

MARILYN MINTER ORANGE CRUSH

MARILYN MINTER Orange Crush

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Dimensions in inches; height precedes width

Orange Crush, 2009

Enamel on metal
108 x 180 inches
Courtesy of John and Amy Phelan

Half & Half, 2009

C-Print
100¼ x 72 inches, edition 2 of 3
Courtesy of the artist
and Regen Projects, Los Angeles

Gimme, 2008

C-print
70 x 97¼ inches, AP
Courtesy of the artist
and Regen Projects, Los Angeles

Amoeba, 2008

C-Print
100¼ x 77 inches, edition 2 of 3
Courtesy of the artist
and Regen Projects, Los Angeles

Chewing Green, 2009

C-Print
65 x 86 inches, AP from edition of 5
Collection of the artist,
courtesy of Salon 94, New York

I ♥ U, 2008

C-Print
65 x 86 inches, AP from edition of 5
Collection of the artist,
courtesy of Salon 94, New York

Green Pink Caviar, 2009

HD digital video
7:45 minutes
Collection of the artist, courtesy of Salon 94,
New York and Regen Projects, Los Angeles

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Lenders to the exhibition:
Marilyn Minter; John and Amy Phelan;
Salon 94, New York; Regen Projects, Los Angeles

Many thanks to Marilyn Minter, her studio
assistant Michelle Matson, Fabienne Stephan
of Director of Salon 94 and Heather Harmon.
Director of Regen Projects for their assistance
in bringing this exhibition to fruition.

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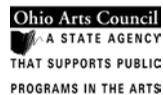
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CLEVELAND

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Chewing Green, 2009



Amoeba, 2008



MARILYN MINTER

ORANGE CRUSH

THIS EXHIBITION IS
GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY

**Laura and Fred Bidwell
Donna and Stewart Kohl**

CURATED BY MARGO ANN CRUTCHFIELD
SENIOR CURATOR

WILLIAM D. GINN GALLERY

LUSCIOUS NAUGHTY SATURATED
RAW SEDUCTIVE DECADENT
ALLURING REPULSIVE VISCERAL

These words only begin to describe Marilyn Minter's provocative paintings, photographs, and video work. One of the most adventurous and accomplished American artists working today, Minter challenges our perceptions of glamour and beauty. Her current work is characterized by extreme close-ups of the body with a shocking but irresistible sensuality. Large in scale, with bold, luscious colors, Minter's vivid paintings and photographs zero in on faces, mouths, or feet—to portray glittery, makeup-laden eyes, glistening flesh, succulent mouths, lips, and tongues, jewel encrusted necklines, or designer-heeled feet sloshing through puddles. The focus here is on the female body: on beauty, fashion, glamour, sensuality, and desire—with its pleasures and dangers—all of which Minter's paintings and photographs deliver in strong, visually seductive and almost palpable terms.

Throughout her career Marilyn Minter has explored how media-prescribed definitions of beauty, fashion, and glamour intersect with and impact notions of the self. One of her earliest bodies of work, a sequence of black and white photographs titled *Coral Ridge Towers* (1969), documented a weekend in the life of her reclusive, drug addict mother, desperately attempting to be "beautiful" with cosmetics, wigs, fake nails, and other accoutrements. Minter's investigation into the desperate pursuit of beauty or the "pathology of glamour" as she terms it, originates in this body of work, as does Minter's interest in the "flawed" and imperfect realities of the body.

Minter's work over the years has developed in various directions. In the 1970s she created photorealistic paintings of spills on the floor, as well as paintings based on found imagery culled from cook books and fashion magazines. In 1990 she created a series of highly sensual paintings depicting the preparation of food titled *100 Food Porn*, which presaged an even more provocative, pornographic body of work a few years later. "I was interested," comments Minter, "in showing the 'construction of desire' and investigating a subject matter that women artists have never owned."¹

Minter's current focus on the exploration of sense, seduction, and the human body, has parallels with fashion advertising. In fact, Minter has also worked as a commercial photographer and, since 2002, has created ads for companies such as Tom Ford's luxury brands and M.A.C. Cosmetics. In terms of pose, slick surfaces, lush color, angle, and close-up perspectives, Minter's paintings and photographs evoke magazine ads that idealize the body. This blurring of the boundaries between commercial and fine art is not new for Minter, but has been an ongoing interest. In 1989 she created a 30-second commercial during late-night television talk shows as an artwork to promote her exhibition of Food Porn paintings. More recently Minter's photographs have been shown as works of art on advertising billboards. A Creative Time project in 2006 included multiple billboards throughout Chelsea; a 2009 Regen Projects exhibition in Los Angeles was accompanied by the projection of her video, *Green Pink Caviar* on Sunset Boulevard's electronic billboards; and one of her billboard artworks was featured in the 2008 museum exhibition *Agency: Art and Advertizing*.² It is interesting to note that Minter shot the video *Green Pink Caviar* during breaks in a commercial make-up shoot. This intersection of the commercial and fine art worlds fuels part of Minter's aesthetic and artistic intent. "Fashion photography is the biggest inspiration because it's a desiring machine. I get a lot of pleasure out of looking at fashion images. It's a love/hate thing because you're never going to look that good; no one ever is."³

