

*Speak, body:
Art, the Reproduction of
Capital and the
Reproduction of Life*

*21 - 23 April 2017
School of Fine Art, History of Art
and Cultural Studies
University of Leeds*

Book of Abstracts

Friday 21 April

16:00 – 18:00 *Common Room School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Film Screening

Martha Rosler's *Vital Statistics of a Citizen, Simply Obtained* (1977) 00:39:16 and selected films from the 1960s-1980s.

Introduced by Gill Park

G.04 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies

Display of Jo Spence's Archive materials, thanks to MayDay Rooms, London.

18:00 *G.04 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies: Drinks Reception*

Saturday 22 April

09:00 – 10:00 *Maurice Keyworth Lecture Theatre, Business School*: Registration

09:30 – 10:00 *Maurice Keyworth Lecture Theatre, Business School*: Introduction - **Gill Park, Tom Hastings, Rose-Anne Gush, Sophie Jones**

10:00 – 11:30 *Maurice Keyworth Lecture Theatre, Business School*

Marina Vishmidt – Goldsmiths College

Chair: Rose-Anne Gush

Corporeal Abstractions: Body as Site and Cipher in Feminist Art and Politics

This talk will explore the currency of the body as a 'speaking instrument' in contemporary and recent political vernaculars, tracing a continuum between biopolitics and mimesis. With the emergence of 'the body' as the central signifier of much poststructuralist and post-foundationalist cultural theory and philosophy some decades ago, and the more recent terminology of 'bodies' as the loci of political agency ('bodies assembling', 'Parliament of Bodies'), an ostensible move beyond the humanist confusions of 'subject' and 'people' rather presents us with the possibility of pseudo-concreteness that often accompanies theoretical projects intolerant of (real) abstraction. The discourse of the body and of bodies elides the question of how and why bodies are *produced*, accepting the bio-, if not necro-, political, premises of the current dispensation – one that capitalises on the fragile, isolated and suffering body - and converting them into an ethical victory. This then tends to exemplify rather than challenge a scenario in which 'the reproduction of capitalism and the reproduction of organisms become indistinguishable' (Johnson). In other words, what form of social relation makes such a thing as 'the body' not just legible but a departure point for any political subjectivation? Another suggestion comes from the somewhat recessed category of mimesis, here understood as the suspension of the human/nature, human/technology divide by means of struggle, play and performance. I will conclude with a close analysis of VALIE EXPORT's *Body Configurations* series.

Marina Vishmidt is a writer and lecturer in Culture Industry at Goldsmiths, University of London and runs a Theory seminar at the Dutch Art Institute. Her work has appeared in *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Ephemera*, *Afterall*, *Journal of Cultural Economy*, *Australian Feminist Studies*, and *Radical Philosophy*, among others, as well as a number of edited volumes. She is the co-author of *Reproducing Autonomy* (with Kerstin Stakemeier) (Mute, 2016), and is currently completing *Speculation as a Mode of Production* (Brill, 2017).

11:45 – 13:30 Panel 1a *Common Room School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Chair: Tom Hastings

Rachel Warriner, University College Cork - **Feeling the pain of others: Nancy Spero's *Torture of Women***

In 1974, American feminist artist Nancy Spero began work on her fourteen-panel piece *Torture of Women* (1974-76), made in response to revelations about the global prevalence of state-sponsored violence during the 1970s. One of a number of New York-based artists who sought to respond to brutality, particularly in the aftermath of the 1973 Chilean Coup, Spero began to search for sources that would adequately represent the experience of torture. Following on from her *War Series*, which protested against the Vietnam War, and her *Artaud* works that examined her own alienation under patriarchy, Spero sought to create a work which could act against what she described as the 'palpable realities of torture and pain'.¹

This paper will argue that in *Torture of Women* the body plays a central role. Using harrowing accounts of violence inflicted by totalitarian regimes, Spero's work focused on the female body and its internal experience. Transcribing detailed accounts of brutality, Spero retyped reports, introducing ruptures and repetitions that deflect their reading. Turning to literature relating to medieval affective meditation as a productive metaphor for reading *Torture of Women*, I suggest that by appropriating detailed accounts of suffering Spero forged a visceral empathy in the viewer in order to build opposition to political injustice. By personalising the seemingly distant practice of torture Spero sought to politicise her viewers, and forcing them to confront 'real events, ... real victims in real prisons, tortured for political reasons'.²

Rachel Warriner completed her PhD in 2016 on the work of Nancy Spero at University College Cork. Her research was supported by the Irish Research Council. She has published on Raymond Pettibon and Spero, is on the editorial board of the Irish Association of Art Historians' *Artefact Journal*, co-founded the Modernisms Research Centre, UCC and is co-curator with Pluck Projects. Currently she teaches on History of Art at University College Cork and Museum and Gallery Studies at the University of East Anglia.

Ana Carolina Minozzo, Birkbeck, University of London - **Points of Transformation - the body as a site for psychic resistance in Lygia Clark and her lessons for the contemporary.**

Working under the Brazilian military dictatorship and witnessing the rise of neoliberal politics in Europe and the United States, Lygia Clark was heavily influenced by psychoanalysis, especially her own analyst, Pierre Fédida, trained with Lacan and Deleuze, in the process understood as her abandonment of the art world. Her initial breakthrough with the publication of the Neo-Concrete Manifesto, in 1959, already carried a discontentment with the standardised practices of then contemporary artists and curators. Her mid-life works called the viewer to a closer contact with the artworks, touching and participating, yet, it was with 'Objetos Relacionais', her later series, that the viewers' unconscious, reached through the body, dominated the scene. The transformative character of aesthetics and interaction were, to Clark, the real aim of her path as an artist. She defended her work as therapeutic. This paper looks at Clark's project in relation to the potentialities of the body in times of crisis and asks how, and if, it can offer clues for an expansion of our notion of the body in the current late capitalist context. The digital revolution, the 2008-economic crash and the 'dividualisation' of subjects in the contemporary accompanies discourses of self-care based on enjoyment through the body – as seen in contemporary art pieces by young names such as Amalia Ulman and Petra Collins – generating a problematic numbing of political potential that is dissonant from Lygia Clark's statute of the body-unconscious bind. What would it mean to go through an 'Objeto Relacional' session with Clark today?

Ana Carolina Minozzo is a PhD candidate at the Department of Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck, University of London. She has been lecturing on theory and contextual studies at the University of the Arts London since 2013, as well as acting as the culture correspondent of *Vogue Brasil* and a number of other publications. She is a graduate of Birkbeck MA in Psychosocial Studies, following from reading Psychoanalytic Psychology and Fashion Media at the University of London and the University of the Arts London respectively.

Hana Janečková, Charles University - **Tactile Image, Displaced Body**

In the early 1970s Ana Mendieta digressed from the conceptual school of her tutor Hans Breder and began to use blood, feathers, earth and animals — materials deemed "unclean and messy" by art's anti-aesthetics movement of 60s and 70s. Influenced by writings of philosopher Octavio Paz and the notion of social exchange pioneered by sociologist Ervine Goffner, Mendieta, a Cuban refugee in the American Midwest created rape re-enactments and earth works, public interventions, documented in a series of startling images and Super 8 films. Her works have been re-enacted and developed by the contemporary Cuban artist Tania Bruguera, who continued to work with motifs of blood, soil and animal sacrifice and

¹ Jo-Anna Isaak, 'Interview', in *Nancy Spero* (Phaidon: London, 1996), p. 18.

² Nancy Spero, 'Woman as Bearer of Meaning, Not Maker of Meaning', 1988, Box 5 Folder 11, Nancy Spero Papers 1940s-2009, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

have been taken upon by art activist feminist groups, most recently WHERE SANAMENDIETA.

Mendieta's trance-like and ritualistic works have been very often exhibited as a photographic documentation accompanied by short descriptive texts. In the words of Nancy Spector, the curator of the 2000 exhibition *Postmedia* at Guggenheim, New York, Mendieta records "a corporeal performative gesture" conveyed by the photographic documentary evidence, as a hybrid medium of conceptual photography. However, the arousal of bodily sensations in the audience that is achieved by the artist's manipulation of human, animal, and environmental materials suggests that the affective dimension of her work is of greater and more lasting importance than its dematerialisation.

