THE RISE OF THE FEMINIST ART MUSEUM IN THE NETHERLANDS

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Social and ethical responsibilities of the museum through the prism of feminist concerns and theoretical framework – how are they reflected in the Netherlands' leading modern and contemporary art museums?
Museum Arnhem (Arnhem), the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), and Van Abbemuseum (Eindhoven).

1. Introduction

The second principle in the International Council of Museum's *Code of Ethics* states: "museums have the duty to acquire, preserve and promote their collections as a contribution to safeguarding the natural, cultural and scientific heritage".[1] However, considering the significant weight attributed to grand exhibitions across past decades, it has been argued that perhaps acquiring, preserving, and promoting these objects may not be (or at least should not be) the ultimate goal of the museum. Rather than a purpose, these activities should embody a means to achieve something else entirely: a social role.[2] In their book on museums and social inclusion, director of The Research Center for Museums and Galleries, Jocelyn Dodd, and professor of Museum Studies, Richard Sandell, discuss the lesser known outcomes of a museum visit. These can be indirectly reflected in how individuals accept and own their identities, how communities are empowered, how archaic beliefs are challenged, and how intolerance is obliterated.[3] This is not to diminish the museum workers' obligation to care for the objects in their collection; but beyond this duty, "[e]thics defines the relationship of the museum with people, not with things".[4]

Gradually and sporadically, many concepts have penetrated the museum walls, from politics, to structuralism, to social class theory, and feminism; without a doubt, "the museum seminar room has become an interdisciplinary place for exchanges of ideas about the social

[1] ICOM, *Code of Ethics*, 2004
http://icom.museum/professional-standards/code-of-ethics/
[2] Fyfe 2010, pg. 39
[3] Dodd & Sandell 2001, pg. 4
[4] Besterman 2010, pg. 431

world".[5] Studying how these concepts are enmeshed within the meaning-making practice of museums surely makes for riveting research quests. However, this paper will be focusing only on one notion that has permeated the art world and specifically institutions in the Netherlands: feminism.

As noted by women's study chair Tineke Willemsen at Tilburg University, "[i]t is hardly even possible to give a definition of feminism that every feminist will agree with".[6] But I will attempt to highlight the notions which I personally identify with the most, and expand beyond the issue of women's rights. To my mind, ardent, valid and informed feminism is intersectional; meaning that it aims for a society in which individuals are not bound by their genders, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social class, religion, upbringing, physical and mental ability, or other elements to do with identity. Feminism encompasses a large variety of issues due to the fact that oppressive institutions (sexism, homophobia, racism etc.) are interconnected and must be examined together, in order to understand the full experience of an individual, and the various levels of injustice they may be experiencing.[7] As it will become apparent from my paper, I equate this utopian society with the social and ethical duties that people and their institutions have towards other people. For this reason, I believe the limits of feminism (if any) to be very broad, and I suspect that its philosophy and principles are to be found in any discussion on justice and human rights.

For the sake of the integrity of the terminology used in this paper, I will briefly delve into the history of the word 'feminism', and the reasoning behind using it in relation to this broad spectrum of people and issues. First used in the late 19th century, the term derives from the French *féminisme*, and started being heavily used during the suffrage movement in the early 20th century, by women who advocated for the right to vote.[8] Over the course of time, the term evolved to become an all-inclusive movement for everyone. In recent years, discussions arose in regards to the term's contemporaneous relevance, and alternatives such as 'humanism',

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[5] Fyfe 2010, pg. 33
[6] Willemsen 1997, pg. 5.
[7] The reason why I stress the relevance of intersectionality for feminism, is because a variety of issues lie at the root of inequality. Gender, class, race issues are not mutually exclusive – in fact, they are very much interlinked. There are groups of people that suffer from various degrees of oppression, and all must be taken into account and discussed as equally significant. For instance, a white woman who is straight, able-bodied, and wealthy, will experience a significantly different type of oppression to a black woman who is lesbian, disabled, and impoverished.
[8] K. Rendon, *So, if it's for everyone, why is it called 'feminism'?,* Fembot, 2015 http://fembotmag.com/2015/02/06/so-if-its-for-everyone-why-is-it-called-feminism/

'equalism', or 'egalitarianism' have been proposed. However, none of these options are feasible, for a number of reasons. To begin with, while 'humanism' may appear more inclusive at first glance, it is in fact a concept older than feminism, describing a philosophical stance that argues for the centrality and superiority of human beings over acceptance of religious dogma or superstition. Relying heavily on notions such as critical thinking and rationalism, humanism is a celebration of the individual human existence.[9]

Even more so, the terms 'equalist' or 'egalitarianism' are also unsuitable, not in the least on account of their implications. The root of feminism lies in its focus on the disadvantages and inequality of the group that is mostly targeted, which was and remains that of women. While the strife for equality is intrinsically all encompassing, the movement, and its name, are reflections of the current state of affairs: namely, discrimination against women.[10] In a somewhat similar vein, we refer to advances in the LGBT community as fighting for 'gay rights', and not 'all sexualities rights'. The term does not imply that gay rights are superior to straight rights, or others, but it does imply that they firstly must be elevated to the same level of acceptance, in order for equality to become the norm. Many feminists argue that there is no need to change the name of a movement with clear benefits for everyone. In fact, its name is reminiscent of the many brave women who fought for this movement's birth and advances – it carries a history and a legacy. "To take away the name, is to take away yet another right, to take away even more of [women's] representation. People who demand to be called 'equalists', rather than feminists, are ignoring the fact that [women and men] aren't actually equal."[11]

In the light of what I have said, I believe that feminism is to be employed when looking at art, politics, stereotypes, history, education, and generally all fields related to interpersonal relationships. Bearing in mind the progress in today's societal issues, I believe that feminism is truly just and morally sound only when it is intersectional, namely when it takes into account all aforementioned systems through which an identity is created and 'evaluated' by societal standards. I also believe that intersectionality (be it accidental or not) lies at the core of many museum inner practices. In consequence, this paper is written through a viewpoint that acknowledges these aspects. I hope that my research will be able to provide guidance in terms of

[9] N. Walter, *Humanism – what's in the world*, Rationalist Press Association, 1997
[10] J. R. Thorpe, *Why feminism still needs to be called feminism*, Bustle, 2015
http://www.bustle.com/articles/122047-why-feminism-still-needs-to-be-called-feminism
[11] Rendon, 2015

how a museum that is preoccupied with 'feminist concerns' should look like, and equally as significant, what it should do.

My structural aims are threefold: firstly, I will attempt to provide the reader with a fair understanding of the term 'feminist' in the context of my paper. I will argue for a dual interpretation of the concept: one of its facets lies in a museum's content (artists and artwork that openly set out to tackle feminist concerns), while the other is related to museum practice and theory (particularities of the museum that demonstrate the museum's open-mindedness, tolerance, and the desire to challenge the norm). Secondly, I will engage in demonstrating the reasons why I deem necessary that modern and contemporary art museums should make a priority of exhibiting art, as well as attitudes and attentiveness in regards to feminist issues. I will argue that these set of practices are strongly connected to higher moral responsibilities towards the audience, which is why they are of utmost relevance for museum workers and visitors alike. Lastly, I will set out to deconstruct the manner in which three highly relevant institutions – the Stedelijk, Museum Arnhem, and Van Abbemuseum – display and preoccupy themselves with the previously mentioned principles.

Naturally, my queries are very much linked to the phenomenon labelled by museum scholars and practitioners as 'the new museology', or the current model of theoretical and critical thinking within the museum sector. According to Vicki McCall, lecturer in Social Policy and Clive Gray, professor in Cultural Policy Studies and Management, this development is characterized by a number of concepts and traits designed to transform the museum.[12] From the elitist and 'closed' institution that it has been regarded as in the past, the museum now wishes to transition into a safe cultural space, preoccupied with greater issues than simply preservation – such as the social and political roles of the museum.[13] The new museology practice confirms that rather than holding curatorship as the vital force that lies at the centre of museum practice, other facets of this authoritative institution are to be found at the forefront. Aiding masses of population in the quest to create a superior community, encouraging personal expression and interpretation on the part of the visitor, better access and representation of minority groups, and eradication of social injustice and inequality, are paramount for a successful museum. As indicated by celebrated researcher in museum practice Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, language and

[12] McCall & Gray 2003, pg. 2
[13] Ibidem

education become central for the notion of the 'new museology'[14], and institutions worldwide adopt a 'visitor-orientated ethos'.[15]

I have chosen to delve into this particular aspect of museum studies on account of its significance in the wider spectrum of issues. When thinking about the unassailable role of culture in shaping society's collective psyche, the authoritative institution of the museum immediately comes to mind. It is by no means a secret that avid museum-goers purposefully seek to gain a new understanding of themselves and their environment, acquire a deeper knowledge on select issues, or even be challenged by fresh, unfamiliar perspectives. Similarly, the casual tourist desires a broadening of their cultural and aesthetic horizons at the very least. Even more so, I suspect that in time, visitors internalize not only art and its meaning, but also the manner in which it is presented to them. And what better way to obtain a relevant understanding of these issues, than by entering through the readily open doors of prestigious museums worldwide?

My firm belief is that by understanding the intricate ways in which the museum acts as catalyst for this particular societal matter of public concern, one is better equipped to assimilate its meanings both inside and outside of the museum. Through gaining a better grasp of the aforementioned institutional responsibility, the viewer can be part of the process of accountability, a step that is absolutely necessary for stimulation, growth, and constantly bettering our cultural realm. To argue that feminism is still just as relevant now as it was when it emerged, is an obvious (albeit at times necessary) task. However, I hope to argue for its presence within the dominant influence of the museum – not just on the surface, but in its most obscure and convoluted workings.

[14] Hooper-Greenhill 2000
[15] Ross 2004, pg. 86

2. Feminist art and theory in the contemporary art museum

Translating the social movement of feminism into the artistic realm – both art itself and the behavior of the institutions dedicated to it – is a somewhat elaborate process to grasp the meaning of. This is due to the fact that there are significant differences between feminist art and art made by women, or feminist exhibitions and museums' inner organization based on feminist principles. For this reason, the definition of feminism and the manner in which to relate to it are concepts that vary considerably among museum practitioners; there is no curatorial agreement on what it means, what it is worth, or how to approach it within the museum space. However, what can unanimously be agreed upon is that "feminism was never an art movement. Feminism is a resource for artistic practices".[16] And, as I hope to demonstrate, it is also a resource for museological theories and practices. It has been noted that in the past decade, significant, undivided attention was granted to feminist art and exhibitions – not just in museums, but also in galleries, auction houses, and art events all over Europe and the United States.[17] This is significant for my research, because the social and cultural contexts are paramount in analyzing museum attitudes towards social issues. In addition, "writing about art has traditionally been concerned with that which is interior to the frame, whereas feminism has focused primarily on what lies outside the frame of patriarchal logic, history and justice"[18] – my hope is to write about both.

For instance, a reader who is somewhat familiar with the Dutch scene of feminist art will know and acknowledge South African born artist Marlene Dumas' (1953-) *oeuvre* as a collection of easily identifiable and accessible feminist artworks. In her renderings of nudity and portraits, Dumas "explores contemporary cultural constructions of beauty"[19]. Her work aims to challenge societal norms, the manner in which personal taste is influenced by the media, and the culture-specific and transitional aspects of what one finds attractive. Paired with her interest in human sexuality and eroticism, Dumas' pieces are not about bodies, but about establishing relationships between the viewer, the subject, and herself: "[t]he aim of my work… has always

[16] Robinson 2013, pg. 147
[17] Ibidem, pg. 129
[18] Phelan & Reckitt 2013, pg. 14-49
[19] Dumas & Bedford 2007, pg. 42

been to arouse in the audience (as well as myself) an experience of empathy with my subject matter" (Fig. 1).[20] Norm challenging, personal, unafraid, and liberating – these are undoubtedly the marks of a veritable feminist work. And I have found plenty examples of such works in the three museums I have been studying. But, because of the intersectional aspect aforementioned, the feminist pattern might not always be as obvious as with works that ponder on the female nude and the media, such as in Dumas' imagery. This is a sobering reality that I became aware of when discussing the visit to the Van Abbemuseum with a classmate that had accompanied me: she was bewildered at my claim that works dealing with the theme of refugees and politics are deemed by me as utterly feminist in nature. But how could they not be? Sadly, this type of geographical displacement creates circumstances that favor various forms of injustice for refugees, ranging from exacerbated risk of sexual harassment, to difficulty in finding work and resources, to verbal abuse on account of their "otherness". By incorporating these ideas into its wider narrative, the Van Abbe actively participates in the fight for social equality and respecting human rights, issues that I will elaborate on later in my analysis.

Thus, it becomes more apparent how works of art can, in themselves, be feminist. But what about the museum in its entirety? Scholars – such as philosopher, feminist, and museum specialist Hilde Hein – are making use of feminist theory more and more in order to understand museum practice and work, and I too intend to tackle these issues in my study. To begin with, the particularity that becomes apparent when feminist theory is applied to museum studies is its questioning of all previously held mores. A good illustration of this aspect is noting the assimilation and taming of the feminist model of thought into a "deadened, museal category of 'feminist art' while unthinkingly continuing ineffectually to add women artists to existing models of the history of art".[21] Even more so, the state of being bound to binaries has often been remarked in relation to museums. The fact that histories of men and women have often been represented in the narrative of the art institution as distinct is not new in itself; but it is argued that this clear differentiation is rooted even more deeply than just mere pictorial representation. The entire internal construction of the museum, "abstract knowledge and organization as well as concrete manifestations of buildings, exhibitions and collections",[22] relies on hierarchical, firmly established classifications which reflect assumptions about males and females, and what is

[20] Dumas & Bedford 2007, pg. 43
[21] Robinson 2013, pg. 146
[22] Porter 2004, pg. 105

deemed as masculine versus what is deemed as feminine. The manner in which the three museums relate to the concept of binaries will constitute highly significant factor of analysis in my research.

