Office Hours: Women Artists at Work in the Art World, 1945-1990

Deadline: Oct 15, 2025

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Office Hours: Women Artists at Work in the Art World, 1945–1990.
Edited Volume

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Abstracts Due October 15th, 2025

This edited volume seeks proposals for original, unpublished essays exploring the understudied multifaceted roles of women artists who served variously as arts administrators, educators, program officers, curators, writers, and cultural organizers in the United States and Americas, respectively, after World War II until the 1990s. By foregrounding the structural, curatorial, and bureaucratic labor of women artists who worked within, alongside, and against the art world's dominant frameworks, Office Hours aims to reframe the institutional histories and feminist art discourse in the second half of the twentieth century.

Although women artists have long played crucial roles in shaping cultural institutions—from museums and artist-run spaces to funding agencies and educational programs—their administrative contributions have often been overlooked or dismissed as peripheral to their "real" work and lives as artists. Recovering and prioritizing these records and historical narratives, this volume positions administrative labor as generative, political, and deeply creative sites for analysis. It addresses, on the one hand, how women artists' administrative labor helped shape postwar art ecologies, networks, and infrastructures and, on the other, draws attention to the complex interrelations and mechanisms between women's institutional labor and creative work, asking: How did such dual roles inform, inspire, or derail their aesthetics, politics, and cultural influence? How did artists from geographies outside the US conduct operations and insert themselves in roles within the county, or facilitate transnational exchange between North and South America, and for what larger purpose? How were they critically received?

We welcome contributions that explore individual case studies, collective initiatives, or broader structural critiques. Interdisciplinary approaches that bridge art history, museum studies, feminist theory, archival studies, and labor history are especially encouraged, as are explorations about global women artists working in administrative capacities within the US.

Possible Topics Include:

- Artists who held curatorial, education, or leadership roles in museums, non-profits, or govern-

ment arts agencies
- Feminist collectives and artist-run institutions (e.g., Woman's Building, A.I.R. Gallery, Artemisia, the Women's Interart Center, Social and Public Art Resource Center – SPARC)
- Race, gender, and class in institutional labor and access
- Artists in exile or working under political or financial duress from global territories
- Archival recovery of under-recognized administrative labor
- Artist-organizers in public art, community art, and activist contexts
- Intersections of teaching, caretaking, and feminist pedagogy
- Institutional critique from within: working under/against systems of exclusion
- Oral histories, letters, memos, and other documents of "invisible" work

We are seeking 8–10 contributors for chapters of 6,000–8,000 words. Proposals should include a 300–500 word abstract, brief bio (150 words), and any relevant institutional affiliations.

Please send proposals by October 15th to Helena Shaskevich (hshaske@gmail.com) and Aliza Edelman (alizaedelman@mac.com)

Reference:
CFP: Office Hours: Women Artists at Work in the Art World, 1945-1990. In: ArtHist.net, Jun 26, 2025 (accessed Nov 23, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/49583>.