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Feminism and art: unexpected encounters

Abstract

Since the revolutions of the 1960s, feminism and art have created spaces for thinking and rethinking the links between gender and creativity. Art has been challenged both within and without the frame, as artists and feminists disrupt and complicate pre-established modes of production and representation.

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Feminism and Art: Unexpected Encounters

Review Essay

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Books Reviewed:

- Susan Best, *Visualizing Feeling: Affect and the Feminine Avant-garde*, I. B. Tauris: London and New York, 2013.
- Katy Deepwell (ed.), *Feminist Art Manifestos: An Anthology*, KT Press: London, 2014.
- Eleanor Heartney, Helaine Posner, Nancy Princenthal and Sue Scott, *The Reckoning: Women Artists of the New Millennium*, Prestel: Munich, London, New York, 2013.
- Amelia Jones (ed.), *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, (2nd edition) Routledge: New York and London, 2010.
- Helena Reckitt (ed.), *Art and Feminism*, (Abr Rev Up edition,) Peggy Phelan (survey) Phaidon Press: New York, 2012.

The artworld has been transformed by feminists at the same time as feminists have been among its chief critics. (Reckitt, 2012, p.13)

What we call feminism here is not a movement for increasing women's equality to men. What we call feminism is for all, not only for the biological female. (FAAB Tokyo in Deepwell, 2014, p.93)

Since the revolutions of the 1960s, feminism and art have created spaces for thinking and rethinking the links between gender and creativity. Art has been challenged both within and without the frame, as artists and feminists disrupt and complicate pre-established modes of production and representation. Feminism in turn has been challenged by art that asks: what does a feminist subject look like? What does she read? Think? Feel? Make? Amidst the constant questioning some unexpected encounters occur: art made by women is not necessarily feminist art; patriarchal logics continue to dominate the ongoing boundaries of canon formation; and, it remains necessary to examine gender in all its potentialities. As Susan Best writes, it continues to be our job as feminist artists and art historians to address ‘the refraction of the question of the subject through the lens of gender’ (2013, p.143). Subsequently, this review asks: What do you feel when you encounter feminist art? And, who is art AND feminism for? We pursue these questions through five new or recently updated titles broadly collected under the heading of contemporary feminist art history and theory.

In many ways the transformations of art and feminism have paralleled those of feminism more generally. In its online glossary of terms, the TATE Britain defines feminist art as “art by women artists made consciously in the light of developments in feminist art theory in the early 1970s” (2014). However, feminist art historian Whitney Chadwick reminds us that “Feminism’s success as a cultural force can be measured in the ways that artists – men and women – have embraced, challenged, and renegotiated its assumptions” (Heartney, Posner, Princenthal & Scott, 2013).

Each of the books discussed here challenges a narrow model of feminism, locating their arguments not just amidst the familiar waves of feminism but in the mapping of broader genealogies of concern. A common beginning point for feminist art histories is statistical with processes of counting and accounting used to identify inconsistencies in representation. For example, Gemma Rolls-Bentley discovered that in 2012 not one female artist was represented in the top 100 auction sales in England.¹ Representation then, becomes a focal point for questioning not just access but control of the means of production: who has the tools to represent, in what kinds of modes, through which kinds of means, and where?

¹The Guardian, (2013) <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/the-womens-blog-with-jane-martinson/2013/may/24/women-art-great-artists-men>

The need to address specific equity issues is paralleled by exhibitions that present a visual challenge to art history. Yet, the sites of feminist power seem to replicate those of contemporary art more generally. For example, the *Bad Girls* exhibition at the New Museum New York, curated by Marcia Tucker in 1993, and the two major survey shows – Maura Reilly’s *Global Feminisms*, 2007 at the Brooklyn Museum, and Connie Butler and Linda Nochlin’s *Wack! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, 2007 at SF MOMA – all mark important moments of transformation in American feminist thought. However, these exhibitions do not easily translate into global and colonial contexts. In GOMA’s broadly inclusive *Contemporary Australia: Women*, 2012, Australian curators celebrated ‘the diversity, energy and innovation of contemporary women artists working in this country today’, while at pains to avoid the ‘f’ word.

