

Komplizenschaft – Eine Kunstgeschichte kollektiver Praktiken

Einführungsvorlesung Kunstgeschichte der Moderne und Gegenwart

Dr. Charlotte Matter (charlotte.matter@uzh.ch)

Frühlingssemester 2023 / Mittwoch, 15.15 bis 16.45 Uhr / MIS 03, Raum 3024

23. März 2023 – Antirassistische und intersektionale Perspektiven



Ein Mitglied der «Third World Women's Alliance» bei einer Demonstration, 1970



**Do women have to be naked to
get into the Met. Museum?**

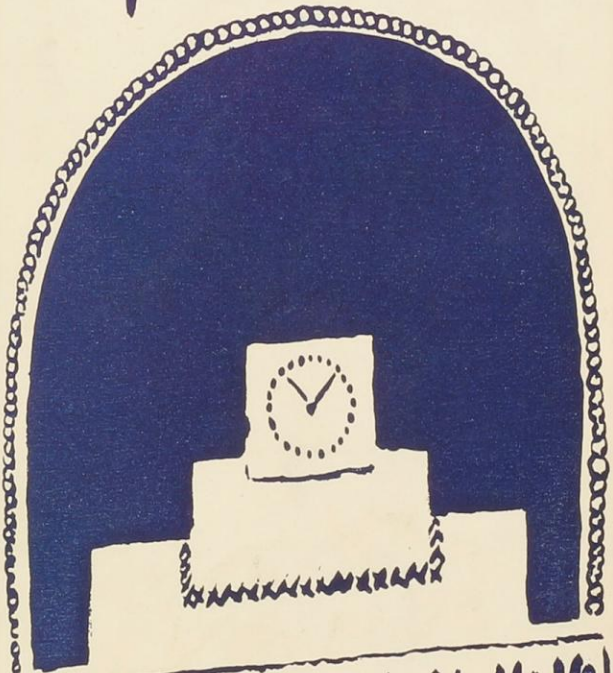
**Less than 5% of the artists in the Modern
Art sections are women, but 85%
of the nudes are female.**

GUERRILLA GIRLS CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD

a
room
of
one's
own

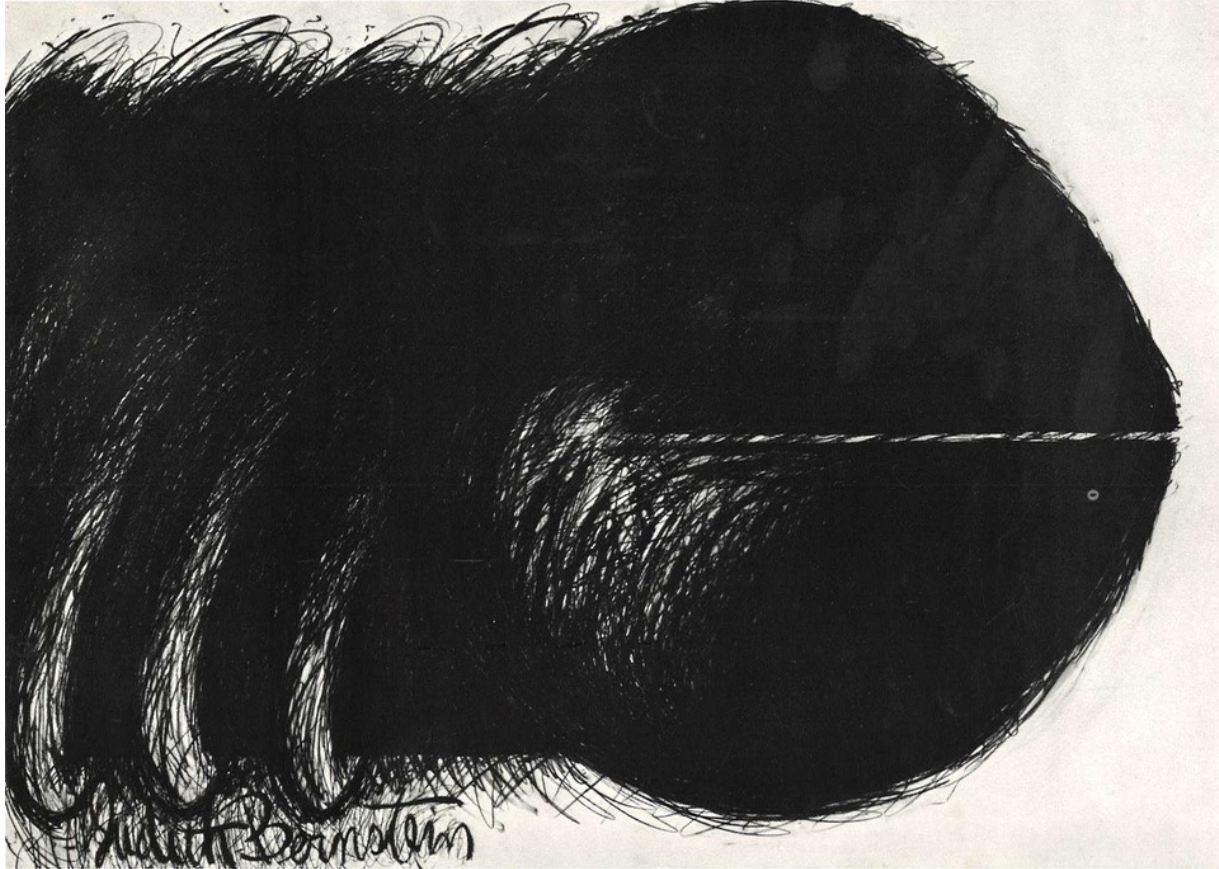
a room of one's own

Virginia
Woolf



The
Hogarth
Press

virginia woolf



JUDITH BERNSTEIN

CHARCOAL ON PAPER 108" x 150"

5

Opening Saturday Oct. 20
Through November 7 1973

10-6 Tuesday Thru Saturday
A.I.R. GALLERY 97 Wooster Street, New York City, Tel. 966-0799



Blick auf die Eröffnungsausstellung der Cooperativa Beato Angelico, Rom, 8. April 1976. Foto: Alfio di Bella

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Aurora*, um 1627
Öl auf Leinwand, 218 cm x 146 cm. Rom, Privatsammlung



RIVOLTA FEMMINILE

«Le donne saranno sempre divise le une dalle altre? Non formeranno mai un corpo unico?»
(Olympe de Gouges, 1791)

La donna non va definita in rapporto all'uomo. Su questa coscienza si fondano tanto la nostra lotta quanto la nostra libertà.

L'uomo non è il modello a cui adeguare il processo della scoperta di sé da parte della donna.

La donna è l'altro rispetto all'uomo. L'uomo è l'altro rispetto alla donna. L'uguaglianza è un tentativo ideologico per asservire la donna a più alti livelli.

Identificare la donna all'uomo significa annullare l'ultima via di liberazione.

Liberarsi, per la donna, non vuol dire accettare la stessa vita dell'uomo perché è invivibile, ma esprime il suo senso dell'esistenza.

La donna come soggetto non rifiuta l'uomo come soggetto, ma lo rifiuta come ruolo assoluto. Nella vita sociale lo rifiuta come ruolo autoritario.

Finora il mito della complementarietà è stato usato dall'uomo per giustificare il proprio potere.

Le donne sono persuase fin dall'infanzia a non prendere decisioni e a dipendere da persona «capace» e «responsabile»: il padre, il marito, il fratello...

L'immagine femminile con cui l'uomo ha interpretato la donna è stata una sua invenzione.

Verginità, castità, fedeltà, non sono virtù; ma vincoli per costruire e mantenere la famiglia. L'onore ne è la conseguente codificazione repressiva.

Nel matrimonio la donna, privata del suo nome, perde la sua identità significando il passaggio di proprietà che è avvenuto tra il padre di lei e il marito.

Chi genera non ha la facoltà di attribuire ai figli il proprio nome: il diritto della donna è stato ambito da altri di cui è diventato il privilegio.

Ci costringono a rivendicare l'evidenza di un fatto naturale.

Riconosciamo nel matrimonio l'istituzione che ha subordinato la donna al destino maschile. Siamo contro il matrimonio.

Il divorzio è un innesto di matrimoni da cui l'istituzione esce rafforzata.

La trasmissione della vita, il rispetto della vita, il senso della vita sono esperienza intensa della donna e valori che lei rivendica.

Il primo elemento di rancore della donna verso la società sta nell'essere costretta ad affrontare la maternità come un aut-aut.

Denunciamo lo smaturamento di una maternità pagata al prezzo dell'esclusione.

La negazione della libertà dell'aborto rientra nel veto globale che viene fatto all'autonomia della donna.

Non vogliamo pensare alla maternità tutta la vita e continuare a essere inconsci strumenti del potere patriarcale.

La donna è stufo di allevare un figlio che le diventerà un cattivo amante.

In una libertà che si sente di affrontare, la donna libera anche il figlio, e il figlio è l'umanità.

In tutte le forme di convivenza, alimentare, pulire, accudire e ogni momento del vivere quotidiano devono essere gesti reciproci.

Per educazione e per mimesi l'uomo e la donna sono già nel ruolo nella primissima infanzia.

Riconosciamo il carattere mistificatorio di tutte le ideologie, perché attraverso le forme ragionate di potere (teologico, morale, filosofico, politico), hanno costretto l'umanità a una condizione inautentica, oppressa e consenziente.

Dietro ogni ideologia noi intravediamo la gerarchia dei sessi. Non vogliamo d'ora in poi tra noi e il mondo nessuno schermo.

Il femminismo è stato il primo momento politico di critica storica alla famiglia e alla società.

Unifichiamo le situazioni e gli episodi dell'esperienza storica femminista: in essa la donna si è manifestata interrompendo per la prima volta il monologo della civiltà patriarcale.

Non identifichiamo nel lavoro domestico non retribuito la prestazione che permette al capitalismo, privato e di stato, di sussistere.

Permetteremo ancora quello che di continuo si ripete al termine di ogni rivoluzione popolare quando la donna, che ha combattuto insieme con gli altri, si trova messa da parte con tutti i suoi problemi?

Detestiamo i meccanismi della competitività e il ricatto che viene esercitato nel mondo dalla egemonia dell'efficienza. Noi vogliamo mettere la nostra capacità lavorativa a disposizione di una società che ne sia immunitaria.

La guerra è stata sempre l'attività specifica del maschio e il suo modello di comportamento virile.

La parità di retribuzione è un nostro diritto, ma la nostra oppressione è un'altra cosa. Ci basta la parità salariale quando abbiamo già sulle spalle ore di lavoro domestico?

Riesaminiamo gli apporti creativi della donna alla comunità e sfatiamo il mito della sua laboriosità sussidiaria.

Dare alto valore ai momenti «improduttivi» è un'estensione di vita proposta dalla donna.

Chi ha il potere afferma: «Fa parte dell'eroticismo amare un essere inferiore». Mantenere lo status quo è dunque un suo atto di amore.

Accogliamo la libera sessualità in tutte le sue forme, perché abbiamo smesso di considerare la frigidità un'alternativa onorevole.

Continuare a regolamentare la vita fra i sessi è una necessità del potere: l'unica scelta soddisfacente è un rapporto libero.

Sono un diritto dei bambini e degli adolescenti la curiosità e i giochi sessuali.

Abbiamo guardato per 4000 anni: adesso abbiamo visto!

Alle nostre spalle sta l'apoteosi della millenaria supremazia maschile. Le religioni istituzionalizzate ne sono state il più ferreo piedistallo. E il concetto di «genio» ne ha costituito l'irraggiungibile gradino.

La donna ha avuto l'esperienza di vedere ogni giorno distrutto quello che faceva.

Consideriamo incompleta una storia che si è costituita sulle tracce non deperibili.

Nulla o male è stato tramandato dalla presenza della donna: sta a noi riscoprirlo per sapere la verità.

La civiltà ci ha definite inferiori, la Chiesa ci ha chiamate sesso, la psicanalisi ci ha tradite, il marxismo ci ha vendute alla rivoluzione ipotetica.

Chiediamo referenze di millenni di pensiero filosofico che ha teorizzato l'inferiorità della donna.

Della grande umiliazione che il mondo patriarcale ci ha imposto noi consideriamo responsabili i sistematici del pensiero: essi hanno mantenuto il principio della donna come essere agnitivo per la riproduzione della umanità, legame con la divinità o soglia del mondo animale; sfera privata e pietosa. Hanno giustificato nella metafisica ciò che era ingiusto e atroce nella vita della donna.

Sputiamo su Hegel.

La dialettica servo-padrone è una regolazione di conti tra collettivi di uomini: essa non prevede la liberazione della donna, il grande oppresso della civiltà patriarcale.

La lotta di classe, come teoria rivoluzionaria sviluppata dalla dialettica servo-padrone, ugualmente esclude la donna. Noi rimettiamo in discussione il socialismo e la dittatura del proletariato.

Non riconoscendoci nella cultura maschile, la donna le toglie l'illusione dell'universalità.

L'uomo ha sempre parlato a nome del genere umano, ma metà della popolazione terrestre lo accusa ora di aver sublimato una mutilazione.

La forza dell'uomo è nel suo identificarsi con la cultura, la mostra nel rifiutarla.

Dopo questo atto di coscienza l'uomo sarà distinto dalla donna e dovrà ascoltare da lei tutto quello che la concerne.

Non salterà il mondo se l'uomo non avrà più l'equilibrio psicologico basato sulla nostra sottomissione.

Nella coesente realtà di un universo che non ha mai svelato i suoi segreti, noi togliamo molto del credito dato agli accanimenti della cultura. Vogliamo essere all'altezza di un universo senza risposte.

Noi cerchiamo l'autenticità del gesto di rivolta e non la sacrificheremo né all'organizzazione né al proselitismo.

Roma, luglio 1970.

COMUNICHIAMO SOLO CON DONNE



Carla Accardi, *Triplice tenda (Dreifaches Zelt)*, 1969–1971
Farbe auf Sicofoil, Plexiglasrahmen, 271 x 451 cm
Ausstellungsansicht *Women House*, Monnaie de Paris, 2017

Manifest von Rivolta femminile, Rom, 1970



Heresies #1
Feminism, Art and Politics

Vol. 1, No. 1 Jan. 1977

[Download PDF](#)



Heresies #2
Patterns of Communication and Space Among Women

Vol. 1, No. 2 May 1977

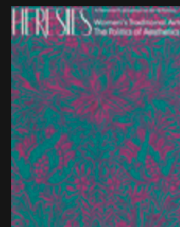
[Download PDF](#)



Heresies #3
Lesbian Art and Artists

Vol. 1, No. 3 Fall 1977

[Download PDF](#)



Heresies #4
Women's Traditional Arts – The Politics of Aesthetics

Vol. 1, No. 4 1978

[Download PDF](#)



Heresies #5
The Great Goddess

Vol. , No.

