

The background of the slide features three black paper cutouts of female figures, possibly inspired by the 'Woman in Red' by Francis Bacon. Each figure has two red circular accents on its chest. The figures are positioned horizontally across the upper half of the slide. A solid red rectangular box is overlaid on the bottom half, containing the title and date in white text.

# Re-Evaluation in Feminism and Contemporary Art

13 SEPTEMBER 2024



**Middlesex  
University**

Cover Image: Clara Bonfiglio, "Sagome nere", 1984, 100x200 cm, multilayer material and paints.

# Create/Feminisms ACI Conference, 2024

## Conference Programme

## **9.30–10.30 Grove Atrium Registration and Poster displays**

**10.30–10.45**

### **Hatchcroft Building Lecture Theatre H116**

Welcome, followed by keynotes

### **Hatchcroft Building Lecture Theatre H116**

**10.45 am – 11.30 am** First keynote – Jacqueline Millner (online)

**11.30 am – 12.15 pm** Second keynote – Oksana Briukhovetska (in-person)

**12.15 pm – 1.00 pm** Third Keynote – Ghazel (online)

**1.00 pm – 1.30 pm** Keynote Speakers Q&A

**1:30 pm – 2:30 pm** Grove Atrium Lunch

### **Panels 1–6 2.30–4.00 pm VINE building**

(VG01: Panel 1; V101: 2; V102: 3; V103: 4; V104: 5; V105: 6.)

**2.30–4.00:**

#### **VG01: Panel 1**

Karen Keifer Boyd (online) The Curve of the Blade: Problems of Vulnerability and Protection.

Irene Bronner (online) A Re-evaluation of Mary Sibande's Sophie.

Sonja van Kerkhoff (in person) Sidestepping (the object): case studies in the art of Tiakitanga (Taking Care).

#### **V101: Panel 2**

Kimberly K Lamm (online) Writing Imaginary Maps: Feminist Art Beyond the Centre.

Amy Tobin (in person) Misalignments: Feminist Horizons and Epistemological Art.

Suzana Milevska (in person) Feminist Microhistories and Macrohistories: Women Artists as Archivists of Solidarity and Intersectionality.

#### **V102: Panel 3**

Alessia Cargnelli (in person) Working together in forms of resistance: on women-led and feminist-informed artists groups.

Laura Leuzzi (in person) Re-evaluating women's video art: uncovering and reassessing marginalised histories of feminist pioneers

Varvara Keidan Shavrova (in person) Feminism and Flight: how do women artists working today respond to global wars and conflicts by reimagining flight technologies?

#### **V103: Panel 4**

Jana Kukaine (in person) Latvian Feminist Art and (Post)socialist Food Practices.

paula roush (in person) Technobiographic Interventions: Feminist Narratives and AI in Academic Capitalism.

Barbora Komarová (in person) Can I label your work as feminist? Questionnaire as a method for verifying the possibility of a feminist interpretation of an artwork.

#### **V104: Panel 5**

Lisa Moravec (in person) Women's Politics and Art: Feminist Animalities in Kunst mit Eigen-Sinn.

Fran Cottell (in person) Conceptual Clothing revisited.

Valeria Mari (in person) On speaking terms with Feminist Art Curating through a Global Perspective.

#### **V105: Panel 6**

Pedro Merchán Mateos (in person) On the museum's foundations. Feminist and queer practices in contemporary art in Spain.

Karolina Majewska-Güde (in person) Exercises in Post-socialist Feminist Art History: Historicizing Collective Artistic Labour During Socialism.

Ellen Suneson (in person) Re-evaluating disciplinary departures of feminist art history through 1970s feminist representations of subordination.

**4.00–4.10** (Comfort break)

**Panels 7– 12 4.10–5.40 VINE building**

(VG01: panel 7; V101: 8; V102: 9; V103: 10; V104: 11; V105: 12)

**4.10–5.40**

**VG01: Panel 7**

Clara Zarza (online) Rethinking omissions: from the life of the artist to the life of the work.

Helena Reckitt (in person) After Gretchen Hupfel.

Anke Kempkes (online) The Pre-Symbolic at the Constitution of a Protofeminist Avant-Garde:

Maria Pinińska-Bereś and the Redefinition of Sculpture.

**V101: Panel 8**

Katy Deepwell (in person) Feminisms, contemporary art and world systems theories.

Maria Kheirkhah (in person) Navigating Anotherness in Contemporary Western Visual Culture (Muslim Diaspora).

Qingyu Shen (in person) Challenges and Reconstructions: Femininity in Contemporary Chinese Art from the 1990s to the Present.

**V102: Panel 9**

Ala Younis (online) Plan (fem.) for Greater Baghdad: artist's work.

Sohaila Baluch (in person) Unsettling the Archives, Sohaila Baluch 2024: a performance lecture.

Anne Robinson (in person) The telling is political: collectively speaking our collective story.

**V103: Panel 10**

Sabine Gebhardt Fink (in person) The Revolving Histories–Project Revisited.

Virginia Marano (in person) (Re)–Evaluating Artistic Norms and Temporalities: Feminist and Disability Perspectives in Contemporary Practice.

Alexandra Kokoli (in person) It was easier to act than to consider: The role of activism in Laura Mulvey's iconoclasm.

**V104: Panel 11**

Barbara Mählknecht (online) Re-evaluating Feminist Conceptions of Art Production: The Creative Refusal and Female Creativity in the Italian Wages for Housework Campaign.

Pauline Barrie (in person) The Founding of Women Artists Slide Library: Re- evaluating a living archive dedicated to the work of women artists.

Maria Photiou (in person) Rethinking the Legacies of War: Feminist Arts Activism in a Divided Country

**V105: Panel 12**

Gabriela Traple Wieczorek (online) Feminist Art and Social Practices in Latin America from the 1990s to the present.

Wiktoria Szczupacka (in person) The Broken Genealogy of Feminist Art History in Poland, on the Example of the Gallery of Women's League (1967–1980).

Angela Maderna (in person) The Separatist Issue into the Italian Art System in the 1980s.

**5.40 pm – 7:00 pm** Grove Atrium, Plenary, Reception and Long Table (after Lois Weaver) (in-person only).

# Keynote Speakers



## Keynote Speaker

### **Professor Jacqueline Millner (online) Revolutionising value: Practising feminism through contemporary art**

At the heart of much feminist thinking and practice is the desire to firstly question, then radically change, and finally re-imagine, what is socially, politically and economically valued. In this keynote for a conference on Re-evaluation in Feminism and Art, Catriona Moore and I consider how feminist contemporary art practices can enact a process of re-valuing what is devalued in neoliberal, colonial systems. We focus on work that is at hand in Australia, but as with much of our art historical and theoretical research, we do not make the case for a national art but rather connect those closely inhabited practices to broader concerns. Drawing on our experiences with collaborative feminist networks in Australia focused on the generative links between contemporary art and feminism, and care ethics and art, we consider how feminist creative interventions can contribute towards a reimagining of values towards more equitable and sustainable futures.

**BIO:** Jacqueline Millner is an art theorist specialising in contemporary art and its intersections with social, political and cultural change. Coming from an interdisciplinary background that includes law, political science and visual arts, Jacqueline draws on social history of art and feminist perspectives as well as on political theory and aesthetics to re-think the link between art and broader systems of power. Her interest is also in exploring how contemporary art and creative practices can model alternative values that are urgently needed to address the excesses of neoliberalism. Her recent research has focused on feminist care ethics, theorising how they are practiced in various contemporary art projects and how a focus on aesthetics can help us better value caring practices. Jacqueline's research has contributed significant new perspectives on Australian and international contemporary art, including the centering of feminist perspectives and the reconciling of beauty and conceptual concerns. Along with scholarly books, articles and catalogue essays for major galleries and museums both nationally and internationally, Jacqueline also undertakes research through curatorial projects. Her most recent curated exhibition focused on the art of care and was held across metropolitan and regional venues in Victoria, NSW and the ACT. Jacqueline's research has consistently attracted Category 2 external funding from the Australia Council and Create NSW, as well as Regional Arts Victoria. She is currently co-CI on the LTU-led ARC funded project Parched: Cultures of Drought in Regional Victoria where she is focusing on the distinct, place-informed visual cultures of various regions to create new knowledge about how drought is understood and experienced.

### **Oksana Briukhovetska (in person), We are Fighting Back. War, Art and Feminism in Today's Ukraine.**

My presentation will provide an overview of the rise of feminist art practices and visibility of women's artists in Ukraine during the period marked by Russian military aggression, which started in 2014 and escalated in a full-scale invasion in 2022. As a member of the local artistic and feminist community, I will provide first-hand insights based on my curatorial feminist projects in Kyiv, Ukraine, in 2015–2019, on my work with Ukrainian women artists for the Secondary Archive platform and on my own artistic research and practice at the MFA program at the University of Michigan in the U.S. in 2021–2023. I will reflect on the feminist theoretical frameworks in Ukraine during this time and on how Ukrainian feminist thinkers sometimes faced difficulties in applying Western feminist scholarship to the Ukrainian context. The Russian war against Ukraine provoked strong anticolonial re-evaluation of Ukrainian history, theory and art. The context of Ukrainian struggle for its identity and statehood provides a unique combination of the ideas of national liberation fighting against Russia's imperialist attempts to dominate with the fight against patriarchy, racism, homophobia and sexism within its own society. I will present a multilayered map of these struggles emphasizing an emancipatory role of feminist and queer art in it.

**Bio:** Oksana Briukhovetska, born and lives in Ukraine. She works with topics of memory, social and gender trauma, touching on social topics through the study of personal experience. Her work addresses the issues of war in Ukraine, Ukrainian labor migration, the realities of motherhood, femininity. Her research practice often includes interviews and conversations, while utilizing a wide range of mediums: drawing, painting, textile, writing, public installation, and interventions into urban spaces. She also works as a graphic design. For nearly a decade she worked as a curator at the Visual Culture Research Center in Kyiv, where her main intention was to give voice to women artists. She continues to research feminist art in both Eastern and Western Europe and is co-editor of the book collection of interviews, published in Ukrainian and English: *The Right to Truth: Conversations on Art and Feminism* (VCRC, 2019). Among others, she has also collaborated with the Warsaw Museum of Modern Art, European Alternatives, and Political Critique, Poland. In recent years she lives in the US, where she has been researching and writing a book, which aims to present to a Ukrainian audience a more critical discussion of race and anti-racist struggle. She has interviewed over 20 people from different US cities talking about the Black Lives Matter movement. In 2023 she graduated from MFA program of Stamps School of Art and Design at the University of Michigan.

### **Ghazel, (online) Paradoxes of living and working in and out of Iran.**

Paradoxes are a centerpoint in my work and my life. In my presentation I will talk about how in the 90s, I detoured getting official permissions to show my work in Iran and therefore ended up doing underground performances/ happenings. I will also discuss the social work that I did with delinquent children in Tehran. In 1997 I had my first experience of working in a correction center for children and not only it was a turning point in my life, but also a starting point for my ongoing Me series. In these videos I use autobiography and/or the excuse of autobiography to portray myself and my paradoxes in and out of Iran.

**BIO:** Ghazel lives in Iran and France. Artist's website: <https://www.ghazel.me> In 1986 Ghazel left Iran to study Film at Université Paul Valéry (Montpellier), then she entered the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux Arts of Nîmes in 1988 where she received her BFA in 1990 and her MFA in 1992. In order to be able to remain in France, Ghazel continued to be a student, but in 1997, after trying to change her immigration status from a student to a permanent resident, she received an expulsion letter from the governor of Languedoc-Roussillon. This was a turning point both in her life and her artistic life. She started the ongoing *Wanted (Urgent)* project, in which she looked for a husband for a marriage of convenience. Since 2009 these works have been on display at the Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration, Paris. She started showing her Me series in 2000 and their presence in the *Clandestini* (Venice Biennale, 2003) exhibition, curated by Francesco Bonami, gave her worldwide recognition. Her recent solo shows were *Mea Culpa* (Carbon 12, Dubai) and *Anthologie des racines carrées* (Galerie Nivet-Carzon, Paris) and ISCP Gallery in New York. She has participated in many international biennials, the 8th Havana Biennial (*El Arte con la vida*) in 2003, the 3rd Tirana Biennial (*Sweet Taboos, Episode 2: To lose without being a Loser*) in 2005, the 15th Biennale of Sydney (*Zones of Contact*) in 2006, and the 7th Sharjah Biennial (*Belonging*) in 2005. In 2018 the French Minister of Culture made her a Knight (Chevalier) of the Order of the Arts and Letters.



# Abstracts and Biographies

## **VG01: Panel 1**

**Karen Kiefer-Boyd**

### **The Curve of the Blade: Profiles of Vulnerability and Protection.**

The study is grounded in the field of transdisciplinary posthuman becoming with a focus on Linda Stein's Profiles: Below the Eyes series of artworks as profiles of vulnerability and protection. In a review of the 2024 rebooted "classic" movie, "Mean Girls," film critic Desiree Ibekwe (2024) writes: "Watching it feels like opening a pink crushed velvet box and finding a knife inside." Linda Stein's art, whether drawings or sculptures, embodies such contradictions of vulnerability and protection with a complexity that visual metaphors can evoke. Rather than a representational line of inquiry into themes of vulnerability and protection manifested in Linda Stein's art, my investigation concerns embodied, embedded, relational, and affective performativity of her art and the affective experience of creating the art.

