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Lauren Kate Leacher
P144804

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“How does gender and sexuality affect an artist and determine their success?”

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Summary

This piece of writing explores the implications of being a woman within the arts industry from a historical and modern point of view, defining what it means to be successful. It also reaches into the practices of old school art institutes and their exclusivity. This is then contrasted against the modern day female activist artists who intend to break the rules of what once was considered classical art by taking a new meaningful interpretation of fine art.

Mentions

First and foremost a special thank you to my best friend of over 10 years, Danielle Shears for always keeping me motivated and encouraging my academic work.

To my family, for continually supporting me in everything I do.

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Introduction

The aim of this writing piece is to delve into the definition of success from a woman artists point of view, encapsulating what it means to women creatives and thinkers alike; scoping out how their version of success is perceived. Many aspects deemed successful are often defined by classic artistic institutes and organisations by the standards that they have taught for generations.

Through looking at western institutions such as the Royal Academy and Ecole Des Beaux Arts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this essay will outline the issues between women and male dominance. Specifically from these organisations and their cultural attitude. Not only did these establishments provide a strict set of rules, they were also extremely exclusive and restrictive towards women artists. More often those who were permitted to produce work at these schools were strictly male and furthermore the work style was generally dictated by a trend at the time, much like The Old Masters.

“It thus becomes clear why there is not a female equivalent to the reverential term “Old Master”. The term artist not only had become equated with masculinity and masculine social roles..” (Parker and Pollock, 1981, pg.114)

It is known that through the niche, strict arts systems in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there would naturally be backlash from groups, such as the Salon des Refusues. This becomes prevalent through a few key theorists researched in Chapter 1 such as Whitney Chadwick and Griselda Pollock, who clearly outline the lack of women representation through those periods and the oppression they faced. Instances such as women segregation, exclusion and complete ignorance while applying for salons and institutions were common.

Now in the Twenty-first century it is nothing out of the norm for an artist to break rules, however the power of feminism is more crucial now than ever for women to gain artistic recognition by breaking these rules set by institutions.

Chapter 2 will look at themes of subjective art works and the female psyche through artists such as Tracey Emin, Yayoi Kusama and Guerrilla Girls. It will not only outline problems that all women encounter but also investigate how their pieces come into being through their personal endeavours by creating strong feminist art works. All of these artists challenge the norms of their art work and pushing the boundaries of success by remaining vigilant activists through non conventional mediums. This will also raise questions as to who and what cultural institutions have criticised and reviewed their works, giving responses that deem their work unsuccessful against a classical art practice by challenging what is considered fine art.

The proposed question of this essay also strikes a personal chord, as being a female in an artistic practice it is important for me to understand not only how the industry works but how one should gain equality through the female gender, whether that be in a job or showing at an exhibition but also to be able to understand the monopoly and why females are represented in such a way. And also how I should manifest my own definition for success as I prepare myself to go out into the working world post graduation.

Chapter 1

In Latin etymology, the word success is said to be derived from the from Latin “successus”. The online etymology dictionary states that its meaning is “a good result, happy outcome” and the noun use of past of success is “succedere” meaning to come after, follow after, go near to, come under, take the place of (Etymonline, 2019). This suggests that by giving the “succedere” or the “close after” a title of success, even though they have not achieved the end goal, it shows that they have still participated in something rather than nothing. This shows that there is no certain end goal for success and that all should be praised.

In the English Cambridge Dictionary, the modern definition of Success is to “achieve the results wanted or hoped for” or “something that achieves positive results” (Cambridge 2019).

On the Forbes Magazine website, Entrepreneur and writer John Hall stated that “I’ve noticed a major shift in how people look at success” and previous to that he tells the reader “it was easy for me to identify success as something directly related to how much money someone was making” (Hall, 2018). This suggests that now in a more modern day and age, money itself and material things of greater costs are not all that people are seeking. He later on tells us that the three key items for success are a “healthy mindset”, “respect within your career” and “surrounding yourself with solid people”. However while Hall’s take on success has more to do with a self care and self success outlook that has a more grounded respect, it also has no timeline of growth.

