The Feminist Function of Affects: Affective Dissonance as Curatorial Methodology

Telliez, Clara

THE FEMINIST FUNCTION OF AFFECTS

Affective Dissonance as Curatorial Methodology

Clara Telliez

The Feminist Function of Affects

Affective Dissonance as Curatorial Methodology

A thesis by Clara Telliez
s3700097
c.c.s.telliez@umail.leidenuniv.nl

Under the supervision of dr. Ksenia Fedorova

MA Arts & Culture, Museum Studies
2024

Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Declaration of Originality

By submitting this thesis, I certify that:

✓ this work has been drafted by me without any assistance from others (not applicable to group work);
✓ I have not discussed, shared, or copied assessment work from/with other students;
✓ I have not used sources that are not explicitly allowed by the course instructors and I have clearly referenced all sources (either from a printed source, internet or any other source) used in the work in accordance with the course requirements and the indications of the course instructors;
✓ this work has not been previously used for other courses in the program, unless explicitly allowed by the instructors.

I understand that any false claim in respect of this work will result in disciplinary action in accordance with university regulations and the program regulations, and that any false claim will be reported to the Board of Examiners. Disciplinary measures can result in exclusion from the course and/or the program, and in a permanent endorsement on my diploma.

I understand that my work may be checked for plagiarism, by the use of plagiarism detection software as well as through other measures taken by the university to prevent and check on fraud and plagiarism.

I understand and endorse the significance of the prevention of fraud and I acknowledge that in case of (gross) fraud the program could declare the exam invalid, which may have consequences for all students.

"To be a feminist, one has first to become one." [1]

On the front page: "Cézanne cosmetics", Sara Cwynar, *Red Film*, 0'26, 2019. On display at *Next Level: Sara Cwynar - S/S23* exhibition, Foam, Amsterdam, 2023.

[1] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 425.

Table of Contents

Text word count: 16309
Total word count: 19528

Introduction

Museums are affective, and they always have been. Ever since the invention of the curiosity cabinets during the Renaissance, the viewer's affective reaction has been sought.[2] One might leave a museum being surprised or enchanted as the visitors of the *Wunderkammer* must have been, but one might also be bored, upset, enthralled, horrified, curious. Sometimes, the impression disappears after a few hours. Sometimes, it persists for days, months or years. And sometimes, the affective experience troubles us more deeply than we might have envisaged. It follows us beyond the museum's walls and tinges our living experiences. This transformative potential of affects within the museum comes from the encounter with "*something* that affect us" as writes museologist Marzia Varutti.[3] This *something*, in the art museum, might be an object on display whose inner and autonomous qualities affect the viewer, but not solely. As Varutti stresses, a museum's contribution, a curatorial intervention, or the point of intersection of both with the visitor's subjectivity, can also foster affective reactions.[4] To make affective responses elicit within the museum may be unconscious but it is also, sometimes, purposefully aimed by curators. Such a curatorial approach is what Varutti conceptualises as affective curatorship in 'The Affective Turn in Museums and the Rise of Affective Curatorship' (2023). For her, affective curatorship "moves away from text-centred exhibitions" in favour of "a stronger engagement with non-verbal channels of communication such as emotions, imagination and sensory experiences".[5] Its contemporary relevance, she explains, lies in the key role that affects play in pedagogy and in the definition of the museum as a space for "collective healing and well-being".[6]

The concept of affective curatorship, as coined by Varutti, is recent. While it was published in 2023, the term captures a variety of curatorial strategies which have already been put into place in the last decade by museum practitioners and scholars, in line with the affective turn that influenced scientific research since the 1990s.[7] Yet, affects have since long been used as methodological tools. Feminist and queer theories have unveiled the pedagogical relevance of affects, for they reveal the epistemological qualities of the body, its emotional reactions and

[2] Varutti, "Affective Encounters", 133.
[3] Varutti, "The Affective Turn", 62.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid., 63.
[6] Ibid., 64.
[7] Ibid., 61.

living experiences. Audre Lorde, bell hooks and Megan Boler, among other feminist scholars, have unpacked the subtle role of affects within the perpetuation of patriarchal mechanisms of domination. If affects are places for social control, they are also for feminist resistance.[8] For it is through affects that women's oppression and its processes are revealed to them.[9] In *Living a Feminist Life* (2017), philosopher Sarah Ahmed elaborates on the dialectical relationship between affects and feminism. According to her, becoming feminist implies sensing (as a woman) that something in the naturalised regime of patriarchy is amiss.[10] "You sense that something is wrong", she explains, as you come up against "the injustices of the world".[11] The affective perception of life through the glasses of patriarchal violences, however, is not without consequences: it is the very beginning of a feminist curiosity and intellectual activity.[12] It is precisely for this reason that scholar Linda Ahäll theorises affects as feminist methodology, which she applies to international relations sciences in 'Affects as Methodology: Feminism and the Politics of Emotion' (2018). For her indeed, "there is no feminism without affect".[13] How is such an affective shift provoked in the first place, she asks? Through the experience of affective dissonance, she answers.[14] Over time, feminist scholars have used different words to write about this experience. In 1975, in 'Towards a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness', Sandra Lee Bartky considered this affective shift as the revelation of the unfair and contradictory nature of patriarchal facts and behaviours to women, which Clare Hemmings later coined as affective dissonance in 'Affective Solidarity: Feminist Reflexivity and Political Transformation' (2012).[15] Nonetheless, both authors relate to a similar affective shift: the experience of a gap between a woman's personal sense of self and the alienated social expectations towards her and her gender.[16] Described as such, affective dissonance appears to be a rather negative experience. But for feminist scholars like Hemmings, Bartky or Ahäll, it is not: its positive potential lies in the capacity of affective dissonance to raise feminist consciousness and empowerment within women.

It is for this very specific reason that affective dissonance has been studied and applied within the curriculum as a strategy for feminist pedagogies, a didactic movement which campaigns for the empowerment of female students. But what about other educational spaces?

[8] Boler, *Feeling Power*, 2.
[9] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 31.
[10] Ibid., 27.
[11] Ibid., 21- 22.
[12] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 45.
[13] Ibid., 38.
[14] Ibid., 44.
[15] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 429.
[16] Hemmings, "Affective Solidarity", 150.

If affective dissonance is fostered in the classroom, could it be also elicited in art museums since they share a similar educational mission? Could it be a tool for feminist curators? Since the 1970s, the latter have been questioning and analysing museums as non-neutral institutions, reproducers of gendered distinctions and their construction.[17] They have tackled the marginalisation of women artists as a minority, criticiqued the masculinist nature of the canon and the gendered relations between the viewer/ the artist and the represented subject.[18] They have reassessed the contribution of women to the arts and gave visibility to their production through exhibitions.[19] Linda Nochlin and Ann Sutherland Harris's 1976 groundbreaking exhibition *Women Artists, 1550-1950* is one example of the dominant strategy adopted by feminist curators, the 'survey show' dedicated to the insertion of women artists into art historical discourses.[20] This curatorial model has been significant in the development of feminist curation but has equally been criticised and accused of ghettoisation since the 1990s. Because of its 'women-only' approach, this form of display reinforces the hegemonic system, for it isolates further the women artists and merely integrates them into an existing and patriarchal discourse.[21] But curating as a feminist is not only about reaching equality in displaying women artists' works or creating exhibitions about women. Contemporary forms of feminist curation have enlarged the definition of feminist curatorial practices. Citing historical references correctly and not referring solely to male geniuses, questioning the institutional model of the museum and its built-in patriarchal ideology, or revealing the power dynamics that prevail within the distribution, production and reception of displays are also considered as feminist curatorial techniques.[22] Feminist curation, in this sense, captures a multiplicity of creative strategies increasingly present in the museum world, which seek the revision of the patriarchal structure of the art historical discourse and of its institutions.

Art historian Dorothee Richter, in 'Feminist Perspectives on Curating' (2016), points to another display technique of feminist curation: *disturbance*. Creating disturbance within the visitor through the images or through the display is, as she states, an important mission for feminist curators.[23] It "can give rise to an encounter that looks at the viewer", she writes, which, I argue in this paper, affective dissonance permits.[24] Twice, I felt that an exhibition was

[17] Deepwell, "Feminist Curatorial Strategies", 67.
[18] Ibid., 67-68.
[19] Ibid., 68.
[20] Ibid., 69.
[21] Guth,"A Short History", 30.
[22] Richter, "Feminist Perspectives", 64-66.
[23] Ibid., 65.
[24] Ibid.

