10, 2015–January 30, 2016

In difficult times, we look to the past for comfort and clarity. In the wake of France's deadliest attacks since World War II, Corita Kent's late 1960s and early 1970s silkscreens promoting pacifism and tolerance take on an unexpected urgency. Planned well before terrorists killed 130 Parisians, Galerie Allen's exhibition devoted to the late American artist, activist, educator, and former Catholic nun,(1) now feels eerily prescient.

Not far from Place de la République, where a shrine of flowers, candles, posters, and photos honors victims of the attacks, the gallery's street-facing window offers a taste of Kent's Pop aesthetic and pacifist ethos. Painted in bright pink block letters directly onto the glass, the proclamation "Hope arouses as nothing else can arouse a passion for the possible" is an excerpt from Kent's 1969 print *a passion for the possible*. Showing her flair for mixing text and images from diverse—sometimes seemingly antithetical—sources, this black and yellow silkscreen pairs a quote from clergyman and peace activist William Sloane Coffin with a silhouetted photo of protesters making peace signs with their raised hands.

from the Catholic Church, advertisements, newspaper headlines, and pop music to create political messages that are accessible and inspiring. But while her rhetoric might ring true today, her aesthetic is rooted in another place and time. Taking visual cues from psychedelic concert flyers, California surf culture, and contemporary artists like Andy Warhol and Robert Indiana, Kent's late 1960s prints are characterized by DayGlo colors, collaged news photos, and a pre-punk mix of stenciled and handwritten text.

In a pair of related works, *Moonflowers* and *Manflowers* (both 1969), Kent uses two different high contrast yellow and purple images to illustrate the same text: the slogan "MAN POWER!" and the title lyric of Pete Seeger's pacifist anthem, "Where have all the flowers gone?" With its cropped photo of the moon's cratered surface, *Moonflowers* evokes the Space Race and Cold War anxiety. Meanwhile, an image of injured US soldiers in Vietnam makes *Manflowers* one of Kent's most poignant antiwar posters. In different ways, both works undermine typically positive connotations of manpower, reminding us that man's power is destructive as much as constructive.

One of several prints from Kent's 1969 "Heroes and Sheroes" series, *phil and dan* pairs a blood red image of two priests standing above a bonfire with two handwritten quotations. One of the quotes is attributed to William Kunstler, the civil rights lawyer known for defending radical groups including the Black Panthers and the Weather Underground: "They were trying to make an outcry, an anguished outcry to reach the American community before it was too late. I think this is an element of free speech to try—when all else fails—to reach the community." Kunstler also represented Philip and Daniel Berrigan (the two men pictured) as part of the so-called "Catsonville Nine" group of Catholic political activists convicted in 1968 for burning draft records with napalm. Kent's most iconic heroes are even more tragic—among them President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorialized in magenta and green in *Love your brother*, King appears in two photographs: with his wife on the day he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and in a police car, under arrest. Across these paradoxical portraits Kent has written, "The king is dead. Love your brother."

art agenda

Art Agenda, 20 January 2016

"Corita Kent's 'Resurrection of the Spirit"

by Mara Hoberman

Two rarely seen, recently digitized 16mm films shown at opposite ends of the gallery further elucidate Kent's spiritual, educational, and artistic philosophies. Shown on a plasma screen, Baylis Glascock's two-channel *Mary's Day 1965* (1965) features documentary footage of nuns and students at Los Angeles's Immaculate Heart College celebrating Mary's Day. Under Kent's artistic direction (she became chair of the school's art department in 1964) an austere march commemorating the Assumption became a vibrant rally for peace and an end to world hunger. Women wearing colorful shift dresses, cat eye glasses, and flower wreaths proceed with handmade posters and floats while Kent provides a non-diegetic voiceover. Beginning with a quote by Friedrich Nietzsche, her monologue —more philosophical than religious—emphasizes community activism.

In Thomas Conrad's documentary film *Alleluia* (1967), shown on a monitor on the floor, Kent speaks in front of the camera. Filmed in her nun's habit in the Immaculate Heart College print shop, she discusses printmaking processes and what makes an effective artwork. During her 30-year tenure at Immaculate Heart, Kent designed a remarkably hip curriculum that included lectures by John Cage, Charles and Ray Eames, and Buckminster Fuller. One year after appearing in Conrad's film, however, she left the college. In 1969, she was formally released from the order. Made just before and after this pivotal moment when Kent's political activism and artistic license took precedence over her religious affiliation, the silkscreens presented at Galerie Allen reflect an internal struggle as well as a quest to make the world a better place.

(1) The artist was better known as Sister Corita until she left the order of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles.

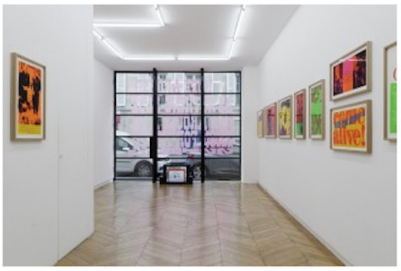
Mara Hoberman is a writer and curator based in Paris.

art agenda

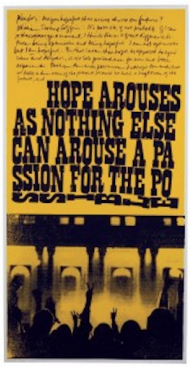
Art Agenda, 20 January 2016

"Corita Kent's 'Resurrection of the Spirit"

by Mara Hoberman



1 View of Corita Kent's "Resurrection of the Spirit," Galerie Allen, Paris, 2015.

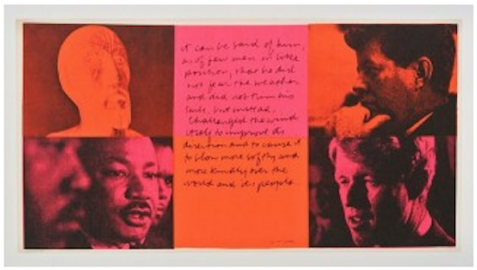


2 Corita Kent, *a passion for the possible*, 1969.

3 View of Corita Kent's "Resurrection of the Spirit," Galerie Allen, Paris, 2015.

4 Corita Kent, *phil and dan*, 1969.

5 Baylis Glascock, *Mary's Day 1965*, 1965.



6 Corita Kent, *it can be said of them*, 1969.

7 View of Corita Kent's "Resurrection of the Spirit," Galerie Allen, Paris, 2015.

8 Corita Kent, *give a damn*, 1968.

9 Corita Kent, *you shout at yourself, america*, 1968.

10 View of Corita Kent's "Resurrection of the Spirit," Galerie Allen, Paris, 2015.

11 Corita Kent, *news of the week*, 1969.

12 Corita Kent, *one must not cut oneself off from the world*, 1967.

HAPPENING

Happening, 16 December 2015

"Corita Kent the Pop Art nun"

by Jessica Saxby

Jessica Saxby

Based in Paris since 2011, Jessica is a graduate of the University of London Institute Paris, she is passionate about Modern and contemporary art and has collaborated with various arts enterprises in the French capital.

ARTISTS INSTITUTIONS 16.12.2015 Jessica Saxby

Corita Kent the Pop Art nun

Make love, not war.

The maxim proclaimed by John Lennon and Bob Marley, the anti-war slogan emblematic of 1960s American counterculture, the letters stamped across Sister Mary Corita Kent's 1967 silkscreen serigraph on paper, yellow submarine.

Corita Kent, born in 1918, was an artist, a nun, an educator, a Pop-Art pioneer and a political activist driven by peaceful protest. Her acid-colored silkscreens imbued with the power of the words of her like-minded contemporaries from Ghandi to Martin Luther King Jr speak of biblical teachings, love thy neighbour and peace to all mankind. Yet Corita Kent's art was deemed inappropriate by the Catholic church in Los Angeles where she was part of the Order of the Immaculate Heart, there are records of letters from the Archdiocese telling Kent to stop creating "weird and sinister" images. She was the nun who quoted Nietzsche, Camus and the Beatles, and she left the Order, and the Immaculate Heart College art department that she taught at in 1968. Many of her Sisters followed suit in the years that followed.

Not only was it a period instability for the Los Angeles church, It was a time when the United States was finding its social conscience and Corita Kent's work illustrated and drove this discourse.

Yet these maxims that define her work remain highly pertinent to today's struggles. Putting together the ongoing exhibition "Corita Kent, Resurrection of the Spirit" at Galerie Allen in Paris, was, for gallerist Joseph Allen Shea, "a meditative process" in the wake of recent events in the city. The words "Hope arouses as nothing else can arouse a passion for the possible," the William Sloane Coffin quote featured in Kent's 1966 silkscreen print Passion for the possible, are pasted large on the facade of the gallery, a message to the city, not just the gallery goers.

Such was the philosophy of Corita Kent. An educated and informed artist, she was aware that she was creating artworks, not posters, or prints, yet she didn't number her editions, so there was no exclusivity involved in her production, her works were for everyone. She was aware of the art market — it is said that she frequented Chelsea galleries in full habit along with one of her fellow nuns — but she worked with a disregard to it, unlike her more famous New York-based counterpart, Andy Warhol. Despite the aesthetic comparisons drawn between Corita Kent and Andy Warhol, the West-Coast hippy nun was the antithesis to her East-Coast contemporary. While the two artists were inspired by advertising iconography and epochal figures, she chose John Kennedy, he chose Jackie, his artworks spoke of commercialism, capitalism and pessimism, hers preached love, peace and optimism.

Two videos sit among the neon silkscreens at Galerie Allen, Mary's Day 1965 by Baylis Glascock, an 11-minute dual-screen, 16mm film showing the Immaculate Heart Sisters on the annual Mary's Day procession. What was traditionally a solemn march, Mary's Day 1965 sees Kent and her sisters surrounded by a joyus local community, flower-power paintings, nuns in habit brandishing painted boxes with the words RELAX plastered across them. Art bridging the gaps between the community.

