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Citer cet article
This issue of ETC is very eclectic in its focus on women's contemporary art. It presents political aspects of creative research from several countries, papers written by women from Quebec and France. We chose the art of women in 2008 for many reasons. First, women artists are numerous, and their work is remarkable and very different from that of their male counterparts. The inclusive nature of their approaches bears witness to the societies from which they draw a wealth of references. Since the 1960s, one clear difference between today's creative women and those from the first feminist waves is that today's groups work in close relation to their environment, with encompassing and open attitudes. It is as if their political and social capacities influence their works. The distance between the viewer and the philosophical positions supplying these esthetics isn't any longer limited to, or stemming from, pure denunciation (instrumental in creating the work). Rather, it permits the elaboration of languages, as well as the construction of esthetic and social (or societal) driving forces that are feminine. Consequently, each creator's philosophical "position" brought up in this issue causes, in the writers that defend them, a burst of ideas and feelings that are aimed at capturing and opening our world, marked as it is by the uncertainty in our lives. As some of our institutions perpetuate the tradition of not presenting as many women's shows as men's, we elected to use affirmative action in granting women artists enough space, as well as the analysis and questions that they deserve.

For Christine Palmieri—who identifies a soft approach to feminine protest can be found in the art made by women. She doesn't address worldviews in the way that some feminist artists do. She is a feminist, and her work is an example of how to resist various models of domination and control in our societies. As for Maïté Vissault, she is concerned with a contemporary art that is not marked by feminist views even if it is subjective, by feminist views. However, her work is a feminist project. She is an active, if only in a certain power of attraction and seduction that it brings along through an effect of collective pathos and longing for an end to the dissolution of the barrier separating the private from the political. Instead of being ignored, the "private is political" slogan brought up in this issue causes the writers that defend us to an art that is less idealistic and more down-to-earth, an art of identity more focused on difference. Chantal Pontbriand continues her reflections on Yvonne Rainer, one of the great figures of the American avant-garde since the 1960s, tied to the anarchist scene. Dancer, choreographer, filmmaker and director, Rainer has inspired an innovative and radical style with her films and videos, where she exposes the animated human body. Pontbriand explains why this work is so relevant in 2008. Finally, a tribute is paid to feminist art historian Christine Palmieri who contributed articles on art history. She has also contributed to the editing of "Soft" Approach and the Power of Seduction. She is an active, if only in a certain power of attraction and seduction that it brings along through an effect of collective pathos and longing for an end to the dissolution of the barrier separating the private from the political. Instead of being ignored, the "private is political" slogan brought up in this issue causes the writers that defend us to an art that is less idealistic and more down-to-earth, an art of identity more focused on difference.
of everyday life in a way in which the technical yields to the natural in every situation, permitting a full embrace of the shifting rhythms of scenery, landscapes and characters, in family and friends circles. In serene solitude, she finds the innocence of an eye catching an all-illuminated reality, a universe without any shadow, in perfect nudity—a world, as it is, full of grace. Nature is what appeals to us in this work, different from any other. Rose-Marie Abour expresses these ideas: "I need to be able to dissociate any given environment. It is experienced more as a distinction than as a break. Difference doesn’t question institutional frameworks of contemporary art or society. It is aimed at an esthetic effect that lets us feel privacy and subjectivity in an everyday life context, a context rarely explored with such vividness and apparent frankness." This apparent frankness, this transparency and this opening up of the private would be assets to a feminine charm strategy that, contrary to the games of 'femmes fatales,' eliminates the notion of mystery and its gravity.

**Playfulness**

Besides this production of apparent 'frankness,' some artists choose a style closer to comic strips. Such is the case of Aya Takano, a young artist from Japan who, like many others, is inspired by manga. She creates pictorial artworks similar to teen book illustrations. Takano reflects her own vision of Japanese youth in her pastels and characters—who are often lanky, modest, coquettish, daydreaming or fashion victims in an urban hell. Some features of her work include a freshness of color, ingenuity of the lines and of the feminine morphology as much as the sensual Loli aspect of gentleness, over which collectors from all over the world fight. Through subtle allusions to Japanese culture, Aya Takano questions the place of women in her society: what is there to be found beyond the image of a virginal doll? Is a woman obliged to remain a cheeky girl with a manga look or is an evolution toward gender equality possible? Aya Takano asks disturbing questions while still having tenderness for young girls illustrated in their everyday lives—a critical stance that is totally undermined and assimilated by the system.