'looking at me', that it 'talked to me' as a gendered self, as a woman. It was disturbing and something felt wrong: I experienced affective dissonance. It happened during my visit to the *Next Level: Sara Cwynar - S/S23* exhibition at the Foam Museum in Amsterdam, in 2023. The show was temporary and dedicated to the work of the contemporary artist Sara Cwynar. It was thought of as a critical essay about the functioning of capitalist consumption culture through images. With photo collages, video works and their curation, the artist and the curator addressed the notion of identity, compulsive consumer desires and the socio-historical beginning of such capitalistic practices. While the curatorial narrative intended to reflect on "what it means to be human in the 21st century" as written in the leaflet, I perceived it as a victimising discourse towards women, and towards me.[25] But most importantly, as my own perception of the artworks and curation was different and feminist, something felt disturbing. It is with a comparable feeling that I ended my visit to the Aberdeen Art Gallery, in Scotland, a little earlier that year. The institution is a heritage museum built in the 19th century and whose collection is heterogeneous. There, the affective pattern was different. The same feeling of something amiss was aroused, but for varied reasons, which I will argue in this paper, were dissimilar to the ones that shaped my affective experience at Foam. The visit to one specific room, the gallery 14, surprisingly felt good. Its feminist curation about 'The Art of Empowerment' was particularly effective and, as a woman, I felt represented, in a safe place. The singularity of such a feeling in the museum, since it is not a norm, felt wrong. I experienced a reversed form of affective dissonance. I encountered deep affects during the two visits, to the extent that a year after, the impressions remain strong. The particularly long-lasting emotional state which followed me since my visits, revealed the transformative nature of affects within the exhibitions and the power that affective curation can have. In line with the feminist method of producing knowledge from the living experiences as a woman, and with the need, to borrow a phrase from Ahmed, to "get closer to that feeling", I want to identify the mechanisms which provoked affective dissonance during these visits and propose affective dissonance as a curatorial methodology.[26]

Why is affective dissonance an effective tool for feminist curators? How can it be provoked within female visitors in the art museum? This is what this thesis is about: answering these questions and expanding the experience of affective dissonance as a methodology for the art museum. My intentions for this research project are to meticulously look at the curatorial and

[25] Kooiman, *S/S 23*, 2.
[26] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 37.

narrative structures of both exhibitions, as much as their aesthetic strategies, to unveil the process through which my own experiences of affective dissonance were elicited. My method is inspired by Varutti's own approach, which she elaborates in 'Affective Encounters in Museums' (2021) and develops in three steps.[27] First, it includes being affected by curations, namely by the one set in *S/S23* and at the Aberdeen Art Gallery, whose impressions remain lively, despite the time. Second, I examine the memory of my impressions to unpack the mechanisms of my own experiences of affective dissonance. And third, I transpose these display patterns into a set of strategies for the practice of affective dissonance as curatorial methodology. In doing so, I wish to propose affective dissonance as a didactic methodological tool for feminist curators and as a contribution to contemporary forms of feminist curatorial practices. In the first chapter, I will address the conceptual background and functioning of affects and of affective dissonance in relation to a feminist pedagogical perspective. I will explore the theoretical coherence of the methodology and argue in favour of its efficiency as a tool for feminist curatorial practices in the art museum. In the two following chapters, I analyse the case studies of Foam's *S/S23* exhibition and of the Aberdeen Art Gallery's gallery 14. I unveil the specificity of both affective experiences, in relation to their museological contexts and curation, and suggest a few display practices and curatorial points which could support the methodology of affective dissonance as a curatorial practice directed towards female visitors.

[27] Varutti, "Affective Encounters", 132.

Chapter 1. Affective dissonance in the museum: a feminist perspective

"Feminism can begin with a body, a body in touch with a world, a body that is not at ease in a world, a body that fidgets and moves around. Things don't seem right*".*[28]

What if the world, this world that Ahmed mentions, was the art museum? A space where a body moves from one exhibition room to another, where a body is in touch with the representations of the world, and where a body might not be at ease with its ideological discourse. A place where things, for a woman, would also not seem right. What are these uneasy feelings and how are they provoked within the museum? What potential do they hold for feminist curators? In this first chapter, I explore the feminist function of affects, their role in raising feminist consciousness and empowerment, and the conceptual relevance of proposing affective dissonance as a curatorial methodology for feminist curators.

1. Feminism and affect: a dialectical relationship

Affect has taken over the sciences. The concept, which was first philosophically framed by Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) in his 1675 treatise *Ethics*, has been extensively expanded to other scientific disciplines during the last decades. Since the mid 1990s, several domains such as neurosciences, psychology, biology, humanities or social sciences claim its interdisciplinary pertinence, under the expression 'affective theory' or 'affective turn'. Its revolutionary nature lies in the shift of interest that it implies. In Western societies, facts, rationality and objectivity have been considered essential to knowledge production, as a certainty of its legitimacy.[29] The knowledge of something is commonly acknowledged as referential, to facts or events, and is detached from the knower.[30] For this specific reason, a theory based on affects challenges the traditional epistemological systems by raising the body, and its emotional responses, to the

[28] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 22.
[29] Lennon and Whitford, "Introduction", 14.
[30] Ibid.

status of a factuality that is worth exploring. Although it seems like a relatively new insight in Western thought, affects have been at the core of feminist theory for long.[31] Behind the well-known slogan of "The personal is political", the activists of the second wave feminist movement that occurred in the USA in the 1960s and 1970s, already engaged in theoretical discussions about the role of emotions in the patriarchal structure of knowledge production.[32] For those feminists already, bodily experiences as much as affective states were a legitimate source of epistemological interest and for critical analysis. If a turn to affect sounds new, it obscures the (not so new) pre-existing bond between affect and feminism.

While the affective turn has been embraced by numerous disciplines, the definition and naming of the phenomenon has been strongly contested.[33] The abstract character of affect renders the generalisation and singularisation of its meaning difficult, which explains why its conceptualisation differs from one discipline to another.[34] Yet, many converge on one point: the definition of affects as moments of intensity. In 'The Autonomy of Affect in Parables of the Virtual' (2021), an influential work in affect theory by theorist Brian Massumi, the author qualifies intensity as synonym for affects.[35] He describes both as a state of suspense which is, in his own words, "not exactly passivity, because it is filled with motion, vibratory motion, resonation. And it is not yet activity, because the motion is not of the kind that can be directed (if only symbolically) toward practical end in a world of constituted objects and aims".[36] For Massumi, during this moment of intensity, the body reacts, often in a purely mechanical way that is mostly manifested on the level of the skin.[37] For others, like scholar Eric Shouse, affect has a deeper impact that encompasses the physiological reaction of the body's basic structures such as facial muscles, blood flows and respiratory systems.[38] In both cases, the body is set in motion, which puts its passivity to an end. But, for Massumi, this physical reaction is not yet directed towards a clear goal, object or action.[39] According to him, the biological nature of affect acts as the determinant of its status, as unconscious. Indeed, for most theorists of the affective turn, affect is a precognitive state that occurs before conscientisation, prior to language and reason.[40] In this context, the state of suspense is recognised as a body response

[31] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 39.
[32] Boler and Zembylas, "Interview with Megan Boler", 19-21.
[33] Gorton, "Theorising Emotion and Affect", 334.
[34] Seigworth and Gregg, "An Inventory of Shimmers", 3-5.
[35] Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect", 27.
[36] Ibid., 26.
[37] Ibid., 25.
[38] Shouse, "Feeling, Emotion, Affect".
[39] Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect", 26.
[40] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 39.

equipped with autonomy.[41] If defined in this way, as autonomous, affects are often differentiated from emotions and feelings. While the latter is qualified as personal and autobiographical, emotions are perceived as social, but both pertain to a state of consciousness that would occur after the affective reaction.[42]

A feminist critique of the affective turn, however, refutes such a distinction. Feminist theory, as advanced by Hemmings, Ahmed and Åhäll, does not adopt different attitudes and considerations between affects and emotions. The motivations behind it, "the problem with 'the affective turn'" as Åhäll stresses, are as follows.[43] The first problem, she argues, is that by privileging the term affect over the word emotion, the sexist exclusion of the female from the scientific domain is perpetuated.[44] In the Western binary model of thinking, emotions have been historically opposed to the objective, to the rational, to the public and the universal. These characteristics have been commonly conferred to men and have been the object of a hyper valuation that is rooted in the dominant religious, medical and scientific discourses built since the advent of the Enlightenment idea of the Man of Reason.[45] Since they are understood as pertaining to the subjective, the personal or the private, emotions have been the subject of disregard and delegitimisation within Western societal functioning. In patriarchal society, women have been relegated and confined in the house, leading to the association of the private with the domestic and the feminine.[46] Thus, defining emotions as personal and affect as precognitive means associating the first to the feminine and the second to the masculine. It simultaneously holds back emotions as bearing no epistemological interest and reenacts the patriarchal dualistic relationship between men and women, and the sexist exclusion of the latter in the production of 'legitimate' and scientific knowledge.[47] But for Åhäll, the most fundamental issue of the affective turn lies further in the prepersonal character of affect. According to her, the non-subjectivity and the unconsciousness of affect excludes the social in which the affective event is embedded.[48] By advocating for the autonomy of affect, its unqualifiable and no ownable nature, Massumi prevents affective experiences from being critiqued.[49] In doing so, he also distances affect from being politically interpreted, which is at the heart of feminist views on affects and of their dogma "the personal is political". This paper,