Exploring expressive and non-expressive languages within the artist's work this paper will argue that displacement, communion and trace operate within an affective model that destabilises the art historical categorisation of Mendieta's work. How can the affective models and the concept of 'tactile image' within Mendieta's practice be useful in understanding the re-enactment of her work, such as Bruguera's, and her continued relevance to contemporary performance practice?

Examining the role of documentation in relation to affect and performance, this paper will question the 'tactile image' and whether the politics of performance's documentation can still be weaponised in feminist art and politics.

Hana Janečková is an artist, researcher and curator based in London and Prague where she is a graduate researcher in History of Art at Charles University. She received the Gilbert De Botton's Award in 2011 and Red Mansion Award in 2012. In 2014 she was commissioned as part of Three Experiments in Translation Cinema6, London and curated *I turn the images of my voice in my head*, part of her ongoing research into the presentation of feminist art in different cultural contexts, in collaboration with Artycok.TV, Prague. Her writing has appeared in *Frieze*, *Springerlin*, *Romboid* and elsewhere.

11:45 – 13:30 Panel 1b *Seminar Room 2.09 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Chair: Griselda Pollock

Ekin Pinar, Middle East Technical University - **An Aesthetics of the Surface: Chick Strand's Haptic Ethnographies**

Between 1966 and 1976, filmmaker and artist Chick Strand frequently traveled between North and Latin America to make as well as show experimental ethnographic films. When analyzed in their entirety, the audio-visual, thematic and technical features of Chick Strand's experimental films manifest what I would like to call an *aesthetics of the surface*. This aesthetics of the surface collapses the illusionary space of the film and underlines the materiality of the objects by appealing to the sense of touch. In this paper, I will focus on Strand's *Mosori Monika* (1970), an experimental ethnographic film documenting the interactions between Warao Indian women and Spanish Franciscan nuns living by the swamps of Orinoco River in Venezuela and *Anselmo* (1967), a re-enactment of Strand's smuggling a tuba across the Mexican border and giving it as a gift to her Mexican Indian friend, Anselmo. Through an analysis of the aesthetics of surface manifest in these works, I suggest that the films instantiate a subjectivity that operates in the gap between bodies, languages, and cultures. In their underlining of the tensions and links between performance and performativity, between doing and speaking, and more importantly, between the body and the language, the films connect to their audience on an intimate, bodily level. At the same time, through her reflexive collage techniques combined with the phenomenological implications of the aesthetics of the surface, Strand gives voice to the different and at times contrasting needs and desires of multiple women from different cultures without mastering or controlling them visually. Furthermore, Strand foregrounds the material interactions and intercultural layers of meaning embedded in objects over their commodity status as part of an abstract capital flow. Strand emphasizes the film itself as an object of exchange whose materiality is foregrounded through the aesthetics of surface that she utilizes. The interdependence between the bodies of objects and subjects and the interchangeability of the subject positions in these films suggests an intersubjective meaning-making process among the filmmaker, the film, and the audience.

Ekin Pinar received her Ph.D. from the History of Art department at the University of Pennsylvania. Following her undergraduate studies in Architecture at the Middle East Technical University, she completed two M.A.'s at University of Pennsylvania in History of Art and at Middle East Technical University in History of Art and Architecture, respectively. Her areas of interest include modern and contemporary art, cinema studies, history and theory of animation, history of experimental film and visual culture, expanded cinema, documentary and

non-fiction modes, critical theory, and gender and sexuality studies. Her articles on futurist sculpture; experimental ethnographic film; and animality in French New Wave have been published in essay collections and visual culture journals. She served as a Zigrosser Fellow and a Film Intern at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, as an Andrew W. Mellon Graduate Research Fellow in Penn Humanities Forum, and as a Sachs Fellow of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania. She has taught several courses on history and theory of film, animation, and contemporary art at the Cinema Studies program and the History of Art department at the University of Pennsylvania as well as the Theatre, Dance, and Film department at the Franklin and Marshall College. She is currently working on a book project on Canyon Collective, an experimental film group active in the San Francisco Bay Area in the sixties and seventies.

Celia Graham Dixon, University of Amsterdam - **The re-mediation of Billie Whitelaw's performance of *Not I* as an aesthetic encounter in the 'virtual feminist museum'**

This paper explores Billie Whitelaw's 1977 performance of *Not I* for television as an aesthetic encounter. Written by Samuel Beckett and originally performed for the theatre, my analysis is located in the re-mediation of the performance from stage to screen and from theatrical to aesthetic experience. Through an examination of the use of close-up and the textured tensile quality of the screen, I will use screenshots of the performance to consider how it might be analysed as a series of images. These images are formed by the movement from text to performance that takes place through Whitelaw's body that cause her mouth to move and behave in certain ways that effect and join with the surface of the screen. By considering how the re-mediation of the play traverses the boundaries between performance and visual art, I will perform a reading that not only intends to break with traditional methods of art history and modernist visual analysis, but also aims to mess with and destabilise the legacy of the play in which Beckett is seen as the sole artist and maker of the work. Calling on the work of Bracha Ettinger, I will consider how the televisual image of *Not I* might be formulated as a matrixial screen of proposition. It is with this move that the performance of the play on for the screen might be seen to fragment the spatial authority of the proscenium and open up a new space of possibility via aesthetic encounter.

Celia Graham-Dixon is in the final year of a Cultural Analysis Research Masters at the University of Amsterdam.

After graduating from the University of Leeds in 2010 where I took Griselda Pollock's trauma and cultural memory class, I have maintained an interest in the ongoing role feminist art practice can play in bearing witness to dominant social conditions and

offering possible encounters of transformation in art and politics.

Catherine Spencer, University of Saint Andrews - **Joan Jonas's Imagist Poetics/Body Politics**

The performance works of the US artist Joan Jonas are frequently compared to 'Imagist poetics' – an analogy which stems from Jonas's own avowed interest in, and study of, modernist poetry, and which culminated in a suite of works rooted in the writings of the poet H. D. in the 1990s and 2000s. Yet while the catalogue essays and short reviews that have proliferated around Jonas's practice briefly allude to this affinity at a purely formalist level, its critical implications for her work, as well as for the wider relationship in performance art of the 1960s and 1970s between image and body, and psychic and social struggle, have yet to be analysed in any depth.

This paper unfolds and pushes at Jonas's mobilization of the 'image' in her early performances, exploring how, even before the overt engagement with H. D., her practice mined the connections linking modernist poetics, psychoanalysis, anthropology, kinesics, cybernetics, and the writings of the art historian Aby Warburg. The emergence of the women's liberation movement increasingly informed Jonas's investigation of these intersections, resulting in a specifically feminist project to re-think established modes of embodied subjectivity. Many of Jonas's performances in the early 1970s were created in downtown lofts and abandoned urban sites in New York, so that her investigations of the image's spatial, temporal and psychic ramifications for the embodied subject mapped directly onto the landscape of post-industrialization and advanced capitalism. The image emerges as a way of mediating between psychological effect and material state, in a manner that draws on – but also, significantly, contests – the precepts of Freudian psychoanalysis, in line with the wider feminist project to re-think and re-write Freud. Jonas's work pays close attention to disorienting oscillations between psychological and social projects, while seeking to find moments of overlap between these two models for experience.

Catherine Spencer is a Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Art in the School of Art History at the University of St Andrews. Her research and teaching focuses primarily on performance art since 1960, particularly in Europe, North America and Latin America. Her writing has appeared in *Art History*, *Tate Papers*, and *British Art Studies*; she has also written exhibition reviews for *Art Monthly*.

13:30 – 14:30 G.04 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies: Lunch

14:30 - 16:30 - Panel 2 *Parkinson Building, Seminar Room 1.08*

Chair: Sophie Jones

Carina Brand, De Montfort University - A Materialist Re-reading of Abject Art: Non-reproduction, Abjection and Aesthetics

The paper will readdress 'abject art'³ that culminated in the 1990's (but by no means beginning then) as a social and political response to limited or non-reproduction.⁴ The abject in art is often enacted and envisioned by artists who experience the front lines of limited social reproduction and the reality of 'abject labour' (labour that 'deals' with the abject), primarily enacted by women and increasingly women of colour and migrant labour, but equally those affected by genocide, neoliberalism, austerity and growing 'surplus' labouring populations.

