

Henry, Gerritt. "Hannah Wilke."
ARTnews (May 1978).

HANNAH WILKE (Ronald Feldman): To any but the most devoted eye, film and video art of the past ten years has been, for the most part, boring. Wilke's films and tapes are anything but—she has avoided the static, impersonal nature of this brand-new fine arts medium by treating it personally, playfully, and with very frank eroticism.

Wilke's concern as an artist has always been with herself—or, to phrase it properly, her self, physical and emotional. A series of works related to the major film and video pieces in the exhibition proved the point: *A Hannah Wilke Monument* was a photo documentation of the artist's "happening" in front of the Albright-Knox Museum in Buffalo, in which she stood huge photo blow-ups of herself, nude from the waist up, in Greco-Roman costume, in front of the museum's facade of Greco-Roman male statuary. Along a lower frieze of the facade, Wilke affixed pieces of chewed gum. The gum motif reappeared in other nude photos—on a poster for the School of Visual Arts and a photo silkscreen on plexiglass called *Marxism and Art* ("Beware Fascist Feminism"), in both of which shots Wilke had stuck gum all over her torso.

In these works, Wilke proved herself an artist unafraid of exhibitionism of the feminist-rankling, girlie-magazine sort; perhaps the last revenge of the physically attractive female is to display fully all of her attributes, including, as a kick-in-the-pants to slaving voyeurs, an artistic intelligence. This was perhaps the point to the major piece in the show, a film called *Through the Large Glass* (accompanied by a video, *Philly*, documenting the making of the film), in which Wilke, outfitted like next year's Jean Shrimpton, stood in front of Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and proceeded to strip herself bare—by herself, of course, without the aid of any bachelors. Woman-hater Duchamp was thereby put in his place by the mere expedient of an attractive woman acting out, and thereby contradicting, his title.

—Gerritt Henry