Hall’s theory also resonates well with the idea of the Latin etymology of Success. Although the Latin definition does give one successor it also refers to the “succedere” which is a more eloquent reference to second place or close by successor, given that there is more than one who should be successful much like Hall’s generalisation of success it becomes more of a cluster celebration. This allows the goal to be a more broad and reachable success, much like giving a second place which also signifies more than one achievement and an overall good result. As it is better to have a result than no result at all, much like the Oxford Dictionary definition. They suggest the result is something wanted or hoped for, not necessarily first place or second place but a general success of good and positive outcomes.

Further more from an artistic point of view Alan Bowness' book titled *The Conditions of Success: How the Modern Artist Rises to Fame*, now a text following on from his lecture given in London in 1989, initially talks about how artists are referred to as 'genius' within the art industry. This is given through the term "geniebewegung", first coined by the Germans as a description for the genius movement (Bowness, 1989).

Contradicting in the book *Old Mistresses*, it is said that "for instance- but notions of greatness - 'genius' - too had become the exclusive attribute of the male sex" (Parker and Pollock, 1981, pg. 114). Furthermore questioning if Bowness was referring to artists as males specifically when writing his text, due to the statement disregard of females within *Old Mistresses*.

Subsequently, Bowness later reveals his own ideology to artistic success, claiming that there are "four successive circles of recognition through which the exceptional artists passes on his path to fame". These are peer recognition, critical recognition, patronage to dealers and finally public acclaim. He states that peer recognition is the first and the most important aspect, as the peers are other young artists also. By all coming forth together, giving support and honestly throughout critiquing each others work this allows them to group together forming a movement or collective.

Bowness goes forth to explain that public acclaim is one of his four pathways to success and the final stage, he claims. Which according to him it shows that the artist is truly famous and the way to do this is by gaining the correct recognition. To gain this sort of status at the time, it was to show at the Royal Academy as done so by the previously discussed Pre-Raphaelites (Bowness, 1989). Other ways were to be written so highly by a well known writer to to be bought into the Satchii Gallery's personal collection. He later goes on to explain how both Francis Bacon and David Hockney became successful by breaking the Tate Gallery records of footfall, likewise explaining how their blossoming periods of fame were brought to attention many years after the artists had been discovered. This clearly shows that for one to gain the correct recognition throughout the arts, it must be through an institution of grand respect or one of extreme popularity. Bearing in mind as Bowness moves throughout this book, all examples of artists success is predominantly male, as are the ones above.

In many cases groups of young artist have been collected together to work and new happenings come of affiliation of outstanding talents, Bowness then goes on to say and compare this situation to “Think of the Pre-Raphaelites, or of Monet, Renoir, Sisley and Bazille meeting in the Parisian studio of Gabriel-Charles Gleyre in 1862” (Bowness 1989). Subsequently, groups like this also formed within female artists. Although under the movement of the Impressionists, collectives of women artists such as Berthe Morrisot, Mary Cassatt and Eva Gonzales assembled, furthermore backing up Bowness’ statement of peer recognition.

Bowness later goes on to explain how through the late eighteenth century one of the first artists that fell prevalent to such success was Turner due to his achievements at the Royal College, leaving the art market booming and gaining recognition throughout all of Europe. This suggests that all of Turner’s achievements were due to the Royal College and the skills obtained throughout his studies there.

This proposes the idea of a group of artists coming together to work, rising up in success together as an art movement in themselves, giving them a defining moment where their realisation begins. As the essay progresses he gives the theory that “the artists themselves who are first to recognise exceptional talent”, this is rather contradictory against his previous statement that public acclaim is the final aspect to success as this suggests that the artists themselves are self acclaiming exceptional talent and the comment is not one of a writer or buyer.

Although, artists forming groups and coming together is nothing out of the norm, as it seems that arts academies are the catalysts for many of these groups emerging. When the infamous Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris’ The Annual Salon did not seem to cater for all art practices in 1863, it caused upset to many whom felt worthy of showing their work. Whilst the Ecole Des Beaux Arts did accept works from women, said to be around 2,150 every year prior to 1880. “but with a few exceptions - like the aforementioned Rosa Bonheur - none of them ever won a medal” (Pfeiffer et al, 2008). Women started to protest for a revolution, making a male dominated show more open to women artists.