[Download PDF](#)



Heresies #6
On Women and Violence

Vol. 2, No. 2 Summer 1978

[Download PDF](#)



Heresies #7
Women Working Together

Vol. 2, No. 3 Spring 1979

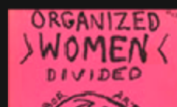
[Download PDF](#)



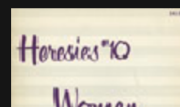
Heresies #8
Third World Women

Vol. 2, No. 4 1979

[Download PDF](#)



Heresies #9
Organized Women Divided



Heresies #10
Women and Music

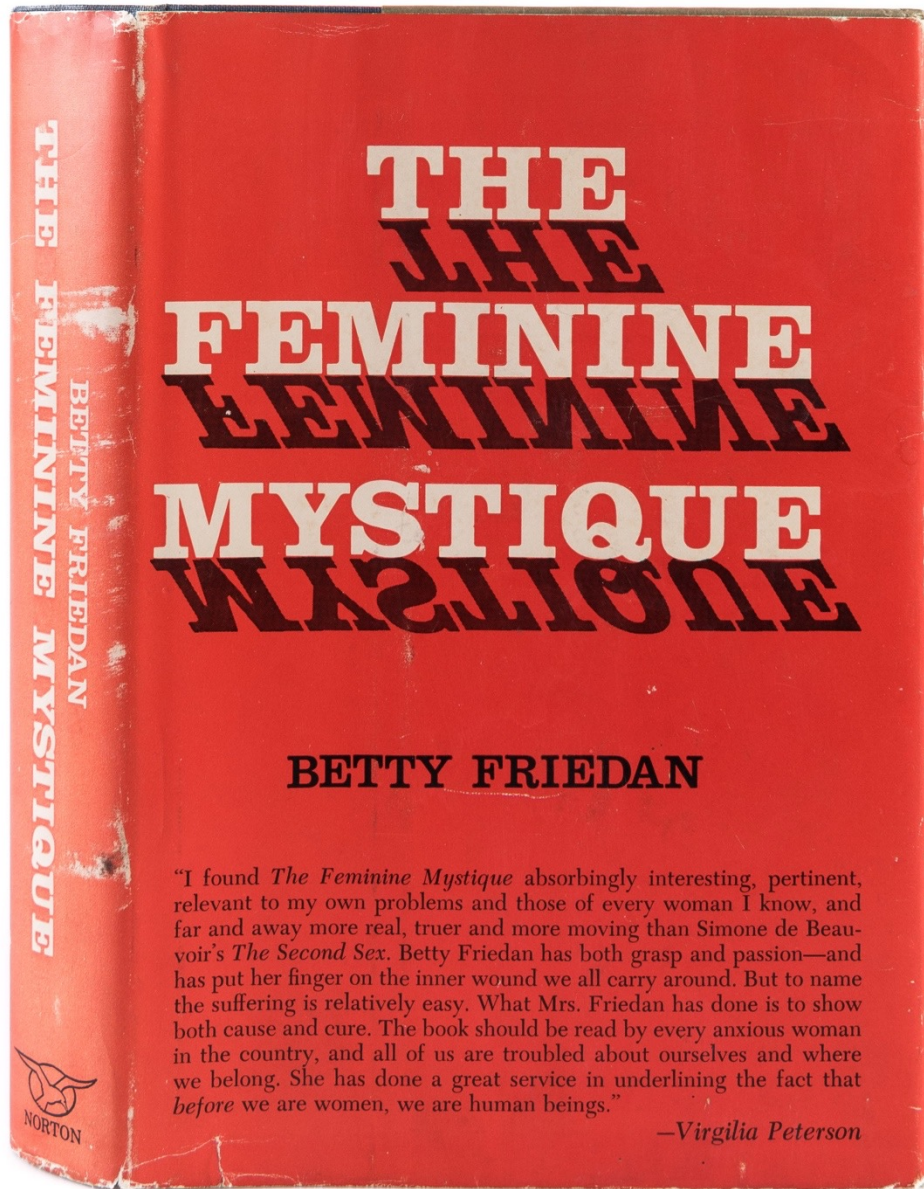
Vol. 3, No. 2 1980

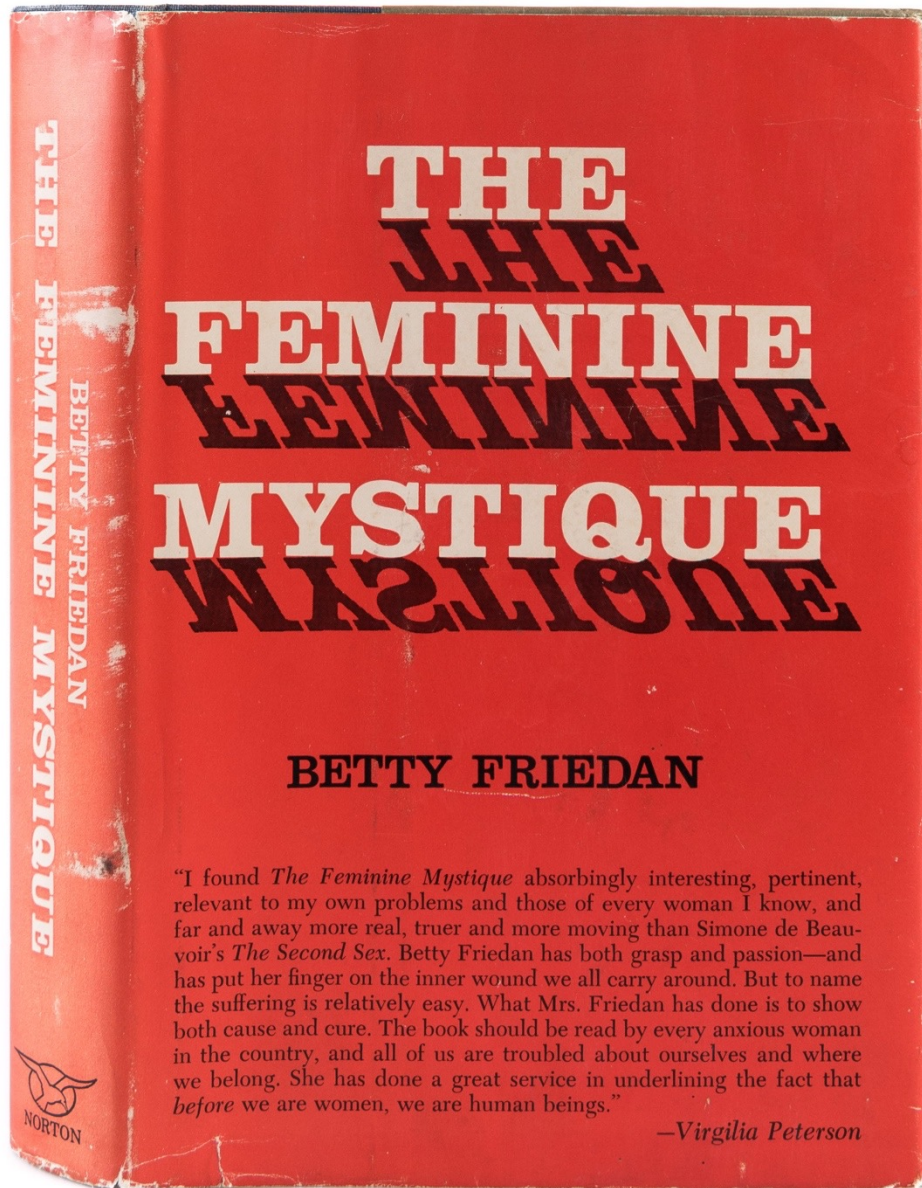


Katalog zur Ausstellung *Womanhouse*, Los Angeles, 1972



Sandy Orgel, *Linen Closet*, 1972, Ausstellungsansicht *Womanhouse*





«Friedan concludes her first chapter by stating: «We can no longer ignore that voice within women that says: I want something more than my husband and my children and my house». That «more» she defined as careers. **She did not discuss who would be called in to take care of the children and maintain the home if more women like herself were freed from their house labor and given equal access with white men to the professions. She did not speak of the needs of women without men, without children, without homes. She ignored the existence of all non-white women and poor white women.** She did not tell readers whether it was more fulfilling to be a maid, a babysitter, a factory worker, a clerk, or a prostitute than to be a leisure-class housewife.»

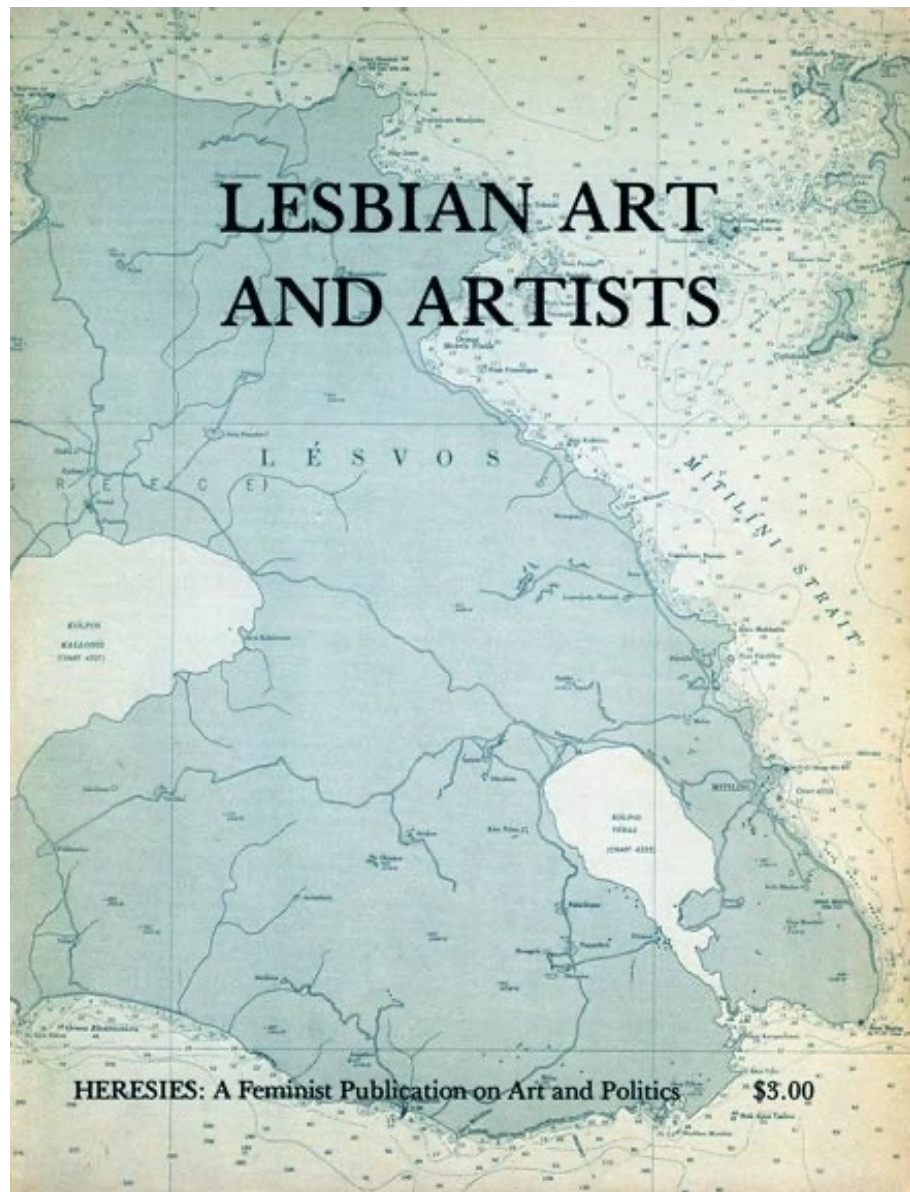
—bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, 1984



Katalog zur Ausstellung *Womanhouse*, Los Angeles, 1972



Katalog zur Ausstellung *Women House*, Paris, 2017/2018



Titelblatt von *Heresies* Nr. 3, «Lesbian Art and Artists», 1977 und Brief des Combahee River Collective an das Redaktionskollektiv, abgedruckt in *Heresies* Nr. 4, «Women's Traditional Arts» 1978

Dear Lesbian Issue Collective:

We appreciate all of the work the *Lesbian Arts and Artists* issue of *HERESIES* represents. We find it appalling, however, that a hundred years from now it will be possible for women to conclude that in 1977 there were no practicing Black and other Third World lesbian artists. It is not sufficient to explain such grievous omissions merely by stating: ". . . yet biases which informed our choices of material were certainly conditioned by the fact that we are all lesbians, white, college-educated, and mostly middle-class women who live in New York and have a background in the arts." Feminist and lesbian politics and creativity are not the exclusive property of white women.

We would like to know if any of the hundreds of contributors you had to choose from were Third World women and if so to know more specifically the basis on which their work was rejected.

We look forward to your response.

THE COMBAHEE RIVER COLLECTIVE
SECOND BLACK FEMINIST RETREAT

November 4, 5 and 6, 1977

Cessie Alfonso	Somerset, N.J.
Lorraine Bethel	Cambridge, Mass.
Gwendolyn Braxton	Chicago, Ill.
Camille Bristow	Bronxville, N.Y.
Margie Butler	Plainfield, N.J.
Nivea Castro-Figueroa	Dorchester, Mass.
Cheryl Clarke	New Brunswick, N.J.
Charley B. Flint	Edison, N.J.
Domita Frazier	Dorchester, Mass.
Cecelia B. Homberg	Sunderland, Mass.
Gloria T. Hull	Newark, Del.
Bonnie Johnson	New York, N.Y.
Audre Lorde	Staten Island, N.Y.
Carroll Oliver	New York, N.Y.
Linda C. Powell	New York, N.Y.
Sharon Page Ritchie	Chicago, Ill.
Barbara Smith	Roxbury, Mass.
Beverly Smith	Cambridge, Mass.



Das Combahee River Collective im Jahr 1974, von links nach rechts oben: Margo Okazawa-Rey, Barbara Smith, Beverly Smith, Chirlane McCray und Mercedes Tompkins, unten: Demita Frazier und Helen Stewart

«The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are **actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression** and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that **the major systems of oppression are interlocking**. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives.»

