BAMPFA Mounts Major Solo Exhibition of Work by Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

On View January 31–April 22, 2018

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Avant Dictée is First Exhibition Inspired by Bay Area Artist’s Celebrated 1982 Book Dictée

(Berkeley, CA) January 18, 2018—The UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) presents an innovatively organized exhibition of work by Theresa Hak Kyung Cha (1951–1982), the first solo presentation in more than a decade of work by the accomplished artist, filmmaker, and writer. Opening on January 31, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Avant Dictée features nearly fifty of Cha’s works in a range of media, organized for the first time into distinct thematic groupings inspired by the ten chapters of her iconic 1982 book Dictée.

Drawing from Cha’s rarely exhibited archives—which were donated to BAMPFA in 1992—Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Avant Dictée captures the interdisciplinary scope of Cha’s artistic output, which encompassed photography, poetry, film, video, live performance, mail art, sculpture, works on paper, and more. The selected works highlight the artist’s interest in the spiritual and aesthetic dimensions of language, which is also a central focus of Dictée—a formally ambitious work that includes passages in English, French, and Korean. The exhibition is organized into ten sections that correspond to the chapters of Dictée, with excerpts from the book displayed alongside individual works to illuminate connections and themes that extend throughout the artist’s practice.
Born in South Korea, Cha immigrated with her family to the United States as a child and settled in the Bay Area, where she studied French at San Francisco’s Convent of the Sacred Heart before enrolling at UC Berkeley. Much of the work in Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Avant Dictee was created during Cha’s time as a student in Berkeley, where she earned four degrees and worked as an employee of BAMPFA. The exhibition includes rarely seen correspondence and other ephemera from Cha’s life, which ended in 1982 with her untimely death at the age of 31.

“By exploring Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s art through the lens of Dictee, and vice versa, the exhibition offers viewers an opportunity to appreciate the global resonance of the artist’s oeuvre and the ways in which it was profoundly interconnected across works and media, returning again and again to certain key themes,” said Assistant Curator Stephanie Cannizzo, who curated the exhibition.

“We are excited to introduce Cha’s work to a new generation while at the same time offering a fresh take on this tremendously important and original artist,” said BAMPFA Director and Chief Curator Lawrence Rinder, who has previously curated multiple exhibitions of Cha’s work. “This exploration of Cha’s oeuvre through the lens of Dictee could really only happen at BAMPFA, where we are privileged to hold such an extraordinarily deep archive of the artist’s work and ephemera.”

In conjunction with Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Avant Dictee, BAMPFA is mounting a panel discussion and other public programs to reexamine the artist’s legacy; a full schedule of these events will be announced at bampfa.org. Copies of Dictee are on hand in the exhibition gallery and are available to purchase at the BAMPFA store.

Support
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Avant Dictee is organized by Assistant Curator Stephanie Cannizzo and made possible with support from the Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Archive Fund and Young Chul and Elizabeth Cha Park.

Above
1) Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: A Ble Wail, 1975; performance, Worth Ryder Gallery, University of California, Berkeley; BAMPFA; gift of the Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Memorial Foundation. Photo: Trip Callaghan.

2) Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Re Dis Appearing, 1977; video; black and white, sound, 3 min.; BAMPFA; gift of the Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Memorial Foundation.

3) Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Repetitive Pattern, 1975; ink on cloth, sewn with thread; 46 x 46 in.; BAMPFA; gift of the Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Memorial Foundation. Photo: Benjamin Blackwell.
Visitor Information
Address
2155 Center Street, Berkeley, CA 94720
Hours
Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

$13 general admission
$11 non-UC Berkeley students, disabled, 65+
FREE BAMPFA members; UC Berkeley students, faculty, staff; 18 & under; one adult per child 13 & under

Information
bampfa.org
(510) 642-0808

Social Media
facebook.com/bampfa
twitter.com/bampfa
instagram.com/bampfa
#bampfa | #bampfafilm | @bampfa

About BAMPFA
An internationally recognized arts institution with deep roots in the Bay Area, the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) is a forum for cultural experiences that transform individuals and advance the local, national, and global discourse on art and film. BAMPFA is UC Berkeley's premier visual arts venue, presenting more than 450 film screenings, scores of public programs, and up to twenty exhibitions annually. With its vibrant and eclectic programming, BAMPFA inspires the imagination and ignites critical dialogue through art, film, and other forms of creative expression.

The institution’s collection of more than 19,000 works of art dates from 3000 BCE to the present day and includes important holdings of Neolithic Chinese ceramics, Ming and Qing Dynasty Chinese painting, Old Master works on paper, Italian Baroque painting, early American painting, Abstract Expressionist painting, contemporary photography, and Conceptual art. BAMPFA’s collection also includes more than 17,500 films and videos, including the largest collection of Japanese cinema outside of Japan, impressive holdings of Soviet cinema, West Coast avant-garde film, and seminal video art, as well as hundreds of thousands of articles, reviews, posters, and other ephemera related to the history of film.