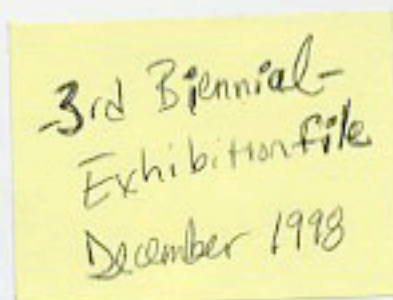


ELISABETH SUSSMAN

CURADORES
CURATORS

ELISABETH SUSSMAN ES
CURADORA DEL WHITNEY
MUSEUM OF AMERICAN
ART DE NUEVA YORK

ELISABETH SUSSMAN IS
CURATOR OF THE WHITNEY
MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART IN
NEW YORK CITY



POLIÉSTER: *¿Cuáles son tus antecedentes en el mundo del arte?*

ELISABETH SUSSMAN: Cursé una maestría en historia del arte, con especialidad en arquitectura. Escribí un libro intitolado "Construyendo con la naturaleza", que examinaba la construcción y los mitos de la arquitectura californiana desde principios de siglo hasta los años cuarenta. Empecé a trabajar en museos cuando el libro se utilizó como base de una exposición en el Berkeley Art Museum. Después conseguí trabajo en el departamento de curaduría en el Museum of Fine Arts de Boston. Por mi libro me llamaron para trabajar en una exposición sobre el segundo centenario de la independencia de Estados Unidos, llamada "Frontier America" (América de la frontera), que trataba sobre la expansión de Estados Unidos hacia el oeste. A mediados de los setenta, realicé mi doctorado en Estudios de Estados Unidos en la Boston University. Mientras estaba en la escuela, trabajé como aprendiz en el Institute of Contemporary Art de Boston. Al terminar, preferí dedicarme a trabajar de tiempo completo ahí en vez de terminar mi tesis. Después trabajé en la Exposición Situacionista Internacional, que fue mostrada inicialmente en el Beaubourg en París y luego viajó a Londres y Nueva York. En esa exposición colaboré con Peter Wollen, Greil Marcus y otros, y desde entonces nos hemos mantenido en contacto para compartir nuestras impresiones sobre la curaduría y el arte. Ingresé como curadora al Whitney Museum en 1991 y empecé a trabajar en la Bienal.

P: *¿Cómo fue el proceso de curaduría para esta Bienal?*

ES: Fui la directora de un equipo de cinco curadores. Me gusta mucho trabajar en equipo con otros curadores y escritores y por eso se trató de un proceso muy interesante para mí. Fui la encargada de establecer la dirección y los temas y también de decidir la combinación de medios que

POLIÉSTER: *What is your background in the art world?*

ELISABETH SUSSMAN: I received an MA in art history, with a special interest in architecture. I wrote a book entitled "Building With Nature" which examined the construction and myths of California architecture from the turn of the century to the 1940s. I first started with museum work when the book was turned into an exhibition for the Berkeley Art Museum. Afterwards, I got a job at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in the curatorial department. There, because of my book, I was brought in to work on a Bicentennial-year exhibition entitled Frontier America, which dealt with the Westward expansion in the United States. In the mid-70s I went back for my PhD in American Studies at Boston University. During my time there I became an intern at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. In the end, I chose to work there full time instead of finishing my dissertation. Since then I have worked on the Situationist International Show that was first exhibited in the Beaubourg in Paris, and then travelled to London and Boston. I worked on this show with Peter Wollen, Greil Marcus and others, and we all stay in touch and compare notes on curating and art. I came to the Whitney Museum as curator in 1991, and I started to work on the Biennial.

P: *What was the curatorial process for this Biennial?*

ES: I was the leader of a five-person curatorial team. I like very much to work collaboratively with other curators and writers, so this was a very interesting process for me. I was the person in charge of setting the direction and themes, and deciding on the mix of mediums for the show. I wanted to emphasize an art which dealt with issues in American society, such as gender, sex, abuse, militarism, violence, gay and lesbian identity, community, and the differences in the experience of being an outsider or insider. I think the issues of the politics of the body and the politics of race and ethnicity, as well as those regarding the ownership of the nation, are very strong, and I believe they really come out in this Biennial.

P: *How many artists are participating and how were they selected?*

ES: There are a total of eighty-two artists, with forty-four of them creating work to be hung on the walls or as installations, fifteen video artists, fifteen filmmakers and seven performance artists. We did not work with quotas, but we definitely wanted to work with as diverse a group of artists as possible. This was a high priority even from the initial stages of the curatorial process. We only accepted artists who have lived in the United States for a good period of time, which is why artists who have been here only a year or so, such as Gabriel Orozco and Rubén Ortiz, both from Mexico, and Ilya Kabakov from Russia, were not included.

P: *Could you talk a little about some of the most interesting art and artists included in this exhibition?*