—The Combahee River Collective, «A Black Feminist Statement», 1977

«Although we are feminists and lesbians, **we feel solidarity with progressive black men** and do not advocate the fractionalization that white women who are separatists demand. Our situation as black people necessitates that we have solidarity around the fact of race, which white women of course do not need to have with white men, unless it is their negative solidarity as racial oppressors. **We struggle together with black men against racism, while we also struggle with black men about sexism.»**

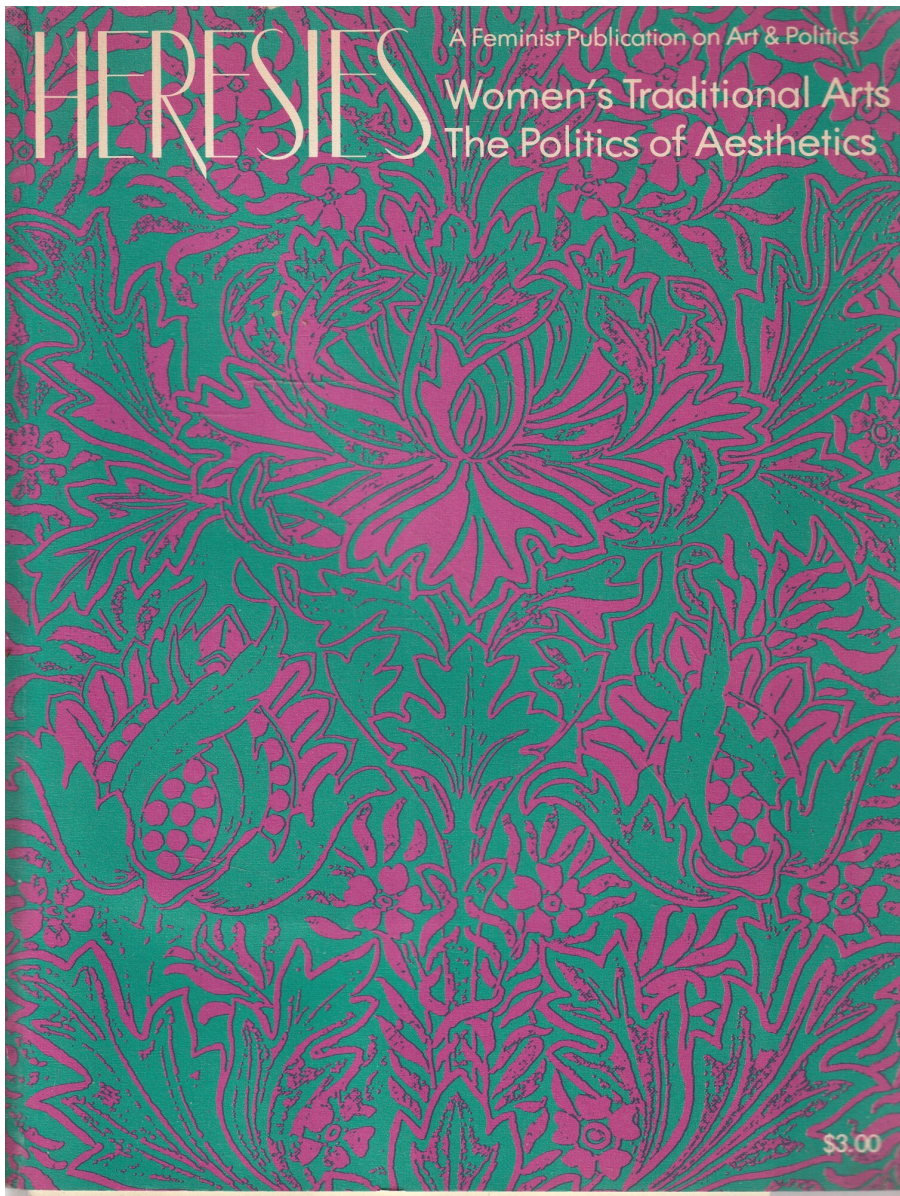
—The Combahee River Collective, «A Black Feminist Statement», 1977

«We have a great deal of criticism and loathing for **what men have been socialized to be in this society**: what they support, how they act, and how they oppress. But we do not have the misguided notion that it is their maleness, per se—i.e., their biological maleness—that makes them what they are. As black women we find **any type of biological determinism a particularly dangerous and reactionary basis** upon which to build a politic.»

—The Combahee River Collective, «A Black Feminist Statement», 1977

«One issue that is of major concern to us and that we have begun to publicly address is **racism in the white women's movement**. As black feminists we are made constantly and painfully aware of how little effort white women have made to understand and combat their racism, which requires among other things that they have a more than superficial comprehension of race, color, and black history and culture. **Eliminating racism in the white women's movement is by definition work for white women to do, but we will continue to speak to and demand accountability on this issue.**»

—The Combahee River Collective, «A Black Feminist Statement», 1977



Antwort des Redaktionskollektivs von *Heresies* Nr. 3, «Lesbian Art and Artists», 1977, abgedruckt in *Heresies* Nr. 4, «Women's Traditional Arts» 1978

Dear Combahee River Collective:

Although we did not systematically exclude Third World women from the Lesbian Issue of *HERESIES*, we did participate in a kind of passive exclusion. The editorial collective that formed was all white. Our knowledge of the Third World artist or lesbian community was limited. By not making a concerted effort to contact Third World Lesbian artists we became an only too typical all-white group operating in a racist society.

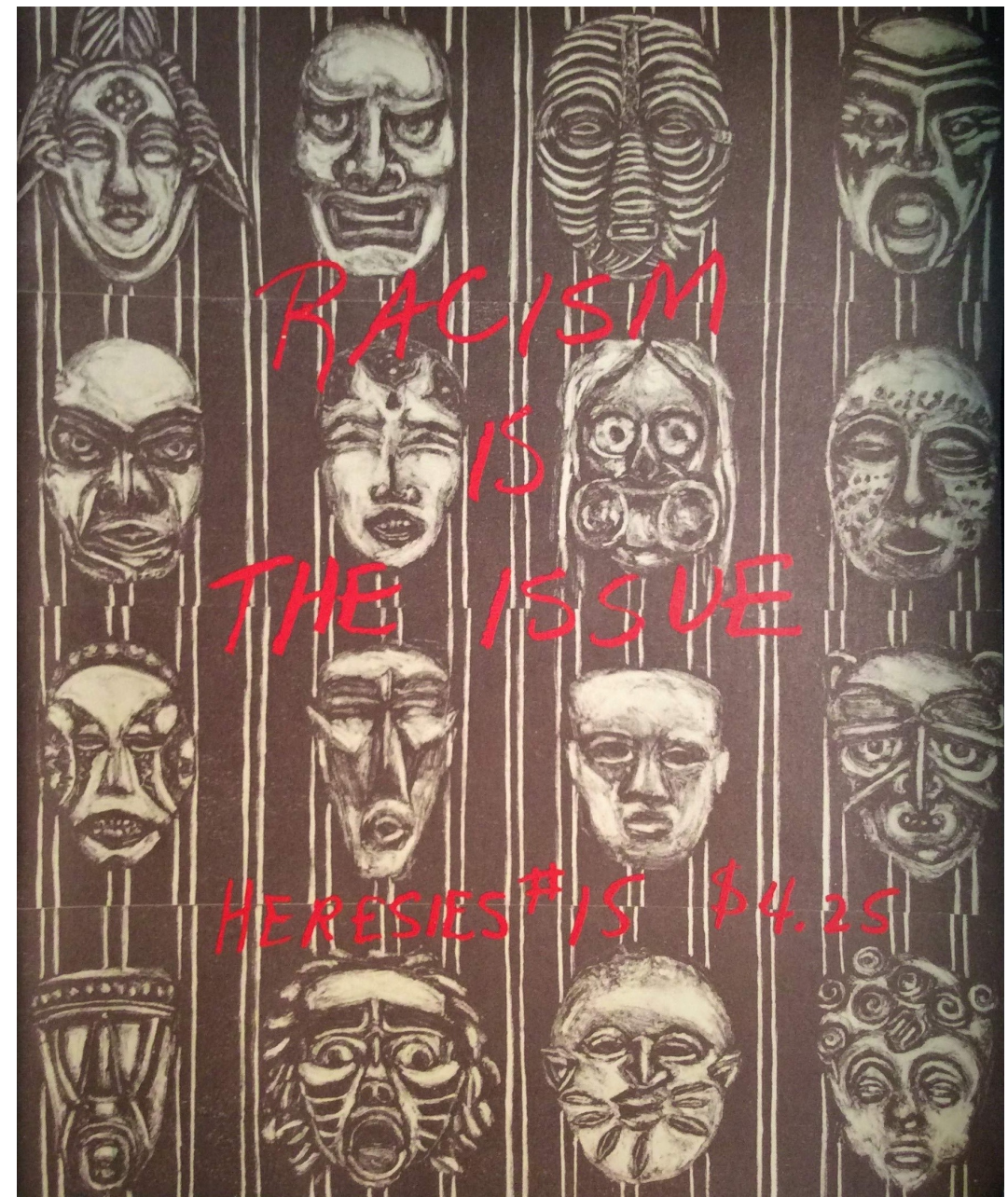
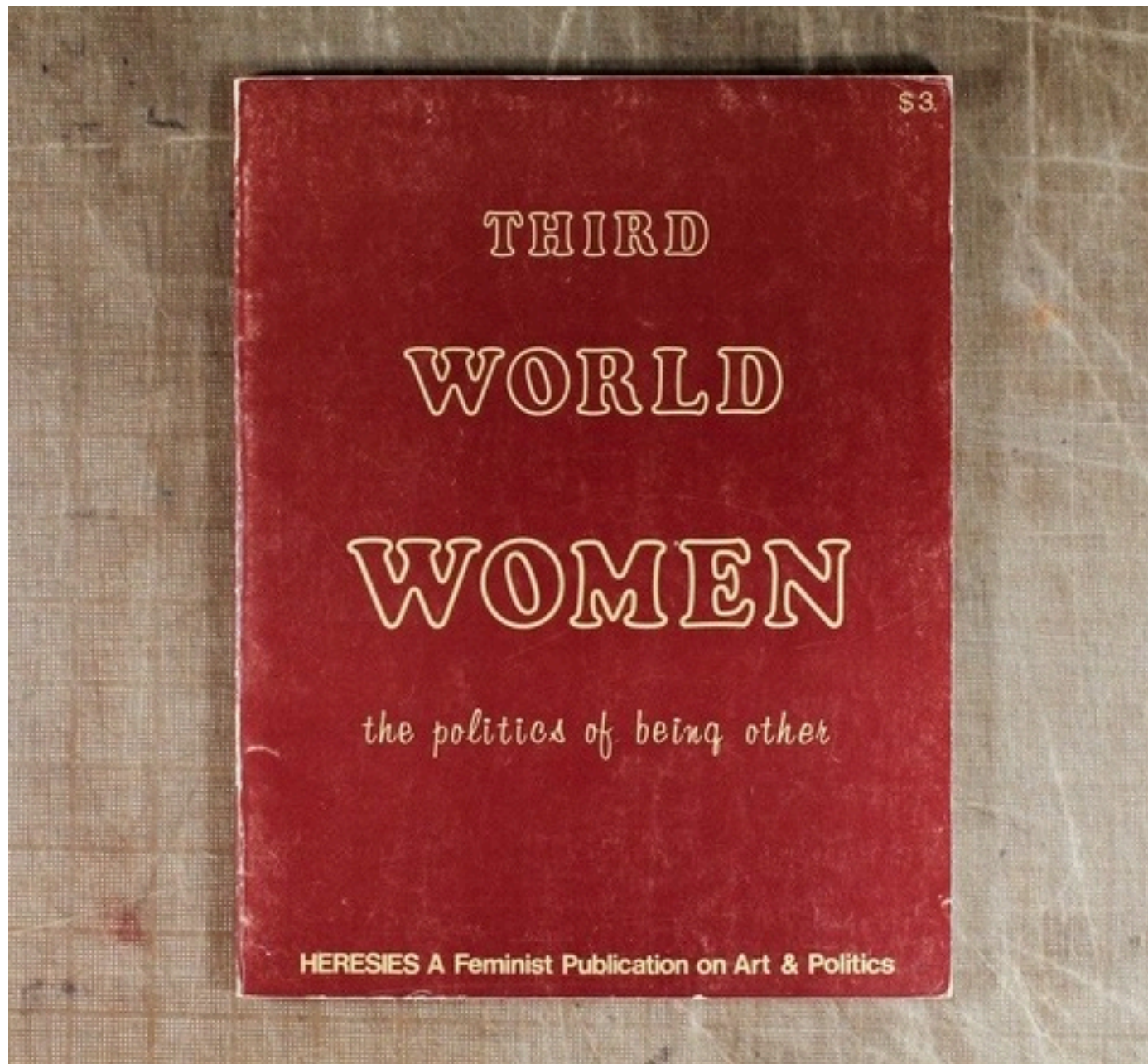
The inclusion of Third World contributions was based on the same criteria applied to all work submitted to the issue. We don't know exactly how many Black and other Third World women submitted work, but we received nothing that specifically dealt with being a non-white lesbian artist or which spoke from an identifiably non-white position. As far as we know, the work of only one Third World woman was included in the issue. It is probable that we didn't receive much work from Third World women.

HERESIES has had a similar problem with every issue. Most of the editors and contributors have been white women. As you may know, each issue of *HERESIES* is edited by a different group of women. Each issue is thematic and any women with an interest in that particular topic is welcome to work on the issue. We hope that, increasingly, Third World women will want to participate in issues of their choice.

