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**CITY OF
WOMEN**
REFLECTING
2020/2021



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

COME CLOSER! , JASMINA JERANT	2
--------------------------------------	---

ART PRODUCTION

SIMONA SEMENIČ: PICTURE PERFECT , ANA LORGER	7
---	---

DEFIANT MUSES , NICOLE FERNÁNDEZ FERRER, NATAŠA PETREŠIN-BACHELEZ	12
--	----

DELPHINE AND CAROLE: Excerpts from the discussion with Callisto McNulty, PETRA METERC	18
---	----

ADRIANA KNOUF: XENOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS. 001A: TRYING PLASTIC VARIATIONS , ANNEMARIE LOTTI GOSAR	24
--	----

BIO-AUTONOMOUS FARMING: Interview with Isabel Burr Raty, JASMINA JERANT	34
---	----

# corneous # hands # toxic # image # parlour # mask # shift # body # modern # mobility # labour # future # counter-solidarities # protection # independence , KATJA KOBOLT, SUZA HUSSE	40
---	----

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

CATASTROPHE BLUES , SAMMAR AL KERAWE, VIKTORIIA POSPELOVA, FAVOUR EDOKPAYI MUSA, SAMAR ZUGHOO, KATJA KOVAČ	53
--	----

TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN? , PIA BREZAVŠČEK	66
--	----

#METOO IN CULTURE , NIKA KOVAČ	72
---------------------------------------	----

ARTS EDUCATION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS AND BOYS IN EDUCATION , VERONIKA TAŠNER	79
---	----

LJUBLJANA FEMINIST BIKE TOUR , JASMINA JERANT, GREGOR BULC	84
---	----

FIERCE WOMEN , GABRIJELA IVANOV	90
--	----

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS	98
----------------------------	----

JASMINA JERANT

COME CLOSER!

Nearly half a century ago, three French women shot the first series of feminist activist videos. They chose documentary video as their weapon of choice, as their medium, away from television censorship and expensive commercial production. Their work, which is still current today, was intersectional before the term even existed. Fifty years later, in a completely different environment, video media served as a tool of expression to five migrant women in Slovenia. An Iraqi, a Jordanian, a Nigerian, a Russian, and a Serbian explored the meaning of catastrophe and the manifestation of oppression. They agreed that oppression against women is similar in all environments but has its own distinctive faces. Parallels, both temporal and conceptual, between the two stories are not coincidental. The stories were connected by the 26th edition of the City of Women, the International Festival of Contemporary Arts held between the first and the second wave of the pandemic. If anyone before the festival wondered whether it made sense discussing gender equality in the time of global challenges such as climate change, global pandemics, inequality, poverty, migration and growing nationalism, the City of Women answered: *Well yes, more than ever; therefore, come closer!*

Data shows that domestic violence increased significantly in Slovenia during the pandemic. At the height of the first wave, the number of calls for help rose by over 100%. Women are also exposed in the epidemiologically high-risk occupations: more than 65% of shopkeepers are women; around 90% of nurses and midwives are women; 63% of doctors are women, and more than 95% of nurses in nursing homes are women. Another feminised profession in Slovenia is that of a teacher; about 90% of them are women. Due to the huge increase in invisible work, women, regardless of their profession, finish their day in the middle of the night. Some, do not even sleep because they are worried – especially if they are unemployed, in precarious professions, refugees, single mothers on minimum wages, to name just a few.

The City of Women's activities relating to feminist curating, advocacy, activism and education in the 2020/2021 season continued to reflect the efforts of maintaining that very much needed discussion. This annual overview of its work, including the 26th edition of the festival held in September and October 2020, showcases women and their fight through diverse art productions, social engagement, and arts education for the recognition of women's societal, political and economic positions. Hence, the

materials collected for this publication fall into three main categories: *Art Production*, *Social Engagement*, and *Arts Education*.

Art Production includes *Picture Perfect*, Simona Semenič's one-act play that produces a critique of the patriarchal and nationalist system without words, using only gestures. *Defiant Muses* and *Delphine and Carole* reflect on the French video collective mentioned at the beginning of this introduction. French activists are followed by a review of an all-around extraordinary lecture performance *Xenological Entanglements. OO1A: Trying plastic variations* by artist Adriana Knouf, which delves into the experience of living in a trans woman's body. Next is an interview with Isabel Burr Raty about her *Bio-autonomous Farming* workshop which taught participants how to manufacture beauty & care bio-products from socially despised female fluids: menstrual, fertility, orgasmic, menopausal and pregnancy fluids. And, last but not least, the *Corneous Stories*, a discussion between Katja Kobolt and Suza Husse on the multi-layered interface linking humans with machines and imaginaries via gender, toxicity and labour.

The second section, *Social Engagement*, firstly focuses on *Catastrophe Blues* – a video made by the already mentioned five migrants living in Slovenia discussing war, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity, language and gender in the context of the circle of oppression. In an essay *To Have or Not To Have Children*, Pia Brezavšček does not answer the question as she believes that no woman should ever been called upon to answer it to anyone but herself. And in *#metoo in culture*, Nika Kovač reflects on the *#metoo* movement and summarises the findings on anonymous collection of stories of sexual harassment and violence as experienced by women working in culture in Slovenia.

In the last section, *Arts Education*, Veronika Tašner discusses what still needs to be done when it comes to *Equal Opportunities for Girls and Boys in Education*, while the last two articles are dedicated to *herstory*. The *Ljubljana Feminist Bike Tour* took the participants around Ljubljana to get to know the forgotten heroines of Slovenia on the tool and symbol of women's liberation, while the social card game and teaching materials *Fierce Women* promote and celebrate the work and contributions to society by women from Croatia, Slovenia, North Macedonia, and Ireland.

The discussion about gender equality has been, as the selection in this publication shows, long-lasting but hasn't gotten old yet. Quite the opposite, it is still relevant in many places and far from over. Thus, welcome, come closer, let's discuss gender equality together in the time of global challenges.



C'EST... QUI NOUS BRANDE...
LE NOC QUI VA A TOU...

TOURNE... LE...
DE LL... VIO... terre de...
HOMI...

UN MALE
DES MAI

NO...
E...
U...




BIENNE IONALI
E MALEMMES

LES FEMMES
VIVANTES
SONT EN DANGER
DE MORT

LES FEMMES
VIVANTES
SONT EN DANGER
DE MORT

LES FEMMES
VIVANTES
SONT EN DANGER
DE MORT

LES FEMMES
VIVANTES
SONT EN DANGER
DE MORT

The background consists of several large, overlapping triangles in a vibrant orange color, set against a white background. The triangles are arranged in a way that creates a dynamic, geometric pattern. The text 'ART PRODUCTION' is centered within the white space, following the diagonal orientation of the triangles.

ART PRODUCTION

ANA LORGER

SIMONA SEMENIČ: PICTURE PERFECT

Beautiful, silent, immovable

This review has been kindly shared with us by the author and the critical platform Kriterij operating under the Bunker Institute, www.kriterij.si, where it was originally published.

Walking into the Old Power Station hall during the City of Women festival to see the performance, the one-act play *Picture Perfect*, we are welcomed by loud accordions or folk-pop music, which is reminiscent of village fetes or firefighters' parties. The resounding and unpleasant music becomes more and more disharmonious, the sounds of the accordions mix, flow, making us feel anxious – until the tension is drowned out by silence. We stare into the red curtain onstage to see it open and reveal a naked **Simona Semenič**.

The silence, bare skin, and the stage – empty apart from the small pile of neatly folded clothes – make up a scenographic contrast to the previously invasive sound of accordions. Simona Semenič remains standing for a few moments, watching us. And because no gazing of a naked female body can be neutral, we judge, perhaps become nervous, or awkwardly seek for a neutral point of staring. Simona Semenič bends down to pick white lace panties from the pile. Then socks, an underskirt, another skirt, an apron, a blouse, a metal belt, a headscarf, a bonnet, shoes ... We are watching a woman donning on a national costume, and Semenič looks at us every time she puts a piece of clothing on.

She dresses with care and patience, her gestures are spontaneous, yet movement gets more and more impeded due to the uncomfortable cut, the weight and the quantity of clothing. The more dressed she is, the less agile she becomes – and towards the end of the process, she can barely tie her black shoes. This limited movement makes us laugh, cutting through the awkward silence brought on by her slow act of dressing. No specific illustration or emphasis, no words or explicit gestures are needed for us to read the signs

of this performance. They warn of the absurdity of female clothing and the terrors brought on the female body by the patriarchal society. And this is not all. Slovenian national costume is a paradox in itself as it is a combination of traditional pieces of clothing coming from different cultural spaces: both Yugoslav and Austrian. This emphasises the ideological layer of Slovenian, as well as any other national identity.

The naked body of Simona Semenič, later completely covered with clothes, evokes references to her oeuvre. The dramaturg and dramatess is known for her feminist writing stemming the connection between the political and the personally intimate. Exploring female sexuality, eroticism, the questioning of the artist's status, and the critique of the health system and cultural politics are some of the contexts in which the performance can be read as a critique of the contemporary capitalist and our own fascistoid country. Another reference the play *Picture Perfect* brings to mind is the photograph on which Simona Semenič stands pregnant with a cut up Slovenian flag. The Slovenian Institute for Patriotic Values that reported this gesture to the police floats to the surface as the undertext of her gestures.

This one-act play is again accompanied by strong symbols: the folk-pop music, the Slovenian national costume, and finally a plate with an image of a hen (evoking the shape of Slovenia) that Semenič holds in her hands while standing dressed in front of us for a few moments. But if we look more closely, we see it is not actually a plate but a framed needlepoint tapestry, an art piece by artist **Arjan Pregl** who, in the current political situation, is mostly known as an activist, protester, critic of the system, the initiator and supporter of alternative government and several anti-government petitions. The tapestry clearly points to another dimension of authoritarian repression. Just like the female body is regulated, so is the systematic draining of freelance artists a repression of the creation of socially critical art or art that is not to the taste of the ruling. At the end of this one-act play, the tapestry adds threads of irony and bitterness that reflect the situations of every self-employed cultural worker who has reached the poverty threshold in these epidemic conditions. The curtain falls, the lights dim, and once again the overpowering, almost ominous sound of accordions fills the hall.

Under the play's description, **Rok Vevar** writes:

Layer upon layer

A painting is painted,

Until it looks like nothing


But the image.

Beautiful?


Beautiful as the most beautiful of them all.

These verses perfectly capture the topic of this one-act play that transforms the naked artist's body into an image, into a symbol of Slovenia. In nationalism, the female image is an image of a healthy mother, a housekeeper, an object covered with clothing that must be as regulated and controlled as possible. The movement limited due to the quantity and the uncomfortableness of clothes is a way of repression that we are used to, both in the capitalist fashion industry and in national ideology. To deprive her of her freedom and frame her so that she serves the interests of the ruling. To be silent and immovable like a picture. The principle of dressing that Semenič applies onstage also reminds one of the short feminist performance by **Mallika Taneja** *Be Careful*, as seen four years ago on the Glej Theatre stage as part of the Young Lions Festival. The Indian artist focused on rape and used speech to express herself, yet the naked body and the donning of excessive clothing also spoke as a symbol of control over the female body despite the different cultural context.

This theatre one-act play that produces a critique of the patriarchal and nationalist system without words and using only gestures shines as a strong statement at the City of Women festival. This time, Simona Semenič's naked body speaks in place of her texts or can be read in combination with them, with her revealing of the intimate which is never only private but always political (and must be understood as such).



Ana Lorger is a graduate student of Comparative Literature and Dramaturgy. Her interests extend into the fields of political theatre and feminist art. Ana also writes literary and theatre critiques for Radio Študent, the online theatre platform Kriterij, and LUD Literatura Publishing, curates her own art projects, and writes poetry.







NICOLE FERNÁNDEZ FERRER, NATAŠA PETREŠIN-BACHELEZ

DEFIANT MUSES

Discussion on the French feminist video collective

With fellow activist filmmaker **Carole Roussopoulos** and translator **Ioana Wieder**, **Delphine Seyrig**, a renowned French film star and a less-known powerful voice of the French feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s, founded one of the first activist video collectives **Les Insoumuses (Defiant Muses)**. The City of Women festival hosted screening nights, titled **Disobedient Muses**, of their ground-breaking videos. The discussion¹ that the programme selection curators **Nicole Fernández Ferrer** and **Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez** had about the work and activism of the three pioneers is published here in a revised form.

Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez: Nicole, you are the director of the Centre audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir. Can you tell us more about the Centre?

Nicole Fernández Ferrer: The beginnings of the Centre go back to 1982. It is an audio-visual archive of feminist and LGBTQ films established by **Delphine Seyrig**, **Carole Roussopoulos**, a video pioneer, and **Ioana Wieder**. The goal of the Centre is archiving, preserving, valuing, restoring, and incorporating new films in the archive collection that encompasses more than 1500 titles. We also work with pupils and students to encourage discussion and the understanding of gender stereotypes; as well as with artists who can find inspiration in our archive. We have workshops and

1 See <https://youtu.be/EeFOHTk7piY> and https://youtu.be/W_w7RSR0KFU.

film screenings in prisons. Our vision of feminism is an active feminism that fights and tries to make a difference.

NPB: Let's talk about the name of Defiant Muses [Fr. *Insoumuses*] – it is the name of the three-women collective who later established your Centre. The story goes that the name came to be after somebody mispronounced or did a wordplay on 'les insoumises' [the defiant women] and 'les muses' [muses].

NFF: Yes. On the one hand, there are muses who inspire poets, sculptors, writers – these are the women who are there to give inspiration and consolation. On the other hand, there are the rebels who refuse to yield to the rules of society, who fight against what limits them, what stops them from being what they want to be. It's a coinage from 'les muses' and 'les insoumises': 'Les insoumuses'. There were more founding members, not just three. They decided to keep this name that later also turned into *Les muses s'amuse* (The muses are having fun). Wordplay and humorous nicknames are a common feature of feminism.

NPB: An interesting fact is that Carole was the first woman to own a video camera.