The ingenuity of Takano's graphic gesture is reminiscent of Canadian artist Kim Dawn and her clean and direct drawing stroke. With apparent playfulness and innocence, Dawn draws the emotions of little girls whose words, written directly on the medium surface, appear surprising: "I deserve respect," or "I want a kiss!" These little girls have a lot to say in the mystery of the artist's spontaneous and fast gesture, who severs their hands, turns them into schizophrenic or makes them two-headed, excluding "Banana-split" on the sheet's blank background. Also going into the twists and turns of childhood and adolescence, Éve K. Tremblay considers this unclear waters of emotions by creating bizarre games that seem innocent. Like in Sophie Calle or Raymond's Apoll's work, the photographic medium endows the artworks with a power of truth, of transparency and almost of ingenuity—just like in the naïve drawings of Aya Takano, Kim Dawn, Tracey Emin or Mika Rottenberg, a young American artist who, contrary to productions depicting an ingenious woman-child, offers a production oriented toward the works of women and of the adult body.

Burlesque and Glamour Nostalgia

Mika Rottenberg's videos present farm work by women in a poetic, rural and playful esthetic through the work of wax. She builds claustrophobic architecture where she sets comedians battling against hellish machines in absurd and ridiculous scenes. Such is the case of Dough (2006), presented at the 2008 Whitney biennial. In 2008, at the Laurent Godin gallery, she presented a video visible only by looking through a hole in the wall and in front of fat women in incision. With a close-up of one of Marilyn Minter's arm pits sweating—Minter the artist with whom she shared the showing space. The scene is set in a motel with erotic rooms with two sweating body builders and a contortionist. Every drop of sweat falls on hot pans, hissing. It is the spectacle of the "animalized" body secreting in the nostalgic and desirable antechamber of secret. All this while Marilyn Minter's work shamelessly shows off photographic and lacquer waves of wide open mouths and exuding pores, as well as photographs of sexy glamorous women.

In a nearby gallery, Chinese artist Lin Tianmiao shows urban landscapes and blurred portraits in faded grey tones—on which float long threads of white silk similar to the hair of the white sculptures of women, dogs and frogs that she is also presenting. These threads "metaphorize the ancestral Chinese customs and serve as links to the past," she says. It is a dream-like universe where the figure of the mother is omnipresent.

**Violence of the Flesh**

Omnipresence of the mother is also present in Lydie Arick's demolished and severed bodies emerging from a spiked paste or out of a nervously kneaded bronze. She says: "I use big and heavy material, like asphalt, which is sent to me in 25 kg cans!" She battles the impossible, mixing wax with the asphalt in order to obtain a new material. "It's a kind of material aphrodisiac. When I paint, it comes from it within. It's a compulsive need to create, as fundamental as hunger and connected to life." Thus, her paintings and sculptures inventory life's vivid forces and capture their inner influences in order to sublimate them in the struggle with the ever mutating flesh.

This stroll through these contemporary productions of women from different generations illustrates to us that similar preoccupations exist within the variety of esthetics and mediums. Identity claims have shifted, but through the affirmation of the feminine subject they remain present. Women don't fear anymore—as Annette Messager was saying in her beginnings—being devalued because they express themselves as women; to the contrary, they use the smallest affirmations, cliches and stereotypes to better denounce them with subtlety and charm. They create shrewd artworks with which the spectator empathizes, in an unconscious inter-subjective relationship—as if a spectator, Kolys' lecture, was being denied by the seeing process. These artworks operate according to a principle of immanent perception or of "sublime perception," and not only in the mode of mnesic affects. In this sense, one could say that they come up in the present context (as described by Catherine Grenier in La Revanche des émotions) or even that they have led the way.

Christine Palmier

**Notes**

3. Rose-Marie Abour, op. cit, p. 133.

**NEOFEMINISMS: POLITICS**

**WEB ACTIVISM: OVERVIEW OF RESISTANCES**

I chose to contribute to this issue on feminism and politics by introducing and analyzing a corpus of hypermedia artworks made by women. These works are different and yet complementary examples of a tendency in hypermedia art that I call "web activism.

