



SALON 94

Wallpaper*

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Laurie Simmons unpacks domestic ideals and the American dream in US retrospective

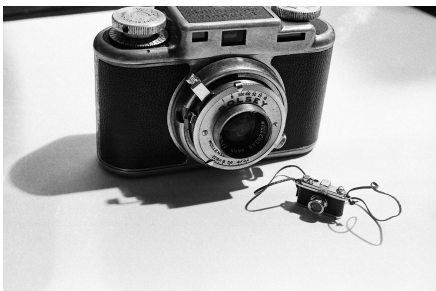


Pushing Lipstick (Red Lipstick), 1979, by Laurie Simmons, Cibachrome print.

Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94

In the 1970s, [Laurie Simmons](#) made ends meet as an artist by working as a photographer for a dollhouse miniature company. There she began to photograph the dolls and toys for her own work, unpacking gender relationships, the domestic ideal of the 1950s, and the myth of the American dream in tiny, staged scenes.

'I was simply trying to recreate a feeling or mood from the time I was growing up,' Simmons said in a statement, 'a sense of the 1950s that I knew was both beautiful and lethal at the same time.' The series, which went on to form *Early Black & White* (1976-78), serves as the namesake for 'Laurie Simmons: Big Camera/Little Camera', a major survey of the [former Wallpaper* Guest Editor's](#) work at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth in Texas.



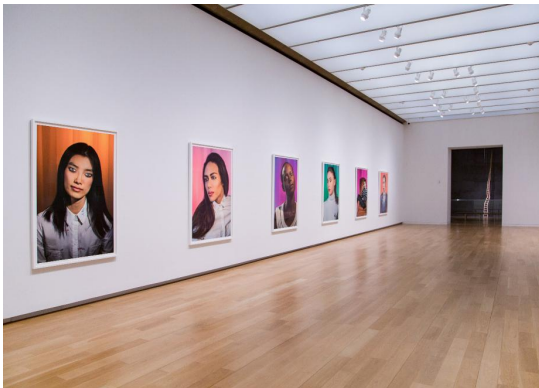
Big Camera/Little Camera, 1976, by Laurie Simmons, gelatin silver print.

Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94

The eponymous image, *Big Camera/Little Camera* (1976), depicts a small toy camera next to one given to Simmons by her father: 'I put the two cameras together for scale, and as a metaphor – real life versus fiction. It was also a statement about what I intended to do with the camera.'

The retrospective spans four decades of work by Simmons, including her renowned series *Walking & Lying Objects* (1987-1991), in which the artist began to work with larger, fantastical props; *The Love Doll*, (2009-11), centring on luxury life-size Japanese dolls; and *How We See*(2015), where young women seemingly stare out at us through closed eyes, painted like those of dolls.

Together, the bodies of work on view at the Tadao Ando-designed museum trace her career-long fascination of gender roles, with these themes moving to the forefront of the cultural conversation in 2018. The show includes screenings of two video works, *The Music of Regret* (2006), featuring Meryl Streep, and *My Art* (2016) – written and directed by, and starring Simmons – a feature-length film about a New York artist’s relationship to her work, Simmons herself becoming the performer of an identity, the artist, the object. §



Installation view of Simmons' 2015 series *How We See* at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94



How We See/Edie (Green), 2015, by Laurie Simmons, pigment print. Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94



Rooftop, 1984, by Laurie Simmons, pigment print.
Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94



From left, *Walking Gun*, 1991, gelatin silver print; *Walking Purse*, 1989, dye destruction print; and *Walking Cake II (Color)*, 1989, pigment print, by Laurie Simmons. *Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94*



Walking House, 1989, by Laurie Simmons, pigment print.
Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94



Woman Opening Refrigerator/Milk to the Right, 1979, by Laurie Simmons, Cibachrome print.
Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94



2017: The Mess, 2017, by Laurie Simmons, pigment print.
Courtesy of Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Laurie Simmons and Salon 94