

**SHERMAN, MORIMURA, AND MOLINIER REVEAL “OTHER SELVES”  
PHOTOGRAPHIC SELF-PORTRAITURE ON VIEW AT LACMA**

*Masquerade: Role Playing in Self-Portraiture—  
Photographs from the Audrey and Sydney Irmas Collection*

October 12, 2006–January 7, 2007



(Left) Yasumasa Morimura, *An Inner Dialogue with Frida Kahlo (Collar of Thorns)*, 2001, ink-jet print on canvas, diameter: 82 ¾ in.; depth: 8 ½ in., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Audrey and Sydney Irmas Collection

(Right) Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #3 (Woman in kitchen)*, 1977, gelatin-silver print, 6 3/8 x 9 13/16 in., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Audrey and Sydney Irmas Collection

Los Angeles—Costumed, masked, wigged, made-up, or transformed through technique or situation, *Masquerade: Role Playing in Self-Portraiture—Photographs from the Audrey and Sydney Irmas Collection* explores the ways in which photographers present their fictional, or other selves. The exhibition, on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) from October 12, 2006 through January 7, 2007, includes the revealing photographic self-portraits of Cindy Sherman, Yasumasa Morimura, Pierre Molinier, and twenty-seven other artists from 1850 to the present—all of which are drawn from LACMA’s permanent collection gift from Audrey and Sydney Irmas. The Irmas’ donated their collection of photographic self-portraits to LACMA in 1992 and this latest exploration into the subject is being curated by their daughter, respected photo historian and writer, Deborah Irmas. “My parents have always been deeply honored by the examination of these works that meant so much to them. Through this unique presentation, it becomes evident that elaborate costumes and settings are a pervasive aspect of the contemporary vocabulary of photographers,” she notes.

(more)

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Perhaps no artist is better known for using costumes for role playing than Cindy Sherman. In her series entitled *Film Stills*, the artist becomes the star of a pretend movie. The subject of each picture, like the aproned blonde in *Untitled Film Still #3 [Woman in kitchen]*, 1977, lirts of an anonymous fifties actress, of a starlet who seems familiar, yet does not exist. Similarly, Yasumasa Morimura plays with the inventory of images we each hold within us. In *Inner Dialogue with Frida Kahlo (Crown of Thorns)*, 2001, he shifts races and even genders to transform from one famed artist—himself—into another, the Mexican surrealist Frida Kahlo.

While Sherman and Morimura create wildly inventive fictions, other photographers in *Masquerade: Role Playing in Self-Portraiture—Photographs from the Audrey and Sydney Irmas Collection* present themselves as someone other than their real selves. A mask, make-up, or even a scowl emboldened by a descriptive title can alter what we think we know about a person in a photograph. In any case, bold or subtle, each permutation of fantasy exposes verity. As the great acting teacher Stanislavsky noted, when protected by a mask, an actor “...can lay bare his soul down to the last intimate detail.” It is then through their guarded, disguised selves, and through LACMA’s presentation of the exhibition, that another version of reality is exposed, one where creative practice meets an illusory truth.

**Credit:** This exhibition was organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Photographs in the exhibition are from the Audrey and Sydney Irmas Collection.

**About LACMA:** In April 2006, Michael Govan became CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). He is the seventh person to hold the position of Director in the museum’s 41-year history. Established as an independent institution in 1965, LACMA has assembled a permanent collection that includes approximately 100,000 works of art spanning the history of art from ancient times to the present, making it the premier encyclopedic visual arts museum in the western United States. Located in the heart of one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world, the museum uses its collection and resources to provide a variety of educational and cultural experiences for the people who live in, work in, and visit Los Angeles. LACMA offers an outstanding schedule of special exhibitions, as well as lectures, classes, family activities, film programs and world-class musical events.

LACMA is located at 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles CA, 90036. For more information about LACMA and its programming, log on to [www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org).

**Museum Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, noon–8 pm; Friday, noon–9 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am–8 pm; closed Wednesday, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Call 323 857-6000, or [www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org) for more information.

**General LACMA Admission:** Adults \$9; students 18+ with ID and senior citizens 62+ \$5. Admission (except to specially ticketed exhibitions) is *free* every evening after 5 pm, the second Tuesday of every month, and for children 17 and under. For membership and ticketing information, please call 323 857-6151.

**Please note:** LACMA is free every evening after 5 pm.

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