The five books reviewed here open up the two politics of art and feminism (with the emphasis placed on the conjunction *and*). Shared between all the books is a concern for new ways of thinking about art that can enable a historically informed and future focused understanding of feminism. Each suggests a specific context for particular art practices, while at the same time disciplinary boundaries in the visual arts are consciously dismantled. Finally, most of these titles (with various levels of success) make an attempt to challenge the Euro-American-centric dominance of thinking and writing about art.

Two of the books discussed here are new editions of important texts originally published at the turn of the millennia. The second edition of *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* (2010), edited by Amelia Jones embraces the expanded fields of visual culture as defined by critical thinkers such as Stuart Hall and Mieke Bal. Initially visual culture was a method for reading art differently, highlighting ethics that do not discriminate by class or material and that emphasise the social, the bodily, and the cultural. Yet, as Jones explains in her introduction, ‘cultural studies has not always embraced or even acknowledged the theoretical or political pressures of feminism in its critical practices’ (Jones, 2010, p.4). The point of the second edition of the *Reader* is to counter this tendency. As the volume’s title encapsulates, ‘feminism’ is a theoretical foundation with equal weight rather than a subset of visual culture or cultural studies.

Jones has completely restructured the 73 essays in this edition into seven parts to identify a transformative genealogy at the site of feminism and visual culture. This is much more than a temporal update. In particular, Jones takes into account the election of Barak Obama and the ‘global financial crisis’, which she rightly calls the ‘collapse of a global capitalist economy’ (Jones, 2010, p.1). Jones argues these two events have changed *everything*. In this context, she says, we must rethink power, the body, and representation. The first section, ‘Provocations’, has six commissioned texts that situate feminist visual culture as a site of intersection with globalism, and identifications of race, class, gender and ethnicity. The next section, ‘Representation’, leads off with John Berger’s *Ways of Seeing* reminding us of its original televised audience² who reeled with shock at the binary of “men look, women appear.” The other authors here make up a significant reader in their own right, and it is exciting to see Laura Mulvey, bell hooks, Elizabeth Grosz and Laura U. Marks in such close proximity. ‘Differences’ moves toward both the intercultural and the transsexual, with Trinh T. Minh-ha’s challenge to ‘authenticity’ as aligned with concepts of first and third world ethnographic subjects, alongside Sandy Stone’s posttranssexual manifesto. ‘Histories’ includes both Mira Schor’s groundbreaking ‘patrilineage’ essay and Catriona Moore’s curatorial essay employing Kristeva’s critique of the semiotics of masculine time. The ‘Readings/Interventions’ section steps into the difficult territories of self, body, colour and violence, and again includes major Australian contributions such as Jill Bennett’s challenging work on trauma. ‘Bodies’ places Judith Butler’s speech act ‘performativity’ alongside Rebecca Schneider’s study of the performing body. The difference between the two essays has always challenged readers to come to grips first with performance as an action and then as an act and it is interesting to see them here together. The final section, ‘Technologies’, leads off with Haraway’s ‘Cyborg Manifesto’, which for those of us who were studying as undergraduates when it first came out, transfixed us and transformed everything from that moment on. Jones does not just present a substantial reader in visual culture, but makes accessible a rich resource of key feminist texts. It is exciting to now see more Australian voices woven throughout this historiography of feminist thought in and of the visual.

² *Ways of Seeing* began as a 1972 BBC four-part television series created by Berger with producer Mike Dibb.