NFF: She was very quick to understand the camera's usefulness. Nothing much was known about the video camera and its technology; there were only film schools with predominately male professors. That is why video cameras were tools in the hands of feminists and other activist groups such as the Black Panthers, various groups in Palestine, as well as artists. The camera was light and mobile, much cheaper than a film camera, which made it ideal to document different fights or art works. It was also how the three women connected – Delphine and Ioana met Carole on a workshop she ran.

NPB: Creating images and videos is a part of the feminist movement and thought. As much as writing and theory are the founding phenomena of feminism, the production and distribution of images are of extreme importance – and the Centre played a pioneer role in this.

NFF: Correct. Delphine, Carole and Ioana were really innovative in trying to preserve the video documents they (and other collectives) had been creating since the 1970s. As part of the Centre, they wished for these videos to circulate and at the same time to enable new ones to emerge. As they wrote themselves, feminism was narrated through video images and not, for example, through television, which was the

medium controlled by whomever controlled the state. They chose video as a weapon in their fight and as an artistic tool. They often screened videos in the presence of those who created them so that they could give as much context on their artworks as possible. Even though these people are no longer with us, we try to keep this tradition going at the Centre by always talking about their history, creation, and importance for that time whenever we screen a video.

NPB: I believe that the selected videos, shown at City of Women festival, are as current today as they were when they were created. These women were feminist activists who didn't centre only on what was going on in their immediate environment but also in the international context.

NFF: This is true. The video *Genet Talks About Angela Davis* gives support to an American political prisoner but also shows how feminists in France and elsewhere stood up for the international issue of anti-racism. As far as Delphine, Carole and Ioana go, one of the reasons for this is that ever since they were children, they all lived in different countries, evolving a special sensibility towards international fights in feminism. At the same time, it must be said that French feminism was intersectional without even knowing the term.

NPB: Regarding their importance for the era, the films are connected. The video *Inês* is also a story about a political prisoner.

NFF: This video still represents a memory and a reminder of Brazilian dictatorship and is, at the same time, an homage to the women who went through torture. *The Three Marias* is connected to the political situation in Portugal and also speaks about political prisoners – three authors who publicly spoke of women issues trying to effect change but were instead rewarded with prison.

NPB: Selection for the City of Women festival also contains what we could call the first feminist interpretation on video.

NFF: Indeed. You are speaking about *Maso and Miso Go Boating*. At the end of 1975, the year United Nations celebrated as the international year of women, the three women decided to make a show mimicking those on French television. The title of the TV show speaks volumes: *One more day and the year of the woman, phew! It'll be over*. The video *Maso and Miso Go Boating* became legendary and is considered the first feminist film included in any museum collection. It was recognised as an artwork

that is in its entirety a reinterpretation. So we can say that it is the first feminist reinterpretation on video. When we screen the film today and explain the context of those times, it is an important archival document of feminist history, as well as the history of video and its inventiveness.

NPB: Sociologist Nadja Ringart also collaborated on *Maso and Miso*. At the end of the video, there is a text that could be called the manifesto of this female collective. The text communicates the mission of video through which women would be able to self-represent. Not through media, most definitely not by men (the Maso) nor by women (the Miso). They will be able to represent themselves. We can therefore understand this video as activist.

NFF: Yes. Now, 45 or 50 years later, we see it as dated. We not only have television; there are also social networks, the Internet, we can record with our phones, it is much easier for us to auto-document our opinions. Back then, it was more difficult. Television was the voice of the state, the voice of the master, while women did not want this dominant voice to represent them. They preferred to choose small cameras that began appearing by the late 60s and make their own films with them, document their fights, or reinterpret television programmes. They declared: “We will not be represented by television, we chose video for our fight.” And the camera really did become the weapon of their fight.


NPB: And then there are two more movies: *S.C.U.M. Manifesto* from 1967, which is considered an artwork, and *Racists Are Not Our Mates, Nor Are Rapists* from 1986. In this video, intersectionality happens between racism and sexism. The video, shot with three activists against racism, all three of migrant roots, is extremely current.

NFF: Yes. If we think of the context in France that year – rapes happening in public places, on the metro and on the street, for example. A large manifestation against rape followed. Although the perpetrators were unknown, French right-wing media immediately accused the Arabs. This was therefore the racist position of rejection of a large part of the French public. That year, the Centre established a feminist collective against rape. At the same time, they invited three male activists against racism who were the children of immigrants, i. e. French nationals with foreign roots, with whom they discussed racism and sexism.

NPB: To conclude, let’s talk about the video *In Memory Of* about the death and especially the funeral of Simone de Beauvoir. Simone de Beauvoir agreed to the Centre taking her name. For many feminists,


including Delphine Seyrig, she was not just an icon but a sort of a spiritual mother. This is also one of the last videos Delphine recorded.

NFF: The video was shot in 1986, on **Simone de Beauvoir's** funeral, and later in 1987. Delphine decided to record not only the funeral ceremony but also the accompanying crowd present, where we can see a really diverse large group of various generations. She also didn't concentrate only on the flowers on the grave, but also filmed the messages left by women from all over the world. These messages bear witness to the influence Simone de Beauvoir's life and writing had on whole generations of activists and other women who identified with her perspective.



Nicole Fernández Ferrer has, besides coordinating the Centre audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir, lectured on women's film and feminist video, and served as a jury member in various festivals. She has programmed the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival in Paris, the Creteil International Women's Films Festival and Racines Noires, among others. She is a board member of the 7ème Genre, the Archives du Féminisme, the Centre Hubertine Auclert and the Cinémas du Sud-Tilt. She lives and works in Paris.

Nataša Petrešín-Bachelez is an interdependent curator, editor, and writer. She was co-director of Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers (2010–2012). She is chief editor of *Versopolis Review*, and was chief editor of the *Manifesta Journal* (2012–2014) and of *L'Internationale Online* (2014–2017). She curated the project *Not Fully Human, Not Human at All*, organized by KADIST, Paris (2017–2020). She is co-founder of the Initiative for Practices and Visions of Radical Care, with Elena Sorokina.





PETRA METERC

DELPHINE AND CAROLE

Excerpts from the discussion with the documentary's director Callisto McNulty

Although **Delphine Seyrig** rose to fame as the star of films by Chantal Akerman, François Truffaut, Alain Resnais and Luis Buñuel, she was a powerful voice of the French feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s, advocating for women's reproductive rights (abortion) and the rights of sex workers. Since women's roles in the film industry were restricted to male visual pleasure she began working with filmmakers who dismantled this voyeuristic relationship (**Chantal Akerman, Marguerite Duras, Ulrike Ottinger** and others) and founded one of the first activist video collectives **Les Insoumuses**.

Callisto McNulty, director and Carole Roussopoulos' granddaughter, illustrates this unsung aspect of Seyrig's career in her riveting and subversively funny documentary *Delphine and Carole*, which comprises film clips, television interviews with misogynistic politicians and intellectuals, and excerpts from radical protest videos that Seyrig made with **Carole Roussopoulos**.

The screening of the documentary *Delphine and Carole* at the City of Women festival was followed by a **videotalk with the director**. The talk was moderated by film critic **Petra Meterc**.

Petra Meterc: We have seen in the film that your grandmother, Carole Roussopoulos, started this project and then you decided to continue it. Why did you decide to continue this project and how did you change it from what it was meant to be in the first place?

Callisto McNulty: My grandmother started this project two years before her death in 2009. It was a project that meant a lot to her, it was a project that was keeping her alive towards the end of her life. Unfortunately, she could not finish the film with which she wanted to pay tribute to **Delphine Seyrig** as a director and a feminist. Five years ago, together with my mother and uncle, we decided to present the documentary to the public, but I had to re-edit it, and through the editing process I discovered that it was impossible to finish the work of someone who is dead. So I started additional research work on grandma's work and on the work they did together and the research made me realise that I really wanted to include Carole's presence in this film as well. To tell the story of both of them as there is a really specific energy that comes out of films that they made together in terms of humour, creativity ... This was becoming more and more clear to me as I edited the materials. Maybe the first edited version was more like *Delphine by Carole*, but later on it eventually became *Delphine and Carole*.

PM: There is really a lot of archival footage in the documentary and it seems there was a lot to choose from. What were the toughest decisions that you had to make as a director? Was it difficult to choose lines or the right images?

CM: Some parts of it were not really that difficult. I really wanted to portray some topics. While I was researching and watching films by Delphine Seyrig, some images really resonated with others. So it was organic and almost magical, how something, some archives, worked incredibly well together. The hardest part was not wanting to say too much. Sometimes I wanted to add something in the videos, I wanted to go deeper into some issue, but realised I was getting out of the film. The challenge of editing a film that only uses archival footage is to always keep attention, to train yourself in that. To not get lost in all the material. And sometimes one piece can be incredibly strong, but if it doesn't work with other pieces it should not have its place in the film. I like to use the metaphor of two coloured circles – when they come together, they make another colour. And Delphine and Carole were really like that. Their encounter, their work. Delphine Seyrig as an actress and Carole Roussopoulos as a director. What I showed with Carole's work says something about Delphine as an actress and as a feminist. And vice versa. Sometimes the movies of Delphine Seyrig and her roles and the way she was committed says something about Carole.

PM: At the beginning of the film, we see that your grandmother bought her first camera right after quitting her job and I wonder, did she immediately start to make political videos, feminist political videos, or did that come later?

CM: Carole was working for *Vogue*, which is not really a political magazine, but in some interview she said that she met really independent women there who were often alone or raising children alone and had to provide for themselves. She was dismissed from her work and the reason for it was political. She had this anger from a very young age. When she was dismissed from work, she met with **Jean Genet**, a famous French poet, writer and a very engaged political figure. He said to her: “You should buy this video camera.” He wanted Carole to come with him and film Palestinian camps in Jordan. The first film that she made was very political. It was during the war. The living conditions were very difficult and there was violence against the families in camps in Jordan. When she came back to France, she continued working in this left anti-colonial movement. But very soon she met a group of feminists. Pioneer feminists – the MLF (Mouvement de libération des femmes, the French Women’s Liberation Movement). At the time she was editing a film of the revolutionary gay movement. The feminists who were passing by saw the images she was editing. And they were shocked. They said: “Oh, you only film men talking. Why don’t you film women?” And Carole said to them: “It was only the men who spoke up, and the women didn’t speak.” From then on, she became really close with the Women’s Liberation Movement. She started filming the feminist trouble. I would say that her work always had a political dimension. Or at least a human dimension. Which is feminist.

PM: What is surprising about the excerpts from different films and also about the whole work of this collective is that it is very joyful, humorous but, at the same time, also extremely radical, even for our time. Were you surprised at any point about these two moods merging in their work and in their activism?


CM: Yeah, it actually really gave me a lot of energy while I was researching and then editing. It just seemed that it is possible to be engaged in a way that gives you energy, it can be joyful, and this is the opposite of the image that we often have of political commitment as being sacrificial, not allowing you to have pleasure and fun. But that’s not really what they were about. Their work is a lesson how you can do very radical things collectively with quite little funds. And this is something we sometimes forget, to go back to essential things and be effective.

PM: I want to ask about the specific abortion scene, as it seems very daring for the time. Can you tell us a bit more how it was filmed and planned and where it was filmed?


CM: Abortion was still illegal in France when this particular one was filmed. It was an abortion organised by a group of doctors and the woman who was having an abortion agreed to be filmed. The abortion was taking place in Delphine Seyrig's apartment. She was famous and was, thus, in a way protected by the law, at the same time she had more visibility, and she used this visibility to be engaged, so she often gave her apartment so that women could get the procedure done in safe conditions. The film then came out two years later after it was filmed and by then abortion was legalised in France. If the film had come out earlier, it would put the girl who was filmed in danger.

PM: Delphine Seyrig was in fact quite a famous movie star. She was very well known in France. How was she perceived in the movement, in the community?

CM: In a way, when you are famous, you have power and it means that your ideas can be heard and you are protected in some way. So I think her involvement was very positive for the movement. At the same time, I think people did not immediately take her seriously. They were impressed but at the same time also a bit like: "You are this famous actress who acts and dresses in fancy clothes, how are you actually engaged ... how is that possible?" But then they realised that she was very simple. And I think it was not an issue after that anymore.



Callisto McNulty's research in the fields of feminism and cultural studies takes the shape of cinematic and editorial projects. She co-wrote and co-produced *Éric's Tape* (2017). She is also the co-editor and co-author of the digital book *SCUM Manifesto*, based on text by Valerie Solanas, combining a restored version of the same-titled video by Carole Roussopoulos and Delphine Seyrig as well as documents, filmed interviews and original texts.







ANNEMARIE LOTTI GOSAR

ADRIANA KNOUF: XENOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS. 001A: TRYING PLASTIC VARIATIONS

Lecture performance as seen by Annmarie
Lotti Gosar from the Transfeminist Initiative
TransAkcija Institute

Now the first hit of this cocktail feels like such a letdown; such a list of changes and no immediate results! But slowly things begin to accumulate, permanently: erections stop being spontaneous and, when they happen, they are extremely painful because of atrophied tissue. Orgasms, which actually require work now, nevertheless are body-shaking intense. Sobbing occurs for no particular reason. Bumping into things with your nipples causes you to wince in pain. Full effect occurs in just a few weeks. Estradiol is such a simple thing, really. Just 44 elements bound together into rings and groups, elements from the exploding stars, from respiring plants, from the remains of expired creatures in the dirt.

— **Adriana Knouf**,
Xenological Entanglements. 001a:
Trying Plastic Variations

Scientifically articulating the changes that happen to her during her hormone replacement therapy (HRT), Adriana Knouf opens the lecture performance by saying that estradiol, a hormone occurring naturally in the human body, as well as a synthetically produced to aid in transition, is but a simple thing; the elements that constitute it are the same ones that are present in the stars, in the decaying wildlife, in all of us.

Hormones are, after all, a very *human* thing. Yet these same substances can be used to alter the body, transforming and moulding it into something tranxxeno, a terrestrial entity that is too often labelled as the Other by the cis-heteronormative patriarchal society.

The malleability of the body as seen in HRT is explored in this lecture performance, as well as in the artist's previous and future works. In her published article, *Xenological Temporalities in the Search of Extraterrestrial Intelligence, Lovecraft and Transgender Experiences*, she delves into these transition temporalities, explaining how the process of change is not at all linear, her past aspect of female puberty that did not really exist, yet should have existed, taking place in the present with the help of estradiol patches.