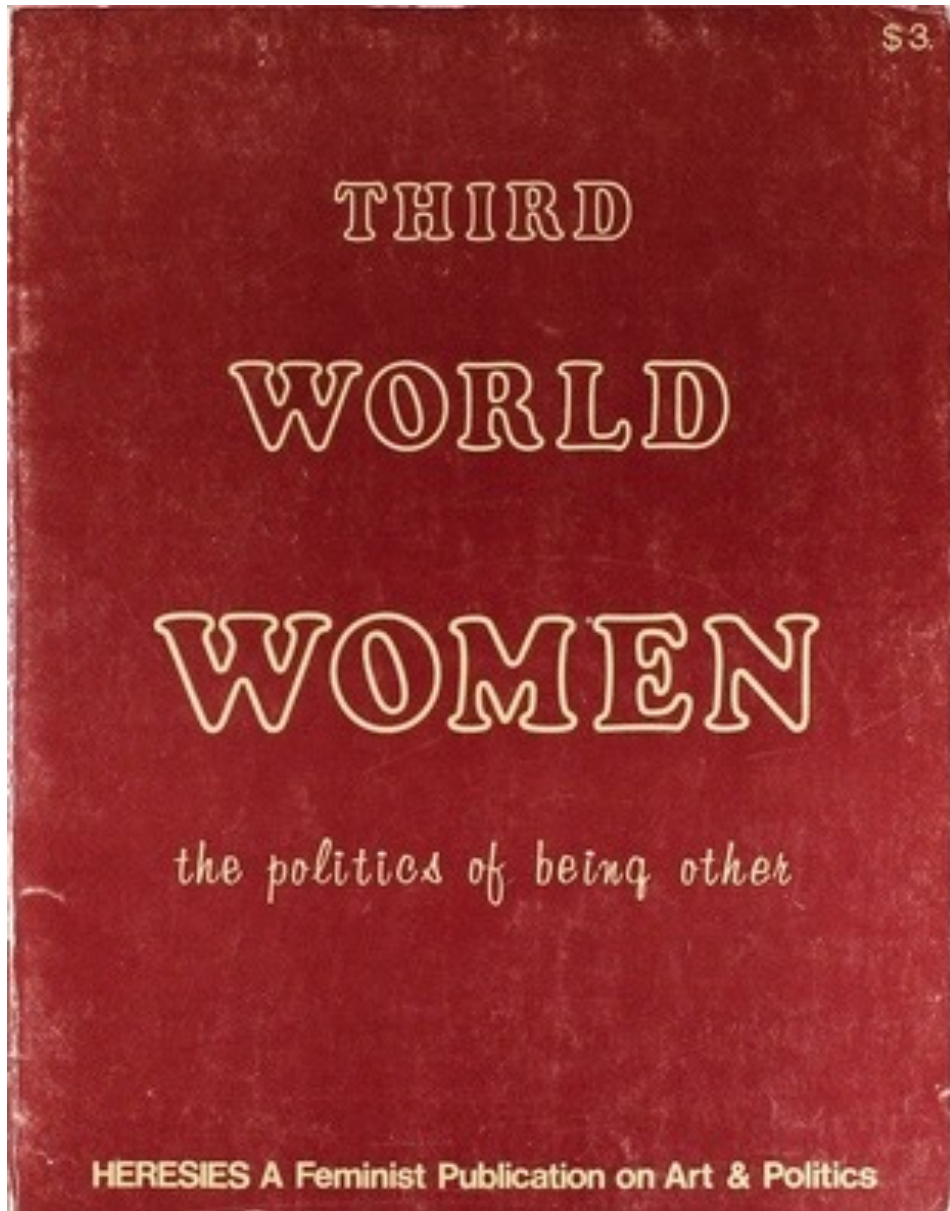
Also, though we haven't done this yet, if a group of women approaches us with a proposal for an issue they want to put out themselves, we will consider giving an entire issue to them to produce. A group of women who are already organized, such as the Combahee Collective, might want to do an issue devoted to Black and other Third World artists. In this way we can begin to extend our publication to speak for many feminists who have not been well represented so far.

As you pointed out, however, it is *HERESIES*' responsibility to continue to print work by and about minority women (including Third World women, lesbian women, etc.) in each issue to avoid tokenism.

We hope this information and your letter will encourage a greater effort on the part of both *HERESIES* editorial collectives and Third World women to enter into an exchange.

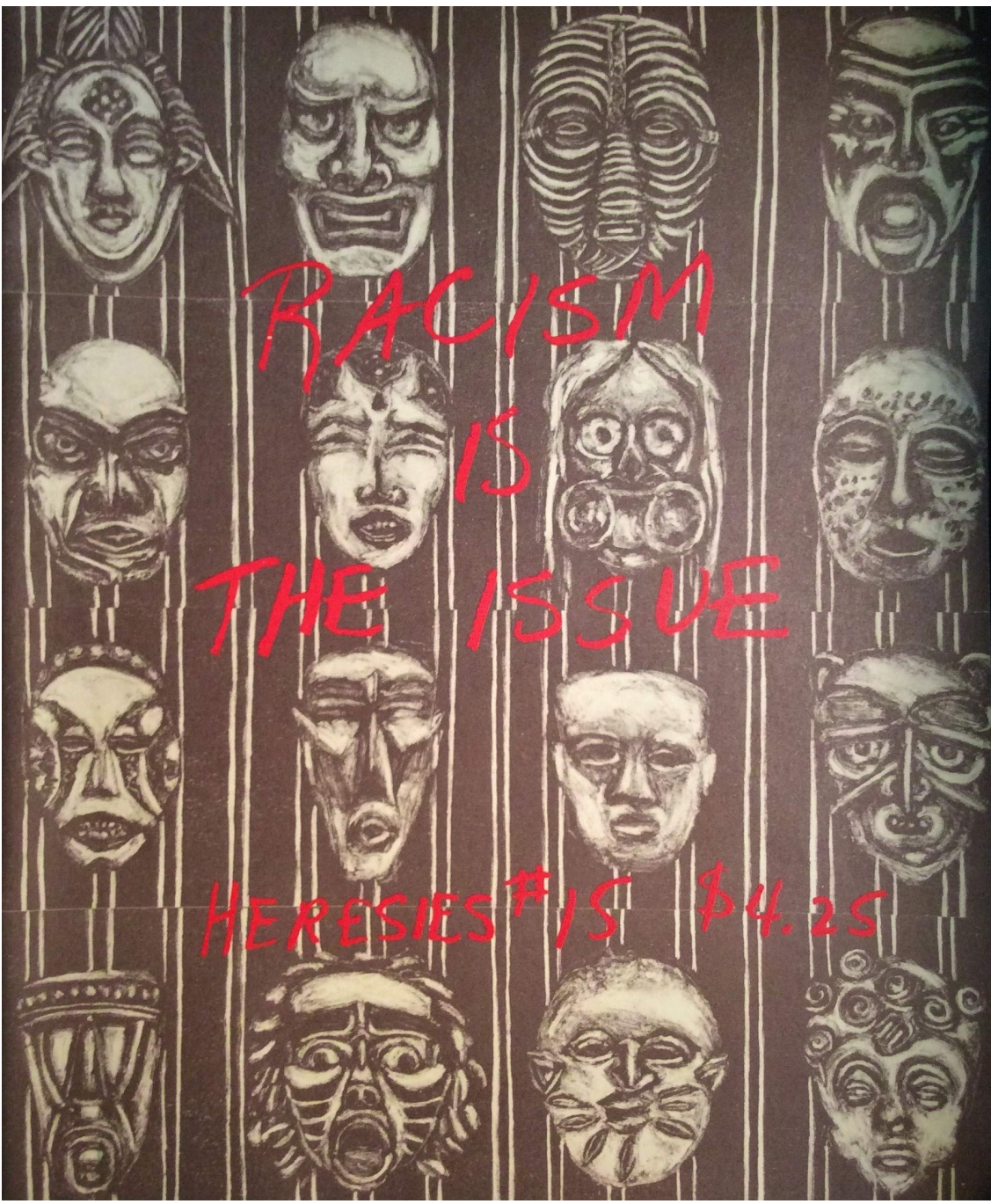


Titelblätter von *Heresies* Nr. 8, «Third World Women», 1979 und *Heresies* Nr. 15, «Racism is the Issue», 1982



«To describe who we are is exciting. We are painters, poets, educators, multi-media artists, students, ship-builders, sculptors, playwrights, photographers, socialists, craftswomen, wives, mothers and lesbians. In the beginning we were Asian-American, Black, Jamaican, Ecuadorian, Indian (from New Delhi) and Chicana; foreign-born, first-generation, second-generation and here forever. **We are all of these and this is extremely hard to define.** The phrase Third World has its roots in the post-World War II economic policies of the United Nations, but today it is a euphemism. We use it knowing it implies people of color, non-white and, most of all, <other>. **Third World women are *other* than the majority and the power-holding class, and we have concerns *other* than those of white feminists, white artists and men.»**

—Stellungnahme des Redaktionskollektivs von *Heresies* Nr. 8, «Third World Women», 1979



Issue 15 Editorial Collective: Vivian E. Browne, Cynthia Carr, Michele Godwin, Hattie Gossett, Carole Gregory, Sue Heinemann, Lucy R. Lippard, May Stevens, Cecilia Vicuña, Sylvia Witts Vitale.

ISSUE 15 EDITORIAL STATEMENT (From Taped Conversation, October 21, 1982)

So what's the point of a collective statement? What do we want it to say? (S.H.)

Well, it's not an individual statement. What I could do with another Black woman is totally different from what I can say in a collective statement. (S.W.V.)

The point of this is what we say to each other. Let's talk about what were our expectations when we joined the group. (M.S.)

When I arrived from Boston the Heresies Collective was working on the Third World Women's issue. That was apparently a very difficult issue and the word that got back to me from Black feminists was the Heresies Collective is a group of racist white women. . . . Then I read some of the issues and articles and I really liked the material. I had an article in the next issue, and decided to come to a meeting for this one. I was really happy to see so many different women. I know a lot of people from different countries, but this was a chance to focus on women. This was so different. We put in so much hard work. We tried to be so fair and listened to each other's experiences. Yet I am still shocked at the way white American women discuss racism. So many of the manuscripts we got talked about white women and sex with Black men. Sexual contact was always the starting point, which is not how I see racism at all. If we're talking about feminism, we're talking about women, so they're only interacting with me, a Black woman, through their sexual image of Black men. Perhaps this is one major barrier. I don't think about white men at all when I think about white women. Fortunately nobody here in the collective did that; it was just in the manuscripts. (C.G.)

Part of the experience is the way the women in this collective looked at that material and reacted to it. (S.H.)

Yeah, we were OK. (C.G.)

It wasn't nearly as bad as I thought it would be, based on the stories I had heard from other women of color about working with "those racist white girls at Heresies." Not that both white girls and colored girls don't have a lot of learning and growing to do. (H.G.)

Being on the racism issue—it was an experience. Hearing these people argue about something that's so important when you usually don't hear about it. You may read about it, but you usually don't hear other people talking about it, unless you bring it up. (M.G.)

Carole, you say now you can talk to white women? (V.B.)

Not in general, only the women in this collective. (C.G.)

So you felt some need to make some kind of contact? Was it satisfied? (V.B.)

I don't really like to make contact with white people. (C.G.)

But you came here. (V.B.)

I didn't see the racism issue as just white people, but many women coming from many backgrounds to discuss the subject. Like at work you can not discuss racism with white people. (C.G.)

Has this experience changed your approach to white people? Affected your attitudes in any way? (V.B.)

That's hard to answer. I don't want to dismiss our work. . . . We needed to form a study group to define racism. Then, we would have had a common language. I felt that one of the stories we published is a racist piece. To refer to the West Indies as "bush" and to quote a Harlemite expressing hatred of whites are negative symbols about Black people. The Nigerian author, Chinua Achebe, has asked white authors to refrain from creating more works like Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" in which Africans are degraded. However, no one agreed with my interpretation of the piece. Had I not solicited manuscripts from Alice Walker and other women, I would have resigned from this collective on racism. Unconscious and conscious racist imagery hurts. (C.G.)

This short-term process might not produce anything. I see that in the classrooms when I talk about racism. . . . You might see a little bit of opening up. (S.W.V.)

A little bit of opening up is a miracle. (M.S.)

Here you had the Civil Rights Movement, you are always aware of the years of struggle between Black and white. But in Latin America, particularly in Chile where I come from, racism is simply not discussed. So I had never had the opportunity to think about racism in relation to my own experience. It was a fantastic thing to think in those terms with Black and white women. My experience in this capital of the world is that whatever art my Latin friends do, it's ignored by the mainstream. It does not exist, or it's "ethnic." Which is why I got out the issue of ethnocentrism. And I realized nobody in this collective shared this thing with me. I was disappointed that everybody said this issue is about racism and nobody was willing to go to a more general, a more cultural and ideological issue. Nobody was willing to go from the emotional level of personal experiences about racism to the more philosophical level. . . . So I adapted! (C.V.)

I remember those early meetings being very exciting, when there were Asian and other Latin women in the group too. A new experience for me too. Before that I had worked on racism in a group of all-white feminists. I think I was afraid, at first, of working with women of color on this issue but I decided I wanted to do it anyway. Afraid, I guess, that I'd unpeel new horrible layers of my own racism. Instead this was a really wonderful experience. I think I've become much more aware of racism. . . . There are shortcomings in the issue, like the lack of input from Native American women, but in general I'm proud of it. If racism is going to change, white people will have to do something to make it change. I think what we did here will be a tool for that change. What I discovered was just that simple step—that you don't just say, "Oh it's all so horrible," but that you can do something about it. (C.V.)

Me too. Another thing I got out of the whole process was a deepened sense of the complexity of racism in the U.S., how it's affected by elements of class, education, degree of color, all that. And the intense ambivalence even the most positive women of color have toward the kind of work we've been doing, and the psychological and historical roots of that ambivalence. (L.R.L.)

Working together you see how people feel and see. A lot of times white people aren't aware that we're being racist. We don't really understand how it's understood. A lot of the racism that goes on is unintentional, unconscious. It's really important to work together to undo that. . . . Misunderstanding only gets corrected when there's a chance to understand. (S.H.) I've had white women—friends—try to talk to me about racism and tell me they just don't know what to say about racism because they're not involved. I just couldn't believe that. The problem doesn't exist. (V.B.)

That's what I meant about Latin America. People are very ready to discuss class struggle because class struggle is a term that comes from European culture that everybody shares, so this is OK. But to go beyond that conception or even discuss the implications—like racism—it's awkward. The subject of the Indians in Chile was usually treated as a problem of class struggle, not a cultural or religious difference. We have to question to what extent we've been conditioned by all this miseducation we've received. I worried about the narrowness of the experiences that were submitted. Most of the articles in this issue are individualized, separated experiences—"I felt this, you felt that." But we also have to put together our own experiences of racism with what's going on in the world, to reach a more general concept of global racism. It's the American situation. If this collective were in Latin America, we would have arrived at a totally different conclusion because we are marginal. We're always aware of the global situation because we have to be. (C.V.)