[41] Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect", 25.
[42] Shouse, "Feeling, Emotion, Affect".
[43] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 39.
[44] Ibid., 39- 40.
[45] Megan Boler, *Feeling Power*, 5-10.
[46] Ibid., 6; Ibid.,19.
[47] Pedwell and Whitehead, "Affecting Feminism", 119.
[48] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 40.
[49] Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect", 28.

wished and thought as a feminist enterprise itself, will position its discourse in adequation with the feminist critique of the affective turn and will therefore adopt its terminology. Here too, affects and emotions will not be differentiated.

"There is no feminism without affect" states Åhäll.[50] If feminist scholars have played an avant-gardist role in the development of affect theory, it is because feminist theory itself is, as Gorton writes, "suffused with feelings, passions and emotions".[51] In fact, feminism often begins with intensity, it is, Ahmed stresses, an affective reaction "to the injustices of the world" which one comes up against.[52] As she writes it,

"You register something in the sharpness of an impression. Something can be sharp without it being clear what the point is. Over time, with experience, you sense that something is wrong or you have a feeling of being wronged. You sense an injustice".[53]

Working with affect, indeed, implies entering the realm of causality.[54] In a patriarchal society, where oppression is directed towards the female sex, people identifying as women might encounter affect during diverse life experiences, when symbolic or material social, economic or political practices perpetuate gendered domination. The encounter with the functioning of a patriarchal world provokes unsettlement and, to borrow Ahmed's words again, "a sensation that begins at the back of your mind, an uneasy sense of something amiss".[55] In this sense, women's affective encounter with the patriarchal world, even if it is not always clear at the very moment of the event, might feel 'wrong'. Wrong towards them, their gender and their identification with the latter.[56] This feeling represents a first impression that, by its existence, questions the apparent naturalness of women's unfair treatment. This is why affects, because they let us encounter the patriarchal world differently than cognitively, beyond what is taught, are essential to feminism. Hence, for feminists, the affective experience is necessarily political. Such an approach on affective experiences recognises the difference between men and women, to which this thesis affiliates its intention. Not for essentialist reasons, but as the direct interpretation of the performance and embodiment of gender that is internalised through education and culture.

[50] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 38.
[51] Cited in Pedwell and Whitehead, "Affecting Feminism",116.
[52] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 21-22.
[53] Ibid., 22.
[54] Hardt, "What Affects are Good For", 9.
[55] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 27.
[56] Ibid., 22.

2. How to become a feminist

If the relationship between feminism and affect is dialectical, the latter, from a feminist perspective, act on two opposite fronts. On the one hand, emotions are considered as a place for social control, in the interest of patriarchal ideology.[57] Feminists like Boler accuse the common agreement on the normalcy of emotions, their 'benign' and 'natural' classification, for obscuring their political meaning and impact.[58] To counter this phenomenon, feminist theories have challenged the distance that is usually acknowledged between emotions and rationality, between the private and the public. By questioning the natural definition of affects, they simultaneously expose its socially constructed essence.[59] Through this approach, feminist theory recognises emotions in relation to social class, gender, age, race and culture, but also to the power dynamics that rule and structure Western societies.[60] This is what Boler does in *Feeling Power* (1999), where she unveils the social functioning of emotions, from both women and men's part, as guardians and reproducers of the masculine hegemony.[61] According to her, the continuous 'success' of patriarchal ideology lies in the division of the public and the private which both shapes and is shaped by gendered rules on emotions.[62] The consideration of certain emotions as appropriate (or not) for women is taught through educational and societal discourses, and results in its internalisation by women.[63] In this way, traditional qualities that are expected by women such as tenderness, calmness, care, attentiveness, modesty and so on, maintains them in the private and outside the higher social spheres, where 'masculine' characteristics like ambition and assertiveness are valued. The common understanding of affects as being natural, consequently, reinforces the legitimacy of such gendered roles and resists any critical and feminist discourse. It cunningly guides women towards the performance of their inferiority through emotional control.[64]

On the other hand, affect can also serve as a place for feminist resistance.[65] And it does, when something feels wrong. For the subject experiencing it, it suddenly seems that what

[57] Boler, *Feeling Power*, 3.
[58] Ibid., 2.
[59] Ibid., 6.
[60] Ibid., 2.
[61] Ibid., 22. Boler describes Foucault's concept of *pastoral power* as a framework to understand "how emotions are disciplines to maintain social control" in patriarchies, through the individualised control and the internalisation of rules of self-control, which are taught within educational environments.
[62] Ibid.,7.
[63] Ibid., 7-8.
[64] Ibid., 7.
[65] Ibid., 2.

appears to be mundane behaviours and societal practices, are different from what is really happening.[66] Feminist theorists have used different words to qualify this affective experience. For Ahmed, "things don't seem right".[67] For Bartky, there is a "double ontological shock".[68] For Hemmings, there is "ontological and epistemological dissonance".[69] But they all agree on the nature of the affective shift: the affective reaction turns a simple fact of patriarchal reality into something that feels wrong. It does not solely unveil unfair material conditions as they seem to be, it affectively reveals them as *contradictions*: this is affective dissonance.[70] Affective dissonance is further detailed by Hemmings, who follows scholar Elspeth Probyn's distinction, as the experience of a gap between an embodied sense of self and the self that we are supposed to be socially.[71] In other words, it is a contradiction between a woman's individual conception of herself and the performance of the gender that she identifies with, in the context of a patriarchal society. To illustrate her words, Hemmings departs from an autobiographical example, her very first experience of affective dissonance at the age of seventeen.[72] As she was leaving a feminist lecture on Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Hemmings, enraged, denied the scholar's analysis and the mere existence of feminism, which she qualified as "nonsense".[73] Her reaction, she explains, was informed by a strong confidence in herself, the personal feeling to be the equal to her male peers, and a privileged living experience during which she never felt the inferiority to men that is expected from her sex, nor the limitations of her gender.[74] She remarks, however, that "as time went on I discovered rather profound differences between my sense of self and the social expectations I occupied with respect to gender and sexuality".[75] She further notes that, later, her understanding of feminism evolved towards "a way both of preserving a coherent sense of self (still equal to any boy or man) and of bringing ontology and epistemology closer together again (through politicised intervention)".[76] From this experience, Hemmings draws feminist conclusions on the necessity of affect in giving life to feminism. The strong affective reaction that she felt during the lecture did reveal the contradiction between her own perception of herself and of alienated social reality.

[66] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 434.
[67] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 22.
[68] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 434.
[69] Hemmings, "Affective Solidarity", 148.
[70] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 434.
[71] Hemmings, "Affective Solidarity", 149-150.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid., 149.
[74] Ibid., 150.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.

When she writes:

"Feeling that something is amiss in how one is recognised, feeling an ill fit with social descriptions, feeling undervalued, feeling that same sense in considering others; all these feelings can produce a politicised impetus to change that foregrounds the relationship between ontology and epistemology precisely because of the experience of their dissonance.",

Hemmings evokes the judgement that arises after the affective dissonance.[77] In 'Affects as Methodology: Feminism and the Politics of Emotions', Åhäll combines Hemmings' concept of affective dissonance and researcher Cynthia Enloe's consideration on feminist curiosity to explain the outcome of the experience of affective dissonance.[78] For her, Enloe's idea that our lack of curiosity is what conserves power structures is not enough, in the sense that it does not explain how to reach this state of feminist curiosity.[79] She remedies this shortcoming by considering that the experience of affective dissonance is what sparks feminist questions and interest.[80] Because it is the point of departure of any form of feminist intellectual activity, for Åhäll, affective dissonance is the very first step towards a resistance to patriarchal ideologies.