However, the decision to exclude “the French Feminists” from the second edition is a strange one, as it indicates a decision based on geography and language. Jones writes that the omission ‘has everything to do with space limitations (I am including a lot more very recent scholarship addressing intersectional and “global” issues in feminism and visual culture) and the fact that it is increasingly difficult to keep up with complex intellectual developments outside one’s own linguistic and geographic areas of expertise’ (Jones, 2010, p.5). The fact that many of us can only experience these texts in translation (albeit challenging and difficult translations) does not seem an adequate reason for the exclusion. Nor does the emphasis on Anglophone contexts—for within the Australasian context French writers such as Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva and Hélène Cixous were enormously influential and demonstrated a new framework for thinking that was not straightforward, predictable, and expressed exclusively in English terminology. How else are we to understand feminist thought beyond the master’s language, without at the same time understanding the colonising power and controlling voice of the English language? The emphasis on globalism surely is important, and not to be argued with, but even in this context Kristeva’s writings on ‘pollution’ and China in *Murder in Byzantium* (Fayard, 2004) would have a place.

Both the *Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* and Helena Reckitt’s *Art and Feminism* (2012) are recent reissues of earlier texts. *Art and Feminism* was first published as a weighty 304 page visual art textbook with a carefully curated documents section of foundational essays and case studies taking up the latter half of the book. The most dramatic transformation in the new edition is the removal of these documents reducing the overall volume to a lightweight coffee table book. This new version is organised into six historical sections entitled ‘Too Much’, ‘Personalizing The Political’, ‘Differences’, ‘Identity Crises’, ‘Corporeality’ and ‘Femmes De Siècle’; each focusing exclusively ‘on artworks and texts that have made a critical impact in Britain and the US.’ (Reckitt, 2012, p.13). Together these sections present works by 155 artists from the mid 1960s to late 1990s, artists who initially redefined and now continue to inspire practices in contemporary painting, performance, photography, textiles, film and installation art.

What is retained is an extensive survey essay by theorist of contemporary art and performance Peggy Phelan that unravels three decades of feminist art history and the influences of feminist theory, politics and activism on art made by women. Phelan traces the development of what she

calls a seductive subject—the relationship between art *and* feminism. Phelan’s emphasis on the word *and* indicates her attempt to overcome the limitations posed by the theoretical abbreviated form ‘feminist art’. The word *and* allows more room for grasping the richness and new trajectories of art practices informed and shaped by feminism; yet, it also proves problematic. For example, the Euro-American tendency of second wave feminist artists to cast essentialising nets over women’s experiences as seen in Judy Chicago’s approach to constructing *The Dinner Party* (1974-79) also emerges here in reference to the sacred dimensions of paintings created by the Aboriginal Australian painter Emily Kame Kngwarreye. Phelan draws loose connections between ‘The Dreaming’—a term used by Indigenous Australians to describe the relations and balance between the spiritual, natural and moral elements of the world—Western feminist manifestos, and works arising from artist’s migratory experiences from non-Western cultural backgrounds. Re-examining the established historical connections between art, women and feminism needs to be undertaken with care and sensitivity in order to resist universalising claims over territories and peoples who are still experiencing colonial suppression and whose own relationships to feminism in its various manifestations are unlikely to be straightforward.

Despite this limitation, *Art and Feminism* presents a collection of significant artworks supported by informative caption-based summaries and high-quality reproductions via which new visual connections between the generations can be made. Further, the conjunction of the terms ‘art’ and ‘feminism’ are employed here in order to expose the epistemological boundary between the social and intimate spheres. As Reckitt suggests: ‘The project tracks that which lies ‘between’ feminism and art, surveying what these categories have, and had in common. In focusing on artists’ responses to feminism the book set up a series of tensions – between politics and poetics; content and form; feminists and women; feminism and ‘the feminine’” (Reckitt 2012, p.11). This means that engaging directly with assumptions about gender, race, sexuality, age and class, does enable a fertile ground for rethinking the complex set of connections between art and feminist politics. Since many of the artists included in this publication use their art to challenge broader political agendas (for example, Shirin Neshat, Doris Salcedo and Coco Fusco all respond to non-Western structures of power) questions of whether art ought to respond to the demands of politics, and then why politics should make demands of art, are sure to follow.