The Palmer Museum of Art reopened in June 2024 and acquired seven works of art by Linda Stein: Five from the Profile: Below the Eyes series (i.e., Profile Writing, Profile Envelope, Profile Landscape, Profile Daubs, Profile Flying), one sculpture from the Displacement series titled, "Possessions," and the sculpture "Asian Armature". My study for an exhibition I am curator includes works by several artists also in the Palmer Collection in conversation with Stein's art, such as: Mildred Howard's "Thirty-eight Double Dee", Hung Liu's "Miss Fortune", Carrie Mae Weems's "Trees with Mattress Springs", and Martha Wilson's "I Make Up the Image of My Perfection/ I Make Up the Image of My Deformity".

My project includes audio-recorded diary readings by Linda Stein and her narrative reflections on the affective experience of creating numerous profiles "below the eyes." Working with audio material, similar to my interviews with 19 artists involved in Wo/Manhouse 2022, I am using augmented reality tools with Stein's art to set-in-motion pedagogical potentials of augmented reality to stage feminist interventions in public spheres.

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#### **BIO:**

Karen Keifer-Boyd, Ph.D., Professor of Art Education and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Penn State University, co-authored several books: Teaching and Assessing Social Justice Art Education: Power, Politics, Possibilities (Routledge, 2022); Lobby Activism: Feminism(s)+Art Education (NAEA, 2021); Including Difference (NAEA, 2013); InCITE, InSIGHT, InSITE (NAEA, 2008); Engaging Visual Culture (Davis, 2007); and co-edited Real-World Readings in Art Education: Things Your Professors Never Told You (Falmer, 2000); and authored more than 80 publications. Her research focuses on feminist critical disability studies, feminist art pedagogy, transcultural dialogue, and eco-social justice art education, and has been translated and published in Austria, Brazil, China, Columbia, Finland, Oman, S. Korea, Turkey, and the US.

#### **Irene Bronner**

### **A Re-evaluation of Mary Sibande's Sophie.**

South African artist Mary Sibande's work centres on a daydreaming domestic worker character named 'Sophie', visualised through digital prints and mixed-media sculptural installations, for which she has received both local and international critical and market related recognition. In her various iterations from 2007 to the present, Sophie is recognisable in two ways: firstly, through her costuming, created by Sibande's melding of a domestic worker uniform with grandiose elements of ersatz Victorian costumes that evoke colonial privilege and feminine ideals; and secondly, through the fiberglass life casts that are cast from Sibande's own face and body. A flurry of South African scholarship emerged in the 2010s examining Sophie's various iterations, principally through an intersectional and postcolonial feminist lens, produced primarily by white female art historians with often elaborate theorising. Sophie's international reception, in contrast, mostly in the art fair context, tends to flatten Sibande's works into an aspirational 'fairy tale' of a servant whose creative fabulations of power and privilege know no bounds, thereby honouring generations of Black African women who work as domestic labourers. What is missing from both positions, I argue in this paper, is a discussion of the political and theoretical potential of the works' limitations as art objects. I articulate therefore how an unhomely doubling results in a number of Sibande's Sophie installations. These doubles depicted, I argue, may reveal but not ultimately subvert existing South African social norms. I question therefore, potentially somewhat controversially, whether Sophie's parodies of contemporary South Africa's aspirational and fetishistic materialism, which nevertheless arise from its legacies of societal trauma, are drawn back into tropes that Sibande herself has stated she seeks to critique. A feminist reflexive methodology allows me to consider my own role in this argument as a white female South African art historian.

**BIO:** Irene Enslé Bronner is a Senior Lecturer with the NRF Research Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture, in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA), at the University of Johannesburg. Her research interests centre on contemporary feminist new materialisms in the visual arts, with a focus on South Africa.

**Sonja van Kerkhoff**

**Sidestepping (the object): case studies in the art of Tiakitanga (Taking Care).**

Feminism, often a rebellion against the missionary position by focussing on giving agency or focus to women, or telling stories from a female perspective, also embraces feminism(s) on the awareness of seeing and doing things differently. In the art world, a focus on the autonomy of the artist and artwork is dominant. I present examples as artist and curator, also aware of the colonialist influences in Aotearoa New Zealand, of ways of creating space(s) where the autonomy of the artist/artwork is blurred. Take Care/Tiakina was a project I developed with 15 artists in 10 different countries during covid times. I used zoom not only to connect them to 15 New Zealand-based artists who followed Māori customs of hosting (manaakitanga), but also as a medium. Later I created the work He tito nekehanga a waenga / Choreographies of in betweenness, in which zoom video clips of the 15 overseas artists were projected on a wall.

Visitors had to silence the voices in order to hear them, one at a time. The cacophony of voices, an intentional soundpiece, required visitors to take agency and 'blurred' the space(s). Artworks in the Take Care project were diversely collaborative. Authorship was blurred One artist crocheted an edging onto one of my works hung in response to her own work and that artwork has evolved into a collaborative work, open to future mutations.

Collaborations, such as The Mataaho Collective (2024 Venice Biennale), are one way to foreground less ego-driven art processes. I am particularly interested in the interstices between media and between who made what. This also sidesteps essentialist positions. In 2024 for a solo show, I embedded works by others into the relational nature of all objects in the total space. The show mutated week by week. Te hinengaro whakawaatea (the unbounded mind) was about sidestepping the autonomous artist-maker and the finality of the artwork.

**BIO:** Sonja van Kerkhoff (1960, Aotearoa / New Zealand) based in the Netherlands 1989–2017 now resides in The Hague and Kawakawa. She makes things, curates and writes. See: [sonjavank.com](http://sonjavank.com) or [sonjavank.wordpress.com](http://sonjavank.wordpress.com)

## **VI01: Panel 2**

**Kimberly K Lamm**

**Writing Imaginary Maps: Feminist Art Beyond the Centre.** This paper focuses on artistic practices that offer methods for exploring feminist art beyond western dominance. We can see the challenges of this project in well-meaning efforts that focus on artists whose work emerges out of places shaped by the west's exploitative reach. As demonstrated by the Brooklyn Museum's 2007 exhibition Global Feminisms (one of the big exhibitions devoted to feminist art in the first decade of the twentieth century), often these artists are asked, whether implicitly or explicitly, to speak for and bear witness to the truth of oppression, which reinforces the centre/periphery model and can reinscribe victimization as the only way to understand the artwork, a real risk for women artists in particular.

My paper begins with Marsha Meskimmon's "Chronology through Cartography: Mapping 1970s Art Globally" (2007) and its call to shift the paradigms for studying feminist art from linear time, and all its associations with development and progress, to a "spatial frame" and a "global cartography" (323). "Thinking spatially," Meskimmon argues, "We can admit the co-existence in time of locationally distinct narratives and connect disjointed temporalities, thus asking vital questions concerning networks of relations, processes of exchange, and affinities of meaning" (324). The artists whose work I focus on in this paper—Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Mona Hatoum, and Lorna Simpson—give us images of thinking spatially by creating images of writing that foreground the graph in the cartographies of oppressive histories. These artists, I aim to show, take up writing to reveal how the body of 'woman' has been mapped as the symbolic ground of family, race, and nation, both as a result of western dominance and resistance to it. Mahasweta Devi's Imaginary Maps (1995), and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Translator's Preface" (1995) to Devi's triptych of novellas will inform my reading of these distinct bodies of work and

their “affinities of meaning.” Exploring the links between mapping and writing, Devi and Spivak illuminate the gendering of ethics—the basic idea that women are essentially good and naturally give—at the conceptual core of ‘woman’ as the symbolic ground of collective forms. I argue that the work of Cha, Hatoum, and Simpson inventively deploy language, text, and writing to refuse that assignment, and by doing so, begin to map imaginative places in which women of colour from oppressive historical circumstances are at the centre of the image but are not forced to make victimization present for western consumption.

**Bio:** Kimberly Lamm is Associate Professor of Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies and Art, Art History, and Visual Studies at Duke University. She is the author of *Addressing the Other Woman: Textual Correspondences in Feminist Art and Writing* (2018). Her research, which has appeared in journals such as *Women’s Studies Quarterly*, *Feminist Theory*, *Cultural Critique*, *Australian Feminist Studies*, and *Oxford Art Journal*, brings psychoanalytic feminism to bear on the study of Anglophone art, literature, and film.

### **Amy Tobin (in person) Misalignments: Feminist Horizons and Epistemological Art.**

In this paper I consider the theme of ‘Re-evaluation’ by attending to artists’s interests in counter histories. Rather than read these strategies as revisionist or corrective, I want to propose they offer a form of epistemological art aimed at transforming ways of thinking and concomitantly ways of being. Tracing examples rooted in different moments of production, I argue for these artistic practices as feminist horizons that point to the unfinished political work of feminism, beyond any academic, institutional or art world recuperation.

The work in this paper builds on arguments made in my book *Women Artists Together* –in which I argue for a materialist reading of feminist informed art that returns the context of revolutionary thought, debate and struggle to the art of the Women’s Liberation Movement – to consider a broader range of practices (including Rosemary Mayer, Amelia Mesa-Bains and Vaginal Creme Davies, among others) to articulate new points of solidarity across subject positions and histories. Drawing on what Claire Fontaine calls ‘magical materialism’, or Marina Vishmidt described as speculation. These artists, I suggest, refuse conditions of individual subjection as well as planetary extinction and extraction by resisting, to quote Fontaine, the ‘irreversible loss of textures, emotions, possibilities, and movements [...] transforming the present in ways that prevent anyone from remembering the past’. Vishmidt’s concept of ‘misalignment’ is here suggestive of the productive ways that considered fulsomely, rather than as an identity, feminism pushes us to think beyond categories (including the individual artist, and the marginal figure, as well as national identity, race, trans becoming and queerness) and into new disruptive formations.

**BIO:** Amy Tobin is Associate Professor in the Department of History of Art, University of Cambridge and Curator, contemporary programmes at Kettle’s Yard, the University’s modern and contemporary art gallery. She is also Fellow and Director of Studies in History of Art of Newnham College, Cambridge. She has curated numerous exhibitions at Kettle’s Yard including *Linderism* and *Making New Worlds: Li Yuan-chia & Friends*. In 2023, she published a major article on the artist Candace Hill-Montgomery in *Art History* as well as her first monograph *Women Artists Together: Art in the Age of Women’s Liberation* with Yale University Press.

### **Suzana Milevska**

#### **Feminist Microhistories and Macrohistories: Women Artists as Archivists of Solidarity and Intersectionality.**

This paper addresses the intersections between feminism, nationalism, and socialism in post-socialist South Eastern Europe. I am particularly interested in how these intersections – that simultaneously created femo-nationalist and femo-socialist movements – were reflected in the arts, and how the socio-political changes affected the understanding of what kind of feminism is necessary and sustainable in this region. In my presentation, I attempt to convey a more complex notion of the famous 1970s feminist slogan ‘the personal is political’ – with the emphasis to be put on the term ‘political.’ I want to argue that the issue of what kind of ‘political’ was not fully determined in the past, and even though most often feminism was defined as activism it was not specified in more concrete terms what kind of ideology and real politics called for dismantling the patriarchy – although it was clear that such calls often resonated with Marxist and post-Marxist critique. The lack of contextualisation of feminism in various microhistorical states of affairs left room for wiggling, misunderstanding, and counter-argumentations of different feministic waves and initiatives. I, therefore, find it relevant



to discuss several examples of feminist artistic research projects focusing on solidarity movements among women and their fights for women's rights from various ideological and political positions – in diverse political-cultural contexts. On the one hand, I'll look at projects based on artistic research of private archives of women artists, their family archives, and various documentation about women's movements in the region that bear witnesses of inhomogeneous and particular patriarchies, and self-empowered feminine subjectivities of pre-war generations. On the other hand, I want to offer a re-evaluation of the feminist artistic discourse in the transitional period in South Eastern Europe – when the disillusionments and disenchantments with Marxism and socialism somehow affected and weakened the position of feminism in general. I'll therefore suggest to look at art projects that addressed the effects of the rampant and tectonic movements towards neoliberalism that rapidly led to the return of patriarchal and right-wing policies and enabled even the emergence of anti-gender movements.

**BIO:** Suzana Milevska is a curator and theorist of visual cultures. Her theoretical and research projects employ postcolonial, feminist, and institutional critique of the regimes of hegemonic power and their bearing on arts and visual culture. From 2016 to 2019 she was Principal Investigator for the project Transmitting of Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts (TRACES – EU Programme Horizon 2020), Polytechnic University Milan and she curated the project's final exhibition Contentious Objects/Ashamed Subjects. Milevska was appointed the first Endowed Professor of Central and South Eastern European Art Histories (2013–2015, Academy of Fine Art Vienna). Milevska was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar in Library of Congress and initiated the project Call the Witness – Roma Pavilion, Venice Biennale (2011). She holds a Ph.D. in Visual Cultures from Goldsmiths College London. She curated numerous international exhibitions such as Capital and Gender, 2001, The Renaming Machine (Ljubljana, Zagreb, Vienna, 2008–2011), Roma Protocol (Austrian Parliament, Vienna, 2011), Call the Witness (BAK, Utrecht, 2011) and she initiated the project Call the Witness–Roma Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. During the Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen Fellowship (2021–2022) in Innsbruck, she developed the exhibition Sorry, the Hardest Word? (Gallery P74, Ljubljana, 2023). Milevska published the books Gender Difference in the Balkans, 2010, The Renaming Machine: The Book, 2010, On Productive Shame, Reconciliation, and Agency, 2016, and most recently Participatory Art: A Paradigm Shift from Objects to Subjects, 2024. In 2012 she won the Igor Zabel Award for Culture and Theory.



