

Guerrilla Girls: Reinventing the 'F' word – Feminism! opens on International Women's Day (Friday 8 March) at Auckland Art Gallery



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Guerrilla Girls © George Lange 1990

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Guerrilla Girls
Guerrilla Girls, Do Women Have to Be Naked to Get Into the Met. Museum?, 1989, from *The Guerrilla Portfolio Complete 1985-2012 + Upgrade 2012-2016, 1985-2016*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with funds from the Elise Mourant Bequest, 2018.

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki presents *Guerrilla Girls: Reinventing the 'F' word – Feminism!*, an exhibition of work by anonymous, feminist art collective, the Guerrilla Girls, opening Friday 8 March.

Punchy, satirical and incisive, the Guerrilla Girls' gorilla-masked personas, bold visual language and frank, humorous messages have rendered them iconic in the history of art and as part of wider social movements.

For more than three decades, the Guerrilla Girls have been dedicated to exposing and challenging discrimination in the art world, in politics and in the film and music industries. *Guerrilla Girls: Reinventing the 'F' Word – Feminism!* follows the collective's artistic practice from 1985 until 2016, and explores how their striking, fun and provocative work criticises ongoing biases in art and society.

Founded in New York in 1985, the Guerrilla Girls' activism germinated out of a highly charged social context of protest and change. The group's first posters detailed discrimination by New York City's art galleries against women and artists of colour, posing questions such as: 'Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?' The answer: 'Less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female.'

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Since then, their boldly defiant and witty posters, pamphlets, videos and books have infiltrated city streets and art galleries, exposing and calling into question imbalanced stories and double standards permeating daily life. The Guerrilla Girls' 'creative complaining' has increasingly extended beyond the confines of the art world to encompass a wide range of social issues and injustices, including discrimination in theatre and in the film industry; economic policies; environmental concerns; women's reproductive rights; LGBTQI+ rights; and war.

Auckland Art Gallery's Head of Curatorial and Exhibitions, Sarah Farrar, says: 'The Guerrilla Girls bravely – and publicly – call to account the people and institutions that perpetuate bias and discrimination. Their example of artistic activism is inspiring, humorous and, at times, sobering. This exhibition is a call to action.'

Exhibition curator Emma Jameson says: 'The Guerrilla Girls are punk-art pioneers whose provocative poster art continues to resonate today. In an age of increasing conversations around discrimination and social injustices, the Guerrilla Girls' work is as prescient now as ever.'

Work featured in *Guerrilla Girls: Reinventing the 'F' Word – Feminism!* is drawn from *The Guerrilla Portfolio Compleat 1985–2012 + Upgrade 2012–2016*, which was acquired by the Gallery in 2017 with funds from the Elise Mourant Bequest.

For more information, high-res images and interview requests contact:

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#guerrillagirlpower

Exhibition details

Guerrilla Girls: Reinventing the 'F' Word – Feminism!

When:
Friday 8 March to Sunday 13 October 2019
10am – 5pm daily

Where:
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
Cnr Kitchener and Wellesley Streets

Admission:
Free with Gallery entry

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