In *The Reckoning: Women Artists of the New Millennium*, (2013) Eleanor Heartney, Helaine Posner, Nancy Princenthal and Sue Scott build on their widely recognised study *After the Revolution: Women Who Transformed Contemporary Art* (2007) to address the question posed by Linda Nochlin: 'After the revolution comes the reckoning. Exactly what has been accomplished, what changed?...as a result of the feminist movement in art?' (2007, p.7). To respond to this question the authors divide the volume into four thematically structured sections. These focus on twenty-four international women artists born post-1960 and their feminist predecessors.

Launching the first section 'Bad Girls' is Eleanor Heartney's incisive essay which highlights female artists who use and transform provocative and sexually explicit content to confront authoritative perspectives on female power, sexuality and identity. Featuring in this section are artists Ghada Amer, Cecily Brown, Tracey Emin, Katarzyna Kozyra, Wangechi Mutu, and Mika Rottenberg, whose diverse cultural and socio-political perspectives reveal distinctly artistic approaches for testing institutional politics of boundaries. This section is a crucial reminder of the wide-ranging critical artistic communicative strategies that women artists have developed to challenge the pervasive objectification of the male gaze, and the limitations on artistic expression imposed by early feminist activism.

'Spellbound' is a section that focuses on artists who draw on the subjective, the interior and the surreal. Nancy Princenthal's bold essay debunks a number of assumptions related to the epistemological binary between reality and irrationality, the notion of *feminine dreaminess* and the surrealist art movement. Princenthal explains: 'Dreaminess, or trance, or spell-boundedness-an inclination to wander off topic and way from material reality-has often been considered a feminine trait, sometimes dismissively. Using a trysty tactic of subversion, many young women artists have turned the characterizations upside down, finding in this inclination a source of expressive strength' (Heartney et al, 2013, p. 69). The work of artists Janine Antoni, Cao Fei, Nathalie Djurberg (disappointing here is the omission of Hans Berg's name, who is Djurberg's partner and long time collaborator), Pipilotti Rist, Jane and Louise Wilson and Lisa Yuskavage, confirm Princenthal's argument that the space formed by traditional ideas of feminine imagination, introspection and emotion has been claimed and reshaped by women artists as a

critical and speculative domain. Princenthal writes: ‘The evidence strongly suggests that venerable, culturally imposed associations between femininity and introspection, as between femininity and departures from rationality, have been long since taken over by women artists themselves and fashioned into sources of active, affirmative inquiry’ (Heartney et al, 2013, p. 77).

In ‘Domestic Disturbances’, Sue Scott brings attention to women’s dynamic interactions with the domestic sphere. Scott emphasises that ‘Much has changed in the world at large over the last forty years with regard to social organization, economics, politics, and communications. And while progress for women’s rights in much of the world is undeniable, change has also brought with it an entirely new set of problems, anxieties, and traumas that earlier feminist artists could not have imagined...’ (Heartney et al, 2013, p.121). Scott persuasively reminds us that for women the process of negotiating the space of domesticity is permeated with tension and anticipation fuelled by the advent of economic and technological changes. Here, works by Kate Gilmore, Justine Kurland, Klara Liden, Liza Lou, Catherine Opie and Andrea Zittel are used as examples of powerful political acts and devices for navigating the shifting ideas and feelings about home, family and security. These works expose the labour of redefining the domestic terrain as ongoing and two fold; it involves dismantling of established structures in order to rebuild new spaces of refuge.

Helaine Posner introduces the last section entitled ‘History Lessons’. This focuses on artistic responses to socio-political events including the politics of fear and victimisation, and the impacts of political and economic power on liberty. Artists Yael Bartana, Tania Bruguera, Sharon Hayes, Teresa Margolles, Julie Mehretu and Kara Walker show how linking personal histories with experimental approaches to art-making enable critical and imaginative responses to the raw intersection of history, race, gender, sexuality, politics and mass-media. As Posner observes, ‘These issues, including immigration, asylum, poverty, violence, racism, and sexism, among others, reflect the interest of a group of artists who are mindful of the past while being fully engaged in the present’ (Heartney et al, 2013, p.181).