However, Åhäll's conceptualisation of affective dissonance does present limitations. The author does not elaborate on what happens after the emergence of feminist curiosity. What does a feminist curiosity provoke? It implies asking feminist questions. It implies perceiving things, environments and situations through the filter of these questions. It is approaching things differently, from a feminist perspective. In this respect, taken a little bit further, Åhäll's concept of affective dissonance unveils another, and deeper, feminist potential: through the affective shift, one has not only developed feminist curiosity, but has formulated a different perception of the world and of its experience. Understood in this way, the result which emerges from affective dissonance shares similarities with the concept of feminist consciousness. For Bartky, feminist consciousness does not imply being aware of more than non-feminist persons through feminist knowledge, on the contrary, it is "to develop a radically altered consciousness of oneself, of others and of what for lack of a better term, I shall call "social reality".[81] In other words, through feminist consciousness, life is perceived through the injustices and contradictions of patriarchal systems, to which one is personally introduced by the experience

[77] Ibid.
[78] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 44.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid., 45.
[81] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 426-9.

of ontological and epistemological gaps during affective dissonance. Hemmings explains how a feminist form of consciousness does not necessarily lead to change or to action, one is free to welcome or not the need for change that aligns with this new perception of reality.[82] However, she says, if the subject of the affective shift considers patriarchal injustices as unbearable, it is believed to be a first step for potential individual or collective transformation.[83] And by personal transformation, the author refers to becoming a feminist. As Barty stresses, one is not born feminist. One becomes feminist.[84] For her, becoming a feminist means going through a profound personal transformation, which acts on a multiplicity of aspects, from one's behaviour, to one's consumption and one's social habits.[85] But to reach that point of desire for structural and political change, a feminist must develop awareness of patriarchal oppression, which occurs through affective dissonance.[86] According to Bartky again, feminist consciousness is also an awareness of one's victimisation.[87] To perceive oneself as a victim means that there is an external and hostile force that is acting in favour of women's oppression.[88] The author designates two different actors that feminists can perceive as responsible for it: while for some they are men themselves, for others it is society in its broader sense.[89] Nevertheless, the precise understanding of who or what is responsible for the injustices is not the absolute aim for raising feminist consciousness. Its real value lies in its potential for personal growth and empowerment that is provoked by the arising of feminist consciousness. It is the consciousness of one's weaknesses related to one's gender, but it is also the consciousness of one's power to change that.[90] It is the possibility to move beyond one's suffering from the patriarchal naturalisation of women's alienation and to claim *ownership*. It is the possibility to resist patriarchal ideologies.

[82] Hemmings, "Affective Solidarity", 156-157. Hemmings elaborates on the diverse outcomes that might follow affective dissonance. For her, "one might remain content with one's lot" since "it could be worse", or one could "become sufficiently outraged to resist existing social prescriptions" and resist.
[83] Ibid.,157. The author specifies that this "sense of dissonance might become a sense of injustice and then a desire to rectify that".
[84] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 425.
[85] Ibid. These changes, Bartky states, are varied: "the feminist changes her *behavior*: she makes new friends; she responds differently to people and events; her habits of consumption change; sometimes she alters her living arrangements, or, more dramatically, her whole style of life".
[86] Hemmings, "Affective Solidarity", 154.
[87] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 430.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid., 431.

3. Defining affective dissonance as a curatorial methodology

Feminist perspectives on affects and on affective dissonance have already been used as tools for raising critical consciousness about oppressive social conditions through feelings and experience. In fact, they are at the core of the definition and goals of feminist pedagogies.[91] Feminist pedagogy is an educational movement that acts against hegemonic didactic practices, which, feminists argue, reproduce a social order that is oppressive, classist and racist.[92] It is not merely teaching about women; it is a liberal and activist vision of education that sees itself as a tool for empowerment and social action.[93] The movement is grounded in Paolo Freire's critical theories on education as liberatory, and the progressive education movement that took place in the United States after John Dewey's philosophy of education.[94] Feminist pedagogies grew during the 1960s and invaded the curriculum with its objectives to foster consciousness-raising, personal growth, and social action.[95] The educational strategy of radical feminist pedagogies draws attention to women's emotions and encourages them to articulate and name them openly, allowing the 'private' to enter the 'public'.[96] In doing so, women's affective experiences are acknowledged. If 'experiencing' is a fact that is taken for granted in society, feminist pedagogies wish to point at the systematic dismissal and restriction of women's experiences, and the necessity to recognise and value them.[97] But raising feminist consciousness goes further than expressing affective experiences. Feminist pedagogies also wish to critically assess these emotions to uncover and understand the internalised hierarchies and gender roles that have been precisely infused by emotional control.[98] Thus, feminist pedagogies do not merely inform existing patriarchal epistemology with feminist knowledge. In fact, they structurally challenge traditional knowledge canons by using affect as a tool for critical reflection and empowerment. Feminist pedagogies share feminist theorists Carolyn Pedwell and Anne Whitehead's argument that "feminist theory might most productively explore affects less for how they dominate, regulate or constrain individual subjects and more

[91] Fisher, "Qu'est-ce que la pédagogie féministe?", 67. In "Qu'est-ce que la pédagogie féministe?", Fisher distinguishes two traits that characterise consciousness-raising: "self-education as a tool self-definition" and "to pay particular attention to feelings, and to consider them as an integral part of consciousness-raising" (personal translation).
[92] Crabtree, Sapp, and Licona. "The Passion and the Praxis", 4.
[93] Fisher, "Qu'est-ce que la pédagogie féministe?", 65.
[94] Crabtree, Sapp, and Licona. "The Passion and the Praxis", 5-6.
[95] Ibid., 9.
[96] Boler, *Feeling Power*, 114.
[97] Fisher, "Qu'est-ce que la pédagogie féministe?", 68.
[98] Boler, *Feeling Power*, 112.

for the possibilities they offer for thinking (and feeling) beyond what is already known and assumed.", and seek the reformation of what is taught, but also how it is taught.[99] In this respect, affective dissonance, and consciousness-raising, which have been applied to feminist pedagogies act as an efficient methodological tool for the feminist awakening.

Yet, affective dissonance and consciousness-raising, as rather recent disciplines, seem to have been mostly explored within the curriculum. In *Feminist Pedagogy: Looking Backward to Move Forward* (2009), the authors, Robbin Crabtree, David Alan Sapp and Adela Licona, point to the critical analysis of the educational environment that concerns feminist pedagogies. According to the latter, didactic frameworks have been hostile for girls and women.[100] If I agree with this statement, I want to expand the definition of educational spaces that is given here before commenting on its antagonistic nature. In most scientific works on feminist pedagogies, the methodology is applied to the classroom, to the curriculum, to the figures of the teacher and the student. This narrow definition of educational environments made me question: what about museums? Museums, in the definition given by the International Council of Museums, are institutions whose mission is also to offer experiences of education.[101] No one denies the pedagogical role of museums and the fact that they are highly trusted institutions in the production and transmission of knowledge.[102] Museums are also, historically, a patriarchal space which reproduces its ideology of gender inequalities as normative. In this sense, they, too, are unfriendly to the female sex. The similarities that are shared between the curriculum and the museum suggest the relevance of the implementation of feminist pedagogies and of affective dissonance as methodology within the latter's structure. How can a methodology designed for the classroom be transposed to the museum? An easy answer to this question would be through the work of the education department of a museum, through guided tours, workshops, and other pedagogical materials. For this thesis, however, I want to explore affective dissonance as part of the curation. Curatorial practices are multiple and varied but I will address them as the ensemble of techniques involved in the making of an exhibition, a display or of its narrative, through a careful selection of artworks and their installation. From the analysis of my own experiences of affective dissonance and their typologies which I will develop in the following chapters, this paper will gather a few exhibition strategies through which affective dissonance can be provoked. The point of intersection of my two experiences

[99] Pedwell and Whitehead, "Affecting Feminism", 117; Crabtree, Sapp, and Licona. "The Passion and the Praxis", 4.
[100] Ibid., 8.
[101] ICOM, "Museum Definition".
[102] Clover, "Seeing the Unseen", 116.

revolves around *disturbance*, a feminist curating technique conceptualised by Richter.[103] Curatorial processes of accumulation, repetitions, contrasts and poetic juxtapositions, implemented in the museum can engender disturbing, surprising or unsettling affective encounters (affective dissonance) between the female visitors, the artworks and the curation.

