

PRESS RELEASE

**BARBARA KRUGER**

**Early Works**

10<sup>th</sup> February - 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015



*Untitled (You make history when you do business), 1981*  
gelatin silver print in artist's frame , 62 5/8 x 47 5/7 in.

Skarstedt London is delighted to announce its forthcoming exhibition of seminal early works by American artist Barbara Kruger. The exhibition features Kruger's large-scale black and white photographs, overlaid with provocative captions in bold Futura type. This group of works, selected from the 1980s, examines the cultural constructions of power, identity and sexuality through their juxtaposition of text and imagery.

*"In my work I try to question the seemingly natural appearance of images through the textual commentary which accompanies them".*

Presented in the artist's signature red enamel frames, the works in the exhibition form part of Kruger's highly recognisable and consistent stylistic practice. Coupled with the bold font, the red frames not only create a strong visual impact against the black and white imagery, more importantly they function as a key element in Kruger's strategy to challenge the visual language and power structures of consumerist culture. As Kruger affirms: *"These were objects. I wasn't going to stick them on the walls with pushpins. I wanted them to enter the marketplace because I began to understand that outside the market there is nothing... That's what the frames were about: how to commodify them. It was the most effective packaging device. Signed, sealed, delivered."*

Drawing on her background in graphic design, Kruger adopts the same visual tools as mass media; the appropriated images and texts acting as both social commentary and political agitator. In today's digital era, where hierarchies of culture and power are blurred through online and social media, Kruger's direct address remains highly relevant. Subverting the media's illusions and aspirations for a modern American culture, Kruger's ground-breaking works of the 1980s have contributed significantly to the discourse of such themes as Conceptual Art, Semiotics and Feminism, earning her a place among the leading artists of today.

Barbara Kruger was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1945. A recent solo exhibition of her work was held at Modern Art Oxford in 2014. Kruger's work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions at international institutions including: Kunsthaus Bregenz in 2013; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C. in 2012; Moderna Museet, Stockholm in 2008; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, California in 2005 and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York in 2000. Previous public projects include façade banners, tube posters, billboards and bus wraps for Selfridges Department Stores in London, Manchester and Birmingham in 2003. In 2005 Kruger was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime achievement at the Venice Biennale.

## About Skarstedt



20 East 79th Street  
New York NY 10075



550 West 21st Street  
New York NY 10011



23 Old Bond Street  
London W1S 4PZ

Skarstedt was founded in 1994 by Per Skarstedt to mount historical exhibitions by contemporary European and American artists that had become the core of his specialty in Sweden and New York in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Skarstedt's New York gallery is located on 79 Street and Madison Avenue in an historic building, formerly the renowned Rosenberg Gallery. In October 2012, Skarstedt opened its London space on Old Bond Street with the inaugural exhibition *Andy Warhol: The American Indian*. Skarstedt opened its 3<sup>rd</sup> space in May 2014 in Chelsea, New York with the exhibition *Yves Klein and Andy Warhol: Fire Paintings and Oxidation Paintings*.

Skarstedt's programme reflects the gallery's established area of expertise whilst also expanding its focus to include museum-quality, historically researched exhibitions from modern and contemporary masters. Skarstedt's unique relationship with artists allows it to present exhibitions both on the primary and secondary markets, creating a dialogue between the generations. Skarstedt is committed to sharing both its aesthetic perspective and philosophical approach whilst working with prominent international museums and private collections around the world.

### Notes to editors

**Exhibition:** *Barbara Kruger: Early Works*

**Location:** Skarstedt, 23 Old Bond Street, London W1S 4PZ, UK

**Telephone:** +44 (0) 207 499 5200

**Dates:** 10 February 2015 – 25 April 2015

**Hours:** Tuesday to Friday 10am - 6pm; Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

**Admission is free**

[www.skarstedt.com](http://www.skarstedt.com)