This expression refers to acts of political, social or feminist resistance. These works (mostly social actions/performance) are used by the many forms of power in our hypermodern societies. They encompass diverse forms of resistance: resistance to sexism, racism, heterocentrism, neoliberalism, or to a technophilic view of social relationships. They can act on a small scale as well as on a larger one, whether they are intended for a specific community or whether they deconstruct conventional types from within or in order to challenge our assumptions.

I don't want to determine the values and impacts of these acts. Rather, my aim is to describe a phenomenon that is important in emerging practices, and to provide insights to understand them. Because of its democratic nature and its broad accessibility (or at least in some regions or our planet), the web has provided artists with a platform and the means for non-institutionalized distribution, creating more spontaneous actions, more 'free' and more 'anarchist.' A good example of this phenomenon is the multiplication and instantaneous publication of manifestos and other political writings as a recurring literary form.

Many Infiltration practices are found on the web. For example, some try to infiltrate an institutional or commercial site in order to plant an alien and dissolvent element, an element that dramatically changes the way given symbols and systems are understood.

**Activism and Feminism**

The Guerilla Girls are a canonical example of artistic activism. Their demonstrations, advertising posters and inscriptions on consumer products have captured our imagination for two decades. In combining incisive phrases with the gorilla mask, they create a model of resistance that is both political and playful. Their actions are innovative and feminist, as they claim it: "Guerilla Girls re-inventing the
"I word - feminism." As well as a venue for their artistic projects, their website has become a new platform to express the persisting iniquities of the world of artistic production.

With the same activist spirit in mind, I would like to draw attention to some hypermedia artworks that tackle the material forms of control systems. Prison stands out among these forms, and Hard Place (Jenny Pollak and Lauren Gill) reminds us of it. This work shows different locations in the US where illegal immigrant are detained, like the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). The images are inspired by plans and diagrams drawn by people who experienced detention there. The representation of prison life through its architecture is striking. The website also provides links to online resources on the issue of immigrant rights and civil liberties.

The Choice to Denounce the Aggressor

Media image of police and military is another loci of the system of control, something that the very efficient website Los Dias y Las Noches de los Muertos (Jenny Pollak) exemplifies. Through many images, texts, quotations and slogans, this work takes a stand against violence, in favour of human rights. The political message predominates. The artist reuses shocking media images that have recently been made public, like the photographs of the assassination of Carlo Giuliani during the Genoa Summit. This project uses various sources: popular movies, news, photojournalism images, graffiti and different media icons. The main theme concerns the idea of modern war: commercial, financial, and above all, media warfare. The reuse of cliches creates a critical effect as da Rimini reorganizes them, juxtaposing dramatic events, childhood images of peoples. Da Rimini shows us both victims and executioners, but also rebels, people who react against a constant global state of war, as Foucault anticipated it in Discipline and Punish. She presents us with the enduring spirit of democracy, which at times succeeds in shattering these walls (as in the case of the last Golan Heights peace conference). Voices from Ravensbrück (Pat Binder) adds the voices of victims and prisoners to the images of rulers, military or police, using the prison's architecture as an interface. This work is based on the form of collaborative writing, and the website presents texts, evidence and images from Pat Binder or other women who have survived concentration camps in Ravensbrück. The polyphonic writing offers a variety of poems and photographs that are accessed by the user through the image of a prison. Every door leads to a voice who expresses her grief, tells her everyday experiences (work, resistance, death...), she talks about her hopes.

In this work, to resist is not only to survive, but also to give rise to a poetry of abjection. It also insists on remembering. Anamnesis reminds us of the importance of memory and cultural memory, an idea shared by Lyotard and Ricoeur. Anamnesis is particularly significant when considering emerging artistic practices. We play a memory game that takes shape in the importance given to proof, accounts and experiences, a game in which what belongs to our past, whether close or distant, comes back to haunt us as the return of the repressed or as the refusal to forget. The works of Pat Binder, Natacha Merritt, Digital diaries, or Francesca da Rimini can thus be understood in this perspective: they denote the aggressor and the system of control through a set of interplayed fluctuations around anamnesis. They advise us of the importance of remembering, the impossibility of forgetting and the challenge to depict the despicable, to imagine the unimaginable.

