



Bigger, Better, More: The Art of Viola Frey

Davira S. Taragin: Patterson Sims

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At times a painter, sculptor, and photographer but always a ceramicist, Viola Frey found inspiration in flea-market castoffs and curiosities. She was an integral player in the revolutionary artistic innovations taking place in the Northern California Bay Area during the latter part of the twentieth century. Frey is most renowned for her large-scale "monumental figures" and bricolage assemblages - work that is often referred to as "anthropological in its many references to popular culture, the visual arts and the history of ceramics." A lifelong champion of figuration - a commitment that stubbornly endured and even thrived on the West Coast in contrast to East Coast abstraction - Frey created personalities and vignettes commenting on personal relationships and recollections. This vibrant monograph accompanies a major exhibition organized by the Racine Art Museum and the Gardiner Museum, Toronto. The book follows Frey's career from her breakthrough student years to her mature work and its successful exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art and subsequent national and international venues. Authors Davira S. Taragin, director of exhibitions and programs at the Racine Art Museum, and Patterson Sims, former director of the Montclair Art Museum, present never-before-published facts and fresh interpretations of both Frey's life and her art. Susan Jefferies, curator of the Gardiner Museum, offers a personal recollection of the artist. This book marks the first full-scale monograph on Viola Frey and additionally contextualizes her and her work within the Bay Area art scene and within twentieth-century art and ceramics generally. 64 color plates, 8 black and white reproductions.

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