Yet Kent seems have slipped through the cracks, especially in Europe, she has been desperately under-represented in European institutional collections over the years since her death. But acquisitions by the Centre Pompidou in Paris this year could signal a renewed recognition of not only Kent's importance as a fiercely individual artist, but also the enduring relevance of the messages contained within her works.

"Corita Kent: Resurrection of the Spirit" is currently on display at Galerie Allen, 59, rue de Dunkerque 75009 Paris France, running through January 23 2016.

Thumbnail: BAYLIS GLASCOCK, Mary's Day 1965 (video stills)
1965 Dual screen 16 mm film with sound 11 mins, Courtesy Baylis Glascock and Galerie Allen.
Corita Kent *yellow submarine*, 1967 silkscreen serigraph on paper 58.5 x 89 cm
Corita Kent, *If I*, 1969 silkscreen on paper, 57 x 29 cm Courtesy Galerie Allen, Paris

The New York Times

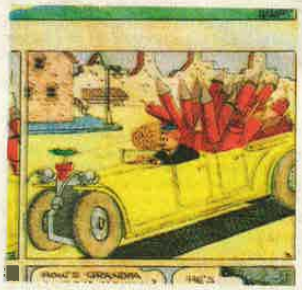
The New York Times, December 2015

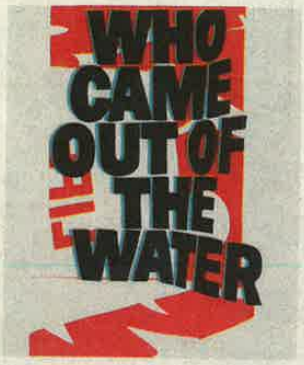
"Printing by heart," book review *Someday is now: the art of Corita Kent*

Unknown Author

Chain Reactions

The Rube Goldberg contraption that is the cover of **THE ART OF RUBE GOLDBERG (Abrams ComicArts, $60)**, with a manually operated rising sun and clashing cymbals, is a pure delight, albeit foolishly excessive. It is a primitive way to animate the cartoonist Goldberg's signature fantasy mechanisms that prompted the adjective "Rube Goldbergian," which, according to Merriam-Webster, means "accomplishing by complex means what seemingly could be done simply." Goldberg's silly inventions, satires on the absurdity of our machine age, are just a portion of the wackily conceived, beautifully drawn cartoons, comics and games lovingly selected by his granddaughter Jennifer George. She also provides a preface that serves as a touching memoir: "My favorite thing to do with Papa Rube was make paper balloons. The first time my grandfather made one, I was mesmerized."





Printing by Heart

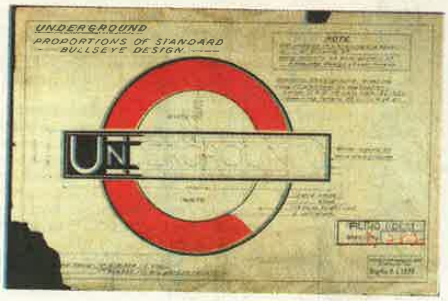
On Boston's Southeast Expressway, the colorful handiwork of Frances Elizabeth Kent, known as Sister Corita (1918-86), a Roman Catholic nun turned populist artist, is emblazoned on a landmark gas tank. She also produced the art for an early (1985) "Love" stamp. Ben Shahn called her the "joyous revolutionary," and Newsweek ran a cover story on "The Nun: Going Modern." As the editors Ian Berry and Michael Duncan demonstrate in **SOMEDAY IS NOW: The Art of Corita Kent (Tang Museum at Skidmore College/DelMonico/Prestel, $49.95)**, her playful hand lettering and typography were ahead of their time.

Women of Substance

Samantha Hahn, an illustrator who works in watercolor, has a knack for capturing the fluidity of a costume and the gloss of an eye or lip. "As an artist consumed by the female form," she writes in the introduction to **WELL-READ WOMEN: Portraits of Fiction's Most Beloved Heroines (Chronicle Books, $19.95)**, "I could not resist the challenge of bringing each of the greatest women in literature . . . to life" as she saw them in her mind's eye. Portraits are paired with quotations, rendered in watercolor or ink. If you've read the books (ranging from "Crime and Punishment" to "Auntie Mame"), the interpretations may very well run counter to your own imaginings. But that's the fun of it.

No Words Needed

Great logos that are memorable or venerable are not made by a computer, or by a designer sitting at a computer. They start as doodles, sketches, drawings, imprecise renderings and ultimately become refinements (on the computer). The London Underground's famous circle and bar is reproduced in a variety of versions in **A LOGO FOR LONDON: The London Transport Bar and Circle (Laurence King, $29.95)**. It was introduced in 1908 and reworked by designers like the calligrapher Edward Johnston into the symbol we know today. As the book's author, David Lawrence, says, it has been used not only as a logo for the city, but also "to define ideas, activities and products as being in vogue, edgy, different."



Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

"Review: 'Someday Is Now' reflects influences of the 60s and Warhol on artist Sister Corita"

by Christopher Knight

Review 'Someday Is Now' reflects influence of the '60s and Warhol on artist Sister Corita

Christopher Knight
LOS ANGELES TIMES
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@knightlat RIP William Pajaud, artist who built Golden State Mutual's African American art collection http://t.co/ylhvBw6tdC

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Sister Corita's "wonderbread" (1962, silkscreen) (Pasadena Museum of California Art)

JUNE 24, 2015, 6:40 PM

Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

"Review: 'Someday Is Now' reflects influences of the 60s and Warhol on artist Sister Corita"

by Christopher Knight

JUNE 24, 2015, 6:40 PM

Pope Francis, meet Sister Corita.

The timing is coincidental, but the opening of the large survey exhibition "Someday Is Now: The Art of Corita Kent" resonates with the publication last week of "Laudato Si,'" the pope's encyclical on the worldly crisis of environmental degradation.

Sister Corita was an activist nun in the 1960s. After she began teaching and making art at Immaculate Heart College in Hollywood, engagement with pressing social and political issues of the day became the focus of her labors, both spiritually and artistically.

Evidence is everywhere among the roughly 250 prints in the show, organized by the Tang Teaching Museum at Skidmore College and newly opened at the Pasadena Museum of California Art. Corita, the single name by which Frances Elizabeth Kent was widely known, made about 800 often colorful, sometimes formally inventive prints on a variety of subjects.

"circus alphabet," 1968, is one of Corita Kent's pieces. (Don Milici)

Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

"Review: 'Someday Is Now' reflects influences of the 60s and Warhol on artist Sister Corita"

by Christopher Knight

Among them are black civil rights, the Vietnam War, the United Farm Workers struggle and the moral demands of social justice. She worked mainly with a silkscreen reproduction technique. The simple, inexpensive means for making multiple copies signaled her populist orientation.

Corita's most notable art, made for half a dozen years between 1962 and 1968, also coincides with the first serious expansion of a market for contemporary American painting and sculpture. Her budget prints intentionally stood to the side. Humility found an aesthetic form.

Which is not to say that Corita was timid. Anything but. She infuriated the local Catholic establishment.

Cardinal James Francis McIntyre, described by one historian as "the most extreme right-wing member of the American Catholic hierarchy," regularly sent his priests to meetings of the John Birch Society. He was a harbinger of what became the religious right in the 1970s and 1980s.

Needless to say, Corita's enlightened support for Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez and George McGovern did not sit well with the archdiocese. McIntyre and the Immaculate Heart sisters constantly butted heads. Eventually, in 1968, Corita left the order after a 30-year affiliation.

She moved to Boston, where she lived until 1986 and her death from cancer at 67.

What would McIntyre have thought had he accompanied her to Ferus Gallery on La Cienega Boulevard, where she saw the 1962 debut exhibition of Andy Warhol's paintings of Campbell's soup cans? Probably not much, except disgust. But Corita responded in a productive way — by making her first mature print.

It is simplicity itself, composed of three rows of four big dots — flat, irregular, clearly handmade disks in red, green, black, blue and yellow.

Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

"Review: 'Someday Is Now' reflects influences of the 60s and Warhol on artist Sister Corita"

by Christopher Knight

"for eleanor," (1964) is one of Corita Kent's pieces. (Corita Art Center Los Angeles)

For inspiration she had followed Warhol to the supermarket, selecting the spotted Wonder Bread package as her soup can. Her spotted print built a bridge between pure abstraction, pinnacle of Modern art, and vernacular subject matter, a language emphatically down-to-earth.

Corita's embrace of the vernacular reflects the transformation of Catholicism under the Second Vatican Council, launched by Pope John XXIII — canonized a saint last year and a hero to Pope Francis today. That Rome was an engine for her work is evident in her supermarket selection: It represents the host, symbolic body of Christ, using a bread characterized as wondrous.

The print's 12 dots reflect the number of ways to build a strong body, as the product's famous advertisements announced. And they also number the disciples who broke bread at the Last Supper.

Was Corita a Pop artist? That's how the show frames her, but I don't think the term really fits.

Pop artists used commercial media imagery to dismantle deeply entrenched shibboleths of Modern art culture. But that's not what Corita was up to. Instead, she used commercial media imagery to advertise an enlightened liberal humanism, which grew from her religious faith.

Certainly she was inspired by Warhol (also a lifelong Catholic). But unlike the evolving impersonality cherished by the New York artist, who so famously "wanted to be a machine," Corita placed enormous value on the primacy of the individual artist's hand.

Corita was a humanist. Warhol, not so much.

