A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

This is our Tenth Anniversary season, a proud moment in my life as founder of the institution, and a nice round number to symbolize Franklin Furnace's achievements. Among these, surely, are the historical and thematic exhibitions, which illuminate the book as an artform -- "Cabaret Paintings/Cabaret Books," "Russian Avant-Grade Books," "Samizdat," "Artists' Use of Language," the "Copcat" show of zineography, "The Page as Alternative Space, 1989-1989," "Public Relations a.k.a. Propaganda," "Mail Art Then and Now" -- it's hard to mention only a few of the 57 worthy exhibitions organized by guest curators since 1976.

Another of Franklin Furnace's achievements of which I am inordinately proud is our launching of emerging artists' careers. Exposure at Franklin Furnace provided timely boosts to artists whose names are becoming household words: Laurie Anderson, Barton Bensen, Eric Bogosian, Lenore Chiripone, Gianfranco De'Jongh, James Cauchon, Karen Finley, Claudia Fitch, Donna Hannon, Julia Hayward, Candace Hill, Montgomery, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Mierle Ukeles, Lederman, Stephanie Brody Lederman, Robert Longo, Charles Moulton, Matt Mullican, Karen Shaw, Theodora Skipsiato -- to name a few of the artists presented by Franklin Furnace's performance and exhibition series since 1976.

But finally, Franklin Furnace's crowning achievement, one made possible by the generosity of thousands of artists and collectors worldwide, is the accumulation of the largest collection of art in book form in the United States. The aggregate importance of these materials, as well as the value of individual works by such artists as Vito Acconci, Ida Applebroog, John Baldessari, Gilbert and George, Sol Lewitt, Claus Oldenburg, Yoko Ono, Doeri Roth, Lawrence Weiner and many others from all parts of the globe, has led to recognition of the field in quarters where there was none ten years ago. Franklin Furnace's permanent collection holds over 30,000 items which are studied, catalogued, conserved, documented, exhibited, traveled and loved.

I hope you will agree that Franklin Furnace is a remarkable institution, funded by artists who work on staff, exhibit and perform, and contribute to the permanent collection and benefit events.

Martha Wilson
Director

"Franklin Furnace, the Last Word in Museums"
Exhibition, Performance, Artist's Book Archive
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