The abject can be understood as both an aesthetic response within art and a social condition imposed by capitalist production.⁵ Understood this way the abject becomes a radical response offered by women, artists of colour, and LGBT artists.⁶ I will specifically explore the way the Japanese group Zero Jigen's work grew out of the devaluation of life imposed by America through atomic decimation and imperialism.⁷ Then consider feminist practice of the late 1960-80s that reflected a period of economic stagnation and neoliberalism's 'roll back' of services for social reproduction.⁸ Lastly considering the 1990's abject art and culture as a culmination of enduring states of abjection after over a decade of neoliberalism and conservative governments.⁹

Although this historical period is multifarious and complex, I want to draw out a lineage and more importantly a specific response that is centred on the body: its annihilation, its mutilation, its transformation and the inclusion of its by-products as material and subject matter. If we understand the abject in relation to value or non-value, and consider the value of the body in question, we can open up a debate around the way 'life' and bodies are defined by values structured by gender, race and class.¹⁰ By

reclaiming the concept of the abject as a collective response to imposed conditions of capitalist extraction and decimation we can separate it from its individual, spectacular and psychological use.

Opening up a dialogue around the contradictory role of social reproduction and gendered bodies under capitalism and the aesthetics of these 'differences'.¹¹

Carina Brand is currently a lecturer in Art Theory at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK, where my research interests are Critical Theory, Marxism, globalisation, Science Fiction and contemporary art. Previously studied Anthropology at Victoria University Wellington, and Royal Academy of Art and completed my PhD (2015) under Professor John Roberts at the University of Wolverhampton. Conferences presentations include: 'Historical Materialism' (2016) 'Power in Communicative Capitalism' (2016: European Sociological Association), 'The Avant Garde' (2013: The University Edinburgh). Upcoming publications: 'Feeding Like A Parasite' in *Economic Science Fictions* and 'The Utopia/Dystopia Dialectic' in *Symploke*. I am currently developing my PhD thesis into a monograph on extraction.

Vanessa Parent, University of British Columbia - Mediated and Domesticated: On the Disruptive Potential of the Non-Labouring Female Body

The female body, specifically 'her' genitalia, finds itself ensnared within a historically contingent matrix of economical and socio-cultural obligations: the reproduction of the labour force on the one hand, and the reproduction of the male worker on the other. This form of gendered labour, historically considered 'natural' and thus unwaged, because of its contribution to the maintenance of capitalism, has also made the female body subject to political and ideological control. Today, the continuing legislation of female bodies makes clear that within a capitalist political economy, women are not to engage in non-reproductive sex. On a social and cultural level, the ubiquity of rape culture ensures that women submit to, and participate in, the disciplining of their own bodies making social and historical determination all the more difficult to dismantle.

Through an examination of VALIE EXPORT's 1969 performance and photograph *Genital Panic* as well as photographic works by Birgit Jürgenssen which address domesticity and the mediated female body, this paper will offer a consideration of female genitalia as the source of women's reification, as the site of women's determination as resource, commodity and unwaged worker and crucially, as the site upon which female lived experience under capital has been inscribed. This inquiry will examine the ways in which the female body has been essentialized as a labouring body whose reproductive forces are

³ 'Abject Art' canonised by its 1993 show at the Whitney, Hal Foster has also dedicated a chapter of *Bad New Days* (2015) to the 'Abject' ensuring its ongoing currency.

⁴ Here I will draw on Marxist feminist readings of social reproduction: Federici (2012) Fortunati (1992)

⁵ I will also tease out different meanings of the abject using Kristeva (1982) and subsequent analyses of abjection, Bataille and 'base materialism', and Marx's (1976) writing on surplus laboring population and law of capitalist accumulation, and Endnotes 2013/2015 writing on the abject in relation to gender and surplus population.

⁶ Henry (2015) 'Suffering body of 1993'

⁷ We can consider Arendt (1951), Mbembe (2003) and Foucault (1990) here, and Standish (2011) in relation to the Japanese Avant-Garde.

⁸ I will explore works by Barbara Smith, Carolee Schneemann, and Mierle Laderman Ukeles.

⁹ Note this is in reference to UK/USA, here I will consider work by Kiki Smith, Marina Abramovic, and Andres Serrano, and also popular 90's film that deals in the abject, notably *Trainspotting* (1996)

¹⁰ Foucault and subsequent theorists readings of biopolitics are important here.

¹¹ Identity politics and 'difference' understood in the context of the way capital discriminates, especially in the current political climate is still an important debate.

exploited and ensured through legislation and leveraged within an economy of shame and morality. It will also consider female genitalia, having endured for centuries these conditions of extreme duress, as a potent site of resistance from which women have been alienated. While considering the radical and disruptive character of the non-labouring female body, this inquiry hopes to unpack this specific form of alienation which has made the conditions imposed by history seem all the more inescapable.

Vanessa Parent is a PhD candidate in the department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. Her dissertation consists of an investigation into the Body and Community in relation to an oppressive capitalist political economy. More specifically through an examination of Vienna Actionism within the context of the *longue duree* of the failed revolutions of 1848 leading up to the crisis of the 1960s-70s. VALIE EXPORT's work in response to that of her male contemporaries serves as a crucial part of her investigation into revolutionary subjectivity. The panel, "On the Dialectics of Procedural Violence in Post-WWII European Art, 1949-65" at the College Arts Association Conference in New York City which she is co-chairing with Dr. Jaleh Mansoor examines some of the themes explored within her dissertation such as the body's position in relation to aesthetic and political engagement. Vanessa has also contributed to publications such as IKON, C Magazine and more recently to the Blind Field's segment on Housework. Vanessa is currently teaching at Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA.

Amy Tobin, Goldsmiths, University of London - Be the Body: Work in 1970s Art

This paper considers the exploration of the embodied politics of work in two artworks from the early 1970s. Both were made in South London: one, titled *A Woman's Place*, in Vauxhall another, titled *Women and Work: A Document on the Division of Labour in Industry* in Bermondsey and Camberwell. While the former, by the South London Art Group, engaged with housework and the gender politics of domestic architecture, the latter, by Kay Hunt, Margaret Harrison and Mary Kelly, addressed the factory and the application of equal pay legislation in the workplace. Despite the different modes of work under consideration in these artworks each shows the complex entanglement of work and home, and the focus of the labour of reproduction on the often-silent bodies of women.

Amy Tobin is associate lecturer at Goldsmiths College and City and Guilds Art School. She completed her PhD, titled 'Working Together, Working Apart: Feminism, Art and Collaboration in Britain and North America, 1970-1981', at the University of York in 2016. She has published articles and reviews in *MIRAJ*, *Tate Papers*, *Art History* and

Oxford Art Journal, while chapters are forthcoming in *A Companion to Feminist Art* (Wiley Blackwell, 2017) and *Other Cinemas: Politics, Culture and British Experimental Film in the 1970s* (IB Tauris, 2017). She is also the co-editor of *London Art Worlds: Mobile, Contingent and Ephemeral Networks 1960-1980* (Penn State University Press, 2018) with Jo Applin and Catherine Spencer and editor of *A Woman's Place* (Raven Row, 2017).

Fulvia Carnevale (Claire Fontaine) - Raising revolution and human strike. Biopolitics of care.

Our proposal for this conference is to deepen and broaden the investigations that we have begun in 2015 at the symposium *Feminist duration in art and curating* in Goldsmiths with our intervention entitled *And they ask for their help more than they are ready to help her* and pursued in 2016 at the symposium in London also organised by Helena Reckitt entitled *Now you can go* with our intervention revolving around the double bind of "social motherhood", subsequently re-elaborated in the text published in the current issue, n°16, of *May* under the title *Human strike between foreignness and responsibility*. The conceptual core of the research is the exploration of the complex relationship between care and revolt, revolutions and the relational daily work that these imply.