For this research project, I propose a feminist curatorial methodology that is not explicitly activist. Despite its main goal being a didactic, transformative experience that leads to female empowerment, affective dissonance as methodology does not require to be communicated to the public as feminist. This aspect can allow the museum implementing it to attract a wider audience that wouldn't be either already convinced or resistant to feminism politically. Its functioning, since it is based on affects, go deeper than the cognitive recognition or understanding that prevails in dominant feminist curations. Feminists, as I have mentioned in the introduction, have developed curatorial strategies to serve a feminist and revisionist discourse within the museums. Since the 1970s, they have troubled the conventional forms of display by inserting the works of women artist in their structures, they have built exhibitions dedicated to female artists or thematically engaged with topics that pertain to what we consider being the feminine. They have pointed to the patriarchal nature of art history and museum displays to bring feminist awareness within the institutionalised narrative.[104] The main feminist curatorial approaches, however, do not question the very structure of these discourses. For some feminists, infusing an existing and historically patriarchal structure with women's knowledge is not enough.[105] If dominant feminist curatorial practices do change the nature of knowledge delivered by the museum, they do not present a structural and critical engagement with the medium of the museum and exhibition practices themselves. Affective dissonance as curatorial methodology, because of its nature, challenges the patriarchal system of curating the museum by essence. Fostering the experience of affective dissonance within women through curation stands against the traditional knowledge canon. Precisely because it is based on an affective response to a given situation, curating affective dissonance means prioritising emotions over rationality. It turns to the body and its experiences while simultaneously giving them value and blurring the patriarchal distinction of the personal and the political. In doing so, it puts the female body to the forefront of knowledge production and legitimates women's experiences, which have been historically restrained and dismissed.

[103] Richter, "Feminist Perspectives", 65.
[104] Molesworth, "How to Install Art", 504-508.
[105] Ibid., 504.

On the other hand, because affective dissonance is the experience of patriarchal contradictions and is the point of departure of the development of a feminist consciousness of the world, it gives the female subject the potential to claim *ownership* for her sense of self and to know her worth. Affective dissonance as curatorial methodology leads the female visitors to the overcoming of women's alienation, the subtle mechanisms through which the very existence of patriarchy is supported. Since women's emotionality has historically been reproached and has been socially manipulated against them, using affects as a curatorial methodology could be envisaged to apprehend the power structures and enable women's empowerment through the very tool that confined them for so long. For all these reasons, this paper argues that fostering affective dissonance through curation within the museum acts as an effective tool for feminist curatorial practices, for it raises feminist consciousness and fosters personal growth and empowerment within female visitors.

Chapter 2. When something feels wrong at the museum

"Feminism helps you to make sense that something is wrong; to recognize a wrong is to realize that you are not in the wrong".[106]

To become a feminist, something must feel wrong. This 'wrong', the ontological and epistemological shock between female self-narration and institutionalised narrative, is what leads to feminist awareness and empowerment. Its elicitation is thus essential for affective dissonance as a curatorial method. How can it be designed within the art museum? What display strategies can be implemented by feminist curators to provoke this feeling among female visitors? The architecture of the exhibitional space, the layout of the artworks selected, the atmosphere created by the curation, the lighting, the temperature, the sensory experience of the space are tools that usually support or shape a discursive curatorial intent. In this chapter, I want to address these strategies and point to a few of them that are particularly relevant and effective to foster affective dissonance. To do so, I will depart from my own experience of affective dissonance within an art museum, the Foam Museum in Amsterdam, where I visited *Next Level: Sara Cwynar - S/S23* a solo show of the Canadian contemporary artist Sara Cwynar in 2023. At *S/S23*, different aspects of the exhibit's curation created *disturbance* within the female visitors, which, I argue, was elicited by affective dissonance. The curatorial patterns of contrast, parataxical juxtaposition and repetition present in *S/S23* encouraged the feeling that something was wrong.

1. Contrasting: cognition versus affects

Foam is a photography museum that doesn't function with a permanent collection. The institution exhibits several shows which are not designed in relation to each other, simultaneously. Nevertheless, Foam formulates its programme around one core mission: the connection of a diversity of visions through a "critical and open approach" to photography's

[106] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 27.

role and medium.[107] The museum's mission statement enables its curators and partner artists to develop experimental projects about contemporary societal topics, which it specifically does through its Next Level exhibition series. Since 2015, the programme has introduced young artists to the public and has promoted their "innovative art" and "ground-breaking use of the medium photography" to foster "awareness among the visitors of how images influence our everyday life".[108]

For the year 2023, Next Level presented *S/S23,* a show curated by Mirjam Kooiman and committed to the photographic and video work of artist Sara Cwynar (born 1985). According to the curator, the radicality of Cwynar's vision lies in her critical perspective toward capitalist consumerism, its mechanisms and influence on the notion of identity.[109] At *S/S23*, indeed, the artist's videos and collages examined today's consumption by way of (re)use of past, present or future objects that "we do not yet own", and their pictorial representation.[110] "Images about images" as it is written in the leaflet of the exhibition.[111] To do so, the exhibit's theme focused on one specific aspect of consumer culture, which the title of the exhibition, *S/S23*, reflected. Borrowed from the fashion milieu, it embodied the seasonal nature of its productions, acted as the acronym of a fictional Spring/Summer 2023 collection and captured the actual timeline of the exhibition.[112] The entirety of *S/S23*'s discourse questioned fashion consumerist practices and their socio-historical origins. It also exposed Cwynar's reflections about their impact on our desires and ideas about beauty, appearance and identity. Through a meticulous and accumulative investigation of everyday mode, cosmetics and images, Cwynar pondered the extent of their participation in the formation of *Zeitgeist* and its reinvention.[113]

The exhibition shared Cwynar's "doubts and conclusions" faced with these thoughts, through a highly scientific (or rationalised) narrative.[114] *S/S23* was, in fact, designed as an anthropological essay written in the form of video works and collages, where socio-economical concerns were addressed in a critical and theoretical manner. Cwynar's ideas were drawn from "prominent theorists and philosophers" which she exposed in *Red Film* (2018), the only video work displayed at the very centre of the exhibit.[115] The exhibit's discourse was presented by the curator as an academic enterprise: it was legitimised by references to recognised thinkers

[107] Foam, "About".
[108] Foam, "Next Level".
[109] Kooiman, *S/S 23*, 2.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid., 1.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

and answered one research question found both in *Red Film* and in the exhibition text: "Who owns the way you look?".[116] A question to which the exhibition answered: mass consumerism. At *S/S23* individual responsibility and agency in the formation of aesthetic identities and physical looks which, as said in *Red Film*, "constitute the self for us" were questioned.[117] In the leaflet, Kooiman brings attention to the non-naturalness of human's visual identities. She does so by qualifying Cwynar's work as a reminder that "we all conform to one role or another, determined by the costumes we choose for ourselves".[118] In choosing to mention the concept of 'determination' and to use the word 'costume' instead of cloth, the curator evokes the constructed nature of one's appearance and images. The latter was embodied by Cwynar's work itself. In all the artworks, one or more elements pertaining to the lexical field of the photographic or film studio were present: colourful backdrops as in the *Western Costume* series (2023) (Fig.1), the camera or lights tripods as in *Tracy (Yellow Grid)* (2017) (Fig.2), the nature of the historical photographs of the *Doll Index* (2022) (Fig.3, Fig.4) artworks which open the exhibition, the visible camera on *Pamela as Pamela* (2023) (Fig.5). There was no doubt about the staged and indoor environment of the scenes, nor about the focus that was made on clothes, makeup and the appearance of the characters. At *S/S23*, Cwynar exposed the constructed nature of images and visual culture while turning her characters into models for fashion commercials.

Yet, if Kooiman assures that S/S23 reflected on "what it means to be human in the 21st century", it was clear to me during the visit that the exhibition and Cwynar's work were not solely about humans and mass consumerism, but rather addressed women (only) and their issues of representation.[119] When walking around the exhibition and contemplating the artworks I sensed that something was unfair towards women, towards me, and something felt wrong, but nowhere have I found it written in the official and textual narrative of *S/S23*. In the four rooms that constituted the exhibition, the masculine was almost absent. While female figures predominated, the masculine was only represented by a male voice in *Red Film* and the brief appearance of the speaker in the video. The same applied to the exhibition's discursive framework where the masculine was only cited once by Kooiman while she recounted the beginnings of consumption culture. "Where it all began" as she wrote.[120] The text explained that it all departed from the international phenomenon of the rise of the New Woman.[121] Coined

[116] Ibid., 4. The question is verbally asked in *Red Film* at 9'59 but also written in the leaflet of the exhibition on page 4.
[117] Cwynar, *Red Film*, 4'54, 2018.
[118] Kooiman, *S/S 23*, 4.
[119] Ibid., 2.
[120] Ibid., 3.
[121] Ibid.

by British novelist Sarah Grand in an article published in *The North American Review* in March 1894, the term identifies a generation of women who freed themselves from the Victorian ideals set upon them by marriage.[122] These women sought emancipation, wore a new wardrobe, studied, smoked in public, cycled, in other words, challenged the behaviour that was expected from them.[123] Economic independence was essential to their new freedom, for it allowed them to shape their own lives and to finally make their own choices.[124] Nonetheless, the exhibition text also introduced the New Women as easy targets for mass consumerism, whose "dark side" became apparent through an addiction to consumption.[125] The latter, as the leaflet stressed, was materially embodied within the structure of the department stores "set up just for women" while "male consumers would continue to wear tailor-made suits".[126] By choosing to define the origins of mass consumerism as a feminine matter, *S/S23* excluded the responsibility of the masculine in capitalist history but also in its storytelling. The exhibition decided to address women's experiences with consumption and desires in a victimising way, under the pretext of a reflection on 'the human'.

