

Press Kit

Defiant Muses. Delphine Seyrig and the Feminist Video Collectives of 1970s and 1980s France

February 25 – May 7, 2023

Press event: Friday, February 24, 2023, 11 a.m.

Opening: Friday, February 24, 2023, 7 p.m.



Curators

Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, Giovanna Zapperi

An exhibition by the

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart

Organized by

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía Madrid

In Collaboration with

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart

Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna)

Centre audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir Paris

Introduction

Artists

Fani Adam, Etel Adnan, Florence Assouline, Claire Atherton, Ti-Grace Atkinson, Mary Barnes, Cathy Bernheim, Danièle Bordes, Aloïse Corbaz, Françoise Dasque, Micha Dell-Prane, Catherine Deudon, Marguerite Duras, Éditions des Femmes, Anne Faisandier, Claire Goriot, Henriette Grindat, Ellsworth Kelly, Erica Lennard, Guy Le Querrec, Les Insoumuses, Babette Mangolte, Rosine Nusimovici, Ulrike Ottinger, Brigitte Pougeoise, Michèle Richer, Nadja Ringart, Yvette Roudy, Carole Roussopoulos, Paul Roussopoulos, Carlos Santos, Abraham Ségal, Delphine Seyrig, Valerie Solanas, Vidéa, Ioana Wieder and others

Defiant Muses. Delphine Seyrig and the Feminist Video Collectives of 1970s and 1980s France focuses on the intersection between the histories of cinema, video, and feminism: the exhibition sheds light on a network of creators and political figures around the actress, videomaker, and activist **Delphine Seyrig** to sketch a history of feminism as media history.

Delphine Seyrig (1932–1990) is best known for the roles she played in French auteur cinema, most notably in Alain Resnais' *L'année dernière à Marienbad* [Last Year at Marienbad] (1961), where she became the symbol of an idealized and sophisticated femininity. But "acting" was not merely a profession for Seyrig: during the 1970s, she became engaged in various collaborations within the framework of the feminist movement. At the same time, working with women filmmakers such as Chantal Akerman, Marguerite Duras or Ulrike Ottinger allowed her to explore a variety of female roles and to undo her own image as a diva.

In 1975, she starred in Chantal Akerman's iconic feminist film *Jeanne Dielman. 23 quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, which was voted the best film of all time in a 2022 poll by the British film magazine *Light and Sound*.

Around 1975, together with activist video maker **Carole Roussopoulos** and translator **Ioana Wieder**, she produced a series of videos under the collective name **Les Insoumuses** (Defiant Muses). In their tapes, such as *Sois belle et tais-toi!* [Be Pretty and Shut Up!] (1976), *SCUM Manifesto* (1976), and *Maso et Miso vont en bateau* [Maso and Miso go boating] (1976), video became an emancipatory tool and an agent of political activism. In 1982, the three women established the **Centre audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir** in Paris, thus providing an unprecedented audiovisual archive of the feminist struggles of the time, in and beyond France, which include the fight for legal abortion, against torture and the Vietnam War, for the rights of sex workers and political prisoners, and the involvement in the anti-psychiatry movement.

Focusing on the emergence of video collectives in the 1970s, the exhibition proposes to reconsider the history of the feminist movement in France through a set of media practices and looks at a network of creative alliances that emerged in a time of political turmoil and that were relevant far beyond France.

Seyrig as well as actress and friend Jane Fonda, cinematographer and filmmaker Babette Mangolte, poet and painter Etel Adnan, artist, author and activist Kate Millett, or writer and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir appear as knitting nodes of a wider, plural, transnational fabric.

Videos, films, artworks, costumes, photographs and archival documents are associated within sections that convey the multiple political concerns that the feminist movement was raising at this precise historical moment.

The total of seven exhibition areas were conceived under the following titles: Undoing the Diva; Feminist Media Appropriation; Countering Normativity; Disobedient Practices; Transnational Struggles; Research Into The Anti-Psychiatry Movement; An Unfinished History.

The topics negotiated therein resonate with a set of problems concerning art and politics today, as feminists keep on building alliances, rise against the film industry's structural sexism, and challenge normative gender roles.

Seyrig's troubled positions in-between aesthetics (cinema, video) and work (profession, industry) are marked by a continuum between the actress and the activist thus reminding of the ongoing significance of the 1970s feminist slogan: "the personal is political."

Defiant Muses was organized by Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía Madrid in collaboration with Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna) and Centre audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir Paris. The exhibition's first iteration was shown at LaM (Lille Métropole Musée d'art moderne, d'art contemporain et d'art brut).

The exhibition is accompanied by a booklet with detailed texts and images.