Together these four sections that comprise the volume provide an important contribution to the maintenance of critical spaces within which we can witness the breadth of women’s

accomplishments in the visual arts and their enormously varied approaches to art-making. These in turn reflect the multiplicity of women's encounters in everyday living. *The Reckoning* certainly makes a new contribution to thinking about art and feminism, and the authors conclude with an optimistic tone. Nevertheless, it might be argued that a further text is needed to bring forth a greater diversity of works, including a much-needed turn towards the Asia-Pacific region which is under-represented in *The Reckoning*.

Australian art historian Susan Best's *Visualizing Feeling: Affect and the Feminine Avant-garde* (2013) challenges both the anti-aesthetic tradition of Minimalism, and its framing of the artist and spectator. The politics of feeling have long been attached to women's bodies and women's history. With an interest in subjectivity pervading art, the employment of psychoanalytical models has made a lot of sense in art historical practice, and often results in attention to the biographical. This is often countered by a numbing aesthetics that seek to dismantle subjectivity by turning variously towards and away from the object. There are specific moments in which this approach reaches its height, and the late modernist discussions of Minimalism are one. According to its major interpreters, critics such as Michael Fried and Rosalind Krauss, Minimalism is about the removal of feeling; about an approach to space and object that challenges any senses. Susan Best twists this entire discussion around. In the hands of women practitioners, she argues, Minimalism was explicitly about feeling.

Out of the five books reviewed here *Visualizing Feeling* specifically offers a new model for art history; one that privileges gender, yet also contributes to the dissection of previously established hierarchies of thought. Best's aim is to explore the place of affect within the work of four key artists: Lygia Clark, Eva Hesse, Ana Mendieta and Theresa Hak Kyung Cha. All four appear in the other texts reviewed here, and at first they seem to form an idiosyncratic collection. By choosing four artists who do not make a neat bundle Best forces us focus on the depth and diversity of their practice. It is the strength of Best's argumentation that by the conclusion the grouping of these artists makes complete sense.

By reading the artists in pairs – Clark and Hesse who address the physical material object (focused on interiority and imagination), Mendieta and Cha with lens-based practices that focus

on identity and sensate spaces – Best shows that a definition of ‘non-categorical affect’ enables a new understanding of Minimalism as a movement deeply invested in feeling. For example, in the chapter on Lygia Clark, Best demonstrates how Clark challenged the now established models of participatory art long before their time. Clark’s work continues to intrigue after so many texts, after so many readings, there is not a single way to capture the affect of this work, without the unsettling haptic participatory experience of being there. There is, however, little discussion on how the works are connected to the power geometries of place and time. For example, Mendieta reacted against European models of feminism, recognising that her own experiences of migration, identity and dislocation contributed modes of longing and desire that were not accounted for in feminisms based in concepts of stability and home.

Best shows how in Minimalism affect becomes something that can be understood as a shared space of feeling between object and viewer, a space of communication that is encountered before it is made into language, and then when entangled within affect’s grasp, viewers find themselves thinking of form, the object and the avant-garde of thought. *Visualising Feeling* should be read as a manifesto for an art history done differently.

Katy Deepwell’s selection of thirty-five feminist art manifestos, which span a period of more than forty years, provides a timely reminder of desires and hopes for the future in the face of the multiple forms of discrimination that continue to permeate contemporary everyday living. *Feminist Art Manifestos: An Anthology* (2014) offers an important perspective for considering the protean nature of feminist art practices, politics and forms of artistic expression. Here we can see the capacity of feminist art manifestos to initiate the dismantling of established systems of knowledge that cause suppression of women. In itself, the book is a jagged and challenging call to arms.