According to the TATE website, “The basis of the teaching was the art of ancient Greece and Rome, that is, classical art. But anatomy, geometry, perspective and study from the nude were also part of the curriculum”.

This suggests that the school only taught what could be considered a small aspect of design these days, showing the the school was quite exclusive and only studied the well sought after art that was taught from professionals. Whilst life drawing classes were a crucial sector of artistic study, women were rejected to study the body in both public and private institutions as nudity was deemed unsuitable towards the morales of young women (MET Museum, 2019).

Seemingly, perfecting the act of classical art may be successful to those of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, it became prevalent that those rejected from The Annual Salon did not fit the criteria but however still wanted to prove themselves successful. This proves Bowness’ theory that “the artists themselves who are first to recognise exceptional talent” is correct, as the turned away artists persist from their unsuccessful attempt to show at The Annual Salon and reform a new collective of artists named the Souete Anonyme des Artistes, Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs etc. also known as The Anonymous Society of Artists, Painters, Sculptors and Engravers. This is because the rejected artists understand their worth in the industry and have recognised that they have exceptional talent much like Bowness’ earlier theory. The society then went on to create their own showcase named the Salon des Refuses, that was built up of the rejects from the Ecole des Beaux Arts Salon shows.

It was said that whilst many attended the Salon des Refuses to laugh and mock, it actually exceeded the footfall of the Ecole des Beaux Arts’ salon and therefore made it more successful. It also drew the viewers towards a new style of art which was unseen to the eye before. These artists who were rejected were part of what is called the Impressionist movement. It is said that from an online source that an impressionists aim is to “deliver only (their) own impression from things and not to worry about generally accepted rules” (Impressionists Gallery, 2019). Through trying to prove that their work is not only unusual but can be successful even though they have deviated from the norms of artistic society, the Salon des Refuses creates a great and revolutionary resistance. Not only did this generation of deviance create the artistic turn of a new movement, but it also encouraged many artists to be confident about their work and create

pieces that did not necessarily fit into a box. Furthermore proving the inclusivity of the Impressionist movement, now extremely renowned female artists were involved such as Cassatt and Degas who regularly exchanged their ideas of painting. Despite the inclusivity there was still a vague separation between the males and the females (Chadwick, 2012. pg.232)

Whilst women were not considered to be able to enter an art school, it was still prevalent that this did not stop women from creating art much like the Impressionist females. It was also known that through the founding of the Female School of Art and Design in 1843, it became an excuse for less women to become admitted to the Royal Academy Schools, which some women opposed due to the ridicule of men (Chadwick, 2012. pg. 176).

Although women were creating work not deemed good enough for showing, it was often described by scholars as a “craft” and that women’s work was crafted (Chadwick, 2012).

Feminists within the arts have protested against the difference between art and craft. This merely came down to the difference in education; being technically trained and the materials used. Moving forward, throughout Victorian England it started to become apparent that artists such as Rosa Bonheur did not adhere to the suppression and lack of success from women artists and continued to create work. It is said that women artists of this period went through a phase of “unsexing” their work, simply by rejecting the model idea of painterly flowers whilst using the mediums of oil or water colour (Chadwick, 2012. pg. 177). While Bonheur conformed to unsexing her work it became apparent that she took on a male like form, furthermore conforming to working alongside male artists. See Fig.1.



Fig.1 - Rosa Bonheur Portrait

Whilst the creative ideologies of success are based purely upon your studies and creative upbringings,

the general consensus for obtaining success from someone less educated by the arts is a complete contrast. What we learn from Bowness is that his idea of success is purely based upon ones education within an arts institution, the circle of people ones surrounded by and who one knows. However after looking at a more generalised opinion from the writer Hall and dictionary definitions, it seems that those without an artistic opinion lean towards success as being a less of a tactile entity or 'status' so to speak. They value success as more of something earned or found within themselves- much like the artists of the Anonymous Society.