To a cis person, this may all seem complicated and unnecessary, some might even deem it unnatural. But the moulding and changing of the body is a very natural process that many organisms go through in their lifetimes. And if we have the ability to expand, rewrite ourselves into something more, into something that connects with our deepest inner self, why should we not use this ability? After all, through time, humans have tested the limits of possibility many times, which just goes to show that nothing that exists in this world is really unnatural, simply because it exists. What can exist, ultimately, cannot go against nature.

We see the artist disrobe herself in front of a dressing mirror and perform a task that has become a part of her daily routine. Removing a used rectangular transdermal estradiol patch from the lower left side of her abdomen, she also gently scratches the left-over tape still stuck to her skin. She then takes a new patch and lightly presses it on the same spot, smoothing the edges. It is a very mundane task at its core, like moisturising your hands, changing your bedsheets or brushing your teeth. Yet performed in front of an audience, this peek into the life of a trans woman is anything

but banal. This transdermal patch is what releases estradiol into the body, raising the hormone's levels in blood closer to that of a cisgender woman, which triggers a change in the body. It is an instrument of modification and transformation, so often feared by the society but nevertheless a crucial part of a transgender woman's transition.

The audience sees the artist's body, not directly, but through a mirror, a body of a trans woman, a body rarely seen or represented in such prosaic matter. This intimate, but not sexualised display of trans nudity is crucial for people to rethink the forced binary of bodies, of identities, and see the actual complexity of the human being as a whole. We are all greatly unique and have the potential to become more through mutual understanding and compassion. Nonetheless, society time and again deems hormonal therapy as a form of mutilation, contaminating the body's 'natural' level of hormones and looks down upon transitions.

The artist dressing herself in full safety attire carefully holds her used estradiol patches with long tongs, distributing them to the audience and inviting them to put them on their throat, giving instructions on how to do it properly. This act is a clever jab at the aforementioned view on contaminating the body with foreign hormones along with the thought-provoking fact that you are contaminating yourself with a trans woman's estradiol. In a sense, the artist invites people in the audience to alienate themselves, accept the change and put themselves in the shoes of a trans person, forever shifting and searching for their true self in the strict binary imposed by society.

In the scientific field, contamination means a mistake, an experiment that needs to be redone, a bacterial agar roaming in the trash and deemed useless for further examination. Scientists dealing with dangerous small organisms also go a long way to avoid contamination, with strict regulations and protective equipment to cover themselves from head to toe. So it is ironic in a sense that people are afraid of something as simple as estradiol, a hormone we all already possess regardless of our gender or sex; that we would go to such lengths to prevent others from using these often life-saving molecules simply because we don't see the broad diversity of what human body is and can be. Hormones might have diverse effects on the body and not all of them are positive, but the question remains: is society willing to study these effects further to assure a safe transition for trans people? Or are we using the hormone's unpredictability as an excuse to enforce the binary and avoid the ever-looming fact that we consider trans bodies and experiences weird and other?

Although estradiol makes many changes to the body, it does not shorten the vocal cords or make them thinner if a trans woman has begun hormone therapy after puberty. This is in contrast with transgender men, whose vocal cords, while taking testosterone, will lengthen and they would develop a deeper voice. Trans women sometimes have surgeries to shorten their vocal cords, but the results are unpredictable and many trans women are not able to find or afford such surgery. Therefore, the feminisation of the voice is achieved by often lengthy and rigorous voice training. Why the feminisation of voice, one might ask? Voice is a very important human characteristic. Its pitch and resonance make us who we are and also often put us in the binary of either 'male' or 'female'. Speech and communication scientists argue that speech patterns differ quite considerably between men and women, and since there are so many aspects to the voice, one must consider a lot while trying to retrain it. For many transgender women across the world, passing, meaning being seen and perceived as a cis woman, is crucial to their survival. More often than not, they also pass until they speak. Feminising the voice also helps with one's gender dysphoria.

Knouf puts an important emphasis on her voice in the lecture performance, showing the audience certain voice training methods and breathing and pitch exercises she uses to feminise her voice. The artist previously did some work on non-speech vocalisations, being interested in sound art and poetry, and was also a musician for some time, playing the viola, so experimenting with her voice was something very essential to her. Pointing out this missing effect of estradiol, the artist specifically instructs the audience to put the estradiol patch on their throat, where the vocal cords reside, perhaps also in the hope that someday, a substance would be available to help trans women feminise their voice easier and with less rigorous vocal training, as well as showing the audience the importance and malleability of the voice. After all, with enough training, one can change one's pitch and speech patterns.

Xenological Entanglements is a multi-year project, consisting not only of the artist's performances, but also of a project called *001: Eromatase*, which is a science venture in which Knouf seeks to be able to differentiate her own testicular Leydig cells to produce more estrogen. The interesting and perhaps ironic thing, if looking at scientists enforcing the binary through hormones, is that the molecule of estradiol is produced from testosterone, a so called 'primary





male androgen'. About 0.3–0.5% of testosterone that the man's body produces is converted into estradiol, which is important for bone health and the cognitive function. This conversion is conducted by an enzyme called aromatase. This means that every trans woman has the ability to turn her own testosterone into estradiol, albeit in small amounts.

But what if we were to engineer these cells to produce a bigger amount of aromatase and thus convert more testosterone into estradiol? This question, along with the fact that scientists have discovered that putting Leydig cells in the presence of higher amounts of testosterone causes them to turn this excess testosterone into estradiol, has sparked interest in the artist to start researching the idea of being able to regulate her own estradiol levels. Since Knouf is yet to find a doctor willing to perform a biopsy of her testicular cells for research purposes, the project is presently taking the route of modifying mouse testicular cells to see how they respond to an environment rich with testosterone and one with microgravity.


Why would the artist seek to find out how cells respond in microgravity? The answer is in the aspect of space travel. As a xenologist, Adriana Knouf is looking for a way to explore the space outside the limits of our own atmosphere. At present, no trans person or someone on hormone replacement therapy has been to space. There are many adjustments that a person must make in order to go into this inhospitable environment and stay there for longer periods of time. It is known that microgravity in space stations affects the body in many ways, one of them being the production and release of hormones, which appears to be different under those conditions.

In order to maintain a safe and effective hormone therapy while in space, the artist has to first know the amount of estradiol her body would produce while in microgravity to make changes in her HRT. Very little to no research has been done in this field, since science sees no potential in assisting trans people to go to space. So Adriana, taking matters into her own hands and constructing this DIY space biology program, is seeking to help herself and other trans people who wish to explore the world beyond planet Earth.


Simply travelling to space and residing in a space station for some time is not the artist's only wish in life. She often tells the story of her as a young child, living in rural USA, walking at night in the corn fields near her home with a flashlight in her hands. She would turn the light up to the skies in the hope that some extra-terrestrial being would see her cries of help and

take her away some place where she would not feel so alone and alien. This is not a rare experience among queer and trans people in our society that sees anything and everything outside the strict norms set on the foundations of a cis, white, heteronormative patriarchy as weird, alien and other. Provocatively, the artist embraces these descriptors and expands them to a whole new level. Since trans bodies are seen as alien, as other, the outcasts of this world, she connects their experiences to those of an extra-terrestrial body.

Xenological Entanglements. 001: Trying Plastic Variations was an all-around extraordinary lecture performance, delving into the life and the experience of living in a trans woman's body, which many of us cis gendered people might not fully understand. Yet the raw, provocative nature of it beckons us to see our world beyond our own bubble and encounter everything tranxxeno. Who knows, we might find an extra-terrestrial being in ourselves.



Annemarie Lotti Gosar, a student at the Veterinary Faculty in Ljubljana, participates in content development and event organisation at the Transfeminist Initiative TransAkcija Institute, which provides support, information and a sense of alliance for transgender and gender non-conforming people in Slovenia. An occasional writer and poet, her interests lie in implementing art into science and fighting for social justice.



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JASMINA JERANT

BIO-AUTONOMOUS FARMING

An interview with Isabel Burr Raty

**How many kinds of female ejaculation do you know?
Can a brain orgasm be transformed into a renewable
energy source in times of disaster?**

In the *Bio-autonomous Farming* workshop **Isabel Burr Raty** presented the essentials of the bio-autonomous female farming system employed at her *Beauty Kit Female Farm*, exploring some of these questions together with the workshop participants. This farm is a mobile installation performance project that she tours with across Europe, recycling bodily materials and orgasmic electricity to produce eco-erogenous para-pharmaceutics products.

In the course of three days, the artist outlined the medical and ancestral perspectives on the nutritious properties of menstrual, fertile, orgasmic, menopausal and pregnant fluids, and taught the participants how to manufacture beauty & care bio-products from these juices. Furthermore, the essential tools and techniques of this farming system inspired participants to explore, train and tone the different ecosystems of the landscapes that make up their sexual organs, taking their bliss potentials a step further within a niche of synergic mutualism.

Jasmina Jerant: How does the Beauty Kit Farm work?

Isabel Burr Raty: The *Beauty Kit Female Farm* works around harvesting female erogenous juices to manufacture beauty and wellbeing bio-products with them. It is actually a durational body art performance and installation, where participants come together for a few days to become the harvesters of their female abysses. In this context they are mentored by me, the Farm Patrona, together with the facilitators team, within the *Bio-autonomous Female Farming System*. This system provides a DIY technology for each participant to explore the erogenous cavities that make up the landscapes of the female abyss.

JJ: What do you mean with the female abyss?

IBR: We use the term female abyss in the farm in order to re-name the sexual organs.

JJ: What inspired you to work in this direction?

IBR: I have a background in philosophy, theatre and filmmaking. A few years ago, I lived on Easter Island (which is an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean) during the developing process of *Nua Rapa Nui*, a film that I'm directing about the colonial history of this Human Heritage. The film follows one of the leaders of the local indigenous community, a female friend of mine who introduced me to the local tribes and their way of living. This allowed me to undergo a parallel performance research, aimed at understanding the indigenous Cosmo-logical vision on Earth that speaks of this living organism as being the womb of a mother. In this quest I encountered ceremonies and rituals that connect bodily matters with the local oceanic, volcanic, air and agricultural landscapes. After this process, I started regarding my body as a territory and the womb as one of its landscapes to explore. This has resulted in investigating and working with more than twenty-three different female juices, pertaining to the menstrual, fertile, arousal, orgasmic, ejaculative, menopausal, pregnant and birth eco-systems.

JJ: Would you say your research was ethnographic?

IBR: I am not an ethnographer and probably the research goes beyond the limits of ethnography, in the sense that it comes from sharing with the Rapa Nui people, where I was given the generous opportunity to embody their way of living.

JJ: How do you envision the future development of the female farm?

IBR: The premise behind the project is to conceive the human body as a territory for agricultural development. The female farm is part of a larger process that will eventually become a self-sustainable village where we will harvest every-*body* with the aim of offering solutions for the ecological crises and multispecies extinction that we are facing.

JJ: How was your workshop at the City of Women festival prepared?


IBR: I was invited by [Čipke] from the Rampa Lab / Kersnikova Institute to run the workshop called *Bio-autonomous Female Farming System* in Ljubljana for three days. This workshop is an adaptation of the farm and we met for three hours every day for three day. In this format, the participants experienced a selection of activities that we normally conduct at the farm. Some of these activities included the in-situ harvest of female fluids, learning about the nutritious properties that compose these juices and the production of your own beauty and wellbeing products from them. Another activity we did is the seeding activity, which consists of training the vaginal and pelvic floor muscles, as well as understanding the biology that is behind the female abyss landscape.

JJ: Apart from the workshop, you also exhibited your tools?


IBR: Yes, together with the workshop I exhibited the *Beauty Kit Bio-autonomous Farming System & aspects of the BK SPA*, exposing some farming tools used at the farm's production plant, as well as the different BK lines and the 13 products that we have developed so far. The farming tools forecast the character of the harvesting 'machine' process, which include: weeding, fertilising, seeding, harvesting, storing and content transfer tools. Some examples of the exhibited products include the *BK Clarifying Mist*, which contains G-spot ejaculation harvested at full body orgasm, and the *BK Nourishing Face Cream*, composed of cervical fluid harvested at ovulation.

JJ: When the farm is over, you offer a full facial treatment with the products?

IBR: Yes, after the farm is concluded we open the *Beauty Kit SPA* interactive installation, which invites the public to engage with the BK products. At the BK SPA, we call the treatments beauty abductions. One of the abductions that we offer is the self-facial abduction, where we display a selection of our products accompanied by an application protocol that offers participants a full facial renewal treatment. Believe it or not, the public enjoys this very much!



Isabel Burr Raty is an artist, filmmaker, teacher and sexual Kung Fu coach, interested in exploring the interstices between the organic and the artificial, between the unlicensed knowledge of minority groups and the dominant narratives. Her art works and collaborations have appeared all over the world, including at the Paris Palais de Tokyo, the Royal Flemish Theater, the Hong Kong ISEA and the London Eco-Futures.







BK
by Isabel Burr Raly

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KATJA KOBOLT, SUZA HUSSE

corneous # hands # toxic # image
parlour # mask # shift # body
modern # mobility # labour
future # counter-solidarities
protection # independence

Discursive parlour about *Corneous Stories* project
 with Katja Kobolt and Suza Husse, co-iniators of the
 collaborative platform N*A*I*L*S hacks*facts*fictions¹

corneous

Suza Husse: I am intrigued by your choice of *corneous* as a common ground for the narratives and aesthetics within the fourth iteration of N*A*I*L*S hacks*facts*fictions. Corneous describes a bodily feature, something made of horn, like nails and claws, hair, feathers, skin, scales. As a site of porosity, the corneous connects human and animal bodies to their environments. With *Corneous Stories* the *corneous* appears as a multi-layered interface, which links humans with machines and imaginaries via gender, toxicity and labour. Through the art works, texts and interactions that you gathered with *Corneous Stories* I came to understand it as a practice of tackling embodied layers of histories, of ideologies, of violence and of resilience. Corneosity like toxicity acts like a cumulative organic filter between animate and inanimate matter, alive and dead, soft and hard, present, past and future.