The strong feminine standpoint of *S/S23* was not acknowledged by the intellectual narrative of the exhibition, but I sensed it through the direct and affective experience of the display. During the visit, cognition and affects contrasted in a disturbing manner. The lack of convergence between the two narratives of the exhibition created a tension that troubled me, what I felt, the 'injustices' perpetuated within the exhibition was nowhere recognised nor expressed. Something felt incoherent, and, to quote Ahmed, "things didn't feel right".[127] However, the copresence and contrast between the intellectual and emotional discourses of the exhibition were where, I argue, its feminist nature lied. An exhibition space filled with images of women, but which nonetheless denies their presence of agency felt wrong and revealed the patriarchal nature of museum's narratives. It is through *S/S23*'s strategy of contrast between the cognitive and the affective that I experienced a patriarchal fact as a contradiction. And it was affective dissonance.

[122] Sutherland, "'A Sort of Bogeywhom", 1.
[123] Ibid., 3.
[124] Ibid., 8.
[125] Kooiman, *S/S 23*, 3.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 22.

2. Juxtaposing: building an affective narrative through parataxis

How were the two contrasted narratives articulated within the exhibition? How was the affective discourse built? Through the principle of parataxis. In 'The Terrible Gift: Museum and the Possibility of Hope Without Consolation' (2006), scholar Simon Roger explores non-verbalised forms of meaning within the exhibition, and the tension between the cognitive and the affective. To do so, he departs from his own interpretation of Adorno's thoughts on aesthetics and on the tensions between the conceptual and the aconceptual, the tensions between experience and knowledge, or, as scholar Witcomb reads it, the rational and the affective.[128] If Adorno elaborates such ideas in regard to poetry, Roger expands them to the museum practice under the concept of the "poetic exhibition".[129] He explains that "if poetic language marks the presence of the conceptual and aconceptual, a 'poetic exhibition' is that form of the presentation of materials in which the latter struggles against the former", which accurately relates to my troubling experience of the contrasting affective and cognitive narratives at *S/S23*. Roger continues further his association between exhibition practices and poetic form by claiming for the definition of parataxis, a component of the poetic construction, as a display technique. In poetics, parataxis qualifies "the placing of propositions or clauses one after the other, side by side, without indicating with conjunctions of connecting words, the relation (or coordination or subordination) between them".[130] But for Roger's poetic exhibition, parataxis is "a juxtaposition of text, objects, voices, and images presented in multi-model form" encountered by the visitors.[131] It is through this juxtaposition that the latter "create meaning in the gaps between things" although affectively, since these gaps "work through poetic of affective realms rather than explicit rational forms of knowledge production".[132] At *S/S23*, it is precisely through the parataxical qualities of the display that a second, feminist and affective narrative came to life.

Parataxis was present from the very beginning of the visit. The (female) visitor entered the exhibition by walking down the stairs that lead to the first room. She found herself surrounded by a symmetrical pattern display repeated in the exact same way on both of her sides. Attention was immediately drawn by the arrangement of very tall photo collages in bright yellow frames, and their association with smaller photographs on their side (Fig.6). The symmetricity went

[128] Roger, "The Terrible Gift", 200; Witcomb, "Toward a Pedagogy of Feeling", 323.
[129] Roger, "The Terrible Gift", 200.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid., 201.
[132] Witcomb, "Toward a Pedagogy of Feeling", 323.

further as the two big yellow framed artworks appeared, at first glance, to be similar. They both pertained to Cwynar's *Doll Index* series and are facing each other. *Doll Index 1, 1779-1950* (2022), as well as *Doll Index 2, 1779-1950* (2022), are photographs of photographs of historically dressed dolls. The artist found these pictures at the Costume Institute Collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New-York, as part of a series of images taken in the 1940s for documentary purposes on elite French fashion from 1715 to 1906.[133] On top of the two re-photographed dolls, the artist has further dressed them, to quote the exhibition's curator, through collages of photographs of daily objects.[134] Combs, gloves, tights, makeup, phones, dolls, scrunchies among many other things are covering the dolls' bodies and outfits in a harmonious blend of pastel pinks and faded purples. Cwynar purchases and collects objects from well-known selling websites as eBay, Amazon or Shein and then, under a messy appearance, aesthetically arranges them, photographs them, and neatly archives them by listing each object with their originating platform and how they were described there in the yellow bottom part of the artwork.[135] Two smaller artworks were appended to both dolls. They were also photographs but not collages, and they too, repeated comparable properties. With grand emphasis on colours, central feminine figures frontally face the viewer, in enclosed spaces that resemble a photo studio. In *Tracy (Yellow Grid)*, the model (Tracy) is lasciviously leaning on an invisible support covered with a plastic backdrop while in *Ruby on Film in Western Costume* (Fig.7), the female character (Ruby) is standing straight on a stage. Both wear heavy makeup. The prominence of Tracy's lips and eye makeup, as much as Ruby's saturation of red blush on her cheeks hide their natural features to the viewer which, enhanced by the staged environment of the photo studio in which they are placed, evokes the theatricality or non-naturalness of the scene. The latter is further evoked by the postures adopted by the models. Tracy, quite uncomfortably and unrealistically, places her hands in a manner not so different from those of dolls, while Ruby adopts a very static and straight pose.

The parataxical juxtaposition of the two types and sets of artworks disturbed. Some inner qualities of Cwynar's work troubled the visitors. In *Tracy (Yellow Grid)* and *Ruby on Film in Western Costume* the setting is left imperfect. What would have been, seemingly, a traditional fashion photoshoot is confused: Tracy's backdrop is disordered, the projector stand is visible in the right corner, her clothes are not arranged in a commercial way, and the whole backstage of the photo studio is visible behind Ruby. The making process of a photoshoot is exposed to

[133] Kooiman, *S/S 23*, 3.
[134] Ibid., 4.
[135] Ibid., 1-2.

the viewer, and denies the perfection usually expected from an image whose aim is aesthetic and/or mercantile. Here, the space of the photo studio seems to be more than the mere substructure of a selling activity. What is it for? The direct contemplation of the artworks blurred the expectations of the space of the photo studio, and created an unsettling feeling which was emphasised by the curation of this set of artworks. The juxtaposition of the two photographs with the *Doll Index* series inexplicitly associated one photograph of human models posing like dolls in an actual but bizarre environment to its exact opposite: dolls rendered human by their size and the contemporary reality of the actual objects they are surrounded with (Fig.8). Despite the realism conferred by the quality of the photographic medium of the artworks, elements of reality and of fiction intertwine in Cwynar's aesthetics and obscures the line between virtual and real. Through the curatorial work of *S/S23*'s and the parataxical qualities of its display, Cwynar's hybrid virtual and fabricated realm was expanded, and removed the space of the photo studio from its actualness.

Disturbance was then provoked by the direct perception of the content of the artworks, but also in their relational nature. The affective gaps created by the juxtaposition of the two photographs and the *Doll Index* collages went beyond the formation of a troubling feeling and singular realm. It embodied another unsettling fact, especially for a visitor identifying as a woman, the association of women and dolls, of subjects and objects. In the exhibition text, Kooiman rhetorically asks whether we have "been made into dolls".[136] If the question occupies a few lines of the exhibition leaflet and addresses the systematic and compulsive desire to buy induced by capitalism, it was inexplicitly spread throughout the whole show. In the first room, while the aesthetic qualities of the *Doll Index* series rendered the dolls realistic through their accurate historical fashion and the association that the artist made with tangible objects, and while the actual models are presented as non-human, the juxtaposition of the two reduced the latter's status as toys. Dolls acting like women, women acting like dolls. Through the placing of female-looking dolls at the side of puppet-like actual women at the very beginning of the visit, the curation supported the textual narrative of the exhibition and introduced a symbolic message which reduced the female figure to an object. Further in the exhibition, the display of the *Western Costume* series enhanced the comparison: fashionable outfits were displayed on wooden dislocated puppets without faces or identity.