Feminist Art Manifestos begins with Mierle Landerman Ukeles’ ‘Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969!’, a radical proposition for an exhibition entitled *Care*, which emphasises the notion of maintenance labour in women’s domestic work, artist’s actions and society’s responsibility towards the environment. It ends with an equally provocative 2013 performance reading titled ‘The Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto’ in which Martine Syms re-imagines an alternative future

for black diasporic artistic producers. Deepwell excludes some influential but readily accessible feminist texts such as Valerie Solanas's 'SCUM manifesto' (1968), Yvonne Rainer's 'No Manifesto' (1965) and Donna Haraway's 'Manifesto for Cyborgs' (1985) in order to throw a spotlight onto less familiar poetics.

Importantly, Deepwell captures the diversity of female voices in a way not achieved in any of the other books discussed here. Across the manifestos we hear feminist artists call for socio-political change through mission statements from different parts of the world including Hungary, France, Japan, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Australia and the US. The artists write from different cultural perspectives and socio-political orientations, and are separated by geography and time.

Nevertheless, their manifestos reveal a shared commitment to feminist activism via art, and a belief in the potency of feminist manifestations. Deepwell suggests that the link between the widely varying forms of feminist poetics relates to 'a common concern for women's art practices, feminist politics and women's potential as artists' (Deepwell, 2014, np.).

Entanglements between these elements are revealed in a number of texts. For example, the manifesto written by Polish artist Ewa Partum in 1979 suggests that 'the phenomenon of feminist art reveals to a woman her new role, the possibility of self-realisation', and the '15 Women Artists of Pakistan Manifesto' published in 1983 states that 'we call all woman artists to take their place in the vanguard of the Pakistani women's struggle to retain their pristine image and their rightful place in society.'

Deepwell's use of a chronological scaffold to assemble a rich assortment of texts, aspirations, desires and approaches, constructs much needed space for encountering the ways in which women's creativity, imagination, thinking, writing and art-making intersect with feminism and the power geometries of a place. In addition, Deepwell offers a firm platform for thinking about the contingency of future practice; including questions of how the history of feminist art might shape the bodies, minds, and feelings of emerging artists—both women and men. Critical here is the question of how feminist art will encourage young artists to produce their own new manifestos for the future: tools that will be effective devices for challenging oppressive institutional politics and recovering past injustices that might otherwise stay buried. She writes: 'Feminism's agenda for social change has been about the transformation of what it means to be

human. This means changing the lives of both men and women in our society by escaping all proscribed or stereotyped roles. Feminism here is not limited to the question of legal, social and civil rights, important as these are: instead, many of these texts recognise how practices in everyday life, in cultural representations and in the representation of women as cultural producers can reinforce sexism' (Deepwell 2014, np).

Feminist Art Manifestos includes a mixture of familiar and unfamiliar texts, as well as thought provoking and emotionally moving calls for feminist action and response, and as such deserves a less shabby presentation than KT Publishing's current effort (the inclusion of page numbers, formal formatting and colour reproductions of representative artworks should be addressed) in order to reflect the real position of feminist art manifestos as significant medium of communication and artistic expression. As a model for electronic publishing that finds itself reliant on Adobe's proprietary software it still has a long way to go. The strength is in the collection and the voices as they push up against each other; in this it surely lends itself to a more accessible model of digital production. This is not something to be considered lightly. Engaging new modes of digital publication raises questions of who controls the powers of digital storage (the histories) digital reproduction (the materials) and digital presentation (the voices); and into whose hands we allow these to fall. The warning is embedded within the manifestos themselves: 'Do not lag behind cultural monopolies. Get ahead by being aware of the discrete changes of the world.' (Violetta Liagatchev 'Constitution Intempestive de la République Internationale des Artistes Femmes' in Deepwell, 2014. np).

