

# KOHN GALLERY

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## BRUCE CONNER A MOVIE

On View Saturday, November 12, 2016  
Exhibition on view through January 14, 2017



**Los Angeles, California** – During SFMOMA and MoMA’s large survey retrospective honoring the late Bruce Conner (1933 - 2008), Kohn Gallery premieres Conner’s masterwork, the seminal *A MOVIE* (1958). Comprised of scavenged newsreels, B-movies, and coming attractions, *A MOVIE* has been described as the first contemporary “found footage film.” The sophistication in

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which Conner has crafted the work – a precision that would define his entire oeuvre across diverse media – belies any association with the readymade.

A MOVIE orchestrates a virtual symphony of disasters, including car crashes, explosions, war, and famine, as well as moments of grace – a tightrope act, a plane floating through clouds, or light reflected on water. The images in their specificity become archetype, and they attain a state of visual poetry that allows the viewer to feel their full emotional weight.

With his initial exploration in the film medium, Conner launched a lifelong career positioning moving image alongside collage, assemblage sculpture, drawing, painting, and photography; in this first film he reconceived notions of cinema itself. A MOVIE is deeply invested in exploring the tactile nature of its medium, where Conner found the perfect vehicle to explore the depths of the human experience in modernity.

In A MOVIE's joining of montage with Respighi's "Pines of Rome," Conner also established a filmic language of music and image that he would refine in his work over the course of several decades. In this stroke, Conner managed to not only re-introduce film to the art world (after a relative absence dating to the 1930's), but invented the music video--an achievement later recognized by David Byrne and Brian Eno, who approached him to make films accompanying their classic "My Life in the Bush of Ghosts."

The new 4K digital restoration of A MOVIE, conducted from Conner's original 16mm positive A-roll, is the second in a series of groundbreaking digital restorations which will ultimately preserve all of his films in unique limited editions of the highest quality. The first to receive this treatment, CROSSROADS (1976) was described in a feature-length essay in Artforum in 2013, and has been hailed as a new standard in the presentation and archiving of moving image.

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## About Bruce Conner

Born in 1933, internationally recognized American artist, Bruce Conner is best known for his assemblages, surrealist sculptures, avant-garde short films and detailed paintings and drawings. Conner's innovative film works, often utilizing montaged shots from pre-existing footage and incorporation of pop music for sound tracks, have inspired generations of filmmakers and considered to be precursors to the music video genre. He was a central figure in the San Francisco Beat scene of the 1950s and remained an active proponent of the counter-cultural movement, at large through his death in San Francisco in 2008.

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA) is currently exhibiting a major retrospective of work by Bruce Conner through January 2017. The exhibition premiered at MoMA, New York in July and travels after SFMoMA to the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid in February 2017. The retrospective is co-curated by SFMoMA's Rudolf Frieling, Curator of Media Arts and Gary Garrels, Senior Curator of Painting and Sculpture in collaboration with MoMA's Stuart Comer, Chief Curator of Media and Performance and Laura Hoptman, Curator of Painting and Sculpture. While offering a comprehensive selection of works spanning his career, this retrospective will underscore the parallels between Conner's work as an artist and as a filmmaker.

## About Kohn Gallery

Since its establishment in 1985 by former Flash Art editor, Michael Kohn, Kohn Gallery has presented art historically significant exhibitions in Los Angeles along with contemporary exhibitions that create meaningful contexts, establishing links to the greater art historical continuum. Significant exhibitions include: *Andy Warhol's Campbell's Soup Boxes* in December 1986, just weeks before the artist's untimely death; *She: Works by Richard Prince and Wallace Berman*, brought together, for the first time, two generations of leading artists from different coasts; *Bruce Conner: Work from the 1970s*, which inspired the artist's first solo retrospective in Europe at the Kunsthalle Wien and Kunsthalle Zurich (2010); other shows of important New York-based artists have included new works by Christopher Wool, Richard Tuttle, Mark Tansey, Kenny Scharf, and Keith Haring. Kohn Gallery represents important West Coast artists with long

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careers and rich history, including Bruce Connor, the Estates of John Altoon, Wallace Berman and Charles Brittin; Lita Albuquerque, Larry Bell, and Joe Goode; along with an exciting roster of emerging and mid-career artists including Ori Gersht, Tom LaDuke, Ryan McGinness, Rosa Loy, Dennis Hollingsworth, Mark Ryden, and Troika.

In May 2014, Kohn Gallery opened a new 12,000 square foot gallery. Designed by Malibu-based architect Lester Tobias, the new gallery building features an immense space with 22-foot ceilings, allowing for stunning exhibitions on a monumental scale. This design also incorporates a massive glass window along Highland Avenue and extensive skylights to bathe the gallery with natural light. With an eye always towards the future, the Kohn Gallery will utilize this expansive new exhibition space to continue to mount bold exhibitions of established and emerging artists.

Visit [kohngallery.com](http://kohngallery.com) for the latest information on upcoming exhibitions.

Join the conversation on social media by mentioning @KOHNGallery and using the #ConnerKohn hashtag when posting.

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