Such an instance was demonstrated by Evelyn Hankins, associate curator at Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, in relation to the Whitney Museum in 1930's New York. Founded by Juliana Force and Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, the museum was a decorative environment, "intended to welcome rather than intimidate"[23] – in consequence, the space was dismissed as seemingly 'feminine', and not quite a fitting space for intellectually sophisticated art. In contrast, the New York Museum of Modern Art – also founded by women around the same time – was deemed to be the canon-setting institution for modern art. Henkins argues that this is because director Alfred H. Barr not only constructed a more seemingly 'masculine' space in the visual format of an undecorated white cube, but also because he characterized the museum's female founders as "philanthropists, rather than policy makers".[24] As it has been observed by feminist theorists, the practice of dividing by binaries is deeply ingrained in the museological psyche, and its limitations still linger, even in today's more evolved and self-aware museum practice.[25]

And how could the museum be any different than that which its content echoes? Our entire world is characterized by a set of boundaries that may seem, at first glance, impossible to permeate, and fixed categories of 'right' or 'wrong'. According to Hein, feminism does not exactly question the necessity for some boundaries, but it does question their "impermeability and the fixity of the categories they define".[26] Instead of letting our differences govern, feminism hopes for an understanding of their contexts, in order to focus on the common ground. And this is precisely where the paradox of how museums operate makes itself known: systematization lies at the core of this institution, and so does the ability to classify and categorize objects and ideas. Though at the same time, the display of various civilizations, the preoccupations of many cultures, and the artifacts belonging to different religious belief systems promote "a kind of intellectual tourism that reconciles diverse ideas without transcending them".[27]

[23] Marstine 2008, pg. 18
[24] Ibidem
[25] Porter 2004, pg. 105
[26] Hein 2007, pg. 37
[27] Hein 2007, pg. 37

For this reason, Hein wishes to propose feminist theory as starting point for the reinventing of the museum. The author makes note of the vantage point of the museum critic, which always lies in accordance to their own field of academia (be it art history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and so on). The argument is that feminist theory can successfully reunite the interdisciplinarity that characterizes museum studies. Out of her convincing and well-rounded explanation, a few concepts distinguish themselves from the point of view of my research.

Firstly, the author explains "the rejection of traditional historical periodization, which classifies eras in terms of men's achievements as determined by male historians".[28] This is a riveting aspect purely because it so often goes unnoticed, and unchallenged. What I mean by this is that, on occasion, certain artistic objects are questioned in terms of how well they fit into a certain category on account of their intrinsic properties. However, the categories themselves are never questioned by the museum goers. This is an issue in itself, and it is an aspect noticed by other feminist theoreticians as well. For instance, such is the case of Aletta Instituut voor Vrouwengeschiedenis. In an attempt to correct the white privilege[29] that comes with being an institution that is exclusively dependent on donations, this Institute seeks to document the histories of women living in the Netherlands, in all their diversification. But, when discussing the history of this organization (formerly known as the International Information Centre and Archives for the Women's Movement in Amsterdam) cultural anthropologist Gloria Wekker states "show me your archive and I will tell you who is in power".[30] And, according to visual theorist and cultural analyst Griselda Pollock, "[a]rchives matter".[31] What makes up our history ultimately ends up shaping (or distorting) our collective past. The absence of the histories of people of a certain gender, sexual orientation, nationality, descent, and other factors, simply favors a vision from the point of view of the white male. The museum, by its very nature, is actively participating in history making, and we need to ensure the outcome is not created through an exclusive lens.

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[28] Hein 2007, pg. 31
[29] White privilege is not to be understood as something purposefully done or enjoyed by white people, but it is the mere fact that white skin is the standard societal preference, and it attracts certain advantages, rights, or immunities. K. Clark, *white privilege – a social relation*, University of Dayton https://academic.udayton.edu/race/01race/whiteness05.htm
[30] Wieringa 2008
[31] Pollock 2007, pg. 12-13

The second point that Hein makes is related to the instances singled out by museum workers as masterpieces, breakthroughs or 'historic moments'. The reason why these phrases (and the implications they attract) are problematic is that they indirectly break down and neglect the segments of a higher process – "[t]hey negate the ordinary flow of events that gave them birth and sustain their currency".[32] By indicating irrefutable supremacy of some objects over others, the museum unknowingly "induces visitors with finite interest and limited time to rush through the museum seeking out the anointed objects, or consecrated experiences, as in a treasure hunt".[33] In fact, the problem is not so much with the very objects selected, as they are often times worthy of awe and admiration – the problem is with the range of candidates, and the nature of the judges. This is closely linked to the aforementioned point – even if the construction 'masterpiece' would not intrinsically imply exclusion, its use in relation to a category that actively neglects a significant part of humanity may be seen as morally questionable.

The reason why I have selected these particular issues, is because I want to make an attempt at conceptualizing a 'feminist' museum, in order to have a strong theoretical framework in which to inscribe the three museums previously mentioned. The misconception of feminism as 'supremacy of women over all' has colored the academic theories proposing its use in this cultural institution. My research has highlighted a common denominator in the theories of these scholars: they all actively insist on the fact that a feminist museum is not a place filled with objects whose essence lies in femininity, or womanhood. For Pollock, the feminist museum we want to create is not an institution designed to preserve and display all things by women. More accurately, the feminist museum is an institution that actively fights all injustice and inequality, through a number of ways. Rather than indicating feminine essence, the feminist museum indicates the presence of "a working practice, a critical and theoretical laboratory, intervening in and negotiating the conditions of the production, and, of course, the failure of sexual difference[34] as a crucial axis of meaning, power, subjectivity and change".[35]

Museum professional Gaby Porter puts forth a very similar account for exhibitions that she regards as 'feminist'. Her definition insists on abolishing the binary-dictated concepts shaping the Western society and culture – be it the age-old question of gender, or "the dualistic

[32] Hein 2007, pg. 35-36
[33] Hein 2007, pg. 35-36
[34] Here I feel I must add that the discrimination is not contained to just biological differences, but also gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religious beliefs and other aspects that make up one's identity.
[35] Pollock 2007, pg. 14

notion that knowledge or science forms the content of exhibitions and art provides their shape and presentation".[36] A feminist exhibition is undoubtedly interdisciplinary, both in concept, as well as in display. In addition, "they do not hesitate to use feelings and emotions as a point of departure. Such displays draw on and mix different forms and conventions – historical and contemporary, 'found' and constructed, factual and fictional".[37] What is more – and I will return to this in more detail upon my analyses of the museums – these exhibitions are often not formal, or distanced from the viewer. They tend to be personal, thought-provoking and pleading for tolerance for the Other. They break down the barrier between the museum worker and the visitor, by not providing definitive statements and facts, but by encouraging discussion in acting as platform for interpersonal communication.[38]

In the context of museum ethics explained in my previous chapter, Museum Studies Director and distinguished scholar Janet Marstine argues that "gender studies and critical anthropology offer some of the most revolutionary implications"[39] for the new museology. In her view, issues tackled within feminism have brought forth the question of how to understand and accept difference in such an ardent manner, that traditional museum elements are bound to be re-configured through this new prism. It is with this in mind, that I would like to stress on the significance of the symbiosis among concept, content, and museum practice. This is perhaps the most significant aspect of my analyses, because it truly lies at the core of this research. When debating whether these three leading Dutch museums are preoccupied with feminist issues and feminist theory, I want to look beyond the mere presence of art by women, or even feminist art, within the museum. I want to examine the narratives constructed, and pay attention to what the subtle undertones of an exhibition really speak of. Even more so, I want to deconstruct the very inner structures of these museums, in order to assess if their mores and principles are in accordance with their content. The feminist museum – in the broad sense that I have described the term – is not just a place in which you can find feminist art, but it is an institution that actively acts as a feminist social agent.

The reasons why I have chosen to focus this research within the context of Museum Arnhem, the Stedelijk, and the Van Abbemuseum are multi-layered. Firstly, it is to be noted that

[36] Porter 2004, pg. 112
[37] Porter 2004, pg. 112
[38] Porter 2004, pg. 115
[39] Marstine 2011, pg. 8

all three museums hold collections concerned with modern and contemporary art; however, there are also discrepancies in their preoccupations and missions. My on-site approach was to analyse cross-sections in the permanent and temporary collections of the three museums, as well as take into account various significant projects undertaken in the past year or so. To begin with, Museum Arnhem, is known as the "women's museum" on account of its outstanding collection of contemporary art by women artists with various backgrounds. Its mission statement clearly states that their main objective is to intersect art and society, inspire a wide and diverse audience, and build a close relationship with the visitors.[40] Analysing the collection and construction of narrative within Museum Arnhem is of pivotal significance in the context of intersectionality, an aspect of the feminist movement that cannot be neglected when researching its ramifications. On the other hand, lies the Stedelijk; considered to be the Netherlands' largest and leading museum of modern and contemporary art. The visitor statistics keep growing by the year – in 2014, a number of 816.396 viewers crossed its doorstep.[41] Considering its significant influence in the Dutch modern museum world, the study of its feminist narrative and behaviour cannot be neglected for the proper materialization of this research. Lastly, the Van Abbemuseum is interesting to examine from the point of view of its own dynamics in regards to inclusion and other social issues. Its international appraisal in this aspect makes it "one of the frontlines of museums that are socially engaged and combine this engagement with cutting edge art".[42]

In order to understand not only the presence of feminist ideals within these museums, but to comprehend the manner in which it acts as vital force, inspiration, theoretical base and catalyst, one must acknowledge the moral and ethical facets of this notion. In an attempt to better explain the necessity for these particular theories, I have selected case studies and appropriate literature. My analysis of the museum's duties and responsibilities towards its visitors and the larger spectrum of society is meant to demonstrate how the use of feminist theory can lead to achieve higher moral purposes than just object preservation and display. To my mind, modern, successful, and visitor-oriented museums should be preoccupied with approaching certain themes, and displaying certain positive attitudes in regards to those themes.

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[40] Museum Arnhem, Missie/ Visie
http://www.museumarnhem.nl/museum-arnhem/missie-visie/
[41] Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Annual Report 2014
http://www.stedelijk.nl/upload/Jaarverslagen/2014/Annual%20Report%20SMA%202014%20English.pdf
[42] Bierling, Brisoux, Kuijten, La Rosa, Pereira de Morais Luz 2011-2012, pg. 3

3. Feminism vs. museum responsibilities – a synonymous terminology?

3.1. Social issues: identities, inclusion, and social activism

A significant testament of the influence of the museum on society lies in the newly found interest of sociologists in various museological issues. Questions on how culture is exhibited, why, who displays the objects and who consumes their meaning are often at the forefront of exhibition news and study.[43] The narratives found within a museum are popularly perceived as visual, textual, and conceptual commentaries on ourselves, and the world around us. But, a museum's intrinsic core is of a dual nature: the institution acts as both archive, as well as participant in the making of cultural content.

The notion of 'social inclusiveness' within the museum has frequently varied according to country and culture; more often than not, it has been understood as the equivalent of access and audience development. However, a considerable body of research suggests that the ramifications of this concept are much more profound and widespread. Given the following outcome of engagements with artistic and cultural institutions both at a personal and community level, the museum is "predicated on forwarding a social justice agenda".[44] According to previously mentioned scholar Richard Sandell, the meanings brought forth, and the narrative in which they are enmeshed, have the potential to place the seed "for social regeneration, empowering communities to increase their self-determination and develop the confidence and skills to take greater control over their lives"[45].

Contemplating the manner through which to achieve the socially inclusive museum has led to intense scholarly discussion. Sandell notes that simply including a social justice agenda in the content is not enough – rather, the profession and entire sector need to "radically rethink their purposes and goals and to renegotiate their relationship to, and role within, society".[46] Janet Marstine proposes an even more involved stance on the part of the museum: it must be willing to embrace the task of social activism. [47] This can be seen as clashing with the traditional image of museum practice as objective, and museum display as neutral and detached. But, it has been

[43] Fyfe 2010, pg. 33
[44] Marstine 2011, pg. 13
[45] R. Sandell 2003, pg. 45
[46] Ibidem
[47] Marstine 2011, pg. 13

argued that in assuming the position to impress the viewer with notions of citizenship, and instill a sense of 'appropriate demeanor', museums can already be thought of as acting with an activist agenda.[48] Regardless, changing fundamental structures in order to publicly support a particular cause, or militating for a political or social change, would undoubtedly act as significant feminist catalyst for said change. And, because of the nature of museum dynamics and its role as 'seminar room' for the 'study' of interdisciplinary subjects, there is space to explore the rich potential of activism.[49]

It is rather facile to acknowledge the need for visual inclusion of a variety of cultures and identities; what is proven to be the true challenge lies in adopting a gracious and mindful *modus operandi* in regards to the sensible themes that are exhibited. The lack of the aforementioned can lead to not only a weak exhibition and failed social mission, but to propagation of even more stereotypes, division, and negative feelings towards the minority group – in short, the polar opposite of feminist ideals. For instance, such was the case for Alison Lapper (1965-), in regards to an exhibition in a major arts institution in London. An English artist and model born without arms and shortened legs, Lapper is known for questioning what is deemed by society as 'physically normal' or 'beautiful' in stunning imagery of herself. She is also widely known for posing for Marc Quinn's (1964-) sculpture, *Alison Lapper Pregnant* (Fig. 2). Lapper describes museums as having the potential to be "very negative places – places that, rather than representing disabled people within the mainstream, so often marginalize their work and the issues that they explore".[50] She goes on to describe her experience of visiting an exhibition in a significant institution in London: a warning was placed at the entrance, stating "18 years old and over only". To her dismay, inside there were representations of people missing limbs, much like herself. An indisputable account of active ableism,[51] Lapper herself described the situation as 'obscene'. The artist felt that this particular curatorship put her and others "back into the circus ring to be ridiculed as freaks, to be stared at in amazement".[52] In this instance, this institution

[48] H. Hein, *What's real in the museum*, Lecture at School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, October 2010
[49] Marstine 2011, pg. 13
[50] Dodd & Sandell 2001, pg. 53
[51] "Ableism" is defined as "discrimination in favour of able-bodied people", but extends beyond this, into society's conceptualization of disability. For instance, it could be the belief that people with disabilities cannot function like able-bodied members of society, or that disability is a flaw rather than a difference.
Oxford English Dictionary
http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/240190?redirectedFrom=ableism#eid
[52] Dodd & Sandell 2001, pg. 53

failed its mission of social inclusion, and thus failed honoring the feminist vision of tolerance, acceptance and body positivity. Despite this, the artist acknowledges the capabilities of the museum for beneficial content, and its ability to challenge previously held beliefs around the topic of disability. A potential explanation for this mistake and others of the like – and here I draw the line between 'explanation', and 'justification' – is that curators misinterpret the concept of inclusion.