Los Angeles Times

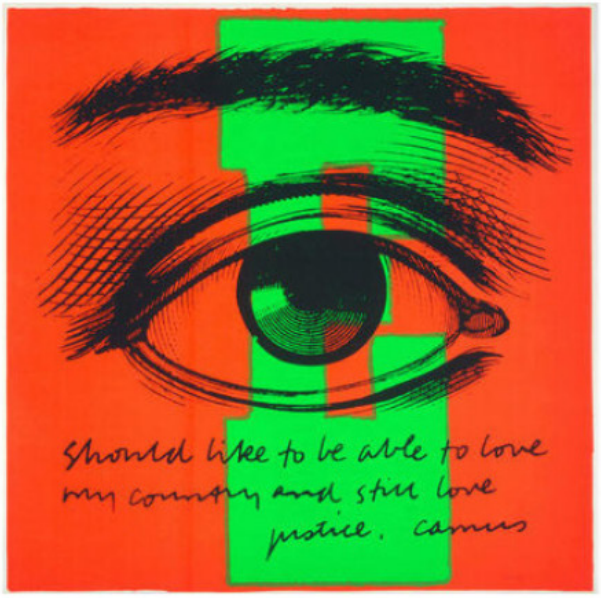
Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

"Review: 'Someday Is Now' reflects influences of the 60s and Warhol on artist Sister Corita"

by Christopher Knight

One reason she used a silkscreen, she said, was to emphasize its capacity for "close, personal handling of each step in its creation." But one reason Warhol used silkscreens was so that he could send them out to a commercial shop for fabrication and then turn them over to Gerard Malanga or another studio assistant to be mechanically printed.

Warhol had a "factory." Corita had a classroom.



"E eye love," (1968) is one of Corita Kent's pieces. (Corita Art Center Los Angeles)

It would also be easy to mistake the vibrant rows of colored dots in her print, "wonderbread," with the paper cut-outs of Matisse or the bouncy prints of Alexander Calder. Likewise, other L.A. artists not identified as Pop were also working with mass media and industrial signs and symbols.

Wallace Berman visualized the music of the spheres emanating from transistor radios, which he printed on a copier machine. Vija Celmins set the immediacy of mass imagery against the slow deliberation of the hand in paintings whose imagery is taken off the TV screen and the cover of Time magazine. Robert Heinecken manipulated photographs gleaned directly from the newsstand.

Perhaps most similar in philosophical aim to Corita, although not in the bleak palette of his mostly gray-toned work, Roger Kuntz made paintings that employ the stark, razor-sharp play of light and shadow on freeways. Street signage saying stop, exit and go one way meditates on questions of salvation and mortality.

Corita had studied art history at USC, earning a master's degree in 1951 — the same year that she made her first print. (She was already a nun living under vows of poverty and chastity.) Her 1950s prints, with formal, stylized rows of saints or a centralized Virgin or Christ, reflect her study of medieval sculpture.

Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

"Review: 'Someday Is Now' reflects influences of the 60s and Warhol on artist Sister Corita"

by Christopher Knight

The prints' figures are edged in jagged, almost painterly dark lines around thinly applied colors, bringing to mind the graphics of Georges Rouault and Leonard Baskin. It's as if she was trying to make a luminous image that was like an Expressionist stained-glass window.

In the '60s Corita got formally inventive, often using fragments of words gleaned from familiar product labels or magazine ads. The fragments let you easily fill in the blanks in order to make the picture cohere. Surreptitiously, the clever technique coaxes out language already rattling around inside a viewer's head.

Sometimes she would fold a printed text, photograph it and then use the "bent" image as the model for cutting her printing stencil. These floating, topsy-turvy printed words become like thoughts in the surrounding atmosphere — an idea that's "in the air."

A fine and informative catalog accompanies the show. Among its more interesting features is a selection of commentaries by a younger generation of 20 artists who recall the effect Sister Corita had on their own youthful work. Among them are Lorraine Wild, Lari Pittman, Deborah Kass, Roy Dowell, Andrea Bowers, Jim Isermann and Mike Kelley — a pretty diverse bunch.

"the sure one," (1966) is one of Corita Kent's pieces. (Corita Art Center Los Angeles)

Texts played a steadily larger role in her work, however, often to detrimental effect. An aphorism has graphic punch. But full paragraphs — and sometimes more — of poetry or philosophical musing written in calligraphic script turn the sheet on the wall into a manuscript page.

The result can be exasperating. Joyful enthusiasm slides into something close to hectoring.

For a few years in the mid-1960s, though, Sister Corita powered up. The show effectively lays out the story.

Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

"Object Lesson: Wild Corita Kent biblical print has Eames chairs, no 'shampoo-ad Jesus'

by Carolina A. Miranda

Object Lesson: Wild Corita Kent biblical print has Eames chairs, no 'shampoo-ad Jesus'

Carolina A. Miranda
LOS ANGELES TIMES
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FOLLOW CAROLINA A. MIRANDA

@cmonstah Nina Simone, you give me goose bumps.

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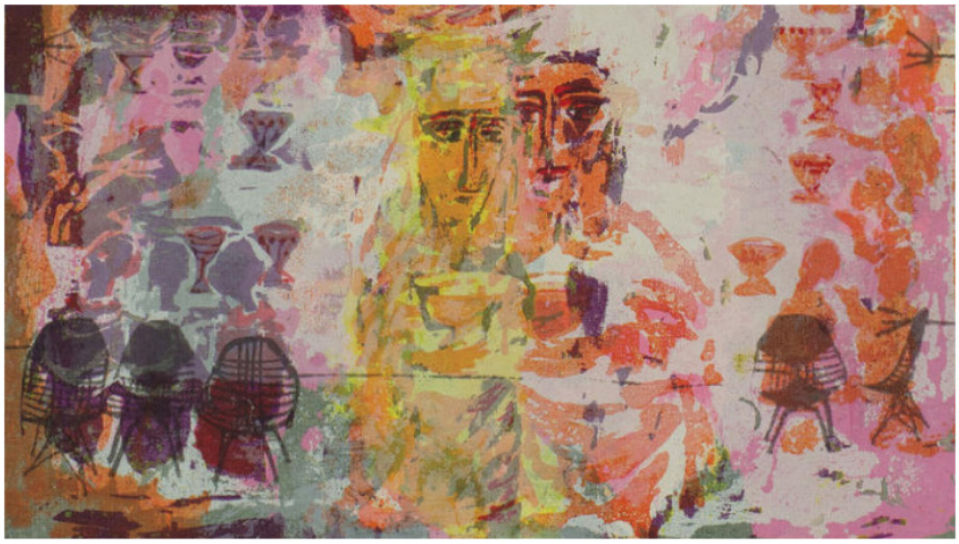

Corita Kent's "At Cana of Galilee" is part of a new Pasadena Museum of California Art exhibition of work by the activist and printmaking nun. This detail of the print, from 1952, shows Kent's wild sense of experimentation. (Corita Art Center, Immaculate Heart Community)

SHARELINES

A comprehensive survey of Corita Kent's work at @PMCAonline includes rare early prints

Object Lesson: A biblical scene with Eames chairs by Corita Kent at the Pasadena Museum of California Art

JUNE 24, 2015, 12:36 PM

Bold graphics in shades of pink and lemon yellow. Poetic phrases, borrowed from e.e. cummings and Gertrude Stein. Bits of typography that torque and bend. The survey devoted to the art of Corita Kent at the Pasadena Museum of California Art gathers a lifetime of masterful printmaking by one of the more compelling figures in 20th century art.

Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

“Object Lesson: Wild Corita Kent biblical print has Eames chairs, no ‘shampoo-ad Jesus’

by Carolina A. Miranda

The PMCA show of Kent's work contains a number of early prints. Compositionally, 'At Cana of Galilee' could have probably done with fewer layers. Butit reveals an artist who is willing to tweak religious imagery with modern iconography — such as an Eames chair. (Corita Art Center, Immaculate Heart Community)

Kent was an activist, artist and Catholic nun who shaped a generation of young artists as a professor at the now-closed Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles. She also palled around with the likes of composer John Cage and industrial designers Charles and Ray Eames in the 1960s, appeared on the cover of Newsweek in 1967 and went on to inspire art world figures such as Mike Kelley with her wild graphics.

The Pasadena show is especially worthwhile for including some of the earliest works of Kent, who died in 1986. These include colorful religious scenes that the artist made in the early 1950s, when she was fresh out of graduate school.

"This was when she was just getting out of USC," says Michael Duncan, one of exhibition's co-curators. "She was eager to experiment and rattle the cage of traditional religious art. She wanted to do something different than the pretty, pretty pictures that were in Sunday school texts. As she said, she wanted to get away from the 'shampoo-ad Jesus.' "

During this time, she produced deeply layered prints of traditional religious iconography — Virgin and child, Crucifixion — featuring an array of colors, some embedded with words and letters, all inspired by a range of influences, from Byzantine art to the work of the early 20th century political printmaker Ben Shahn.

> **“[Corita Kent] wasn't afraid of mess, ever. This was something she had tried to instill in her students: don't be afraid -- fear shouldn't be part of art-making.”**
>
> - Michael Duncan
>
> SHARE THIS QUOTE

One of these pieces is a print she made in 1952 titled "At Cana of Galilee." It depicts the miracle in which Christ turned water into wine. Certainly, it's an abstracted view of the proceedings. The print features layers of orange, pink and purple showing the wedding couple (likely the pair at the bottom) along with silhouettes of revelers, images of chalices and — quite curiously — a repeating image of an Eames chair.

Related

ARTS & CULTURE

Corita Kent's distinct pop of art-activism on view at a Pasadena show

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Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times, 24 June 2015

“Object Lesson: Wild Corita Kent biblical print has Eames chairs, no ‘shampoo-ad Jesus’

by Carolina A. Miranda

"There's this impulse to speak to a contemporary audience, but she's still holding on to religious graphics," Duncan says. "It shows incredible ambition and excitement in making these things. 'Cana' could have done with a few less screens. It's pretty messy-looking. But it's also intriguing for that reason. ... She wasn't afraid of mess, ever. This was something she had tried to instill in her students: Don't be afraid — fear shouldn't be part of art-making."

Duncan, who has been studying Kent's work since the 1990s and previously curated important traveling shows of her work, says in this untidy, early work that it is possible to see the roots of what she would become known for in the 1960s.