Deconstructing from Within

Let's now have a look at the websites of women artists who play with the conventions of pornography. I consider these to be practices of inferring and juxtaposing net users' interests and desires in pornography while deceiving their expectations. The success of such websites rests on two elements: sexually-oriented content and the live-feed.

Deceiving expectations means to hide what is expected to be shown, or to show too much brazenness in disclosing—an excess that induces the creation of distance. It means to give the spectator all of the dimensions of pornography, not only transmitting the content through a transparent system of representation, but also exposing pornography and hypermedia as legitimizing authorities, that is, as control. These works aptly point at the paradoxical quality of the Internet.

Indeed, the Internet combines contradictory elements such as infinite access and normalized content, liberty and censor, subverting through the reproduction of popular belief and parody.

Natacha Merritt (with her Digital diaries and her Digital girly) and Ana Clara Voog (in Anacam) are among the most well-known artists of this movement. Without hesitation, they ostentatiously present their own bodies, strongly insisting on traditional feminine sexual markers (made-up mouths, breasts, and vulva). Following in the rich tradition of the self-portrait, they pit themselves against the world through the digital camera and the depiction of their sexual activities. To the casual net user, these images of female nudity simply add to all of the images already encountered while surfing. But given a second look, the images and the text produce a fascinating and teasing dimension: the celebration of active sexuality, the play around the pleasure of looking at and being looked at, the amusement of the inclusion into the long history of art through iconic or formal quotations.

Opposite to suggestions, Sunny Crittenden proposes a destabilizing mix of genres. On the website camwhores, she is a pornographic heroine who is in illegal act of defiance. Through reference to Donna Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto (1991) and Oviedio's Porno manifesto (2002), while claiming to be a dilettante. Her website employs crude language in headings such as 'crap i made, just scravin' around, Sunny's guide to anal sex, Pussy, It's what's for dinner, Blow jobs 101. What is the most interesting are the collected reactions of the net users who don't seem to know how to reconcile the contradictory images claimed by the author: artist, intellectual, mother, virtual whore. This is a combination that evades trivial use while arousing discomfort and displeasure.

One last example: Cyber Babes (Lisa Hutton). This website is mainly composed of short sentences and shock affirmations such as I am OVER 18 years of age and I am looking for the cyber'babes, or I am over 18 years of age and I don't feel like censorship; sentences on which the users need to click in order to browse the site. The users need to choose among affirmations that lead either to images of characters displaying strong, sometimes combined sexual markers (musculature, huge breasts and moustache), or to websites dealing with the issue of pornography from various angles (legislative, spiritual, systems of control). Thus the artwork tricks the net users in search of erotic photographs, because it plays on their lust and desire while confronting and neutralizing them. This hijacking creates a polemic revelation: the true theme of this artwork is the porn user's search more than its result.

There is so much more to be said about these different websites—more than the short account I've given here. I've provided no detailed analysis of each of these works, works that engage particular experiences and particular readings. An overview presents the whole of a phenomenon—it is not aimed at the particular. Therefore, I hand over the task of a particular reading to the reader, and recommend that she/he adds her/his own browsing experience to mine. Who knows? Maybe new artworks will be found in this shifting corpus.

Joanne Lalonde

Links to the artworks mentioned:
Sunny Crittenden, www.sunnycrittenden.com
Francesca Da Rimini, Los Dias y Las Noches de Los Muertos, http://doljyoko.thing.net/LOSDIAS/INDEX.HTML
Guerrilla Girls, www.guerrillagirls.com

Notes
1 I would like to thank doctoral candidates Camiliane Cloutier, Emille Houssa and Pauline Maucour, who have been working with me in locating and documenting hypermedia artworks in different research projects. They are associated with the N72 laboratory as well as with the Équipes de recherche sur l'imagination contemporaine ERC, UAT, at UQAM.
2 Web manifestos have been proliferating in recent years. Here is a sample of websites that present a rich diversity of themes:
http://www.art.net/about/manifesto.html
http://www.lastplace.com/webism.htm
http://www.lowtech.org/projects/n5m3/
http://www.hitparade.com/manifesto.htm
http://www.refinementsmovement.org/index.php?hyper_archives=manifesto_services
http://www.altx.com/manifestos/orgasm.html
http://www.lastplace.com/webism.htm
http://www.refinementsmovement.org/index.php?hyper_archives=manifesto_services

4 Some references can be found on www.sunnycrittenden.com; the current version of which is smaller than the one studied for this text.