Going back in time to a period of peak for feminist activism both inside and outside of cultural institutions, the 1989 poster of Guerilla Girls (1985-) (Fig. 3) exemplifies just that: technically, women were not only visually present within the museum, but, at a superficial glance, made up for a considerable part of its visual content! But the actual number of living, working women artists who were 'present' in the museum is abysmal: 5% artists, versus the 85% nude women on display. Similarly to the case of the aforementioned London exhibition, in this case visual representation is rendered useless or even damaging, according to the context in which it is placed.

These examples greatly illustrate the vital significance of understanding that the manner in which collections are documented and presented, the larger framework in which they are placed, the language used to describe them, and the connections made between concepts are equally as important as visual cues, if not more so.[53] Thus, theory does not suffice in the quest for social inclusion, and without its practical range, it can do more harm than good.

A large factor to be taken into consideration when evaluating the case of improper exhibiting is the automatic assumption made by the majority of visitors in the process of museum visiting, namely that the institution is delivering in an unmediated manner, quintessential and archetypal truths.[54] In fact, unbeknownst to the viewer, the whole process of deciding on the exhibition content is manifold. To find the right approach, to include or exclude objects and sub-themes, information on the labels, the narrative voice, alternative voices or interpretations, are all issues to be taken into account. A highly significant fact remains that the objects that are put on a pedestal or in display, are not always the most representative of the chosen subject matter. A

[53] Dodd & Sandell 2001, pg. 82
[54] Griffiths & King 2008, pg. 25

number of reasons unrelated to the exhibition theme may lead to the choice of a certain item: state of preservation, aesthetic considerations, availability etc.[55]

In addition, the professional codes and practices of many museum workers revolve around "the premise of objectivity and neutrality, eschewing bias and influence".[56] Thus, it should come as no surprise that when assimilating the message and narratives of certain powerful exhibitions, visitors often forget the magnitude of the voice and vision of the museum workers involved, as well as other practical reasons for exhibiting certain objects. But, for those who understand the inner workings of these institutions, it is certain that the style reflects, albeit in a subtle manner, some institutional beliefs and values. This "inevitably promote(s) some truths at the expense of others",[57] a fact which can be overlooked, unless a conscious endeavor is made. On the other hand, feminism stands for inclusion and vigorous representation of diversity – no voice or woe should remain unheard.

In spite of this, efforts are being made in order to promote, alongside the responsibility for accurate information, the duty of truthfulness. Lately, a tendency has become more and more apparent among museum professionals, namely the 'signing' of exhibitions and shows. This translates into the presence of a visible statement, devised by the curators of the exhibition, which reasserts the fact that the display is the result of the thoughts and beliefs of those who have designed it. It may also claim that the meaning and message are as valid as possible according to most recent findings, or the sign may also allude to the speculative nature of some of the claims in the exhibition. While this may leave the impression of a mere 'disclaimer', museum researcher Gary Edson claims that these signings play a more significant role, that of making an overt effort to inform the audience, through raising awareness to this issue, as well as addressing the need for transparency.[58]

The subtle implications of this can have a positive impact on a visitor's experience, even more so if the issue at stake is a social one. By providing the required information, but allowing room for critical thinking on the matter, the visitor perceives the museum experience as less threatening and elitist as it used to be decades ago. In addition, acknowledging the visitor as a thinking being eliminates their potentially feeling as if intellectually inferior to the curator or

[55] Gazi 2014, pg. 2
[56] Porter 2004, pg. 106
[57] Gazi 2014, pg. 2
[58] Edson 1997, pg. 197

museum practitioner, and encourages future visits through the consumer-oriented attitude displayed.[59] For instance, had the exhibition that Lapper spoke of displayed such a sign, the average visitor would have been more prone to automatically feel at least more neutral about (if not downright question) the narrative of the story, rather than take it at face value, and had paid more attention to how meaning is constructed beyond the surface.

Previously, I have mentioned the importance of not just visual cues, but also of the larger framework in which they are placed. By this, I mean that "[e]verything around an object has an impact on how the visitor reacts, interprets and assimilates information".[60] To begin with, when discussing language – in this case, the syntagm "18 years old and over only" – the suggestion that what follows is age-appropriate only for adults lies in more aspects than the mere choice of words. The style, genre, voice, lexical and grammatical construction of the statement all contribute to the general impression made on the viewer. After consideration, it has been assessed that within the museum space, "all choices, apparently even mundane ones, contribute to an overall picture".[61]

However, as much as textual context might impact the understanding of an exhibition, significant factors such as design, space and display ought not to be forgotten, as they play a crucial role "not just in presenting content, but in actually creating it".[62] The use of space through the means of distribution of the objects in the room, the moving pattern designed for the visitor, height of the object, lighting, its harmony or lack of in reference to the larger conceptual framework, its visual pairing with the objects around it – all of these instances actively participate in how an object is assimilated. There is a subtle, but ever-present difference between 'evident' and 'concealed' "aspects in exhibition making: a). exhibition content with special reference to 'sensitive' material; and b). exhibition interpretation and presentation with an emphasis on museum language".[63]

For example, when thinking about the case of Mauritshuis and Johannes Vermeer's (1632-1675) *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (Fig. 4), these elements become apparent. Carefully hung and softly lit, it is more than apparent that one is gazing at an impeccable instance of artistic technique. Thus, the display is undoubtedly designed to inspire a sentiment of awe. The wooden

[59] Edson 1997, pg. 197
[60] Gazi 2014, pg. 5
[61] Ravelli 2006, pg. 112
[62] Serell 2006, pg. 33
[63] Gazi 2014, pg. 2

bannister in front of it, designed to keep visitors at an appropriate distance, almost adds to the girl's seductiveness; it is almost as if the curators know that given the change, her radiating skin and glowing eyes will draw the observer too close for comfort, perhaps even without their knowledge or control. I have used this example solely on account of the noticeability of these parameters; I shall return to the issue of choices and the overall meaning when discussing the social activism present in the museums in question.

3.2 Ethical obligations: interpersonal relationships, radical transparency, and moral agency

The notion of written and unwritten ethical duties, otherwise known as moral philosophy, might appear as a new concern of Western society, in the light of recent progress. However,

> [t]he human impulse that has nourished the development of moral philosophy over more than two thousand years has drawn sustenance from the same intellectual sources that seek expression through the museum […] the roots of museums and philosophical thought are closely entwined and burrow deeply into the history of humankind's need to make sense of the world and our place within it.[64]

Within the museum walls, ethics can be defined as a set of leading values of good practice that museum practitioners are advised – but not compelled – to adopt in their day-to-day activities. These values are not legally binding, but they are heavily required as a manner of thinking that is just, morally sound, and in consequence, appealing to the audiences. The main justification why institutions such as museums and galleries sometimes fall short of meeting the standard of these sets of values is supposedly on account of their constant changeability. The framework in which museums operate is "continually evolving, both as a result of the intense analysis to which museum practitioners subject their own value, and in response to the shifting values of the society".[65] In addition, much like the aforementioned social responsibility, it has been argued that by themselves, ethical principles may be pleasing in appearance only. Practical value is to be derived from moral philosophy only if paired with a conscious self-awareness of the role of the museum, a quest for candidness, and a strengthened consideration and tact in regards to various cultural groups and values represented in the cultural institution.[66] If one was to seek for the relationship between the previously discussed feminist duties of social inclusion and activism, and museum ethics, one might think of ethics as the innate and visceral driving

[64] Besterman 2010, pg. 432
[65] Ibidem
[66] Gazi 2014, pg. 1-2

force for using the museum as bringer of justice in society, through the methods presented in Chapter 2.

In her study of the twenty-first-century museum ethics, Janet Marstine proposes a new view, one that explains the concept of museum ethics as "more than the personal and professional ethics of individuals and concerns the capacity of institutions to create social change"[67] – which she refers to as 'institutional moral agency'. Scholar Hilde Hein supports this view, claiming that even though museums do not, as opposed to people, have a 'conscience', they do have what can be understood as moral agency. Marstine's study revolves around the notion that contemporary museum ethics is founded on the basis of this moral agency, and highlights the practices of social inclusion discussed previously, as well as the notion of radical transparency.[68] The concept is described as consisting of not only full disclosure of the issues faced by the museum, but also the motivations and manners of the curatorial process of choosing, as well as potential future implications of these choices.

The word 'transparency' implies a complex notion, one with multiple meanings and nuances according to the cultural context. An interesting example of misunderstanding of this term is the case of the Smithsonian and David Wojnarowicz (1954-1992) controversy. In 2007, Lawrence Small was fired from his presidential position on account of financial mismanagement. In the hopes of avoiding further issues of the sort, the following president, G. Wayne Clough launched a zealous, elaborate "internal and external transparency initiative to establish a publicly engaged system of oversight".[69] Its main component consisted of workshops in order to strengthen the collaboration between museum workers and the community, and the results of these meetings were posted on a platform that facilitated discussions and debates.

However, their goal of transparency was effectively annulled with their censorship of part of artist David Wojnarowicz' 1986-87 piece *A Fire in my Belly* (Fig. 5) in the National Portrait Gallery exhibition *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture,* 2010. After consulting gallery director Martin Sullivan and co-curator David C. Ward, but not second co-curator Jonathan David Katz or the community, Clough withdrew part of the footage in the film, on account of complaints from the Catholic League. The scene showed a crucifix covered in ants, and its removal was on the basis of the claim that it constituted 'hate speech' against

[67] Marstine 2011, XXIII
[68] Marstine 2011, pg. 5
[69] Marstine 2013, pg. 7

Catholics. This museum *faux pas* has been described by historian Jonathan Ned Katz as similar to the demonization of Robert Mapplethorpe's (1946-1989) sexuality by his contemporaries.[70] Thus, the Smithsonian's efforts of achieving public trust through openness and disclosure were obliterated by Clough's precipitated decision to respond to this type of pressure, without even consulting the entire body of staff, or the community which it promised to take into when making significant decisions.

So, as revealed by this example, radical transparency is not synonymous with transparency in its most basic sense; instead, it is described as a freeing, rather than a confining act for the museum practitioner. It is a mode of operating that describes points of discussion, but also analyzes them deeply. For instance, "[a] transparent wall text might tell us than an artifact is of unknown provenance; a radically transparent wall text would additionally engage the ethical issues of exhibiting works of unknown provenance".[71] In terms of its purpose, radical transparency is the ultimate tool for museums to help the viewer reach an informed understanding, engage in superior self-reflection, and think critically about the museum and society.

It is noteworthy to make the distinction "between ethical principles – those ideals and values which a society holds dear – and applied ethics – the practice of employing those principles to specific areas of activity, from medicine to business to museum work".[72] In addition, this new concept of museum ethics is not an ideal, and it is not a goal that once achieved, can be cast aside and revisited once per decade. It consists of a continuous debate, and thus a continuously new practice, and it is to be engaged consistently, in accordance to whatever developments may be reflected in culture and society. For this reason and others, some may deem this invariable attentiveness and profound transparency as confusing and tiring – it is unanimously agreed that "[e]thics is never easy".[73] However, given the rapid evolution of the realms of social justice, human rights, cultural studies, politics, and other significant areas, the museum leader and practitioner must adapt accordingly. To accept the convolution and vigor of

[70] J. Trescott, *After Smithsonian exhibit's removal, banned ant video still creeps into gallery*, *The Washington Post*, 2010
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/06/AR2010120607328.html
[71] Marstine 2011, pg. 14
[72] Marstine 2011, pg. 6
[73] Marstine 2011, pg. 20

the museum discourse is to truly understand the nature of this institution that equally shapes and reflects our world.

4. Feminist art and interpretations of museum narratives

4.1 Museum Arnhem

I have chosen Museum Arnhem as my starting point on the study of feminist art, because it certainly distinguishes itself among other institutions in the realm of Dutch art. Referred to by locals as "the women's museum" on account of its significant collection of female artists, this museum holds modern, contemporary, and applied art and design.

My visit to Museum Arnhem was a very distinct one, marked by a very accessible collection and narrative, and remarkably thought-provoking pieces. As I walked into the museum, the first exhibition I visited was the temporary one, titled *Queensize*. A traveling show, it consists of works borrowed from renowned doctor, chemist, and art collector Thomas Olbricht (1948-). Composed of works from 43 international female artists, the exhibition is centered around the concept of the 'bed' as a fundamental presence in our lives, especially at the beginning and at the end of a cycle of life. The themes of birth, death, and all the stages one goes through in between, along with dreams, sexuality, hopes, and all other aspects that make up our identities, are present in this display. Divided into three chapters – childhood and innocence, adulthood and being, aging and dying – the curating is often realized in a manner that is meant to appeal to one's emotions and innermost thoughts. The very first work the viewer sees is Patricia Piccinni's (1965-) *Balasana* (Fig. 6), a hyper realistic sculpture of a child in a fetal position, with a small kangaroo resting on the girl's back. Interestingly enough, I happened to see it during a school trip, surrounded by children, which contributed to the room's atmosphere of playfulness and purity.