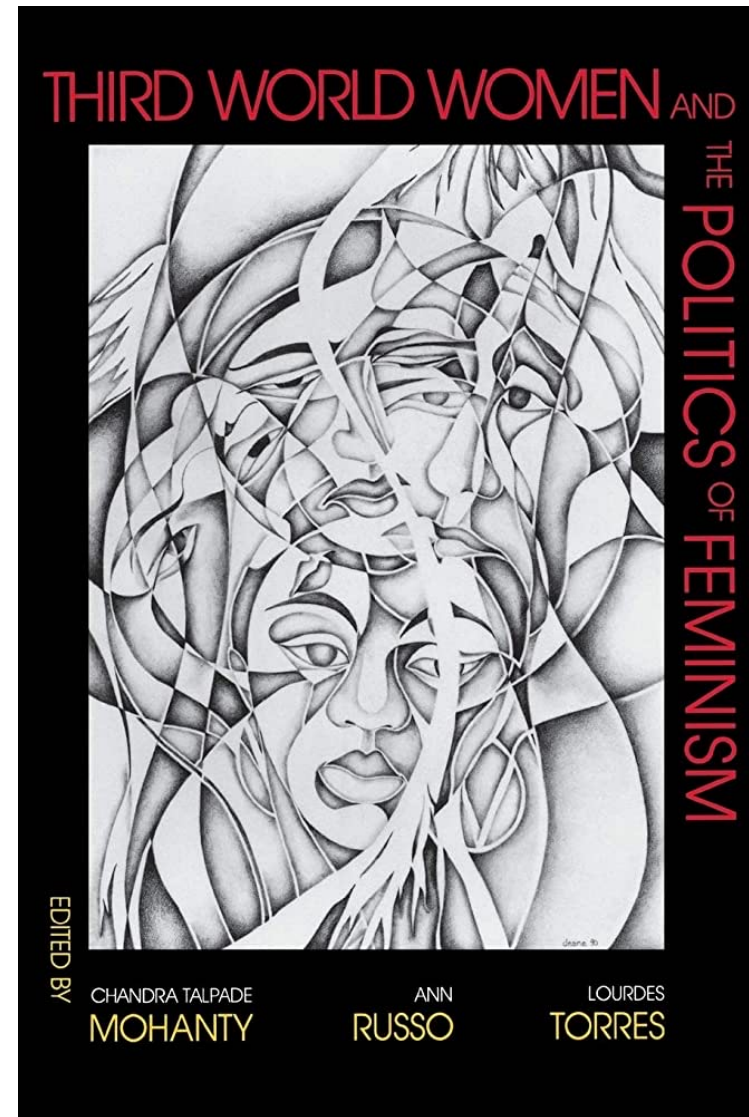
This issue of Heresies is on the situation of racism in the U.S. today. It represents who we are and what we're concerned with, and how far we could go. (M.S.)

We do need to put discussion on an intellectual plane at some point, but I do not necessarily agree that the word "ethnocentrism" for this country is on an intellectual plane. I still insist that for us here that's a cop-out. When you say how you are not chosen by the art world because it centers on here, that puts another meaning on ethnocentrism which has nothing to do with racism. It does have to do with peripheral vision. I insist on calling racism racism, a spade a spade (laughter). That's what it is and you cannot take it and water it down. I'm not saying that your relation to the word is a watering down for you, but this country has gone through so much shit, and to come up with another name on top of the shit is to say it did not happen to us. All these personal little things make up this country. (V.B.)

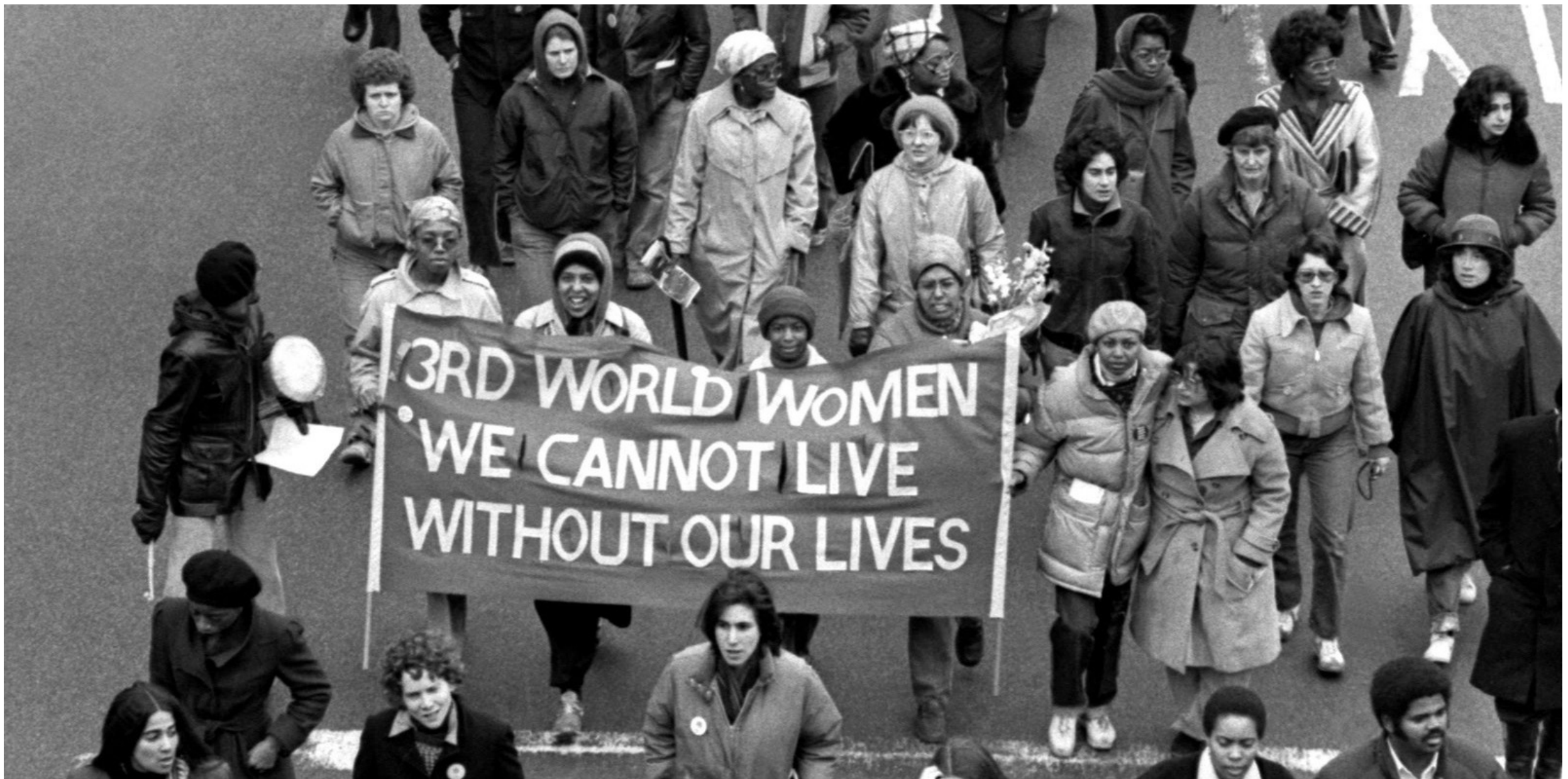
(continued on inside back cover)

Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art & Politics is published Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall by Heresies Collective, Inc. 225 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012. Subscription rates: \$15 for four issues; \$24 for institutions. Outside the U.S. and Canada, add \$2 postage. Single copies: \$5 each (current issue), \$6 (back issues). Address all correspondence to: Heresies, PO Box 766, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. Heresies, ISSN 0145-3411. Vol. 4, No. 3, Issue 15. ©1982, Heresies Collective, Inc. All rights reserved.

Cover drawing by Michele Godwin.



Titelblätter von *Third World Women's Alliance*, Bd. 1, Nr. 1, September–Oktober 1971 und *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, hrsg. von Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Russo und Lourdes Torres, 1991



Mitglieder des Combahee River Collective marschieren bei einer Gedenkveranstaltung für ermordete Schwarze Frauen in Boston, 1979. Foto: Ellen Shub

SELF-PROTECTION

- Do not accept rides from strangers.
- Do not get into unlicensed cab services or cabs with 2 people in the driver's seat.
- Lock your car doors at all times. Check back seat before entering.
- Lock your house door at all times, make sure all windows are locked.
- Vary your route to and from home. Stay on well-lit main streets. Avoid side streets and alleys.
- Travel in pairs or groups.
- Learn some simple self-defense like how to get out of a hold or how to use available objects as weapons: comb, keys, hair brush, lighted cigarette, edge of book, whistles, nail, red/black pepper.
- Always have your keys ready in your hand so you enter your house.
- Let someone know where you are at all times and your planned route. Phone ahead to your destination.
- Get to know your neighbors on your street. Keep an eye out for each other. Make an effort.
- If you hear someone in distress, don't ignore it. If you can't safely investigate, call 911.
- Call your local hotline number at 445-1111 if you need to talk or if you have information.
- If you feel like you are being followed... check first—change directions, then REACT... Stay calm, change your pace, cross street, walk next to curb or in middle of street against the traffic... DO NOT GO HOME, the attacker will follow... run to the nearest lighted place.
- Yell FIRE! if someone is attacking you, people are more likely to come to your aid, than if you call "help".
- Encourage your friends to take these precautions.

Wear shoes and clothes you can easily run in.

This pamphlet can be reproduced without permission.

RESOURCES

Weekly neighborhood meetings organizing against the recent murders.

CRISIS
HERBERT THOMAS HOUSE 445-1111
 7:00 WEDNESDAY EVENING
 560 Columbus Ave.
 Boston (South End)
 530-8510

WOMEN COMMUNITY CTR.
 719-2121
 189 WASHINGTON ST.
 10th Floor
 021-1011

Community organizations providing services in connection with the recent violence.

WOMEN CTR. 442-5566
 (Providing a network & information clearing house for all the groups working on the recent murders.)

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
 421-1987 SOCIAL
 ASSISTANT (C.P.A. & A.)
 442-9603
 (Services for pre-venting rape, support for women who have been assaulted.)

Other organizations working against & providing services for violence against women.

GARY WOMEN 442-2222
 252-9591
 (Temporary shelter for women and their children in crisis.)

TRANSITION HOUSE
 661-7283 24 hours
 (Temporary shelter for battered women and their children.)

ELIZABETH STONE HOUSE
 522-9417
 (Temporary refuge for women in emotional crisis.)

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT
 492-0120
 (Organizers of August 25, 1983 march against violence against women. Further work is in the planning stages.)

AASO: ALLIANCE AGAINST SEXUAL COERCION
 442-0329
 (Information and services for women who are sexually harassed at the workplace.)

266-43059
 (South End)
 (Provides information concerning domestic violence and violence against women.)

Domestic Violence and Technical Assistance Project

266-43059

(South End)

(Provides information concerning domestic violence and violence against women.)

Dorchester WOMEN'S HOUSE
 442-4910
 (Building a safe-house network where women can go to feel safe and become seen in danger on the streets.)

BLACKSTONE COMMUNITY CENTER 252-2192
 (Classes in self-defense.)

WOMEN'S RESOURCE MULTI-SERVICE CTR.
 445-1111

JAMAICA PLAIN BATTERED WOMEN'S TASK FORCE
 544-9205 9AM to 1PM
 Monday thru Friday
 (Assistance for battered women.)

WOMEN INC. 442-6105
 (Incidental drug program for women and their children.)

ROSDEN AREA BAPTIST CENTER 492-8432
 (Information, counseling, support services.)

WYMAN WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
 c/o The Cambridge Women's Center 351-6907
 (Organizing against pornography, violence in the media.)

EMERGE
 267-7690
 (Men's counseling service on domestic violence.)

ELEVEN

~~SIX~~ BLACK WOMEN

~~87~~ WHY DID

THEY DIE?



This pamphlet was prepared by the Combahee River Collective, a Boston Black Feminist Organization (c/o AASC, P.O. Box 1, Cambridge, MA 02139.) It was created for Third World women. If you are not a Third World woman, please read it and share it with Third World women.

ELEVEN BLACK WOMEN

WHY DID THEY DIE?



This pamphlet was prepared by the Combahee River Collective, a Boston Black Feminist Organization (c/o AASC, P.O. Box 1, Cambridge, MA 02139.) It was created for Third World Women. If you are not a Third World woman, please read it and share it with Third World women.



Auf einer Veranstaltung Ende April 1979 protestiert Barbara Smith, Mitglied des Combahee River Collective, mit einem Megaphon gegen neun Morde an Schwarze Frauen, die in den ersten Monaten des Jahres verübt wurden. Foto: Ellen Shub.

«We might use our position at the bottom [...] to make a clear leap into revolutionary action. **If black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free** since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression.»

