

Corita Kent: The Sorcery of Images @ Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles

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Corita Kent, The Sorcery of Images, 2025 installation view Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles

“In a sense, the whole world around the artist is his source, his sorting and relating powers are his sorcery, and the one isn’t much good without the other. ... Anything can be a source, even a mistake. The sorcery or the thievery is the art of relating sources into a new solution.”

These were the insights of Corita Kent (1918–1986), an artist, teacher and activist who uniquely combined her passions for faith and politics in an exuberant and joyfully creative practice. As a Catholic nun in Los Angeles’s Immaculate Heart of Mary order and an influential art teacher at Immaculate Heart College from 1947 to 1968, Corita (as she was known) gained international recognition for her signature serigraphs (silkscreen prints) that innovatively brought together elements of popular culture with messages of love, faith and social justice. Over the course of several decades, Corita developed a unique and inventive approach to typography and color that rivaled the explorations of her Pop Art contemporaries.

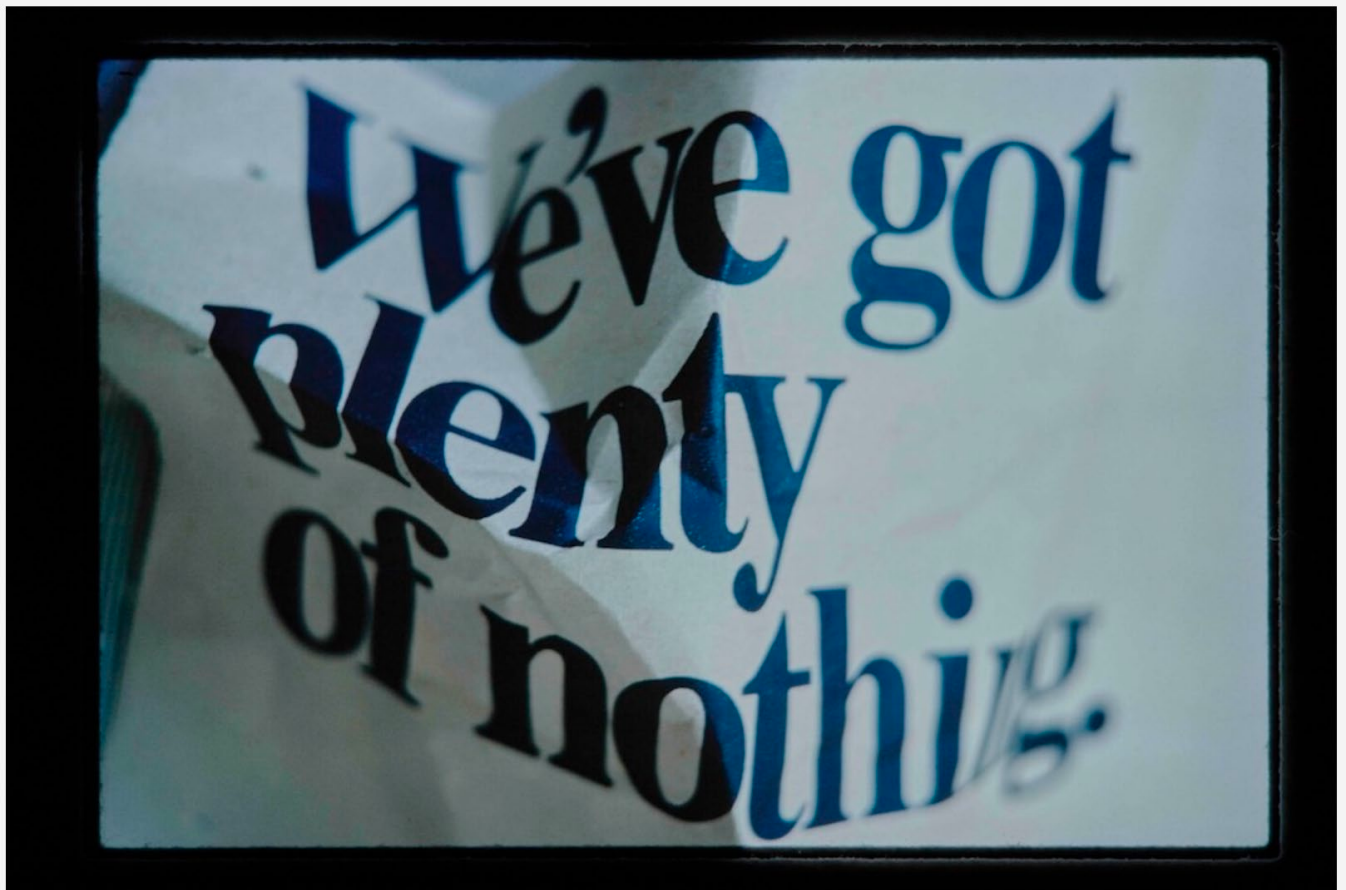
Corita Kent: The Sorcery of Images focuses on a little seen part of Corita's artistic practice: her archive of over fifteen thousand 35 mm slides that she and her cohorts took between 1955 and 1968 while she was a beloved teacher in the art department at Immaculate Heart College. Collecting fragments of the world with her camera for reuse at a later date, her eye documented the contemporary Los Angeles urban landscape of advertising and billboards, social events such as the effervescent and carnivalesque processions of the college's Mary's Day celebrations, dolls and puppets, flowers, and many other often-overlooked moments of everyday wonder. This exhibition brings together over 1,100 images from Corita's photographic archive in an effort to show how photography was an integral part of her artistic practice as both a source and an inspiration. Presented as a three-screen digital slide projection that pays homage to Corita's multi-screen slide show lectures, *Corita Kent: The Sorcery of Images* offers a unique look at this photographic archive, combining and recombining images in an exploration of her joyful and idiosyncratic way of seeing the world.

On view in the Marciano Art Foundation Library is *Irregularity: Corita and Immaculate Heart College's Rule Breaking Designs*, a selection of materials from Corita Art Center's archive, highlighting her years as a teacher at Immaculate Heart College. The presentation features the art department's irreverent newsletter the *Irregular Bulletin*, edited by Corita's mentor Sister Magdalen Mary, and for which Corita served as the unofficial photographer.

Corita Kent: The Sorcery of Images is organized by MAF Director Hanneke Skerath and independent writer and curator Douglas Fogle for Marciano Art Foundation in collaboration with Corita Art Center.



Mary's Day attendees, Immaculate Heart College, 1966, 35 mm slide, Corita Slide Collection, Corita Art Center, corita.org



Distorted ad, source material, 1967, 35 mm slide, Corita Slide Collection, Corita Art Center, corita.org



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