Chapter 2

Gender has been an issue within the arts for generations, as the representation of women within the arts is becoming more prevalent. Feminine and Masculine are terms that can often be used to signpost gender, much like the previously discussed impressionists. A females work would be considered feminine because of their handiwork, either a delicate cotton stitch or a painterly stroke.

Whilst gender is a term that is often confused with sex, sex is biologically categorised between male and female determined at birth, gender is purely a definition of both cultural and social outcomes between a person. From the 1960s, the general understanding of gender referred to the socially accepted male and female roles, behaviours, and characteristics that a given society considered appropriate for men and women (World Health Organisation, 2012).

However, thinker and writer Deborah Satz talks about in her essay *The Handbook of Political Philosophy* that “Even when there appear to be biological differences between men and women that explain some gender choices and gender patterning—such as the fact that men cannot give birth to or nurse children .. such differences justify inequalities in social circumstances” (Satz, 2012). Her views are merely biological and champion the fact that males are simply not built for childbirth or the role of personally feeding a child. This then creates the lifelong notion that women should be at home caring for a child whilst men, who perhaps do not have such a maternal connection with the child should work or study. Much like the previously discussed ideologies of women not being accepted in artistic institutions.

Historically gender roles date back as far as the story of Adam and Eve, hints of feminism and female empowerment are also prevalent throughout the tale. Given that both genders were present, situations arise where Eve must take control as opposed to Adam. During the story it becomes apparent which feminine traits and characteristics Eve takes on as her seduction shows through, however some depictions show heresy and sin, notions of her darker side. These are prevalent when one notices through several narrative scenes, in their representations of Eve as a

sinful figure and also by painting her as irreverent of a male domination and of how sexually exempt she presents herself. (Arbel, 2012)

Furthermore in Vita Arbel's book, *Forming Femininity in Antiquity*, she then goes on to show how although Eve, a woman in a world overpowered with such temptation, male output and sin she is more than capable to be out in the world fending for herself and taking control. "Now, then, my children, I have shown you the way in which we were deceived; and do guard yourselves from transgressing against the good." Eve makes a clear remark and takes control of the situation here, clearly giving instructions to be followed, as opposed to being the one instructed. Her message contains more than just the story of her and Adam's sin in Eden. Stunningly, Eve's words claim an force, effectiveness and universality greater than her voice and experience alone, these words also give a broad ethical and theological instruction. It becomes apparent here that even situations dating as far back to what could be considered the creation of the earth, women have been able to stand up for themselves and fight their corner providing opinion where necessary. Although it seems that women in modern day can often be suppressed by male opinions, this shows that there will always be one greater female who is willing to be the outspoken.

This is much conflicting to Deborah Satz more modern depiction of gender of women staying in a safe space to care for others, as Eve is showing much courage and determination after suffering such trauma. This shows that although women may be confined to certain duties, it is not abnormal for those confined to be opinionated, educating and strong willed. This outlines an extremely early depiction of feminism within the world as some females choose not to follow a typical woman lifestyle, to marry and birth children.

Moving on from a more historical outlook, the book *Vision and Difference* by Griselda Pollock concludes her first chapter with an extremely bold statement one in which encapsulates the questions asked throughout the particular essay. She calls upon the Pre-Raphaelites exhibition which was shown at the Tate Gallery back in 1984, which was sponsored by what she calls "multi nationals whose interests involved not only mineral, banking and property concerns, but publishing houses, zoos and waxworks as well as newspapers and magazines" (Pollock, 2003). She then questions what is it that the sponsors are supporting exactly? An exhibition that allowed

males to gaze at women? Is this the natural order of how things become perceived as beautiful? It is apparent that she calls them out for clearly being of industries of great fortune and neither respect or appreciation for the art industry. Then whilst reviewing the exhibition Pollock and Deborah Cherry go on to say that high culture is categorically present in the oppression of women. This is not only in the sense of how the women are perceived through the image and paintings shown in the exhibition but also through the lack of women's art work included in the show.

