

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Lorna Simpson Exhibition Opens Season at The College of Wooster Art Museum

Thought-provoking photographs and video on display from Aug. 31 through Oct. 10

WOOSTER, Ohio — The College of Wooster Art Museum will present a selection of coolly provocative photographs and video by Lorna Simpson, a significant voice in contemporary art. The season-opening exhibition runs from Aug. 31 through Oct. 10 in the Sussel Gallery and the Burton D. Morgan Gallery located in the Ebert Art Center (1220 Beall Ave.).

Using the language of conceptual art, Simpson challenges the ways in which gender, racial, and other cultural stereotypes function. She investigates the relationship between image and language by juxtaposing photographs with cryptic captions and fragments of text that invite viewers to ponder the tensions resulting from their own efforts to make these visual and textual signifiers connect.

According to John Siewert, exhibition curator and assistant professor of art history at Wooster, “Simpson’s art, like the photographic medium in which she works, expresses a fundamental dialogue of the visible and the invisible, a creative conversation that is mindful of the past at the same time that it is anchored firmly in social and cultural concerns of the present. Between those limits, she creates a central place for the active deliberation of the viewer.”

Selections from Simpson’s show at Wooster include the 1986 photo and text work *Twenty Questions (A Sampler)*, where the repeated images of the back of an African-American female head are juxtaposed with the phrases “is she pretty as a picture . . . or clear as crystal . . . or pure as a lily . . . or black as coal.” More recent works feature an ongoing series of silhouetted and obscured profile portraits interwoven with text, such as *Untitled (guess who’s coming to dinner)*, 2001, and *Over the Course of Time*, 2002. Also included in the exhibition is Simpson’s 2001 video *Easy to Remember*, from the collection of The Baltimore Museum of Art, which features 15 mouths in grid-like spaces humming

renditions of the popular 1930s song, "It's Easy to Remember." This film, transferred to DVD format, was first shown in the Whitney Museum of American Art's 2002 Biennial.

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First Add – Lorna Simpson Exhibition Opens Season at The College of Wooster Art Museum

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Simpson received her M.F.A. from the University of California, San Diego, and her B.F.A. in photography from the School of Visual Arts, New York. Her work has been displayed in venues around the world, from the Wohnmaschine in Berlin and the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin to the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, among others. Her work is included in the collections of major museums, such as the Art Institute of Chicago, Cleveland Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Lorna Simpson is represented by the Sean Kelly Gallery, New York.

This exhibition will be complemented by four events: an opening reception on Sept. 2 from 6-7:30 p.m., with a brief gallery talk at 7 p.m.; a *Conversation in the Galleries* with John Siewert, the exhibition curator, on Sept. 15 from 12-1 p.m.; *Music in the Galleries* on Sept. 30 from 7-8 p.m. featuring *The College of Wooster Jazz Combo I*; and a *Roundtable* discussion on Oct. 7 from 7-8 p.m. with faculty from the departments of Art, English, History, and the Women's Studies program.

The College of Wooster Art Museum is open Tuesday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 1-5 p.m. All receptions, lectures, exhibitions, and performances are free and open to the public. Group tours are also available. This exhibition and related events are supported, in part, by the Ohio Arts Council with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

For more information, or to schedule a group tour, please call 330-263-2388 or visit www.wooster.edu/Music-and-the-Arts/The-College-of-Wooster-Art-Museum.aspx.

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