NEOFEWMINISMS: POLITICS

THE FEMININE "I"

"I want to enjoy myself."
Sarah Lucas

Since the "I" here is at issue, I will play the game by making no secret of subjective choices and reflections on this issue. My own "I" is
also feminine, even without being colored by feminist views. Consequently, my presentation might appear equivocal. However, it seems to me that—and it’s only the tip of the iceberg—these subjective and equivocal aspects are precisely set the feminine content of a ‘political and social’ art produced by women, an art that stemmed from ideas that are not properly feminine, and even less feminist. This said, if we are to determine how a feminine sensibility in art differs from a masculine one, it seems impossible not to consider, even briefly, the impulse of the feminist struggle of the 60s. This is because our perception of the art of women is conspicuously shaped by an art of emancipation that is head-on, militant, aggressive, accusing and caricatured (pejoratively dubbed “tampax art”), and that stigmatizes the many social identities of women. Besides, as soon as contemporary women artists approach themes often slightly related to feminine lives, they face recurring questions about their feminist “intentions,” whether they want it or not.

In the present plural world, less polarized than in the 60s, female artists don’t relate to any particular emancipation views. In an interview published in Kunstforum in 2006 and composed of 127 threads that were used in the stitching of 127 corpses, Margolles says that this “work is what the threads have absorbed; interrupted lives, torn families, ruined cities. Every thread comes from a corpse and is a human being, a story, a reality.”

Staging the “I”

Like many women artists, Margolles tells a story (not necessarily hers) and offers the spectator/viewer an experience of the being-in-the-world that takes the form of a generic “I.” Whether directly or indirectly, women artists often use staging that creates narrative structures. In that regard, one emblematic artist is Finnish Eija-Liisa Ahtila. Her films and videos serve as many fictive moments of social psychosis, “human dramas” always told in the “I” form of those of the narrator or of the protagonist. In Conservation Service (1999), Ahtila tells the story of a young couple about to divorce. Set on two screens, this movie mixes documentary with fantasy language to generate a disconcerting complexity, full of different tensions and emotions. Physical and metaphorical death, the kind that looks at you straight in the eyes, appears in the gaps, in breaks both narrative and formal, through the process of a staging as sharp as a razor blade.

Thus, contemporary women artists speak more of the identity of human-than the identity of the individual. Because our perception of the art of women is distinctly shaped by an art of emancipation and composed of "tampax art", Margolles says that this “work is what the threads have absorbed; interrupted lives, torn families, ruined cities. Every thread comes from a corpse and is a human being, a story, a reality.”

Is This the Sign of a Fear of Running Risks?

On the masculine side, one common presupposition is that men have a sense of conquest that is unknown to women. A cliché if ever there was one, but a cliché that even appears in views with a feminist content, like that of Judy Chicago, when she claims that “the masculine gaze carries more than pure observation. It always implies some activity or possession of something. Women can capture a gaze and respond to it, but they can’t react to it actively.” It also appears in some men’s views: in a discussion between Christine Macel, Xavier Veilhan and Jean-Marc Bustamante published in 2005, Bustamante claimed that men were impregnated with the conquest of new territories, and that because of this, they took more risks than women, who had difficulty losing the course. The debate is still open: are women artists less ‘conquering’ than their masculine counterparts, or the same, just by a different path? Is it again the remnant of the 70s feminist legacy (cf. Valie Export’s Genital Panic) that makes us think that women are absolutely working in radicalness? And by this radical image, wasn’t Export acting and reacting? And isn’t the practice of Teresa Margolles, when she exposes pieces of tattooed skin or blankets that were used to transport corpses, a reaction to indifference more than another answer?

It seems to me that the way women are engaged in a political and social art isn’t characterized by radical-ness nor by military strategy, but rather a matter of subjective power and of a certain physicality. Margolles extracts the water, the threads and other peripheral elements—physical above all else—that were used in autopsies, in order to “understand death in its social dimension.” She initiates a work that is radically about art, poverty, anonymity and violence, using a work material both actual and organic, while giving a physical velocity to pasts or to those dispersed of lights, the nameless victims of social violence. On 127 corpses, an installation produced at the Düsseldorf Kunstverein in 2006 and composed of 127 threads that were used in the stitching of 127 corpses, Margolles says that this “work is what the threads have absorbed; interrupted lives, torn families, ruined cities. Every thread comes from a corpse and is a human being, a story, a reality.”