Minter's world, though steeped in fashion and glitz, is one in which beauty has gone awry. As the artist explains, her art is invested "in the moment when everything goes wrong. It's when the model sweats. There's lipstick on the teeth and the makeup's running."⁴ "I think I'm trying to make a picture of that constant failure: armpits with hair growing out of them, sweat running into the eyes, eyelashes that clump together because of too much mascara."⁵

Minter capitalizes on this intrusion of reality into the fantasy of fashion and glamour. Her works may be about the pleasures of glamour, sensuality, and desire but they delve deliriously into decadence, with the near explicit representation of sexuality and desire verging dangerously on overdose. With her outrageous, over the top imagery, Minter treads a tenuous line between attraction and repulsion, while plunging into the raw edge of decadence with fierce determination and energy. As poet and art critic Barry Schwabsky aptly comments, Minter is driven by her "simultaneous love of glamour and the compulsion to desecrate it."⁶ From this perspective, Minter's work subverts cultural ideals of beauty and sexuality by critiquing the omnipresent pressures of sex, fashion and consumer culture.

This exhibition presents a focused selection of Minter's work centered on one of her most recent major paintings, an enamel on metal triptych titled *Orange Crush* (2009). Measuring an enormous 9 x 15 feet, *Orange Crush* portrays an extreme close-up of a woman slurping up a luscious, sloppy liquid that is in fact saliva mixed with orange cake decorations, creating an image teetering between beauty and revulsion. Accompanying the painting are five related large-scale photographs that focus on the mouth, lips, and tongue. Also presented in the exhibition is Minter's acclaimed 7-minute 45-second video, *Green Pink Caviar* (2009), originally featured in 2009 on Creative Time's giant MTV billboard in Times Square, and subsequently presented in the opening sequence of the European leg of Madonna's *Sticky and Sweet* tour this past year.

Rendered in rich, almost lurid, colors and magnified to such an extreme, the fleshy, succulent tongue in the painting *Orange Crush* is startling and outrageous. This depiction of excessive sensuality and extreme indulgence is unnerving even if compelling and irresistible. The significance of Minter's emphasis on mouths, lips, and tongues, however, extends beyond their erotic connotations and titillating effects. Certainly the importance of these organs as essential human functions for language and communication, food, and sex, has symbolic implications. For Minter, however, the imagery is about hunger and insatiability.⁷ It's about being propelled in our culture to want more and more. It's about a culture of excess and the relentless pursuit of desire.

Orange Crush is based on numerous photographs Minter took of a model's mouth, lips, and tongue swirling viscous liquid on a glass pane. These photographs served as "drawings," as preliminary material for the painting. Minter then scanned and manipulated the photographs in Photoshop, altering or adding elements, or applying more color to get the exact effect she wanted. She then used a composite of these photographs to create the painting's striking imagery.

It took a year to complete *Orange Crush* as Minter and her team of painting assistants applied layer upon layer of thin, translucent enamel paint on metal to produce its luminous, almost hallucinatory finish. With a technique that Minter invented in the early nineties, they used their fingers to soften all the hard edges, so that the painting's surface is covered with fingerprints. The results are lush, vivid surfaces in which hyper-real imagery dissolves into abstract bursts of color at close view.

The stunning, large-scale C-prints in the exhibition, some of which are as large as 6 by 8 feet, were all created during the same period as *Orange Crush* and Minter's provocative video, *Green Pink Caviar*. Two of the photographs, *Chewing Green* and *Half & Half* were among the group of photographs Minter created in 2009, on which the imagery of *Orange Crush* was based. Created in 2008, *Gimme, I ♥ U*, and *Amoeba* were among the photographs Minter created that inspired her high definition video, *Green Pink Caviar* (2009). This lush and sensual voyeuristic hallucination, as it has been described, was filmed with a macro lens, as Minter directed her models to lick and swish brightly colored candied goo while she was shooting photos from underneath a glass plate.⁸ In this work, as in the accompanying painting and photographs, Minter literally achieves what initially inspired her to create this body of work—that of simulating "painting with the tongue." Together these works in the exhibition—*Orange Crush*, the photographs, and the video, *Green Pink Caviar*, define a vital and compelling moment in the career of this remarkable artist.

—MARGO ANN CRUTCHFIELD



100 Food Porn #61, 1990. Enamel on metal, 24 x 30 inches. Private Collection.



Shit-Kicker, 2006. Billboard.

¹ Minter quoted in Kate Linthicum, "Marilyn Minter willfully misfires glamour shots," *Los Angeles Times*, November 27, 2009.

² *Agency: Art and Advertizing* took place in 2008 at the McDonough Museum of Art, Youngstown, Ohio.