¹ Curated by Katja Kobolt and presented in 2020 at the City of Women festival, the fourth iteration of N*A*I*L*S hacks*facts*fictions *Corneous Stories* encompassed a student research project, a publication, an international group exhibition, and an art education programme. Within *Corneous Stories* the City of Women Association for Promotion of Women in Culture, Goethe-Institut Ljubljana, the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana, Škuc Gallery, and District Berlin joined forces for artists, students, researchers, and educators to look at society and history through cosmetics and beauty work.

toxic

Ingredients of nail lacquer can migrate through the nail into the skin or enter the body through mucous membranes and airways. Here, nail polish can affect the senses through a series of toxic substances. Ingested in larger quantities, they can alter states of consciousness and hormone levels, trigger allergies and cause kidney damage, liver damage and cell proliferation. The ingredients contained in nail polish can be detected in urine samples taken from nail polish users. More significant is the damage sustained by those who are exposed to toxic fumes directly under their breathing zone. Here the toxic trio of toluol, formaldehyde and phthalate poison the primarily female migrant labourers working in nail salons.

— **Mareike Bernien**, *Toxic Polish*, 2019

SH: In the connections between the contributions in *Corneous Stories* toxicity emerges as a historical agent, a relational carrier between the social and the ecological, between human and non-human bodies, animate and inanimate matter. I think it is quite interesting how, from our first collaborative research within the group that emerged at the University of Arts in Berlin (UdK), toxicity became an important concern and a link between different experiences and approaches. It was there even from the very beginning of our conversations as much as friendship and feminist comradeship, solidarity and cross-collaborations. You were working on *no stop non stop* – a project dealing with cultures influenced by migration histories, gender and labour regimes on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the guest worker agreement between West Germany and Socialist Yugoslavia – and brought **Ayşe Güleç** and I together to come up with a format for us to collaborate on. Ayşe had been thinking about nail studios in relation to migrant small business economies in Germany and the toxic experience of racial profiling at the employment office that a friend of her had told her about. At the time, my friend, the artist **Phuong Linh Nguyen** and I were working together to finish a part of her long-term project on nail and beauty labour performed in the global north by people from the Vietnamese diaspora. Linh at the time worked on toxic fumes as spectres of colonial whiteness. She became my main collaborator when we took N*A*I*L*S to the UdK, as did **Mareike Bernien**, Ayşe's friend whose work *Toxic Polish* emerged from that context, then continued at *no stop non stop* and has now become an important inspiration for *Corneous Stories*.

Katja Kobolt: Totally, apart from *corneous*, as, among other meanings, a state of sedimented layers of analogous phenomena, in the collaborative research that we have pursued since the first N*A*I*L*S hacks*facts*fictions edition in 2018, many works were about toxicity, including within the

Corneous Stories. In fact, some of the findings of the previous research editions, like Mareike Bernien's investigation into the common chemical base of car and nail polish and celluloid film stock served us as a point of departure for further geopolitically situated investigations in *Corneous Stories*. Historically, the three products based on nitrocellulose also shared the circuit of their popularisation: while in the East, the train brought moving images of the (October) revolution to the people, film in the West promoted car mobility and cosmetics.

image

KK: In their film *Rainbow's Gravity* **Mareike Bernien** and **Kerstin Schroedinger** confront us with the historical conditions of the Agfacolor-Neu colour film, which was developed during the Nazi regime through the exploitation of forced laborers working with highly toxic chemicals. Problematising the political use of colour vs. black and white in the construction of remoteness and proximity in time, *Rainbow's Gravity* turns to the social phenomena that were blurred and disguised from the present by the black-and-white construction of historical distance (from Nazism and Fascism).

Toxicity turned out to be at the core of many phenomena that become apparent once you employ the prism of the material practice of cosmetics and beauty labour to look at historical, social or aesthetic practices. **Dovilė Aleksaitė** focused on this in her video *Landscape of the Studio*, not unlike the materiality of the historical landscape painting which, as described by John Berger, legitimised (private) ownership over (previously common) land. She accompanied the video with a sculpture about the sensations of porosity of the skin and body when in contact with the invisible toxicity of chemicals and materials used in beauty and nail parlours but also in industrial silkscreen processing.

parlour

SH: For the *Corneous Stories* exhibition you chose a curatorial structure of a series of visual, discursive and art educational parlours. Today the two of us are continuing this format that was originally inspired by nail and beauty salons or parlours. The word *parlour* stems from the Anglo-Norman French word *parlur*, which means a place for speaking and has its roots in the Latin *parlare*, to speak. Let's talk a little bit about the parlour as a relational and space-making device for feminist and antiracist curating – something that you are deeply committed to as a cultural worker.



What is work?

“Work” means to start the reflection where it hurts the most – to look at our entangled histories without losing track of the consistent intersectional power dynamics that reproduce themselves on a global scale.



No individual woman simply wakes up to find herself seated in the manicurist’s chair. Forces beyond her control, such as global patterns of feminized labor migration flows, the growth of service-related industries, racialized job structures, and the resources of her family and ethnic community shape the conditions of her employment.

“smile mask syndrome” is a psychological disorder in which subjects develop depression and physical illness as a result of prolonged, unnatural smiling. First described in Japan in 1983, this is attributed to the great importance placed on smiling in the Japanese service industry.



This specialization of emotional labor in the marketplace rests on the different childhood training of the heart that is given to girls and to boys. Moreover, each specialization presents men and women with different emotional tasks. Women are more likely to be presented with the task of mastering anger and aggression in the service of “being nice.”

We have a simple word for the product of this shadow labor: “nice.”



KK: With N*A*I*L*S hacks*facts*fictions, we departed from the parlour as a socio-cultural and experiential space, and the different artists and researchers that have joined this journey have been dealing with different aspects of it. Some have looked at its hybrid architecture and social choreographies of labour, of encounter and of communities, some at the material and immaterial elements and circuits and their entanglements with larger cultural and historical patterns. Others related more to the affective and political dimensions as well as performances of gender, race and class in the particular encounter between a beauty worker and the person engaged in the process of objectification.

SH: A parlour is a paradoxical space where different codes and power dynamics, identities, economies and erotics are at play, where they are being regulated but can also be liquefied. It unfolds as a problem as much as a lived relational space, where stories are being shared, aesthetics negotiated and from where care and solidarity can also be rethought.

KK: Exactly, and also, as the *Corneous Stories* project was developed in parallel to the Covid pandemic, the observation of and interaction with how Covid measures influence beauty labour, beauty workers and the cultural value of these semi-public, semi-private spaces and practices, were also the subject of our research and collaborations.

shift

KK: The project *3rd Shift* by **Milijana Babić** and the **Centre for Women's Studies at the University Rijeka** is based on conversations with approximately 60 women in different beauty parlours across the city of Rijeka over a period of nine months in 2019. The notion of the third shift describes the labour that women do on top of their first shift, their paid work, and their second shift, the unpaid reproductive labour around home and family.

3rd Shift presents the views of the interviewed women on their relation to beauty labour and how it affects and is affected by their other work shifts, being a co-worker, a care worker, a lover and so forth. The outcome of the project was an intervention (insert) in the Croatian women's magazine *Gloria Glam* and as a billboard in public space within the *Corneous Stories* exhibition, thus reflecting the media economy of the gendered norms of beautification.

SH: The third shift is an interesting way to think economically about beautification as performative acts that constitute gender, that constitute the space we call woman for example. I think **Anna Ehrenstein's** video work

L'Originale shows in quite in quite a joyful glitch-feminist way that binary gender is a fiction, an assemblage which one can get 'wrong' easily (which is why it requires constant training and labour) and which – same as branded fashion – has no point of origin, no purity. At one point in the video we see the following conversation: “You would rather buy a knock-off brand than go into the store?” “Absolutely, I would rather support someone making an honest living than corporations trying to rob people.” I love that. It works the same for gender or the ‘authenticity’ of any identity category.

body

Gender has been used as a weapon against its own populace. The idea of 'body' carries this weapon: gender circumscribes the body, 'protects' it from becoming limitless, from claiming the infinite vast, from realizing its true potential.

We use 'body' to give material form to an idea that has no form, an assemblage that is abstract.

— **Legacy Russell**, *Glitch Feminism. A Manifesto*, 2020

KK: A beauty parlour is also a place of sensuality and pleasure-giving between feminised subjects, where inter-gender touching is socially allowed, where that kind of intimacy is also regulated in a way.

SH: In the book *Testojunkie* **Paul Preciado** calls this intimacy a counter-sexual hand job, women and people of diverse genders beyond cis-masculinity rubbing each other off, so to speak. He captures, in quite an inspiring way, the paradoxical space of the beauty parlour where intimacy and exploitation, toxicity and dissidence are all entangled. Those who enter the parlour in their third shift are worked on by people in their first shift – often in the most precarious and underpaid circumstances.

modern

KK: My personal point of entry into the N*A*I*L*S research was through regimes of migranticised and feminised labour and representations of migration in post-socialist times. A particular prism through which I have been working are the geopolitics involved in the construction of femininity between the so-called former East and former West, socialist femininity versus capitalist femininity. With *Corneous Stories* I was able to deepen that research and proposed to look at cosmetics as a technology of modernity. Inspired by the investigations of **Mareike Bernien** and by **Nika Autor**, in particular by her *The Train of Shadows* film, which was also a part of the *no stop non stop* exhibition, I focused upon the entanglements of (auto)mobility, gender and in particular cosmetics as promoted practices of modernity.

mobility

KK: Paying tribute to the socialist struggles for emancipation, women succeeded to articulate their agenda and push forward the structures that supported the realisation of nominal equality, which was introduced on all levels of legislation, political representation, education, employment, child- and health care, which (predominantly) supported women in reproductive work to a degree seldomly found anywhere in present times. However, I would say that the promotion of normative gender stereotypes and relations (along with cosmetics), of the nuclear family (along with individual car mobility instead of the initially promoted and expended collective train mobility) in Yugoslavia point to the failures of the socialist project and its slow departure from or rather its early return to capitalism.

As I point out in my article *Cosmetics, Cars and The “Diesel Exhaust Curtain”* in the *Corneous Stories* publication: *The more-or-less-annexed post-socialist markets have offered especially the global players in both car and cosmetic industries new market possibilities, also at the costs of environmental pollution and public health. In terms of having access to ‘cleaner’ means of transportation, Eastern Europe obviously ‘drives’ at a different speed. While Germany, with measures such as ‘environmental or scrapping bonus’ (Umwelt- or Abwrackprämie) in the face of the Covid-19 economic stagnation, again considered subsidies for its car industry (and to boost the renewal of its car park), Eastern Europe and Africa have recently become lucrative markets for used, ‘dirty’ second-hand diesel cars and are faced with growing environmental and health crisis of air pollution. However, the historical race between collective mobility (mainly train) and private mobility (mainly cars), has been won by cars and in the ‘multi-speed’ Europe, the Iron Curtain has been replaced by the one of diesel exhaust. Along the road to post-socialism and for the sake of more cars and more lipstick, the emancipated socialist women who performed their nominal, political and structural emancipation also by using cosmetics and driving cars, have had to renounce many structural rights that were of crucial importance in the realisation of nominal gender equality.*

labour

I have always had a very personal relationship with metal, as my family and I have been collecting and recycling it to sustain ourselves since my childhood. My latest paintings on scrap metal depict impressions of everyday life, references to art history, and text collages. Humour, wordplay and my incessant probing of the boundaries of art fuse painting and sculpture into small intimate objects.

— **Selma Selman**, in *Corneous Stories* publication, 2020.

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SH: Another important circuit in the European economies and ecologies around automobile production is made present by the works *Mercedes Matrix* and *Virtual Materialism* by artist and Romani activist Selma Selman. *Mercedes Matrix* is a video documentation of a performance in which the artist and members of her family are re-enacting the labour of disassembling a car for scrap metal recycling. The rough intimacy with the mechanical and electronic make-up of mobility and commodity is accompanied by a series of objects – paintings on metal parts – called *Virtual Materialism*, which propose an intimacy and value production of a different kind: the metal parts of former machine bodies are used as carriers of imaginaries, testimonies and community. With Lenka Đorojević's installation *EXIT, Corneous Stories* exhibition opened up another layer in the 'Mercedes matrix' of capitalist extraction and dealt with the continuities between historical forced labour and current forms of dependent labour.

future

*This installation is a testimony [of concentration camp survivor **Hasena Sulojžić-Terzić** from Pljevlja, Montenegro] and a kind of forensic speculative map that reflects not only the specific conditions of forced labour but also of dependent labour [...] present in contemporary society through various layers of discrimination, exhaustion, exclusion, radicalisation and re-fascisation of societies. So maybe the most important message of this installation is that in every human being there is something untameable and indestructible, which is the future that is yet to be written.*

— **Lenka Đorojević** about her installation *EXIT*, 2020

KK: With the audio spatial installation and visual collage *EXIT* it is important to mention again an ongoing geopolitical entanglement: if during German fascism people from the space of ex-Yugoslavia and elsewhere from Eastern Europe were to work in German factories as forced labourers, they returned to the very same factories as *Gastarbeiters*, guest workers soon after. Very often they even lived in the same dorms that used to be inhabited by forced labourers and their lives in the 'host' country were also meant to resemble the condition of invisibility – with no participation or very regulated participation in social or political life or representation. However, the *Gastarbeiter* were not silent, they fought for their children to have the right to education, they have actively woven not only economical, but also societal living-landscape and paved the way for millions of migrant workers today, many of whom again walk the path of dependent conditions.

counter-solidarities

SH: An important protection device, for example against the toxic fumes or virus health threats but also, at times, against immaterial toxic cultures, is the mask. Together with three more objects that can be found in nail parlours, the mask is an important protagonist in the work *Dialogue of the Objects* by **Jinran Ha** and **Johanna Käthe Michel**. I read their work as a response to the broad spectrum of everyday racism encountered by people of Asian descent in Germany as well as fuelled by a specific moment in spring 2018. At the time the gallery Johann König in Berlin put forth a fetishising and sexist representation of imaginary Asianness and made the racist and patriarchal currents that are still flowing through much of the so-called art world in Europe very visible. On Jinran's initiative our group discussed this incident – also in the context of other racist incidents that art students of colour were encountering in German art schools – and shared our thoughts about the protest and counter-solidarities that were organised by activists and artists, including the initiative Deutsche Asiat*innen Make Noise (German Asians Make Noise).

protection


KK: To prepare for direct contact with toxicity in *Corneous Stories* project **Lea Culetto** produced wearable objects called *Gloves*. Usually gloves are used for protecting the skin from porosity of chemicals in both, the first and the second shift – with nails and other charms or prostheses enhancers. Lea derived *Gloves* from her fashion label *Deflowered by Lea* that she uses for circulating wearable objects and images to deal with different symbolical and material layers of toxicity, like toxicity in relationships, toxicity in working environments, the toxicity one is exposed to (or identified with) as a queer person or as a member of an ethnic community.

independence

Her independence. They kick repeatedly and then again, to show the spectators who is in charge – people will understand the language of kicking – to reject, to repudiate, to humiliate, to punish, to remove, to uproot, to exterminate – to establish orderliness. She was unrivalled.