Image: "Screenshot from <https://collectiveherstories.alessiacargnelli.com/> containing images from IWAG, WAAG, NIWAG, Women's News and Array Collective", Alessia Cargnelli



**Alessia Cargnelli**

**Working together in forms of resistance" on women-led with feminist-informed artists groups.**

This paper focuses on the overlooked herstories of women-led and feminist-led collectives connected with the island of Ireland, investigating their legacy and the reasons behind their absence in the literature. The Irish Women Artist Group, the Northern Irish Women Artists Group and the Women Artists Action Group were three women-artists' advocacy groups founded in the late 80s in London, Belfast, and Dublin. Rooted at the local level and consciously allied with the international social movements, these artists-led initiatives aimed to establish a community of women artists, creating exhibitions opportunities, and initiating political discourses around the conditions of women. Nonetheless, these crucial initiatives occupy a marginal – if not inexistent – place in the feminist scholarship and contemporary Irish art discourse, in contrast with the fact that many of the artists involved in these groups at the start of their career, are now internationally recognised arts professionals. After the groups' dissolution in the early 90s there was a notable improvement in Irish women's representation in the arts, although these initiatives' role in enhancing Irish women visibility was not read as significant. In catalogues and texts, the links between individual artists and women-led artists groups were mostly omitted, as if these artists were being discovered as – paraphrasing Deepwell – new "exceptions/the others". (Deepwell, 2014, 194). Through the re-evaluation of these underrepresented collective practices and their influence on the 90s' art production, this paper demonstrates how the legacy of 80s women-led artists advocacy groups directly connects with both the 90s feminist-informed artmaking and the contemporary collective artists' practices on the island of Ireland – thus giving space in the literature to marginalised herstories outside the dominant canon.

**BIO:** Dr Alessia Cargnelli (she/her, b. 1990 in Trieste, Italy) is a visual artist and researcher based in Belfast. She recently completed her doctoral research on feminist-led women-artists' advocacy groups in the 80s–90s' island of Ireland. Alessia is also a post-doctoral researcher at the National Irish Visual Arts Library in Dublin. She is co-founder of the artist-run initiative Soft Fiction Projects and a member of Array Collective, winners of the 2021 Turner Prize.

**Laura Leuzzi**

**Re-evaluating women's video art: uncovering and reassessing marginalised histories of feminist pioneers**

Since its commercial inception and availability in the late 60s and 70s in many countries in the world, video has acted as a powerful tool for women artists to explore feminist issues and engage and subvert approaches and systems of gaze perpetrated over the centuries in visual arts by the patriarchal society. Although many of these women artists were not aware of each other's work, their video art pieces very often explore similar topics – including motherhood, the representation on media, make-up and plastic surgery, love, sexuality, the body and women's professional status – and adopt similar strategies – deploying for example mirrors, close-ups and doubles or using video as a component of larger multimedia or ephemeral installations – which in some cases are today lost. This common element results in distinctive approaches and aesthetics that are widely shared among women artists videos in the 70s and 80s.

This germinal and specific contribution of women artists to the development of video as an art form has tended to be drastically marginalised in video art histories, screenings and surveys. It can also be argued that most of the available mainstream histories of video art are still focused on the US and more in general on anglophone contexts. Occasionally there is some coverage of the important role of women in video art in the Netherlands and Germany, but in a number of other countries their contribution has effectively been consigned to oblivion (including France, Spain, Italy and Northern Europe).

This paper will examine and discuss the recent re-evaluation of women artists' video – which is proving to be a discontinuous process with some successful examples and some patent shortfalls – and the part played in this re-evaluation by some recent publications, projects and exhibition on video art or art and feminism (including for example EWVA European Women's Video Art, 2019; the itinerant Feminist Avantgarde) and the role of major solo exhibitions and publications (for example those of Sanja Iveković, Marina Abramović, Pipilotti Rist and Ketty La Rocca).

**BIO:** Laura Leuzzi is an art historian and curator. Currently, she is Chancellor's Fellow at Gray's School of Art, RGU, Aberdeen.

**Varvara Keidan Shavrova**

**Feminism and Flight: how do women artists working today respond to global wars and conflicts by reimagining flight technologies?**

'All wars lead to progress', I was told once by an astronaut when discussing the future of flight. This statement repeated a familiar idea that, somehow, the horrors of war must be endured to allow technologies to evolve and deliver benefits to mankind; but it was both shocking and sobering. Can it really be true that human civilisation can only progress through the misery of war? In this paper I pose the question, why demilitarizing and womanizing flight is important, and argue that there may be 'poetic technologies' (Graeber, D. 2015)\* comprised from haptic artworks, including textiles, that could offer a way forward, to reimagine different flight technologies for a future away from global militarism.

Using the examples of my artistic practice and research, I demonstrate how women artists respond to wars and conflicts, and how these artistic responses strive to re-imagine fast-changing technologies, including the technologies of flight and militarised surveillance. I examine how women artists who have experienced conflicts and wars, including Putin's disgraceful invasion into Ukraine, can activate 'poetic technologies' within their artworks, becoming instruments of feminist resistance through strategies of deceleration such as



Image: Varvara Keidan Shavrova and Photo Museum Ireland. 2023. Artwork installation created collaboratively with a group of Ukrainian refugee women, that illustrates my paper. Image credit:

creative collective projects and artistic endeavours working with haptic technologies, textiles, and other fibre-based materials.

This research analyses contemporary perspectives on flight via feminist philosophies and feminist thought ( Silvia Federici, Sadie Plant, Rosi Braidotti and Donna Haraway, et al), juxtaposed with critical perspectives on capitalist acceleration and accumulation (Paul Virilio, Bledwyn Bowen, Kohei Saito), to evaluate and reimagine haptic technologies in the form of textile installations created by women artists and activists.

Can flight be requalified and reimagined through a feminist perspective on its technologies? By problematising the geo-politics of flight in relation to personal histories and feminist thought,



my research strives to develop an alternative, artistic vision of flight, to offer a transformative redirection for our future with flight technologies that sets aside any reliance on male-dominated, techno-industrial militarism, that continues to contribute to ecological collapse, climate catastrophe and global refugee crises.

**BIO:** Varvara Keidan Shavrova is a visual artist, curator, writer, and PhD candidate at the Royal College of Art. She is currently conducting her 12-month AHRC-funded research placement at the Science Museum in London. As part of her research, she is also collaborating with Rolls-Royce Aviation. [www.keidan.art](http://www.keidan.art)

#### **VI03: Panel 4**

**Jana Kukaine**

##### **Latvian Feminist Art and (Post)socialist Food Practices.**

This spring, together with Natalia Anna Michna, I worked on an article on the Polish artist Malgorzata Markiewicz with a focus on her video installation *The Resistance Kitchen* (2018). When drawing a broader context of this work, we referenced the feminist tradition of kitchen art and the figure of a housewife interpreted by Hannah Höch, Chantal Akerman, Martha Rosler, and the project *Feministo: Portrait of the Artist as a Housewife*. I realized I would like to bring in some examples of the Latvian art scene too, particularly the work of artists Ieva Jurjāne (1944–2015) and Rasa Jansone (b. 1973). However, it was not possible to secure enough space in the scope of the article to provide sufficient insight into Latvian cases.

The conference is an opportunity to introduce these artists to international feminist audiences. Aija Jurjāne was a teacher in an art school, and her paintings, as well as countless drawings, mostly reflected her private domestic space and family life, including the kitchen – simultaneously an asylum, confinement, and an artist's studio. Jurjāne's work gained recognition only recently as the everyday life of a woman in Latvia was rarely considered to be the proper subject of high art. The second artist is Rasa Jansone. In her collages and installations, she weaves the stories of her mother and grandmother with the postsocialist food politics and the feminized labour of care work. Of special interest is her installation *Diet* (2017) which consisted of more than 400 items of jarred food (pickles and jams). It was an experiment to perform the foodwork that was part of her grandmother's annual routine.

In the presentation, I will explore these two artists in the context of (post)socialist domesticity, family life, and food practices, and will highlight how their works reveal both the standard of (post)socialist alimentary motherhood, and the tender attunement, sensuality, and sensitivity towards everyday life.

**BIO:** Jana Kukaine is an assistant Professor and lead Researcher at Riga Stradins University, and an independent art curator. Author of the monographs *Lovely Mothers. Woman. Body. Subjectivity* (Riga: Neputns, 2016), and *Visceral Aesthetics: Affects, and Feminist Art in Postsocialism* [forthcoming in 2024].

**paula roush**

##### **Technobiographic Interventions: Feminist Narratives and AI in Academic Capitalism**

This paper explores the project "'paula' & Work: A Document on the Machinic Enslavement in Academic Capitalism 2023–24," a critical extension of the exhibition "Women & Work: A Document on the Division of Labour in Industry 1973–75" by Margaret Harrison, Kay Hunt, and Mary Kelly. Engaging with the historical context of feminist labour documentation, "'paula' & Work" interrogates the contemporary landscape of academic capitalism, identity, and technology within the arts and humanities in the UK.

"'paula' & Work" responds to the closure of the Photography program at the School of Arts, London South Bank University, amidst widespread threats to arts and humanities departments across UK universities. This decision, occurring post-sabbatical work with Generative AI, situates the project in a politically charged climate, addressing the trauma of precarity and the specific trauma around the loss of professional and academic identity. The paper re-evaluates specific elements of the original exhibition's curatorial approach along the axis of intersectionality:

– **Documentary Approach:** Incorporating an AI model trained on self-portraits, "'paula' & Work" extends documentary methods with contemporary generative AI, highlighting shifts in representation and narrative authority.

- Representation of Female Labour: While the original exhibition portrayed female workers through the artists' lens, this project involves creating AI-generated self-portraits, exploring how digital tools can alter perceptions of feminist queer labour and identity.
- Documents Included in the Installation: The project includes contemporary documents reflecting the precarious state of academic labour in academic capitalism, drawing parallels to the historical documents used in the 1970s exhibition.
- Use of the Archive: Utilizing archival ready-made materials from both current academic contexts and pedagogical frameworks, the project underscores the evolving nature of feminist archival practices and their role in documenting labour struggles.
- Intersectionality and Ageism: Addressing age bias, the project features "AI-centric Curriculum," comprising ninety AI-generated portraits representing speculative roles for the aging artist. This element critiques the marginalization of older individuals in both art and academia, highlighting the ethical implications of AI in perpetuating ageist biases.

Both exhibitions occur in the aftermath of significant labour strikes. "Women & Work" looked at working conditions post-Equal Pay Act 1970, influenced by the 1968 Ford sewing machinists' strike led by women demanding equal pay. Similarly, "'paula' & Work" unfolds amidst ongoing teachers' strikes over pay and university strikes over job cuts, situating it within contemporary labour struggles in dialogue with the Union.



Image: paula roush, Technobiographic Interventions: Feminist Narratives and AI in Academic Capitalism, msdm publications.

By revisiting and extending the methodologies of Harrison, Hunt, and Kelly, "‘paula’ & Work" highlights the continuing relevance of feminist critiques of labour. It examines how these critiques evolve in response to new socio-economic pressures and technological advancements, offering an emerging perspective on feminist interventions in contemporary art and academia.

This paper contributes to the broader discourse on the re-evaluation of feminist research and its implications for contemporary practices. It explores how feminist strategies from the 1970s can inform current challenges and opportunities within academic and artistic fields, emphasizing the need for intersectional gender and race critique and adaptation in the face of changing political dynamics. Through this lens, the project underscores the transformative potential of feminist art and research in addressing issues of social justice, identity, and labour within contemporary academia.

**BIO:** paula roush is an artist, researcher, and founder of msdm [mobile strategies of display & mediation], a collective platform that explores the mobile entanglements of art, curatorial, and publishing practices. Through place-based research, viewed through the lens of hydrofeminist 'new materialisms' and a decolonial perspective, paula investigates emerging technologies and relational methodologies. The aim is to develop a narrative of transitional design leading towards a more equitable and ecologically just future.

**Barbora Komarová**

**Can I label your work as feminist? Questionnaire as a method for verifying the possibility of a feminist interpretation of an artwork.**

A relationship to feminism in post-socialist countries has its specific development in the society, as well as in the visual arts. Even after the revolution in 1989, the attitude changed only slowly. After the first translations of foreign literature and establishing contacts, gender discourse was taken up by more theorists and curators than artists, who seemed to need more time to engage and identify with feminist or gender theory. Until recently, the feminist "label" was avoided by a large number of artists (for various reasons), who nevertheless reflected in their work their position in society, gender stereotypes, or traditional notions of ideal femininity. In my paper, I would like to focus on several case studies of a cautious approach to feminism that has manifested itself in the form of questionnaires – in the Czech magazine *Výtvarné umění* (1993) or in Slovak curatorial projects *Inter-view* (2009–2010) and *Fem(inist) Fatale* (2015) focused on feminism and gender in art. In these projects, the authors asked respondents about their relationship and self-identification with feminism and about possible feminist or gender interpretations of their works, subsequently publishing these responses as part of the project.