Now in a modern culture within the artistic realms to be presented and shown in a gallery without the hint of a man's world, to have statistically more art work in a gallery than men and to claim the recognition of what a woman can do in a man's world is a significant change. As successful artist and sculptor Louise Bourgeois said "Do you see art as a man's world? Yes, it is a world where men and women are continually trying to satisfy the power of men." (Curatorial Activism, pg.35)

Furthermore in essays by well renowned feminist Linda Nochlin, she states that "made it impossible for women, whatever their talent, to succeed on the same footing as men- have been shifting" (Nochlin, 1999). This suggests that change is about. Women are becoming more of a figure within the arts industry and although the fight of the female success is not over, change is happening. This all comes to life when you see the likes of Yayoi Kusama and Tracey Emin making headlines with astounding auction prices and demonstrating what is possible for women within the artistic realms, however the argument of representation does not end here.

The way in which this change is becoming more prevalent is through the artists and the work themselves. They are strong and questioning women which are challenging the realms of the arts by creating personal and unconventional art works. These art works pose objection and protest against the well established conventions of traditional art institutions as discussed earlier. The juxtaposition of a woman dominating the art world whilst art institutions historically did not let women enter the schools. Quite often these art works will come from a personal experience of the artist, from their experiences of sexualisation or even mental health issues. All of which can be deemed as taboo topics which are often brushed under the rug.

One artist that tackles extreme mental health issues whilst facing the world as a woman artist is Yayoi Kusama. After leaving Japan in 1957, Kusama headed for the states where she climbed the fame ladder as an artist, mixing with the likes of Andy Warhol and Georgia O'Keefe, another female artist which was gaining fame in a world saturated with men's work. However one of Kusama's most famous work is her soft phallic art. To some, it seems rude and gestural but contradictingly it is quite the opposite. 17

In her autobiography "Infinity Net", she explicitly states that "The reason that my first soft sculptures were shaped like penises is that I had the fear of sex as something dirty". See Fig. 2. It becomes apparent that this is a manifestation grown in Kusama's mind herself, she later goes on to state that her fear of sex had developed at an early age during her education years and the environment that she grew up in. Growing up in Japan she says that she wasn't even allowed to freely speak and converse with boys. However, her way of making soft phallic art work was her way of letting her fears go, "By continuously reproducing the forms of things that terrify me, I am able to suppress the fear.. It turns the frightening thing in to something funny, something amusing", "I am able to revel in my illness in the dazzling light of day" (Kusama, 2013).