— **Anna Daučíková**, *Expedition for Four Hands and Accompaniment*, 2019

SH: I found this quote by Anna Daučíková on the backside of a zine page that has been used by our friend Ulrike to wrap a gift: Legacy Russel's book *Glitch Feminism. A Manifesto*. On the front is an image with two hands connected by a flask of red nail polish hovering over photographs and other documents. The short cut nails on the left hand are painted bright red. (The image resonates with another one of Daučíková's works, a polaroid series that shows the artist cutting her nails – an action that within lesbian and queer aesthetics and cosmetics functions as foreplay.) The right hand forms a fist, the nails don't seem to be painted, it's the sexing hand maybe, because I mean, after all we've talked about today: Would you want nail polish up your vagina or up your ass?



Katja Kobolt works as an interdependent curator, art educator and researcher. She obtained a PhD at the LMU München University researching the memory politics on post-Yugoslav wars and feminist canon methods, and has been active as a lecturer (Humboldt University; UDK Berlin; currently at LMU Munich, Institute for Art Pedagogy), editor and writer.

Suza Husse, a queer*feminist cultural practitioner, is a member of the curatorial collective of the queer*feminist art space and community center District Berlin. She co-initiated the collaborative platforms D'EST and N*A*I*L*S hacks*facts*fictions, co-founded the decolonial art and publishing collective The Many Headed Hydra, and she co-runs 'wild recuperations. material from below'.





The background consists of several large, overlapping triangles in a vibrant orange color, set against a white background. The triangles are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some pointing towards the top and others towards the bottom. The overall composition is clean and modern.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

SAMMAR AL KERAWE, VIKTORIIA POSPELOVA,
FAVOUR EDOKPAYI MUSA, SAMAR ZUGHOOOL, KATJA KOVAČ

CATASTROPHE BLUES

A work in progress

For several months, five women based in Slovenia, **Sammar Al Kerawe, Favour Edokpayi Musa, Katja Kovač, Viktoriia Pospelova, Samar Zughool** collaborated with **Tanja Završki** and the Dublin-based theatre makers **Bernie O'Reilly** and **Maud Hendricks** (the **Outlandish Theatre Platform**). Inspired by **Samuel Beckett's** *Catastrophe*, they explored the relations between oppressors, the systems of persecution and precarity. They co-developed video performance portraits together with artist **Đejmi Hadrović**.

At the public screening at the 26th City of Women festival, they discussed war, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity, language, and gender in the context of the circle of oppression which is common to all cultures and societies, but still based on different personal situations and realities. Here, we present their thoughts and motives for the 'set of guidelines' with 'instructions' that they prepared and incorporated into the video performances, each of which reflects a particular individual experience of oppression ... and catastrophe.

Sammar Al Kerawe

I experienced two different types of oppression connected to my marital status. When I was married, the instructions I had to follow were different from the ones after I got divorced. There was a social stigma because I was a divorced woman. I felt that the instructions changed. I remember it was a radical change. I was in shock. I was trying to tell the people that nothing had changed. Why are you treating me differently? One of the instructions that I wrote in this film was dedicated to women: Be strong, life is a jungle. As it is true, life is a jungle and women should be fighting strong for their rights and for freedom. For their personal spaces. To be equal to men. To travel. To work. Another instruction that I wrote was to be patient. Because I was patient. I hoped for three years to leave and come here and eventually I managed to leave Iraq and come here. If you are patient you can change things, you can make them happen. I also wrote – be realistic. You cannot change society, but I had the power to change my life and lead a better life. That was the realistic part. I wrote that you cannot have everything, because indeed, I think you cannot have everything. I had to leave my country and come here. To get some of the things I wanted, but leave others behind. I wrote be nice but not available. Because life is asking us to be nice, but not available. I wrote protect your benefits and protect your space. I think women should do that in order to get what they want, and the rights they want.



Viktoriiia Pospelova

Before we started this project, I had never heard about the term oppression and as we went on with preparations for the filming, I learned so much and I realised that I had actually been personally oppressed. In my case the oppressor is religion and religious institutions. As a non-heterosexual person, I feel that people who believe they are Christians or any other religion ... believe that they are doing everything right and they are the only good people and that others are not normal. I just used to hear so many nasty comments, so much aggression towards me and towards people who were 'not normal' in the way that those religious institutions and people thought. When it was suggested that we write a story and that the performance would be based on that story, I got this idea. I wanted to show what queer people go through and even in my own family, for example, some of my family members are insanely religious and I can say that I am feeling oppressed even at home when talking to them. I am really glad that I got to show this topic in this film within this project. It matters to me and I had fun doing it.



Favour Edokpayi Musa

Oppression means different things for different people. In my case, oppression is visible. When someone is oppressing me based on the colour of my skin, they cannot hide the oppression. For me, the oppression is very visible when it comes to me. One is seeing my colour. I am very visible. Anywhere I walk into, they kind of give me this look, even when I speak out. I want to speak out. And they are like “no, it is not possible”. If I try, these people will look at me, because we are different. So I am just quiet, because that is what you want me to do. You want me to show to you that I am small, because I am from whatever place you think, whatever colour you think ... so I keep quiet, I sit down and I let my body language do the talking. You want me to be small. You want me to be down. You want me to accept that I can't do anything. But I know I can do more than you think. Even more than you. But you don't want to give me a chance. I will let you feel that ego, that I am listening to you, but I know what I can do. So that is why I am here. For me this is very powerful. It means a lot to me.

A black and white photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored blouse with a ruffled collar. She has a piece of white tape over her mouth with the words "NOT POSSIBLE" written on it in black, hand-drawn capital letters. Her right hand is raised to her face, palm facing forward, as if in a gesture of surprise or protest. The background is a bright, overcast sky.

NOT
POSSIBLE

Samar Zughool

I would connect catastrophe to internalised oppression when embodying the system of any kind. When you start living a system of colonisation, a system of white supremacy, a system of patriarchy, you start practicing oppression for yourself. It is a catastrophe that oppression can be visible or invisible. If we embody this system within us, to the extent that it becomes invisible, and we are not even aware of it ... we are not even aware of chauvinism ... we really embody it. When we think that colonisation is history but we are in fact living in it. White supremacy is mainly but not only about skin colour, it is also about many other things. It is about the rules and destruction that we inherit through generations. It is about us internalising the oppression of ourselves. How I can be less Arab so I can be perceived as smarter, how I can act less Arab to be more accepted. Which university I should go to. Which formal education I can get. And how I should treat others to prove that I am part of the system. I can climb into your system because I am a part of it. And this is a catastrophe for me. Awareness is the first step and that is why I was enthusiastic about this project, which motivated me to take part in this. It is empathy that we need before any intellectual talks about colonisation as part of history. Intellectual talk of any kind about historical events is not valid if empathy is not there.



Katja Kovač

As the headline of the guideline, I wrote “this manual is de facto” because de facto is for me one line for waiting. Between living lives and waiting for our lives to pass. Because in our life, everything waits. You must do this, you must do that ... For all these things we have only two things. Time and patience. If you have time, you have a lot of possibilities. And patience to actually get them. A lot of us say, “we have time, life is long”. We are waiting for better times. I think when we are waiting for these better times, we lose opportunities and when we wait for opportunities, we lose time. So, life is one and life is your life. You must live it your way. For it is you who decides about your life. I think we have to live our lives and colour it, all this life.





Sammar Al Kerawe was born in Bagdad, Iraq, and is currently an asylum seeker in Slovenia, where she applied for asylum one year ago. She is a committed advocate for gender equality and women's rights, and she is active in different social programs in Slovenia. Sammar dreams of an inclusive world with equal rights and justice for all.

Viktoriiia Pospelova was born in Russia. She started writing fiction and drawing as a teenager. At the age of 15, Viktoriiia and her family had to leave the country because of political reasons. One of Viktoriiia's main goals is to teach people feminist theory and introduce them to problems women face in everyday life through art.

Favour Edokpayi Musa was born in Nigeria. She lives in Ljubljana. She is eager to form a platform where women could be able to talk about women in our present societies and wants to create a safe space for women. Her aim is to transform society into a more inclusive place for women, a society where women would not be pressured to marry and have children at a very tender age.

Samar Žughool, born in Jordan, has been a resident of Slovenia since 2014. She is passionate about activism, and through theatre, she tackles issues related to global injustice and gender-based discrimination. At University of Ljubljana, she received a student award for her MA thesis 'The role of Women's Rights Movements in Reforming Public Policies after the Arab Spring'.

Katja Kovač was born in Serbia where she graduated in financial administration from the Secondary School of Economics. She came to Slovenia in 2018. She advocates for women's rights because she noticed that women are discriminated against in many areas. She believes that women suffer gender-based discrimination at home, as well as in politics, economy and society.





PIA BREZAVŠČEK

TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN?

Essay

The decision to have a child is among the most burning issues faced by the new generation of women, especially feminists. Why do women still choose to have children – what is the female desire? Following **Freud**, **Julia Kristeva** and **Shoshana Felman** tried to find an answer to this question; while in her book *Why Have Children?* (2012), **Christine Overall** proposed the burden of proof be reversed – why only ask women without children and not women with children to give their reasons, too? **The round table**, *To Have or Not to Have Children*, co-organised by the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, and the City of Women, discussed both theoretical concepts as well as practical circumstances, juxtaposing different perspectives.

The doctoral students of philosophy and psychoanalysis, **Pia Brezavšček**, **Polona Mesec**, **Tamara Podlesnik**, **Petra Polanič**, **Dali Regent**, and philosophy professor **Eva D. Bahovec** from the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, gave their answers to this question. As she pointed out in her introduction, Pia Brezavšček permitted herself “a more personal intrusion in the debate.” We present her speech below.

The title question gives rise to more indirect questions than it does answers. My first reaction to it is this: is it perhaps not so particular that any generalising answer that fails to take into account who asks and who answers it is irrelevant? Can this really be a philosophical question? How can feminism change philosophy so that it will be able to answer such questions adequately? These questions undoubtedly transcend the purpose of this article. But recently, in public space, the question of having children or not has been posed exactly so – in a generalised manner. But who – apart from themselves – is the judge of people who have children, who do not have children, who perhaps have them even though they did not want to? Should only those persons with the biological potential of giving birth decide on the matter? Is this a decidedly personal question or also an ethical, if not a political one?

Carol Hanisch writes that “a political action [is] to tell it like it is, to say what I really believe about my life instead of what I’ve always been told to say.” Can I really answer this question for myself in such a way? Who can really answer this question in such a way? Is it possible to decide this in anybody’s name? Who sets the criteria for the legitimacy of such answers? If we strictly stick to the slogan “My body, my decision”, the debate could end before it had the chance to really open. But it is clear that any decision on this body that is of course inseparable from the person it embodies is influenced by how informed this person is. Not just of this body, but also of the collective body to which the person belongs to, and the environment that the person inhabits.

The myth of motherhood proclaiming that the female essence can only be realised through motherhood is still very present when raising girls from a very early age and it is difficult to draw a line that limits something an individual woman really believes from something it was ‘implanted’ into her. Even though motherhood – be it an autonomous or a complicitous one – can be a part of what a woman wants, that which we call maternal instinct is without question something already strongly sublimed. This is only one of the problems my colleagues **Saška Rakef**, **Barbara Krajnc Avdić**, **Bojana Šaljić Podešva**, and I addressed in the musical and theatrical project *Ideal (M)other* that premiered at the City of Women festival in 2017.

The data suggesting that the more educated a woman in society is, the less children she decides to have is very telling. This of course does not mean that women should be kept ignorant or else they will completely stop giving birth. It mostly means that we are living in a society that does not give equal opportunities to people who should primarily take care of children

and to those who do not have this obligation. When women are allowed the autonomy of deciding on their life paths, they naturally try to do so, in line with the available facts and their personal convictions.

Last but not least: considering the human invasive, destructive and less and less reversible damage to the environment, perhaps the reproduction of humankind has become an ethical question. A stance supported by the ever louder anti-natalist movements. From an ecological standpoint, it is still better to not have children than to put a born polluter into washable nappies (however economical those might be) and the like. In a way, we can therefore understand the turn to the ‘ethicality’ of giving birth as done by **Christine Overall** in connection to the previously self-evident and even morally superior task of motherhood.

And yet. Doesn’t such transferral from the question of the personal (that is political) to the ethical lose the feminist aspect of the question? Similarly to the issue of waste recycling, this is a case of putting systemic responsibility onto the individuals’ consciousness. That is why I will not answer this question. Not because I am so convinced in my own right. Far from it. I believe that no woman should answer this question, except on her own, albeit out loud and collectively. Not lastly because the decision which is a precondition of ethics is not the privilege of every woman who has given birth.

That is why I believe that women should not be called responsible for something that we cannot claim with all certainty included choice. Even when it seems that a child is most wanted. I have peers who have children and claim that parenthood brings them immense joy. Other peers who have children feel the ambivalence inevitably brought on by the situation. There are even more of those who do not have children. Some want to have them but do not have the conditions to do so or cannot have them. But I also have many friends who have decided not to have them. I have a trans friend who is the non-biological father of his child. But regardless of their situation, I am uncomfortable every time any of them have to defend their situations in front of anybody – something that happens all too often.