"She becomes a master of color," he explains. "She learns how color works and how it can snap you to attention. Clearly, she's experimenting with that here, with these bright purples and oranges. It's interesting to compare it with the abstract art of the time."

The piece also tells an interesting story of transformation.

"In the story of Cana, Christ turns wine into water," Duncan explains. "It's part a transformation that is so much a part of Christianity and religion in general. Corita was transforming this by putting an Eames chair in there. She's making it modern. Later, she would transform advertising — by taking this cynical mode of communication and turning into something that bore much more profound content.

"It shows her ambition," he says, "a real desire to make something you can immerse yourself in."

"Someday is Now: The Art of Corita Kent" is on view at the Pasadena Museum of California Art through Nov. 1. 490 E. Union St., Pasadena, pmcaonline.org.

AD Magazine, 7 April 2014

"Corita Kent, Sister Pop: la Galerie Allen expose l'artiste et religieuse américaine. Une première en France"

by Renaud Legrand

PUBLIÉ LE LUNDI, 07 AVRIL 2014

Corita Kent, sister Pop

La Galerie Allen expose l'artiste et religieuse américaine. Une première en France.

PAR RENAUD LEGRAND

« Gloire à Dieu pour les paysages urbains – ils sont pleins de signes. Gloire à Dieu pour les magazines – ils sont pleins de publicités. Le langage des signes est infiniment riche. » Corita Kent, sister Corita Kent, était religieuse, peintre et activiste. Elle enseignait les arts plastiques au couvent du Cœur Immaculé de Los Angeles, était amie avec John Cale, Richard Buckminster Fuller et Alfred Hitchcock, c'était dans les années 1950 et 60 californiennes et, entre l'énergie contestataire de l'époque et sa vocation, elle devint une sorte de météore, une sœur pop.

Only you and I, 1969

SISTER CORITA KENT – LET THE SUN SHINE IN

Sister Corita Kent (1918-1986) was an artist, teacher, philosopher, political activist and possibly one of the most innovative and unusual pop artists of the 1960s. She was a nun in the Catholic Church until 1968 when Sister Corita sought dispensation from her vows. For over 30 years, in the heart of Los Angeles, Corita produced a variety of serigraph or screen-printed images. The retrospective exhibition Let The Sun Shine In – until May 10, 2014, Circle Culture Gallery, Berlin – documents Corita’s practice during that time.

As a pop artist, Corita primarily focused on text and vibrant color, manipulated type and images appropriated from the newly burgeoning consumer culture of her era.
After leaving the church in the late 1960s, Corita’s works took a grand stylistic turn. She all but abandoned the neon-soaked Psychedelia of her previous works, and opted instead for a more subtle, nuanced approach to art making.
Corita first taught, and subsequently became chair of the art department at Los Angeles’s Immaculate Heart College, where she became famous for her novel pedagogical methods. Her students helped produce her serigraphs, and her inventive teaching practices encouraged them to look hard and work harder, leaving a lasting impact on the way they encountered the world. With fame also came the opportunity to invite her contemporaries to speak at her lectures. Illustrious speakers including luminaries such as designers Charles and Ray Eames, composer John Cage, graphic designer Saul Bass and film director Alfred Hitchcock.

Upcoming exhibition, But, there is only one thing that has power, from March 12 to April 19, 2014, Galerie Allen, Paris.

« Op & Post-Op Editions

The Book of Go »

ARTFORUM

Art Forum, February 2010

"Sister Mary Corita"

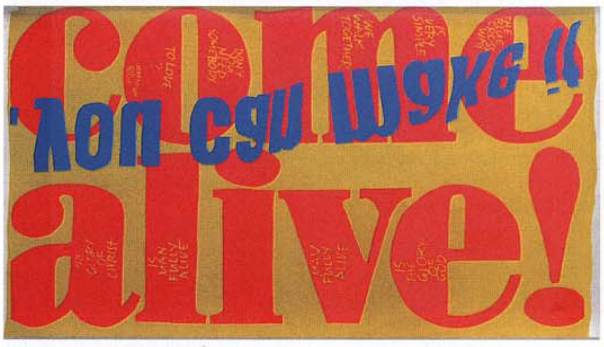
by Frances Richard

Sister Mary Corita

ZACH FEUER GALLERY

The cover of *Newsweek* of April 12, 1965, shows a Vietnamese man, wearing only a pair of shorts, being pushed through a field by a helmeted American soldier. "Profile of the Viet Cong," the caption reads. The man looks angry and desperate; the soldier's face is turned away. The picture is included in *news of the week*, a 1969 serigraph by Sister Mary Corita, where it is washed in blood red. The poster's lower third is tinted mint green, the contrasting colors buzzing urgently. At right in this green section, a *Life* magazine cover shows soldiers supporting a wounded comrade. In the center is stamped the infamous diagram of bodies wedged into a slave ship; pointing upward, the deck plan with its rounded prow looks like a bomb or a bullet. At left is a passage from Walt Whitman: "I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of the dogs / Hell and despair are upon me."

Frances Elizabeth Kent (1918–1986) was the least likely Pop artist, an activist and friend of R. Buckminster Fuller's who had joined the Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent in Los Angeles at age eighteen, taking the name Sister Mary Corita. Her hot-hued and typographically daring silk screens were largely produced with the help of her students at Immaculate Heart College, and in 1967 she was on the cover of *Newsweek* as the epitome of "The Nun: Going Modern." The next year, she left the order to pursue an independent artist's life. Her compassionate militancy and optimistic agitprop mellowed, perhaps inevitably, as the audience for her work enlarged; her beloved *rainbow swash* was painted on an enormous Boston gas tank in 1971, and she designed the anodyne "Love" stamp issued by the U.S. Postal Service in 1985. But she held on to her mastery of complex verbal meaning in visual space, and her eye for wild color never dimmed. Artists from Mike Kelley to Dana Frankfort could be read in terms of her precedent, and in 2007 Julie Ault published the first monograph on Corita's art. This gathering of some fifty prints, watercolors, and books was the first gallery show mounted for her in New York. Colorists,



Sister Mary *come alive*, silk screen 13 x 23".

graphic designers, concrete poets, and those who despair of unironic yet non-naive art statements on peace and justice, take note. Or, to quote Corita, COME ALIVE! YOU CAN MAKE IT. The fact that this latter declaration is written upside-down and backward (in the ocher-and-blue silk screen *come alive*, 1967) only emphasizes her belief that aesthetic, spiritual, and ethical action all require exquisite attentiveness.

Corita juxtaposed the Coca-Cola tag "Things Go Better With . . ." against a quotation from Father Daniel Berrigan concerning the importance of "justice, peace, unity and love" and appropriated the Wonder Bread logo to discuss transubstantiation. Images of street signs, American flags, and supermarket boxes found their way into her work. But, unlike Rauschenberg, Johns, or Warhol, she was wont to quote Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Albert Camus, Martin Luther King Jr., and e. e. cummings. Key to the exhibition (about two-thirds of which derived from the gallerist's own collection) was a film shot on Mary's Day 1964 on the Immaculate Heart campus. Happenings had been going on for several years, and Warhol's Factory was already operational, though there were no hippies in Haight-Ashbury yet. Corita was, in short, ahead of the curve both artistically and socially when she staged a multimedia and interactive pageant focused on the eradication of hunger and celebration of divine nurturing. The film shows outdoor murals constructed from grocery-store packaging decorating the festival ground; the prayers sound like civil rights movement exhortations; grinning young nuns wear wreaths of flowers over their wimples; and college girls carry double-sided signs declaring in big pink letters I LIKE GOD / GOD LIKES ME. Imagine.

—*Frances Richard*

ARTFORUM

Art Forum, 17 November 2009

"Sister Corita Kent"

by Cameron Shaw

ARTFORUM

Sister Corita Kent

ZACH FEUER GALLERY (LFL)
530 West 24th Street
October 23–December 5

In 1967, *Newsweek*'s David Shirey dubbed Sister Mary Corita Kent the "hippest of all" nuns. The next year, after three decades of service, she left the religious order but kept producing the radical serigraphs that helped earn that title. Zach Feuer Gallery now presents a minisurvey of Kent's works from the 1950s through her death in 1986—including many that surround her transition from cloistered to secular life. Bright and shockingly brave, the silk-screen prints marry biblical allusions and advertising slogans with quotes from Walt Whitman, Martin Luther King Jr., and Albert Camus. Though devotional undertones are most pronounced in earlier works, it is clear that Kent's brand of Pop proselytizing seeks converts, namely to the churches of tolerance, peace, justice, and love.

Sister Corita Kent, *i thirst*, 1964, serigraph, 24 x 36".

In *the cry that will be heard*, 1969, a black child wails from the cover of *Life* magazine. Kent replaces the publication's iconic red logo with fluorescent pink, blazing against the grisaille image like the sign of a roadside tabernacle. Below, she adds text, typeset sideways in radiant blue, which reads WHY NOT GIVE A DAMN ABOUT YOUR FELLOW MAN, along with lyrics by the folk-rock band Spanky and Our Gang. In addition to these serigraphs, the exhibition provides a glimpse of Kent's varied cultural contributions —books, her famous "love" postage stamp, and video documentation of Immaculate Heart College's Mary Festival, which Kent transformed into a heavenly happening. The Good Word never looked so groovy.

— Cameron Shaw

Shaw, Cameron. "Sister Corita Kent." Artforum.com November 17, 2009.

art
agenda

Time Out New York, 19-15 November, 2009

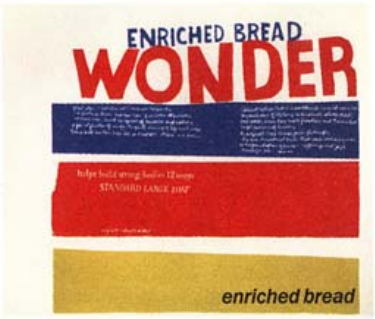
"Sister Corita Kent"

T.J. Carlin

Sister Corita Kent

★★★★½

Zach Feuer Gallery, through Dec 5 (see Chelsea)



A contemporary of Andy Warhol, Ed Ruscha and Roy Lichtenstein, Mary Corita Kent may have harnessed the psychology of the media more effectively than any of those artists. On view at Zach Feuer Gallery are more than two decades' worth of her screenprints, plus a few drawings and some books, all marked by the California nun's particular conflation of religious euphoria and advertising hyperbole.

