

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KIM GORDON
STAIRWAY (IS IT MY BODY?)

April 19 - May 18, 2003

Opening Reception, Saturday, April 19, 2003, 7-9pm

From April 19 - May 18, 2003, PARTICIPANT INC will present
STAIRWAY (IS IT MY BODY?), an installation by Kim Gordon.

Gleaned from a visual/text edition constructed by the artist (one of an active series of music free-visionist artist's books), this site-specific work reflects the sentimental education of 1970s teenage girlhood in Los Angeles. The invocation of style--from minimalism to surrealism to west coast craft and funk-art, with the daily life dynamics of car culture and hitch-hiking--express the artist's idea of architecture as experience; as well as the motion in and around the city--a search for lifestyle-desire that does not exist--a situation eventually producing stylized shelters emblematic as "freedom of expression." One person's bad taste is another man's castle.

The real architecture, the *body* of Los Angeles, is the time spent in one's car, driving, listening to the radio, gazing out the window--the space between stations.

In the early 1970s, Joni Mitchell, a city girl with a longing to "*get back to the garden*," situated herself in L.A.'s Laurel Canyon, a locale replete with nature yet overlooking Hollywood and the suburban flatlands. For Gordon, Joni Mitchell not only presents herself as an icon, but as a figure exemplifying the dichotomy of L.A., that of being natural vs. artifice.

In this work, the artist's memories, in situation--like architecture, are the aesthetic. Using the particularities of L.A. architecture (wood and metal detailing, the colors of buildings, Ed Ruscha paintings, graffiti) as catalysts for works, Gordon recollects and reveals sentient subtleties and obsessions of this personalized, formative, and resonant moment.

In 1979, after graduating from art school, Kim Gordon moved to NYC. She concurrently wrote on the confluence of contemporary art and music (for the magazines *Real Life*, *ZG*, *ArtForum*, *File* and others) and curated, as well as exhibited in, group shows at the nascent White Columns and Anina Nosei Gallery. She established *Design Office*, an ongoing art project involving altering clients' living space--operating more as a dime store psychologist than interior decorator.

Throughout the eighties and nineties, as her band Sonic Youth's work became increasingly more pronounced and high profile, Gordon continued to write and make art. She directed the critically acclaimed music videos *Cannonball* and *Divine Hammer* for The Breeders. With Daisy Von Furth, she developed the clothing line, X-Girl, holding guerilla fashion shows during fashion week in downtown NYC, and producing an experimental post-narrative film as a promotional tool.

She co-founded the band, Free Kitten, with Julia Cafritz, ex-Pussy Galore and STP; Yoshimi from the Boredoms; and Mark Ibold from Pavement. She

continues to perform and record with an improvising group consisting of Ikue Mori, DJ Olive and Jim O'Rourke.

In spring 2000, Gordon curated the show *Kim's Bedroom* at Mu-DeWitte Dame in Eindhoven. As well as her own work, it involved the artists Mark Gonzales, Raymond Pettibon, Rita Ackerman, Richard Kern, Cameron Jamie, Spike Jonze, Sofia Coppola, Jutta Koether and others. It was a multi-tiered exhibit with a catalog/book and CD, as well as performances, video and film.

In the 80s, Kim Gordon exhibited at the Times Square Show; White Columns; ICA, London; F.A.R., L.A. and Vancouver.

In the 90s, she exhibited at Parco in Tokyo; Alleged Gallery, NYC; and in the collective Free Time, with Rita Ackerman and Jutta Koether, at Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany.

Upcoming exhibitions include, The Second International Biennial for Contemporary Art 2003, Gothenburg, Sweden, curated by Carl Michael von Hausswolff; and a collaborative project with Jutta Koether at Kenny Schachter's Contemporary.

See [Sonic Youth.com](http://SonicYouth.com) for Discography.

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PARTICIPANT INC is located at 95 Rivington Street, between Ludlow and Orchard Streets in the Lower East Side.

Gallery hours: Wednesday-Sunday, 12-7pm.