However, this does not mean that, following the principle of radical feminist circles saying that the personal is political, we cannot talk amongst ourselves on the difficulties of motherhood, non-motherhood, obstacles, desires, anxieties, fears, patriarchy, systemic upbringing, the mythologisation of social roles, etc. The mere fact that the title question so often remains in exclusively female circles as it obviously means a more radical intervention


in their lives is extremely indicative. The fact that the majority of women have the potential possibility of gestation does not in itself mean that their fulfilment will happen through pregnancy and birth. Through its arrogant, often explicitly sexist history, philosophy has treated people of the female sex due to their always open potentiality of birthing as animal-like beings unable of rational and political action. A man creates, a woman maintains. He is the norm, she defines herself in the difference between him and her, as a deviation. In the words of **Simone de Beauvoir**: “He is the Subject, he is the Absolute: She is the Other.”

There is no symmetry, therefore, between a woman and a man – including when it comes to the question on whether or not to have children. In order to achieve symmetry in a utopic projection, we would need, so **Shulamith Firestone**, a perfection of a reproductive technology that would be so mechanised and autonomous that it would not necessarily base on oftentimes barbaric interventions into female bodies. In order to free themselves, women would therefore have to seize the means of reproduction. Or, in the more contemporary xenofeminist articulation: “If nature is unjust, change nature.” Yet such a utopia seemed more of a dystopia to some, especially French difference feminists who do not wish to eliminate but to maintain the difference, and who seek for the ways of emancipation and for the added embodied value in the radicalisation and affirmation of difference. When it comes to these issues, we can see that the history of feminism or feminisms is all but uniform. Often even contradictory.


Another question we can ask is, of course, what it actually means to have children. Can we only have a biological child? Do pregnancy and birth guarantee that the children are mine and can I possess them? **Sophie A. Lewis** claims that “children never belong to us, their makers, in the first place. The fabric of the social is something we weave by taking up where gestation left off, encountering one another as the strangers we always are, adopting one another skin-to-skin, forming loving and abusive attachments, and striving at comradeship.” **Donna Haraway** calls for kinship: “Make kin not babies.” This kinship is not a biological one, yet it is not only an optional connection but a responsibility towards a milieu in which we happen to be. Thus, there is no necessary social connection in the relationship between a biological mother and her child even though they shared the same body during the development of the embryo into an independent being.

Motherhood in itself is no guarantee for good mothering. Interestingly enough, matricentric feminism and the concept of mothering has also experienced a rebirth in recent family abolition philosophies (**Andrea**

O'Reilly). Perhaps the true value of selfless care work that has long been uncritically attributed only to the nature of the woman who gave birth to the child can only be thought of when mothering is no longer connected to (biological) motherhood. If mothering is something everybody needs, everybody could also learn how to practice it beyond the biological ties as the world obviously lacks it. Perhaps the term is inadequate on the conceptual level as it is based on the word 'mother' and carries all the problematic issues connected to it. Yet we can keep it like **Catherine Malabou** keeps the word woman – as the history of non-erasable violence over it. In the same way, we can keep the history of non-erasable care work inscribed in the word 'mothering'.



Pia Brezavšček, a doctoral candidate at the Humanities and Social Sciences Doctoral Programme at the University of Ljubljana, a dance and performance critic, and a theatre researcher, is the President of the Slovenian Contemporary Dance Association, and co-editor of the performing arts journal *Maska* and the online platform www.neodvisni.art.





NIKA KOVAČ

#METOO IN CULTURE

Collection and public reading of testimonies

The non-governmental organisation **March 8th Institute** invited women working in culture to drop their **#metoo** testimonies in collection boxes at several cultural venues as well as online during the 26th City of Women festival between 22 September and 12 October 2020. Women working in culture shared their experiences by leaving a note, either anonymously or with their full names and surnames. During the festival, members of the **ImproŠke Collective** publicly read some of the testimonies collected. In the presented text, **Nika Kovač**, director of the March 8th Institute, reflects on the #metoo movement and summarises the findings of **#metoo in culture**.

On 24 October 2017 I saw something completely unexpected happen on Twitter: tweets massively addressed sexual harassment and violence provoking media interest in the issue that had previously been completely marginalised. In 24 hours following the initial tweet by American actress **Alyssa Milano**, more than 12 million people shared their experiences of sexual harassment and violence on various social media.

Among them were well-known actresses, politicians, journalists, but also cooks and students, i.e. people from all walks of life. By adding the #metoo hashtag to their social media posts, they clearly communicated that they, too, were subject to sexual harassment and violence. The phenomenon was larger than the individual personal experience. These declarations shared online were supposed to add to the reflection on the position of women in modern society and to the questioning of social power relations. Via social media and as an organised social action, the #metoo campaign spread to different countries, exhibiting certain common characteristics. People who spoke out on sexual harassment and violence also shared the method of solidary expression.

On 8 March 2018, the #jztudi (#metoo) campaign also came to life in Slovenia. Encouraged by **Renata Šribar**, **Darja Zaviršek**, and **Irena Šumi**, the Slovenian #metoo campaign was launched by **Inštitut 8. Marec (March 8th Institute)**, which opted to do a different take on the action. We provided an anonymous platform for people who had experienced sexual harassment or violence to share their testimonies. We wished to gather testimonies from people of different classes, coming from different social strata, and living in different personal circumstances. We expected such a campaign to provide an insight into the social structure and reveal where sexual harassment and violence take place most often.

In the two years of the campaign, we received over 180 different testimonies from people from every age group: the youngest person who gave their age was 17 years old, the oldest was 61. For some of the people who shared their experiences in the #jztudi campaign this was the first time they broke their silence and spoke out. Collecting testimonies creates an image of collective learning with something that has not been discussed often in a wider public space. It was somehow blurred and pushed to and across the edge of the private.

The #jztudi campaign received no testimony from the cultural sphere. Together with the City of Women, we therefore organised the #jztudi v kulturi (#metoo in culture) campaign where we filled the Ljubljana-based institutions with mailboxes to collect testimonies on sexual harassment

and violence. The campaign received 19 testimonies. When analysing the testimonies collected in the #metoo in culture campaign, we divided sexual harassment and violence into verbal harassment, inappropriate touching, exhibitionism, and rape.

Almost a half of the victims' testimonials spoke of inappropriate touching.

I take a poet to a poetry reading. He is a foreigner. We read his war poems, I am moved and shed a tear. The poet holds and squeezes my hand – I understand this as a gesture of shared insight. Later, I accompany him back to his hotel and he takes my hand again. This time, I start feeling weird. A moment later, he forcefully pulls me onto himself, attacks my neck with his mouth, and grabs my breasts with the other hand. I quickly push him away. What is worst is that later I had to shake his hand in front of everybody when he was saying goodbye.

A little more than a quarter of the victims spoke of rape, others of exhibitionism and verbal harassment. From the testimonies, we can sense that they are afraid to speak of sexual harassment and violence: they are scared of losing projects, they feel that the perpetrator would remain the renowned artist he is while they would vanish from the cultural scene.

According to the testimonies, sexual harassment and violence often happen in educational establishments and on auditions. The perpetrators are people with social authority and influence, while the gravity of sexual harassment and violence corresponds to the hierarchal position of the perpetrator's post. The higher the person's position, the higher the degree of sexual harassment and violence.

There was a theatre camp and we set up a small studio in a holiday house to record songs. The studio 'director' was a musician, a guy around 40 years old, and we spent a good part of the day with him in the studio after practice. Because the camp lasted for a couple of days, we slept in the same house. At night, we hung out in the corridors. He invited me and my friend to his room. We didn't find it odd because everybody was chatting in one room or another. Later he suggested that we join him in bed. I thought my friend took him as a kind of father figure and she lay next to him, while I sat at their feet. We turned the lights off because it was time for bed. Then he started explaining how he doesn't have sex with his wife anymore and that he finds this difficult. We thought it was really interesting that somebody was talking to us like we were adults. But we weren't, we were 15 years old. Then he started groping my friend's breasts.


Sexual harassment and violence also happen at literary readings, concerts, and recordings. The majority of such testimonies speak of inappropriate touching.

I went because my mum likes this sort of music and I was glad to go somewhere with her. After the concert, I went to the musician and asked him to sign the sleeve of the CD to make my mum happy. He took out the booklet with lyrics, put it on my breasts and signed it. He was flirting with me the entire time. I thought this was disgusting. I never listened to that CD and I later gave it away as a raffle prize because I couldn't look at it without experiencing feelings of shame and powerlessness of the teenager who was unable to put a stop to this.


Some testimonies also include the reactions of the immediate environment faced with acts of sexual harassment and/or violence: the majority of contributions speak of silence. The victims are often silent, as well: they are afraid of the reactions and of losing their employment.

I didn't go to the police because of fear and silence.

The #metoo in culture campaign refutes the myth that most often sexual harassment, sexual violence, and rape happen in dark alleys and are done by people unknown to the victim. The analysis of the testimonies proves the exact opposite: sexual harassment and violence are prevalent in environments we believe to be safe and familiar. The victims usually know the perpetrators. While acts of sexual harassment and violence are noticed by the environment, there is no reaction. Culture as such is no exception in this.

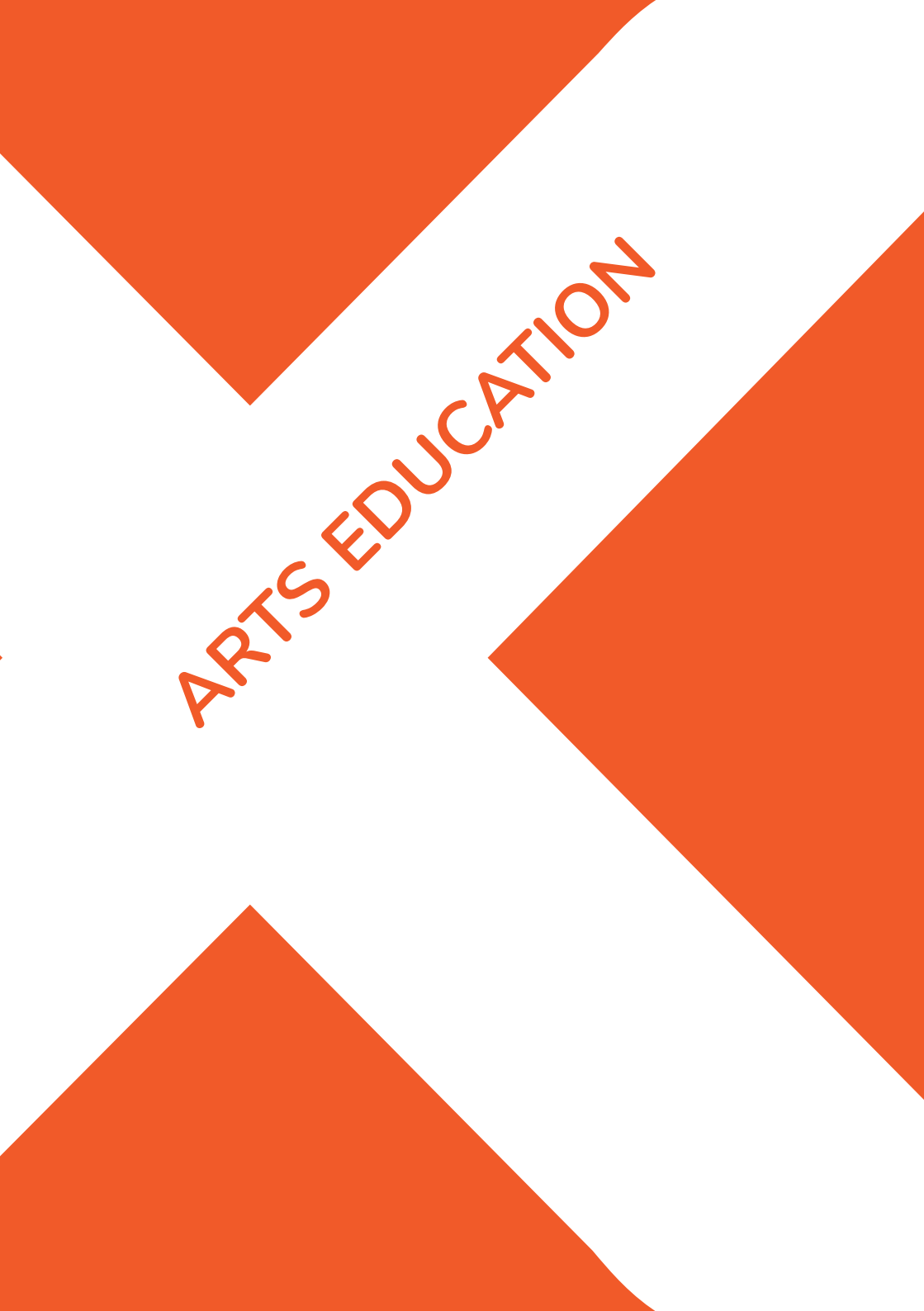


Nika Kovač is the director of the March 8th Institute and one of the initiators of the Slovenian #jztudi (#metoo) campaign. She is the author of *Pogumne punce* (Brave Girls, 2018) and co-author of *Nepozabne: ženske, ki so premikale meje našega sveta* (The Unforgettable: The Women Pushing the Boundaries of Our World, 2020).







The background consists of several large, overlapping triangles in a vibrant orange color against a white background. The triangles are arranged in a way that creates a dynamic, geometric pattern. One large orange triangle is in the top-left corner, another is in the bottom-left corner, and a third is in the bottom-right corner. The central area is white, with the text 'ARTS EDUCATION' written across it.

ARTS EDUCATION

VERONIKA TAŠNER

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS AND BOYS IN EDUCATION

A revised lecture from the *8 March Every Day* expert meeting at the 26th City of Women festival

When discussing the topic of equal opportunities for girls and boys in education, we often hear that everything has already been taken care of. It is true that we have achieved much already, but there is still a lot to be changed, completed, improved. One of the most important parts in striving for a better position of girls and women in society was standing up for their opportunities in education. This struggle is an important factor in social change as it did not only shift the societies in which we live but also the gender order.