Kent was a sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles. An educator and activist, she served as head of the art department at Immaculate Heart College until 1968, when she decided to devote her life exclusively to making her art; she left her religious order and moved to Boston. Kent was no outsidery recluse: She was friends with Buckminster Fuller and Ben Shahn, among others, and her work exemplifies strategies of visual sampling that were popular at the time. Many of the eye-popping prints on view here combine, in brilliant, often fluorescent color, corporate logos with excerpts from Kent's favorite writers. *enriched bread* (1964) sets the Wonder Bread logo atop a quotation by Rainer Maria Rilke, which speaks of the need for spiritual nourishment. *the juiciest tomato of all* presents one of the most striking combinations of text and image in the exhibition: A long quotation from poet Sam Eisenstein careens through abstract musings on making food, before concluding with the notion of feeding the soul.

Through these combinations, Kent seems to expressing her certainty that the only thing that can truly satisfy in this universe is God. Kent's messages harnessed the spirit of the times with intensely personal messages in undeniably unique, if not moving, works.—*T.J. Carlin*

Carlin, T.J. "Sister Corita Kent" Time Out New York November 19-25, 2009: 57.

Artnet, November 2009
"Gotham Art & Theater"
by Elisabeth Kley

GOTHAM ART & THEATER
by Elisabeth Kley

Sister Mary Corita
enriched bread
1965
Zach Feuer Gallery
© Corita Art Center

Sister Mary Corita
wide open
1964
Zach Feuer Gallery
© Corita Art Center

Sister Mary Corita
Zach Feuer Gallery
© Corita Art Center

Sister Mary Corita Kent
The light emitted by almost incandescent colors comes to the fore in works by the late Sister Mary Corita Kent (1918-1986), an activist teacher and nun whose bold serigraphs were seen in numerous 1960s publications and antiwar demonstrations -- she even had her face on the cover of *Newsweek* magazine. Filling Zach Feuer Gallery until Dec. 5, 2009, Corita Kent's art brings a time of glowing optimism expansively back to life.

When she concentrated on lettering, which she most often did, the artist's limpid expansive style is reminiscent of Henri Matisse church decoration, and graphics by Alexander Calder and Ben Shahn. Like her contemporary Andy Warhol, she appropriated '60s food-package design, but she replaced Pop Art's consumerist mummification with religious transcendence and exhortations to end world hunger.

Enriched bread wonder (1965), for example, appropriates the label of the prototypical junk food bread to spread a message of joy. The word "wonder" appears in red capital letters that gradually enlarge, as if the term is levitating, while the "enriched bread" resting delicately in blue above takes on connotations of Jesus distributing loaves, rather than mushy tastelessness.

Two of the three bands of color hovering below "wonder" feature cutout quotations that let the pure white of the background shine through. An uncharacteristically hopeful Camus quote, written in neat cursive script, describes the nourishment provided by "the gentle stirring of life," while banal Wonder Bread slogans like "helps build strong bodies 12 ways" and "no preservatives added" seem to comment on the Catholic belief in eternal life and physical resurrection. Prices for the works range from $900 to $9,000.

The New York Times

The New York Times, 6 November 2009

"Art in Review: Sister Mary Corita"

by Holland Cotter

Art in Review

Sister Mary Corita

Zach Feuer Gallery
530 West 24th Street, Chelsea
Through Dec. 5

Anyone entering Boston by the Southeast Expressway gets a big, splashy, drive-by burst of Sister Mary Corita's art, in the form of a mural composed of giant swipes of rainbow-colored paint on a gas tank visible from the road. The painting, commissioned by the Boston Gas Company in 1971, is a relic of a time gone by: a feel-good, do-your-own-thing statement, with the mildly subversive, guerrilla-art air of graffiti.

Sister Corita — who was born Frances Elizabeth Kent and entered the Roman Catholic order of Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles at 18 — had been making similar statements on a more modest scale for years. In 1964, as an art teacher at Immaculate Heart College, she turned an annual school procession devoted to the Virgin into a proto-love-in, with nuns wearing flowers over their habits and students in body paint dancing on the lawn.

But silk-screen prints, with jazzy combinations of images and words, were her specialty, and the show at Zach Feuer is a mini-survey of them, along with drawings and watercolors. The earliest pieces, from the 1950s, are religious, but in the 1960s the work takes a secular, activist turn, pulling images of civil rights conflicts, antiwar protests and corporate logos from newspapers, and interspersing them with politically charged slogans ("Love Your Brother," "You Shoot at Yourself, America"), and quotes from Walt Whitman, the Berrigan brothers, and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Ferociously productive, Sister Corita became a popular star, and the target of conservative ire within the local church community. In 1968, after 30 years as a nun, she left her order and moved to Boston, where she lived alone and continued to work until her death in 1986. Her combination of Pop and agitprop, convent and counterculture still conveys period utopian vibes, sometimes firm and sharp, sometimes soft and sugary.

No artist could do such work today without a stiffening dose of irony, but she gets away with it, partly because she's now an artifact, but also because her work is so unapologetically and democratically straight from the heart. The Boston mural, demolished and recreated in the 1990s, is like that: a monument to leftover uplift and a real wake-up shout of joy.

HOLLAND COTTER

The New York Times

Eye Magazine, 2000

"Art in Review: Sister Mary Corita"

by Holland Cotter

Spring 2000

All you need is love: pictures, words and worship

Julie Ault
Martin Beck
Corita Kent
Design history

Sister Corita Kent's freewheeling assemblages of text and image provide a new perspective on the 1960s obsession with messages and media.

Charismatic nun, artist and activist – in 1960s America the combination was irresistible, guaranteeing Sister Corita Kent a place in popular culture, if only as the woman who spawned "nun art" and made the Love stamp. Her public persona and artistic output were hugely influential, but although her picture appeared on the cover of Newsweek magazine (25 December 1967), Corita was never part of the mainstream, being too radical for the Church, too Catholic (and priced too low) for the art world and too much of a maverick to be pigeonholed in the broader contexts of social and political conflicts of the 1960s.

Frances Elizabeth Kent was born in Fort Dodge, Iowa, in 1918, the fifth of six children in an Irish Catholic family that later moved to Los Angeles. After finishing high school, she entered the Immaculate Heart of Mary Religious Community, taking the name Sister Mary Corita. She studied at the Immaculate Heart College in Hollywood and then at the University of South California, where she learnt serigraphy [silkscreen printing] and gained an ma in Art History in 1951.

Between 1938 and 1968 Corita lived and worked in the cloistered environment of the Immaculate Heart Community (IHC). In 1962, Pope John XXIII issued his Vatican II decree on the "Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life". This called for movement toward modern values, including fewer restrictions on nuns' daily lives and a new focus on social action and service. The IHC, in the way of many Catholic institutions, was divided on how to implement these changes, but the nuns largely favoured a progressive reading of the decree. Dramatic, widely reported conflicts with the conservative Archbishop of Los Angeles ensued, with the result that the Immaculate Heart sisters were banned from teaching in diocesan schools. In 1969, given an ultimatum to conform or seek dispensation from their vows, the community chose the latter and formed an independent entity, which still exists today. They kept their name and structure, but removed themselves from Catholic Church supervision.

Corita's celebrity ran in parallel with that of the community. In her art, and in her capacity as teacher and chair of the college's art department from 1964 to 1968, she seemed to personify the "modern nun", in step with the widespread questioning of authority that epitomised America in the 1960s. Her classroom, where she taught "layout and lettering" and "art structure", among other subjects, was renowned for its lively interdisciplinary environment. Multiple films were screened simultaneously, rock music played on the stereo, and large-scale collaborative projects were usually in process. Buckminster Fuller, the visionary architect and designer of the geodesic dome, described visiting her classroom as "one of the most fundamentally inspiring experiences of my life."

Corita regarded printmaking as "a very democratic form, since it enables me to produce a quantity of original art for those who cannot afford to purchase high-priced art." 1 The forms she used – serigraphs, greeting cards, posters, murals – and the way she disseminated her work – through churches, community centres, galleries and fairs – made her art widely accessible, without ever descending to an imagined lowest common denominator of visual literacy.

In the 1950s her art was heavily influenced by Abstract Expressionist painting. The richly coloured prints she made during that period were

Popular Feature Articles
Forensic types
Reputations: Massimo Vignelli
First Things First Manifesto 2000
Reputations: Josef Müller-Brockmann
The designer as author

Feature Categories
Awards madness
Book design
Design education
Design history
Graphic Design
Illustration
Information Design
Magazines
Photography
Posters
Typography
Visual Culture
craft
Monotype
Wordless picturebooks

TIME

Time Magazine, 8 September 1967

"Joyous Revolutionary"

TIME Partners with CNN

Joyous Revolutionary

Friday, Sep. 08, 1967

Between sessions at a conference on religion and the arts at the New York Hilton last week, delegates wandered through a maze of 1,500 cardboard boxes stacked seven feet high in two exhibition halls. Pasted on the vividly painted cartons were collages of photographs from Viet Nam, Newark and Vogue, bits of magazine ads, scribbled quotations from John Kennedy, Albert Camus and Beatle John Lennon. In effect, the exhibit — entitled "Survival with Style"— was a dramatic plea to man's conscience. A message in blank verse invited viewers to mull over the maze and "find alternatives to war to poverty to pain."

