

MICHAEL KOHN GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JEAN CONNER

CIRCA SIXTY: 1958 to 1964

November 11 – January 4, 2012

Opening reception: Friday, November 11th, 6-8pm



Voo Doo, 1960, paper collage, 18 1/2 x 7 1/4 inches

Michael Kohn Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of never before seen work by Jean Conner, created between the years 1958 – 1964. During this short but creatively explosive time, Jean, along with her husband, Bruce Conner, helped to shape the artistic sensibility of the historic, underground Beat movement. This exhibition, which will be in conjunction with her late husband's show of work from the same period, will underscore their importance to not only West Coast art, but to art history as a whole.

In 1958 Jean Conner began making collages using black and white magazine photos. In 1960 she switched to color, which she continues to use today. *JEAN CONNER: CIRCA SIXTY* will chronicle this period in her artistic career and will show off her prolific oeuvre that includes not only collages, but also her paintings, etchings and drawings.

Often described as simultaneously “dreamlike” and “comic,” Conner’s virtuosity and excitement explode in her work. While using color as a unifying element to create the imaginative world of her compositions, the artist presents the viewer with complex Surrealist scenes and objects that celebrate nature and form. This body of work delves into the realm of the Existential as well, as each piece in its unique way explores the relationship between subject matter and medium, spirituality and life.

Jean Conner participated in an important traveling show inspired by the Beat Generation called *SEMINA CULTURE: Wallace Berman and his*

Circle. This show underscores Conner’s relevance to this generation of artists and visionaries. *SEMINA* focuses on the West Coast visual culture of the “Beat Era” and explores the underground art community of the 1950s, ‘60s, and ‘70s.

Jean Conner was born in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1933. She attended the University of Nebraska where she earned her B.F.A. She then received her M.F.A. at the University of Colorado where she was trained in oil painting, watercolor and printmaking.

For further inquiry, please contact Laura Sumser at laura@kohngallery.com, or Lindsey Schiff Abrams at lisa424@gmail.com.