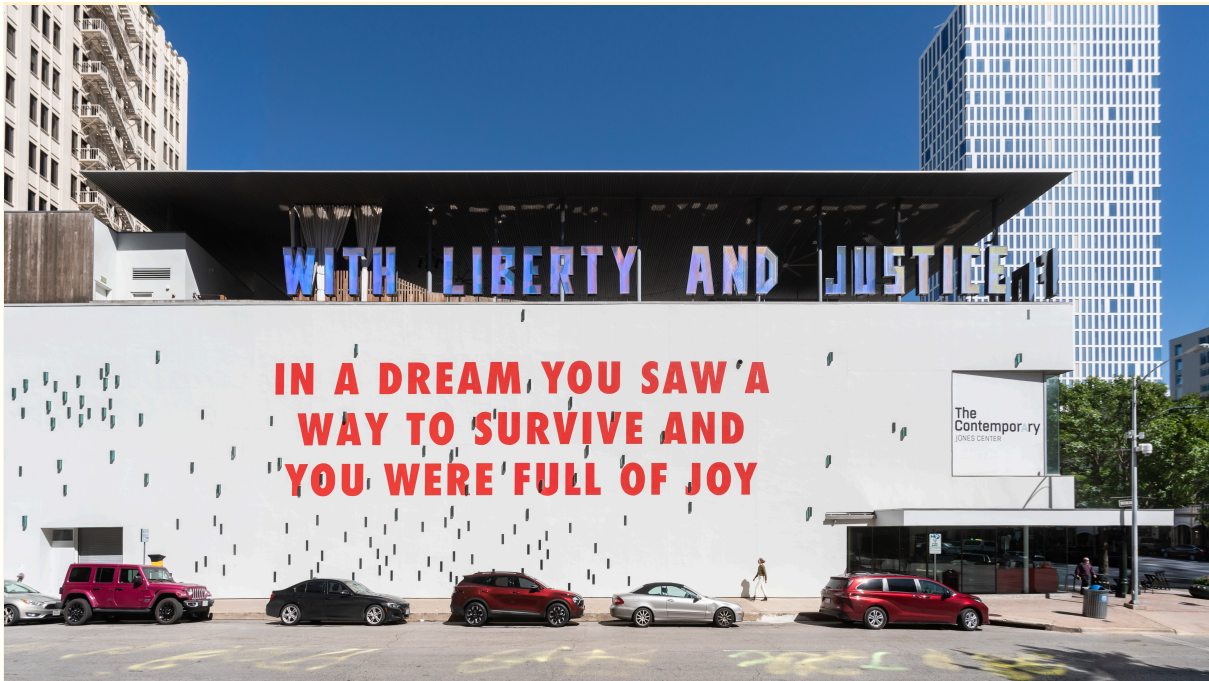


THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN UNVEILS PUBLIC MURAL BY ARTIST JENNY HOLZER



Jenny Holzer, *IN A DREAM YOU SAW A WAY TO SURVIVE AND YOU WERE FULL OF JOY*, 2022. Acrylic latex paint on stucco. Text: *Survival*, 1983–1985. © 2022 Jenny Holzer, ARS. Image courtesy The Contemporary Austin.

Photograph by Alex Boeschstein.

MURAL: *IN A DREAM YOU SAW A WAY TO SURVIVE AND YOU WERE FULL OF JOY*

Through Spring 2023

The Contemporary Austin

700 Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas

October 19, AUSTIN, TEXAS – The Contemporary Austin has unveiled a new mural by American artist **Jenny Holzer** on the 7th Street side of the museum’s Jones Center building in downtown Austin. Reading *IN A DREAM YOU SAW A WAY TO SURVIVE AND YOU WERE FULL OF JOY* in large, red letters, the mural presents a text drawn from the artist’s series *Survival* (1983–85). The mural is presented in conjunction with the Contemporary’s fall exhibition titled after the same work. The exhibition features eight female artists working across a variety of mediums to explore the intersections of narrative, identity, and power. Participating artists include: Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley, Adriana Corral, Ellie Ga, Juliana Huxtable, Tala Madani, Danielle Mckinney, Wendy Red Star, and Clare Rojas.

