NO MORE FUN AND GAMES

Feminist Parasite Institution

Act 1
Act 2
Act 3
Setting as the target an ossified history of phallocentric art, Jesse Jones contem-
plates themes of empowerment and social renewal by interrogating how art has been misrepresented in museum through the in-
cessant selection of male artists. She has established the Feminist Parasite Institution – an informal curatorial collective created through social connections and political affinities – for her exhibition of new work entitled No More Fun and Games. This para-
site institution aims to use the gallery's collection as material to raise feminist consciousness, putting into circulation a set of objects, actions and rumours, conceptually situated somewhere between feminist theory and lucky strikes into the heart of the collection.

Happenstance in art and cinema where Jones situates the project. From the outset of our discussions she cited Robert Altman's 1977 film 3 Women, which explores the mys-
erious relationship of three women who fold into a shared identity (the women themselves become exaggerated archetypes examining the complexities of female consciousness). The film is both metaphorically and symbolically connected to the rise of the radical second wave feminist movement during the 1970s.

Jones does not view the aesthetic object as her goal, but rather her installation is a scene – a new province, mapping relations between people and the world. This doesn't take from her installation's mapping magically cinematic through sonic and architectural interruptions. Pneuma, a newly commissioned score by Gerald Busby, the original composer of the Altman film's soundtrack, fills the gallery space, creating a threshold into a separate terrain. No More Fun and Games is a blurring of the boundaries between consump-
tion and production. The connecting 'actors' of still image, sound, motion and sequence, are reworked in an attempt to make cinema without film; thus the installation focuses on the artwork as instigator of event rather than as object. Between the politics and emotions of the contemporary, we become, as Félix Guattari writes, ‘a collective body, a song, a gesture of fiction and mediation.'

ACT II: SKewing NARRATIVES
This episode of the project will unfold over the months of February and March and will consist of a series of visual and performative tours of the gallery by artist Eimear Walsh that will explore how institutions might function as political gesture in relation to notions of quality and the canon. It will explore possible modes of feminist institu-
tional alternatives within the existing framework of the gallery itself through gestures of fiction and mediation.

ACT III: LAUGH A DEFiance
Curator Vaari Claffey and writer and curator Avril Jones willTailor Yap will Tailor Yap and gently chatter among themselves as a recording device is set up. There are three empty chairs that will serve as a subjective political experience and as an act of resistance in itself to modes of domination and definitions of accepted polit-
cal reality?

ACT I: CURATING THE CANON
Intruding the gallery space, the Feminist Parasite Institution rethinks the alluvial-
esta tactic of comedy to reflect on the museum as a historical actor and an abstract scene of performance. This improvisation in institutional critique feeds off the resources available, taking up phys-
ical space but existing in the live drama of coexistence. The ‘parasite’ intends to disrupt the canon of art through inter-
rupt gender bias as the discriminating filter to the provenance of art history through a series of performances and tours. Collective writings will address and argue the question of gender equality in the con-
struction and communication of knowledge. As Judith Butler writes, "There is no value to be derived in silencing disputes. The ques-
tions are: how best to have them, how most productively to stage them and how to act in ways that acknowledge the irreversi-
bility of who we are?"

Through a process of discussion and as a collective act of raising consciousness, The Feminist Parasite Institution curated the ex-
hibition of work on view in Gallery 14 with a selection of artworks by women from the gal-

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2. Félix Guattari, ‘On Machines’, in Andrew Benjamin (ed.), Cinema and the Avant-Garde: Experiments of Medi-
feminist autonomy and the identity of women, especially when we have had children or are pregnant.

Margaret: I’m Margaret, I’m a mature student up in NCAD. As I said to Jesse this morning, a bit of this goes a bit over my head but it won’t stop me talking!

[Groups laughs]

Margaret: That’s it.

Eleanor: Eleanor... eh, artist... eh, socially-engaged practice I think is what you call it these days, it has so many names... I am currently interested in organisational structures and the systems of power. That’s it.

Louise: My name’s Louise Walsh and I am a queer feminist artist. I suppose I’ve been practising in that vein since the mid-80s... um, oh yeah, I work in kind of very sculptural site-specific outdoorish... Often work with participatory sort of community-based da da da... but also, I’m very interested in educational work. I work in education but I also work at finding spaces where groups can educate themselves and each other.

Alice: My name is Alice, I work in the Programming Department of the IFI. I’m also a curatorial member of the Experimental Film Club so I’m interested in artist and experimental film, em... I programmed a season called ‘Beyond the Bechdel Test’ in 2014 which looked at the representation of relationships between women, and I guess that’s an interest that’s ongoing, not just in cinema but in art.

Jesse: Will somebody take minutes?

Eleanor: If I have a pen...

Jesse: Yeah?

Louise: I can give you a pen.

Jesse: Does somebody want to summarise some of the decisions and the general conversation made last week? Who would like to do that?

Alice: I remember that we were discussing a lot the idea of how Robert Altman’s film 3 Women would feed in to the way we might collectively curate the show and we looked at, sort of the twinning idea, and the mirroring, and also the idea of Pinkie’s sort of lack of provenance – how she sort of comes out of nowhere. And so we were then looking at how that might inform where we go with selecting the works and be some sort of overarching idea. So I guess that idea of twinning was relevant, wasn’t it? The idea of twinning works with each of us also selecting works and then standing by those choices, based on a lot of the ideas we have been discussing the last few weeks.