Carla Lonzi's quest for an absolute liberation of the whole subjectivity in a feminist perspective is the guide-line, the *Maintenance Manifesto* by Mierle Laderman Ukeles is a key formalisation of these problems within the art field, but also the book by Tristana Dini (*La materiale vita*, 2016) where the question of biopolitics as care is studied and eviscerated. The concept of "human strike" is a red thread within this exploration – it is the most generic and radical form of strike that doesn't involve any affiliation or particular identity and consists into transforming one's subjectivity into a weapon and a battlefield (cf. our previous elaborations in *Human strike has already begun & other writings*, Mute, 2013) – comes from the analysis of Italian feminism from the 70s by Silvia Federici and the Milan Women Bookstore, where domestic housewives were first seen as productive agents of society and the family unmasked as a place of political and social reproduction and exploitation of women. Within our contemporary context the main question that we wish to pose is related to the regeneration of the "love-force" and the "revolt-force", energies that, we believe, mainly come from women within collective contexts and are both savagely exploited and not renewable in the current patriarchal system. We would like to analyse the difficulties that mixed gender collective formations encounter in order to persist and fight the current state of things, and illustrate how a feminist perspective centred on the idea of human strike could transform the state of things. Refusing one's subconscious complicity with dynamics that reinforce gender exploitation especially in libertarian and supposedly radical context would be a way to entirely transform the role of women in

nurturing and raising a revolution that won't solve their own problems.

Claire Fontaine (founded in 2004). Lives and works in Paris. Claire Fontaine is a collective artist based in Paris. A monograph about the artist has been published in 2012 by Walther König entitled *Foreigners Everywhere* with texts by Bernard Blistène, Nicolas Liucci-Goutnikov, John Kelsey, Hal Foster. She has published with Mute an anthology of her texts entitled *Human strike has already begun and other texts* (2012), with One Star Press *Some instructions for the sharing of private property* (2011) and with Dilecta *Vivre, vaincre* (2009). She has published in e-flux journal # 47, *We Are All Clitoridian Women: Notes on Carla Lonzi's Legacy*, 2013; *Gallerie da non riempire* in *Il gesto femminista: la rivolta delle donne nel corpo, nel lavoro e nell'arte*, Derive Approdi, 2014; *Carla Lonzi o l'arte di forzare il blocco* in *Carla Lonzi la creatività del femminismo*, Il Mulino, 2015. She has organized and coordinated at La Monnaie de Paris on the 1/10/16 the encounter entitled *Work, strike and self-abolition. Feminist perspectives on the art of creating freedom* with Julia Bryan-Wilson, Elisabeth Lebovici, Helena Reckitt, Marina Vishmidt, Giovanna Zapperi.

16:30 - 16:45 G.04 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies: Coffee and Tea Break

16:45 - 18:30 *Common Room School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Martha Rosler - *Some Notes on the Body in Pieces*

Discussant: **Alison Rowley**

Martha Rosler works in video, photography, text, installation, and performance. Her work focuses on the public sphere, exploring issues from everyday life and the media to architecture and the built environment, especially as they affect women.

Rosler has for many years produced works on war and the national security climate, connecting life at home with the conduct of war abroad, in which her photomontage series played a critical part. She has also published several books of photographs, texts, and commentary on public space, ranging from airports and roads to housing and gentrification. A retrospective of her work has been shown internationally, and her writing is published widely in publications such as *Artforum*, *e-flux journal*, and *Texte zur Kunst*.

In 2012, she presented a new series of photographs, taken during her trip to Cuba in January 1981, and in November, she presented the *Meta-Monumental Garage Sale* at MoMA in New York. In 2013, her book of essays, *Culture Class*, which deals with the role of artists in cities and gentrification, was published by e-flux and Sternberg Press. Most recently, she produced the exhibition and public project *Guide for the Perplexed: How to Succeed in the New Poland* at the CCA Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw, Poland. Rosler lives and works in Brooklyn.

Alison Rowley is Reader in Cultural Theory in the School of Art, Design and Architecture at the University of Huddersfield. Her book *Helen Frankenthaler: Painting History, Writing Painting* was published by I.B. Tauris in 2007. Her writing on contemporary art and film includes essays on AES+F, Chantal Akerman, Willie Doherty, Eva Hesse, Sarah Lucas and Trinh T. Minh-ha. Her new book *Common Gestures Class Acts: Young British Art in Retrospect* will be published by I.B. Tauris in 2017.

19:00 *G.04 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies: Mezze and Wine*

Sunday 23 April

09:30 - 11:15 Panel 3a *Common Room School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Chair: Tom Hastings

Alice Butler, University of Manchester - 'just a diary. to yourself. for no one'

Getting Closer to Kathy Acker and her Diary Desire

When the feminist artist Eleanor Antin started mailing out her postcards of *100 Boots* in spring 1971, she gave her younger friend, the writer Kathy Acker, the job of handwriting the six hundred addresses on the list. It was a mode of distribution that circumvented the commercial limitations of the gallery space. Then, in 1973, and using the gift of Antin's mailing list, Acker began to imitate Antin's strategy: she typed up her text 'Some Lives of Murderesses', staple-bound it as a simple, handmade chapbook, and mailed it out, to Antin's art world contacts.

For this project, Acker expanded the diary experiments she had used for her first self-published work *Politics*, wherein she appropriated passages from her diary that documented her life working in a Manhattan sex show, by going one step further, placing 'straight diary material, right next to fake diary material' – the autobiographies of nineteenth century murderesses.¹² While Antin's postcard project was indebted to the formalist traditions of conceptual art, here was Acker re-writing those traditions by making conceptual writing corporeal and sexual, in a response to the social conditions in which she was forced to work, in order to write.

Acker walked the 'bridge between the verbal and the visual', which Lucy Lippard recognises as being central to 'conceptual art', but while for Lippard 'it was usually the form rather than the content of conceptual art that carried a political message',¹³ for Acker it was both, and it was with this political awareness of personal performativity in writing, that Acker's chapbooks moved away from purely conceptual traditions. Drawing on theories of performance and performativity, from scholars such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Peggy Phelan, this paper argues for a re-thinking of Acker's early diary works as 'writerly' extensions of feminist performance art. As she exhibited and performed intimate narratives of sex and desire in public writing, Acker challenged the codes of sexual politics, and showed the machinations of its violence, but hers was a making public that was also stung with a radical perversion of the personal. She blurred the

¹² Kathy Acker in 'Devoured by Myths: An Interview with Sylvère Lotringer' in *Hannibal Lecter, My Father* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991), pp. 4-5.

¹³ Lucy Lippard (ed.), *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966-1972* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), pages x and xiv, respectively.

autobiographical, first person 'I', with a performative and plural staging of selves, and an anonymous mail art form, amounting to what Peggy Phelan might call 'an active vanishing'.¹⁴

Alice Butler is a writer based in London, and a current PhD student in Art History & Visual Studies at the University of Manchester, working on a project provisionally titled *Close Writing: The Personal Performances of Kathy Acker and Cookie Mueller*. She has been published widely in the art press, including *frieze* (as the winner of their 2012 Writer's Prize), *Cabinet*, *Art Monthly*, *Gorse* and *Eros Journal*. She regularly contributes catalogue essays for artists, including Joanna Rajkowska, Marianna Simnett and Lucy Clout, and has given talks at a wide range of cultural institutions, such as the Royal College of Art in London, Wysing Arts Centre in Cambridge, Centre for Contemporary Arts in Glasgow, and Brighton, Leeds and Manchester universities. In 2016, she was a contributing artist to the Whitstable Biennale, and in 2015, she was the Jerwood Visual Arts Writer in Residence.

Kimberly Lamm, Duke University - **From Reproductive Labor to the Affective Labor of the Image: Writing in the Kitchen with Martha Rosler and Carrie Mae Weems**

This proposed paper examines two works of art that significantly contribute to our understanding how of women's bodies in the United States have been made to align with an image of a body that perpetually gives and pleases: Martha Rosler's video *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975) and Carrie Mae Weems' photo-text installation *Kitchen Table Series* (1990). Starting with the fact that both artists situate their artwork in the kitchen, I demonstrate that these pieces suggest how the imperative that women perform reproductive labor slides into the visual dimensions of affective labor. That is, both *Semiotics of the Kitchen* and the *Kitchen Table Series* reflect on the fact that the work that goes into the care and maintenance of homes, families, and communities—work that is disproportionately the responsibility of women—cannot be separated from the work of creating feelings of satisfaction and comfort, and it is the image of a woman's body that hinges them together.

While the continuum between reproductive labor and affective labor in the category of "women's work" is not particularly surprising, what *Semiotics of the Kitchen* and the *Kitchen Table Series* show is the crucial role images play in the constellation of expectations "affective labor" identifies. These pieces shrewdly deploy images to highlight the imperative that women create affectively pleasing images with their bodies, and show that assumptions about women's reproductive capacities—key among them that maternal femininity translates into natural acts of

¹⁴ Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 19.

giving and caring—inform this visual imperative. To perform this work, both Rosler and Weems draw upon language, its visual shapes, lines, and patterns, as well as the poetics of its echoing sounds and the textures of its diction. Therefore, a significant part of my analysis will focus on how these artists create images of writing that de-link the female body from the imperative to become an image that perpetually gives and pleases.

