

jiggle n juice's
JAWBREAKER
series



Episode 4 - 28/08/2020

Feminists discuss what is wrong with "feminist" art

Discussing the power and relevance of early feminist art, as well as why we don't make "feminist" art.

early feminist art



Guerrilla Girls

- anonymous group of feminist, female artists
- aim - to fight sexism + racism in the art world
- began in reaction to MoMA's "An International Survey of Recent Painting + Sculpture" 1984 exhibit
- although the exhibition was supposed to represent the top artists in the world, out of the 169 shown, only 13 were women.



Manina Abramovic - Rhythm 0 (1974)



* this performance invited the audience to use 72 objects including a feather, honey, band-aids, salt, scissors + a gun, on her unopposing body

* this can be seen as a reflection on aggressions against the female body, as the artist sat for a period of 6 hours a day, highlighting Abramovic's familiar themes of endurance + pain

* "the experience I drew from this was that in your own performance you can go very far, but if you leave decisions to the public, you can be killed"

* repeatedly and violently combing her hair while increasingly manically repeating the words "art must be beautiful, artists must be beautiful"

* this is a critique on the pressure that is often put onto young female artists by the industry

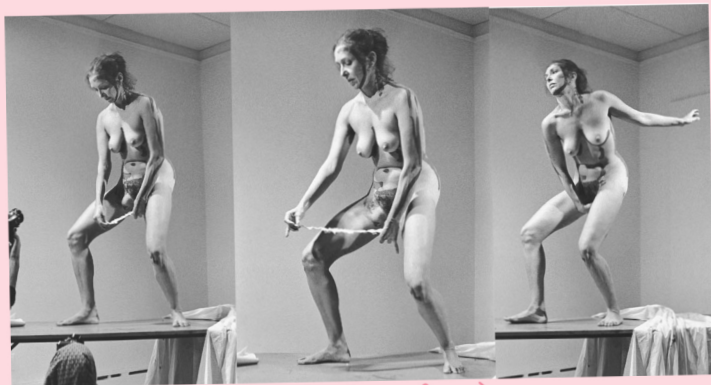
* this piece lasted over 50 minutes, and the repetition of the words + building intensity of the physical action leads the viewer to question conventions of beauty



Art Must Be Beautiful (1975)

Lynda Benglis - ArtForum Ad (1974)

- Benglis felt underrepresented in the male-heavy art community, so reacted by creating a series of advertisements
- she placed them in magazines, ensuring they took critical stabs at traditional depictions of women in the media
- below is her most famous ad, she used to promote her upcoming show at Paula Cooper Gallery by posing holding a double-headed dildo and sunglasses covering her face
- she paid \$3,000 for the ad, and by doing this she could ensure her voice would be heard without editing/censorship
- she later cast a series of sculptures of the dildo, bent into a smile, playing as a cheeky "fuck you" to the male dominated art institutions



Carolee Schneeman - Interior Scroll (1975)

* performance piece where the artist climbed onto a table wearing only a white sheet + apron. She told the audience she would be reading from a book, but quickly lost interest. She enacted a series of inebriated poses, then discarded her apron. Then, after adopting a squatting stance, she pulled a rolled up scroll from her vagina and read it aloud

* the feminist movement was in full swing at this time, so this piece highlighted women's creative force within their own bodies

* her "vulvic-space" unified female art-making with sexual experience, shifting it from the dominant masculine precedent, to a female explanation of the body



Janine Antoni - Loving Care (1993)

- Antoni used her hair as a paintbrush and Loving Care hair dye as her paint, mopping the gallery floor on her hands and knees, viewers were slowly backed out of the space

- in this process, she explored the body, as well as themes of power femininity and the style of abstract expressionism

- influenced by social injustices, Antoni combines the everyday task of mopping with ideas of the power dynamic - being on her hands + knees in a very vulnerable position, but claiming the space is very empowering



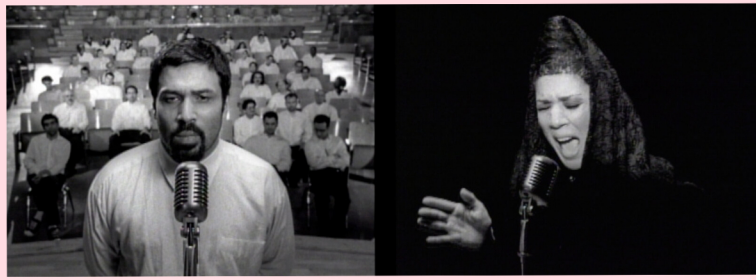
contemporary ~~feminist art~~

We don't want to box artists in, and assume they identify with the term "feminist," so here are some artists dealing with gender and/or identity politics.



