

Carolee Schneemann
Tooth and Paw

May 9 - June 8, 2019
Opening Reception: May 9, 6-8 PM



P·P·O·W is delighted to present *Tooth and Paw*, an exhibition of works by Carolee Schneemann's beloved feline companion, La Niña. The exhibition had been visualized by Schneemann during the last year of her life and includes an edition of selected correspondence along with a series of sculptures assembled by her devoted cat, La Niña.

Schneemann once declared that "the cat was my medium." While Schneemann asserts the works on display as La Niña's creaturely creations, *Tooth and Paw* offers us a chance to appreciate Schneemann's visionary sensibility and the crucial role of her cats in that vision. The show is a playful premise for reflection on Schneemann's most precious interlocutors and the radical insights she attained from them: a new modality by which to challenge the destructive configurations of her "guilty culture" and their repressive frames of reference. Schneemann writes: "The domestic cat represents potential harmony, the bridge from invisible to visible—the connection between the ineffable to what can be given plastic form." By tooth and by paw, then, La Niña shows us how we might continue to learn from Schneemann's work.

Tooth and Paw is a unique opportunity to consider Schneemann's devotion to her feline companions throughout her life. "Cats have taught me a lot about concentration, about time, when to slow down, when to speed up, where to pay attention." For Schneemann, to live with and love a cat, to be attentive to it and be attended by it, offers a means to displace the deep-rooted conceits of our misogynistic culture, with its proscribed roles, genders, habits, and desires. "When I'm caressed by my cat, and admire her beauty and responsiveness," Schneemann observes, "I wonder at the stretching, tearing contradictions surrounding the fragility of domestic constancy and the female traditions of empathic attention which are ever assailable." *Tooth and Paw* offers an encounter with Schneemann's at turns light-hearted and serious exploration of interspecies relations and their expressive possibilities.

P.P.O.W presents La Niña's assemblages in their interstitial position as the work of an animal and as an embodiment of its being, its propulsive force, that was affirmed and revered by Schneemann as an important inspiration for her own transformative actions. In this concentration on La Niña's work, we learn anew Schneemann's revelatory commitment to the "tactile activity" of her Kinetic Theater projects with and through her cats' fur and claws, its teeth, the low frequency vibration of its purr. *Tooth and Paw* is in ludic and solemn conversation with Schneemann's landmark works *Lateral Splay* (1963), *Fuses* (1964-67), *Snows* (1967), *Kitch's Last Meal* (1973-76), *Vespers Pool* (1999-2000), and *Infinity Kisses* (2008). And so with this honorary show, we send kisses to infinity for Carolee.

A reception for *Tooth and Paw* will be held in coordination with a day-long screening of Schneemann's film and video works—many of which feature Schneemann's feline collaborators—presented by our friends at Electronic Arts Intermix.

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Born in Fox Chase, Pennsylvania, **Carolee Schneemann (1939-2019)** found home in Paris, London, New York City. She spent the last quarter of her life living and working in her country residence in New Paltz, New York. Her critically acclaimed traveling retrospective, *Carolee Schneemann: Kinetic Painting*, was presented at the Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Austria, the Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and MoMA PS1, New York. Other major solo exhibitions include the multi-part *Carolee Schneemann Residency* at The Artist's Institute at Hunter College, New York; *Carolee Schneemann: Then and Now*, which traveled from the Musée départemental d'art contemporain de Rochechouart, France to the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain; and *Carolee Schneemann: Within and Beyond the Premises* at the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, State University of New York, New Paltz. Schneemann's work is included in major museum collections around the world including the Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Austria; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Spain; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California; Tate Modern, England; Centre Pompidou, France; and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. In 2017, Schneemann was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 57th Venice Biennale.