The transition to the next room is somewhat sudden and profound: Kiki Smith's (1954-) red string of 'beads' (Fig. 7) are scattered centrally, from one side of the room to the other. The impeccable lighting does much justice to the piece, and it appears to be the climactic point of this chapter – even after viewing everything else, the viewer must return one last time to gaze at the vital force of this visual composition. An ode to the intricate inner workings of the body, it alludes to blood, and its significance for life, womanhood and sexuality. The beginning and end of the string of beads are framed by Sylvie Fleury's (1961-) *Louis Vuitton* bags (Fig. 8). The explicit aim to comment on the distinction between high and low art and their place within the

museum space brings significant attention to the concept of consumerism. Whether it is placed near the female form in an attempt to create a higher narrative on the objectification of women's bodies or not, the bags stand significant on their own, speaking of "ephemerality and the temporality of taste and fashion to the visual arts, which prefers to profile itself with long-lasting depth and content".[74]

Marlene Dumas' ink works of the female nude frame the walls on one side, and striking photographic imagery on the other. The duality of ink versus photography brings a new dimension to works that treat similar subjects: voluptuousness, one's relationship with the body, desire, violence and the media. Dumas' naked bodies stand "confidently and with defiance, almost as if they deliberately chose to be objectified by the viewer" (Fig. 9).[75] It is most definitely a bold reclamation of the female nude, a phenomenon known to happen with feminist art and the female nude. The other wall consists of a visual illustration of the relationship between our bodies and the media. Fascinating visual pairings grasped my attention, such as Marilyn Minter's (1948-) *Pink Bra (Pamela Anderson)* (Fig. 10), a photograph that explores the value of erotic imagery for women. In close proximity lies Dawn Mellor's (1970-) *Julia Roberts* (Fig. 11) seemingly 'abused' painting, in which the scratches and mutilations speak of the reality of celebrity culture and negative influence of mass-media. Daniela Rossell's (1973-) series *Rich and Famous* (Fig. 12) reunites these aspects with the issue of social standing and the results of cross-cultural influences on appearances and expectations.

The last room describes the last few stages of life, as well as negative emotions like greed, violence, and fear. It is here where I encountered a discrepancy between the general attitude displayed, and curatorial involvement: Şükran Moral's (1962-) 2009 *Found Guilty* (Fig. 13) appeared to be somewhat hidden behind a wall, around which the viewer had to walk in order to see it properly. The photograph depicts a woman with her legs spread, uncovering her bloodied genitalia. According to Moral, her "themes are universal", but mostly speak of "violence against women".[76]

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[74] Museum Arnhem, *Queensize*, Exhibition Catalogue, 2015, pg. 9
[75] Ibidem, pg. 10
[76] J. Ward, *Shocking Turkey: Şükran Moral tests the boundaries of contemporary art*, Spiegel Online, 2009 http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/shocking-turkey-suekran-moral-tests-the-boundaries-of-contemporary-art-a-662880.html

When the work was firstly exhibited in Turkey, Moral's close friends advised her to disguise her appearance and "get out of town fast or they'll kill you".[77] But the artist did no such thing. In fact, her work stands tall and acts unashamedly overt – Moral wants to critique the Eastern society attitude towards women, their bodies and their sexualities. *Found Guilty* is a vibrant testament of the artist's display of fearlessness in the face of verbal and physical threat. An honest commentary on the major social issue of the placing of guilt on rape victims, the image is the visual representation of pain and trauma, and equally as bad, the public- and self-inculpation for these instances. It is here where my confusion stems from, in regards to the choice of its display. I would not go so far as to say it is hidden so as not to offend, but it does seem deliberately placed on a wall that does not directly confront the viewer. This is not only in discrepancy with Moral's oeuvre and principles, but also with the rest of the exhibition, as only moments before, the viewer was met with a red string of huge beads, reminiscent of the taboo theme of menstruation.

In fact, the wall on which this photograph is placed is part of a construction that hosts a screening of Nathalie Djurberg's (1978-) 2009 *Greed* (Fig. 14), one of the three parts of the video installation *The Experiment*. In it, claymation figures tell a dark tale about religion, power relations, sexual violence and, of course, greed. With a troubling musical score by Hans Berg (1978-), the viewer is confronted by a 10-minute long succession of disturbing imagery.[78] Almost naked idealized female forms (large breasts, buttocks and lips, blonde hair, naïve eyes) are shown in instances that imply their existence for the sole pleasure of corrupt church officials. As the narrative progresses, the female figures become disfigured and morph into one another creating grotesque visuals, yet their torment never stops: they take turns in repeatedly going under the robes of the officials, in a never-ending limbo of pain and humiliation. A dark and disturbing, but authentic insight into the history of church corruption, the piece is placed at the entrance to the third room. Thus, it is without a doubt that Museum Arnhem is unafraid in tackling issues that may be met with societal dissaproval, which only emphasizes my confusion in regards to the placement of Moral's photograph. In retrospect, I choose to believe that the decision had more to do with other aesthetic and practical concerns, and was not meant to clash with the history of the work.

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[77] Ibidem
[78] Julia Stoschek Collection, *Nathalie Djurberg – The Experiment*, 2014
http://www.julia-stoschek-collection.net/en/exhibitions/past/nathalie-djurberg-the-experiment.html

Perhaps the most visually striking element of this room are Vanessa Beecroft's (1969-) *3 Black Sculptures* (Fig. 15). In the center of the room, three sculptures of nude women rest peacefully on three black tables. Appearing to be in eternal slumber, rather than a temporary sleep, the figures are in stark contrast to the white floor and walls, and appear to reunite all other images hung on the walls under the one constant: death. A few feet away, Mona Hatoum's (1952-) *Untitled (wheelchair)* (Fig. 16) sits quietly, exuding a menacing quality.

4.2 Stedelijk Museum

As it will become apparent in the rest of the chapter, Museum Arnhem is the one that holds the most pieces of feminist art encountered during my field trips. By comparison, the Stedelijk Museum is more modest in this aspect, but makes for a captivating study nevertheless. My experience during my first visit of the kind began with the viewing of Gerard Fieret's (1924-2009) photographic imagery. A well-known Dutch photographer, renowned for his mesmerizing manner in capturing women and pigeons, Fieret's prints can often times have a rugged aspect, appearing to be manhandled, stained, and often times signed more harshly and obviously than necessary (Fig. 17).[79] Trapped within his own mind by his hunger for art and overwhelming paranoia in later years, Fieret's life was a lonely and chaotic one.

These aspects are highly relevant when analysing his mode of regarding the female nude, because they allow room for a viewpoint entirely different than the traditional 'male gaze'. A term coined by feminist film critic Laura Mulvey, the concept refers to the manner in which the visual arts depict women as reflecting the attitudes, points of view, and tastes of the white male as the sole viewer.[80] However, this is undoubtedly unfitting to Fieret's images and vision. As one critic explained it, the pictures can be perceived as having a 'naïve' quality; "[h]is gaze does not feel predatory, but more curious and occasionally playful".[81] The power lies not in his hands, but in those of the women he photographs. Paradoxically, the images exude a sense of intimacy, but also one of distant sorrow; Fieret was an outsider in life and in his art, and was powerless in front of his (sometimes nude) subjects.

In this sense, despite the fact that the Stedelijk's collection is not overtly feminist and its narrative does not make direct statements with the purpose of fighting social inequality – by comparison to Museum Arnhem –, it has caused me to muse on certain aspects related to these issues. A new light is cast on the perception of the female nude, in a somewhat contradictory manner to the way it is usually consumed in art, culture, and mass media. Also, unexpectedly enough, I feel that these images have the potential to highlight the stigma cast on people

[79] G. Wood, *Gerard Fieret: the Dutch master who died in squalor*, *The Telegraph*, 2014 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/photography/11257907/The-Dutch-master-who-died-in-squalor.html
[80] Mulvey 1975
[81] T. Leininger, *Gerard Fieret (1924-2009)*, Photo-Eye Blog, 2011 http://www.photoeye.com/magazine/reviews/2011/06_06_Gerard_Fieret_19242009.cfm

suffering from mental health issues. Upon further personal research, I have come to learn about Fieret's struggles with anxiety, paranoia, and self-condemnation,[82] and as consequence engaged in reflection with his art, and the issues in the contemporaneous society in which he lived and worked.

As for the temporary collection, Isa Genzken's (1948-) *Mach dich hübsch!* exhibition (Fig. 18), displayed in the Stedelijk from November 29th to March 6th 2016, is of significant relevance. The artist's largest retrospective in the Netherlands – comprising over 200 works – it provided the viewer with a comprehensive glimpse into Genzken's oeuvre: painting, sculpture, video art, photography, collages and installations were boldly spread around the white-cube style rooms of the Stedelijk. This artist's work stands out on account of the sheer inventiveness used when creating it: transgression and juxtaposition of elements become the norm in this complex collection, which is "rich in autobiographical elements and subtle comments on society".[83] Though not openly identifying as feminist artist, Genzken's choice of subjects are certainly of interest for my pursuit; she focuses on issues very of much significance for the feminist discourse on gender and identity. Her examination of the manner in which society, media, and political context affect – and to a certain degree, construct – our identities can be read in a number of ways. At the very least, it is certain that the artist is taken with humanity and our collective psyche, and at the most, her art could be seen as urging communities to promote respect and tolerance. The artist claimed: "I like to put things together that were previously unconnected. This connection is like a handshake between people."[84]

Her forays into questions about individuality, self-representation, and gender identity can be observed when examining her work as a 'montage', rather than individual pieces. In an interview with Dutch model and literature graduate Valentijn de Hingh about the *Mach dich hübsch!* retrospective, a new light is cast on the Genzken's oeuvre. According to de Hingh, "identity is nothing more than a social passport".[85] Because of her relationship with the fashion

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[82] *Gerard Fieret 1924-2009 (Focus Publishing)*, 5b4, 2011
http://5b4.blogspot.nl/2011/02/gerard-fieret-1924-2009-focus.html
[83] Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Isa Genzkenn – *Mach dich hübsch!*
http://stedelijk.nl/en/exhibitions/isa-genzken
[84] Berlinerfestspiele, *Isa Genzken – Make yourself pretty!*
http://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/aktuell/festivals/gropiusbau/programm_mgb/mgb16_genzken/ausstellung_isa_genzken/ausstellung_isa_genzken_150869.php
[85] R. Goodman, *In conversation with Valentijn de Hingh – an item about art, gender and today's zeitgeist*, Do You Get Me, 2015
http://www.do-you-get-me.com/white-privilege/valentijnstedelijk

industry, de Hingh is able to acknowledge its influence in Genzken's work, and how the artist deals with the notion of identity. For instance, the statues in her 2014 *Nofretete* (Fig. 19) all wear different sunglasses, which causes the viewer to speculate they might represent different women, when in fact it is one and the same persona. This may be seen as alluding to the work of a model posing for a photograph, and taking on various identities for various projects.

De Hingh places emphasis on the contrast between fashion as tool to express one's personality, and biological sex as an outward tool used by society to categorize one's personality. The model claims: "I wouldn't mind if gender would disappear completely. It's unfair that something so objective defines so much."[86] This is also to be found in Isa Genzken's work. Her 1998 piece titled *Jacken und Hemden* (Fig. 20) illustrates this instance, in the sense that it borrows so many elements and influences from the Berlin's contemporaneous techno and club scene, that it manages to positively overwhelm through diversity. Pieces taken from the artist's personal wardrobe "have been customized with fringes, fluorescent paint, photos and small objects, the alterations transforming them into something like constructions of the 'self'."[87] It is significant to acknowledge that the piece *Jacken und Hemden* does not only reflect the artist's exploration of materials and media, but of her identity, and personal narrative: it is a "self-portrait of an artist for whom identity is not fixed, but rather a continuous negotiation between public image, sexuality, male and female roles, and the clothes, surfaces and imaginations we wear and identify ourselves with."[88]

[86] Ibidem
[87] B. Ruf, *Isa Genzken*, Kaleidoscope Media, *Issue #26*, 2016
http://kaleidoscope.media/isa-genzken
[88] Ibidem

4.3 Van Abbemuseum

After musing on the openly feminist art, and the art that holds potential for feminist readings that I have found in Museum Arnhem and Stedelijk Museum, the Van Abbe certainly provided me with a brand new understanding of social themes within the museum space. To begin with, it is worthy to mention that the Van Abbemuseum's very rich permanent collection is in place since November 2013, and it is arranged in the form of an intertwinement between theme and chronology. *The Collection Now* consists of "artworks, archives, histories and relations in historical constellations that connect individual artworks to the social and political contexts in which they were made and exhibited".[89] Over the course of five floors, the visitor is met with over 600 pieces that describe the last century of a collective humanity. *The Prologue* – that is to be found in the 'basement' – speaks of "public virtue, love of art and community commitment".[90] The narrative begins with the establishment of the museum, the life of its founder, Henri van Abbe (1880-1940), and Eindhoven in the years leading to the Second World War. The ground floor contains Expressionist and European Avant-Garde work, spanning from 1909 to 1975. Significant moments and events are highlighted, and war, social image, consumerism and transgression distinguish themselves as key themes for this floor.