The paper will analyse not only the answers that reflect the general approach towards feminism in the society but also the questions asked, in which the authors already put forward certain ideas about feminism and gender. For the most part, they both show a prevailing model adopted from the West, which did not have the same development in our region and thus usually prevented them from accepting feminism as a starting point in their work. Why was there more space given to artists in this field to comment on the possibility of interpreting their works through this certain theory? Wasn't the method of the questionnaire part of a specific approach to adopting feminist and gender theory in this region?

**BIO:** Barbora Komarová is an art theoretician, curator, and PhD candidate at the Department of Theory and History of Art at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. In her research, she focuses on gender discourse in Slovakia and various approaches towards femininity in visual art.



## **V104: Panel 5**

**Lisa Moravec**

### **Women's Politics and Art: Feminist Animalities in Kunst mit Eigen-Sinn**

My contribution focuses on the exhibition, Kunst mit Eigen-Sinn, which took place at Vienna's Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts in 1985 – it was Austria's first all-women exhibition to be held at a national museum. After managing to organise the small-scale gallery exhibition MAGNA at the Galerie nächst St. Stephan in Vienna in 1975, performance artist VALIE EXPORT curated the museum exhibition together with the Austrian art historian Sylvia Eiblmayr, Heidi Grundmann and Cathrin Pichler. They showed works by more than 160 international artists from the UK, Canada, North America, Latin America, Japan, Australia, and countries from the Eastern Block (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia), who worked in painting, sculpture, installation, video, film, and performance.

My contribution starts by sketching the political situation for women in Austria in the mid-1980s, with a focus on Johanna Dohnal's initiative to secure funding to make the cultural realm a battle ground for women politics under socialist Federal Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, which happened amidst (failed) attempts to implement "a women's quota" in the 1980s. (Dohnal served as Austria's first state secretary for women's affairs and was vice-president of the UN World Conference on Women in 1980.)

Then, I move on to discussing the political activism implicit in realising the exhibition and offer an aesthetic-political concept of feminist performance practices. First, I debate Kunst mit Eigen-Sinn's activist feminist stance focused on changing institutional politics in comparison to pioneering feminist art projects in the 1970s; then I closely analyse EXPORT's approach to art and organisational labour before moving into details of the aesthetic positions presented in the exhibition and how the selected British women artists were explicitly inspired by EXPORT image-based aesthetics. In this section I focus on their aesthetically visible shared interest in animals and offer the concept of "feminist animality" to describe their aesthetics. I also cast a light here on the today almost lost performance programme, which for example showed seminal performances by Ulrike Rosenbach, Gretchen Bender, Eva-Maria Schön, Adrian Piper, Anne Bean, and Rose English. I conclude with historically situating Austria's first all-women museal exhibition in the context of the international history of all-women exhibition projects (Womenhouse, LA, 1972; MAGNA, Vienna, 1975; the women exhibition in Charlottenborg, 1975; WACK!, LA, 2007; Feminist Avant-Garde, touring exhibition 2010–now). Focused on the question of how political performances of women (artists) are entangled with their aesthetic performance practice, my contribution asks about the importance and today's relevance of the all-women exhibition model against the backdrop of how the notion of feminism, women politics and exhibition-making practices have changed over time.

**BIO:** Dr. Lisa Moravec is a Vienna-based writer, curator, and art historian.

She holds an interdisciplinary PhD from Royal Holloway, University London in Drama, Theatre, Dance and studied art history at UCL, the Courtauld Institute, and at the LMU in Munich. After completing her PhD, she received several grants for her first postdoc project on Kunst mit Eigen-Sinn, which built on her long-term engagement with the work of Rose English and feminism. Upcoming books: *Dressaged Animality: Human and Animal Actors in Contemporary Performance* (Routledge, Aug 2024), ex. cat. *Memory Theatre: Rose English* (Aug 2024), *Posthumanist Approaches to a Critique of Political Economy: Dissident Practices* (ed. vol. Bloomsbury, spring 2025), and her exhibition on artist Rose English opens in July at the Museum der Moderne Salzburg. (<https://www.lisamoravec.com>)

**Fran Cottell**

### **Conceptual Clothing revisited**

In 1984 the American artist Marian Schoettle and myself met in London through our common interest in validating and articulating a context for the use of clothing as a subject for our work, which we had independently developed with different precedents in the US and UK.

In the 1980s in the UK 'material' was not considered an appropriate medium for fine art students and 'Clothing' was considered a popular/female subject not suitable for Fine Artists. Making 'wearable art' was derided as entering the 'rag trade'. The Arts Council, Crafts Council and Fibre Arts were distinct entities representing different groups of artists.

Together we organised several exhibitions starting with *Private Thoughts Public Speaking* Battersea Art Centre (1986) and then *Conceptual Clothing* in 1987–1988 which toured the UK and then in 1989 *Conceptual Clothing US/UK* in Philadelphia.

The hosting gallery, for Conceptual Clothing, The Ikon Gallery, Birmingham had to change its constitution in order for it to be able to show work that at the time most people in the art world considered to be craft. The resulting exhibition of 23 artists including: Rasheed Araeen, Sokari Douglas Camp, Mikey Cuddihy, Rose Garrard, Mona Hatoum, Susan Hiller, Mary Kelly and Cass Holmes, all genders were included as and there was significant prejudice about this subject matter.

As we wrote in the catalogue, 'Clothed figures are generally viewed as complete. A representation of clothing in isolation from the figure invites the viewer to follow convention and mentally try on the work. It is in this intimacy, this invitation to mentally try on the works and make them complete...Clothes, unlike the human body can be contemplated and engaged with while never completely objectified.'

This paper looks back at the exhibition by one of its organisers and reviews the press responses to it, and this is part of a new book looking again at its precursors and legacies.

**BIO:** Fran Cottell has produced performances and installations since the 1970s. Over the last 23 years Fran has produced a series of increasingly provocative installations in her house for CGPLondon and Raven Row, documented in the book: Fran Cottell: The House Projects (KTPress, 2021).

**Valeria Mari**

### **On speaking terms with Feminist Art Curating through a Global Perspective.**

This paper sets out to explore feminist art curating in the 21st century through global exhibitions focused on female artists and permanent collection presentations. It builds upon theoretical frameworks to foster diverse, decentered readings and practices that establish "feminist art curating" which has evolved alongside feminist discourse and activism in the art world. By analysing curatorial strategies within and outside the 'canonical' Western art centers, this research advocates for inclusive dialogue with feminist art curating that avoids tokenism and Western-centric catch-up dynamics that assume the West as the artistic focal point. The focused global exhibitions of Global Feminisms at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, and Another Energy: Power to Continue Challenging – 16 Women Artists from around the World at the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, along with the Stedelijk Museum's permanent collection gallery "Authorship and Feminist Art Critiques," illustrate the efforts taken by these museums to overcome female underrepresentation by featuring more gender-equal exhibitions. This study looks further at examples of activism by examining counter-hegemonic curatorial approaches, curatorial teams, as well as the contexts and histories of the focused institutions. The paper thus critically analyses examples where feminist perspectives have shaped curatorial decisions and methods, challenging traditional male-dominated narratives and promoting gender equality in the art world. Along with this, the similarities, differences, and contradictions in curating feminisms globally will be discussed to decenter perspectives and highlight the contributions of female artists worldwide. Unravelling these complexities, this thesis provides insight into how international exhibitions play a significant role in fostering gender inclusivity and reshaping the narratives surrounding global female artists.

**BIO:** Valeria Mar is from Italy and currently lives in the Netherlands. She is an art historian, writer, and researcher interested in exploring the intersections of activism, feminism(s), and feminist curatorial practices. She earned her Research Master's (RMA) in Art History from Utrecht University in the Netherlands and has a background in cultural heritage and museology. Mari authored the research project Staff Shares: Towards a Museum of Belonging at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, which explores themes of inclusion, diversity, and gender equality in art institutions.

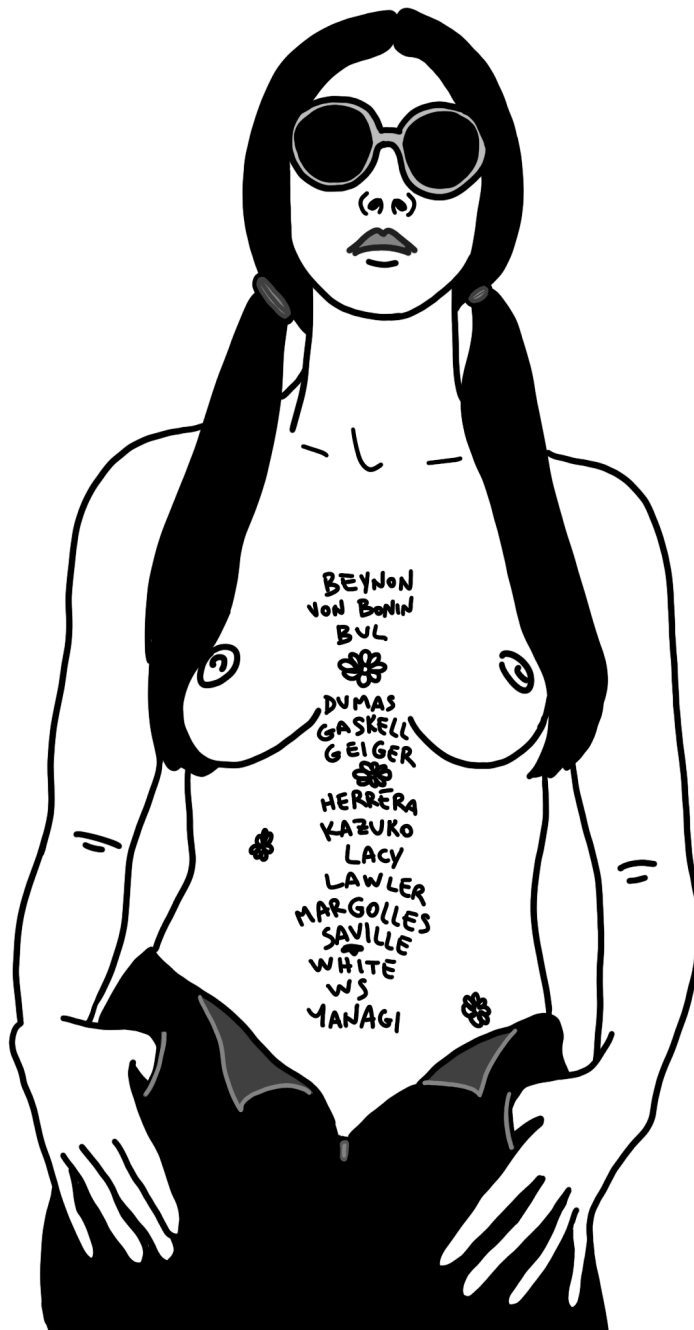


Image: Female portrait captured by Cosima von Bonin in 1990, re-imagined by Valeria Mari. Illustration by Jessica Amoroso, 2024. Valeria Mari.

#### V105: Panel 6

**Pedro Merchán Mateos**

#### **On the museum's foundations. Feminist and queer practices in contemporary art in Spain.**

In the 1980s, Spain's new democratic government adopted a cultural policy that many, artists, academics, curators, and activists criticized through a variety of strategies, particularly from feminist perspectives, because of its neoliberal and oppressive nature. This paper focuses on Mar Villaespesa, art critic and curator who, after a stay in the United States, curated which is considered the first feminist art exhibition in Spain: 100%, in 1993. This collective exhibition was a first attempt to bring together artists beyond essentialist positions from a feminist standpoint. On a general note, this new generation of artists struggled to find any roots for their works and practice in the 1970s generation because of the new cultural policies that celebrated the brand-new democratic regime while erasing memories of feminist anti-Francoist resistance, including art-related experiences.

This first attempt coincided with the rise of activist groups (gay, lesbian, anti-AIDS, anti-militarist, ecologists, squatters) that embraced difference politics rather than identity. These

groups' cultural productions (posters, manifestos, zines, protests documentation) were soon featured in several temporary exhibitions curated by Villaespesa. This led to a series of public programs such as workshops, seminars and other formats that took place on the recently founded contemporary art institutions. Activists interfered and shared their political experience within these informal and ephemeral institutional formations, proposing alternatives based on care, intimacy and the commons, resisting the reification of subaltern individual figures and the fetishization of counterhegemonic objects.

This paper will examine the reception and development of the feminists artistic, curatorial and historiographical practices and discourses in the 90s and the early 2000s in Spain, with particular focus on gender and queer-related narratives, aesthetics and politics. It will re-evaluate the tension between international influences from American, British and French theorists and their capacity to address the specificities of the Spanish context and its colonial roots.