Maïté Vissault

Notes

1 Sarah Lucas, interview with Noemi Smolkov, « Est-il vrai que les femmes, après avoir été au plus haut de l'ascenseur, se retrouvent au bas de l’escalier ? » In: laboratory, Kunstforum International, n° 139, 1997, p. 368
2 Bénice Josse (éd.), 2 ou 3 choses que j’ignore d’elle. Pour un manifeste post-féministe, Metz, Iac Lorraine, Editions 49 Nord 6 Est, 2008. This catalogue contains the extended catalog of a show that took place in April/June 2007 at the MAC Lorraine, Nancy.
3 In her book Social Strategies by Woman Artists (1983), Lucy Lippard presented the introduction of an emotional and autobiographical content as one of feminism’s major contribution to art.
4 Judy Chicago as quoted by Antje Ovchik, « Von der passiven Muse zur aktiven Künstlerin », Kunstforum International, n° 156, 2001, p. 213. For the first time, Judy Chicago in 1979 in San Francisco did a famous installation titled Dinner Party. This installation consisted of a monogular banquet table made up of stone, fabric and porcelain, holding 39 plates, each relates to a great woman of History. The names of 999 women from all eras and continents are carved in the stone in the middle of the triangle. Judy Chicago is also the author of many books about the legacy of women in society.
6 This physicality can also be considered as an inheritance of the direct and harsh representation of the body and its sexuality conducted by feminists in the 70s.
7 Teresa Margolles in an interview with Amine Haase in Kunstforum International, n° 182, 2006, p. 278: The connected and tied threads were pulled across the exhibit room.
8 Id. 
9 Ahtila defines herself as "human dramas"
VYONNE RAINER : DE LA CHORÉGRAPHIE À LA CINÉMATOGRAPHIE

Le cliché est, en un sens, l’art de rendre les choses intelligibles sous sa forme la plus pure ; il nous soumet à la tentative de cerner la vie à l’intérieur de formules merveilleusement immuables, et de dissimuler la nature arbitraire de l’imagination derrière une apparence de nécessité.

Leo Bersani

Veuillez noter que le nombre de caractères du texte extrait précédemment est de 1774 mots.
Cette complexité, qu’une simple relation à l’espace ou dans l’espace ne suffit pas à caractériser ou à nommer, elle va chercher à l’exprimer par l’image en mouvement. Quelques courts métrages intègrent les performances. Ils montrent des gestes simples et répétitifs, un changement de rythme, un changement de course qui déplace un ballon de soccer sur un plancher de bois; un autre montre une jeune fille vue de dos traçant une ligne sur un mur nu, puis se retournant, souriant, vers la caméra; dans un autre film, un couple est assis sur un divan – il ne se passe pas grand-chose. Très simples, ces films sont aussi extrêmement importants en ce qu’ils définissent une esthétique très différente du cinéma de l’époque et même de celui d’aujourd’hui. Au moyen d’un ensemble d’énoncés aussi courts qu’ils sont simples, ils exposent la notion de présentité, qui est essentiellement ce dont il s’agit dans le film voire, et que l’art de sauter les mots, la relecture de l’image et de la mise en scène. Le temps, pour elle, n’existe pas. Elle n’est pas liée à l’histoire, comme il est défini par les historiens occidentaux: il s’agit de viser plus haut et toujours plus haut. La danse est une rencontre avec l’autre: l’autre en soi, ainsi que les autres qui sont extérieurs à soi. Son premier long métrage s’intitule Lives of Performers. Il commence avec une séquence où un groupe de danseurs masculins et féminins répète une pièce avec Yvonne. Le film est parlé comme un élément de l’espace, qui peut être exploré plus aisément au moyen du film que dans les situations de la vie réelle. Un des paradoxes de la danse est que cette image d’un couple homme/femme aux conventions et détaché de la rationalité.