Regarding the choice of Holzer’s *IN A DREAM...* as the exhibition title and the opportunity to present the work as a public mural in Austin, curator Robin K. Williams says, “This text by Jenny Holzer underlines

both the themes and sense of the exhibition in many ways. It's an evocative phrase, telling a story of possibility and implying critical questions that have guided our thinking around the project: Who, under what conditions, must struggle to survive? What does survival look like for individuals and communities? And, how might the tools of our imaginations help us to find joy and collectively reshape the conditions of our society? We ask these questions in a place and time when oppressive political agendas threaten the lives and liberties of many people in Texas and beyond. Holzer's work provides a touchstone for thinking about how art can intersect with today's social and political realities—how art can promote critical dialogues and inspire actionable change. For decades, she has presented her work in the public arena through texts that reflect the implications of power within public discourse, including political speech, government accountability, and the media. Her work prompts people to revisit the ideas they hold and invites them to act for change. Our hope is that presenting this text in the heart of downtown Austin, seven blocks from the Texas capitol building, will do the same. The message is simultaneously critical, reflective, and inspiring.”

Since the beginning of her career, much of Holzer's work has been designed for public spaces, where viewers come across it by chance. These unexpected encounters with words in the midst of everyday life create opportunities for reflection on truth, power, violence, joy, idealism, love, and hope, helping us envision pathways toward a new and better future. *IN A DREAM...* first appeared in the 1980s as part of the *Survival* series, in which Holzer explored how individuals respond to their political, social, physical, and psychological environments. Originally presented on electronic signs, the text has since appeared in a wide range of formats, including billboards, plaques, stickers, granite benches, light projections, and condom wrappers.

IN A DREAM YOU SAW A WAY TO SURVIVE AND YOU WERE FULL OF JOY is curated by Robin K. Williams, Curator, with Julie Le, Assistant Curator, The Contemporary Austin. The project is made possible through generous support from Rachel and Jeff Arnold, Carly and Clayton Christopher, Suzanne Deal Booth, Deborah Dupre, Deborah Green and Clayton Aynesworth, Kathleen Irvin Loughlin, Suzanne McFayden, Chris Mattsson, Fredericka and David Middleton, Guillermo Nicolas and Jim Foster, Topo Chico, Zarmeena Vendal, and Melba and Ted Whatley. This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

ABOUT JENNY HOLZER

Jenny Holzer (born 1950) is a conceptual and installation artist whose work deploys text in public spaces across an array of media, including electronic signs, carved stone, paintings, billboards, and prints. Holzer invites public debate and illuminates social and political justice. Celebrated for her inimitable use of language and projects in the public sphere, Holzer creates a powerful tension between the realms of feeling and knowledge, with a practice that encompasses individual and collective experiences of power and violence, vulnerability and tenderness.

Holzer's work has appeared in public places and exhibitions around the world, including the Guggenheim Museums in New York and Bilbao, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Tate Modern,

and the Louvre Abu Dhabi. She was the first female artist to represent the United States with a solo exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 1990.

THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

As Austin's only museum solely focused on contemporary artists and their work, The Contemporary Austin offers exhibitions, educational opportunities, and events that start conversations and fuel the city's creative spirit. Known for artist-centric exhibitions and collaborations, The Contemporary invites exploration at both its urban and natural settings—downtown at the Jones Center (700 Congress Avenue) and lakeside at the Laguna Gloria campus (3809 West 35th Street), which includes the museum's Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park, with a growing program of commissions, temporary projects, and a permanent collection of outdoor sculptures by artists including Ai Weiwei, Terry Allen, Carol Bove, Sarah Crowner, Tom Friedman, Anya Gallaccio, Ryan Gander, Liam Gillick, Nancy Holt, Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler, Paul McCarthy, Wangechi Mutu, Tom Sachs, Monika Sosnowska, Jessica Stockholder, SUPERFLEX, Marianne Vitale, and Ursula von Rydingsvard.

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