On the second floor, new light is cast on a manifold political narrative that unfolds itself in front of the very eyes of the visitor. Over the past few decades, artists have delved more and more into issues such as conflict and interrelations. "Immigration and the body, the rise of networks, the rapid availability of information and the transition to an uncertain global power balance"[91] are issues tackled through a multicultural prism, which sometimes smoothly intermingle, and other times violently collide. Dan Perjovschi's (1961-) ingenious quotes and drawings dominate the hallway in what can only be described as an abundance of political and social 'ideas'. By using simple terms and minimal drawings, the viewer is prompted to question many of the things one takes for granted in the day to day life, such as the "iPhone vs. I have no

[89] Van Abbemuseum, *The Collection Now* http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/programme/detail/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1%5Bptype%5D=18&tx_vabdisplay_pi1%5Bproject%5D=1173
[90] Ibidem
[91] Ibidem

phone" piece (Fig. 21), or muse on the current developments in world politics, with pieces like "Democracy" or "Humanyty" (Fig. 22).

However, the Van Abbe's political commentaries are not limited to Dan Perjovschi's work. *Who Owns the Street?* is an exhibition currently on display here. Because this show spans on multiple levels, it leaves the viewer under the impression that it is the common denominator, the part that gives integrity to the entire collection, and the element without which the narrative would be thrown into chaotic disarray. Curated by Willem Jan Renders, the show reunites the views of four guests of creative backgrounds, Jouke Sieswerda, Jerry Van Eijck, Jan Rothuizen, and Wouter Wanstiphout.[92] The pieces create a discussion on the concept of street as a public space, and poses questions on who controls it and how. This exhibition aims to have an effect on the viewers, by prompting them to question the notion of power relations, and muse on the occasional unjust use of authority. Even more, the Van Abbe actively involves its community in the current social issues at stake. Through a series of bi-monthly lectures and public debates, the public is actively engaged in the conversation on significant past and present socio-political issues.[93]

Such is the case with *The Refugee Republic* (Fig. 23), one of the projects within the *Who Owns the Street?* exhibition. It is the first interactive documentation encountered by the visitors at the very beginning of their visit. It appears in the form of a long banner of text, symbols, and drawings, starting in the basement and climbing all the way up to the 3rd floor. It is meant to aid the museumgoer in attempting to comprehend life as a refugee: the hardships, the daily struggles, and the misunderstandings that come along with a Westernized view on the matter.

Even more striking is the example of *Do you hear the people sing?*, by the Crimson Architectural Historians. The title of a song from the musical *Les Miserables*, it also stands for the protests for democracy in Hong Kong, in 2014.[94] The piece consists of a massive panoramic-style drawing, which flows all along the walls of the Van Abbe. It shows scenes of various protests and demonstrations across time, with a focus on the street, literal and metaphorical destructions, and the emotions of the humans depicted. Seen through an urbanized lens on

[92] Van Abbemuseum, *Who Owns the Street?*, Exhibition Program http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/programme/detail/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1%5Bptype%5D=18&tx_vabdisplay_pi1%5Bproject%5D=2001
[93] Ibidem
[94] Ibidem

conflict, the project shows the street as the common denominator of struggle and the community's attempts for achieving change.

One of the events in the project is the 1964-1968 period in the United States of America. Impoverished black communities in the inner city protested against white police forces, often resulting in violent altercations. The deeply ingrained racism within the police force that manifested itself in the form of police brutality led to these protests, and it culminated in the summer of 1967 in Detroit. The police tried to violently arrest clients "in an illegal bar […] that was filled with people celebrating the homecoming of a local Vietnam veteran".[95] This led to a riot happening throughout the entire city, which then led to the National Guard stepping in so as to maintain order. These events happened in a time when segregation was still very much the norm in the United States; in other words, it was the last straw for the black community, who fiercely demanded to be treated as equals.

As it is apparent from my attempt at defining feminism in Chapter 2, abolishing racism is an issue of significant concern for feminism. Being the second identity marker (after the biological differentiation man/ woman), issues related to race and ethnicity are at the forefront of social issues today. Police brutality, more specifically, has always been, and unfortunately still remains one of the most damaging facets of the unequal society in which we currently live in. The phenomenon is of high interest for feminist concerns because its root too lies in the belief that some people are inferior to others on account of the color of their skin.[96] This is precisely why Van Abbe's *Do you hear the people sing?* is of relevance: it addresses not only the past, but the present day issues. The colorful drawings that depict both violence and humanity are meant to elicit a visceral response in the viewer, not in the least because of the signs held up by the protestants: "Segregated schools must stop now!", "Police brutality must stop", and "I am a man" being a few of them.

Who owns the street? is not the sole temporary exhibition in the Van Abbe concerned with these themes. *The 1980s – Today's Beginnings?* examines this time frame through the prism of six distinct European narratives. Comprising a diverse array of objects and media, the

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[95] Van Abbemuseum, *Do you hear the people sing?*, Exhibition Catalogue

[96] Racial profiling by authority figures is extremely dangerous for dark skin people: only last year, black woman activist Sandra Bland was stopped for a routine traffic check – she was then arrested, and found dead in her cell a few days later. Despite the fact that the officer's unjustly violent treatment of Bland is recorded on tape, her death is still an enigma, and the case is only a glimpse into today's struggle with inequality in the justice system.
Fusion, *Black Women Speak out about experiences with police brutality*, EverydayFeminism, 2015
http://everydayfeminism.com/2015/07/black-women-police-brutality/

exhibition surveys a time frame characterized by transformations and the blossoming of the international cultural realm. For instance, the *Thinking back. A montage of black art in Britain* chapter, curated by Nick Aikens, tells the story of black artists and thinkers in the 1980s, and the manner in which their relationship with Britain's colonial past unfolded. If one is to look at individual works, this chapter appears to subtly evolve around intersectionality. A good example lies in Sonia Boyce's (1962-) *Lay Back, Keep Quiet and Think of What Made Britain so Great* (Fig. 24). When I viewed the image, it immediately became clear that Boyce's experience is comprised of a number of things: she is a black woman living in a predominantly white society, but religion, affairs of state, and sexual politics are all issues that have permeated into her life and art.[97]

Archivo Queer? Screwing the system (Madrid 1989-1995), curated by Fefa Vila Núñez is the chapter in this project that deals with the queer movements in Madrid in the 90s, a time when the AIDS pandemic thrived. Displayed in the form of an open archive, the content aims to subvert hetero-centric and patriarchal forms of categorization through its formation and display.[98] The material consists of a collective production of Spanish activist groups LSD and La Radical Gai. It is perhaps in this chapter that the visitor is again struck by the heavy knowledge that these themes are literally issues of life and death. The groups' participation in protests and social movements are documented and displayed in Andres Senra's (1968-) imagery, (Fig. 25) which helps to bring these past events into present, and materialize in front of the viewer. A large number of the members of La Radical Gai were HIV positive themselves, which is why the struggle against AIDS became one of the main issues. It was "the backbone which defined and shaped their debates on the body and on sex, on life and death, on rage and desire, friendship and pleasure".[99]

[97] Tate, Artists, *Sonia Boyce*
http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/sonia-boyce-794
[98] Van Abbemuseum, *The 1980's*, Exhibition Newspaper, pg. 20
http://vanabbemuseum.nl/fileadmin/files/Collectie%20en%20tentoonstellingen/2016/Jaren_80/DE_JAREN_80_newspaper_final.pdf
[99] Ibidem, pg. 21

5. Museums as socially aware institutions, and core feminist tendencies

5.1 Museum Arnhem

To begin with, Museum Arnhem's architectural charm is to be found in its splendid building (Fig. 26) on top of a hill, with a view of the Rhine, and a large garden filled with outdoor artworks (Fig. 27). The museum has a mixed board of management, led by Saskia Bak and Miriam Windhausen, working alongside of openly feminist curators Mirjam Westen and Kristin Duysters.[100] The museum's mission statement reveals the core belief that art and culture can be used to enrich the lives of people and better the society in which they live. By helping the visitor create a connection to the museum and its city, Museum Arnhem prioritizes what they refer to as 'the human dimension', something that can be seen in the selection of artworks, as well as in the model of display.[101] Its permanent collection – consisting of around 25.000 objects – alternates between the museum, and Heritage Rosette, an art and heritage center considered pivotal for Arnhem identity and culture.[102] Initially developed through donations, and now through purchases too, the collection features well-known artists such as Klaas Gubbels (1934-), Marlene Dumas and Fiona Tan (1966-).[103]

As it has been seen from the rather lengthy analysis of Museum Arnhem's current exhibition in the previous chapter, the temporary collection titled *Queensize* is highly meaningful in the context of women's lives and experiences, and the diversity of its approaches makes for a comprehensive evaluation of a human life. And while this exhibition confirms Museum Arnhem's desire to be involved in contemporaneous social issues and ethical concerns, its overall feminist narrative encompasses more than just this temporary show.

A telling example is Laura Samsom-Rous' (1939-) 2002-2003 *Tree of Forgetfulness* (Fig. 28), a part of Museum Arnhem's permanent collection. The artist, together with her husband, followed hundreds of kilometers of the final section of the slave route in Africa,

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[100] Museum Arnhem, Organization
http://www.museumarnhem.nl/museum-arnhem/medewerkers/
[101] Museum Arnhem, Missie/ Vissie
http://www.museumarnhem.nl/museum-arnhem/missie-visie/
[102] *Culturehouse in Arnhem / Neutelings Riedijk Architects*, Arch Daily, 2014
http://www.archdaily.com/499856/culturehouse-in-arnhem-neutelings-riedijk-architects
[103] Museum Arnhem, Over de collectie
http://www.museumarnhem.nl/collectie/over-de-collectie/

photographing the descendants of runaway slaves in the woodlands of Suriname. The histories of West Africa and Suriname are undoubtedly linked with the Dutch colonial past, as the trans-Atlantic slave trade lasting for three centuries. "Millions of Africans were forced to leave their places of birth and march to the coast to await their deportation to the European plantations on the other side of the Atlantic".[104] According to Museum Arnhem, this fact is not to be dismissed, or lightly cast aside as part of a long-forgotten past. The title of the project – *Tree of forgetfulness* – is linked to the African legend, according to which "prior to their departure, slaves were forced to walk around the tree of forgetfulness, and from that moment on would remember nothing of their past".[105] The potent piece that outwardly speaks of a somber and harrowing part of the Netherlands' past is very much relevant for museum education today on account of the remaining displays of racism, a social issue that is very real and very distressing for African-descendent (as well as other) minorities in Western Europe. The fact that Museum Arnhem acquired part of this project and displays it permanently shows both this institution's concern with social justice and equality, as well as a strong desire to honor a tragic past.

Laura Samsom-Rous' work is part of a larger project, titled *Unrest 02*. The first part of this ongoing project was *Unrest*, an exhibition displayed at Museum Arnhem between December 18th 2015 and February 25th 2016. In it, works by artists Marlene Dumas, Lida Abdul (1973-), Esiri Erheriene-Essi (1982-) were used in order to demonstrate the manner in which the museum enters a relationship with current issues and changes within society – and how art deals with this 'social unrest'.[106] The current exhibition, *Unrest 2*, serves the same purpose. By using works from the museum's permanent collection, spanning from the 80s to the present day, the institution wishes to demonstrate the grasp they have over the rapidly evolving changes, characteristic of our current society. "Fueled by constructive tension in the world, political upheavals, wars, and economic uncertainty",[107] the content of these exhibitions is based on the idea that art renders visible these societal concerns.

The fact that the representatives of Museum Arnhem strive to create a (perhaps anew) narrative from the reserves of their very permanent collection draws attention to a phenomenon

[104] *Tree of forgetfulness*, Laura Samsom-Rous, Hans Samsom, LM Publishers
http://www.lmpublishers.nl/shop/boeken-over-suriname/4016/
[105] Museum Label, Collectie Museum Arnhem
[106] Museum Arnhem, *Unrest*
http://www.museumarnhem.nl/tentoonstellingen/onrust/
[107] Museum Anrhem, *Unrest 02*
http://www.museumarnhem.nl/tentoonstellingen/onrust-02/

often mentioned by scholars in my theoretical framework. Museum researcher and former Director of The Manchester Museum Tristram Besterman claims that in the current ethical climate, "museums have an opportunity to reflect, respect, and nourish the human spirit as well as intellect […] Museums that respond to social change embrace a consultative, open, and non-presumptive methodology".[108] Similarly, in their study of social inclusion within the museum space, Dodd and Sandell claim that socially inclusive museums value their "relation to people", and these values are made clear in the texts that accompany the exhibition[109] – for instance, in the manner that Museum Arnhem describes *Unrest*. Even more so, these authors state that the "challenge of addressing social inclusion in museums lies in reinterpreting existing collections and cultures in ways that are sensitive and relevant to recent social dynamics".[110] Museum Arnhem is making use of not only traveling exhibitions, but of pieces acquired throughout time, in order to create a narrative that aids the viewers in appreciating the socio-political and economical context in which they find themselves.