Les relations demeurent un paradigme majeur des œuvres de Rainer. En s’allongant, on accède à un autre état d’être, qui est libre des codes des disciplines artistiques, etc. Chez elle, c’est la révolte qui fait la révolution. Elle le démontre dans une installation récente: After Many a Summer Dies the Swan: Hybrid (2002), où on trouve de nombreux renvois à la danse et au film, mêlés à des références à Vienna, Freud et Wittgenstein. Elle réintroduit dans le monde l’idée de révolte, qui semble absente du temps présent. C’est pourtant une notion essentielle à toutes les formes de créativité et de changement. La rage fait partie du courage, dans son cas au moins.

Chantal Pontbriand

Note

1 Voir l’interview récente de Laura Mulvey, Iconic Bodies, publié dans le catalogue Video Dreams à l’occasion d’une exposition à Graz.

NEOFEMINISMS: POLITICS

THE STRATEGY OF IRANIAN WOMEN

"Islamic Republic" is a designation that, rightly or wrongly, has always seemed to me like a contradiction in terms. Res publica ("public thing," in Latin), from which the word "republic" is derived, supposed a social sphere where responsibilities are equally distributed. However, Hannah Arendt detected in the Greek foundation stone of democracy a rather elitist coefficient: to the patrician - the governance of the City, to the slaves and women - the crumbs. Since the Enlightenment, this model has inspired our modern republics. It is not perfect, but it carries a sine qua non condition: the separation of the State from the Church. Yet, in the political life of Iran since 1979, both religious and executive powers, as well as parliamentary and universal suffrage coexist. Partly because of an Islamic understanding as a resource against the hegemonies imposed in the Middle East, this religious reference cannot be unilaterally considered regressive. Since the West doesn’t have a monopoly on democracy, equality and equity can be pursued (and obtained) in other systems of thought. So, in the Iranian 70s, the impact of intellectual Ali Shariati advocating an Islamic non ruled over by the clergy (it is still a vivid memory. As for Khatami, he tried to reconcile Islam’s foundations with egalitarianism. Mohammed Arkoun thinks that it’s a sensitive issue to "think islam" because western modernity is itself in crisis. Iranians, for their part, experience the shortcomings of a theoretical link between religious and executive powers that Shirin Ebadi, jurist and Peace Nobel Prize laureate, describes as "greatly fictitious." The role of Iranian women in the public sphere became antithetical to that of the regime when, in 2003, the majority of reformers brought into the Parliament fourteen women deputies: antithetical too to a public space that has, since Khomeiny, become a place of harassment for "badly veiled" women (an obstacle course...
they learned to go around...). Besides, what can we say about the pro-Islamists (something unseen in Muslim history) demonstrating in the streets, a fact that has not yet found its explanation. The Shah's White Revolution, seeking to diminish the influence of the clergy, gave women the right to graduate studies during the 90s, to be feminine without being treated as an object. Many Muslim women have felt the influence of the Islamic Republic, which has not only']/". These maneuvers benefited Iranian women in the clergy, gave women the right to vote. The important goal is to abolish discriminatory laws. The history of a unified gender cannot be universal, despite the fact that women's struggles for their rights are similar. Iranian society—very sensitive to injustice—has many associations. Despite 39 years of severity, this confirms the existence of a critical coherence. The marginalization of women isn't as absolute as we thought. In the 90s, a new interpretation of the Koran (the exegesis of which the pragmatism of men for centuries] appeared necessary to the women editors of the Zanan, editors of the Zanan had to have a voice, to temper the misogyny advocated struggle "within an Islamic framework." Since the criticism of the intellectuals of Zanan was based on a clarifying hermenutics, the project to amend the anachronistic precepts of the Koran with regard to an inescapable contemporaneity would represent a stimulating reflection on the legitimization itself, the right to free thinking, everything seems to be possible in modern Iran.

Ghazel is to take action. Also, the civil society in Iran seems to be a patriarchal ideology that is ageless in every place. It's a bitter transfer, almost irrevocable, behind closed doors when her mother is invited to unfold and fold the fateful black headscarf. It's a bitter transfer, almost irrevocable, behind closed doors when her mother is invited to unfold and fold the fateful black headscarf. It's a bitter transfer, almost irrevocable, behind closed doors when her mother is invited to unfold and fold the fateful black headscarf.

Notes
4. Ibid., p. 126.
5. Ibid., p. 138.
6. Ibid., p. 140.
8. S. Ebadi, op. cit., p. 156.