Jesse: I suppose collectively we decided that we would select two artworks from The Hugh Lane’s Collection, as a group, and those artworks were these two here, right? [Agnes Martin, Untitled No. 7, 1980 and Elizabeth Magill, Lodge (2), 2006]. And I guess this was a way of thinking of it as like an intro and outro, or that there is something about these two works that... I think you [Una] were talking a lot about the Elizabeth Magill painting having a special resonance, and Tina talked about how, you know, do you find space?, the kind of expansiveness of space. And when I printed them, I looked and thought “wow”, they really work so beautifully together, don’t they?

Group: Yes (muttering), yeah, really well.

Jesse: Like the two of those together feel like an interior and an exterior, they’re just uncanny when they are placed side by side.

Louise: They are also quite figurative and abstract which is strange.

Jesse: Yeah, there is something really special when you actually just look at the two of those pictures together. I feel we arrived at a really good decision there last week. And then Tina talked about how we might try to not make the show feel super didactic in terms of the structure of it. Tina talked about how, if we have them as an intro and an outro, we might read the space in a kind of linear way... That we could like, flip them during the course of the exhibition... as an event where it kind of plays itself backwards, or turns back. Which is kind of interesting in terms of the score for the gallery that Gerald is making, where the curtain moves through the space and then zip!, it is reversed back. So this sense of reversal, motion and then reversal, feels like it works conceptually with the rest of the show as well. So yeah, so those are our two definites, we have a decision on that. And then people sent in some ideas, this was... oh... Kate Butler sent this Alice Maher work as her selection and this is why – [She reads the email]

"Hi everyone, I am not going to make it tomorrow so I’m going to send you my thoughts on two artworks from the collection. The first one is Alice Maher’s Talking to my Hair. One of the things that decided me on this was that I watched a UFC fight tonight, which is not something I would usually do..."

[Group laughs]

"It was between two women: Paige VanZant, she’s actually brilliant, and Rose Namajunas. It was really long and bloody but Namajunas was persistent, and elegantly so. When she won, the interviewer asked how she hadn’t been put off by VanZant constantly escaping from Namajunas’ grip. She said that she had seen VanZant stretch her arm out after winning a previous game, and her arm looked gummy. Namajunas therefore assessed that VanZant was extremely flexible and would be able to get out of wrestle pin-downs, which she did. So, shrewdly, Namajunas knew in advance that she would have to be persistent and not be fazed by VanZant’s escape-artisty. She won!"

[Looks up from reading]

Kate is after learning loads about tactics of UFC in one viewing here!

[Group laughs. Jesse continues reading]

"She won the day. Namajunas has a shaved head, and consequently there is something very clean and spare-looking about her. I couldn’t detangle that from the way she fought. People’s relationship with their hair is endlessly fascinating but perhaps women have the edge on this. I really admire the scale that hair has in Maher’s work; it seems commensurate with the hirsute complex. Plus this piece makes me really fucking laugh."

The group continues to talk for the next hour and a half in the room. They agree to meet the following week and for each subsequent week until they have collectively curated an exhibition. By February the task is realised. They will now continue to meet and discuss their ideas and experiences over the duration of the exhibition.
"In truth, there is nothing woman; can call their own but death, not even that small model of their servile clay which forms a paste and a cover to their bones."

Anna Doyle Wheeler
the youth and beauty of every civilized
land, and gloated on by men pursuing in-
the youth and beauty of every civilized
radical now. the
masses.
freedoms and Karl Marx's emancipation of
the enlightenment's call for individual
dooley calls a "bridging voice" between
deserving love".
That Anna Doyle Wheeler has left
such an anonymous contribution shows
that even our ideas often know no
ancestry. Many of the woman artists
whose work has survived and made it into
the canon are without provenance, and
this collective curatorial project is,
for me, part homage to these women by
(through) disrupting the cultural memory
that forgot them. How did so many woman
artists end up in the basements, hidden
like Anna Doyle Wheeler's work in the
Appeal?
We must also ask if we are re-
writing cultural memory, reshaping it
- creating alliances, disrupting a his-
tory that excludes and separates. Let us
take back the discourse, re-instating
the invisibled women artists, writers,
fighters; remembering them for more than
their relationship to more prominent
fathers, husbands, brothers. We are
curators remembering "ghost voyagers",
creating intimacies, twins, alliances;
claiming intimate solidarity.

When you attempt to make regula-
tions for women...you will not succeed in
regulating properly for beings whose
feelings and habits are so little known
to any but themselves; every one
be a code of laws framed in harmony with
the laws of nature and truth, until
woman shall be permitted to have a voice
in all enactments that concern her...
until...she shall be permitted to legislate
for herself.*

*That Anna Doyle Wheeler has left
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With thanks to Dolores Dooley for bringing
Anna Doyle Wheeler to light in Ireland.

Sources and further reading:
Thompson, K. (1925) Appeal, edited with
'introduction' by Dolores Dooley (1997), Cork
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University Press.

'These voyagers' from the poem, 'The Statue of
the Virgin at Granard Speak by Paula Meehan.