To my mind, this pattern of activity certainly suggests that Museum Arnhem projects feminist tendencies, as feminism too promotes positive social change. But, coincidentally enough, scholar Hilde Hein renders a similar account for the museum that is inscribed within the feminist theory of practice:

> Museums, likewise, will not create the world anew by changing their orientation and that is not their mission. But they can, by shifting to a fresh vantage point, think the world in some of the myriad ways that others have found, to unfold and fold it differently and help visitors and supporters to do the same. That is a positive objective that feminist theory acclaims.[111]

[108] Besterman 2010, pg. 404
[109] Dodd & Sandell 2001, pg. 13
[110] Ibidem, pg. 22
[111] Hein 2007, pg. 34

5.2 Stedelijk Museum

To begin with, it is worthy of interest that behind the white-cube look of the Stedelijk lies an interesting story. Renowned Dutch architect Adriaan Willem Weissmann designed the initial building in the 19th century, but the modern wing with the visitor entrance is only a few years old. Designed by Benthem Crowel Architects and opened in 2012, the façade is angular, clean-cut, and spotless white (Fig. 29). The explicit discrepancy between the two parts of the Stedelijk is more than intentional: "the bathtub" (as referred to by the architects) was designed in order to reflect the highest form of differentiation to its neighbor. The reasoning is that "the appearance of a building should reflect the time of its construction",[112] and if the initial building reflects the taste and tradition of the year 1895, this extension should reflect, in an unquestionable manner, the year 2012. It may be argued that this move mirrors the Stedelijk's desire not to abolish the traditional, neither to encourage the use of binaries (old versus new), but to intertwine the two, in a manner that acknowledges both past, as well as present and future.

Its interior space is minimalistic, and allows the visitor to walk freely from one exhibition into the other, in whatever order they prefer. The works are usually displayed in large spaces, on and around white walls, but the curatorship style at the Stedelijk is flexible enough to allow for significant transgression in the classic mode of exhibiting. For instance, on the occasion of Saskia Noor van Imhoff's (1982-) 13 Feb. – 8 May 2016 exhibition, some works were displayed as if coming out of a wall (Fig. 30), others were placed in impossibly high places (Fig. 31), and others were barely shown in between the confluence of two main museum walls (Fig. 32). The reason why exhibiting practice is relevant for my research is due to the interdisciplinary aspect of feminist museums. As I mentioned before, this quality of involving more aspects than the singular, traditional one, must be found both in the concept of an exhibition (in its overall narrative and approach), as well as in the mode of displaying. This is not to be understood as simply equating the words 'contemporary', 'modern' or 'edgy' with 'feminist'. However, when this factor is taken into account alongside other clues in regards to the attitude of the museum practitioners involved, it may influence an institution's 'score' on the feminist scale of critical thinking and practice.

[112] P. Popp, *Hybrid Solution: Stedelijk Museum Celebrates Re-opening*, 2012 http://www.detail-online.com/article/hybrid-solution-stedelijk-museum-celebrates-re-opening-16452/

As for the layout of the Stedelijk, it is riveting to note the manner in which it imitates the outside: the collection is divided into three main areas inside the historical building, while the temporary exhibitions are held in the new wing. The ground floor holds visual art by some of the most well known artists in the world, spanning between 1860 and 1950. On the ground floor, visitors can find themselves in awe in front of a wonderfully comprehensive design collection featuring a large array of objects from 1900, until present. It is worthy of interest that these objects are arranged by theme, and not chronologically, which again shows evidence of rejection of traditional historical timeframes, in favour of a thematic approach that enmeshes separate concepts, rather than accentuate their systematization. The top floor holds visual art created in between the 1950s and now – these objects are mostly obtained in newer acquisitions, and are made by artists from a more diverse and wide-ranging category than the ones to be found on the ground floor. Lastly, the new wing consists of a 1100 m^2 area that welcomes traveling exhibitions made up of "spectacular large-scale works (and) ambitious installations".[113]

With a diverse management team, led by directors Beatrix Ruf and Karin van Gilst, the museum has taken on a number of highly relevant shows and events in the past year. The museum is actively involved with its community, and takes pride in paying attention to minority groups. What I mean by this, is that the museum is extremely well-equipped in terms of accessibility, and shows awareness of not only physical disabilities, but also accommodates people with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, and their care-givers.[114] By providing easy access to art through such varied facilities (like wheelchairs, mobility scooters and vehicles, audio systems for hearing impairments, and specially designed programs), the museum is both helping these groups of people, as well as actively fighting the aforementioned phenomenon of ableism, and challenging that which society considers the norm.[115] The dissimilarity between the Stedelijk's attitude, and the Alison Lapper case presented in Chapter 2 is striking, and can be perceived as speaking volumes in regards to the Stedelijk's vision and understanding of disabled bodies.

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[113] Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Collection Presentation, http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/exhibitions/collection-presentation

[114] Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Accessibility http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/visit-us/accessibility

[115] J. Zeilinger, *6 Forms of Ableism We Need to Retire Immediately*, Indentities. Mic, 2015 http://mic.com/articles/121653/6-forms-of-ableism-we-need-to-retire-immediately#.H8IqlGTPd

The Stedelijk, much like Museum Arnhem, also employs this particular awareness of the past, and attempts to offer tributes to the victims of an eschewed view on the world and human rights. *The Stedelijk Museum and the Second World War* exhibition, held between 21 Feb. – 31 May 2015 is a great example that illustrates just that. Following five distinct storylines, the show marked the 70th anniversary commemoration of Dutch liberation. The concept behind this project was entirely led by research into the provenance of these artworks, conducted by the museum in an attempt to retrace the histories of collectors and artists, before the destruction and anonymity left behind by the horrors of the Second World War. The intertwining narratives of the fie stories were displayed in a manner that made use of visual works from Stedelijk's collection, as well as their archives and research documentation. By acknowledging and working with the ethical implications of unknown and looted art from the twentieth century, the Stedelijk does a re-telling of the history of Jewish artists', collectors' and dealers' lives and heritage, as well as highlighting the behavior of the museum and its leading practitioners at the time: Willem Sandberg as curator, and David Röell as director. I regard this particular exhibition as significant, not only because of its utmost concern with the cruelty, lack of justice, and humanity in regards to the horrors of the Second World War, but also because of its use of the aforementioned transparency in the museum space. It appears to me that this exhibition shows a curatorial initiative for radical transparency, as the phenomenon is "declarative and self-reflexive […] a declaration of one's theoretical approach".[116]

As for the feminist seeds that are to be found within educational programs employed within the Stedelijk, some considerably distinguish themselves as relevant for the concerns described in the previous chapters. For instance, the *Dream Out Loud* exhibition to be held between 26 Aug. 2016 and 1 Jan 2017 will rely on an 'open call' for contemporary design system. Its focus is on a practice that "involves exploring new approaches to relevant social issues, and designers who make innovative use of materials".[117] Past projects can also be seen as reflecting potential traits of a 'feminist' museum, such as the desire to break down the barriers between the museum worker and the visitor. In a 2014 project, Marlene Dumas engaged in a discussion with Stedelijk curator Leontine Coelewij, and together they deconstructed the most

[116] Marstine 2011, pg. 15
[117] Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Dream out Loud 26 Aug 2016 - 1 Jan 2017*
http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/exhibitions/open-call-municipal-art-acquisitions-2016-design

important themes of the exhibition *Marlene Dumas: The Image as Burden*.[118] In an open forum with visitors, personal subjects, curatorship, social issues and contemporaneous political contexts were discussed, in an attempt to facilitate the relationship between practitioner and viewer.

In regards to other temporary exhibitions, it may be appropriate to compare some numbers in order to gain an understanding of how this institution operates. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that in the US and the UK, "women still get far fewer solo shows in major museums than their male contemporaries".[119] According to The Freelands Foundation, "women got only 25% of the most prestigious shows"[120] in London, in the past year. But, if one is to look at the most recent traveling exhibitions hosted by the Stedelijk, at least 50% of them are by contemporary female artists, both well established and upcoming.[121] Thus, despite the fact that the Stedelijk has not had numerous exhibitions that were openly feminist, its approach manages to somewhat compensate. This museum's inner workings reflect a theory that identifies in a number of ways with what scholars Hilde Hein and Griselda Pollock argue for.

It may be worthy of interest to highlight the fact that the ideas I had after visiting the Stedelijk were not planted in my mind as a whole, based on the museum narrative; they were planted as seeds, by revealing enough in order to cause the visitor to engage in the process of forming a personal and authentic opinion. And this appears to be the norm with what is exhibited in this institution. It may be argued that certain instances purposefully seek to aid the viewer in realizing that the concept of an exhibition is not always unmediated and unbiased. The visitor is encouraged to achieve a particular understanding, colored by the context of an individual experience.

Such is the aftermath of the exhibition *A year at the Stedelijk: Tino Sehgal* 1 Jan. – 21 Dec. 2015. The first major survey of this artist's oeuvre, the project consisted of 16 chapters divided over the course of 12 months, in which performances took place every single day, for

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[118] Stedelijk Museum Amstrdam, Marlene Dumas: Discussion between the artist and curator Leontine Coelewij 16 Oct 2014, http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/calendar/forum/marlene-dumas-discussion-between-the-artist-and-curator-leontine-coelewij

[119] G. Harris, J. Halperin, J. Pes, *What does a female artist have to do to get a major solo show?*, The Art Newpaper, 2016 http://theartnewspaper.com/news/news/what-does-a-woman-have-to-do-to-get-a-solo-show/

[120] Ibidem

[121] Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, A selection of the exhibitions on view at the Stedelijk Museum from 1995 http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/exhibitions/past

365 days, from the opening until the closing of the museum.[122] Sehgal (1976-) is renowned for not creating objects, but 'situations' within the museum walls – the artwork, in this case, lies in the encounter between viewer and performance. With commentaries on society, politics, interpersonal relationships, and art, Tino Sehgal's 'situations' are bound to elicit a wide array of reactions from whoever may interact with it. I have personally only witnessed two of these works, titled *This is propaganda* (2012), and *Selling Out* (2002). In the latter, a dancer pretending to be a museum guard mimes a striptease. For Sehgal, the meaning is deeply rooted in economic theory – capitalist theory, to be precise. The performance condemns Western society for being "blinded by the success and status that could be achieved by wealth […] (and for having) swapped meaningful relationships for money in the bank".[123]

But, in the context of the white-cube style contemporary art museum, the happenings can take on a fresh meaning: the relationship between visitor – artist – interpreter – museum worker, and their presence within the institutional authority frame of reference. According to a press release issued in the last month of the project, the reactions of the visitors were mainly described as "uncomfortable yet fascinated".[124] Especially in regards to the *Selling Out* piece, it was reported that people did not know how to appropriately react, when faced with a security guard performing striptease. I myself was taken aback by the performance, and despite being fully aware of it being part of the Stedelijk's 'collection', I found myself blushing, stuttering, and trying to rationalize the type of behavior I was supposed to be displaying within the museum. This is riveting because it highlights the subtle yet ever-present manner in which the Stedelijk encourages viewers to question that which is to be found within this cultural institution. Significantly different in vision and attitude to the obsolete traditional museum, in which historical and scientific facts are presented in an indisputable narrative, this contemporary art museum wishes to provoke and challenge discussions, not deliver hard facts.

As it can be seen from this brief overview of relevant facts and exhibitions, the Stedelijk truly is the definition of a 'contemporary art museum', and not only because it hosts modern and

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[122] Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *A year at the Stedelijk: Tino Sehgal 1 Jan. – 21 Dec. 2015* http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/exhibitions/a-year-at-the-stedelijk-tino-sehgal

[123] J. Confino, *Tino Sehgal's Tate Modern exhibition metaphor for dematerialization*, 2012 http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/tino-sehgal-tate-modern-exhibition-metaphor-dematerialisation

[124] Stedelijk Musuem Amsterdam, *Stedelijk Museum looks back on an incredible year with live artworks by Tino Sehgal* http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/press-releases/stedelijk-museum-looks-back-on-an-incredible-year-with-live-artworks-by-tino-sehgal

contemporary art. The manner in which objects – or 'situations' – are displayed, the way in which the viewer is engaged on a profound and personal level, the attitudes displayed and the concerns showed for a large variety of visitors, as well as the artists whom the museum chooses to support – all speak of the Stedelijk's concern not simply with that which is 'modern', but with that which is 'just'. Despite the fact that the terms 'feminism', 'social justice', and 'equality' are not so often used, the inner workings of this museum clearly mirror the staff's and management team's efforts to promote tolerance and understanding, and to deliberately challenge all previously held mores that are now obsolete.

5.3 Van Abbemuseum

Housing an impressive collection of modern and contemporary art, the Van Abbe is a truly sensational institution in terms of the feminist inner workings and attitudes exhibited. It too relies on a very diverse group of employees, led by directors Charles Esche and Anastasia van Gennip. According to its mission statement, the museum wishes to act as a transparent mediator between art and audience, in today's "super-diverse world",[125] by exploring the close connection between art and society in its widest possible range. The Van Abbemuseum is undoubtedly one of the Netherlands' crowning jewels for contemporary art as well as feminist tendencies. This may be connected to the manner in which the community perpetually supports the museum: it is both privately funded by clients, as well as a number of companies, unions, and foundations (such as the Mondriaan Fund, Ammondo, the European Union and others). Because of this, the Van Abbe has considerably well-prepared staff and up-to-date technology.

To begin with, the building of the Van Abbe (Fig. 33) is a work of art in itself: in 2003, the initial existing building designed by architect A. J. Kropholler was renovated with the help of Abel Cahen's designs, as well as H+N+S landscape architects. The museum lies on the river Dommel, surrounded by nature, and its café can be reached by going through the smallest covered bridge in the world (Fig. 34). The museum's façade is covered in a natural stone, called grey Flammet slate. Its hue changes according to the weather conditions, but the sleek design maintains "an expressive contrast with the light and the surprisingly transparent spaces within".[126] While the interior may appear like a labyrinth at first glance, the museum's narrative in space is surprisingly easy to follow, because the visitor's movements are subtly guided: they feel almost instinctive according to the spatial cues, and confirmed through the number corresponding to each section.