Kimberly Lamm is Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies at Duke University. She recently completed her first book, *Addressing the Other Woman: Textual Correspondences in Feminist Art and Writing*, which is forthcoming from Manchester University Press.

Flora Dunster, University of Sussex - “Her Main Objection Seems to Be the Presence of Naked Bodies Themselves”: Tessa Boffin and the Politics of Representation

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw heated debates around pro- vs. anti-sex media and representation, in the US, Canada, and UK. Often termed “the Sex Wars,” the implications of these debates would stretch into the ‘80s, outlining strict and divisive ideals as to what sexual and representational practices could be ethically engaged. In the UK, radical and revolutionary feminists assumed an anti-S/M, anti-porn position, arguing against what they saw as male (i.e. oppressive) influences on women’s desires. Socialist feminists/lesbians and ‘sex radicals’ held an oppositional stance, focusing their critique on a wider understanding of capitalism, and declining to censor images of the desiring body.

This paper examines a 1988 letter in *Feminist Review* by photographer Tessa Boffin. Titled “The Blind Leading the Blind: Socialist-Feminism and Representation,” Boffin responded to an attack by Susanne Kappeler on her photo-series *A Lover’s Distance* (1987), refuting Kappeler’s claim that it was neither socialist nor feminist. Clarifying her praxis as a politics of representation, rather than a representation of politics, Boffin’s language points to the emergence of queer theory. She attempts to cut through gendered identification, and re-materialise the body following its evacuation by the debates and practices emergent of the 1970s.

I employ Boffin and Kappeler’s exchange to trace this debate from organised feminism to the emergence of “queer.” The paper asks whether visualising the desiring body in LGBT and feminist art affirmed the fears of radical/revolutionary feminists by facilitating exploitation (and commercialisation), or whether it undid a tendency to self-censorship, which Boffin equated with the “unholy” politics of the far right. It suggests that this exchange—and the fissure it grew from—can productively illuminate histories and strategies relevant to navigating an increasingly fraught nexus of representation and ideology, considering as well

contemporary debates within feminism which echo those from this era.

Flora Dunster is a PhD candidate at the University of Sussex in Theatre, Drama and Performance Studies. She holds a BA in Honours Art History from McGill University, Canada, and an MA in Contemporary Art Theory from Goldsmiths, University of London. Her current research considers the strategic uses of fantasy and imagination in English LGBT artistic practices between 1987 and 1996, and their relationship to simultaneously emergent strands of English queer theory.

09:30 - 11:15 Panel 3b *Seminar Room 2.09 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Chair: Griselda Pollock

Lenka Vráblíková, University of Leeds - Traces of Adriana Šimotová in the Heresies of Feminist Interpretation

As one of the most distinguished Czech visual artists of the 20th century who furthermore worked with so called 'feminine' themes (e.g. intimacy, corporeality), Adriana Šimotová (1926-2014) attracts and fascinates many contemporary feminist scholars and woman artists from the Czech Republic and abroad. At the same time, however, Šimotová and her work also represent a 'trouble'. The interpretative frameworks which have dominated Czech art history consider Šimotová's work incompatible with feminism and politics in general. The premise that feminism is a secondary 'theme' or is even absent from artist's life and work is, furthermore, endorsed by most Czech feminist scholars and artists who wish to relate to Šimotová and her work.

This paper does not aim to close this issue or downplay the stakes by pronouncing it to be simply a problem of self-identification and labelling. Instead, I suggest we take the trouble experienced by Czech contemporary feminist scholars and artists when encountering Šimotová and her work as theoretically, politically, affectively and artistically productive. In order to open a possibility for such an encounter, the paper will introduce and explore conceptual tools, interpretative paradigms and strategies offered by feminist theory and deconstruction. More specifically, I will recount my own encounters with Adriana Šimotová and her work during my artistic beginnings and formation and will outline points where Šimotová's work overlaps with work of feminist theorists Drucilla Cornell and Elizabeth Grosz. Finally, within my presentation, I will stage a *rendez vous* between Adriana Šimotová and a Czech Philosopher Jan Patočka (1907-1977), drawing on Derrida's interpretation of Patočka's *Heretical Essays*. By doing so, this paper will seek to follow the traces of Adriana Šimotová as an intellectual, artistic and feminist heretic.

Lenka Vráblíková is a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom. She works in the fields of feminist theory, deconstruction and psychoanalysis and currently finishes her PhD Thesis entitled *Tremendous Pedagogies: Feminist Theory, Deconstruction and the University*. Her article 'From Performativity to Aporia: Taking Tremendous Responsibilities towards Feminism and the University' was published in journal *Gender and Education* in 2016. Lenka is a co-editor of *parallax*, an international journal in cultural studies, critical theory and philosophy.

Leila Kozma, CRMEP, Kingston University - **Elusive Histories – Bracha Ettinger's theory of subjectivity**

According to the Greek myth, Eurydice's greatest sin is to look into her husband, Orpheus's eyes. Her gaze violates the will of the Gods—it seals Eurydice's destiny. Bracha Ettinger's *Eurydice* series take this as the starting point. As Ettinger argues in *Fragilisation and Resistance*, her paintings' task is to condemn the visitor to look; and to condemn them to reconsider what allows them to look at paintings in certain ways. By reflecting on the socio-political conditions which allow them to apprehend art objects, the visitor is led to rise above her own prejudices and eliminate the misconceptions and beliefs imposed on her by her environment (alienation).

Ettinger propagates a radically new constitution of subjectivity—one that is produced in relation to the painting, one that is constituted by its present moment. This echoes the egalitarianism of the seventies—which regarded the sovereign subject as one that is formulated by the conditions of her ideological era; and whose formulation can be reflected on and challenged from "an outsider point of view".

There are a set of problems with Ettinger's work. I am mostly concerned with this artist for two reasons: her methodology bears strong connotations to Friedl Kubelka, VALIE EXPORT and Gina Pane's practise. Secondly, analysing her pieces allows me to draw connotations to the libertarian thinking of the 70s, more specifically, to Felix Guattari's work. By drawing these connotations, I aim to point towards a larger scale tendency that prevails in contemporary art: the recapitulation of the cult of the individual / the sovereign (after Foucault) / the recapitulation of egalitarianism.

As Ettinger's work attests, the problem lies not in the notions such as equality, subjectivity, or individuality. The problem lies in the tendency to propagate that the re-conception of the notion of subjectivity can yield to larger-scale political changes. By proposing to reinstate the cult of individuality that was pivotal to the libertarianism of the 70s, Ettinger neglects the contemporary significance of this gesture. She proposes to induce a transgression from old structures of subject-production and meaning-making. This act however cannot transcend ideological conditions—it merely reinforces the current ideological conditions of the contemporary cultural sphere.

Leila Kozma is an MA student at the CRMEP, Kingston University. Her research is focussed on madness and resistance, on terrorist groups who name violence as the only means to induce transgression from the prevalent socio-political conditions. She is particularly interested in the work of the Social Patientien Kollektiv, (a precursor of the Rote Armee Fraktion) and the antipsychiatry movement (more specifically, the work Franco Basaglia, Peter Sedgwick, Felix Guattari). Her work was published in *Sleek*, *How to Sleep Faster*, and in various literary journals. At present, she works as a freelance proof-reader/translator.

Elsbeth Mitchell, University of Leeds - **The Woman is Not Me?**

Although best known for her work from the 1990s onwards, the work of Finnish artist Eija-Liisa Ahtila offers an interesting response to the provocations of the *Speak, body* event. This paper offers a reading of the early series of photographs, *Dog Bites* (1992-7), alongside a text written by the artist in response to the inclusion of the series in the 1996 exhibition *Body as Membrane* curated by VALIE EXPORT and Kirsten Justesen at Kunsthallen Brands Kædefabrik, Odense. It also aims to situate these works by reconsidering the significance of Ahtila's earlier projects that, although rarely acknowledged today, provided a vital feminist intervention within the Finnish art scene of the late 1980s.