The maze — done by students at Los Angeles' Immaculate Heart College un der the direction and guidance of Sister Mary Corita Kent, 49 — is the latest project of the nation's best-known teaching nun. Sister Corita's own vibrant silk-screen serigraphs have been pur chased by leading museums in Europe and the U.S., and last year were exhibited at 150 shows. Versatile and prolific, she did a large serigraph exhibit for the Vatican pavilion at the New York World's Fair, designed advertisements for Westinghouse, and gift wrapping for Neiman-Marcus. Her friends range from Buckminster Fuller to Ben Shahn, who describes her as a "joyous revolutionary."

Pop Prayer. Born in Fort Dodge, Iowa, Sister Corita began teaching at Immaculate Heart in 1946, later received a master's in art history from the University of Southern California. Over the years, her style has progressed from representational to fullblown pop. If her technique is secular, so in many ways is her outlook. "I don't find a great difference between what's religious and not religious," she says. "As a Christian, if you believe God became man, you figure that he meant it seriously, and all we have of this world is very good. If Christ were alive today, he'd take people to the movies instead of telling them parables."

A swinging example of her work has been published jointly by the United Church Press and the Roman Catholic firm of Herder and Herder. Footnotes and Headlines: A Play-Pray Book is a 50-page volume of mod meditations filled with brilliant swatches of color and eye-catching graphics. Most of Sister Corita's serigraphs use kaleidoscopic excerpts from advertising slogans blown up and tossed across the pages, often upside down, sideways or in mirror images. Accompanying them are

TIME

Time Magazine, 8 September 1967

"Joyous Revolutionary"

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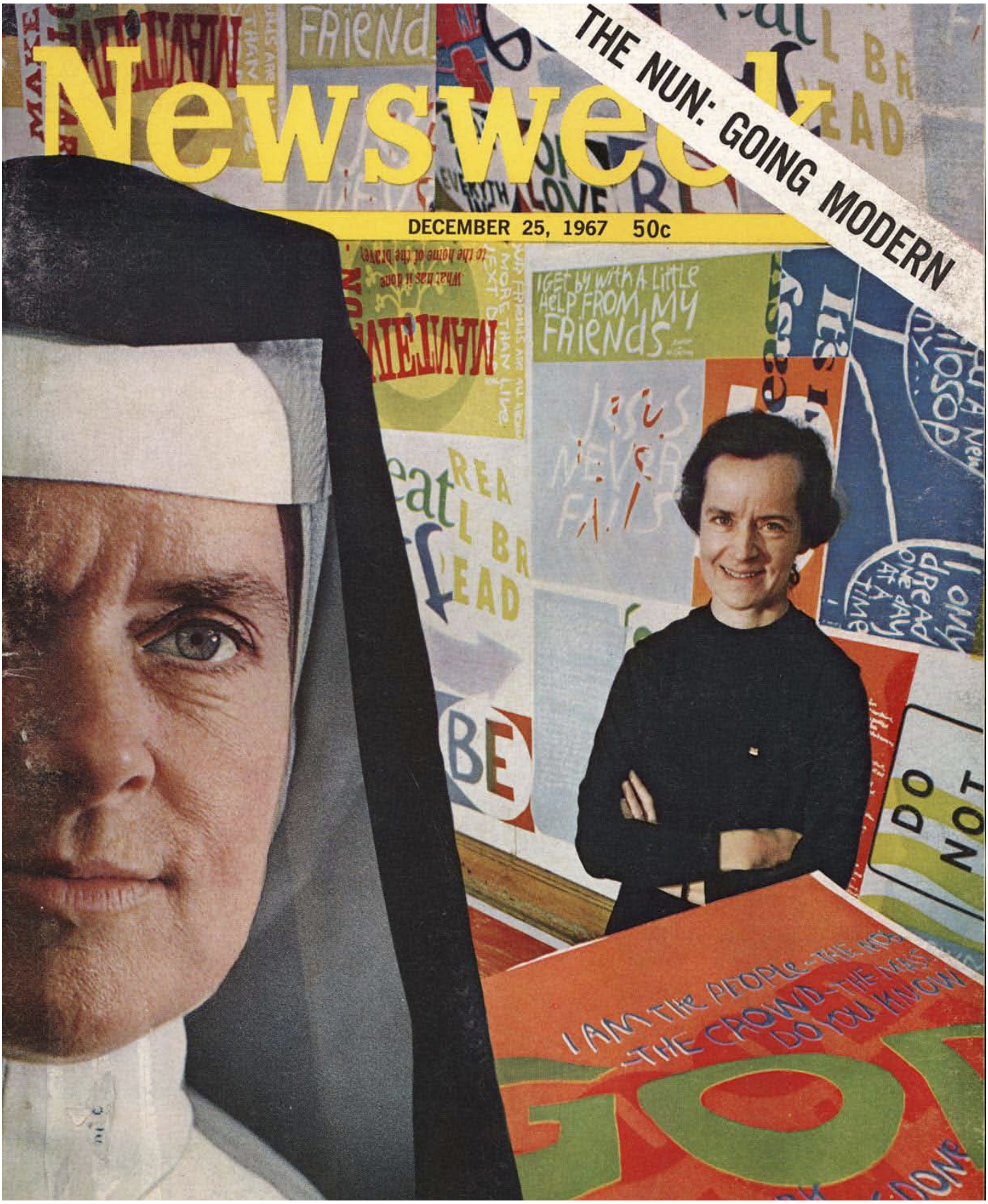
Not all believers take to Sister Corita's jaunty appropriation of advertising slogans to make a spiritual point. Her answer, in Footnotes and Headlines, is that "the most noble words can become ineffective cliches. But cliches when put into a new context can become uncliched . . . which is to discover that they are no longer ordinary."

Newsweek

Newsweek, 25 December 1967

"The Nun: A Joyous Revolutionary"

by Ken Wittenberg



Newsweek

Newsweek, 25 December 1967

"The Nun: A Joyous Revolutionary"

by Ken Wittenberg

Ken Wittenberg

Musical happening in a Harlem street: Outside the cloister, a vibrant sense of sisterhood

THE NUN: A JOYOUS REVOLUTION

The Christian word was delivered first to a woman. Appearing before the Virgin Mary, the angel Gabriel announced that she was to conceive the Son of God. And she, though bewildered, rejoiced in His service: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

Through Mary, new life entered the world. And yet, despite its singular devotion to Mary, the Roman Catholic hierarchy has never permitted its own handmaidens to exercise a genuinely feminine influence. From the earliest consecrated virgins through the great medieval prioresses to the modern teaching orders of nuns, the dedicated women of the church have been set aside, protected and periodically throttled by an institution run solely by men.

But now, the purely masculine way of running the church no longer seems to work so well. Catholics seeking new ways to be Christians no longer find the old patterns of much help in creating a more vibrant religious life. Love, freedom and experiment are their bywords, but this message of renewal seldom is loudly proclaimed in priests' rectories or bishops' chanceries. Instead, it is a growing legion of nuns who seem eager to sound the call.

Personality: Indeed, among U.S. nuns, a joyous revolution is in the making. The tall headdresses, starched wimples and flowing robes that long symbolized the nuns' "no" to secular society are beginning to disappear. As the cloister door swings open, there is a new sense of sisterhood—of feminine love—toward the human family. There is also a refreshing militancy. "When you take the vow of obedience," says a Poor Clare nun in New Orleans, "you don't abdicate your personality." In habit or out, nuns turn up in Milwaukee, marching like resolute suffragettes with Father James Groppi's band of black commandos. Some stride boldly through the nation's Capital, protesting Vietnam, while others applaud at Christian anti-Communist crusades. Still other sisters dot the campuses at Columbia, Michigan or UCLA, debating Sartre or cybernetics with a liberated sense of intellectual excitement.

For most of the new nuns, being in the world means serving the urban poor. They conduct musical happenings in the dirty streets of Harlem, help housewives organize against unscrupulous merchants, assist bewildered families in their search for welfare relief. "Our order is an activist order," proclaims a restless Maryknoll nun who will soon join four other sisters living in a Boston housing project. "We hope to become involved in the neighborhoods as neighbors, not as religious women."

In truth, there is hardly a convent among the nation's more than 500 orders of nuns that is not torn between the impulse to be religious women, wed to the church's schools and hospitals, and the desire to be creative neighbors to those in need outside the church's walls. Some leave the convent to pursue their VISTA visions. Last year alone, it is estimated that 2,000 nuns gave up their vows for this and other reasons. And among the "defectors," as older nuns call them, are groups of women who established their own quasi-religious communities. "In every era of the church, new patterns have emerged to meet the times," explains Sister Francetta Barberis, a former college president who now holds a post in the Job Corps. "Today we must find new patterns to survive."

Cox and Corita: Closer to earth

John Goodwin

Those patterns are many, various and deeply personal. Examples:

- In Davenport, Iowa, a new Sisters' Council—representing 800 nuns—advises the local bishop on everything from education to slum projects. A half-dozen other cities boast similar schemes dedicated to giving nuns a more powerful voice in diocesan policy.
- In Detroit, Dominican Sister Joanette Nitz, a former parochial-school teacher, launched a food club last month for ghetto housewives. Operated as a grocery cooperative with 70 members, it has been an instant success. Sister Joanette describes herself as "a very uneducated educator striving for a new role."
- In Portland, Ore., Sister Mary Guadalupe, 26, of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters lives with two other nuns in a downtown apartment. A buoyant brunette, she teaches remedial reading, counsels slum dwellers and doesn't hesitate to plunge into a rough-and-tumble game of back-alley basketball. Her only spiritual insignia: a gold cross hanging from her neck. "We're creating the community of the future," she says.
- In Appalachia, 40 former Glenmary sisters who broke away from their mother-

Newsweek

Newsweek, 25 December 1967

"The Nun: A Joyous Revolutionary"

by Ken Wittenberg

Jim Running

Richard Pipes

Guadalupe (left) and Delaney: Alley basketball and equality with the janitor

James F. Coyne

Jeff Lowenthal

Donahue (left) and Reidy: What matters is not garb but ghetto and a right God

house in Cincinnati are working as teachers and nurses among the poor. They still follow their spiritual vows but relish a new flexibility in their personal ties to the world outside the convent.