**BIO:** Pedro Merchán Mateos is a PhD fellow at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid under the supervision of Jesús Carrillo. My research focuses on the links between the cultural history of the gender dissidence activism and the queer and third wave discourses on contemporary art productions, practices and its institutions in Spain since 1992.

**Karolina Majewska-Güde**

### **Exercises in Post-socialist Feminist Art History: Historicizing Collective Artistic Labour During Socialism**

My presentation will focus on a collaborative research project dealing with the history of the Fajans factory in Włocławek during socialism. The aim of the research is not only to include a minor art form (faience) and marginalised voices (female ceramic painters) in the art historical narrative, but also to propose a methodological intervention in feminist art history by incorporating diverse forms of knowledge explored and produced within artistic research.

The project addresses women's history in the People's Republic of Poland and the reconstruction of the transnational history of Fajans with an emphasis on the gendered history of labour. It fits into the assumptions of "history from below" or "people's history", but it is also concerned with the historicisation and interpretation of the socialist art institution and its transformations with particular emphasis on concepts such as "artistic work", "artistic knowledge" and "collective authorship".

The research aims at the re-examination of collective artistic practices and is guided by the question of how not to reduce the diversity of voices. It is a grassroots history, concerned not only with the representation of the unrepresented, but also with different ways of producing knowledges about the past. It is indebted to a new materialist feminist optic that promotes ethic of care based on an awareness of interdependence, interconnectedness and sensitivity to non-discursive forms of knowledge. This awareness forces us to look beyond the hegemonic understanding of archives and historical records, but also to develop new research and narrative strategies.

**BIO:** Karolina Majewska-Güde, PhD is an art historian and curator. Her research focuses on East Central European neo-avant-garde art, regional feminist art histories and issues of circulation, translation and production of knowledge through artistic research. She is a member of feminist research and curatorial collectives and works as a researcher at the Institute of Art History, University of Warsaw. (<https://karolinamajewska.wordpress>)

**Ellen Suneson**

### **Re-evaluating disciplinary departures of feminist art history through 1970s feminist representations of subordination.**

This paper traces representations of subordination in feminist and queer feminist art and performance produced by artists based in the Nordic countries during the 1970s. The exploration of positions of political compliance and internalization of oppression in these works, along with an analysis of their reception in the writing of contemporaneous as well as subsequent feminist art audiences may, I argue, provide crucial insights into the development of theories and methods in the disciplinary field of feminist art history. In line with many other social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, feminist movements during this time began to direct an increasing interest in the social construction of oppression and the possibilities of emancipation. Instead of seeing individuals as innately different, there were now increasingly widespread discussions about how sex, gender, and social hierarchies were constructed by societal structures (Love 2021, Rubin 2011). Since then, strategies for social emancipation and transformation have continued to be a central focus for feminism(s) and for feminist art



history. The paper argues that while an interest in social change is important a too dominant disciplinary focus on emancipation may impede the ability to engage with and interpret artistic representations of subordination. Employing formalism (particularly as developed by feminist, queer and decolonial art historians and visual scholars including Doyle 2006, English 2019, Getsy 2015, Pollock 1988, and Simmons 2021) as a methodological framework, the paper places artistic representations of subordination from the 1970s in a juxtaposing relation to similar themes in preceding, contemporaneous, and subsequent art and visual materials. By proposing innovative methodological frameworks and strategies for engaging with representations of subordination, the paper discusses how epistemological frameworks focused on art's emancipatory potential are still formative for – and partly construe constraint for – theories and methods in feminist art history.

**BIO:** Ellen Suneson is a postdoctoral researcher in the project To show but not tell: on themes of passivity, submission, and internalization in 1970s Nordic feminist art, divided between Lund University and Copenhagen University. Suneson holds a PhD from the Division of Art History and Visual Studies at Lund University and defended her doctoral dissertation Portraying Unease: The Art and Politics of Uncomfortable Attachments (Makadam Publishing) in 2022.

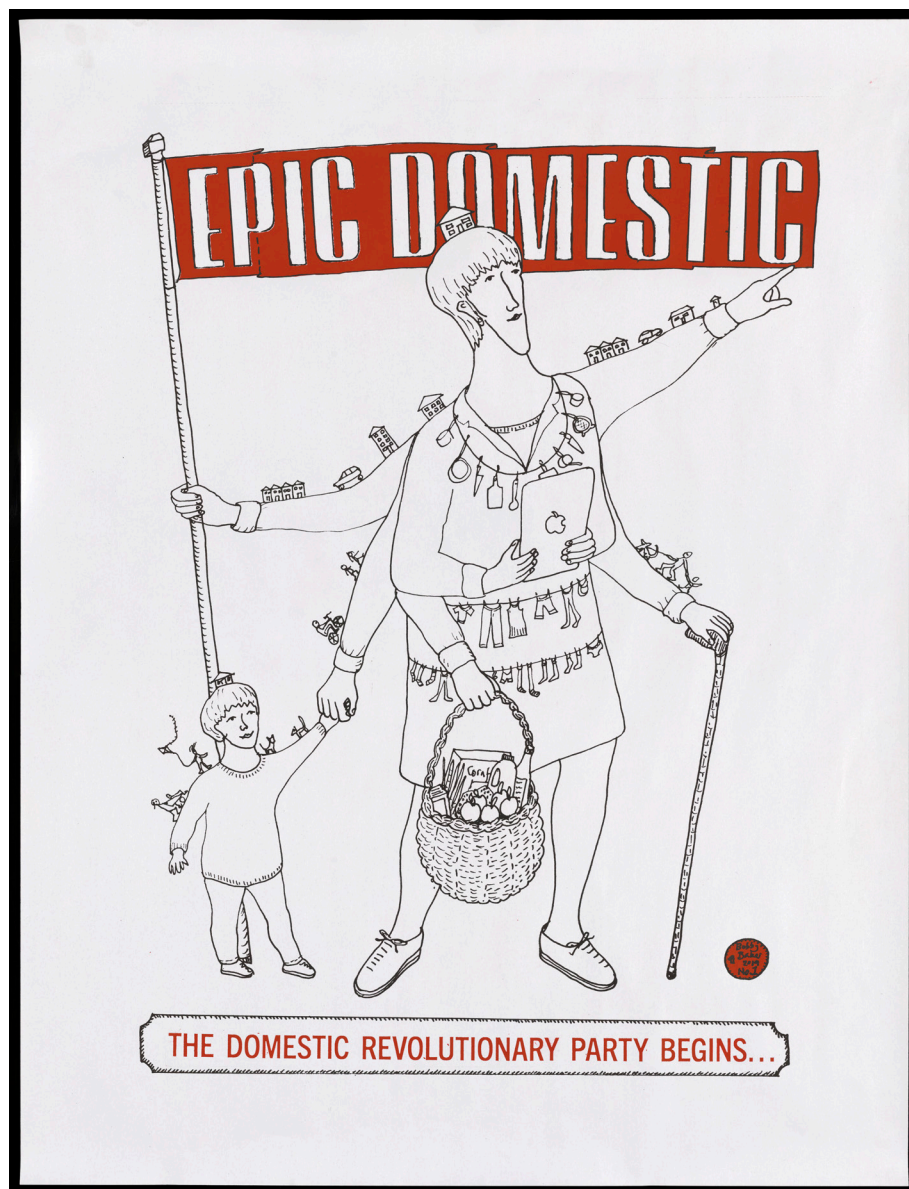


Image: Clara Zarza, Epic Domestic



## 4.10pm –5.40pm Panels 7 – 12

### VG01: Panel 7

Clara Zarza

#### **Rethinking omissions: from the life of the artist to the life of the work.**

The recognition of the canon of art and the artist as excluding categories was one of the fundamental challenges of feminist theory to art history in the twentieth century. Key authors such as Griselda Pollock and Linda Nochlin argued that the historian should analyze the context of production rather than perpetuate a practice based on value judgments. Instead of expanding or correcting the canon by including stories of women artists, a critical look was proposed that questions the values and structures that excluded them in the first place. Despite these criticisms, in recent decades we have witnessed a resurgence of the biographical method in contemporary curatorial practices as a result of the marked interest that the Euro- American art world has shown towards the work of underrepresented subjects, particularly when these works appear to offer a look at the artist's private sphere. Autobiography, confession and intimacy as a new framework of value that replaces the critical vision of self-representation as a narcissistic act devoid of artistic elaboration, gave visibility to transgressive works within the framework of the museum through a process of depoliticization.

This paper builds on feminist critiques of the stigmas associated with self-representation to expose how the recovery of the biographical method in the context of contemporary curatorial practices, especially in the case of the work of women artists and other underrepresented subjects, is a commercially successful strategy to revitalize the production of 'difference' and 'otherness' as a novel object of consumption. In turn, I propose that we redirect the biographical gaze to the artistic object and study the life of the work, visibilizing the conditions of production, the structures and the value systems that regulate these objects instead of perpetrating the invisibility of these works and mystifying them in their historical omission.

**BIO:** Clara Zarza is an art historian and curator specialized in Contemporary Installation Art, Visual Theory and Material Culture. Teaches at IE, Madrid. Her interdisciplinary research has also relied on literary, anthropological and philosophical studies on identity, experience, intimacy and the autobiographical subject, as well as the history of design and material culture. She currently holds a tenure track position at IE University School of Architecture and Design.

### Helena Reckitt

#### **After Gretchen Hupfel.**

Gretchen Hupfel (b. 1963, Wilmington, DE, d. 2002, Atlanta, GA) was a photo-based conceptual artist who took her own life at the age of thirty-nine. In the prelude to Hupfel's death her spare, witty art had started to receive unprecedented attention. A solo show at the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center was reviewed in Artforum, Atlanta Magazine named her 'Best All-Round Artist of 2002,' and she gained representation at Marcia Wood Gallery. Yet despite this outward success Hupfel's personal life was in crisis. Struggling with mental illness, she experienced auditory hallucinations that threatened her grasp on reality and prompted self-destructive behaviour.

For the ten months leading up to her death, Helena Reckitt was Hupfel's girlfriend. Reckitt accompanied Hupfel to galleries and dyke bars, therapy appointments and psychiatric wards. Although Reckitt knew how ill her girlfriend was, the violence and abruptness of her death were a shock. Deprived of a gradual or 'natural' end to their relationship, Reckitt found it hard to let Hupfel go. She also struggled to find a form in which to remember her. A novel she wrote inspired by their relationship failed. Plans for a retrospective of Hupfel's works petered out. In this highly personal talk Reckitt relates her difficulties grappling with the aftermath of Hupfel's death and her art's stalled potential. She relates her questions on how to 'rehabilitate' Hupfel's art to the recent upsurge of critical and curatorial work devoted to under and unknown women artists. Given current awareness about mental illness, would emphasising Hupfel's schizophrenia contribute to her posthumous recognition? Or would it over-determine readings of her art? Given that Hupfel worked in the 'provincial' art context of Atlanta, how likely is it that a contemporary audience for her art could be found? Reckitt looks at artists of the generation before Hupfel, Felix Gonzalez Torres and Sarah Pucill, who give queer expression to mourning and loss. Relating how they return to images and tropes made with and about their dead lovers, she reflects on the urge to touch and connect across time.

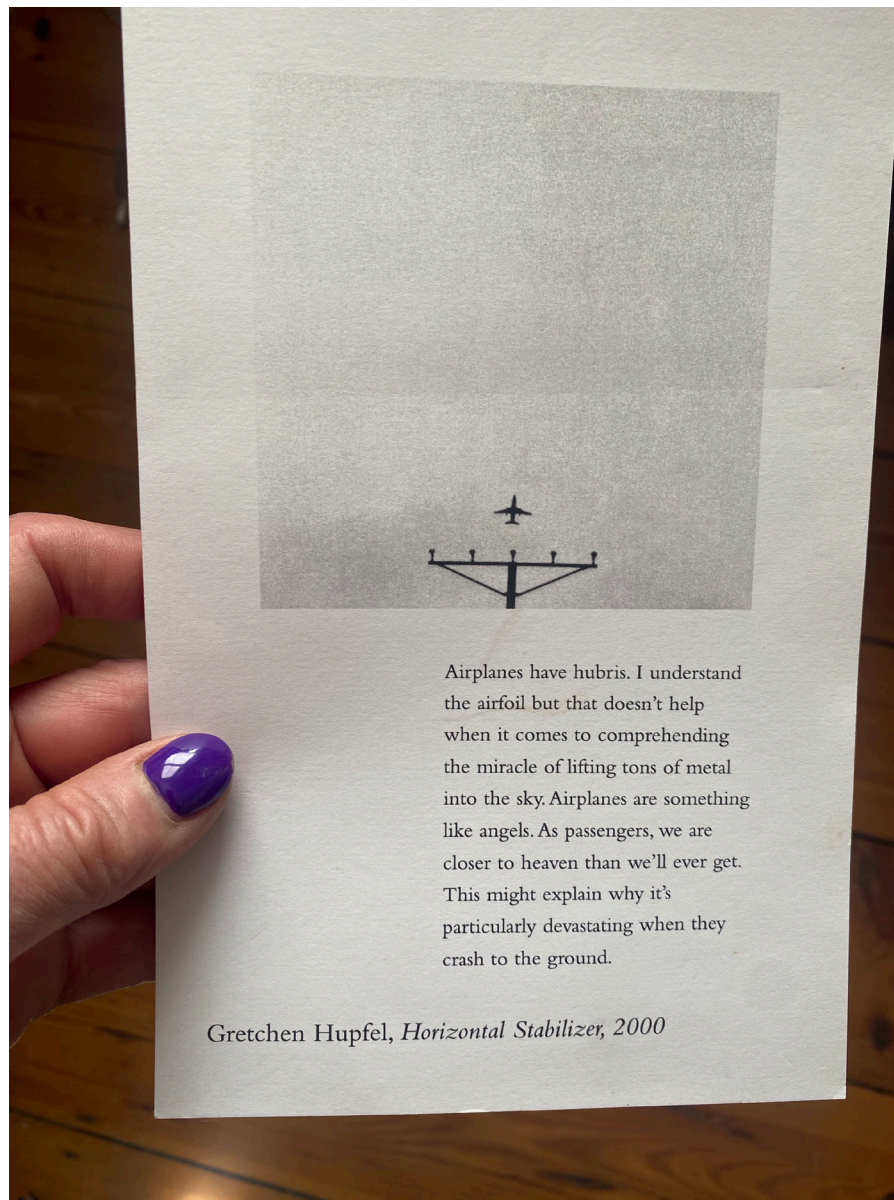


Image: Helena Reckitt, Gretchen Hupfel, Horizontal Stabilizers, 2000

**BIO:** Helena Reckitt is a curator, editor and writer, and Reader in Curating at Goldsmiths, University of London, with a longstanding interest in feminist and queer art, writing, and collectivity. In 2015 she founded the Feminist Duration Reading Group, a collective platform focused on under-represented feminisms and one of the contributors to the 60th October Salon, Belgrade, 2024: Hope is a Discipline.