Within the museum, one particular level distinguishes itself for my pursuit, on account of its intense study of "hippies, punks and other counter-cultures". Because the section is constructed in the form of a DIY archive, the visitors are encouraged to immerse themselves in a

[125] Van Abbemuseum, Transparant & Verspreid Voor Kunst & Samenleving, Beleidsplan 2013-2017 http://alexandria.tue.nl/vanabbe/public/publiciteit/beleidsplannen/BeleidsplanAbbe2013-2017.pdf
[126] Van Abbemuseum, The museum building http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/the-museum/visit/building/

different time, a time in which "dropping out, punk, feminism and gay rights influenced not only aesthetics but the ethics of art".[127] The riveting part of this project is the visitor's involvement: one is not just part of a DIY archival research, but a DIY exhibition. The Van Abbe holds introductory courses every Saturday and Sunday, in which visitors can have a look behind the scenes of the museum, learn about art conservation and management, and curatorial visual concerns. On the basis of submission of proposals, and with the help of museum staff, the visitors are then able to create their own exhibition using the objects in the archive. Thus, this institution is breaking down the barriers between visitor and museum worker not just in theory, but in practice too. The pieces in the archive are pivotal for the times they reflect: for instance, there is a section on video and performance art that contains highly popular works by Marina Abramović (1946-) and Ulay (1943-), Lawrence Weiner (1942-), Bruce Nauman (1941-), Carolee Schneemann (1939-) and many others. The body, consumerist culture, sexuality, and elitism in art, are just a few of the feminist concerns one has access to with the help of the DIY archive.

In regards to the phenomenon of challenging previously held norms, and that which is considered "typical" of a museum institution, the Van Abbe distinguishes itself almost as soon as one enters through its doors. Such an instance can be observed in their project titled *Inhaling Art – Look with your nose*, which greets visitors at the very entrance. Equipped with an explanatory booklet, and a little jar of coffee beans for refreshing my olfactory senses and neutralizing the previous aromas, I started my journey through the Van Abbe. According to art and aroma historian Caro Verbeek and aroma jockey Jorg Hempenius, the sense of smell is not given much scholarly and public attention within Western society, especially in the cultural realm. One visits a museum in order to use their eyes – and, according to more recent developments in modern and contemporary art, perhaps their ears, and even their sense of touch. But olfaction has been grossly neglected, despite the fact that we "breathe more than 20.000 times a day and every time we inhale we smell something".[128] In addition, the sense of smell is highly connected to the

[127] Van Abbemuseum, *The Collection Now* http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/programme/detail/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1%5Bptype%5D=18&tx_vabdisplay_pi1%5Bproject%5D=1173

[128] Van Abbemuseum, *Inhaling Art*, Storyline #4 Exhibition Catalogue

process of remembering, as the olfactory center in the brain is very close to the hippocampus, the area responsible with the recollection of memories.[129]

Thus, with the help of specialists experimenting with different aromas, the visitor is able to interpret the collection of the Van Abbe in an entirely different manner: they will, quite literally, "inhale art". After gazing at Yves Klein's (1928-1962) 1959 *sans titre* (Fig. 35), I was met with a smell that I can only describe as 'plain' and 'clean'; according to the booklet, the smell is meant to evoke "coolness and calm and […] one of the aromas in it is released after a storm with thunder and lightning, just as the sky is clearing up again".[130] However, for me, the most striking effect of this project can be seen when examining Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin's (1957-2007) *Self Heterotopia, Catching Up with Self* (Fig. 36). An enormous assemblage of objects collected by the artist during his visits around the globe, it is a complex ode to our globalized world, an ode that highlights both our differences, and our likeness as humans. The visitor is not only invited to glance over and understand objects from all over the world, but also to smell the universally known aroma of the Eau de Cologne, invented three hundred years ago. Recognized by many as "the oldest and most famous perfume on earth",[131] it is bound to evoke various memories in various types of people.

I regard the project *Inhaling Art* as highly relevant when determining whether the Van Abbe displays feminist tendencies in its core beliefs and attitudes. The reason for this lies in its significant potential for raising doubt towards that which can be identified as the norm. This museum is not the first to implement this strategy: very similar programs took place only last year in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art[132], and London's Tate Britain.[133] But, according to previously mentioned museum professional Gaby Porter, the projects she regards as 'feminist' "call into question many of the things which are taken for granted in conventional museum exhibitions: they are irreverent and interdisciplinary in both the forms of knowledge and the methods of display which they employ."[134] And it appears to me that the Van Abbe does precisely that. In addition, bearing in mind Hein's description of feminist exhibition spaces, the

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[129] Ibidem
[130] Ibidem
[131] Ibidem
[132] E. Ucar, *Multisensory Met: touch, smell, and hear art*, 2015
http://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/digital-underground/2015/multisensory-met
[133] *Welcome to Tate Sensorium: taste, touch and smell art*, *The Guardian*, 2015
http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/video/2015/aug/25/welcome-tate-sensorium-taste-touch-smell-art-video
[134] Porter 2004, pg. 112

Van Abbe appears to interact with the museumgoer in the form of "equal to equal", and not in the typical manner of "active subject/ viewer to passive object/ viewed".[135]

But, naturally, the most significant instance within the Van Abbe is their project titled *Queering the Collection*. According to the Van Abbe, "[i]t is often assumed that queering only concerns subjects related to the LGBTI and examines homosexuality in the arts".[136] Much like the manner in which the previously mentioned scholars have interpreted feminism as more than just women's rights and wellbeing, this museum interprets 'queerness' as anything "that goes against the grain or that is unexpected or fluid in terms of identity, sexuality and politics […] that rejects the general categories and standards".[137] With the hope to contribute to the visibility of minority groups, and become a safe space for LGBTI archive- and meaning-making, the museum published *A Queer Glossary*. The purpose of this publication was to shed light on queer terminology, in the form of a concise and clear alphabetically arranged summary. The remarkable aspect of this publication – beyond its mission to promote tolerance and understanding – is the disclaimer in the very beginning of the pamphlet:

> This queer glossary does not aim to provide the ultimate and fixed definitions. In addressing queer issues from a personal and therefore outspokenly non-neutral perspective, it nevertheless leaves room for curiosity, interpretation, disagreement, and polymorphic images.[138]

Clearly an instance of 'signing' (not an exhibition, but) a concept, as described by Gary Edson in Subchapter 3.2, this brief but clear clause highlights the fact that the information is somewhat subjective, certainly non-neutral, and most importantly, subject to change. By taking a feminist attitude in regards to a feminist issue, the Van Abbe is not only keen on displaying political correctness, but simply correctness. Even more so, the museum does more than include and shed light on queer art: lectures, panel discussions, film showings and interactive displays

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[135] Hein 2007, pg. 35
[136] Van Abbemuseum, *Queering*
http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/collection-and-context/queering/
[137] Ibidem
[138] A. Venir, O. Lundin, *A Queer Glossary*, Van Abbemuseum
http://vanabbemuseum.nl/fileadmin/files/Collectie%20en%20tentoonstellingen/2016/Queering/Queer_Glossary.pdf

are part of the phenomenon of ‘queering the collection’, and this museum has even implemented gender-neutral toilets, so that “no one is excluded”.[139]

[139] Ibidem

6. Concluding Thoughts

Musing on how current social and ethical issues are reflected in three major contemporary art museums in the Netherlands has been an engrossing task, with unexpected, but pleasant results. To my mind, the connection between these issues and the principles and concerns of feminism are now clearly marked. This movement aims to create a society in which fear, disrespect, or prejudice are no longer present. According to feminist beliefs, factors such as biological sex, ethnicity, social class, religion, physical or mental disabilities should not be regarded as indicators of inferiority in any way, but of mere difference. Even more so, the study of all these parameters is the only just manner in which to practice feminism, because oppression unfolds itself in various degrees that are influenced by the aforementioned identity indicators. This intermingling of aspects that operates under the name of 'intersectionality' can also be found at the root of many museum narratives and techniques. Thus, if one is to draw parallels between intersectionality and interdisciplinarity, core feminist tendencies become apparent in many contemporary art museums. As I hope to have shown, the roots of feminism have permeated not only into the psyche of artists, and consequentially, into their work, but also into the very core of museum practice.

A truly particular institution, Museum Arnhem reunites both openly feminist art and theory in practice. Its current exhibition titled *Queensize* appears to be positively overwhelming in itself, for numerous significant artists make an appearance in what proves to be an impressively curated show.[140] In addition, as we have seen in the exhibition *Unrest*, this museum strives for interpreting socio-political and economical issues by bringing into being a newfangled narrative, with the help of works in their permanent collection. Museum Arnhem is a most remarkable example that shows how a perfectly consistent feminist account can emerge from a museum's existing fixed collection. Through mindful curatorship and project management, objects that may originally have had different connotations, now take on a social role: that of educating the visitors about their current societal climate.

[140] I maintain the stance that the decision regarding Şükran Moral's piece is of questionable character. But for the sake of a conclusive attitude, I consider the exhibition to be superbly curated nevertheless.

By comparison, the Stedelijk is certainly less inclined to present works as openly feminist – or even suggest it as a potential reading. Bearing in mind its impressive international reputation, as well as its authority as leading Dutch museum, I found the Stedelijk's lack of overt implication with the movement slightly disconcerting. While a number of works in their collection certainly tackle the social and ethical issues of much significance for my research, it appears that perhaps not enough has been done in order to cast light on feminism as movement central to contemporaneous societal developments. With that in mind, the Stedelijk does timidly compensate through its core tendencies, which often appear to be inscribed in the feminist theory described by renowned scholars whose literature I have employed.[141] Overall, I find that the focus and quality of its educational programs, the museum's design and layout, the management's view and concern with disabilities, as well their intrinsic decision-making process all allude to a feminist attitude and viewpoint. To my mind, the museum and its numerous visitors could certainly benefit from a more overt display of these tendencies, or what we could identify as radical transparency, on the basis of the concepts described in Subchapter 3.2.

To compare the Van Abbe with the previous two museums is a somewhat daunting task, simply due to the fact that the Van Abbe is entirely different in many aspects. It is more than apparent from the art it houses and the narratives it constructs around them, that this institution is strongly preoccupied with the desire to understand and display the relationship between art and society. Much like the Stedelijk and Arnhem, the Van Abbe too wishes to acknowledge past histories and social movements. But in addition to this, the Van Abbe's mission is to challenge the contemporary viewer in the moment, in regards to the events that unfold in the world today. In this aspect, this museum truly is the reflection of the feminist themes and attitudes I have discussed at length in Chapter 3. With its strife for inclusiveness, new manners in which to engage with art, and ways in which to challenge previously held mores about the world and the art realm, this museum is undoubtedly the embodiment of feminist thought and theory.

Despite housing modern and contemporary art, and sharing the desire to engage the visitor on a profound level and to mediate the relationship between art and society, the three museums could not be more different. However, in the light of what I have said, it is my opinion that leading Dutch contemporary art museums are heavily concerned with the themes I have described – whether they acknowledge it overtly, or not. The implications of this fact are

[141] Hein 2007, Pollock 2007, Marstine 2011

significant for the museum-visiting public – and the social potential unlocked by approaching these themes within the museum space. In addition, regarding museum practice from this stance could pave the way for anew theoretical framework for museum practitioners and researchers alike. Naturally, this particular study has its limitations, not in the least on account of its modest dimension. More profound queries would make for riveting further research, starting with interviews and discussions with museum management teams on these matters, visitor surveys on how museum displays have enriched their understanding of feminism, and artists' statements in regard to their works being enmeshed within the feminist train of thought.

As for the future of feminism within the institution of the museum, it is my firm belief that what we are witnessing at the moment is simply the beginning of this phenomenon. Feminist artists have been active for decades, and their art has penetrated the museum walls long ago – because of this, its currency is not surprising in itself. But along with the phenomenon described as 'the new museology',[142] feminist tendencies begin to manifest themselves in other areas of museum practice. Subtle, yet distinctive, these dispositions are significantly modern in nature, visitor-oriented, and always facilitate an interdisciplinary approach to art, and an intersectional understanding of humanity. Be it in the manner of display, in the language that constructs the narrative, in the social priorities of the institution, or in its engagement with its community, this propensity is bound to be a significant part of the future of museums and museum theory.

And it will. Museums can – and have actively started to – instill an awareness of marginalized communities, and a collective sense of belonging on account of our shared humanity. By honoring our painful past, we can aspire to an inclusive society. By acknowledging prior injustice, we can attempt to dismantle stereotypes. And hopefully, with an attentive approach to content and form, the museum can inspire and shape the public's perception into a more tolerant stance, always characterized by mindfulness and respect towards the Other.

