



## **Women in Space**

**As part of the symposium series**

**“Women in the Arts and Leadership”**

**Master symposium Spring 2019**

**4–5 April 2019**

**Atelier Building, Room A 0.11**

**Art Institute, FHNW Academy of Arts and Design in Basel**

Guests: Nikola Dietrich, Mareike Dittmer, Raffael Dörig, Elvira Dyangani Ose, Fanni Fetzler, Elena Filipovic, iLiana Fokianaki, Ines Goldbach, Sabine Himmelsbach, Claire Hoffmann, Manuela Moscoso, Marie Muracciole, Elfi Turpin and Nadine Wietlisbach

Moderated by Chus Martínez and Quinn Latimer

Making reference to the exploratory nature of space travel, and all its attendant problematics and projections, “Women in Space” thematizes the role of scale and space and power in envisioning women in the art system. Who is alien here, and what kind of system, solar or other? Moderated by Chus Martínez and Quinn Latimer, this symposium is a public event within the framework of the Women’s Center for Excellence, a long-term research project initiated by the Art Institute in Basel together with Instituto Susch, a joint venture with Grażyna Kulczyk and Art Stations Foundation CH.

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu once wrote that, “sociology and art do not make good bedfellows.” His reasoning was grounded in the perceived tension between the art world’s desire to focus on individual creative genius, and sociology’s insistent aim to explain phenomena in terms of social forces. Taking the measure of a wide swath of art institutions and spaces run by women curators in recent years, it would seem that these art professionals remain in many cases on the (sociological) side of Bourdieu. The art spaces they activate do not often stress the importance of size, the need for expansion, or the importance of demographic media impact, but rather the necessity of programs that encourage a qualitative interaction between different social spheres as they relate to exhibitions, public programs, and the continuous presence of the artist community. But the question remains: Do women art professionals aim for this outcome or is this the result of the difficult and adaptive process to the very patriarchal conditions in which they, as women in a system created by and for men, are mandated to work?

The transition from the 20th to the 21st century was marked, in part, by the energy of certain discourses occupying a central place in art institutions, a discursive renewal of ideas that would come to effect the programs of the larger institutions, but that had its origin in small and medium-size initiatives. The question of the future of representation and its place in the Western democratic system was answered by a proliferation of philosophers and various curatorial and artistic agents, all of whom claimed access to ideas, archives, initiatives... the past became plural, became the competing stories of many, and the question of History began to be fragmented into the problems caused by colonial imperialism and its postcolonial legacy. The archive was the first door, the document—still white (and male)—remained the threshold one needed to pass through to gain entrance to the materials and artistic voices of

different territories and histories... restitution started to gain a body, some reality, and was as well prior to the question of enforced racial hierarchies in the myriad art worlds. Nevertheless, an entire energy of renewal in the Western art system seemed possible, as its many agents were possessed by an enthusiasm, and an economic and social growth, that unprecedentedly envisioned an empowered art as capable of opening up the social to its past through ideas of a different education, participation, social wealth, and access. The art world believed in itself and many European politicians supported this wave—at the beginning—in their hope that it was a powerful way of activating the Union by creating a resonance between the old continental dreams and a new political organization. Europe, a continent with a dubious economic future, trusted its legacy to the idea of culture once again. This liaison with contemporary art, though, did not last long. Cuts to the cultural sectors and a rapid re-nationalization process across the continent rang the alarm on the future of internationalism and plurality, affecting how contemporary art and its many institutional lives and languages should appear in and be narrated for the public. But this turn not only affected drastically the art world at large, but the way in which it might be occupied and traveled by women artists, curators, writers, administrators...

Ideas of intimacy, the small scale, and the need for a social space in which to express authentically and in solidarity—ideas and ambitions that are often accorded to women professionals, in a specific kind of gendering of care, affective relations, and the minor forms—can seem to clash, simultaneously, with the larger, louder, seemingly more “ambitious” views of what women should want (as outlined by mainstream feminist narratives that center the claiming of traditional modes of power). What do all these ideas—projected or not—imply, and how do they manifest in space itself? What is the historical origin of these conceptions? How have such ideas affected the view of women who claim space, as it were, large or not?

The ambition (for isn't there always one?) of “Women in Space” is to spend two days on the campus of the Art Institute in Basel, in dialogue with a group of art professionals addressing these ideas and notions. Like its predecessor, “Promise No Promises!,” this symposium will be dramatized in a way that avoids the expected power point presentations, instead creating a sense of real debate and conversation, at once performative and improvised, as well as include live readings on the various subjects being addressed (so as to bring in voices both historical and farflung). The voices and thinking of each participant will testify to their specific experiences as women in space—a space that is at once certain, uncertain, competing, and ever expanding and contracting—as well as offer reflections on the recent past and hoped-for future scenarios of their fields, offering the audience a series of shifting images of the very “space” that women occupy in the art system today.

The symposium “Women in Space” is made possible thanks to the generous support of the Federal Office of Culture FOC.