**Anke Kempkes:**

### **The Pre-Symbolic at the Constitution of a Protofeminist Avant-Garde: Maria Pinińska-Bereś and the Redefinition of Sculpture**

This paper looks at the work of Maria Pinińska-Bereś, an Eastern-European postwar woman artist still little known in the West at the occasion of her upcoming first international retrospective. The essay ventures on a comparative reading of a period of groundbreaking experimentation by women sculptors globally in the 1960s and 70s. Looking back at the beginnings of her practice in the 1960s, Polish sculptor Maria Pinińska-Bereś stated that she “felt the urge to redefine sculpture... It was a dramatic struggle”. The first half of the 1960s marked a significant moment where women artists – across and beyond the frontiers and cultural rhetoric of postwar geopolitics – felt the urge for a radical psycho-political intervention into the formalist and iconographic programmes of the still male-dominated neo-avant-garde movements. Artists like Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse, Alina Szapocznikow, Dorothea Tanning, Nicola L, Lee Bontecou, Yayoi Kusama and Feliza Bursztyn ventured to explore what was yet an uncharted dimension of sculpture concerned with the very process of subjectivation made visible and tactile. It is their particular protofeminist

language that these pioneering women sculptors have in common, who did not (yet) commit to the affirmatively representational and activist agendas of the feminist art movements of the 1970s, but who implicitly created alternative concepts of embodiment from a personal gendered perspective while keeping lateral connections with the aesthetic programmes of the dominant neo-avantgardes. The paper looks at an artistic investment that liberated the form-matter-content axis from the self-reflexivity of hegemonic Western Modernist formalism introducing gender-specific perspectives of embodiment reflecting in its deconstructive drive the sexist compartmentalisation of the body, and alternative mutable form impulses deriving from the perspective of non-normative sexualities, as well as the effects of the biographical, in particular the experience of trauma, while keeping a complex concern with avant-garde aesthetics such as the gender-transcending capabilities of abstraction.

**BIO:** Anke Kempkes is a freelance curator, art historian and author, currently based in Dusseldorf. She is an international Curator, Art Historian and Critic specialised on Female Avant-Garde and Feminist Art History, 20th-century movements of Abstraction, Surrealism and Queer Modernism. She was Chief Curator at Kunsthalle Basel and Muzeum Susch, Switzerland. She is a Lecturer at the Zurich University of the Arts. She is a candidate at Middlesex for a PhD by Public Works.

## **VI-01: Panel 8**

**Katy Deepwell**

### **Feminisms, contemporary art and world systems theories.**

This paper offers an analysis based on my work founding, editing and publishing over 500 articles in *n.paradoxa* for 2 decades, 1998–2017). I have written several analyses of these articles based on their approaches and geographical coverage (Arts 2023, Allan Bonilla et al 2020). Many feminist analyses are focused on either the local or the national picture of contemporary art. In this paper I want to question how and whether the local in feminism reaches global analysis in the field of contemporary art, given feminism's presence as a global phenomenon. I want to explore the dominant paradigms of global south/global north, post-colonial/decolonial perspectives in relation to ideas of the global contemporary as it is organised in the art world. I want to question whether feminism can challenge the first-to-fourth world paradigms since the 1970s; and consider the problematic of national-transnational-international through ideas of the local/global to reconsider how feminist art criticism/art history approaches its subjects. The limitations of these positions continue to frame directions in research on feminism and contemporary art in different forms of critical regionalism and pan-Continental studies from *Global Feminisms* (2007) to *Empowerment* (2022). The attraction of ideas of a feminist universalism, models of commonality/political solidarities and planetary constructions (Spivak) or to new cartographies of knowledge (Dolphijn and Tuin) that require further attention to explore their future potential.

**BIO:** Katy Deepwell is Professor of Contemporary Art, Theory and Criticism at Middlesex University and founder, editor and publisher of KT press. Her writings include Katy Deepwell 'The politics and aesthetic choices of feminist art criticism' *Arts* (MDPI) 12(2) 47 (March 2023). Special issue on *Beyond/Around Feminist Aesthetics*. Also Guest Editor. [https://www.mdpi.com/journal/arts/special\\_issues/around\\_beyond\\_feminist\\_aesthetics](https://www.mdpi.com/journal/arts/special_issues/around_beyond_feminist_aesthetics), Katy Deepwell 'Pourquoi 1989? Ecrire sur le féminisme, l'art et le "contemporain global"/'Why 1989? Writing about feminism, art and "the global contemporary"' in M. Allan Bonilla, Elvan Zabunyan et al, *Constellations Subjectivités. Pour une Histoire Féministes de L'Art* (France: éditions iXe, 2020) pp.64–85. ISBN: 979-10-90032-51-1, Gayatri Spivak *Death of a Discipline* Columbia University Press, 2003, Rick Dolphijn, & Iris van der Tuin *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* <http://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/33904> Open Humanities Press, 2012.

**Maria Kheirkhah**

### **Navigating Anotherness in Contemporary Western Visual Culture (Muslim Diaspora).**

Few women artists from the Muslim world(s) who live and work in the diaspora can talk about the way they represent themselves and their artistic self-image without confronting the pre-existing ideas of their predominantly Western audiences. Neither are these women able to escape the historical and political narratives that surround them. My artistic practice is no exception to this – it is assumed, received, perceived and measured within a contemporary Western visual context.

This presentation will briefly touch upon the historical and political contexts of women artists of the Muslim diaspora and argues that Orientalism, Colonialism and Islamophobia negatively





Image: Maria Kheirkhah

impact our image, self-representation and artistic voice within contemporary arts and culture. The events following 9/11 both hindered and problematised this self-representation, pushing some women to self-Orientalise and self-Other, whereas others were pushed into silence. Highlighting this transition – from being imagined through the Orientalist and colonialist canon to using self-narration – as significant for women artists of the Muslim diaspora, this investigation locates and defines this phenomenon (a problematic palimpsest) as the 'Islam-Orientalised Female Other' (IOFO) and asks: Can the IOFO artist speak? If so, how? I will discuss the possibilities of voice through artistic practice by further proposing 'Anotherness' as a strategy of moving forward. This will be discussed through the artistic approach of Ana Lily Amirpour, an English-born Iranian-American film director, screenwriter and producer by analysing her debut film *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night*.

**BIO:** Maria Kheirkhah is a British-Iranian multidisciplinary artist. Her artworks are generated by the interplay of history, politics, media, and materiality, that is realised through writing, curating, installation, film, photography, and performance. Kheirkhah's multidisciplinary practice draws upon the relationship between history and the contemporary, centre and the peripheries as a means of exploring diasporic social experiences and creative responses. Her practice engages with gender and globalization, comparative visual aesthetics, the politics of visual and material culture, image making and representation. Further exploring the important role of women, the politicisation of their bodies and the codifying of their attire, to critically evaluate the relationship between representation, geography, artistic productions, and platforms.

### Qingyu Shen

#### **Challenges and Reconstructions: Femininity in Contemporary Chinese Art from the 1990s to the Present**

In the 1990s, feminism emerged as a distinct artistic phenomenon in contemporary Chinese art, heralding a rise in women artists, feminist artworks, and related art exhibitions. Contemporary Chinese feminist art has progressively unveiled its unique characteristics concerning gender and its relation to works produced by Chinese women artists. Research on feminist art since the 1990s has mainly revolved around the enrichment and development of feminist art as a distinct branch in Chinese art, gaining recognition from various texts and

authors who have discussed this topic in China. Despite the recognition of feminist art as a distinct genre within Chinese art, scholarly exploration, particularly in the nuances of femininity (女性特质, nǚxìng tèzhì), the distinction between feminine-ism and feminism, remains sparse. My research aims to bridge this gap by dissecting the portrayal of femininity in contemporary Chinese feminist art, its critical reception, and the distinction between feminine-ism and feminist art in China through art criticism, artworks, and art exhibitions. Utilising in-depth interviews with art critics, artists, and curators conducted both in person and via Zoom, this study is currently in the writing-up stage following fieldwork outcomes and interview data. Through this exploration, it seeks to enrich the discourse on Chinese feminist art, fostering a deeper understanding of its contribution to cultural enrichment and the lives it touches. By encapsulating how contemporary Chinese feminist art navigates and nuances the discourse on gender and culture, this research underlines the significance of artistic expression in “enriching lives” within the conference’s thematic framework.

**BIO:** Qingyu Shen is a PhD candidate at Middlesex University.

## **VI02: Panel 9**

**Ala Younis**

**Plan (fem.) for Greater Baghdad: artist’s work.**

I have critically examined the methods of working with archives and written narratives that have contributed to the absence of female protagonists in my artwork “Plan for Greater Baghdad”. While the project focused on the role of architects serving governments, I asked, have I adequately addressed issues of class, gender, and labour inequalities? In this paper, I aim to outline how I addressed these challenges, borrowed from the feminist methodologies, to revisit and further create narratives highlighting the roles of females as life partners, junior architects, students, and artists in the same history covered in my initial project. In “Plan (fem.) for Greater Baghdad”, I explore how changing political frameworks over time forced the withdrawal of female protagonists. For instance, some refused to associate with narratives concerning the Baath Party era after its fall. I will discuss how inaccessibility and research challenges informed my artistic choices, layout, the use of technology and materials, as well as the ethics that I upheld towards female body representation.

**BIO:** Ala Younis is an artist, with curatorial, film and publishing projects. Using objects, film and printed matter, she often seeks instances where historical and political events collapse into personal ones. She is co-founder of the publishing initiative Kayfa ta.

**Sohaila Baluch**

**Unsettling the Archives | Sohaila Baluch 2024: a performance lecture.**

*[...] but archivists are also violent actors who traffic in bodies, brand them, transfer them from one place to another, put them under chain and lock. –Ariella Azoulay (Azoulay, 2019)*

This presentation will take the form of a performance lecture that examines the intersection of three distinct feminist art methodologies in archival research which are expanding the scope of feminist archival practices to amplify and include marginalised perspectives. I take a lead from Ariella Azoulay’s (2019) critique of the selective processes of traditional archival practices, which are deeply intertwined with power dynamics, violence, colonialism and the politics of memory. I highlight how the detailed archival and revisionist work by feminists continues to facilitate an urgent rethinking of how history is recorded, preserved and accessed in today’s intersectional contexts. This approach embraces alternative modes of knowledge production that emphasise the importance of documenting the complexities of gender, race, class, sexuality and other axes of identity by centring lived experiences.

In this presentation, I bring my durational performance Being Seen Being Heard, staged at Bishopsgate Institute Archives in 2023, which surfaced the gendered and racialised archival subject, into dialogue with Mindy Seu’s Cyberfeminism Index and Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley’s Black Trans Archive project. While my artistic approach involves engaging directly with physical archival materials and spaces through embodied and affective responses, Seu and Brathwaite-Shirley work in the digital realm, leveraging digital technologies to embody feminist perspectives and, in Brathwaite-Shirley’s case, Black trans experiences. Through this dialogue, I show how embodied feminist methodologies, manifested in both physical and digital forms within a visual arts context are challenging stereotypes and reframing dominant historical accounts. By disrupting the physical and conceptual archival space, these practice-led methodologies enact forms of resistance and activism against the historical erasure of



marginalised bodies in new, urgent ways, offering more inclusive and nuanced narratives, that refuse the archival status quo. Using live durational performance and digital platforms to foreground the lived experiences of 'othered' bodies redresses exclusionary practices by reclaiming space in ways that enhance accessibility and promote experiential understanding. This encourages active engagement over passive reception and ultimately creates a more democratic and diverse archival record.