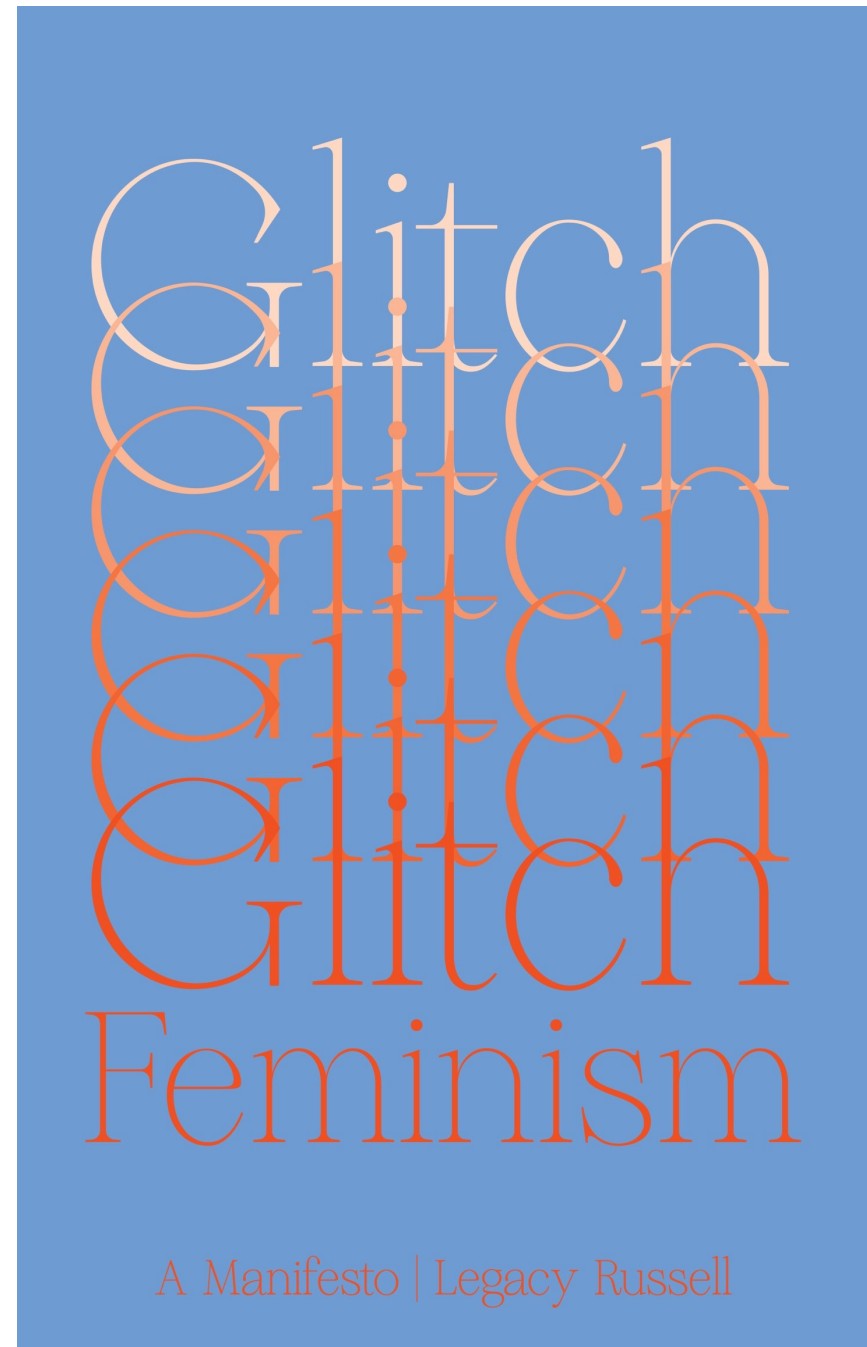
—The Combahee River Collective, «A Black Feminist Statement», 1977

«[W]omen are a political category neither spontaneously nor in themselves. What justifies a reappropriation of the term <feminism> is that its theories and practices are rooted in the awareness of a profound, concrete, daily experience of oppression produced by the state–patriarchy–capital matrix, which manufactures the category of <women> to legitimize policies of reproduction and assignment, both of which are racialized. **Decolonial feminisms do not aim to improve the existing system but to combat all forms of oppression: justice for women means justice for all.**»

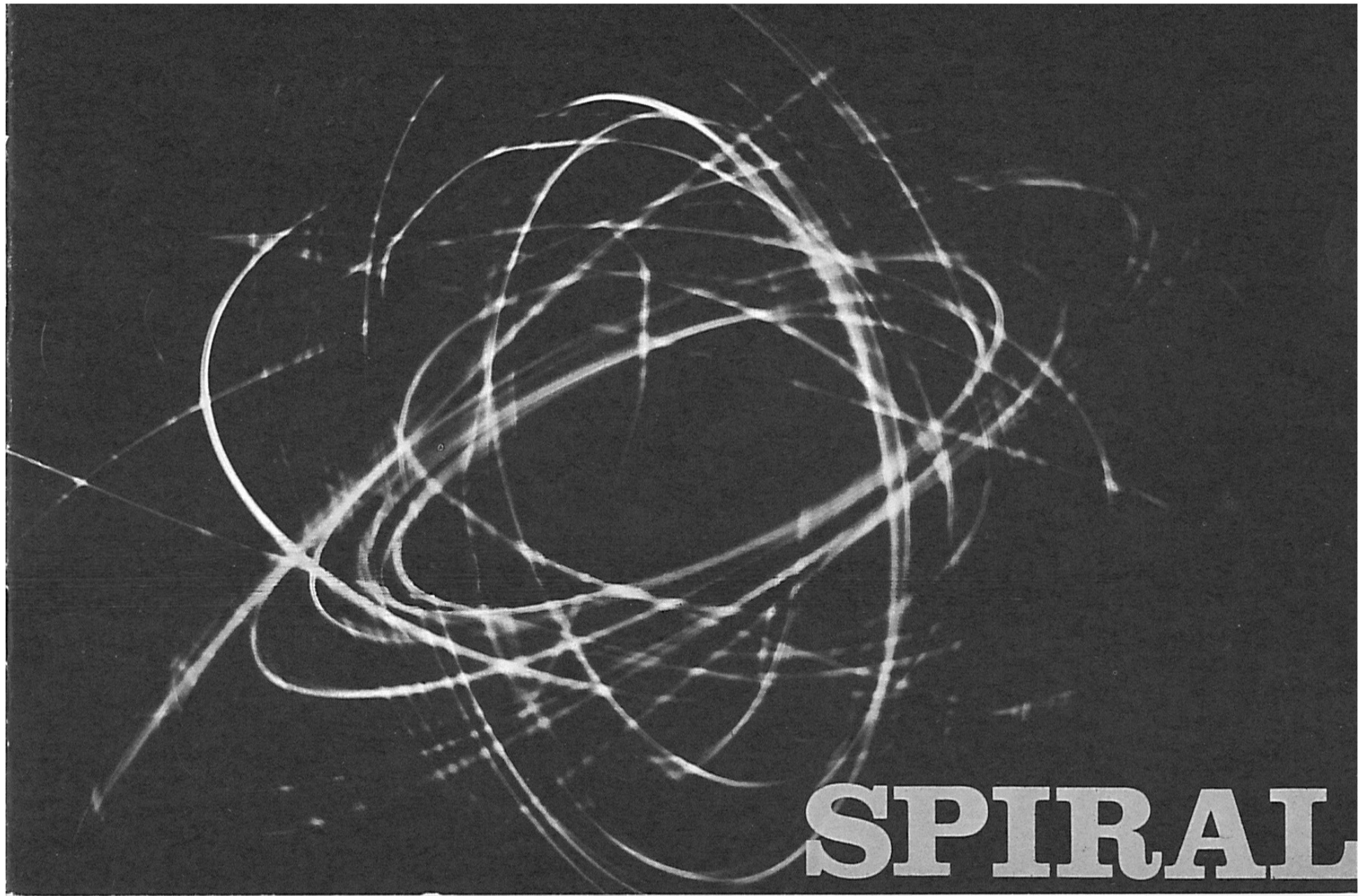
—Françoise Vergès, *A Decolonial Feminism*, 2021

«Feminist ‹sisterhood› toward the purpose of increasing white range and amplified social, cultural, economic mobility, is an exercise in service of supremacy—for *white women only*. This is the ugly side of the movement: one where we acknowledge that while feminism is a challenge to power, not everyone has always been on the same page about who that power is for and how it should be used as a means of progress. *Progress for whom?* Thus, **American abolitionist, women’s right activist, and freed slave Sojourner Truth’s question ‹Ain’t I a woman?› asked in 1851 continues to be painfully resonant even today**, surfacing the ever-urgent reality of who is brought into the definition of womanhood and, via extension, who is truly recognized as being fully human.»

—Legacy Russell, *Glitch Feminism*, 2020



Von Spiral zum Black Arts Movement



Cover des Katalogs zur Ausstellung der Gruppe Spiral, *First Group Showing: Works in Black and White*, 1965



Freedom Now

Reginald Gammon

Untitled

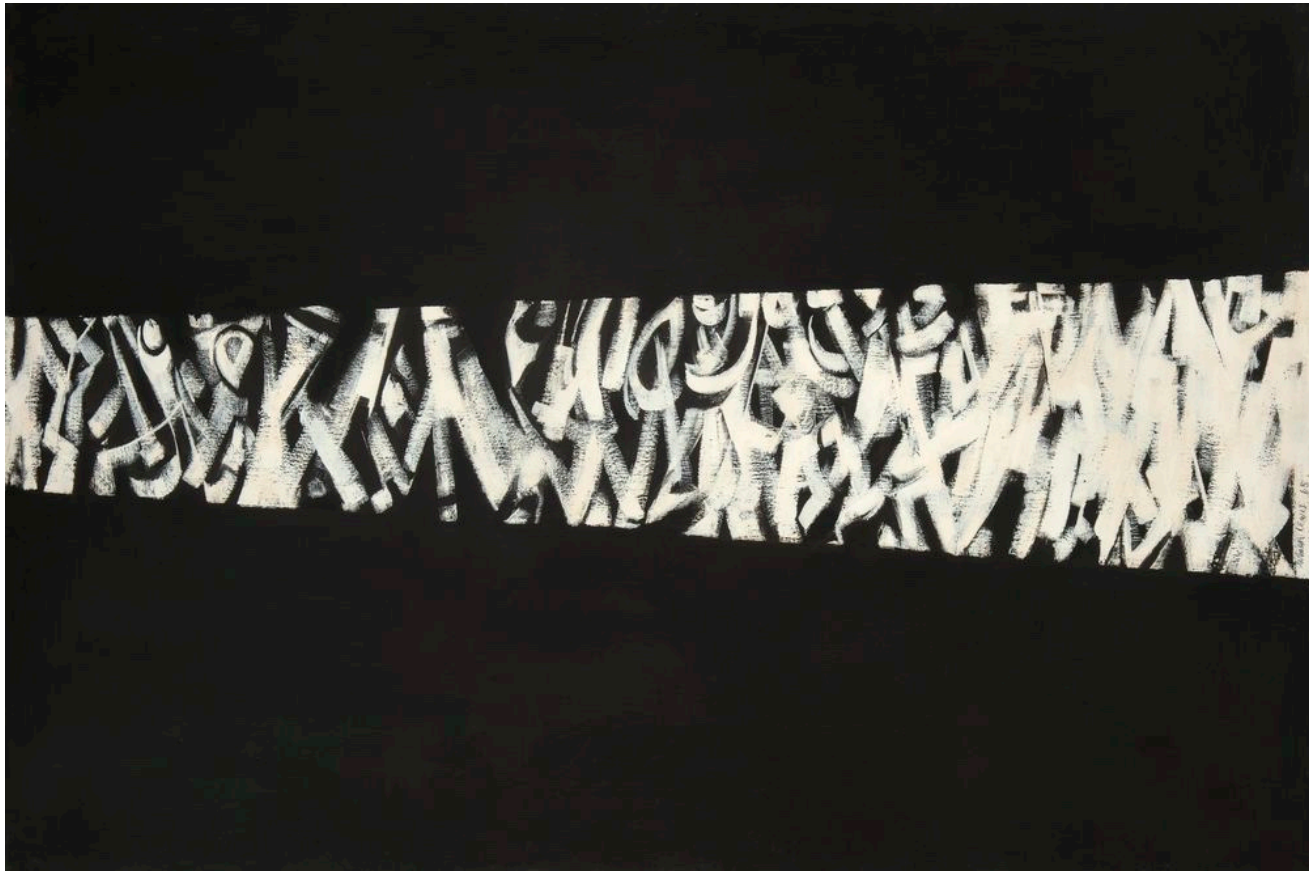
Merton Simpson



Smalltown

Perry Ferguson





Norman Lewis, *Processional* (auch bekannt als *Procession*), 1965
Öl auf Leinwand, 97.5 x 146.4 cm



Romare Bearden, *Pittsburgh Memory*, 1964, Mixed-Media-Collage, Papier und Graphit auf Karton, 21.6 x 29.8 cm



SPIRAL

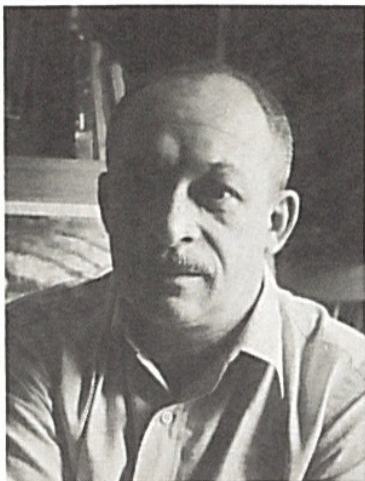
FIRST GROUP SHOWING

(works in black & white)

May 14th - June 4th

147 Christopher Street, New York

MEMBERS



CHARLES ALSTON

STUDIED: Columbia University
EXHIBITS: Heller Gallery, Metropolitan Museum, Modern Museum of Art, Whitney Museum
COLLECTIONS: Metropolitan Museum, Whitney Museum, Jamestown Museum, Baltimore Museum, Detroit Institute of Arts



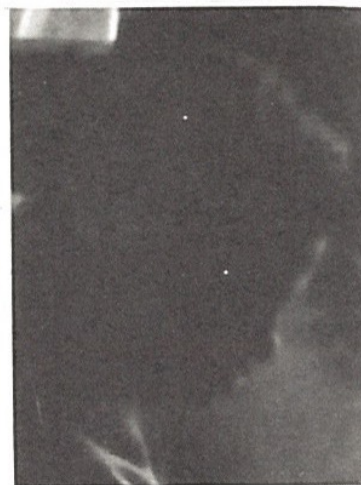
EMMA AMOS

STUDIED: Antioch College, London Central School of Arts, Intaglio Workshop, N. Y. University
EXHIBITS: Atlanta U. Art Show, Provincetown Art Festival, St. Georges Gallery, London, AAA, New York



ROMARE BEARDEN

STUDIED: New York Univ., Art Students League
EXHIBITS: Caresse Crosby-G Place Gallery, Wash. D. C., Samuel Kootz Gallery, Niveau Gallery, Michel Warren Gallery, Cordier-Ekstrom Gallery



CALVIN DOUGLASS

STUDIED: Howard University, Philadelphia Museum, Brooklyn Museum
EXHIBITS: N. Y. City Center, Brooklyn Museum, group shows



Emma Amos, *Untitled* (painting made for Spiral Exhibition, 1965), um 1964, Öl auf Leinwand, 128.9 x 128.9 cm



Emma Amos, *Two Standing Women*, 1966, Öl auf Leinwand

«It's always been my contention, that for me, a Black woman artist, to walk into the studio is a political act.»

— Emma Amos

DON'T admit to being over 28 unless you are over 58. It's handy to be either young and hot, or a doyenne, like Neel or Nevelson. In the middle, it's finding time and space, jobs, kids, lovers, husbands, and hard slogging, no glamour, no news.

DON'T take your art to Soho or 57th Street without Alex Katz's written introduction. Soho/57th Street doesn't dig blackass art. (They do still love "primitive" art, but don't be confused.) I think unsolicited slides are reviewed so the director can continually reinforce decisions about what he or she will NOT show.

DON'T complain about being a black woman artist in the '80s. Many people, both black and white, think you were fashioned to fit the slot in a turnstile—a mere token, baby. They may also think, deep down, that your minority face is a meal ticket entitling you to some special treatment they're not getting. All minorities have this problem; you've just got to tough it out.

DON'T fantasize about winning recognition without breaking your behind for it. There are no "instant winners" in today's art world, the Macdonald Awards not inclusive. (Hope springs eternal.)