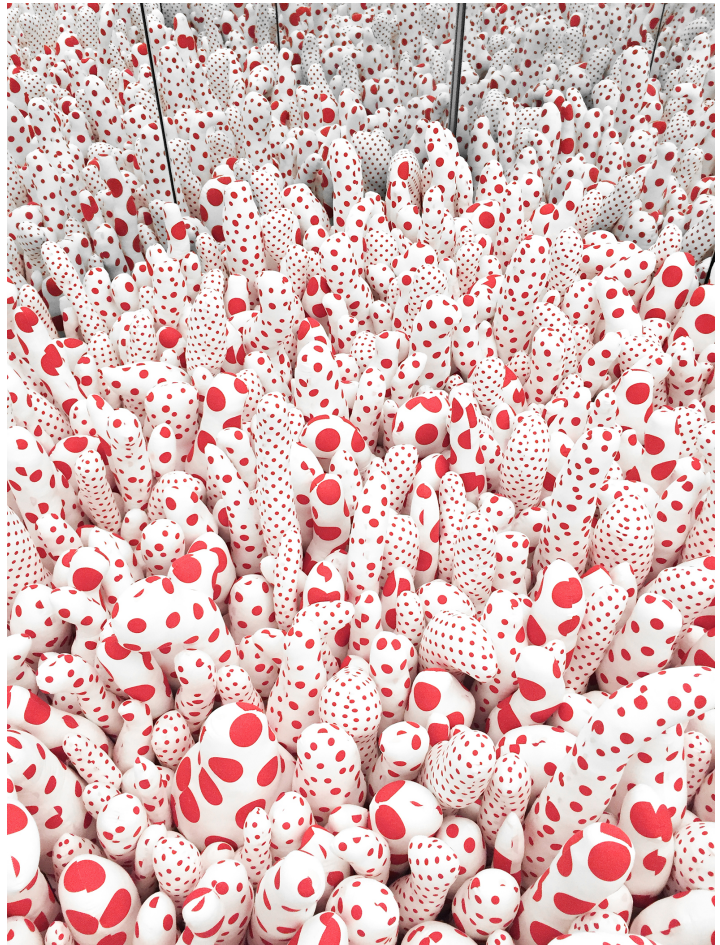


Fig. 2 - Yayoi Kusama, Infinity Mirror Room - Phalli's Field (1965/2016)

Although Kusama suffers greatly with her mental health and is now institutionalised, her book shows a wonderful insight on how she remedies herself through making art work and how it may soothe her mind away from the fears and dark thoughts surrounding such a taboo. Although she is not considered a feminist artist as such and the work is not representing a physical exploitation

by a man, it is interesting to see a male form being used within an art piece that is presented in a gallery setting. Even though it is not being sexualised and merely a figure of Kusama's remedies, it is often women and their figures who are used within western art work.

Another artist that also overcome a tough childhood is Tracey Emin. In her autobiography *Strangeland* (2005) it tells the raw tales of her escapades as a young breakthrough artist trying to climb the ladder of success. This meant that she had to make some personal sacrifices. Her encounters with authoritative males that abused their relationships and instances where Emin worked for money lead her to a warped sense of reality when it came to engaging in heterosexual relationships, she says in her book that "I fell into the ridiculous habit of having sexual relations with men much older than myself" (Emin, 2006). Not only did these situations leave her mentally damaged, in light of the situations they provided her with fuel for her art work, as it appeared that she freed her emotions through the act of making art work. This is much like her work from the more recent exhibition at White Cube, London (2019) where Emin depicts her insomniac nights through self portraits taken in bed and paintings expressing her feelings towards her recently deceased mother.

In an article by Melanie McGrath for TATE she perfectly sums up Emin's work in less than 100 words, her eloquently put together statement claims;

"Not all Emin's work draws me like this. But when it does, my sense memory is summoned in ways that are emotionally challenging, even dangerous. Emin is dangerous. She shouts, she often bullies, she will not let you look away. At the same time, her work radiates vulnerability. At times it is even delicate. A sense of accompanied loneliness pervades the monoprints and blankets; the remote, often truncated figures struggling to claim their place on the paper, the raging words sewn on to pretty fabric backgrounds. Paradoxically, its intimacy comforts me" (McGrath, 1997).

This statement is extremely powerful, however it makes complete sense. For Emin to experience such trauma, loss and pain throughout her life it is understandable how someone's art work would create such a booming and powerful environment for someone who is viewing her works. It is apparent that the reality of Emin's life issues are imbedded throughout her pieces as notions of

feelings. These notions are compiled together as an art piece, perhaps through the angry pencil strokes, the use of colour or the softness of a stitched line- but still translate into a feeling, which gives the works viewers a consciousness which may not have previously been felt before.

Although both Emin and Kusama use stitch in their work to convey their feelings, it has come far from what would be considered traditional female stitch work. As discussed previously from a text referenced to Chadwick, women's work that was often produced by the art of stitch was considered a "craft" and extremely undermined or often considered a technical skill that women should have to stay home and make clothes by sewing.

Much like the painting *The Seamstress* of 1854 by Anna Blunden, depicting how a woman of the time should be working creatively. As time progressed women went into mass manufacturing. However it doesn't deter away from the fact that both modern artists have taken the art of needlework, something once considered wholly a

female lead art. Yet they have now become so highly successful and renowned for it, a once delicate, feminine and domestic act which was now been reimagined.