**BIO:** Sohaila Baluch is currently a 4th year part-time PhD Candidate at the RCA undertaking a practice-led research project titled 'Inhabiting Discomfort: On Being a British South Asian Woman'. I work at the intersection of performance art and fibre arts, drawing from lived experience, positioning the brown female body as a living archive to analyse persisting forms of (un)belonging among female diasporic communities while exploring the conditions of (in) visibility.

**Anne Robinson**

### **The telling is political: collectively speaking our collective story**

The publication of the book *See Red: Feminist Posters 1974-1990* (Baines, J. Mackie, S. Robinson, A. and Stevenson, P., 2016) and subsequent iterations of the work of this collective within key feminist-focused exhibitions since 2016, including 'Women in Revolt!' (Tate Britain, 2023-24) and *Still I Rise* (Notts Contemporary, De La Warr Pavilion and Arnolfini, 2018 – 19) is the focal point of this paper. The book is presented here as an artefact, contextualised with its production and dissemination in order to take account of: the significant circumstances leading to the book being made at a particular historical moment, the interest in feminist art collectives and radical art and graphic practices which led up to publication, the collective mode of its production by collective members, the impact which further exposure of the posters has had in the public domain via exhibitions and re-publication resulting from the book's publication and the significance the book now has for both academic researchers and younger generations of artists and activists. In light of the impact of *See Red*'s work in recent years, as a former collective member who has been engaged in arrangements for shows and responding to requests for information, I am reflecting on a range of distinctions between scholarly academic work re-evaluating past feminist collective practices and auto-ethnographic practice in re-presenting and/or re-contextualizing such feminist work, and asking the question: 'what happens when we tell our own stories?' *See Red Women's* workshop was a collective, set up in 1974 by three former art students 'specifically to make posters to promote Women's Liberation.' (Robinson et al 2016).

**BIO:** Anne Robinson is a former member of *See Red Women's Workshop* and her current art practice is mainly film based and often collaborative: concerned with the perception and politics of time passing, 'queering' technologies and working speculatively with archives to 'listen to the past' and expand on hidden lives such as in the works: *The Hurrier* (2021), *Poor on the Roll* (2021) *Wakeful* (2018) and *Thrashing in the Static* (2014). Recent screenings and exhibitions include BFI Southbank, AEMI, Dublin and Whitechapel, she holds a practice-led PhD on temporality and art and teaches Fine Art at Middlesex University.

### **VI03: Panel 10**

**Sabine Gebhardt Fink**

### **The Revolving Histories-Project Revisited.**

In 2021 the project *Revolving Histories* was started, with the aim to create new narrations of performance art in Switzerland. A group of artists and art theorists researched collectively the different scenes and their trans-local relations, following the concept, to make the connectedness of performance art explicit, and enlighten the political contextualization in feminist, queer and activist artists' struggles. Defining the term feminism with bell hooks's understanding as a political position criticizing sexist, racist, heterosexist, and classist discriminations (hooks 2015), the collective work stood up against a history writing, centering on foremost European, and as "male" conceived positions (*Performance Process*, Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris 2018). Further, *Revolving Histories* advocated for a decolonial feminism, after Françoise Vergès, that fights against all forms of oppression (Vergès 2021), because recent performance art productions elaborated in Switzerland, like Davide Christelle-Sanvee's or Ntando Cele's, put these urgent topics in the foreground. A first result of the shared counter-archiving process was the project *Translocal Histories of Performance Art. Bang Bang*, curated by artists and staged at Museum Tinguely. This was followed by an online collection (<https://revolving-histories.ch/online-sammlung/>) of artworks, which is publicly accessible via

Collections Performance Art Switzerland today (<https://performance.sammlung.cc/en>). A specific research focus of the group are feminist, queer and activist positions (Gebhardt Fink/Mircev 2024). For the conference the proposed contribution will elaborate self-critical and meta-reflexive texts; focusing from a differing viewpoint on the project: how many feminist performance artists have been exposed since the project took place in Switzerland 2022? How many articles had been published? Which positions are included in the mainstream market



Image: Virginia Marano, Carolyn Lazard, Support System (for Park, Tina, and Bob), 2016, 24 gifted bouquets, documentation of performance and collectively produced sculpture, dimensions variable. Courtesy of Carolyn Lazard.

today – and how do those artists contextualize themselves now – in a feminist, queer tradition, or beyond?

**BIO:** Sabine Gebhardt Fink is a performance studies scholar and holds a professorship at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Switzerland. She is co-founder and member of Performance Index, Performance Chronicle Basel, Revolving Histories and Networking Histories of Performance Art. Her recent publication “Revolving Documents”, with Andrej Mircev, (diaphanes: Zurich/Berlin 2024) analyzes feminist and activist positions.

### **Virginia Marano (Re)-Evaluating Artistic Norms and Temporalities: Feminist and Disability Perspectives in Contemporary Practice.**

This proposal re-thinks the intersections of feminist theory, disability studies, and contemporary art through the lens of “crip time” as defined by scholar and activist Alison Kafer. It challenges conventional notions of time and productivity, creating experimental dialogues between art historical cases and foundational disability theory concepts such as complex embodiment and interdependency. Disability is viewed as a set of methodological invitations rather than a subfield of the humanities only relevant to researchers explicitly studying a representation of a disabled person or a disabled artist’s archive, for example.



This contribution explores both collective and individual practices, focusing on the Womanifesto initiative in Thailand and the works of artists Finnegan Shannon and Carolyn Lazard. Their artistic methods emphasize the tension between inaction and resistance, challenging conventional measures of artistic value and productivity. Womanifesto's biennial events, especially the 2001 workshop, serve as critical case studies in opposing capitalist valuations of time and efficiency, advocating for a re-evaluation of what constitutes artistic and societal contribution. Finnegan Shannon's 2018 series, "Do You Want Us Here or Not?" employs crip time to critique the accessibility of art spaces, pushing against conventional narratives by integrating viewer-friendly seating arrangements that defy standard consumption practices. Carolyn Lazard's interpretation of crip time through durational media challenges the capitalist idealization of health and productivity, advocating for a radical reassessment of the labor involved in care.

Incorporating Judith Butler's concept of "vulnerability" and Jasbir K. Puar's "debility," this contribution positions the works of Womanifesto, Shannon, and Lazard as performative acts of resistance. Through a feminist lens, their efforts challenge entrenched norms surrounding bodies and time, demonstrating art's potential to reshape political narratives and community discourses in opposition to prevailing exclusions and stereotypes. This re-evaluation critically examines the history and ongoing evolution of feminist art, aiming to enhance the understanding of how feminist interventions have transformed and continue to shape contemporary art and curatorial practices. This proposal intends to explore how these artists' use of feminist and disability frameworks offer new insights into the continuous re-assessment of feminism(s) within the art world, addressing both historical and current perspectives on feminist politics and artistic expression.

**BIO:** Virginia Marano (she/her) holds a PhD in art history from the University of Zurich. To conduct her doctoral research, she was awarded an ESKAS doctoral scholarship (2018–2021) and a FAN Grant (2021). In 2022, she was a SNSF Doc.Mobility fellow in the Art History Department at Hunter College/CUNY in New York. Her thesis examined the diasporic dimension in the works of Jewish women sculptors in Post-war New York, previously assimilated to feminism but not yet connected to the question of exile. She is also the coordinator and co-founder of the research project "Rethinking Art History through Disability" at the University of Zurich, which aims to rethink the intersections of disability theory and art history through the lens of the non-normative body. In 2023, she was a fellow researcher at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, working on the PNRR-PEBA project for the Removal of Physical, Cognitive, and Sensory Barriers in Cultural Sites, funded by the NextGenerationEU program. She has previously worked at Mumok Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig (2017, Vienna), Artipelag (2018, Stockholm) and Last Tango (2020–2021, Zurich). Currently, she works as a curatorial assistant at MASI Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano.

### **Alexandra Kokoli**

#### **It was easier to act than to consider: The role of activism in Laura Mulvey's iconoclasm.**

This paper seeks to challenge two prevalent assumptions about the oeuvre of Laura Mulvey: firstly, that her theoretical insights are predominantly shaped by her encounter with psychoanalysis; and, secondly, that her critique of the gender politics of the cinematic gaze stems from 'scopophobia' namely the subversion of visual representation to sabotage and frustrate viewing habits, desires, and expectations. I argue instead that, although psychoanalysis had a significant influence on Mulvey's worldview as her chosen antagonist, her key theoretical insights were borne out of her involvement in feminist collective action, and specifically WLM demonstrations at the Miss World contest at the Royal Albert Hall, London, in 1970. Furthermore, her approach to the cinematic gaze is not motivated by 'scopophobia', a term she never used but which was coined as the putative opposite of Freudian 'scopophilia', famously parsed in the essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', but by iconoclasm, namely an activist – not theoretical – intervention in visual and material culture. In unravelling these two assumptions, I also aim to shift and expand the field of Mulvey's contribution from film to public space, and from psychoanalysis to feminist activism.

The paper focuses on 'The Spectacle is Vulnerable: Miss World, 1970', the first essay in the collection *Visual and Other Pleasures*, where Mulvey and Margarita Jimenez give an account of their involvement in the organised disruption of the Miss World contest. The piece was co-authored by Mulvey and Jimenez, discussed with the group that took part in the actions, collectively edited, and published anonymously in *Shrew*, the London Women's Liberation Workshop journal. The essay, which not only foregrounds action over rhetoric but presents activism as a form of knowledge-making, will be critically contextualised in documentation of

feminist activism from that era (e.g. *Misbehaving*, ed. Sue Finch et al, Merlin Press, 2020) and discussed alongside feminist street performances and visual activist interventions, including the 'Flashing Nipple' performances by Margaret Harrison and friends, and their re-enactments as part of Mary Kelly's *Love Songs* (2005–2007).

**BIO; Dr Alexandra Kokoli** researches feminist artistic and activist practices. She works as Associate Professor in Visual Culture at Middlesex University and as Research Associate at VIAD, University of Johannesburg. She has published widely, including the edited collections: *Feminism Reframed*; *Susan Hiller: The Provisional Texture of Reality*; (co-ed with Deborah Cherry), *Art into Life: Essays on Tracey Emin*; and the monograph *The Feminist Uncanny in Theory and Art Practice*. She co-leads the Transnational Early Career Research Network (TECRen) in Visual and Performing Arts, funded by the British Academy. Her research on Greenham Common has been supported by the Paul Mellon Centre and the Leverhulme Trust.

#### **VI04: Panel 11**

**Barbara Mahlkecht**

##### **Re-evaluating Feminist Conceptions of Art Production: The Creative Refusal and Female Creativity in the Italian Wages for Housework Campaign.**

This paper re-evaluates feminist conceptions of art production, challenging modernist ideas of genius and originality through the lens of female creativity. It explores aspects of 'creative refusal' and 'female creativity' as articulated by artists and militants of the Italian Wages for Housework campaign. The focus is on the contributions of the 'Gruppo Immagine di Varese' (Image Group of Varese), particularly Milli Gandini and Mariuccia Secol, as well as Laura Morato's conception of creativity. Founded in 1974, the Varese Image Group included Milli Gandini, Mariuccia Secol, and Mirella Tognola, later joined by Mariagrazia Sironi, Silvia Cibaldi, and Clemen Parrocchetti. This collective significantly contributed to feminist art, challenging traditional notions of art and creativity.

The central aims of this paper are threefold: First, it connects feminist art production with militant organizations and theory, highlighting their shared influence. Second, it shifts the focus from individual artworks to broader art production conditions and modes, emphasizing collaborative and contextual factors. Third, it examines the impact of domestic creativity on feminist art, questioning traditional art historical narratives and proposing a re-assessment based on feminist values, recognizing the innovative potential of everyday domestic creativity. The Varese Image Group contributed significantly to militant materials, including the magazine "Le Operaie della Casa" (The Houseworker). Gandini's works, such as "Pentole inapribili" (cooking pots sealed with barbed wire), exemplify creative rejection, transforming the militant demand for wages into artistic struggle. During a national conference in the 1970s, organized by the SLD groups at Palazzo Vecchio in Rome, Laura Morato presented her paper "Women and Creativity," emphasizing creativity as a practical skill for subverting capitalist and patriarchal structures. She contrasted this with the traditional masculine image of creativity, highlighting it as an inventive approach to everyday challenges.

This paper outlines a trajectory intertwining feminist political theory and art history by examining the works of Gandini and Secol, confronting them with Morato's ideas, and offering a fresh perspective on feminist art production. This re-evaluation foregrounds female creativity as a form of resistance and a transformative social and artistic tool, inspiring change and challenging the status quo.

**BIO:** Barbara Mahlkecht is a curator, researcher, arts educator and cultural producer. She recently worked at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna as a senior scientist and was associate curator and research coordinator for the exhibition *Hungry for Time*, curated by Raqs Media Collective (2021–22). She has taught at several art universities, lectured and given conference papers internationally. She has initiated and realised numerous independent curatorial projects, often in a transdisciplinary and processual collaborative mode. Currently, she is finalising a Ph.D. at Goldsmith University London (AHRC award) on social reproduction and curating from the perspective of the Wages for Housework campaign.