Today we believe education is something self-evident, yet it was not always so. It was not always perceived as a value and for centuries it was only a privilege of smaller elite circles, predominantly men. In the words of **Pierre Bourdieu**, education is an important type of cultural capital that first enabled the male and much later the female individual to achieve a different, more independent position in society. The first equal rights fighters were well-aware of this fact and that is why they emphasised the importance of educating girls if one wanted to make a difference.

I therefore claim that the breakthrough of women in the field of education that we live today was enabled by feminists, pro-feminist authors and researchers as well as other social movements and efforts. Yet despite the success of girls in this field, we are still seeing the glass ceiling phenomena – both in employment and in politics. Young women who acquire cultural and social capital end up with no social power and are not among the leading decisionmakers.

The more contemporary views on equality in education do not differ much from the first struggles and remain grounded on three pillars. They still call for the forming of non-discriminatory practices, the elimination of women disadvantages, and the integration of the principle of gender equality. This latter stipulates that both genders must be enabled equal participation and fair treatment in all fields as only this can guarantee the fairness of everyone's educational achievements.

When we discuss gender, we must however emphasise that it is not the only factor playing a role in educational achievements. Strongly intertwined and substantially more important is the socio-economic status. Where you come from; what your socialisation environment is; whether you are subject to any conditioning or encouragements; what your ethnic background, language, etc. are. Research also shows that the influence of these factors becomes stronger with age. We must also not forget poverty, family size and parents' lack of education. This all bears an effect on a person's prospects.

CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF GIRLS AND WOMEN

Today we are seeing that high schools that are considered prestigious are prevalently attended by girls. In 2019, the number of women graduating from tertiary education excluding technical colleges was higher than the number of men. 2014 marks the first year when women earned more PhDs than men. We could call this a success story. At first glance, the statistical data show that contemporary education is more tailored to girls than boys. It is obvious that girls really take advantage of the opportunity they are given. Girls graduate from secondary and tertiary education faster and more successfully and they have also made it in prestigious scientific disciplines such as medicine and law.

Yet as we look closer, the answer is not as straightforward. We see that gender-specific educative paths of both girls and boys are at work. Young women and men still decide on the typically female and typically male studies. Girls would choose education, humanities, social sciences, social affairs, and health, while the traditionally male fields would be computer sciences, mathematics, natural sciences, engineering, construction, etc. Looking at PISA results, we see that girls are just as successful in these fields, too. Where does it go wrong then? Studies show that despite measured data in international studies, women believe themselves to be not as good as men in areas such as mathematics or natural sciences. Something in their habitus keeps them convinced that this is not their cup of tea.

CHOICES?

Some people look for the reasons for this in choices. Our choices are influenced by gender, parents, socialisation, advisory services, mass media, etc. All of these can shift and change our choices. The role of parents and especially their education as an important form of cultural capital that will greatly affect the parents' expectations, their attitudes towards school, and their parenting styles will influence the educative path of their offspring. Cultural capital is inherited. There are substantially fewer individuals

coming from socially weaker environments enrolled in the most prestigious study programmes.

Bourdieu claims that in educative and career paths and choices this happens due to habitus, the social practices that often unconsciously control the process of us establishing ourselves as subjects with their conventional images of masculinity and femininity. Boys and girls make decisions based on what is closer to their habitus. That is why we must address and empower both genders. We must empower advisors so that they can offer unconventional occupational possibilities to young people, too.

It must be emphasised that, by entering the labour market, women have retained their emotional responsibility. This, in turn, further complicated the process of female individualisation. They fight the dilemma of living their own lives, having their own ambitions and following them or, on the other hand, being there for the sick, the weak, the elderly, etc.

THE PRACTICE OF THE TEACHING STAFF

Further reasons can be found in the practice of the teaching staff. Some research shows that the teaching staff treats boys and girls very differently. While they more often provide help to girls, they would encourage boys to be proactive, invite them to discuss and solve problems. Although the girls are not being ignored and we cannot say that they are not given any attention, this attention is specific. When there is a problem, a pedagogue would solve it for them. The situation is similar in high schools. Teachers tend to encourage boys to be more creative and innovative, and to prepare them for the important roles they are supposed to play later in life. On the other hand, they mostly expect girls to be meticulous, diligent, and tidy. In fact, this is evident throughout the vertical line of education: from kindergarten teachers to university professors.

COMMUNICATION

Communication reveals interesting differences, too. Boys are not perceived as ideal students, yet they are given more attention. As far as communication goes, girls are not as included in discussions. Rather, they are asked about their feelings, commented on their appearance, etc. One study showed that during class discussions boys would begin speaking freely while the girls who tried to do the same were prompted by the teachers to first raise their hands. These are important differences in treatment. When we are talking about habitus, about internalised schemes and practices, these are firmly rooted in us – even in pedagogues – and we must try to eliminate them.

GENDER AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES


The main areas that further need our attention and where work must continue are curriculum, teaching materials, and educating teachers. As far as curriculum goes, gender equality is only rarely included. While certain textbooks already include contemporary findings and use substantially more pluralised forms, textbooks presenting the nuclear family, heteronormativity and such as universal are still to be found.

In Slovenian language, the materials still very often use the male form as neutral. There are differences in the descriptions of girls' and boys' behaviours: boys laugh while girls giggle, for example. There are quantitative and qualitative differences in how genders are represented – not just how often but also how women are portrayed – a mother in an apron and in the home environment, to mention only one example.


An analysis of history textbooks showed that the representation of women was at a mere 11%. In contrast to men who were mentioned with their full names, women appeared as mothers, sisters, wives. Many countries admit to having too stereotypical, even sexist teaching materials. Classic fairy tales represent another serious problem. There is no need to stop reading them, but they need to be equipped with adequate historical context. Children must also have contemporary tales available.

The teaching staff still marginalises the questions of gender, while courses delving into these subjects are mostly elective. They are chosen by people who are interested in the topic in the first place, but sadly do not reach everybody who will someday enter the classrooms as teachers. As the future pedagogues have limited resources in this area, much still remains to be done.

In order for it to provide quality education for all, a public school must become a school with high expectations for everybody and attuned to differentiate where needed.



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JASMINA JERANT, GREGOR BULC

LJUBLJANA FEMINIST BIKE TOUR

A bicycle ride through a forgotten and hidden *herstory*

Walking through a capital, any capital, one stumbles upon dozens of monuments, sculptures, portrait reliefs, memorial plaques, and all other kinds of memorials depicting and praising the city's historical figures. It is usually not hard to find a statue of a writer, poet, painter, politician, scientist, pop star or even a revolutionary when looking for one. One can also visit the city's cemetery to look at, or even better, touch a marble engraved with the name of someone whose activities and achievements left an eternal mark not just on the city where the person lived or worked, but also a mark on our cultural memory. Similarly Ljubljana, the Slovenian capital, boasts a rich and diverse history, which is, at least to Slovenians, very present and well known.

However, this history is primarily a history of male names, and there is a lack of recognition of female contributions and achievements. Walking through a capital, any capital, a visitor will thus rarely stumble upon an abundance of memorials dedicated to significant and groundbreaking women from history. One cannot really see the *herstory*. To change that, back in 2017, **Urbana Vrana Institute** launched the first *Ljubljana Feminist Tour* that straight-forwardly points to the lack of memorials dedicated to women who shaped and co-created Slovenia's capital and its surroundings. The tour takes visitors back and forth between historical moments in which particular women were active, changing history for good.

Showcasing iconic women artists, urban architects, political leaders, scientists, nuns, witches, doctors, the Women's Anti-Fascist Front, etc., the tour, spiced up with a pinch of queer and non-binary interpretations, explores different periods of struggles for women's rights, as well as present-

day gender issues in Slovenian society. The tour does not only offer an educational experience that shocks (do you know the real story behind the symbol of Europa?), but also causes a lot of laughter and amazement (do you know how the only city centre's street named after a woman looks like?).

Offering a gender perspective on Slovenia's capital, the tour has become a popular Ljubljana outdoor activity for tourists as well as locals. Corona aside, in the past three years, the tour has been regularly booked not only for private walks but also by Slovenian and foreign universities, EU institutions, cultural institutions, primary and secondary schools. The interest and praise show the need and want for a wide-present and open discussion for the general public on the topic. The *Ljubljana Feminist Tour*, which also inspired the creation of feminist tours in other countries, for instance the *Belgrade Feminist Tour* and the *Reykjavik Feminist Walking Tours*, is also a member and co-founder of the *Global Network of Feminist Tours*. The Global Network calls for and invites new members from all over the World.

Last year the City of Women invited us to cooperate and prepare a new tour – the bike tour. And so, the new *Ljubljana Feminist Bike Tour* was born and premiered at the 26th City of Women festival in September 2020. The new bike tour, presented a new take on the popular two-hour walking tour that took the participants around the city centre and followed the less-travelled dirt roads of the local *herstory*, or rather, *herstories*. Another difference is that the stories, events and names presented on the bike tour are completely different from the stories, events and names on the walking tour. Nothing repeats, each spot opens a new window into *herstory*. In two to three hours, consisting of leisurely cycling and five- to ten-minute stops, the participants got an insight into the fascinating yet often forgotten heroines of Slovenia. Instead of merely using their feet, this time they sat proudly on, and rode the very tool and early symbol of women's emancipation – the bicycle! This means of feminism, which even today, more than a century later, is still a symbol of women's liberation.

When cycling was introduced and became part of the bourgeois and social culture in the second half of the 19th century, women were advised against it: for moral, aesthetic, hygiene, and health reasons, because of their physique and, of course, on sexual grounds. Cycling for women was deemed indecent and sinful. Critics opposed it saying that if women fell from a bicycle, their legs could be exposed, and that a graceful and poised, slender, petite, and statuesque gait was more in their nature. Not to mention the horrifying image of a breathless, red-faced and sweating woman! Or the long-term consequences of cycling on their faces like paleness, dark shadows, and dark

circles under their eyes, while stress from cycling would lead to weight loss, muscle gain and the loss of curves.

Doctors also feared that bicycles could cause sterility, heart palpitations, depression, and even mass suicides. Some even went so far as to compare the effects of cycling to those of hashish, as a single pedal rotation could create pressure on certain parts of the brain and cause a special mental state. Sitting and pedalling were bad for another reason too: they would put pressure on the pelvis and reproductive organs. And there was another major reason society opposed bicycles: female sexual pleasure. It was thought that seats caused clitoral stimulation, which could lead women to secret masturbation and, god forbid, orgasms.

This opposition to bicycles was the same everywhere and it was no different in Ljubljana. However, as women didn't back off but continued to ride bicycles more and more, with time the opposition changed into support. In 1879, a decade after the first high wheeler was introduced in Ljubljana, a Slovenian cycling club organised a campaign to include women in cycling. Initially, there were concerns similar to those mentioned before, but as women did not step down from the bicycle, the public and expert opinion mellowed down and changed in opposite direction.

In the 1890s male critiques suddenly emphasised the beneficial effects of cycling on the female body. Moderate cycling (not losing too much weight or gaining too much muscle) became a means to achieve female beauty, especially in combination with swimming. It was also praised as the ideal way to strengthen female mental health: the elimination of, at the time, 'typical' female diseases such as hysteria and neurasthenia, hypochondria, melancholy, female whimsy, and neurosis. After all, women had to be physically and mentally healthy if they were to provide healthy offspring and raise them well. However, they were advised not to overdo it, but rather cycle just enough to keep themselves beautiful and fertile.

Women, however, welcomed bicycles with open hands and found ways to ride them no matter what. In fact, the mass use of bicycles had a significant impact on feminist movements at the time. It brought a change in fashion, as women needed more comfortable clothing for undisturbed cycling since riding in crinolines was not only uncomfortable but also dangerous. This marked the beginning of the end of the corset and the end of the long-layered crinolines. Women began to flap their skirts, wrap their bare legs below the knees in straps and wear sultan's trousers (bloomers in the West) and pumps. They relaxed their corsets or got rid of them altogether, and they

started wearing softer shoes. Cycling gave women more mobility, physically broadened their horizons, they were finally able to move more on their own without having to rely on help from men. It gave them a sense of autonomy and independence. Thus, the fight for the right to ride bicycles truly and irreversibly contributed to the feminist movement and even became part of the suffrage movements. For its symbolic value and weight in the history of the feminist struggle for women's rights, the bicycle found its main role on the *Ljubljana Feminist Bike Tour*, taking us on a journey through the *herstory* of Slovenia's capital.



Jasmina Jerant, co-author and guide of the *Ljubljana Feminist Tour*, the *Ljubljana Feminist Bike Tour*, and the *Women of Letters Walk*, is a former host of the feminist radio show *Sektor Ž*. Currently she is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Ljubljana, researching a proposal of universal basic income.

Gregor Bulc, PhD, studied communication and media studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences (Ljubljana) and human rights at the London School of Economics. Heading the *Urbana Vrana* Institute team, he researches and writes on graffiti, music, media, arts and culture, as well as creates and guides various boutique tours under *Ptich* brand.







GABRIJELA IVANOV

FIERCE WOMEN

Presentation of the social card game and teaching materials

The Zagreb-based NGO **Expanse of Gender and Media Culture** ‘**Common Zone**’, also called **K-Zona**, runs the **VoxFeminae platform**, the online portal **VoxFeminae.net**, and the **VoxFeminae Festival**. Common Zone supports and presents the works of women artists, entrepreneurs, civil initiatives, non-governmental organisations and other gender aware and socially responsible groups and individuals.

At the City of Women festival, **Gabrijela Ivanov**, the founder and co-ordinator of the Common Zone, presented the social card game **Fierce Women** launched in 2018, which promotes and celebrates the work and contributions of women to society. She also presented the first expansion of the social card game, *Fierce Women – WoW Cards*, created as part of the European cooperation project, co-funded by the Creative Europe programme, **Women on Women**, featuring thirty new cards of fierce women from Croatia, Slovenia, North Macedonia and Ireland who worked in the fields of art, culture, feminism, human rights, politics and science.

Here we publish a revised presentation of the game by Gabrijela Ivanov.

FROM INSPIRATION ...