DON'T fret about things over which you have little control:

The landlord raises your rent when you put new wiring in the studio.

Your work overflows every available space, and even your new \$400 flat file is delivered already full.

The show you're in next month is not insured. The show you're in gets reviewed, but the writer went to the John Simon school of criticism and your work gets singled out as too _____.

DO take good slides every 3 months or so. Business in the art world is transacted through transparencies. Art that doesn't look good reduced to 1 x 1½ probably shouldn't be reproduced. More people may look at your ektachromes than will ever see your work for real.

DO show as often as you can—new work if possible. Discourage curators from selecting work whose ideas you're no longer involved with. It's hard to do, but each show should reveal something more about you, a progression.

DO exhibit with people whose work you like and in which you find similarities to your own. There's

SOME DO'S AND DON'TS FOR BLACK WOMEN ARTISTS

BY EMMA AMOS

nothing intrinsically good about being a loner; finding parallels won't make you a "groupie."

DO be supportive of all your artist friends. Your peers are the people who see your work as it's happening. They give you feedback and keep you going.

DO extend yourself:

Let the Studio Museum know you're alive.

Let the Met know you're contemporary.

Let the Museum of Mod Art know you're permanent.

It'll probably net you only a "thank you," but we need to let them know how many of us are out there.

DO be thankful and shout "Hallelujah!" for:

Dealers, agents, and pals who work at JAM. Lovers, husbands, children, patrons, and friends.

Norman Lewis—whose art, elegance and concern impressed so many of us.

Alma Thomas—she hung on, and it was worth it.

Nellie Mae Rowe—she keeps working, an incredible Atlanta "folk" artist.

Norma Morgan—the engravings, the work! Where is she?

Romare Bearden—bright, open and deserving of all the praise.

Samella Lewis and Val Spaulding—whose *Black Art Quarterly* is so beautiful.

Hatch-Billops—the collection you must see, to know what "black art" is.

Bob Blackburn—the artist's printmaker and shoulder for 25 years plus.

James Van Der Zee—who has always been an artist.

Hale Woodruff—who would help any artist, black or white.

Lena Horne—for her transformation and hard work.

Tina Turner—who found herself and is free. Toni Morrison—who invents and forms worlds.

Duke Ellington—whose music is our soul. Stevie Wonder—he deserves to be taken more seriously.

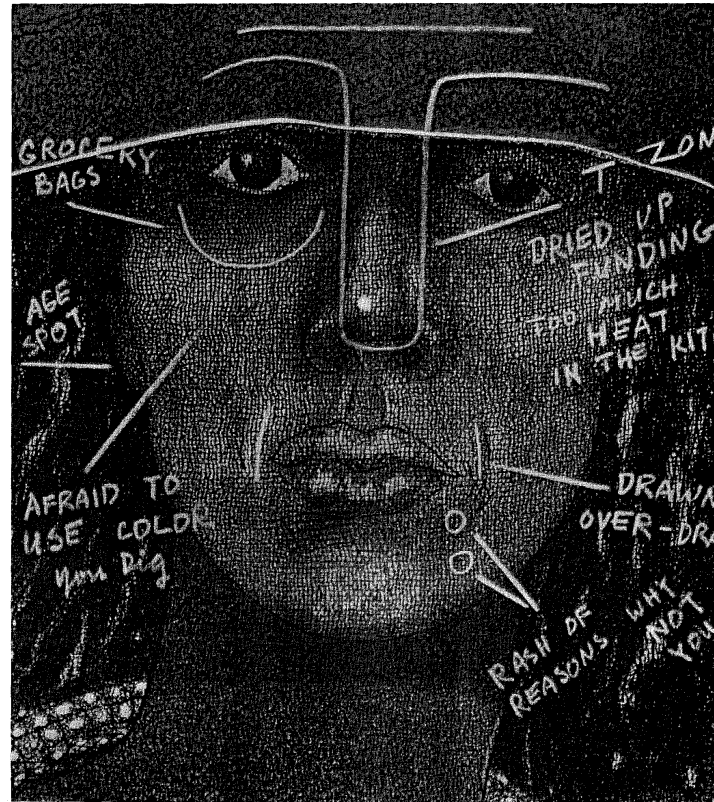
Bill Cosby—kills us on Carson, and buys art, too.

Ntozake Shange—who shows us how to use the system and how to survive success.

Maya Angelou.

Katherine Dunham.

The "do praise" list goes on.



Emma Amos. *Self-Portrait*. 1982. Etching, drawing, and xerox. 8½ x 7½". Emma Amos, painter, printmaker, weaver, and papermaker, lives in NYC and teaches art in NJ.



Emma Amos, *Flower Sniffing*, 1966
Öl auf Leinwand, 127 x 127 cm
Brooklyn Museum, New York



Emma Amos, *Sandy and Her Husband*, 1973
Öl auf Leinwand, 112.4 x 127.6 cm
Cleveland Museum of Art



Wadsworth Jarrell, *Revolutionary*, 1972
Siebdruck, 83.8 x 68.6 cm



Jae Jarrell, *Revolutionary Suit*, 1969/2010
Wolle, Wildleder, Seide, Holz, Pigment, Reproduktion des verlorenen Originalwerks von 1969, Brooklyn Museum, New York



Barbara Jones-Hogu, *Unite (AfriCOBRA)*, 1971, Farbsiebdruck auf Velinpapier, 66 x 85.2 cm (Blatt)



AFRICOBRA 1

ten in search of a nation

MUSEUM of the NATIONAL CENTER of AFRO-AMERICAN ARTISTS
122 Elm Hill Ave. Roxbury, Mass.

AFRICOBRA - AFRICAN COMMUNE OF BAD RELEVANT ARTISTS
 It is Nation Time and we are searching. In the spirit of Nation-ness we are examining the roots and branches of our African Family Tree for the seeds which is most expressive of our people/art. We are trying to make images inspired by sublimely Surreal African people/experience in the U.S.A. Images that all African people can dig on directly. Images that jar the senses and cause movement. Poster art. Images designed for mass production. Inexpensive. We want everybody to have some. All the Surreal people!

We invite you to view our work. You, Surreal African People, are our standard for excellence. Only you can determine the hipness of our observation/vibrations. We invite you to judge our efforts. If we are moving in the right direction we would appreciate hearing from you. If we are moving in the wrong direction, a coal-pull would likewise be appreciated.

Come see us. Got something for you.

SEP. 13 • OCT. 4

opening
 3 to 5 pm, Sep. 13

AFRICOBRA 1

barbara jones born Arles, Chicago, Illinois
 Black People: a TOTAL people, a TOTAL force, UNITE, UNITE. A Nation.
 "Black Family" 20" x 28" 1968 silkscreen
 "I'm Better than you" 20" x 22" 1968 silkscreen
 "Land Where my Father Died" 24" x 24" 1968 silkscreen
 "Heritage" 28" x 32" 1970 silkscreen
 "High Priestess" 28" x 38" 1970 silkscreen
 "Stop Genocide" 28" x 32" 1970 silkscreen
 "G.I.T.C." 28" x 32" 1970 silkscreen
 "Rise and Take Control" 28" x 32" 1970 silkscreen

carolyn lawrence born Virgo, Prairie View, Texas
 I take the past and the present and make the new image.
 "Fags" 30" x 40" 1970 acrylics
 "Rashood" 30" x 40" 1970 acrylics

jae jarrell born Sagittarius, Cleveland, Ohio
 I want to produce garments with patterns, textures and colors that duplicate the richness of the patterns, textures, and colors of Blackness.
 "Black Family" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics
 "Guilt is 1" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics
 "Salt & Sweet w/ 2" 35" x 46" 1969 acrylics
 "Wet girls n 1" 41" x 71" 1970 acrylics
 "Salt & 2" 41" x 71" 1970 acrylics
 "Machete & Pasta" 30" x 40" 1970 acrylics
 "Guilt is 1" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics
 "Wet girls n 1" 41" x 71" 1970 acrylics
 "Salt & 2" 41" x 71" 1970 acrylics
 "Machete & Pasta" 30" x 40" 1970 acrylics
 "Guilt is 1" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics

nelson stevens Brooklyn, New York born Taurus
 My Task ... to get as close as possible to the Jihad ... to images of those brothers and sisters who have never existed before.
 "Trilogy - from Assimilation to Identity" 4" x 12" 1970 acrylics
 "Ishak" 4" x 4" 1969 acrylics
 "A Different Kind of Man" 4" x 4" 1970 acrylics

gerald williams born Virgo, Chicago, Illinois
 My work responds to the potential for Black Nationalism and the need to develop that potential.
 "Black Family" 22" x 42" 1968 acrylics
 "I'm So Proud" 40" x 40" 1968 acrylics
 "Nationhood" 4" x 4" 1970 acrylics
 "Make up" 22" x 42" 1970 acrylics

omarilama born Sagittarius, Halls, Tennessee
 Positive Images - Images that will inspire Black people to a higher level of consciousness.
 "Black Jesus" 12" x 18" 1968 ink
 "Ishak or Perish" 18" x 24" 1970 colored inks

gerald williams born Virgo, Chicago, Illinois
 My work responds to the potential for Black Nationalism and the need to develop that potential.
 "Black Family" 22" x 42" 1968 acrylics
 "I'm So Proud" 40" x 40" 1968 acrylics
 "Nationhood" 4" x 4" 1970 acrylics
 "Make up" 22" x 42" 1970 acrylics

sherman beck born Libra, Chicago, Illinois
 We all extend ourselves through the magic of our medium - this is mine.
 "Melted" 24" x 36" 1970 ink
 "Melted" 24" x 36" 1970 mixed media
 "Melted" 36" x 48" 1970 oil

wadsworth jarrell born Scorpio, Albany, Georgia
 If you can get to Be-So, you can get to me. That is where the truth is.
 "Black Family" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics
 "Crowned to what" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics
 "Lightening the Game" 35" x 46" 1969 acrylics
 "This Time Baby" 52" x 77" 1969 acrylics
 "Home to a Giant" 41" x 71" 1970 acrylics
 "The Other Side" 52" x 77" 1970 acrylics
 "Cool Ade Lester" 24" x 48" 1970 acrylics
 "Boss Oopla" 30" x 40" 1970 acrylics
 "Poster - Cool Ade Rhyth" 24" x 48" 1970 acrylics

jeff donaldson born Sagittarius, Pine Bluff, Arkansas
 Being and doing like we spoke to be and do is what we spoke to do and be. Pop.
 "Black Family" 22" x 31" 1969 mixed media
 "Oshu, Oba and Nansen" 22" x 31" 1969 mixed media
 "Chicago Journey" 30" x 40" 1969 mixed media
 "Vibes of Shaqop" 28" x 38" 1969 mixed media
 "Allah Shaqop" 28" x 38" 1969 mixed media
 "Chicago Journey" (part by South Side Community Art Center, Chicago) 30" x 40" 1969 mixed media
 "Right on Right Reverend" 28" x 40" 1970 mixed media
 "Man's Best Friend" 28" x 40" 1970 mixed media
 "Man - Bad Maryland Farmer" 30" x 40" 1968 mixed media
 "Chris Gaddy, Thelma Barker, Joe Jamon and Charles Clerk" 22" x 31" 1967 mixed media

napoleon henderson born Sagittarius, Chicago, Illinois
 My work - we, Africa and the future.
 "Shabak" 6" x 6" 1969 tapestry
 "Doodle" 6" x 6" 1968 tapestry
 "Cool Ade Jingles" 2" x 5" 1970 tapestry
 "Melted" 2" x 3" 1970 tapestry
 "Makuta" 4.5" x 5" 1970 tapestry

wadsworth jarrell born Scorpio, Albany, Georgia
 If you can get to Be-So, you can get to me. That is where the truth is.
 "Black Family" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics
 "Crowned to what" 35" x 46" 1968 acrylics
 "Lightening the Game" 35" x 46" 1969 acrylics
 "This Time Baby" 52" x 77" 1969 acrylics
 "Home to a Giant" 41" x 71" 1970 acrylics
 "The Other Side" 52" x 77" 1970 acrylics
 "Cool Ade Lester" 24" x 48" 1970 acrylics
 "Boss Oopla" 30" x 40" 1970 acrylics
 "Poster - Cool Ade Rhyth" 24" x 48" 1970 acrylics

W J Studios and Gallery 1521 East Sixty First Street Chicago Illinois 60637

«**We are a family**—COBRA, the Coalition of Black Revolutionary Artists, is now AfriCOBRA—African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists. It's NATION TIME and we are searching. Our guidelines are our people—the whole family of African people, the African family tree. And **in this spirit of familyhood**, we have carefully examined our roots and searched our branches for those visual qualities that are more expressive of our people/art. **Our people are our standard for excellence.** We strive for images inspired by African people—experience and images that African people can relate to directly without formal art training and/or experience. Art for people and not for critics whose peopleness is questionable. We try to create images that appeal to the senses—not to the intellect.»

