

“Fiona Connor, Sydney de Jong, Audrey Wollen”
Fiona Connor, Sydney de Jong, Audrey Wollen

29 October — 10 December, 2016
Opening: 29 October, 5-8 PM

Press Release #1:

Video is actually writing. Art is actually artifacts. Ceramics are fucking plates and cups, and do not tell me different. Press releases are actually poems. Or maybe manifestos. Fiona took the doors out of their frames, so they finally get to have one.

Pass through the front door and what you do does not count as labor, but love. Pass through the bathroom door, and what you do should never leave. Doors are how we tell ourselves about what's public and what's private.

In other words, gender is a doorway.

We know Mary Richardson for her desire to give women a public as well as a private life. We might say she wanted oil on the hinges.

Like a doorway, gender is a technology of space. It makes workplaces: the office, not the home. It makes domestic work (care work, house work) invisible as work. Through the front door (or kitchen door, or bedroom door) what you do doesn't count as labor, but love. Love, we tell women (and artists too) is private, excusing ourselves from compensating them both in the kinds of currencies they can trade for food.

(If you want to find Sydney's work, try the dishes in the sink.)

As Audrey's video reminds us, the Rokeby Venus doesn't see herself in the mirror, she sees us looking at her. The Rokeby Venus meets our gaze. She recognizes her body in the process of an exchange. But we excuse ourselves in her vanity. We make ourselves invisible. We look safely, as if peering through the keyhole of a door.

We know Mary Richardson for taking a knife to the Rokeby Venus, shredding the taut canvas under her back. To demand democratic

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representation for women, she destroyed cultural representation of them. In Gayatri Spivak's terms, she eradicated the portrait for the sake of the proxy. (Like Audrey, I might believe in both.)

When Mary Richardson slashed the Rokeby Venus, she opened a door between a thing and an image. In other words, she was the first critic of immaterial labor.

Maybe ceramics help us understand that all work is wet work—even if, by the time we notice it, the glaze has vitrified. Maybe ceramics help us understand that all handiwork is know-how—that labels like 'art' or 'work' are actually doors to open and close. In other words, the works in this show are about the hinges of love and work, food and sustenance, politics and feelings, use and exchange.

The doorway is a proscenium that shows us both the public and the private as a stage. It twins the proxy to the portrait.

"Justice is an element of beauty," Mary Richardson wrote, excusing herself for destroying the Rokeby Venus (now long-since healed). In other words, Mary Richardson was the first performance artist.

When Audrey talks about her cancer a lump opens in my throat. Fuck cancer, Audrey. In other words, I'm sorry. In other words, gender is a doorway between sex and apologies. Poems are press releases for feelings. Manifestos are press releases for ideas. Plates and cups are ceramics. Artifacts are art. Writing is actually video.

In other words,

—Tracy Jeanne Rosenthal

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