Dog Bites, depicts a young woman in a variety of poses that mimic a dog. She performs various dog actions: stretching, panting, begging or scratching. The photographs raise clear questions for feminism and anti-speciesism in the context of phallogocentric regimes of representation; we can also trace a connection to older works such as VALIE EXPORT's 1968 performance *Aus der Mappe der Hundigkeit*, or, contemporary to the photographic series, the being-dog performances of Oleg Kulik.

This paper, however, takes up the significance an epistolary text written by Ahtila to Justesen in 1996. In the letter Ahtila observes that, although looking nothing like the model, she is continuously mistaken as the woman posing as the dog. The curators seem to have enacted a similar conflation of model and artist in their inclusion of the photographs in their exhibition. Ahtila's letter opens with the statement: "The woman is not me."

This tension provides an opening in which I will explore the specificity of Ahtila's feminist politics. One that speaks to the issues that occur at the nexus of the woman's body, art practice and exhibition.

Elsbeth Mitchell is a PhD researcher at the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds. Her doctoral project examines the figure of 'the girl' in the moving image and feminist philosophy. It focuses on audio-visual work by Chantal Akerman and Eija-Liisa Ahtila and the philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir and Luce Irigaray. She is associate editor of the journal *parallax* and recently co-convoked the second *Feminist Readings* symposium in 2016, which is currently being developed as part of a bigger project into an international network of researchers, artists and writers.

11:15 - 11:45 *G.04 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies: Coffee and Tea Break*

11:45 - 13:30 Panel 4a *Common Room School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Chair: Elspeth Mitchell

Paulina Drėgvaitė, University of Edinburgh - **Embodied Maternal Histories: Social Reproduction and Maternal Labour in Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles***

The oeuvre of Chantal Akerman, the celebrated Belgian filmmaker, is seeped in the imagery of mothers and housewives, present and absent. Throughout her filmography, Akerman continuously grappled with the politics of the domestic and the maternal, representing cinematically marginalised narratives.

This is most profoundly reflected in *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975). Akerman called the film 'a love letter to my mother', carving 'that kind of woman' a place in the sun. Indeed, *Jeanne Dielman* was shaped by and released into a feminist discourse that was heavily concerned with the politics of social reproduction as exemplified by Adrienne Rich's ground-breaking study *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*, Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* and Ann Oakley's *The Sociology of Housework*. These works among others interrogated the 'natural' connection between womanhood and motherhood, and what Kirsten Lloyd and Angela Dimitrakaki call 'the labour of love' performed within the household.

In this paper I apply these seminal works of feminist theory to examine the strategies used in the representation of the maternal body and maternal labour in *Jeanne Dielman*. I argue that by making visible 'a woman's work which is never done', Akerman utilises a political strategy of representation that subverts the notion of innate, natural feminine labour. Moreover, by positioning the maternal body within the possibility of jouissance and a regime of contained desires that are expressed through a gradual disintegration of Jeanne's automaton-like mode of being, Akerman strikingly showcases a discrepancy between the maternal body and its occupied domestic space. This paper traces a journey from a sphere of insulated, contained domestic alienation towards a space of expressed rage and possibility.

Paulina Drėgvaitė is currently pursuing an MSc in Film, Exhibition and Curation at the University of Edinburgh. With a background in Theatre and Performance studies at the University of Warwick, she employs an interdisciplinary approach to interrogate the narratives of gender, illness and creativity within literature, history of art and film. Paulina has a background in playwrighting, and has been published in Lithuania and the United Kingdom, most recently appearing in *Inciting Sparks*, an interdisciplinary multimedia platform dedicated to arts research.

Tina Kinsella, Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology - **In the Shadow of the State: Performing the Female Body as an Act of Resistance**

This paper will discuss *In the Shadow of the State* (2016), a year-long participatory performance project devised by Irish contemporary visual artists Sarah Browne and Jesse Jones.

In 2016 Ireland celebrated the centenary of the Easter Rising of 1916 which led to freedom from British rule and the foundation of the new Irish Republic a few years later. On Easter Monday 1916 the Irish revolutionary, Padraig Pearse, read The Proclamation of the Republic (Forógra na Poblachta) from the steps of the General Post Office in Dublin. Designed to enshrine the ideals of the new Irish Republic to come, the Proclamation made a commitment to female emancipation by advocating for the universal mandate to vote for women of Ireland. However, one hundred years on the reality for women in the new Irish Republic was to fall short of the utopian ideals set out by the Irish nationalist leaders. During the last one hundred years, the state and church conducted a “hand-in-glove” governance which resulted in barriers to basic reproductive rights and the incarceration of so-called “fallen” women in Magdalene Laundries.

Considering the female body as a locus for repressed histories and political desires, *In the Shadow of the State* investigated this complicity between the religious, legal, judicial and medical apparatus of the state by probing the regulatory effects enacted on women’s bodies since 1916. Drawing on the Judith Butler’s work on vulnerability and Marianne Hirsch’s concept of postmemory, this enquiry considers *In the Shadow of the State* as an performative enactment of “anti-commemoration” that disrupts and resists official state narratives by inviting us to consider the consequences for collective memory when female corporeal experience is subject to such state occlusion.

Tina Kinsella is Lecturer in Critical and Contextual Studies (Art) at the Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology and Research Fellow at the Centre for Gender and Women’s Studies, Trinity College Dublin. Her research is interdisciplinary, drawing on critical theory, philosophy, and psychoanalysis to institute conversations with contemporary art practice and process. Recent publications include: (2017) ‘O Children in God’s name slay not your mother!’ Jesse Jones’ *Tremble, Tremble*, Venice Biennale 2017; (2017) ‘Does Every Psychotic Have to Reinvent the Project of “Spirituality” for Herself?’, *As Above, So Below – Portals, Visions, Spirits & Mystics*, Irish Museum of Modern Art; (2017) ‘Querying and Queering the Virgin – Sacred Iconography and Profane Iconoclasm in the Art of Frida Kahlo’, *Esthesis*; (2017) ‘The Artistic Practice of Micol Hebron: Provoking a Performative Heuristics of the Maternal Body’, *Inappropriate Bodies: Art, Design, and Maternity*,

Demeter Press; (2017) ‘Precarious Subjectivity and Affective Performativity in the Academic Precariat’, *Irish Journal of Anthropology*; (2017) ‘Representing Desire? Reconsidering Female Sexuality and Eroticism in *Umbilical*’, *Performing Ireland Journal*; (2016) ‘Liquidities – Transactive Border Spaces and Threshold Structures’, *Performance Research Journal*, co-authored with Silvia Loeffler; (2016) ‘This is the fluid in which we meet ... On Alice Maher’s Recent Drawings’, *The Glorious Maids of the Charnel House*, Kevin Kavanagh Gallery; (2015) ‘Sundering the Spell of Visibility: Bracha L. Ettinger, Abstract-Becoming-Figural, Thought-Becoming Form’, 14th Istanbul Biennial. See <https://iadt-ie.academia.edu/TinaKinsella> and <https://tinakinsella.wordpress.com/>.

Rosa Nogués, Chelsea College of Arts - **Old Woman on the Prowl: Joan Semmel and the Dangerous Ageing Body**

My presentation will consider the representation of the ageing female body from within the theoretical context of Silvia Federici’s analysis of the relationship between the emergence of capitalism and the instrumentalisation of the female body, of which the witch hunts of the 16th and 17th centuries were a symptom. My approach to the ageing female body is thus as an outsider body that defies and threatens the capitalist rationalisation of the female body.

The representation of the body of the ageing woman suffers a curious fate in western culture. Either it is relegated to a permanent state of invisibility or it is reduced to the decrepit, monstrous body of the witch. Having left her reproductive years behind, and thus no longer able to serve her social and cultural function as reproductive force, the older woman is relegated to a marginal and outsider position. Furthermore, given that her sexuality is inextricably linked to her reproduction function within the patriarchal regime of sexual difference, once she loses her reproductive capacity, she is also stripped of her sexuality – ‘for most women, ageing means a humiliating process of sexual disqualification’ (Sontag). And so, when it is not rendered invisible, the ageing female body is represented as formless and sexless, unattractive and ‘repulsive’ (Sontag). At the core of this repulsion is the threat that non-reproductive female sexuality poses for the capitalist patriarchal order. As Silvia Federici has exemplarily laid bare, at the heart of the witch hunts of the 16th and 17th centuries lay the attempt to control the female body and its instrumentalisation as reproductive labour power in the emerging capitalist state.