There are some 180,000 nuns in the U.S.—three times the number of priests—and most of them, unlike the independent novices of today, entered the convent with no thought of developing their individual talents. Typical of the novices of a generation ago is Sister Mary Corita Kent, 49, who joined California's teaching Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary with no more tangible goal in mind than a vague certainty that "I wanted to be a nun." Corita did not want to be a teacher but learned to be one, first in the order's elementary schools and later as an art instructor at Los Angeles's Immaculate Heart College. In fact, the blue-eyed, petite nun remarks: "I probably would never have taken up art seriously if I hadn't become a nun."

Furious: As artist, teacher and woman, Corita incarnates all the ebullience of the nuns' joyous revolution. Her colorful, deceptively witty serigraphs, or silk-screen prints, dance with buoyant hope. In them, words—bits of newspaper prints, a grocery list, a philosopher's maxim or an ad for United Air Lines—flit gaily across abstract patches of orange, red and yellow like charged-up billboards. Though she produces only one series of serigraphs a year during a furious, two-week stint each summer, her prints now hang in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and more than twenty other museums throughout the world.

Her work is "unique, undescribable, unpeggable," says New Yorker cartoonist and writer James Stevenson. He was first drawn to Corita after he saw her 50-foot mural in the Vatican Pavilion at the 1965 New York World's Fair. "She is," he says, "the most extraordinary person I know. She has life in a highly concentrated form, and when she laughs—which she welcomes the clang and clatter of big cities. With her art students, she raids the local jumblescape of supermarkets, hamburger stands and filling stations for new shapes, colors and designs. "San Francisco and New York," she observes, "are finished cities. Los Angeles, though, remains marvelously unfinished." Just as she transforms the city into art, so does she transform people into artists.

Prototype: In fact, Corita's best medium is people. In 1964, for example, she transformed Immaculate Heart College's staid religious festival, Mary's Day, into a religious happening. With black-robed nuns parading in flowered necklaces, poets declaiming from platforms and painted students dancing in the grass, Mary's Day became a prototype for the hippies' 1967 be-in in San Francisco.

The connection is neither frivolous nor profane. Corita sees in happenings a genuine effort to integrate the arts in a multimedia celebration of God's creation. Her own classroom has become choked with paint, sound equipment, a jukebox and movie projectors. ("The first rule for watching a film," she cautions students, "is don't blink.") In her own unblinking way, she manages to turn on the most jaded audiences. In Philadelphia last year, she cajoled a convention of broadcasters into putting on paper hats, reciting poetry to each other and floating balloons. And then she zinged home her point: communicators, of all people, should keep their five senses open to the world and "stay with it."

Before a crowd of students in Boston last fall, Corita joined Harvard theologian Harvey Cox, who gave her a bearded buss on the cheek, for an unfettered "Evening With God." "There's something about a woman that brings her closer to the earth, that makes her less conceptual," points out Cox. "What Sister Corita is saying is that there's this vital and elemental side of life that should be preserved by nuns."

nun, because her life is uniquely disciplined and largely stripped clean of irrelevance, has a rare advantage. Thus Corita finds it natural to bring her life to one sharp focus, to cut through the murky clouds of modern life like a single ray of sunlight. "The person who makes things," she says simply, summing up her view, "is a sign of hope."

To clergymen who know her, Corita is herself a sign of hope for the church. "Everyone does his thing when Corita is around," says Lutheran pastor Richard H. Luecke, director of study at Chicago's Urban Training Center. "She makes you see things. She's sort of a medium without a message—insisting on the changing image, rather than the stable concept, as the proper religious approach."

Through her infectious vitality, Corita joyfully subverts the church's neat divisions between secular and sacred. "She merely steps outside the rules and does her dance," says Jesuit poet Daniel Berrigan, who wrote a verse introduction to Corita's art book, "Footnotes and Headlines." "But she is not frivolous, except to those who see life as a problem. She introduces the intuitive, the unpredictable into religion, and thereby threatens the essentially masculine, terribly efficient, chancery-ridden, law-abiding, file-cabinet church."

Corita's Christian excitement is so infectious that entire religious communities have picked up the same beat. Indeed, her own order both echoes and helps amplify it. Organized by ten Spanish missionary nuns in 1871, it became a separate American community in 1924. Currently, it has 560 sisters, mostly teachers in Catholic schools in the Southwest. Unlike most orders, the IHM's have long preferred to work pragmatically, stressing personal discovery rather than dogmatic training.

Reforms: When Pope Paul VI, following the Vatican Council II's decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious

Newsweek

Newsweek, 25 December 1967

"The Nun: A Joyous Revolutionary"

by Ken Wittenberg

Newsweek—James D. Wilson

Bernice Clark

De la Cruz (above) and Nitz: Cheaper groceries and the need for a family

Newsweek—Joseph B. Cumming Jr.

Newsweek—Jeff Lowenthal

Harak (above) and Borgia: Too ordered a life and too convenient a labor source?

with typical gusto. They re-examined every facet of their life last summer during a long chapter meeting and produced a 58-page outline of provisional reforms which Father Andrew Greeley, a leading Catholic sociologist, considers "the path which all religious orders are going to have to follow to survive."

Under their new and still experimental rules, each IHM nun is free to reassume her family name, receive a small stipend to spend and choose her own clothing. Corita, for instance, spurns the formal habit and wears simple dresses off the rack—as do most other sisters at her college. Each convent within the order is also free to choose its own form of government to encourage "broad participation in decision making." Noting that their community has "tended to become narrowly constricted to services dispensed in church-related institutions," the nuns call for a shift of energies to the "social, economic, intellectual and spiritual needs of the family of man."

This does not mean that the sisters are abandoning their commitment to local parochial schools. But they have insisted on a number of specific and radical changes. Among them: classes must contain no more than 35 pupils; sisters who serve as principals must be relieved of teaching duties; all teaching nuns must be permitted to negotiate annual contracts with diocesan school authorities, and 43 nuns now teaching in the Los Angeles archdiocese must be allowed to return to college to obtain teaching credentials.

Fate: When the nuns presented their decrees to James Cardinal McIntyre, the staunchly conservative archbishop of Los Angeles exploded. Their demands for teaching sisters, he said, represented an unacceptable ultimatum. The nuns reconsidered them, but did not back down. And McIntyre, after warning his pastors to tighten control over parish convents, agreed to let the Vatican's Congregation of the Religious settle their dispute.

Even so, the sisters' plight has awakened resentment in many convents across the U.S., most of whom are busy formulating their own plans of renewal. "If the leadership of the American church permits a persecution of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart," warns Greeley, "they will have sealed the fate of the religious life as we now know it."

For nuns, that life has taken many strange and complex turns. The first nunneries sprang up in Egypt where, for example, Saint Basil founded a convent in the fourth century which his mother and sister joined. Later, the European monastic movement merged with an early Roman tradition that provided for publicly consecrated virgins dedicated to the service of the local bishop. At first, these women were marked for inevitable martyrdom, but as the church made its peace with the world, the ascetic impulse swung inward. Nuns retreated behind the convent wall to pursue a secluded spiritual life.

Reformation: Like Mary, the medieval nun was a symbol of purity, sheared from life by the monastic tradition. Indeed, the Reformation was as much a rejection of such privileged monastics as it was a reaction to theological errors Luther found in the church. In marrying a nun, Luther emphasized his belief that woman's place was in the home presiding over a good Christian family. The revolution he triggered, however, had little impact on the nun's life. The last 300 years of European church history are replete with efforts by Catholic sisters to establish new orders to reach out and serve humanity. Yet, all too often, such moves were blocked by Rome.

But in America, Catholic nuns found hopeful leverage. As immigrant missionaries, they soon adapted to the new country's pragmatic ways, if only to survive. Appropriately enough, the first U.S. citizen to be canonized a saint was a nun —Mother Frances Cabrini, foundress of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart—who was known chiefly as a hard-driving businesswoman.

The American principle of church-state separation was another spur to gradual renewal. Forced to build its own separate school system, the U.S. hierarchy turned to nuns to staff them. And in their struggle to compete with public education, the nuns have slowly become better trained—and more demanding. Other facts of American life are making for even quicker change. A generation ago, novice nuns came from safe, authoritarian families and found it easy to adjust to safe, close, authoritarian convents. But modern aspirants are used to college, cars and pocket money.

Most of all, today's independent young nun is looking for meaningful commitment, and the religious communities are trying desperately to provide the challenge. "In five years, nuns will be presenting such a new face to the world that their vocational crisis will be a thing of the past," predicts Father John J. McGrath, a canon lawyer who was recently elected the first male president of St. Mary's College of Notre Dame.

Sex: McGrath's view strikes some seasoned reformers as optimistic. "Make no mistake about it," warns Sister Maryellen Muckenhirn, a theologian who has long been a leading voice in religious reformation. "Most nuns are not yet prepared to see this thing through. Renewal requires every sister to rethink her whole life commitment."

Obviously, such rethinking is abubble. What is lacking, however, is a measured study of the ferment. Thus Sister Formation, a service organization designed to set standards for U.S. communities, has circulated a lengthy, detailed questionnaire asking nuns everything from the meaning of sex in their lives to whether they should dye their hair. (Sample question: "Have you seen the movie, 'La Dolce Vita'?") Ultimately, the results will reach Rome where four nuns, including American Miriam Cerletty, now sit in the Roman Curia's Sacred Congregation for the Religious.

Even though they have a voice in the Curia, many new nuns still resent its pa-

Newsweek

Newsweek, 25 December 1967

"The Nun: A Joyous Revolutionary"

by Ken Wittenberg

ternalistic sway. "How can some men over in Rome know what I as an American woman can or cannot do?" asks red-haired Sister Patricia McKeough of Chicago's St. Xavier's College. "They're still laboring under their own culture lag." Some orders are not waiting for Rome's approval to experiment. Snaps one middle-aged nun: "Any superior who submits habit changes for approval is foolish. She should just phone her tailor and forget about the Sacred Congregation."

