

***Barbara Hammer: In This Body* debuts June 1, 2019, at the Wexner Center for the Arts**

Exhibition to include three-channel video installation supported by Wexner Center Artist Residency Award

March 5, 2019–Columbus, OH–June 1–August 11, 2019, the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University debuts ***Barbara Hammer: In This Body***. Organized by the Wexner Center for the Arts and curated by Jennifer Lange, curator of the center’s Film/Video Studio, the exhibition is a reflection of the decades-long relationship between the institution and the pioneering experimental filmmaker, recipient of a Wexner Center Artist Residency Award for 2017–18 in Film/Video.

In a career spanning over 50 years, Hammer has been best known for daring depictions of lesbian life and sexuality. *Barbara Hammer: In This Body* continues her ongoing interest in the female body and captures the full scope of her interdisciplinary practice, with a strong focus on the challenging, frequently taboo subjects of illness and mortality. It foregrounds the physical, tactile nature of her work, illuminating the ways in which art can create an empathic, collective experience.

“Barbara is a force. Her creative expression is fueled by personal experiences that have ranged over her career from the exuberance of lesbian sexuality to the realities of aging, illness, and dying,” says Lange. “These coordinated projects, including the exhibition, film screenings, and her residency work, highlight Hammer’s multidisciplinary approach, as well as her intrepid nature and spirit of experimentation, qualities that are central to the Wex’s mission.”

The centerpiece of the new exhibition is *Evidentiary Bodies*, a richly layered, three-channel video installation that draws imagery from previous works to synthesize the artist’s life in film and her life with cancer. A Wexner Center Artist Residency Award supported the creation of the piece—the artist’s first immersive multichannel work—and it was completed in fall 2018 through a residency with the Wexner Center’s Film/Video Studio.

“This installation of *Evidentiary Bodies* will be my first three-screen work,” says Hammer. “Why did I conceive of this for a small space? I want it to be intimate and not overwhelming. I want the viewers to have the experience in a personal way—similar to how I experience living with cancer. I want to show illness in a new way that doesn’t hide it.”

Among the other works on view: *What You Are Not Supposed to Look At* (2014), a series of collages made from photos, mylar, and X-rays; *Cancer Bones* (1994), a group of calf bones gelatin-printed with newspaper coverage of breast cancer; *Eight in Eight* (1994), an interactive installation in which clinical breast models with embedded nodes yield stories of eight women’s individual cancer diagnoses when the viewer touches them; *Chest X-Rays* (2015), a series of 28 images formed from hand-processed 16mm frames that are outtakes from Hammer’s 1990 film *Sanctus*; and three large, scrolling

photographs made from 16mm film strips that were hand-treated with chemical substances by Hammer, to stunning effect.

“It has been my life’s work to break taboos and make the invisible visible,” the artist explains. “This exhibition will reveal the body as it ages, experiences illness and death.”

While this is the first appearance of Hammer’s work in the Wex galleries, many of her past films have been finished with support from the center’s Film/Video Studio, including *Out in South Africa* (1994), *The Female Closet* (1998), *Devotion* (2000), and *Lover Other* (2006). The Wex has also screened her films numerous times over the past 25 years and has hosted the artist as a visiting filmmaker to introduce and discuss her work—most recently, in 2016 for a screening of *Welcome to This House*, her experimental documentary about poet Elizabeth Bishop.

The relationship between Hammer and the Wex continues with the second part of her two-year Artist Residency Award. This project involves a collaboration with filmmakers Lynne Sachs, Deborah Stratman, Mark Street, and Dan Veltri to reenvision and complete four unfinished films using footage from Hammer’s archive. The first completed work, Deborah Stratman’s film *Veve (for Barbara)*, had its international premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) in January 2019. It will have its US premiere in March at the 2019 True/False Film Festival in Columbia, Missouri. The remaining films will be completed this summer and will screen at the Wex in September 2019. More details on this project are available [here](#).

About Barbara Hammer

Barbara Hammer has made 80-plus moving-image works as well as artwork in other media in a career covering five decades. Film retrospectives have been held at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, The Tate Modern in London, the Jeu de Paume in Paris, the Toronto International Film Festival, and the Chinese Cultural University. She won a Teddy Award at the 2009 Berlinale for her 2008 documentary about cancer, *A Horse Is Not a Metaphor*, and another Teddy in 2011 for the short *Maya Deren’s Sink*. Her book, *Hammer! Making Movies Out of Sex and Life*, was published in 2010. In 2013, Hammer received a Guggenheim Fellowship for *Welcome to This House*. Her 1990 film *Sanctus*, which depicts medical radiation imagery, screened at the 2017 Venice Biennale, as well as at the Wex. In October 2018, she delivered a captivating [performance-lecture](#) at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, and she will be a featured artist in the 2019 Whitney Biennial. Hammer lives and works in New York. More info can be found [here](#).

Exhibition-related events

A **Summer Exhibitions Preview** will take place on **Friday, May 31**, for *Barbara Hammer: In This Body* and accompanying exhibitions *Cecilia Vicuña: Lo Precario/The Precarious* and *Jason Moran*.

Three individual programs curated by Lange will be presented in the Wex's Film/Video Theater as part of the exhibition. These will feature shorts and feature-length works spanning Hammer's career, centered on the themes of "**Mortal Bodies**" (June 6), "**Sensual Bodies**" (June 13), and "**Political Bodies**" (June 20).

No No Nooky T.V., a short film by Hammer from 1987, will be presented in The Box, the Wex's dedicated space for experimental video, June 1–30.

More details and events will be announced closer to the exhibition's opening.

Visitor Information

Barbara Hammer: In This Body will be on view **June 1–August 11, 2019**, at the Wexner Center for the Arts, 1871 N. High St. (at 15th Avenue) on the campus of The Ohio State University in Columbus.

Summer gallery hours (through August 18) are 11 AM–6 PM Tuesday–Wednesday, 11 AM–8 PM Thursday–Friday, noon–7 PM Saturday and noon–4 PM Sunday. Galleries are closed Mondays. Admission is \$8; \$6 for seniors and Ohio State faculty and staff; free for Wexner Center members, college students, active military and veterans, and visitors 18 and under; free Thursdays 4–8 PM and the first Sunday of the month.

More info on bus routes, parking, and other visitor information is available [here](#) or at (614) 292-3535.

Exhibition Support

Support for arts access at the Wexner Center is provided by **Cardinal Health Foundation** and **Huntington Bank**.

The Wexner Center receives general operating support from the **Greater Columbus Arts Council**, the **Ohio Arts Council**, **The Columbus Foundation**, and **Nationwide Foundation**.

Generous support is also provided by the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation** and **Wexner Center members**.

About the Wexner Center

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art.

Press contact: Melissa Starker

(614) 292-9840 / mstarker@wexarts.org