This exhibition presents the work of more than forty artists and activists who built their careers—and committed themselves to political change—during a time of social tumult in the United States. Beginning in the 1960s, a number of movements to combat social injustice emerged, with the Black Power, Civil Rights, and Women's Movements chief among them. As active participants in the contemporary art world, the artists in this exhibition created their own radical feminist thinking—working broadly, on multiple fronts—to combat sexism, racism, homophobia, and classism, both in the art world and within their local communities.

As the second-wave Feminist Movement gained strength in the 1970s, women of color found themselves working with, and at times against, the largely white, middle-class women primarily responsible for establishing the tone, priorities, and methods of the fight for gender equity in the United States. Whether the term "feminism" was used or not—and in communities of color, it often was not—black women envisioned a revolution against the systems of oppression they faced in the art world and the culture at large.

The artists of *We Wanted a Revolution* employed the emerging methods of conceptual art, performance, film, and video, along with more traditional pursuits, including printmaking, photography, and painting. Whatever the medium, their innovative art-making reflected their own aesthetic, cultural, and political priorities.

Favoring radical transformation over reformist gestures, these activist artists wanted more than just recognition within the existing professional art world. Instead, their aim was to revolutionize the art world itself, making space for the many and varied communities of people it had largely ignored. The art included here captures this urgent imperative, advanced by a group of artists who were politically active, socially engaged, and culturally responsive. Collectively, it reveals just how contested the histories of art and social change in the later twentieth century remain for us today.

We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85 is organized by the Brooklyn Museum.
The Boston presentation is coordinated by Jessica Hong, Assistant Curator, the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston

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#wewantedarevolution

Hear more from the artists and curator at icaboston.org/go.