Catherine Opie - Self Portrait Nursing (2004)

- * challenging gender and bodily norms in this Madonna-and-child tribute as the artist breast-feeds her naked son
- * the subject herself, a butch, tattooed, topless mother, challenges preconceptions of what motherhood looks like
- * the depiction of her breasts provide a sharp contrast to the airbrushed sexualised images shown in commercialised photography today
- * demonstrates the range of possibilities, desires and uses for the artist's own body, and for lesbian + women's bodies more generally



Shirin Neshat - Turbulent (1998)

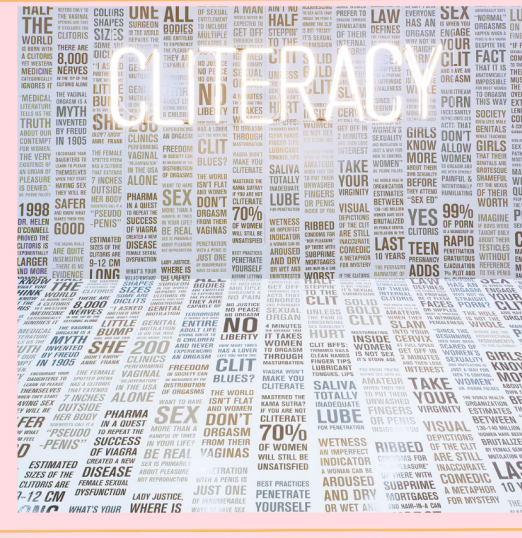
- video work which invites the viewer to stand between two screens, the first shows an all-male audience and a man on stage, the second shows an empty room + a solitary female
- these two characters create a powerful musical metaphor for the inherent gender roles, cultural power and injustices in Iran. This is a consistent theme for Neshat, who recognises the sharply defined binaries regarding gender roles

Shannon Bono

- uses the term Afrofemcentrism to describe her work = a consciousness that asserts race, sex and art as a way of living, where black womxn are the subject depicted by black womxn.
- she is invested in producing symbolic, layered figurative compositions, centralising black womxnhood as a source of knowledge + understanding
- Bono plays with poses, gesture + the gaze to alter reality, as she believes the body is a powerful signifier that provides dialogue
- reimagining bodies as a map of modernity

Sophia Wallace - CLITERACY (2012)

- * text installation, upholding that all bodies are entitled to pleasure, addresses citizenship + body sovereignty
- * addresses a paradox - the hyper sexualisation of body assigned female in the context of scientific ignorance + cultural taboos
- * this series confronts a false body of knowledge taboos by scientists who resist the idea of a unique, autonomous female body
- * she also created sculptural forms such as "Αδύναμος (unconquerable)" - the first anatomically correct sculpture of the clitoris (in 2013)
- * the question that drives her work is: "How is it possible that we landed on the moon before we figured out the anatomy of the clitoris?"
- * 100 Natural Walls = giant wall acts as a declaration of rights for the clitoris



Catfish (2017) ↗

Nina Chanel Abney

- * is not subtle with the sexual imagery she displays - it is gaudy + cynical
- * focus on gender, as women bend over raunchily in few panels, with one man standing amid them, under the word "NOW"
- * her paintings combine representation and abstraction, capturing the frantic pace of contemporary culture
- * Abney observes sociopolitical realities and abuses of power, to celebrity culture + the news media
- * she works with a sense of immediacy, reflecting our contemporary "scroller-culture" and unfolds her stories about racial injustice, gender + homophobia.