Parallel to the *Defiant Muses*, the exhibition *In the Long Run, Only Power Helps!* in the Querungen of the WKV, curated by the Stuttgart-based gender researcher and artist Yvonne P. Doderer, reflects on the local contexts of feminism in the 1970s and 1980s.

Curators' short biographies

Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez is an independent curator, editor and writer. She has curated numerous exhibitions worldwide such as *Contour Biennale 9: Coltan as Cotton* (2019, Mechelen); *Let's Talk about the Weather* (2016–2018, Beirut and Guangzhou); *Resilience. U3-Triennial of Contemporary Art* (2013, Ljubljana). She was chief editor of *L'Internationale Online* and of the *Manifesta Journal* and currently holds the position at *Versopolis Review*. Petrešin-Bachelez is co-founder of the Initiative for practices and visions of radical care and, in 2021, got appointed as the Head of Cultural Programme at *Cité Internationale Des Arts Paris*.

Giovanna Zapperi is Professor of contemporary art history at the University of Geneva. She is the author of three books: *L'artiste est une femme. La modernité de Marcel Duchamp* [The Artist is a Woman. Marcel Duchamp's Modernity], Presses Universitaires de France 2012; with Alessandra Gribaldo, *Lo schermo del potere. Femminismo e regime della visibilità* [The Screen of Power. Feminism and the Regime of Visibility], Ombre Corte 2012, and *Carla Lonzi. Un'arte della vita* [Carla Lonzi: An Art of Life], DeriveApprodi 2017. Together with Francesco Ventrella, she has recently edited the book *Art and Feminism in Postwar Italy. The Legacy of Carla Lonzi* (London, Bloomsbury 2021).

Together, Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez and Giovanna Zapperi have curated the previous two iterations of the exhibition *Defiant Muses. Delphine Seyrig and the Feminist Video Collectives of 1970s and 1980s France* at LaM – Lille Metropole (2019) and at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2019/2020).

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CREDITS

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Curatorial assistance

Julia Hartmann

PRESS

Press event

Friday, February 24, 2023, 11 a.m.

Press Contact

Jolanda Bozzetti

Fon: +49 (0)711 22 33 713

bozzetti@wkv-stuttgart.de

Press Materials

<https://www.wkv-stuttgart.de/presse>

Newsletter Press

<https://www.wkv-stuttgart.de/en/press/press-subscription/>

DATES

OPENING WEEKEND

Friday, February 24, 2023, 7 p.m.

Opening

Greeting: Iris Dressler and Hans D. Christ (Directors of WKV)

Introduction: Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, Giovanna Zapperi (Curators of the exhibition)

Followed by: Party

Saturday, February 25, 2023

Opening program

1 p.m.: exhibition tour with the curators

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.: Panel with Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, Giovanna Zapperi, Nicole Fernández Ferrer and Julia Hartmann. Moderation: Iris Dressler

ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM

Directors tours:

Wednesday, March 15, April 12, 2023, 7 p.m.

Sunday, May 7, 2023, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday tours:

Sundays, 3 p.m.

Guided tours in English:

Saturday, March 11, April 1, April 22, 2023, 2 p.m.

Saddie Choua, Lecture on Chantal Akerman's Jeanne Dielman from 1975 and Ousmane Sembène's La Noire de ... from 1966)

LECTURE, VIDEO + TALK

with Saddie Choua and Iris Dressler

Friday, March 31, 2023, 7 p.m.

Petra Bauer, SCOT-PEP, Workers!, 2018

Screening + Talk

with Petra Bauer and Iris Dressler

Tuesday, April 4, 2023, 7 p.m.

Kitchen Table Talk

TALK

Aneta Rostkowska, On feminist approaches to curating

Moderated by Iris Dressler

Thursday, May 4, 2023, 7 p.m.

Discourse- and Mediation Program

<https://www.wkv-stuttgart.de>

SOCIAL MEDIA

www.wkv-stuttgart.de
www.wkv-stuttgart.de/newsletter
www.facebook.com/wuerttembergischer.kunstverein
www.instagram.com/wuerttembergischerkunstverein

ACCESS TO THE EXHIBITION

Opening hours

Tue, Thu – Sun: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Wed: 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Building

Barrier-free access, wheelchair-accessible toilet, changing table, WiFi, beverages

Reguläre Eintrittspreise

5 Euro / 3 Euro ermäßigt

Freier Eintritt

- for members of the WKV and other art associations affiliated to the ADKV (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Kunstvereine)
- for pupils and students from Stuttgart
- at individual discretion

Wednesdays free admittance

for all

SUPPORTERS

Kulturstiftung des Bundes
Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien
Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst des Landes Baden-Württemberg
Kulturamt der Stadt Stuttgart
Prolab, Stuttgart

PARTNERS

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