Unsettling Feminist Curating

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Unsettling Feminist Curating. Radical Subjectivities, Caring Alliances, and Striking Relations

A New Anthology edited by Elke Krasny, Lara Perry, Helena Reckitt, Dorothee Richter

The current moment is characterized by crises that pose existential threats to humanity and its art cultures. The planet is ravaged by climate change and environmental pollution. Housing and education are rendered unaffordable in many countries. Lives are mortgaged. Digital Media has transformed our lives, as a communications infrastructure and as a surveillance and ideological machinery. Reproduction is in crisis. Femicides are on the rise. Colonial wounds are reopened. Refugees are threatened and immigrants are ostracized. Systematic racism results in mass incarceration and health injustice. The response to these crises has been renewed activist movements driven by anti-capitalist, anti-classist, anti-racist, crip, decolonial, ecological, feminist, indigenous, queer or trans agendas. Such movements include Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, Ni Una Menos, #Metoo, Extinction Rebellion or Fridays for Future. The creative and intellectual activist energy represented in these movements is also seen in the experimental, community-embedded, radical, and critical forms of curating which engage with activist agendas.

This proposed volume seeks essays that record and interrogate the feminist politics in 21st century curating which seeks alliances with ecological, social, and political activism. We specifically seek to unsettle the relation between feminism and the conventional large-scale event and exhibition which has arisen over the past decade. Feminist reflection has produced an analysis of the integration of feminist agendas in the already defined art world spaces of museums and galleries, a development which has been both welcomed and critiqued for its potential for 'pink-washing' the otherwise unchanged system. We seek to explore how alternative approaches to curating have been mobilized by feminist-aligned politics in the following ways:

— By exploring feminist strategies that make possible the expression of radical subjectivities that unsettle curating's relations with the canon, the market and institutions including the representational exhibition format.
— By identifying practices of feminist working and producing that create lasting and sustained caring alliances (affidamento) that counteract the competitive and precarious situations associated with contemporary labour conditions including art and curating
— By promoting new positions of analysis and theorization which counteract the "epistemic violence" (Gayatri Spivak) of colonialism and sexism in art and curatorial production

In short, we seek to produce an account of the ways in which artists, curators, cultural and politi-

cal organisers are resisting the pressures of the forces of right-wing authoritarianism, kleptocratic neo liberalism, and compulsory globalization.

We invite proposals for scholarly and critical accounts of feminist curating, interviews with producers, or visual essays that explore topics relevant to the curatorial labor of counteracting, undoing and unlearning institutional racism, structural feminization, and anthropogenic change. The editors are initially seeking abstracts or proposals for completed texts of around 5,000 words. Our intention is to create a book which will be circulated via recognized routes of publication that carry credibility with academic institutions. We are seeking opportunities to raise funds to offer a fee for contributors in precarious labour conditions.

Please send a brief synopsis of your proposed text (about 300 words) and a short list of key references, case studies or images (5-8 items) to feministcuratingbook@gmail.com by 1 December 2019. We will reply to all submitters by 31 January 2020.

Reference:
CFP: Unsettling Feminist Curating. In: ArtHist.net, Sep 29, 2019 (accessed Nov 8, 2026),
<https://arthist.net/archive/21679>.