Wrong: Rome may wink at rising hemlines, but to many new nuns the habit itself has become a misleading symbol. Traditional garb, says Sister Jeanne Reidy, 38, a striking woman who wears a blouse, skirt and lipstick to her graduate philosophy classes at Notre Dame University, may symbolize "a consecration to the wrong God, suggesting that to belong to Him is to belong to the past."

But other nuns cling fiercely to their habits—and the values they reflect. "I'm not interested in wearing a 1968 dress," affirms Sister Caroleen, superintendent of Dallas parochial schools. "I'd rather be medieval all the way." And Sister Mary Ursula, president of the Dominican College in New Orleans, flatly charges that "the desire to display her hair and look like a woman has motivated most of the nuns who welcome the change." Without the habit, she says, nuns lack the "symbol of dignity and majesty of their calling."

What, in fact, is fundamental to a nun's life? To answer that question, nuns new and old are re-examining their traditional vows to be poor, celibate and obedient. They are also asking themselves whether it is really valid to band together in religious communities.

Nuns have always been personally poor, owning nothing in their own name. But in the security of convent life, few have known what it means to scrape for survival. "Always, when we would go to a new convent," recalls Sister Judith Harak, one of four Franciscans who now work out of an apartment in Atlanta's Negro ghetto, "we would find everything in order for us: drawers with our own clothes in them, linens, blankets—all neat and prepared." Beyond that, orders themselves convey an image of wealth through their ownership of large institutions. To escape that image—and the burden of becoming businesswomen—communities like the Holy Cross Sisters are shifting ownership of colleges and hospitals to separate, legal corporations.

If the vow of poverty is hard to experience in its full rigor for some idealistic nuns, the vow of obedience—by contrast—often seems too rigorous. To many ex-sisters, the convent they rejected was a social corset laced by demands for strict, often pointless, obedience. "I was an extrovert with a sense of adventure when I entered," says Mary Grandi, 23, a pretty blue-eyed blonde who joined a Franciscan convent nine years ago against her parents' wishes. But in 1964, she left—"timid, blushing and scared to death of people." She was allowed to read only religious magazines. She needed special permission to talk to teachers, older postulates and nuns. "You were expected to have an extrasensory perception about the superiors and bring them a cup of coffee before they asked for it. You lived half in fear of forgetting something and getting a penance."

Within renewed communities, cooperation and mutual responsibility have replaced the stiff old style of obedience. Sister Anita Caspary, mother general of the IHM's, rejects both the maternal and military connotations of her title. An author and able administrator, she accepts no more deference than a cheerful "good morning." "My toughest job," she says, "is having to stand by and let others learn by their mistakes."

The one choice that most distinguishes nuns from other women is their voluntary embrace of lifelong celibacy. "The public thinks of celibacy as a negative thing," says Sister Muckenhirn, "and the public is right. All this talk about celibacy freeing nuns to serve is just a rationalization. The choice not to marry is a personal one, and has nothing to do with efficiency in the service of God."

Not every nun would agree. Sister Colette, acting president of Manhattan's Marymount College, believes a nun's virginity should be distinguished from a priest's vow of celibacy. "It makes the nun something special in her own right in the church—not just a reverse image of the male." Even so, many younger nuns do not feel that their vows make them spiritually superior. "We're called to the religious life," says 25-year-old Sister Vivian Delaney of Bellaire, Texas, "but we're not any holier than our janitor because of it."

Increasingly, the more pragmatic communities are considering making vows subject to periodic renewal. Sister Mary Evangeline, executive secretary of Sister Formation, predicts the three traditional vows may be replaced by one: "Total availability to God and people." Such a change would retain a certain amount of the old asceticism, but it would also stir new modes of community life.

Laugh: For some, like the seventeen members of San Francisco's "Society of Helpers," this means creating a flexible convent where each nun's sisterhood is what she makes of it herself. "I believe that all women deeply need a family," says Sister Maria de la Cruz, a small, eloquent society member. "If, in our case, it is not to be a husband and children it has to be the family of a religious community." Others, such as Boston's Sister Mary Donahue, a Maryknoll missionary, find their families in the neighborhood. "We have to go out into the community," she notes, "rather than have the community come to us."

More and more, nuns are finding absorbing work outside the church. Part of the attraction is their resentment at sometimes being taken for granted by the hierarchy. "There are some people," says Sister Francis Borgia, the superior of a teaching order, "who see nuns as a convenient labor source." Clearly, some bishops do—and they fear the new nuns eventually may desert the schools. Last year, Chicago's John Cardinal Cody sharply criticized experimental communities in a speech to the heads of U.S. orders. Other prelates tend to laugh off the current ferment.

The new nuns understand the intransigence of the male mystique. And gradually, they are countering it. "If the church is to be liberated at all," claims Dr. Mark Stern, a clinical psychologist who works closely with religious communities, "it will be liberated by women." Perhaps. But communities like the IHM's are too busy and unself-conscious to press their own importance. They don't want to wither on other people's pedestals. Like the Virgin Mary, they hope to create new life by responding to God's call. As Sister Corita sees it, "The important thing about Mary is that her Son turned out so well."

Pierluigi Torrisi

Four nuns of the Curia: A new feminine voice in Rome

Newsweek

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"The Painting Nun"

by David L. Shirley

The Painting Nun

There have been the singing nun and the flying nun, but the hippest of all is Los Angeles's painting nun. Forty-nine-year-old Sister Mary Corita Kent, a member of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart order, has won an international reputation with her lively and original serigraphs, or silk-screen prints. Her works have been canonized in the collections of New York's Metropolitan Museum and Museum of Modern Art and in the major museums of Paris and London. She has also illustrated national advertisements for Westinghouse and the Container Corporation of America, has made a set of jackets for Spice Island cook books, Christmas boxes for the Joseph Magnin stores and has even turned out designs for record-album jackets and her own recently published "play-pray" book, "Footnotes and Headlines." Now Sister Corita is staging a one-nun show of more than 100 serigraphs at New York's Morris Gallery.

Sister Corita's serigraphs look like miniature Gospel billboards ablaze with bright Dayglo colors in which punchy quotes from Beckett, Camus, Macaulay, the Scriptures and fragments of Madison Avenue ad slogans gracefully collide with bouncy abstract designs. She juxtaposes unrelated words, deliberately misspells and chops off phrases in order to drive home her messages, which usually concern love.

She frequently isolates words to dramatize a meaning, as in "Wonder Bread—An Enriched Bread," where the verbal signs form a kind of punning Madison Avenue Gospel about the host of the Holy Eucharist. In another she combines three messages: "I get along with a little help from my friends—Lennon and McCartney," "Jesus Never Fails" and "It's not easy." The work becomes an apology for John Lennon who, last year, said that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus. "I am not trying to reconcile them," says Sister Corita. "Lennon and Jesus have already worked that out."

Gentle: Almost from the time that Sister Corita started making serigraphs seventeen years ago, the message of words has been her medium. "I started early putting words in my prints and the words just got bigger and bigger," she says. "I think my words gentle people who are afraid of art. People look for content in a work but the artist is concerned with form. When they look at my prints, people are satisfied with the content, but then they're tricked into looking at them as pictures."

Small, slender, blue-eyed Sister Corita was born in Iowa and entered the order at 18. After teaching at a school for Indians run by the sisters in British Columbia, she returned to teach art at Los Angeles's Immaculate Heart College in 1950. For her, art and teaching are ways of reconciling the religious and secular worlds. "I have a hard time thinking of myself as very avant-garde," she told Newsweek's Chris Braithwaite. "I get a huge response from people of different religions, and from people of no religion. People who don't know any sisters have their own peculiar ideas about them. Orders do differ, but this community is quite open. People are not afraid to see the next step and take it."

She preaches to her students that beauty abounds in the outside world, sending them off occasionally just to look —and look hard—at such sights as a nearby tire center, a campy construction of chrome, plate glass and plastic on Sunset Boulevard. "One should have no preconception of what is beautiful," she says. "I used to think that Western Avenue, coming up to the college, was one of the ugliest things in the world. But once I saw it as a great, marvelous jumble of signs, it was beautiful. The purpose of art is to alert people to the things they might have missed."

Bob Grosh

Sister Corita: Making flowers grow

Her "painting room" at Immaculate Heart is a large, hectic playing field for the mixed media, complete with Sister Corita's serigraphs, sound and slide projectors, tape recorders and a jukebox. When she isn't teaching or painting, Sister Corita thrives in the liberal atmosphere of her order, which is currently threatening to withdraw from the 36 parochial schools in the archdiocese if the schools fail to meet the order's high educational standards. The nuns also agitated successfully to make their traditional habit optional. (Sister Corita no longer wears hers.) She travels and lectures extensively. In Boston recently, she joined liberal Protestant theologian Harvey Cox and folk singer Judy Collins in an "Evening With God," which was condemned by some as anti-Vietnam propaganda.

Sister Corita dismisses the apparent contradictions of her life—as liberal nun in one of the nation's most conservative archdioceses; as devout Catholic whose work glorifies the secular; as a serious artist who accepts advertising work. She is content to let other people worry about these paradoxes. "Out of all the apparently evil, dark and painful stuff, our job is to make flowers grow," she says. "It is a huge danger to pretend that awful things do not happen. But you need enough hope to keep on going. I am trying to make hope. And you have to grab it where you can."

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This (These) serigraph (s) is (are) on loan from the Corita Art Center, Immaculate Heart Community, Los Angeles, CA.

Outside of the exhibitions held at Galerie Allen all further requests for informations and/or images should be directed to Corita's formal representative, the Corita Art Center, Immaculate Heart Community, Los Angeles, California. www.corita.org