The objectification of women that was affectively present in *S/S23* participated in the feeling that something was wrong. Women were shown as mannequins or supports, but none

[136] Ibid., 4.

of them acted as protagonists. They were passive figures whose agency is the one of a doll - non-existent - which, by definition, is what would have made them persons.[137] By way of this non-verbalised juxtaposition or parataxis, the curation went further than confusing real and virtual, it blurred the lines between subjects and objects and encouraged of definition of women as such. It built an affective narrative that turned out to be solely about women, but which objectified them throughout all the exhibition rooms. I understood, through the affective narrative built by parataxis, that the exhibition's images of women were hostile and victimising towards me, towards women, and supported the cognitive narrative of *S/S23* by presenting them as 'puppets' of capitalism.

3. Repeating: expanding affective dissonance

Thus, how was affective dissonance provoked? What created this contrast between affective and cognitive narrative? What turned the usual and assertive objectification of women into a contradiction? Repetition. The curation of *S/S23*, indeed, was built on the principle of repetition. Repetition of display patterns, of non-verbalised meanings, of curatorial messages, and of symbols which pertain to the performance of the feminine gender, which reinforced the victimising narrative and turned it into an accumulation or saturation. As much as the *Doll Index* figures are saturated with 'feminine objects' and *Red Film* saturated by the parade of beauty products and objects on a conveyor belt, the affective discourse of *S/S23* accumulated feminine symbolism and presence. A saturation which brought attention to another aspect of the affective narrative of the exhibition: its feminist nature. It is through this curatorial strategy that the affective narrative of the exhibit countered the victimising discourse officially expressed by the museum, for it unveiled one fundamental issue of patriarchal visual culture: the constructed male gaze.

Cwynar's methodological and artistic practice is repetitive. She mainly works in series of artworks for which she repeats a creative process. For the *Doll Index* series, she collects archival photographs on which, and with which, she creates collages. For *Western Costume*, she assembles outfits on wooden puppets. Her stylistic approach follows an identical pattern: she works with the same models (Tracy in *Tracy (Yellow Grid)* appeared in the next room of the show, in *Red Film*), she leaves the materiality of the artistic production and of the photo/film

[137] O'Neil,"(Re)presentations of Eros", 68.

studio visible, she uses bright or saturated colours as backdrops, the women figures are passive and objectified, beauty products and makeup are constantly present. The strong coherence of her artistic work and style functions through the repetition of elements and techniques that are highly recognisable. At *S/S23*, the curation echoed Cwynar's methodology. The pattern display of the *Doll Index* artworks juxtaposed to smaller photographs was repeated twice at the beginning of the exhibition, the selection of serial artworks enlarged Cwynar's artistic approach, the lexical field of the photo studio moved beyond the frames of the photography works as *Pamela as Pamela*'s blue backdrops covered the walls of the last room of the exhibition (Fig.9). The curatorial strategy of repetition is not new and has been at the core of feminist curator Catherine de Zegher's work for her significant exhibition *Inside the Visible* (1996). For the latter which thematically examined the work of famous and lesser-known feminist female artists, de Zegher's processes of repetition and recurrence were designed to resist the linear conceptions of art history. The curator countered the isolation and exclusion of "the Other" that prevail in dominant museum discourses through a repetitive and open-ended approach that "implies that artistic production always has a "female dimension".[138] This inexplicit strategy allowed De Zegher to relate and bring together 20th century female artists from different backgrounds in "a permanent condition of mutual exchange" and which, consequently does "not omit one another".[139] At *S/S23*, the repetition of display patterns and elements created a dialogue between the different rooms and artworks and allowed the female visitor to apprehend the exhibition as a whole.

In this sense, the curatorial technique of repetition expanded the discourse of each artwork and their curation to the entire space of the exhibition, creating an immersive environment for the visitors. The experience was spatially extended, but also temporally as visiting a complete exhibition requires time. The non-verbalised and affective message of *S/S23* was thus enlarged but also reinforced. Over the course of the visit, the affective and feminist discourse became clearer and clearer, while time and recurring curatorial processes participated in the elicitation of affective dissonance. In this context, it was easier for female visitors to put words on their affective state, to recognise what felt wrong and to develop consciousness of the unfair oppression of women introduced by women's objectification.

The latter was expressed through parataxis in the very first room of the exhibition but evolved throughout the display. In the following rooms and within the affective narrative of

[138] Guth, "A Short History", 34.
[139] Ibid.

the exhibition as a whole, women were not only objectified as 'puppets' of capitalism but represented through the prism of the alienation of the male gaze. At *S/S23*, the troubling definition of the photo studio did not concern the background of a commercial activity through which one constructs their looks and performs identities as the written narrative implied. It was the metaphoric form of an enclosed space of representation which addressed the constructed nature of images of women through the male gaze. In the exhibition, the photo studio was presented as two dimensional: what happened behind the backdrops was hidden to the viewer, as much as what was occurring around or in front of the characters. The visual flatness of the scenes made the three-dimensional reality unreachable to the viewer, but also to the models. Proximity between the viewer and the models was imposed upon them, there seemed to be no exit for them but to be offered to external sight. In the second room of the exhibition, a similar relationship pattern between the viewer and the viewed was exposed in *Red Film*. The viewer could recognise the same model that posed for *Tracy (Yellow Grid)* but here again, despite the film medium of the artwork, she seems to keep posing instead of acting. In a rather clustered framing, Tracy is filmed being passive, while external hands apply makeup to her face. She, also, does not seem to be able to escape the person's hands on her face, nor the viewer's sight. In all artworks, there was an emphasis on the use of makeup and clothes that suggested the importance and desire of the female figures to be visually attractive. While the official narrative implied the relationship of these element to identity and the addictive formation of external looks, the affective narrative referred to the sexualised representation of women in visual culture. The passivity of the figures, the importance that is put onto the model's makeup and the suggestive posture of Tracy in *Tracy (Yellow Grid)* revealed their status as sexualised objects, forged according to patriarchal and heteronormative erotic patterns.

This constructed logic of representation of women is not unprecedented. On the contrary, by using the environment of the photo studio, Cwynar recreated the traditional relationship between the artist and the muse or model, and very explicitly reproduced the representational issues and patriarchal signifying practices of women's images in arts and media. Feminist theorists like Laura Mulvey and Griselda Pollock have identified the scopophilic nature (which arises from the perception of the other as a sexual object through the sight) of the dominant look onto women's visual representation, the male gaze.[140] What Mulvey calls the "pleasurable structures of looking", Pollock qualifies as the "sexual politics of looking".[141] But both

[140] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure", 808.
[141] Ibid.; Pollock, *Vision and Difference*, 66.

concepts dialectically function on the projection of male fantasy onto passive female figures who act as erotic objects for the viewer but also for the male characters of a film scene, painting and other visual productions.[142] The exhibition, thus, encompassed the binary positions of active/passive, of looking/being seen and of objects/subjects, participated in the traditional phallogocentric representation of women and presented women as signifiers of the male other rather than signified.[143] The latter concept departs from Mulvey's theory of women as "signifiers for the male other" in patriarchal visual culture, as it is "a symbolic system in which men are permitted to live out their fantasies of domination both linguistically and through images they create".[144] Woman as sign is a semiotic construct that is originally not inherent to art history, but which has been coined by anthropologists Elizabeth Cowie and Claude Lévi-Strauss, and later expanded by Pollock to the representations of women in the arts in *Vision and Difference* (1988).[145] To her, an actual historical female figure as a sign does not necessarily refer to the person itself. She takes the example of Elizabeth Eleanor Siddall (1829-1862), one of Rosetti's partners and muses to unveil the limitations of 'woman as a sign' in representational systems.[146] Siddall, she says, is an actual historical feminine figure, but in art history, 'Siddal' which was how she was referred to, never represented the person herself, in aid of the objectified and sexualised image of a muse which Rosetti constructed through his art. In this sense, 'Siddal', functions as a sign: the signifiers refer to the actual name of the historical Siddall but its signified does not refer to herself, but to Rosetti's masculine erotic creativity.[147]

This semiotic scheme was everywhere in the exhibition. At *S/S23,* women were signifiers. They were empty shells whose signifier was their appearance and signified sexual objects produced by heteronormative eroticism. The only presence of female figures, the recurrence of their sexualisation, objectification and of the beauty symbolism through the repetition of cosmetics throughout the whole show built an affective narrative which addresses women's representation issues within arts and visual culture, but which also reveals its constructed or non-natural essence through the metaphor of the photo studio. In this sense, the affective