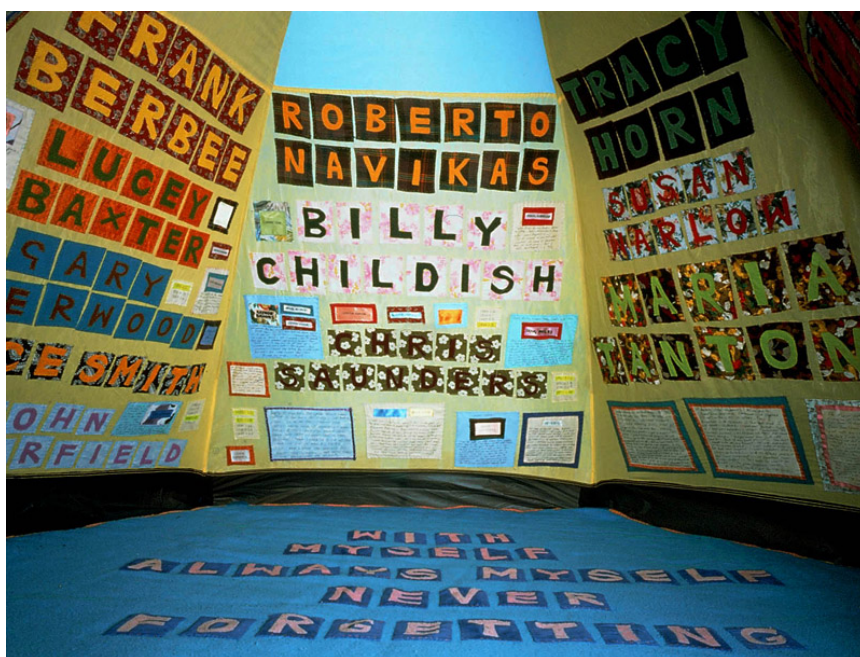


Fig. 3 - Tracey Emin, *Everyone I have Ever Slept With* (1963-1965)

One of Emin's most notable and society challenging works is her piece "Everyone I Have Ever Slept With" -1963-95, not only does it question the boundaries of the tactility of the textiles but both questions the boundaries of fine art too. See Fig. 3. It is provocative, personal and shocking. The piece itself is a standard camping tent, from the outside so it seems. However the inside is an insight into Emin's wild mind as the stitches she has adorned the interior with project the names of quite literally, every person that she has had sexual contact with at the time of completion.

However such work like the tent, rouses much controversy from with press and critics. Later on in McGrath's essay, it raises the issue that many had with Emin's piece "We Killed the F***ing Dinner Lady" - 1995. The press at the time were lead to believe from an interview by her twin brother that stated they shared a hatred for their school dinner lady (Davies, 2016). Which then escalated to that she planned to operate a murder with a friend, with her Margate school dinner lady "Mrs Edwards" being the victim. However she later revealed in an interview that there was not even a Mrs Edwards in the school during her studies. This lead journalists to believe that Emin was a fraudster due to the fact that her work did not include such a literal element (McGrath, 1997). This raises the issue about artists works being edited or merely fictional, is this a boundary that Emin broke or just an art piece concocted of lies? Or was it purely based upon a strong willed woman who Emin took a dislike to?

Strong willed women is also nothing out of the norm in 2019, there are feminist artists within their practice who are extremely passionate about fighting for women rights within the art world. They are outspoken and willing to make a stand, with the likes of the group Guerrilla Girls making statistical art work to be hung within galleries that are directly addressing the issues within the galleries, an extremely confident and rebellious act (TATE, 2019). Much like the group Society Anonyme des Artistes, the Guerrilla Girls formed based on an issue they had within the arts, bringing people together. Not only are there day to day issues between genders within situations such as the workplace, such as the pay gap and positions within companies as the arts also suffer greatly when it comes to women representation within the industry.

The Guerrilla Girls also tackle the issues of female representation within artistic institutions, primarily calling out the likes of MoMA in New York, USA and the Venice Biennale in Italy who are more in favour of showing white western males art works. Although they try to keep their names confidential, it became apparent that female Mexican artist Frida Khalo and many other female artists are part of the group. According to sources, the Guerrilla girls were born from a group of artists who congregated at Khalo's loft with the idea to print "in your face" posters, becoming part of a collection and split the printing costs between them. Not realising how much of an effect their movement would have on the industry, reaching as wide as all over the world (Art Journal, 2011).