**ART  
STATIONS  
FOUNDATION  
CH**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
Federal Office of Culture FOC

Swiss Confederation

## **Program**

### **DAY ONE**

**April 4, 2019, 10 am – 5 pm, Atelier Building, room A0.11**

**Open to the public**

- 10 am Welcome: Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer
- 10.15 am Reading I: Quinn Latimer
- 10.30 am Round I: Mareike Dittmer, iLiana Fokianaki, Claire Hoffmann Moderation: Quinn Latimer
- 11.30 am Round II: Elfi Turpin, Marie Muracciole, Ines Goldbach Moderation: Chus Martínez
- 12.30 pm Lunch Break
- 2 pm Reading II: Quinn Latimer
- 2:15 pm Round III: Manuela Moscoso Moderation: Quinn Latimer
- 3:15 pm Round up Day I with all Participants Moderation: Chus Martínez
- 4:30 pm End of Day

### **DAY TWO**

**April 5, 10 am – 3:30 pm, Atelier Building, room A0.11**

**Open to the public**

- 10 am Welcome: Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer
- 10.15 am Reading III: Quinn Latimer
- 10.30 am Round IV: Elena Filipovic, Fanni Fetzler, Elvira Dyangani Ose Moderation: Quinn Latimer
- 11.45 am Round V: Nadine Wietlisbach, Nikola Dietrich, Raffael Dörig, Sabine Himmelsbach Moderation: Chus Martínez
- 12.45 pm Lunch Break
- 2 pm Round up Day 2 with all Participants Moderation: Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer
- 3 pm Reading VI: Quinn Latimer
- 3.30 pm End of Day

## **Biographies**

**Nikola Dietrich** is an art historian and curator. She is the director of Kölnischer Kunstverein. From 2008 to 2014 she was head of the Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Basel and before that curator at Frankfurter Portikus.

**Mareike Dittmer** is the director of the Art Stations Foundation CH / Muzeum Susch. She set up the Berlin office for frieze as an associate publisher of frieze d/e and associate publisher of frieze magazine. She is one of the founders and the chairperson of the 9th Futurological Congress 2016–2018, nominator of the Davidoff Arts Initiative, and editor of Mono.Kultur, a Berlin-based interview magazine.

**Raffael Dörig** is a curator and the director of Kunsthau Langenthal. He was curator at HeK House of electronic arts in Basel and founded Shift festival in the same city.

**Elvira Dyangani Ose** is a curator and the director of The Showroom in London. She previously worked as a curator at the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno in Las Palmas and at the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo in Sevilla. She was the curator of the eighth Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art and senior curator at Creative Time in New York.

**Fanni Fetzner** is the current director of the Kunstmuseum Luzern. Prior to this, she was a curator at Kunstmuseum Thun and the director of Kunsthau Langenthal. She also was editor of the cultural magazine Du.

**Elena Filipovic** is curator and director at the Kunsthalle Basel. She previously was senior curator of WIELS Contemporary Art Centre in Brussels, as well as a co-curator of the 5th Berlin Biennale with Adam Szymczyk. She is the author of *The Apparently Marginal Activities of Marcel Duchamp* (MIT Press, 2016) and *David Hammons, Bliz-aard Ball Sale* (Afterall Books, 2017).

**iLiana Fokianaki** is a curator and former journalist based in Athens and Rotterdam. She is the founder and director of contemporary art space State of Concept in Athens and a lecturer at the Dutch Art Institute. She regularly writes for international art journals and publications.

**Ines Goldbach** is an art historian, curator and the director of Kunsthau Baselland in Muttenz. Previously, she was working for the Raussmüller Collection at the Hallen für Neue Kunst in Schaffhausen.

**Sabine Himmelsbach** is the director of HeK House of electronic arts in Basel. She has previously held positions as director of the Edith-Russ-Haus for Media Art in Oldenburg and curator at the ZKM in Karlsruhe.

**Claire Hoffmann** is an art historian and a curator at the Centre Culturel Suisse in Paris. Previously she worked at Schaulager, Kunsthau Zurich and Kunsthau Langenthal. She is writing her PhD on the drawings of Maria Lassnig.

**Quinn Latimer** is a writer and editor. Her books include *Like a Woman: Essays, Readings, Poems* (Sternberg Press, 2017) and *Sarah Lucas: Describe This Distance* (Mousse Publishing, 2013). Her writings and readings have recently been featured at REDCAT, Los Angeles, Witte de With, Rotterdam, and the Sharjah Biennial 13. She was editor-in-chief of publications for documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel.

**Chus Martínez** is head of the Art Institute at the FHNW Academy of Arts and Design in Basel, Switzerland. She is also the expedition leader of The Current, a project initiated by TBA21–Academy (2018–2020). She is currently leading a research project at the Art Institute, supported by Muzeum Susch on the role of education enhancing women's equality in the arts.

**Manuela Moscoso** is senior curator at Tamayo Museum in Mexico City. She is also the curator of the upcoming Liverpool Biennial 2020. She was director of Capacete in Rio de Janeiro and worked for the Bienal de Cuenca in Ecuador as well as for the Queens Museum's Queens International biennial.

**Marie Muracciole** is a writer and curator based in Paris and Beirut. She is the director of the Beirut Art Center as well as a cinema and video theory professor at the École Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Bordeaux. Previously she held positions as head of the cultural department at Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris from 1991 to 2011.

**Elfi Turpin** is director of the Centre Rhénan d'Art Contemporain – CRAC Alsace. She holds a master's degree in History of Contemporary Art of the University of Dijon. Among other things she participated to the Capacete Program at the 29th Sao Paulo Biennial in 2010.

**Nadine Wietlisbach** is the director of Fotomuseum Winterthur. Prior to this, she was director of Photoforum Pasquart Biel/Bienne, and a curator at the Nidwaldner Museum in Stans. She also founded the independent art space Sic! Raum für Kunst in Lucerne in 2007.

Institut Kunst  
Hochschule für Gestaltung  
und Kunst FHNW  
Freilager-Platz 1  
4002 Basel

info.kunst.hgk@fhnw.ch  
+41 61 228 40 77

institut-kunst.ch