**Pauline Barrie**

##### **The Founding of Women Artists Slide Library: Re- evaluating a living archive dedicated to the work of women artists.**

This paper is a personal history of the founding of WASL in the late 1970s to 1980s. It considers



the: Activism; Political Participation; Feminist Engagement; Visual Parity; Positive opportunities; Bring about Change; Development of a live archive which represented the work of women artist, both from the past to contemporary work.

As the founder of the Women Artists Slide Library I want to examine what were the main contributing factors of the time, and how was it taken from an idea to a vibrant, new resource archive dedicated to the lives and work of women artists, past and present . I really want to present a short personal history of the mid to late 70's and the political framework that drove my personal activism. WASL was a seeding ground for the development of " how things could work and be cohesive" in order to perhaps meet the needs of many women artists at that time. The main seeds of a new kind of organisation for women artists began to formulate within the discussions, meetings and events of the Women's Movement. The ideas of collective action, all working towards one main entity were constantly referred to. What would it look like, how would it collect information, how could it attract funding, where could this kind of " collective" be developed. Many questions, many differing proposals were suggested but this idea was in competition with the more urgent needs of finding exhibition space, funding for exhibitions, why were there so few women artists working in colleges and universities. The list of topics was broad and always created lively debate. But it took time to understand what was possible in order to really create change. These seeds of change needed another kind of strategy.

**BIO** Pauline Barrie is an artist, curator and arts organiser, living in London. She is the founder of Women Artist's Slide Library and was its managing director from its foundation until 1996, overseeing key changes in its growth. She has retired from Roehampton University, where she taught arts management.

**Maria Photiou**

**Rethinking the Legacies of War: Feminist Arts Activism in a Divided Country.**

2024 marks fifty years since Cyprus' division and twenty years since the agreement of free movement and the opening of the Green Line border that divides Cyprus into the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot regimes. During the past fifty years, Cypriot women not only experienced the enduring militarism and the legacies of the 1974 war but also had to operate in a patriarchal society that muted their lived experiences and excluded them from decision-

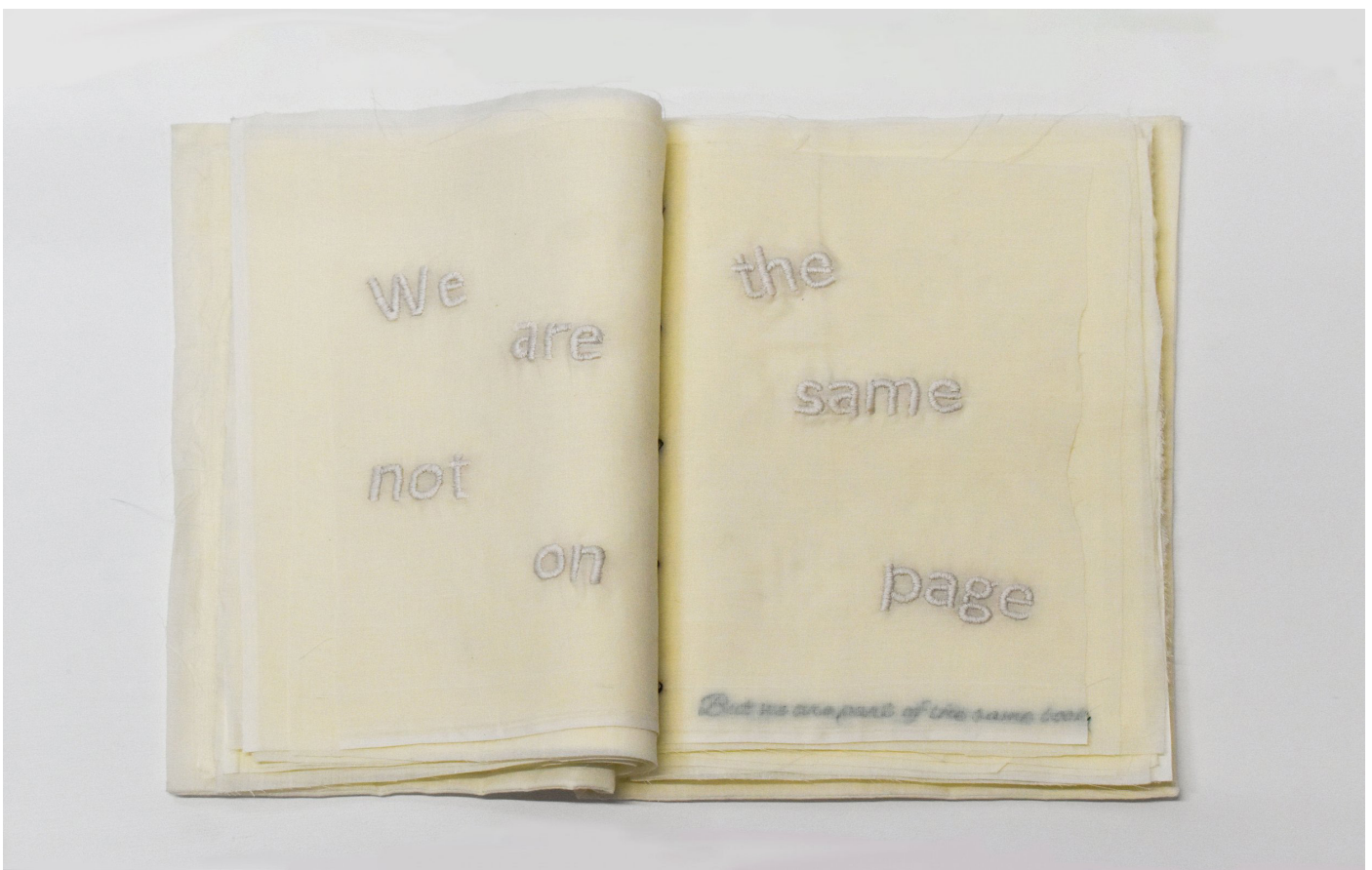


Image: Maria Photiou, Mariandrie Chrysostomou We are not on the same page, 2024.

making. Women's exclusion is a phenomenon noted globally; as Simone de Beauvoir wrote in her book *The Second Sex*, 'Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with the absolute truth' (2010:166). Until today, war narratives have focused on the glorified image of war heroes (predominantly men), who risked their lives for their homeland. War heroes are widely celebrated via veterans' parades and by dedicating public statues and street names to them. For Cypriot women artists, strolling along the border of their divided homeland can be seen as a politicised action, as they enter a domain that has been predominantly controlled by masculinised politics. This paper explores feminist art practices that challenge the conflict culture and offer new perspectives in understanding the impact of war on women's lived experiences. It will specifically analyse contemporary art works (for example, Ayhatun Ateşin's 2008 installation *50 Shoes Walking for Peace*, and Christina Georgiou's 2011 *Sewing the Borderline* intervention) that offer critical reflections on local/global political issues and their approach in advocating a violence-free world. This paper is the first research that brings together the practices of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot women artists whose work contribute to positive change and the making of new legacies of peace, social justice, and gender equality.

**BIO:** Maria Photiou has published several essays that investigate art and migration from feminist and decolonial perspectives, and has co-edited the volume *Arts, Borders and Belonging: On Home and Migration* (Bloomsbury, 2021). Her current research focuses on exploring gender-based violence through arts activism. Maria Photiou has published several essays that investigate art and migration from feminist and decolonial perspectives, and has co-edited the volume *Arts, Borders and Belonging: On Home and Migration* (Bloomsbury, 2021). Her current research focuses on exploring gender-based violence through arts activism. Dr Maria Photiou is a Researcher (Cultural Art Historian) at University of Derby  
<https://www.derby.ac.uk/staff/maria-photiou/>

#### **VI05: Panel 12**

**Gabriela Traple Wiczorek**

##### **Feminist Art and Social Practices in Latin America from the 1990s to the present..**

The proposed paper intends to discuss how feminist practices in contemporary Latin American art from the 1990s onward, from the Bolivian collective *Mujeres Creando* to art created in tandem with reproductive rights movements in Argentina and feminicide awareness groups in Brasil and Mexico, can be traced as influences in current feminist art practices and political action in the Global North. Such practices can be viewed within a tradition of socially engaged art, sharing methodologies with artistic and activist interventions and collective memory production concerning violence and trauma produced by state oppression, especially in the Latin American context, and have been adapted to different contexts as a response to the recent wave of backlash against women's rights in France, Belgium, the U.K., and the US. The most explicit example is the *Collereuses* and similar feminist collage groups adapting discourses and methodologies similar to *Mujeres Creando* to incite discussions on gender violence and how the State and institutions are responsible for maintaining the patriarchal order that protects perpetrators and blames victims and survivors. Through documental research we'll be able to identify how phrases such as "Ni la tierra ni las mujeres somos territorio de conquista", central to Latin American ecofeminism, are translated and adapted in interventions. Our methodological framework stems from a constant dialogue between art and feminist thought produced in different areas of knowledge, from Rita Segato to Julieta Paredes. Paredes, along with Adriana Guzmán (2014), proposes that the discussed art practices are an "instrument of struggle that always allows us to escape neoliberal cooptation, use, and manipulation, it is an instrument that is constantly renewed and always on the move".

**BIO:** Gabriela Traple Wiczorek is a Ph.D. candidate in Art History, Theory, and Criticism at Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (PPGAV-UFRGS/Brazil), researching social art practices on gender violence, memory and feminisms. She is also an activist working with Movimento de Mulheres Olga Benário in Rio Grande do Sul's capital city, Porto Alegre.

**Wiktorja Szczupacka**

##### **The Broken Genealogy of Feminist Art History in Poland, on the Example of the Gallery of Women's League (1967–1980).**

My presentation will be an in-depth exploration of the gallery at the District Board of the Women's League (1967–1980) in Warsaw and the pro-women initiatives led by its program director, Irena Huml. This study situates the gallery within the broader context of feminist

art history in Poland, specifically addressing the often-overlooked and undervalued state-sponsored initiatives for women during the People's Republic of Poland. Such initiatives, when acknowledged, were typically dismissed as superficial or illusory, this assessment was influenced by the totalitarian paradigm that dominated Polish humanities. Building on the new, revisionist paradigm and recent historiographical and sociological research by scholars such as Małgorzata Fidelis, Natalia Jarska, and Magdalena Grabowska, this article calls for a re-evaluation of the interactions between state institutions and the art world. The presentation aims to reevaluate the importance of the Women's League and its role in post-socialist contexts. It seeks to contribute to the discussion about the complex relationship between socialist state policies and feminist art practices. By doing so, it challenges existing narratives and emphasizes the intricate and alter-globalist nature of women's pro-emancipation efforts within state structures.

**BIO:** Wiktoria Szczupacka is an art historian, PhD candidate at the Institute of Art at Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw where her research focuses on the Polish avant-garde of the 1970s, institutional criticism and women's work. Her recent published work includes "About Artistic Collaboration on the Margins of Barbara Kozłowska's Art Practice" in Barbara Kozłowska, ed. Marika Kuźmich, Warszawa – Wrocław 2020 and "Responsibility Is an Action, Never Simply a Feeling: Zofia Kulik's Alice's Adventures in Fucked Wonderland, or, Cleaning Instead of Talking in the Context of the Polish Neo-Avant-Garde of the 1970s" in Zofia Kulik: Methodology, My Love, ed. Agata Jakubowska, Warszawa 2019. Szczupacka has led the Kulik-KwieKulik Foundation since 2016. As an art historian she is interested in contemporary art from Central and Eastern Europe, with a focus on feminist perspectives, including women's work, revisionism, and socialist feminism.

### **Angela Maderna**

#### **The Separatist Issue into the Italian Art System in the 1980s.**

The awareness acquired with the differentialist feminism of the 1970s in Italy led to the affirmation of the figure of the emancipated woman on a social level in the 1980s. This concept strengthened the importance of the idea of professionalism declared by the artists, which had as a direct consequence the increasingly widespread intolerance towards separatist initiatives such as female-only exhibitions. Initiatives such as the Biennale Donna di Ferrara, founded by the UDI – Unione Donne in Italia, in 1984, conferences such as "12 al 2000. Donna Arte" in 1988, in which the role of women within the national artistic panorama was reflected on and also associations such as DUNA – Unione Nazionale Donne Artiste, often organized by women who had already operated in the national system in the previous decade at the height of feminist demands, were deserted or viewed with suspicion by the artists of the younger generations (born in the 1950s) and who appeared on the scene at the time. Through the analysis of these three Italian experiences, the intervention aims to highlight the methods and partly the reasons that led Italian artists to move away from feminism after it had arrived in Italy also thanks to the medium of art (with Carla Lonzi), in absolute contrast with what was happening in the same decade in the Anglo-Saxon context where to some extent, feminism opened up to the demands of Afro- and Asian-descendant women, ensuring that the comparison between art and feminism continued to be lively and profitable.

**BIO:** Angela Maderna (1984) is PhD student at RomaTre University with a research about art and gender issues in Italy in Eighties. She is author of the book "L'altra metà dell'avanguardia quarant'anni dopo" (Postmediabooks, 2020) a study about the exhibition curated by Lea Vergine in 1980. She is art contributor at Domus magazine and Domani and Il Manifesto newspapers.

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