The social game *Fierce Women* shares its name with one of the sections on Voxfeminae.net, a non-profit medium we founded fifteen years ago, delivering daily news and think pieces on gender equality, social justice and independent culture. The annual Vox Feminae Festival showcases the accomplishments of women artists, creators and innovators. We are especially proud of our work with young women. In the past five years, more than four hundred young people have participated in our educational programmes. One of the key problems we've detected is the invisibility of women's work and accomplishments. We've set out to change that by devising an educational and empowering social game that could engage all generations while also keeping it fun.

... COMES AN IDEA ...

On our web portal Voxfeminae.net we have a selection called *Fierce Women*, which consists of three hundred biographies. Our portal has a monthly visit of 50,000 readers and the section with fierce women is one of the most popular. At some point we decided that we wanted to get people interested in the topic in some fun way. Thinking about how to reach even more people with the stories of fierce women, I came up with the idea to develop a game and at the end of 2017 we already had a prototype. In 2018 we launched a crowdfunding campaign in which more than seven hundred people from forty countries backed us and the campaign made it possible for us to realise our wish (and commitment) of producing 1,000 *Fierce Women* decks (in the English language) and start a social enterprise for the development of products that promote gender equality and social justice.

... FOR A BEAUTIFUL EXECUTION ...

In the course of the process, we figured out that if we wanted our idea to reach as many people as possible, it must look really beautiful, thus we developed the social game *Fierce Women* in collaboration with eight Croatian women illustrators, who created the portraits of sixty fierce women. We wanted their accomplishments to inspire and empower other women, especially young women and girls in their choices of education and profession. From the three hundred biographies we chose sixty women in categories of feminism, science, culture, politics, arts, and human rights. For each of the categories we set an icon that is then visible on every card. Some of the cards have two or three related icons. For example, **Mary Wollstonecraft** has three icons: politics, feminism and culture. For now,

there are no women from sports or music in the deck as we have a plan for another deck that will be dedicated exclusively to musicians.

... OF THE UNIQUE SOCIAL GAME ...

The game now includes sixty different fierce women and ten action cards. At the moment we have three language versions: Italian, English, and Croatian. The rules of the game are simple, which makes the game suitable for every generation, from age 5 and up. There are many books on women that have been released in many countries, but the advantage of the card format is that it is smaller than books, mobile and can be played in schools. Also, it is possible to play the game without using action cards, making it even simpler. Additionally, we launched a *Fierce Women* quiz application that can be used for mobile devices and it works in English, Croatian and Slovenian.

... UPGRADED WITH AN EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE ...

Once the game was released, educators started contacting us. Informal educators who work in NGOs, as well as educators from schools and kindergartens. Due to its educational component, the game is suitable for classrooms or workshops. Hence, we prepared recommendations for activities in the ways that they can be used in education. The resulting *Educational Package* consists of 16 ideas for **additional educational activities** focusing on gender equality, which can be used before or after the game, and are rooted in discovery-based learning, problem-based learning, peer learning and creative art expression. What is common to all of the aforementioned sixteen activities is that all of them can be adjusted according to the needs and characteristics of the particular space or group where the activities are carried out.


... AND EXTENDED WITH NEW WOW CARDS ...

The first expansion package *Fierce Women – WoW Cards*, in a limited edition of 2000, consists of thirty new cards for the basic version of the game for two or three persons. The WoW project, which aims to give visibility to female role models, and herstories of inspirational women that change our societies for the better, invited artists from all over Europe to participate in the expansion of the *Fierce Women* card game. More than 300 artists from 27 European countries sent us the most amazing artworks to help us present 30 fierce women from Croatia, Slovenia, North Macedonia, and Ireland.


It was very hard to choose among all the works received, but we finally chose 15 artists whose artworks are now included in the *Fierce Women – WoW Cards* deck: **Ana Lucija Šarić, Ana Salopek, Chiara Tallarini, Eimear McNally, Helena Nemeč, Nazli Karaturna, Polona Drašler, Rina Barbarić, Samira Kentrić, Sindy Čolić, Tamara Zabaznoska, Tea Jurišić, Tina Vukasović Đaković, Queh Magrini Troll and Zoran Cardula.**

... WITH VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The current packages are not the last ones. We are very happy to receive further suggestions of women who deserve to be included in future editions of *Fierce Women* cards. They can be submitted via the Popup Form on our website. Together with experts, we are also planning to develop suggestions for formal inclusion of the cards into the school curriculum.



Gabrijela Ivanov is a computer engineer by formal education and an activist in the fields of independent media, culture and gender equality by calling. Founder of the VoxFeminae.net, the Vox Feminae Festival and one of the creators of the card game *Fierce Women* (Sl. Neustrašne ženske, Cr. Strašne žene).





ta Zupancić

pedagogue, member of the first Slovene Association of girls and left a mark on the Institute for design she worked for 23 years. (1868 – 1950)



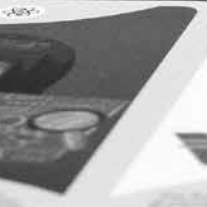
Vida Tomšič

Anti-fascist, women's rights activist, and politician who played a leading role in shaping social policies in Yugoslavia. She worked on the implementation of the program of women's emancipation, contributing to policies that promoted political, social, and economic equality of women. (1913 – 1998)



Christine Buckley

One of the first survivors of institutional abuse to lead a successful campaign for the investigation of the abuse of children in the industrial schools systems in Ireland. She was a qualified nurse and volunteered with helping survivors for over 30 years through counselling and education. (1946 – 2014)





Giuseppina Martinuzzi

Socialist, feminist, pedagogue, and poet. Her work with children from the poorest working-class families sensitized her to social injustice and prepared her for later political action. As a socialist, she emphasized that the fight against fascism necessarily includes the fight against capitalism. (1844 – 1925)



Mara Bešter

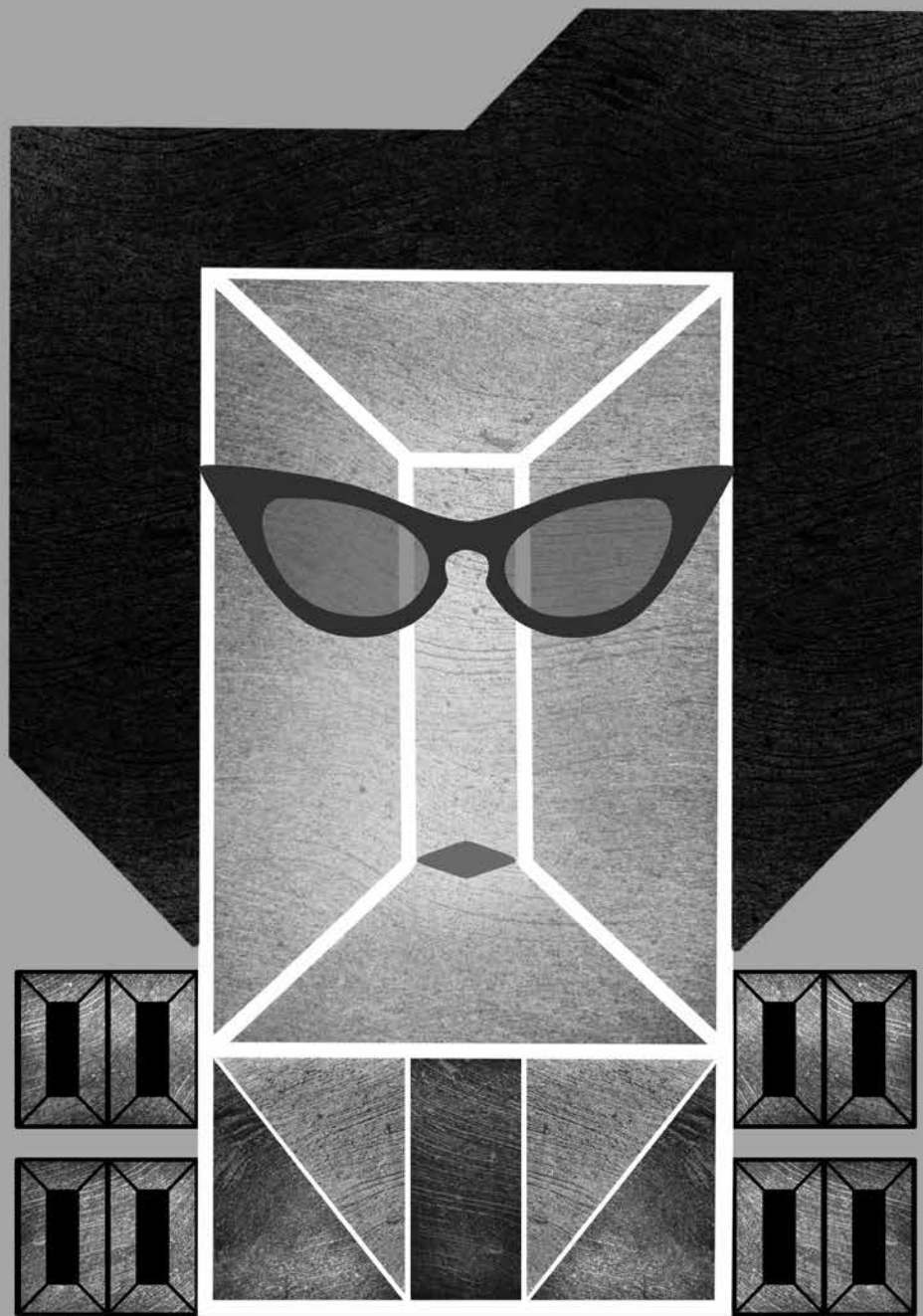
The first Slovene Doctor of Economics. She introduced internationally comparable statistical indicators to Slovenia, dealt with economic and social implications of population reproduction and the economic position of women. In 1982 she was elected a judge of the Constitutional Court of Slovenia. (1922 – 2010)

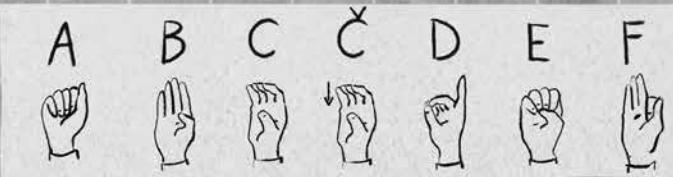
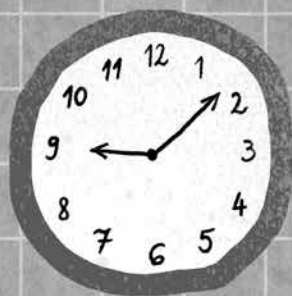


Alojzija Štampar

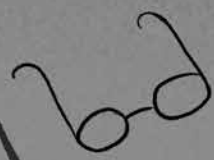
Politician, journalist, and editor of *Zenki*. Her treatise *Democracy and Womanhood* for improving the position of women in the Feminist Alliance of the Kingdom of Serbs, was an advocate for parity between men and women.







enakost



LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

CALLISTO McNULTY: Delphine and Carole

Documentary film, 2019, photo: Defiant Muses, film still, p. 4–5.

SIMONA SEMENIČ: Picture Perfect

Performance, 2020, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 10–11.

DELPHINE SEYRIG: Be Pretty and Shut Up!

Film, 1976, photo: Film still, p. 17.

CALLISTO McNULTY: Delphine and Carole

Documentary film, 2019, photo: Defiant Muses, film still, p. 22–23.

ADRIANA KNOUF: Xenological Entanglements. 001a: Trying Plastic Variations

Lecture performance, 2019, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 28–29.

ADRIANA KNOUF: Xenological Entanglements. 001a: Trying Plastic Variations

Lecture performance, 2019, photo: Artist's archive, p. 31–32.

ISABEL BURR RATY: Bio-autonomous Farming

Workshop, 2020, photo: Artist's archive, p. 37.

ISABEL BURR RATY: Bio-autonomous Farming

Workshop, 2020, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 38–39.

JOHANNA KÄTHE MICHEL, JINRAN HA:

Dialogue of the Objects/Komische Fragmente.

Corneous Stories Project, 2020, photo: Page from N*A*I*L*S hacks*facts*fictions –
Nailwork,

Gender and Migration, 2019, p. 43.

SELMA SELMAN: Virtual Materialism

Corneous Stories Exhibition, 2020, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 47.

LEA CULETTO: Gloves

Corneous Stories Workshop, 2020, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 51.

CATASTROPHE BLUES: Sammar Al Kerawe

Video, 2020, photo: Tanja Završki, production photo, p. 55

CATASTROPHE BLUES: Viktoriia Pospelova

Video, 2020, photo: Đejmi Hadrović, film still, p. 57.

CATASTROPHE BLUES: Favour Edokpayi Musa
Video, 2020, photo: Đejmi Hadrović, film still, p. 59.

CATASTROPHE BLUES: Samar Žughool
Video, 2020, photo: Barbara Režek, production photo, p. 61.

CATASTROPHE BLUES: Katja Kovač
Video, 2020, photo: Đejmi Hadrović, film still, p. 63.

CATASTROPHE BLUES
Public screening and round table, 2020, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 65.

PIA BREZAVŠČEK, BARBARA KRAJNC AVDIĆ, SAŠKA RAKEF: Ideal (M)other
Sound play on the maternity myth, 2017, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 71.

#METOO IN CULTURE
Public reading of testimonies, 2020, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 76–77.

DINA RONČEVIĆ: Car Deconstruction
Workshop, 2016, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 83.

JASMINA JERANT: Ljubljana Feminist Bike Tour
Guided tour, 2020, photo: Nada Žgank, p. 88–89.

FIERCE WOMEN: Cards
Social card game, 2020, photo: Nina Đurđević, p. 94–95.

FIERCE WOMEN: Mimoza Nestorova Tomić
Social card game, 2020, illustration by Tamara Zabazanoska, p. 96.

FIERCE WOMEN: Vita Župančič
Social card game, 2020, illustration by Ana Lucija Šarić, p. 97.

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A large, stylized orange 'X' shape is centered on a white background. The 'X' is formed by two thick, diagonal bars that intersect in the middle. The text 'cityofwomen.org' is written in white, lowercase letters, following the path of the diagonal bars.

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XX

MESTO ŽENSK
CITY OF WOMEN