

Issue 105 March 2007

The Feminist Future: Theory and Practice in the Visual Arts

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK, USA



What is Feminism's fate in the art world? Whatever the answer, MoMA's two-day symposium opened with an air of festivity. After receiving a standing ovation, the keynote speaker, veteran critic and curator Lucy Lippard, recalled her own activist history and that of others, proclaiming, 'We'll be post-feminists when our goals have been met, and not before.'

The topic proved an elusive one. For the panel 'Activism/Race /Geopolitics' Coco Fusco staged a performance that bluntly invoked the spectre of female sexuality used to promote torture and war, while those 'feminist masked avengers' the Guerrilla Girls landed well-placed jabs at art institutions but otherwise described strategies that seem dated. That panel's highlight was Carrie Lambert-Beatty's paper on the Dutch group Women on Waves, which works within international maritime law to provide abortions and contraception to women denied access to such services, via a ship bearing a clinic/container designed by Joep van Lieshout.

About this article

First published in Issue 105, March 2007

by Kristin M. Jones

BUY THIS ISSUE



Print this review

Share this article:



Other Reviews in this city

- Cindy Sherman
- Michael Mahalchick
- Stan Douglas
- Mary Kelly
- Noriyuki Haraguchi
- The Ungovernables: 2012 New Museum Triennial
- Jordan Wolfson
- Klara Lidén
- Breyer P-Orridge
- Jesús Soto

Other Articles by Kristin M. Jones

- Germany is Your America Issue 145
- Sadie Benning Issue 144
- Elisabeth Subrin Issue 140
- Eugene Von Bruenchenhein Issue 139
- Eileen Quinlan Issue 133
- Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster Issue 129
- Anna Molska Issue 127
- Anita Steckel Issue 126
- Paul Sharits Issue 124
- Not So Subtle Subtitle Issue 118
- !W.A.R. Comment
- PERFORMA 09 in review: Part 2 Comment
- From One O to the Other Shows
- Josephine Meckseper Shows
- Marcel Dzama Shows
- (Go Total). View all >

RSS Feeds

Get the Universal feed, or the Magazine Issues feed to be updated of new reviews in this section.

Victoria Miro

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE WWW.ROPAC.NET GALERIE THADDAEUS ROPAC

MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

WHITE CUBE

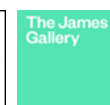
GAGOSIAN GALLERY

WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM

GLADSTONE GALLERY

SPRÜTH MAGERS

Victoria Miro, London



future change.

For 'Body/Sexuality/Identity', Beatriz Colomina explored Le Corbusier's bizarre defacement of the Eileen Gray-designed villa E.1027, and Geeta Kapur addressed the 'reconstruction of identity through the attenuation of identity' in the work of Bombay artists Rumana Hussain and Navjot Altaf. Marina Abramovic's talk on her 'Balkan Erotic Epic' series was fascinating, but there seemed to be a conflict when she denied being a 'feminist artist' while mocking the male audio-visual personnel. The second day opened on a high note with Anne M. Wagner's probing keynote in which she described works by artists ranging from Henry Moore to Yto Barrada as feminist, concluding, 'the feminist imagination assumes many faces', and worried about injustices that women face outside academia (her response to another talk's gauzy optimism: 'Nancy Pelosi as Speaker is not a sufficient solution'). For 'Writing the History of Feminism', David Joselit analysed works by Hannah Wilke and the Bernadette Corporation to argue that images are trans-gendered.

Despite such intriguing positions, issues that dogged Feminism in past decades remained vexing. 'I feel like I'm gate-crashing a reunion', admitted Wangechi Mutu before delivering a presentation on her work for the panel 'Institutionalization of Feminism', which concluded with a list of other women of colour who might have been invited. (Organizer Deborah Wye noted that one of the artists mentioned by Mutu was invited but unable to attend.) The implications of this bastion of Modernism playing host to such an event did not go unremarked. Helen Molesworth imagined works by Joan Snyder, Dana Schutz, Amy Sillman and Cindy Sherman hung together within its walls.

Although generational and other differences threatened to end the day on an anxious note, Linda Nochlin's response was bracingly un sentimental and lucid – coming on the heels of Ingrid Sischy's analogy between Feminism and the 'safe space' of Yayoi Kusama's mental institution – and ended the symposium with a burst of hilarity and passionate critical engagement. She described a girlhood in which she poked out Tinkerbell's eyes in a volume of Peter Pan and 'hoped it hurt'. She dubbed herself 'not a perfect feminist, but a good enough feminist' and pulled no punches on the persistent dangers of essentialism: paraphrasing Milton, she said women should be 'sufficient to stand though free to fall'. Such directness felt absolutely necessary. Perhaps it's time for the masks to come off.

Kristin M. Jones

Advertise with *frieze*

Combined subscription offer

Subscribe to both *frieze* (8 issues) and *frieze d/e* (4 issues), and have both delivered to your door from only £60 for a year.

[SUBSCRIBE](#)



Podcasts

Do you speak English?

Added on 15/10/11

Frieze Projects 2011

[LISTEN / DOWNLOAD](#)

Stay updated



Sign up to our email newsletter

Name:

Email:

[SIGN UP](#)

Publications

Frieze Art Fair New York Catalogue 2012-13
UK £24.95

Buy the new *Frieze Art Fair New York Catalogue 2012-13*

[BUY NOW](#)



Current vacancies

[MORE DETAILS](#)



Frieze 1 Montclare Street, London E2 7EU, UK, +44 (0) 20 3372 6111

Site by Erskine Design | [Back to Top](#) ↑