



Contact: Katrina Carl  
Director of Communications  
805.884.6430  
[kcarl@sbma.net](mailto:kcarl@sbma.net)



Edward Kienholz and Nancy Reddin Kienholz, *Bout Round Eleven*, 1982. Mixed media assemblage, 90 x 97 x 92 in.  
SBMA, Gift of Private Collection, Topanga, CA. © 2022 Estate of Nancy Reddin Kienholz. Courtesy of L.A. Louver, Venice, CA.

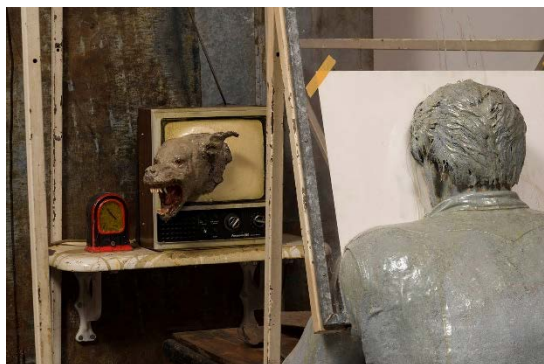
## **Santa Barbara Museum of Art Presents *Scenes from a Marriage: Ed & Nancy Kienholz***

Celebrating the Work of the Artists from 1960 to 2007

**January 29 – May 21, 2023**

*November 30, 2022* — The Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA) is pleased to announce *Scenes from a Marriage: Ed & Nancy Kienholz*, on view January 29 – May 21, 2023. The exhibition centers on a recently acquired masterpiece by Nancy Reddin Kienholz and Edward Kienholz, *Bout Round Eleven* (1982), and examines their collaborative way of working and living. Thanks to generous loans to supplement works already in SBMA's collection, this focused exhibition features five artworks dating from 1960 to 2007, representing Ed and Nancy working together and also solo. Ed was already a well-established artist when he met Nancy in 1972, and she continued to make art after Ed's death in 1994. Their art often takes the subjects of marriage, family, and sexuality and recasts them as isolating and alienating, as forms of human disconnection rather than belonging. Nonetheless, their art came out of a deep artistic partnership, and their studios in Idaho, Berlin, and Houston were filled with friends, family, and assistants.

Besides giving greater weight to Ed and Nancy as a pair, this is also the first museum exhibition featuring their work in Southern California in over a decade. The Santa Barbara Museum of Art has exhibited contemporary art by Californian artists for over 80 years, and the Kienholzes were part of a generation of artists that made this region known as a place for cutting edge contemporary art. It is, therefore, especially fitting that *Scenes from a Marriage* is to be displayed in SBMA's new Contemporary Art Gallery, the Museum's first space dedicated solely to contemporary art.



Details from Edward Kienholz and Nancy Reddin Kienholz, *Bout Round Eleven*, 1982. Mixed media assemblage, 90 x 97 x 92 in. SBMA, Gift of Private Collection, Topanga, CA. © 2022 Estate of Nancy Reddin Kienholz. Courtesy of L.A. Louver, Venice, CA.

The catalyst for this exhibition was the recent gift to SBMA of *Bout Round Eleven* (1982). Like a skeletal stage set, this sculpture implies the architecture of a home with the windows, walls, and rooms partially indicated. The woman dressed in pink looks to the world outside, while the man is lost in the violent fantasies of television, represented by a vicious dog jumping from the screen. They are physically close but emotionally distant. This relationship is past the point of fighting, at round eleven after ten rounds in the ring. The parts of the story are all there, the separate lives, the resignation to the situation, but there remains plenty of ambiguity. The woman's self-containment invites speculation about her thoughts, and the lonely white chair to the side echoes the characters' separate lives.



Two views of Nancy Reddin Kienholz, *Face to Face*, 2007. Lenticular photograph, mixed media. 30 x 30 x 4 1/2 inches. © 2022 Estate of Nancy Reddin Kienholz. Courtesy of L.A. Louver, Venice, CA.

Nancy Reddin Kienholz's *Face to Face* (2007) is not just an homage to Ed, but their partnership. A lenticular image, which blends two source photographs, combines Ed and Nancy's faces. As the viewer walks by, it transitions from one to the other. *Face to Face* gives their melded artistic practice a visual form. Nancy and Ed once expressed surprised when watching a video of themselves at work in the studio because there was no sound. For the first time, they realized that they labored together intuitively in silence.

The Museum will also exhibit *The Nativity* (1961) by Ed Kienholz, which re-stages a creche using castoff and repurposed items. The dark background suggests the mass produced wood paneling typical in mid-century American suburban homes. The head of the baby Jesus is an orange light taken from a traffic barricade, and a battered toy stuffed animal is the lamb. Lamps, brackets, and what might be vacuum cleaner head form angels and wise men. *The Nativity* poses many questions about the commercialization of a holiday or the materialism and waste of American life, but it doesn't seem to take a fixed viewpoint. This important sculpture was on display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's retrospective for Ed Kienholz in 1966, which was met with both controversy and popularity among its vast amount of visitors.

This exhibition is underwritten by the Lilac Drive Foundation.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is one of the finest museums on the West coast and is celebrated for the superb quality of its permanent collection. Its mission is to integrate art into the lives of people through internationally recognized exhibitions and special programs, as well as the thoughtful presentation of its permanent collection.

**Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA.**

**Open Tuesday – Sunday 11 am to 5 pm, Free Thursday Evenings 5 – 8 pm**

**805.963.4364 [www.sbma.net](http://www.sbma.net)**

**Connect: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)**