In my presentation, I will address this problematic within a discussion of the work of the North American artist Joan Semmel, who in her latest self-portraits explores the insistent sexuality of her ageing body by revisiting her naked self-portraits of the 1970s.

Rosa Nogués is an Associate Lecturer in Art Theory at the Chelsea College of Arts (London). She obtained her PhD in 2013 at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy (Kingston University). She has lectured at Central Saint Martins (London), Middlesex University (London) and the Universität für angewandte Kunst (Vienna). Her writings have been published in *n-paradoxa*, *Revista Mundo CríFco* and the current issue of *MIRAJ*. The forthcoming volume *Média Théorie* published by Les Presses du réel (France) includes a chapter by her on the video work of Shirley Clarke.

11:45 - 13:30 Panel 4b *Seminar Room 2.09 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies*

Chair: Richard Checketts

Victoria Horne, Northumbria University - **'Could I introduce the meanings of this body? [...] Could I make it insist upon meanings conventionally resisted?'**

Carolee Schneemann (b.1939) performed *Interior Scroll* twice. In 1975 at an exhibition of women's art in East Hampton and, subsequently in 1977, as an unplanned intervention at Telluride Film Festival in Colorado. Both performances consisted of Schneemann removing her clothing, painting strokes of mud upon her naked body, adopting a sequence of static poses, reading from her 1976 book *Cézanne She Was a Great Painter*, and notoriously culminated in the removal of a scroll from her vagina, which she read aloud to the audience. The artist described the unfurling scroll, which she addressed to other women, 'like ticker tape, rainbow...plumb line... the umbilicus and tongue'.

Interior Scroll has since entered the canon of twentieth-century performance art; photographs of the performance have been reproduced in textbooks and collected by major museums. However, little attention has been paid to Schneemann's unusually active role in the management of these images, nor her assertive control of the work's critical meanings. It becomes apparent in studying the reception history of *Interior Scroll* that Schneemann's performed, written and spoken words have dictated the discourse; a significant observation in light of synchronous discussions on feminist politics, women's creativity, and history agency.

This paper focusses on the themes of embodiment, labour and knowledge; ideas that are concretised in Schneemann's performance and subsequent authorial interventions. By illuminating connections between corporeal feminisms and so-called 'new' materialisms, the paper will suggest ways of re-evaluating key 1970s feminist theories in relation to urgent conditions in our present moment. Given current attacks on women's reproductive rights, bodies and lives, it is instructive to revisit Schneemann's powerful performance, remembering Susan Gubar's significant observation that 'the female body has been feared for its power to articulate itself'.

Victoria Horne is an art historian at Northumbria University in Newcastle. Her research is concerned with the effect of feminist politics in reshaping art history's institutions and historiographical processes. The volume *Feminism and Art History Now*, co-edited with Lara Perry, is currently in press.

Eva Schach, Courtauld Institute - **A Friendly Defence of Josephine Pryde**

This paper offers a technological reading of Josephine Pryde's *Hands für Mich* photographs to situate a longstanding intimacy, a romance per say, between the feminized body and immersive technology. Defending Pryde's work and the quieter,

non-argumentative mode in which it functions, this approach contrasts her photographic practice with those of historical and contemporary peers to envision new understandings of such a haptic romance and how it might produce embodiment.

Eva Schach is an MA History of Art student at the Courtauld Institute in London.

Helena Vilalta, University College London -
Erotics of Information: Lee Lozano and the Networked Body

In the turn from the 1960s to the 70s, Lee Lozano began a series of instruction pieces that dictated the way she was to lead and document her life. Like the early work of her then companion Dan Graham, Lozano's written pieces are concerned with the nascent information economy and its impact upon the art scene of the late 1960s. Unlike in Graham's work, though, in Lozano's the traffic in information is never dissociated from the specific bodies that carry it. In her *Dialogue Piece* (1969), for example, the artist keeps a record of conversations held in her studio loft, which describe information as a commodity being coveted, traded and withheld amongst a group of friends and competitors. In related works, it is the artist's bodily experiences that are tracked in scientific-like observations and circulated amongst her social network. This paper examines how the artist's use of key cybernetic terms such as 'information' and 'feedback' significantly departs from their scientific definition, bringing into relief the suppression of embodied subjectivity prevalent at the dawn of the information age. Further, it suggests that if in Lozano's early drawings and paintings the mechanical body is a conduit for sexual drives, the networked body pictured in the later conceptual works testifies to an increased desire for connectivity, what I propose to call an erotics of information.

Helena Vilalta is a PhD candidate in the History of Art at University College London and an associate lecturer at Central Saint Martins. She is the former senior editor of *Afterall* journal, where she worked from 2012–2016. Prior to this, she held curatorial positions at the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at the New School in New York and the Centre for Contemporary Culture in Barcelona. She has contributed to publications such as *Afterall*, *Moving Image Review & Art Journal*, *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Concreta*, and has curated exhibitions at Gasworks and The Showroom in London.

13:30 – 14:30 G.04 School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies: Lunch

14:30 – 16:15 Panel 5 Common Room School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies

Chair: Brenda Hollweg

Anna Ratcliffe, University of Leeds - **Inescapable Bodies: How Marx's Commodity Fetishism Keeps Art History in the Past**

I would like to look at how artists are defined by their bodies in the field of Art History and what role the market and Marx's concept of commodity fetishism plays in this.

In the 1970s there was a concerted effort to question traditional approaches of Art History and a move towards social art history. In spite of this old modes prevail which still privilege western male artists over people of different races, nationalities, sexes, genders and abilities. For example, a Woman artist or African artist are still defined as such, instead of an artist who is from Africa or an artist who is a woman or simply artist; hence they become representative of their race or sex - their work is seen as embodying a shared identity. This is a limitation that does not affect white male artists. Georgia O'Keeffe wanted to be considered an artist without the prefix woman: "Men put me down as the best woman painter... I think I'm one of the best painters," but despite this - critics read her work as if it contained something intrinsically feminine due to her sex. Artists who are women are championed for being so; even if they want to escape this gaze they are bound to it and cannot escape their bodies.

I would argue that the art market and Marx's commodity fetishism play a role in this inescapability of the artist's body. The 'successful' artwork takes on a transcendental quality and if we cannot situate the artwork in relation to its production it is allowed to take on the fetish character. Further to this, it could be claimed that art has become the epitome of the commodity fetish and this has social implications, meaning the old modes of Art History become harder to shift.

Anna Ratcliffe is a History of Art Masters student at the University of Leeds and also works at the Henry Moore Institute, a research centre for the study of sculpture and also a gallery. She is a writer for Corridor 8, an online northern contemporary arts journal, where she has reviewed exhibitions in grassroots spaces and major galleries. Additionally she has conducted interviews with artists and curators, most recently Katrina Palmer. She is interested in inclusive feminism where 'woman' (the concept) and women's (the lived experience) differ due to the situatedness, class, race and ability, and how the acknowledgment of these vast differences is crucial in a bid to find a common ground.

Barbara Mahlkecht, Goldsmiths, University of London - **Archives, Embodiment and Reproduction. Feminist Politics, Curatorial Strategies**

'The process of reactivation of the resonating capacity of our body that is currently taking place,

even if it is only just beginning, allows us to glimpse the fact that there is no other world but the one in which we live, and that only within its dead ends can other worlds be invented at each moment of human experience.’ (Suely Rolnik, “Archive Mania,” 2011)

This paper addresses the notion of 'social reproduction' in relation to the archive, feminist art, embodiment and curating. As a subject of historical and contemporary feminist debates and struggles, social reproduction has been centrally addressed by the Wages for Housework-campaign launched in 1972 by the International Feminist Collective aiming at fighting the invisible and gendered labour of housework in (post-)Fordist capitalism. While feminist artists in late 1960s and 1970s such as Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Martha Rosler, Mary Kelly and Birgit Jürgenssen addressed reproductive labour in relation to the female body, this paper elaborates on the notion and role of the material-bodily site of the archive. Feminist theorist Kate Eichhorn has argued that activist archives in the neoliberal era are sites of 'political agency.' Thus, these archives enable us to analyze the “conditions of our everyday lives” and highlight that “we might, once again, be agents of change in time and history” (Eichhorn, 2012). Building on the conception of the archive as a material, bodily, and situated political agent, I argue that (activist) archives of feminist struggles represent a site where materiality, affect and embodiment play a central role—be it the ‘traces’ of bodies involved in the women's struggle against housework, be it the bodies of the archivists, the archival researchers or be it the ‘body’ of the archive itself.