The group have been known to refer to themselves as “male traditions of anonymous do-gooders like Robin Hood, Batman, and the Lone Ranger”. One of the Guerrilla Girl’s most renowned prints



Fig. 4 - Guerrilla Girls, Do Women Have to be Naked to get into the Met. Museum? (1989)

is the “Do Women Have to Be Naked to Get into The Met. Museum?”, in a strong and bold black font, easily catching an audience’s eye. Followed by the statement “less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female”. See Fig. 4. They have strategically used a modified image of *Odalisque and Slave* painted by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (TATE, 2019). The poster completely juxtaposes the notion of a male’s art work portraying a woman. This then completely contradicts the idea of how their work should be used; this image invites men to bask in the pleasure of a female nude, however they are then hit with the shocking statistic of how women in the industry are treated. A clever and tactical move from the Guerrilla Girls, much like a lot of their other art works.

Although the Guerrilla Girls work hangs within the Tate Modern’s walls now in 2019, during the grand reopening of the gallery in 2016 following their refurbishment there was a sickening statistic revealed. Out of the three hundred artists that were represented and adorned throughout their walls, less than a third were women and lesser still non white (Reilly, 2018). However this somehow proves that the work of the Girl’s has had a significant success, considering one of the

UK's largest gallery franchises has chosen to show the exact work that is calling upon the outstanding issues of their field of work.

Reilly, 2018 herself, states in her book *Curatorial Activism*, that she aims to ferret out the culprits of such poor recognition and representation. As you delve further into the book it shockingly reveals many well obtained artistic institutes and biennales that simply do not make the cut when showing a well distributed curation of female artists and those of ethnic backgrounds. It is also of great importance at this point to reflect back on the earlier discussed definition of success. As a modern day woman, it has become prevalent through research that success for a woman artist in today's world is simply to gain equality.

However moving forward in today's developing world, the subject of nomenclature is also a talking point within the arts. The term nomenclature itself is the systematic act of naming, often used within the sciences (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). As more and more creators are stretching the boundaries between male and female genders, this questions the nomenclature of the gender system in the modern day. Artists such as Grayson Perry who are extremely open towards their beliefs and question the need for such definition of gender are often open about their gender. It is more about closing the gender gap in a less political way, but more a creative and inclusive way. Whilst Perry identifies as a male, it is apparent that his female alter ego is a person in itself, however this poses the question as to how this should be perceived as a feminist point of view when a man dresses as a woman- does he acquire the rights of a woman or do we simply accept this as an instance of nomenclature?

Conclusion

Overall this exploration is left with many more questions yet to explore, such as the boundaries of gender and sexuality in the modern day and age. This refers to the likes of Grayson Perry and Rosa Bonheur who merge the lines between male and female within the arts, exploring the realm of cross dressing and the notion of nomenclature which was touched upon at the end of this essay. As Perry goes on to say in an interview for AnOther Magazine “I signed up for a gender and I want them to be very clearly delineated so I know I’m dressing up in the wrong clothes.” They are and were part of an artistic movement that is not yet defined, a movement of artists that are breaking the rules. Not only within art but within the way human kind has been systematically categorising males and females for generations.

However, through extensive research it has come to a conclusion that not only are these female artists part of a movement that questions the nature of classical design, but they are a collective who take the crude, deviant, most relevant aspects of life that no one wants to discuss and translate that into art work. It brings subjects that perhaps people would not discuss in public, such as sexual partners, miscarriage and pay cheques into the limelight, outlining how each and every aspect of these obscene art works are part of having an everyday human life as a woman.

Not only are these art works a modern rebellion from women, but they also rebel from the classical institutes of art and design. They are not only breaking the norms by making shocking art but also breaking the norms by using non methodical ways of producing the art taught by institutions and having the work shown in contemporary galleries that perhaps may have not considered women rebel artists in the past.

This is an extremely exciting and ground breaking time in history for women to be making art, in this modern day. Although there are still issues to be faced, it is a revolutionary and privileged time to be a successful woman in the arts.

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