The beauty of the manifesto is in its conjuring of a utopian future as dictated to the present, using the warnings of the past. In the *Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, Amelia Jones leads a conversation about education and an apparent return to feminism in the classroom. In the discussion Maura Reilly raises the question of 'who it is that is taking feminism seriously? Is it the baby-boomer feminists - who, as they age, and fearing they will be forgotten - have finally gotten around to an insistence on it, collectively joining together to insure their place in history? Or is it a younger generation of third-wave feminists who are stoking this fire, desiring to carry the baton of the feminist foremothers, albeit in ways that may perhaps shock their predecessors' (in Jones, 2010, p. 31). As a whole, these texts go some way to resolve the generational framing

of feminist thought by producing publications that actually engage a feminist ethics of inclusivity. As a complex record they review previous practices and place markers of importance and value.

What is clear is that there is still much work to be done on the intersections of feminist theory with other critical, social and cultural concerns. Questions of race and gender are buried amidst the politics of Western thought. Issues around economics and labour remain within the deeply unequal structures of globalisation. The acknowledgement of silent partners—collaborations across gender-boundaries—is perhaps the most difficult. The presence and voices of male artists working within feminist modes seems to generate fear around reproducing patriarchal systems of production. The most unresolved question across all these books is the points at which feminism and art intersect with LGBTIQ cultures. Queer is simply not the same as feminism, but cannot be absent from its thinking.

Something has changed, but not enough. The key reason for these five books to appear almost simultaneously is, as Amelia Jones argues, due to a resurgence of interest in feminist art. The serious long term research of scholars such as Best is becoming harder to carve out in an academic world of precarity and competitiveness, and for this reason alone her book should be celebrated as a substantial contribution to our understandings of the avant-garde. Current students of art are as fascinated by the cult of personality surrounding Marina Abramovic as they are deeply moved by the cancer diaries of Hannah Wilke. The ongoing ramifications of local identity politics, the crippling evils of power, the increasing encroachment of conservative nationalistic discourses, and the ongoing manipulations of global capitalism, which in effect never did collapse, all mean art cannot move forward without feminism. Instead we need to constantly revive, revisit and review the practices of both art and feminism. Each of these books is a model of how feminism continues to encounter and transform art and itself.

At this point in history it does seem possible to identify significant stages in the conjunction of feminism AND art. Notably, the exchanges between art and feminism in each of these books are difficult to separate. The most exciting and unexpected encounters occur when surveys of feminist artists are acknowledged and used as sources of diverse methods that address politics of

exclusion and reflect tangled relationships of power. Here we experience the impacts of feminist thought pervading all contemporary art practices. Detaching feminist ideals from any artworks produced by future generations of artists, both female and male is hard to imagine. In distilling the value of feminism in art as a response to the politics of control that cause turmoil and injury, these books highlight the importance of loosening the established feminist models dedicated to exclusive groupings of women's art. They move us towards an alternative critical non-universalist gender-inclusive approach that manages simultaneously to orientate towards the past and the future in the reality of the present.

The dynamic movement of such turnings is central to the ongoing work of dismantling divisive ideologies. In this context, the conjunction AND takes shape as an investment in the relationship of power—the knotting between art and feminism that is strategically produced and deployed through diverse artistic forms. Although the contemporary interest in art practices that were originally inspired by the feminist art movement of the 1960s and 1970s, including textile and fiber art, is indicative of renewal around the world, there is little evidence of thinking about how to alter or replace the prevailing modes of documentation and history. Consequently, deployments of AND through feminist visual art scholarship are likely to transform and re-shape worlds within worlds, whether real or imagined.

Author Biographies

Dr. Susan (Su) Ballard is a curator and art historian from Aotearoa New Zealand. Su's research examines the histories of materiality, machines, sound and nature in contemporary art and the art gallery, with a particular focus on artists in Australasia. She is a senior lecturer in Art History and Contemporary Arts at the University of Wollongong.

Dr. Agnieszka Golda is a visual artist and senior lecturer in visual art specialising in textile practices at University of Wollongong, Australia. Her collaborations with artist Martin Johnson produce installation spaces that respond to the relationship between power, feeling (the senses, affect and emotion) and trans-cultural narratives in socio-spatial contexts.