In my contribution, I will focus on selected archival documents from the Wages-for Housework campaign. In a reading parallel on how feminist artists from the late 1960s and the 1970s have developed modes of the articulation and examination of bodies—that are inscribed the histories of the physical, mental and affective labour of reproduction—I will investigate material, embodied, and situated modes of curatorial practice and thinking in order to suggest how to rearticulate the complex relations of reproductive labour within capitalist accumulation from a perspective of the present.

Barbara Mahlke is a cultural researcher, curator, and art educator. She currently holds a position as a lecturer and researcher at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her work in curating, research and art education strongly relates to feminist curatorial practices, the archive, the notion of reproduction, socially/politically engaged curatorial and artistic practices as well as critical art education. Recently, she has curated a variety of projects—e.g. *Uncanny Material. Founding Moment of Arts Education* (xibit, Academy of Fine Art Vienna, 2016) *A Proposal to Call* (exhibition, Kunsthalle Exnergasse Vienna, 2015) et al. Recently, she has given papers at international conferences on the relation of feminist art, reproductive labour and

curating. She is a Ph.D. candidate at the Art Department at Goldsmith University London.

Emily Watlington, MIT - Shigeko Kubota and the Tokenization of Women's Body Art

On July 4th, 1965, Shigeko Kubota performed *Vagina Painting* at Perpetual Fluxfest. She tied a brush dipped in red paint to her underwear and painted with her body. The piece would later be described by feminist art historians as a radical subversion of myriad patriarchal art historical values. But in an interview Kubota gave just before she passed away, she revealed that she was “begged to do it” by two men—George Macinaus and Nam June Paik.

Lucy Lippard claimed in 1976 that, “‘Neutral’ art made by women still has little chance of making it into the market mainstream, while the male establishment, unsympathetic to women’s participation in the art world as equal competitors, has approved... of women working with their own, preferably attractive, bodies and faces.” Kubota performed body art once, and reluctantly, but never again. And yet, the piece is her most (perhaps only) remembered work despite an expansive oeuvre.

Vagina Painting has been described as “the most aggressively proto-feminist performance of Fluxus.” Continuing Lippard’s critique that the reception of some feminist body art actually played into patriarchal values, I argue that this praise of aggression by feminist art historians is likewise problematic. Kubota was not aggressive, and she never wanted to be in the limelight. Aggression is one valid way to combat the patriarchy, but we are wise to also strive for a world in which women are not encouraged to be more aggressive, but instead men are encouraged to be less aggressive. While feminist art historians are right to praise Kubota for her braveness, I propose the reticence from which she claims to make her later work “neutral” work, is equally praiseworthy and subversive. While body art can and does certainly have certain critical capacities, a refusal of body art amidst the tokenization of such work is likewise subversive.

Emily Watlington is a graduate student in the history, theory, and criticism of art + architecture department at MIT. She also serves as the Curatorial Research Assistant at the MIT List Visual Arts Center. Her writing has appeared in publications such as *Art Papers*, *Mousse Magazine*, and *Sequitur*.

16:15 – 17:15 *Common Room School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies* Closing of the conference with: **Rose-Anne Gush, Tom Hastings, Sophie Jones and Gill Park**

Rose-Anne Gush is a PhD candidate at the University of Leeds, and writer. Her thesis, provisionally titled *Artistic Labour of the Body: Postwar Austrian Art, Aesthetic Theory and Psychoanalysis*, explores the work of artist VALIE EXPORT and writer Elfriede Jelinek in relation to critical theories of art. Her thesis focusses on the concept of artistic labour in relation to the body; how these figures work through the history of European fascism, its repetitions and its relationship to the reproduction of capitalism and gender; and how technology appears in this work. She has written for *Mute Magazine*, *AWARE*, *Philosophy of Photography*, *Radical Philosophy* and has a chapter in the forthcoming *Objects of Feminism* (2017).

Tom Hastings is a PhD student and seminar tutor in Art History at Leeds University. His thesis, which is supervised by Gail Day and Griselda Pollock, concerns Yvonne Rainer's choreographic and writing practice (1961–73). In September he visited the Getty Research Institute in L.A, to read through the Rainer papers. Tom was until recently a co-editor at *parallax* journal, and assisted the editorial team at *Texte zur Kunst* with Issue NO. 103, „Poetry“. He has an article forthcoming as part of a special issue of *Architecture and Culture*, titled “Encountering the Mattress in the Virtual Feminist Museum”. His website can be found at the following address: www.mineralmatters.blog.

Sophie Jones is a postdoctoral researcher in the School of English at the University of Leeds. Her work focuses on how post-1945 literature and film mediate legal and medical accounts of the body, particular in relation to the politics of reproduction and other forms of gendered labour. She is currently writing her first book, *The Reproductive Politics of American Literature and Film, 1959-1973* (Edinburgh University Press, 2019), which examines the way writers and filmmakers of the long 1960s engaged with the social horizons of pregnancy by reflecting on their own practices of cultural reproduction. She is developing a second project, on the medicalisation of attention in contemporary American culture, under the auspices of the [Augmenting the Body](#) project, a multi-institution collaboration based at Leeds, which involves scholars in the fields of English, Engineering, Philosophy, Healthcare, and Robotics.

Gill Park is a curator and researcher with a particular interest in recent and contemporary visual art that deals with the politics of representation, in particular photography and moving image work. She is interested in feminist and postcolonial interventions in art as well as the theory and analysis

of power, subjectivity, memory and institutional critique. In addition to undertaking doctoral research Gill is currently Director of Pavilion, a visual arts organisation based in Leeds. In this role she works on the commissioning and programming of new work in collaboration with artists and constituencies across Leeds and beyond. This role directly relates to her doctoral research, which is an analysis of the founding of Pavilion as a feminist intervention into the landscape of visual art in the 1980s.

Speak, body: Art, the Reproduction of Capital and the Reproduction of Life, will address the juncture of the “body” in art in relation to feminism(s) and capitalism, through the period 1960–1980. The “body” is taken to be a historically contingent concept, up for contestation. Today we are witnessing a massive conservative retrenchment in the political and legal spheres concerning images of the body, from anti-woman bans on images of female ejaculation in pornography to the far-right deployment of racist iconography in the mass media coverage of Brexit and the Trump campaign. We want to challenge the hyper-mediated landscape that has propelled the global right, by considering how a previous generation of artists, who focused on the body in their works, responded to dominant social conditions. *Speak, body* sets out to investigate artworks that emerged coincident with the crisis of capitalism in the 1960s and 1970s in order to consider what they can tell us about contemporary transformations in art and politics.

Through an intense and sustained period of engagement, the body was explored by artists such as VALIE EXPORT, Mona Hatoum, Ana Mendieta, Gina Pane, Adrian Piper, Yvonne Rainer, Ulrike Rosenbach, Martha Rosler, Carolee Schneeman, Jo Spence and Hannah Wilke among others. We are especially interested in artworks that counter the museal tendency to appropriate feminist art practices within conventional art-historical categories of movements, iconographies or styles; that is, we want to solicit papers that track the *social* implications of feminist investigation and critique conducted through a range of media (performance, photography, video, film, etc.). *Speak, body* aims to reconnect artistic practices with feminism as a historic social movement, and to query its consolidation into an academic “-ism”.

The idea of the body, connotes a number of tensions: between inside and outside; consumption and excretion; energy and depletion; life and death. At the same time, the body is produced historically through practices and discourses, and has figured as a key site for analysis in, for example, Karl Marx’s description of “labour-power”, Sigmund Freud’s account of sexual difference and bodily prosthesis, Michel Foucault’s theory of the “medical gaze”, Silvia Federici’s corrective historical analysis of the female “rebel” body, and Juliet Mitchell’s foundational work on the woman as “sexual object”. By reading those artistic practices that have engaged a feminist politics – on psychic and social levels, through direct or indirect means – we hope to pursue a materialist analysis of art’s enduring imbrication in capitalist social relations, as well as its relative autonomy from these relations.



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