—Jeff R. Donaldson, «Ten in Search of a Nation» [1970]
nachgedruckt in *Nka Journal of Contemporary African Art*, Nr. 30, 2012



Wadsworth Jarrell, *Revolutionary*, 1972
Siebdruck, 83.8 x 68.6 cm



Barbara Jones-Hogu, *Unite (AfriCOBRA)*, 1971
Farbsiebdruck auf Velinpapier, 66 x 85.2 cm (Blatt)

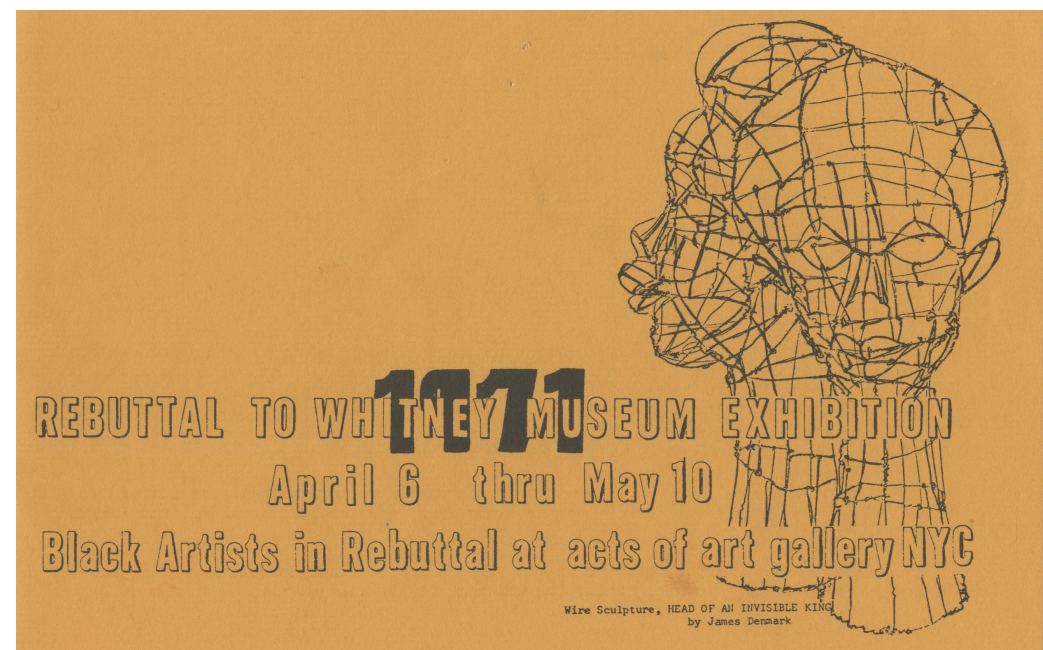
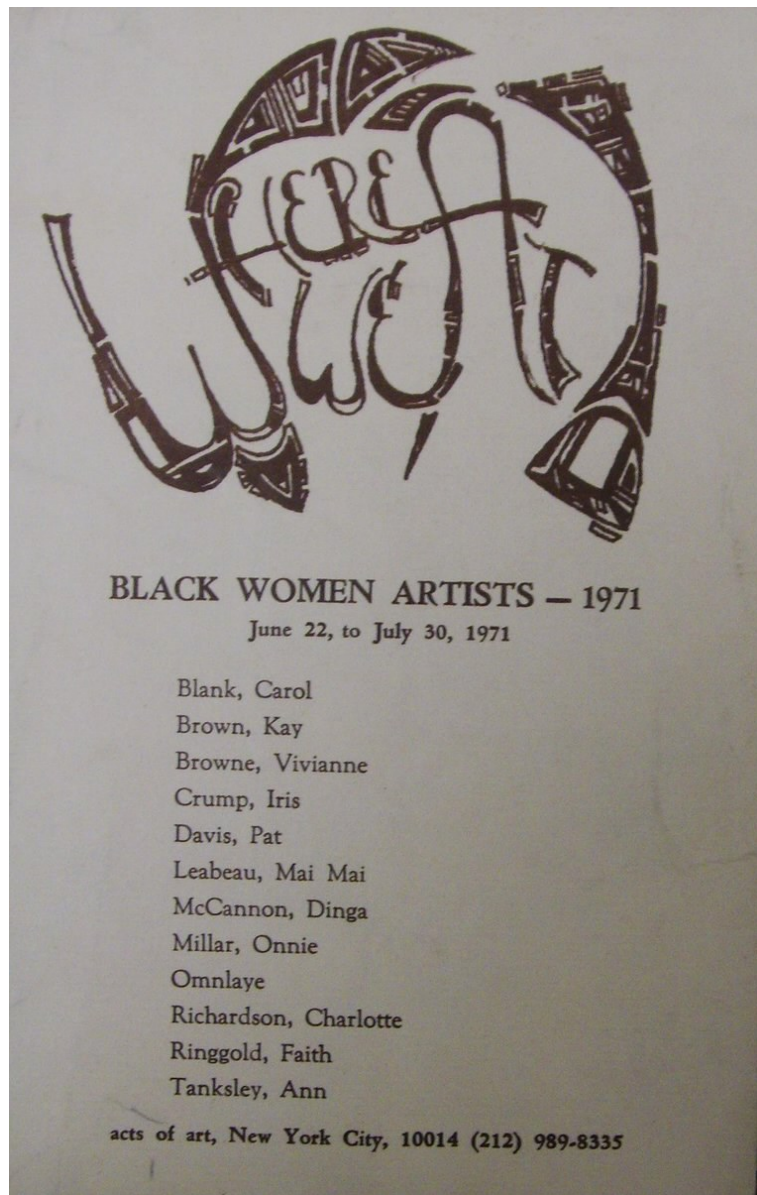
«Where We At» Black Women Artists



Faith Ringgold (rechts) und Michele Wallace (Mitte)
protestieren vor dem Whitney Museum, New York, 1971



«Where We At» Black Women Artists, 1980. Carol Blank, Pat Davis, Victoria Lucas, Crystal McKenzie, Dindga McCannon, Kay Brown, Modu Tanzania, Jeanne Downer, Priscilla Taylor, Emma Zuwadi, Akweke Singho, Linda Hiwot und Saeeda Stanley



Flyer für die Ausstellung *Where We At Black Women Artists*, Acts of Art Gallery, Juni–Juli 1971 (links) / Flyer und Ansicht der Ausstellung *Rebuttal to Whitney Museum Exhibition*, Acts of Art Gallery, April–Mai 1971 (rechts)



Mitglieder von «Where We At» Black Women Artists mit dem Sponsor ihrer Ausstellung in der Metropolitan Applied Research Center Gallery in New York und Flyer zur Ausstellung, Oktober 1973



Dindga McCannon, *Revolutionary Sister*, 1971
Mischtechnik auf Holz, 157,5 x 68,6 cm, Brooklyn Museum New York



«In the '60s and '70s we didn't have many women warriors (that we were aware of) so I created my own. Her headpiece is made from recycled mini flagpoles. The shape was inspired by my thoughts on the Statue of Liberty; she represents freedom for so many but what about us (African Americans)? My warrior is made from pieces from the hardware store—another place women were not welcomed back then. My thoughts were my warrior is hard as nails. I used a lot of the liberation colors: red—for the blood we shed; green—for the Motherland—Africa; and black—for the people. The bullet belt validates her warrior status. She doesn't need a gun; the power of change exists within her.»

—Dindga McCannon

COOKIN' & SMOKIN'



WHERE WE **Black Women at Artists** 1972

*Carol Blank Kay Brown Carol Byard Gilbert
Jerrolyn Crooks Iris Crump Pat Davis Doris Kané
Mai Mai Leabua Dindga McCannon Onnie Millar
Charlotte Richardson Faith Ringgold Ann Tanksley
Jean Taylor*

Exhibits at Weusi - Nyumba Ya Sanaa Gallery

158 West 132nd Street — Harlem - New York

Opening January 2, 1972 — 3:00-7:00 P.M.

Closing January 20, 1972

Gallery Hours: 6-10 P.M.

Telephone 283-9475

Dialectics of Isolation

An Exhibition of Third World Women Artists of the United States

INTRODUCTION

There is a certain time in history when people take consciousness of themselves and ask questions about who they are. After World War II, the label Third World came into being in reference to the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The movement of Unaligned Nations was founded in 1961 with a meeting which took place in Belgrade. Their aims are to end colonialism, racism and exploitation.

We of the Third World in the United States have the same concerns as the people of the Unaligned Nations. The white population of the United States, diverse, but of basic European stock, exterminated the indigenous civilization and put aside the Black as well as the other non-white cultures to create a homogenous male-dominated culture above the internal divergency.

Do we exist?... To question our cultures is to question our own existence, our human reality. To confront this fact means to acquire an awareness of ourselves. This in turn becomes a search, a questioning of who we are and how we will realize ourselves.

During the mid to late sixties as women in the United States politicized themselves and came together in the Feminist Movement with the purpose to end the domination and exploitation by the white male culture, they failed to remember us. American Feminism as it stands is basically a white middle class movement.

As non-white women our struggles are two-fold.

This exhibition points not necessarily to the injustice or incapacity of a society that has not been willing to include us, but more towards a personal will to continue being "other."

Ana Mendieta © 1980

Katalog zur Ausstellung *Dialectics of Isolation: An Exhibition of Third World Women Artists of the United States*, Cover und Einleitungstext von Ana Mendieta, A.I.R. Gallery New York, 1980



Die erste Galerie von A.I.R. an der Wooster Street, New York, 1976. Von links nach rechts: Rachel Bas-Cohain, Joan Snitzer, Kazuko Miyamoto, Blythe Bohnen, nicht identifiziert, Laurace James, Patsy Norvell, Dotty Attie, Mary Grigoriadis und Daria Dorosh.

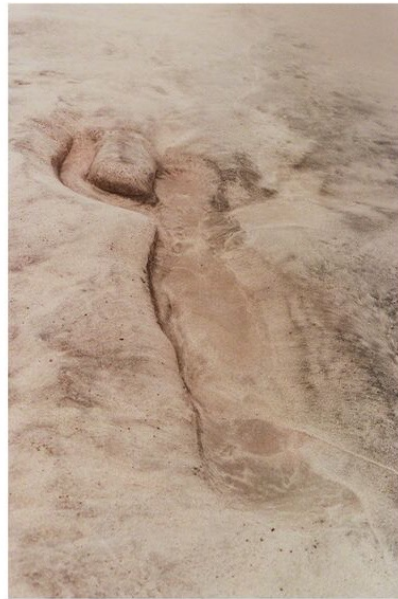


Die Gründungsmitglieder der A.I.R. Gallery im Loft von Daria Dorosh, 370 Broadway, 1974.

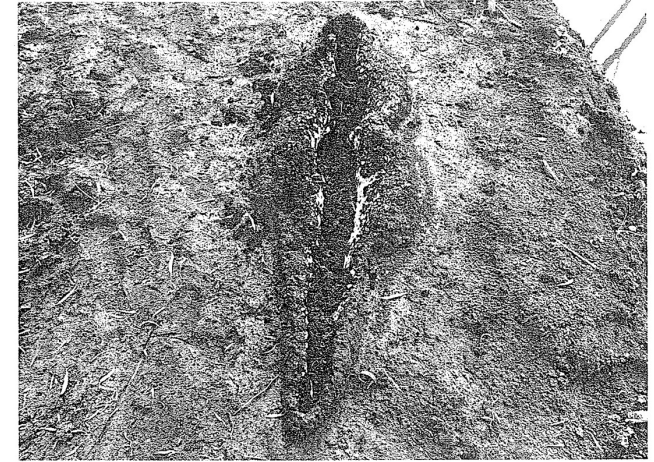
Von links nach rechts und von unten nach oben: Howardena Pindell, Daria Dorosh, Maude Boltz, Rosemary Mayer, Mary Grigoriadis, Agnes Denes, Louise Kramer, Loretta Dunkelman, Barbara Zucker, Patsy Norvell, Sari Dienes, Judith Bernstein, Laurace James, Nancy Spero, Pat Lasch, Anne Healy, Dotty Attie. Foto: David Attie



Howardena Pindell, *Free, White and 21*, 1980, Einkanalvideo mit Ton, Farbe, 12 Min. 15 Sek.



La Venus Negra, based on a Cuban legend.



Ana Mendieta. *Siluetas Series*. 1980. Earth and gunpowder.

Ana Mendieta

Around 1817, when Spanish colonists first set foot on the Cayo Loco—a key off the South Coast of Cuba near the city of Cienfuegos—they found a sole inhabitant. She was a young Black woman, nude except for necklace and bracelets of seeds and seashells, and so lovely that “the most demanding artist would have considered her an example of perfect feminine beauty.” She was a survivor of innumerable generations of the Siboney Indians, who had been extinguished by colonization. They called her the Black Venus.

At the sight of the Spaniards, she ran—from fear rather than modesty. They caught her and discovered she was mute. Living alone on the Cayo Loco, she was accompanied everywhere by a white dove and a blue heron. Spreading their wings, they would touch her mouth with their beaks, in silent caress.

When one of the colonists took her home with him, gave her food and clothing, he expected her to please him and to work for him in return. But taken from her island freedom, and unable to speak, she nestled in a corner, refusing to get up, work or eat. Finally, alarmed at the prospect of her death by starvation, they took her back to the Cayo Loco to live in freedom.

From time to time over the years, the citizens of Cienfuegos tried again to “civilize” the Black Venus. But each time her passive protests forced them to return her to the key, where she reigned in solitude with the blue heron and the white dove her only subjects.

The historian Pedro Modesto recalled that when he was a child, around 1876, an old Black woman, with hair like a huge white powder puff and naked except for a blue, red and white necklace, secretly entered his house. She refused clothing and was dressed only by physical force. She refused all the food offered her except for native products—yucca, bananas and sweet potatoes. The next morning she had disappeared, leaving the clothes behind. That was the last time she was seen.

Today the Black Venus has become a legendary symbol against slavery. She represents the affirmation of a free and natural being who refused to be colonized.

Cuban artist Ana Mendieta has been making earth-body sculptures since 1973. She exhibits at A.I.R. Gallery in NYC and received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1980.

Ana Mendieta, *Siluetas Series*, 1976 und «La Venus Negra, based on a Cuban Legend», in *Heresies* Nr. 13, 1981



«I didn't learn about Ana Mendieta until years after her death, when I was well into graduate school. [...] I was trained by art historians who believed the prime directive was to separate artists from their work. [...] Top that off with the fact that Ana Mendieta was a Cuban emigrant, showing at a feminist gallery, working with blood, making work that summoned the idea of the earth goddess—nothing could have been less cool in my philosophically inclined education that privileged theory over feeling.»

—Helen Molesworth, *Death of an Artist*, Episode 1



Ana Mendieta, *Blood and Feathers #2*, 1974



Carl Andre, *Equivalent VIII*, 1966





Ana Mendieta, *Moffitt Building Piece*, 1973, zwei 35-mm-Farbdias. © The Estate of Ana Mendieta Collection, LLC.

«In his personal life, Mr. Andre has been the focus of serious ethical probing. In 1985, his third wife, the artist Ana Mendieta, was killed in a fall from a window of their Greenwich Village apartment, and Mr. Andre was charged with her murder. He was acquitted, but feelings against him ran high in the art world, and still do. This probably explains his elusive personal presence in New York since then, even as his art has been consistently shown. And it may even answer the question of why this exhibition is making no other American stops before heading off to Europe.»

—Holland Cotter, «A Stonehenge for the Modern Age», *The New York Times*, 29. Mai 2014



Crying: A Protest, organisiert von Jennifer Tamayo anlässlich der Retrospektive von Carl Andre bei Dia:Beacon, 2015

«I wanted a gesture that would focus not so much on Andre himself, but **on the group of people who gathered to grief**. The trope of the crying woman who has been either jilted or left behind or whatever, you know, all those things that go into crying felt so appropriate. And it's also linked to ideas of an overly emotional woman, feminine excess, all of those things.»

—Jennifer Tamayo, in *Death of an Artist*, Podcast, Episode 6