Minter quoted in "Marilyn Minter in Conversation with Mary Heilman," in Joanna Burton, *Marilyn Minter* (New York: Gregory R. Miller & Co., 2007), 26.

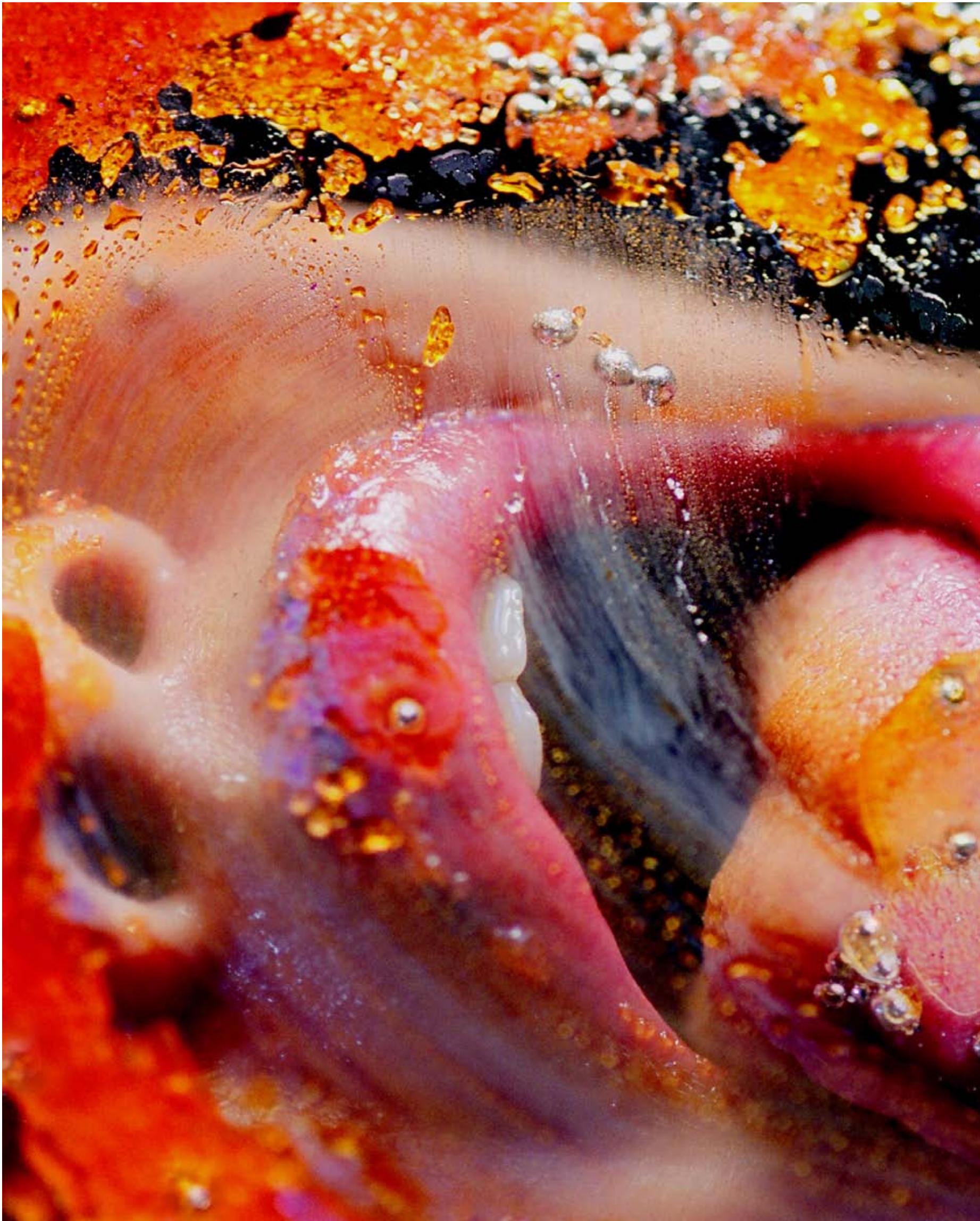
³ Minter quoted in Barry Schwabsky's article "Beauty and Desecration," *Art in America*, March 2007, 134. For the original context of this quotation see Carlo McCormick's interview with Minter in "Fashion Crisis," *Paper*, March 2006, 58.

⁴ Minter quoted in "Marilyn Minter in Conversation with Mary Heilman," 27.

⁵ Schwabsky, 134.

⁶ Minter quoted in Miranda Siegel, "What does Goo Mean to You?" *New York Magazine*, April 19, 2009.

⁷ See Marilyn Minter's website www.greenpinkcaviar.com/bio.



MARILYN MINTER

ORANGE CRUSH ON VIEW JUNE 4 – AUGUST 15, 2010



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Orange Crush, 2009. Enamel on metal, 108 x 180 inches. Courtesy of John and Amy Phelan ©Marilyn Minter