[142] McCall & Gray 2003

7. Illustrations

Figure 1. Marlene Dumas, *Morning Dew*, 1997, ink on handmade paper, 125 cm x 70 cm, Museum Arnhem

Figure 2. Marc Quinn, *Alison Lapper Pregnant*, 2005, marble, 355 cm x 180.5 cm x 260 cm, Trafalgar Square, London

Figure 3. Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989, screen-print on paper, Tate Modern, London

Figure 4. Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, c. 1665, oil on canvas, 44.5 cm x 39 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague

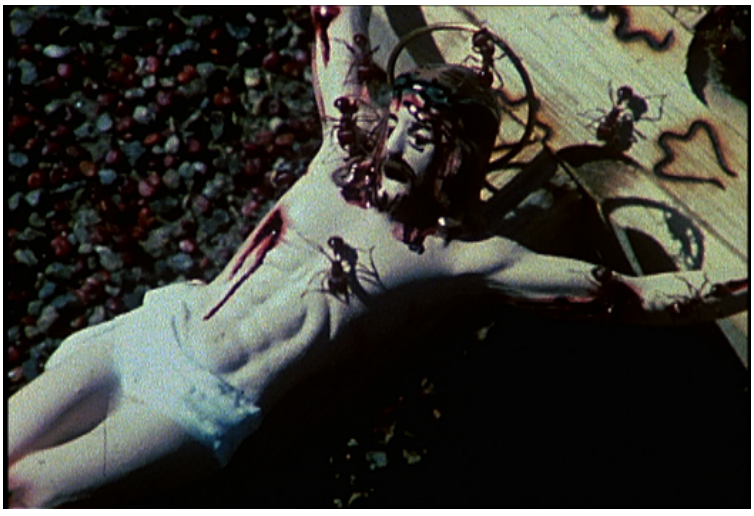

Figure 5. David Wojnarowicz, film still from *A Fire in My Belly*, 1986-1987, super 8mm film transferred to video, 13:06 min, Museum of Modern Art, New York

Figure 6. Patricia Piccinini, *Balasana*, 2009, silicone, fiberglass, human hair, red-necked Wallaby, clothing, rug, 53 cm x 76.5 cm x 122 cm

Figure 7. Kiki Smith, *Bloodline*, 1994, blown glass (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

Figure 8. Sylvie Fleury, *Louis Vuitton*, 2000, chromed bronze

Figure 9. Marlene Dumas, *Willendorf*, 1997, ink on handmade paper, Olbricht Collection

Figure 10. Marilyn Minter, *Pink Bra (Pamela Anderson)*, 2007, c-print, 101 cm x 76.2 cm, Salon 94, New York

Figure 11. Dawn Mellor, *Julia Roberts*, 2010, oil on canvas, Olbricht Collection

Figure 12. Daniella Rossell, *Inge with her mother in the living room, Mexico City*, 1999, c-print, Olbricht Collection

Figure 13. Şükran Moral posing in front of *Found Guilty*, 2009, archival pigment print mounted on Alu-dibond (photograph by Usakowska-Wolff)

Figure 14. Nathalie Djurberg, film still from *The Experiment*, 2009, 3-channel video installation, 7:27 min

Figure 15. Vanessa Beecroft, *+3 black sculptures*, 2008, wax, plaster, wood

Figure 16. Mona Hatoum, *Untitled (wheelchair)*, 1998, stainless steel and rubber, 97 cm x 50 cm x 85 cm

Figure 17. Gerard Fieret, *Girl putting on her shoe*, c. 1970, gelatin silver print, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

Figure 18. Isa Genzken, *Mach Dich Hübsch!* 2016, installation, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (photograph by Gert Jan van Rooij)

Figure 19. Isa Genzken, *Nofretete*, 2014, 7 plaster busts with glassed onwooden bases, wooden plinths on casters and four steel panels, 190 cm x 7 cm x 40 cm x 50 cm, Galerie Buchholz, Cologne/ Berlin/ New York, David Zwirner New York/ London, Hauser & Wirth

Figure 20. Isa Genzken, *Jacken und Hemden*, 1998, mixed media (photograph by Gert Jan van Rooij)

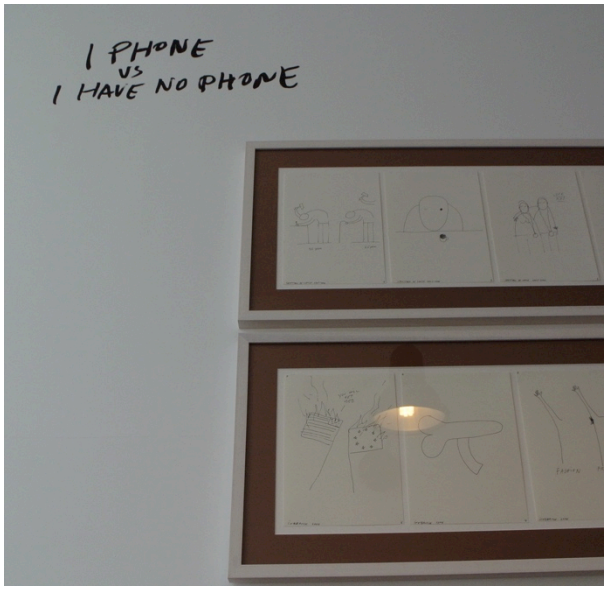

Figure 21. Dan Perjovschi, *Wall paintings in the hall*, 2016, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

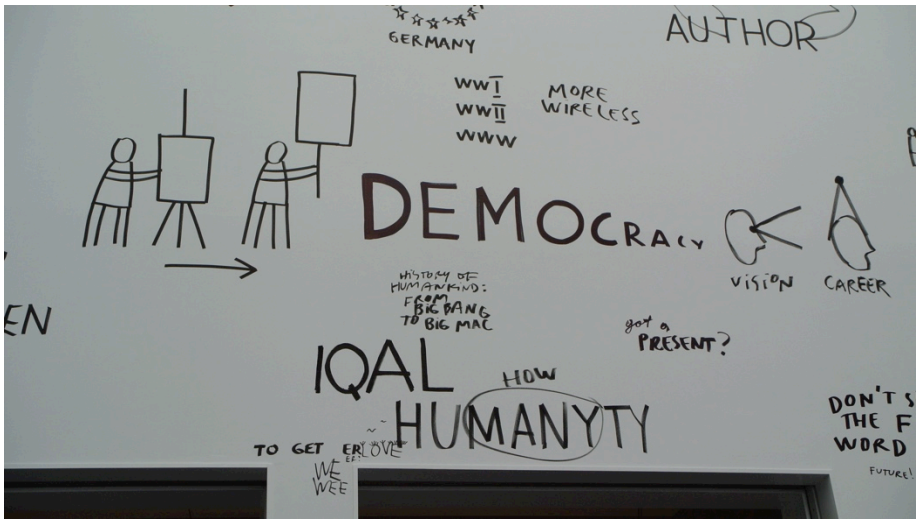

Figure 22. Dan Perjovschi, *Wall paintings in the hall*, 2016, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

Figure 23. Refugee Republic, 2016, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

Figure 24. Sonia Boyce, *Lay Back, Keep Quiet and Think of What Made Britain so Great*, 1986, charcoal, pastel and watercolor on paper, 4 parts, 15.25 cm x 6.50 cm

Figure 25. Andres Senra, *The ministry has blood on his hands*, 1 December 1995 protest, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven

Figure 26. Museum Arnhem, Arnhem

Figure 27. Museum Arnhem garden, Arnhem (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

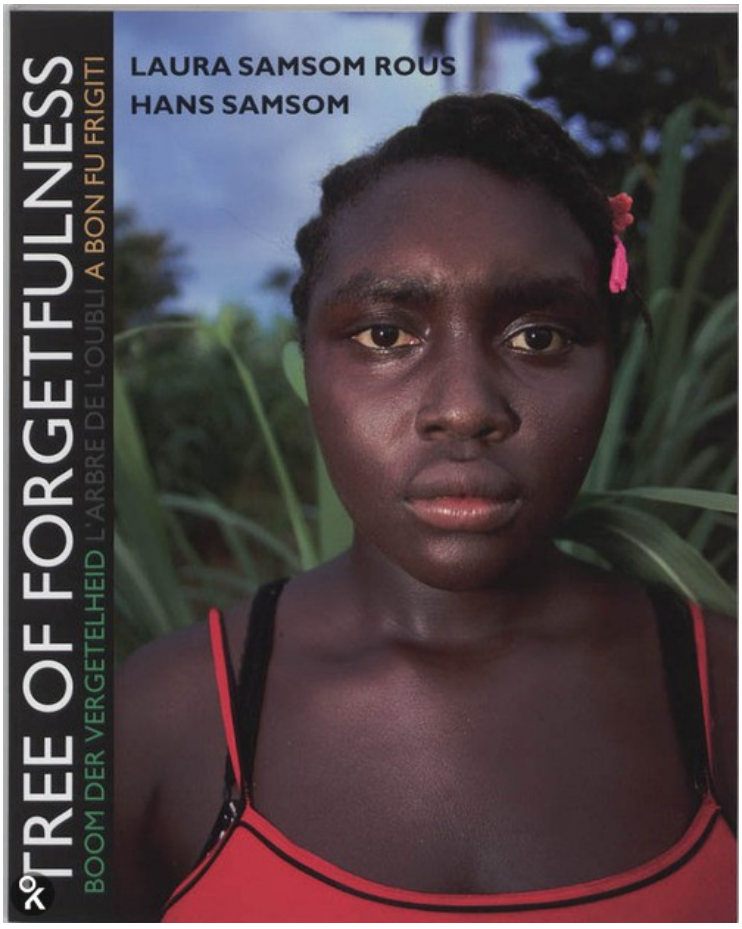

Figure 28. Laura Samsom-Rous, Hans Samson, *Tree of forgetfulness*, cover of publication, 2002-2003

Figure 29. Stedelijk Visitor Entrance, Amsterdam

Figure 30. Saskia Noor van Imhoff, # + *23.00*, Galerie Fons Welters Amsterdam (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

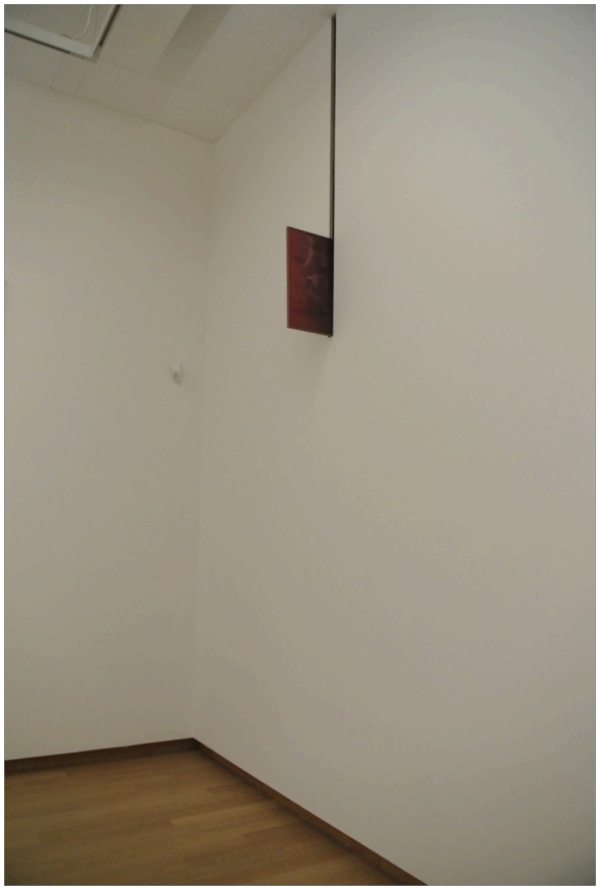

Figure 31. Saskia Noor van Imhoff, # + *23.00*, Galerie Fons Welters Amsterdam (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

Figure 32. Saskia Noor van Imhoff, # + *23.00*, Galerie Fons Welters Amsterdam (photograph by Dana-Iulia Purecel)

Figure 33. Van Abbemuseum building, Eindhoven

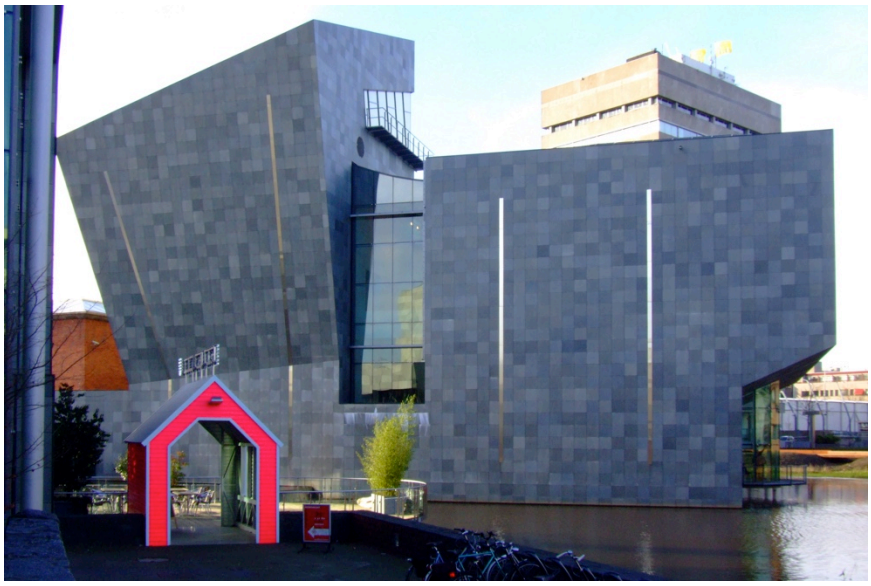

Figure 34. Van Abbemuseum, smallest covered bridge in the world, Eindhoven

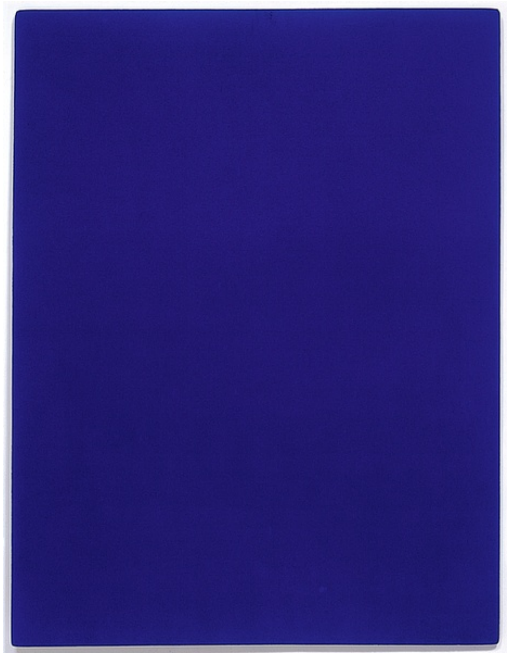

Figure 35. Yves Klein, *sans titre (IKB 63)*, 1959, pure pigment and synthetic resin on canvas

Figure 36. Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, *Self-Heterotopia/ Catching Up with Self*, 1991-2007, various materials, 300 cm x 800 cm

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