[142] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure", 808; Pollock, *Vision and Difference*, 91.
[143] Ibid., 87.
[144] Byerly, "Woman as Sign", 1.
[145] Cowie, "Woman as Sign,", 50-51; Pollock, *Vision and Difference*, 95. 'Woman as Sign' has been originally developped by Cowie and Lévi-Strauss on the basis on their work on kinship as a system of exchange and communication. Within this system, women are the exchanged product in the context of familial affiliation, between a father and a husband, and, as signs, do not bear meaning or value relating to themselves or even to a larger categorisation of "Women".
[146] Ibid., 95-96.
[147] Ibid., 96.

narrative of the exhibition, built by parataxical juxtaposition at the beginning of the exhibition, brought attention to the impact of daily images but also on their unjustified and harmful nature towards women and can be defined as feminist. The contrast between the victimising and cognitive discourse of the curator and the feminist intention of the affective one felt wrong and highlighted the limitations and patriarchalism of the first. Because such a narrative was spread throughout the whole exhibitional space through repetition, it expanded the effect of affective dissonance and increased the possibility of developing feminist consciousness and later empowerment. It was made clear that women were not victims of capitalist consumption, as it was implied by the curator, but that they were *made victims* of a dominant and masculinist narrative. Bartky's statement that "feminist consciousness is consciousness of *victimization*" justifies *S/S23*'s efficiency in fostering empowerment, for it allowed female visitors to recognise the outside force of hostility and to *claim ownership* of their representation.[148]

[148] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 430.

Chapter 3. When something feels right at the museum…it feels wrong

"How meaningful works of Art can make us relate to our own lived experience and how we by sharing them with others together can change the way we see the world".[149]

Affective dissonance is a feminist strategy for curation whose process of elicitation can be conceived through a multiplicity of ways. The provocation of a "double ontological shock", to quote Bartky, is essential to affective dissonance as methodology but does not need to be approached in a single manner.[150] In this chapter, I will explore how affective dissonance adapts to feminist curatorial methodology and I will unpack another of its forms: the *reversed affective dissonance.* In March 2023, during my visit to the Aberdeen Art Gallery, a heritage museum located in the north-east of Scotland, I experienced a different type of affective dissonance than I did at Foam. At *S/S23*, affective dissonance was fostered by the direct interaction with the artworks, the display and the contrasting narratives of the exhibition. The temporary and autonomous nature of the show, which did not pertain to a larger collection or discourse, favoured the immersion of the visitors into the affective realm of the exhibition spread over four rooms. There, things merely felt wrong. At the Aberdeen Art Gallery, and especially in its gallery 14, affective dissonance followed a different pattern. It did not directly feel wrong. It felt wrong because things surprisingly felt right. Feeling right in the heritage art museum is unusual for a woman since its architectural and discursive frameworks are structurally patriarchal, and (conventionally) do not support a feminist narrative. In this environment, feeling good felt wrong, and reversed affective dissonance occurred. From the analysis of the indirect mechanisms of my own affective reaction, I propose its particularities as another strategy for feminist curators.

[149] Gynning, "Transformative Encounters", 65.
[150] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 434.

1. And suddenly, it felt right

The Aberdeen Art Gallery is a regional museum founded in 1885 by local art collectors to display their collections for the benefit of the citizens.[151] Today, the social vocation of the museum remains at its core: the very first mission of the gallery is to inspire and empower its communities.[152] While visiting the gallery 14 of the museum, I have deeply experienced its empowering intent, and I have found its curatorial tone quite unique.

The first thing that the visitor's sight encounters when entering the room is a central panel where *Vienna at Night* (1923) (Fig.10), a painting by the Scottish artist Cecile Walton (1891-1956) is displayed. With pastel tones, the composition depicts a group of three women in an urban environment. Not much is known about their surroundings as the painting is closely framed, and the emphasis is on the women's faces, and their faces only. This time, there are no fragmented bodies, sexualised lips and languid passive figures as seen at Foam. It seems that the artist had no interest in representing the model's outfits or female bodies, nor to associate them with symbolism of any sort. The figures are lively, they show physical but also emotional closeness between each other and form a group which barely acknowledges the presence of the viewer. In the very first artwork of the gallery, women are painted as confident protagonists, existing for themselves and not for external masculine contemplation and objectification. It is through the central display of *Vienna at Night* that the visitor is introduced to the curatorial message of the room.

The latter is formed around the very title of the display, 'The Art of Empowerment', and follows, as I have argued in another paper, a feminist methodological approach.[153] The space, in fact, is dedicated to "the changing status of women through art and craft of the late 19th/ early 20th century".[154] It develops women's living experiences through three thematic hangings: 'Political Reform', 'Subject and Sitter' and 'Artist and Maker' (Fig.11). The overall curatorial theme and symbolic message of the room is rooted in women's political activism in favour of their gender's rights, and its creative expression through literature, music, clothing or accessories, as exhibited in the room.[155] The 'Political Reform' section of the curation and the room's colour articulate its discourse. Purple was originally used for the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)'s visual identity, the leading feminist organisation of the United

[151] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Organisation and History".
[152] Ibid.
[153] Telliez, "The gallery 14 of the Aberdeen Art Gallery".
[154] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Art of Empowerment".
[155] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Political Reform".

Kingdom founded by Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1929) at the beginning of the 20th century which later became known as the Suffragettes.[156] While it adorns the gallery walls, purple is also discernible on the *Suffragette brooch* (about 1910) which is displayed next to a H.M Williamson & Sons' white and green *Suffragette Tea Set* (1909). The association of both objects embodies the palette of the WSPU's flag and suggests the affiliation of the room's curation to past and contemporary feminist activity, for purple is still used by the Me-Too movement.[157] In the gallery 14, women's engagement with politics is considered as a vector of social changes which "empowered women to exert their influence outside the home and to publicly express themselves through art".[158] It was the first time that I encountered such a feminist curatorial voice within a conventional display. Placing empowerment at the core of the room's message is, from a feminist perspective, highly efficient. Doing so resists the limitations of a quantitative approach to women's status in the arts (as I wondered in the first chapter, is pointing to women artist's absence feminist enough?) and places women's experiences at the centre of its discourse. The gallery 14 represents women who *claim ownership* of themselves, in contrast to the alienated nature of the models that were displayed at *S/S23*. In this room, women are neither spoken of nor victimised. Here, they speak for themselves, and are recognised in their ability to act.[159]

The usual passivity which characterises women's images is addressed and questioned through another hanging: 'Subject and Sitter'. The latter occupies the largest part of the exhibition walls. Through a few paintings and a text, it exposes the issues from which women suffered ('women as a sign') and brings attention to their "ornamental" and "status symbols" function in artistic depiction.[160] The display is chronologically organised in two sets of artworks; the first one comprises works from 1885 to 1914 while the second is composed of two paintings from the same year, 1921. The curation of the room juxtaposes these two groups to create a comparison: the first one would capture an earlier way of representing women and the second its evolution towards a supposedly more accurate, modern and respectful representation of the models. However, despite the chronological and stylistic differences between the groups, I disagree with the comparison made in this section and argue that the two last artworks still reproduce the typical representation of women. Harold Knight's *The*

[156] 100 Women Encyclopedia Britannica, "Women's Social and Political Union".
[157] Towards Emancipation? A digital exhibition and encyclopedia, "The Colors of the Website: Purple, Green and White".
[158] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Art of Empowerment".
[159] Telliez, "The Gallery 14 of the Aberdeen Art Gallery", 6.
[160] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Subject and Sitter".

Embroideress (1921) (Fig.12) as much as *Kitty of Frying Pan Alley* (1921) (Fig.13) have been painted by male artists and none of them escapes masculine objectification. While the first one shows the ideal vision of the female housekeeper in the shadow of her confining domestic interior, embroidering in solitude, the last one depicts a working-class young woman as a sexualised schoolgirl which, according to the museum's analysis, "aroused much interest in middle class viewers, who found it hard to believe that a mere flower girl could be quite so beautiful".[161] If I object with the gallery's statement here, I nonetheless believe in the strength of its curation, which, to me, lies in the dialogue created between this very wall, and the symmetrically opposite one. On the latter hangs the last part of the display, 'Artist and Maker', which directly responds to the objectification of women that predominates on the opposite wall 'Subject and Sitter'.

'Artist and Maker' evokes the lack of recognition of women's role in the art production. Here, through the exhibition text and the display of almost only female artists, the curation acknowledges women's creative agency and participation within the art world, despite their common under-valuation.[162] The wall welcomes a high number of artworks made by female artists, but also of feminist paintings driven by a female gaze (Fig. 14). At the centre, two large colourful paintings dominate the surface: *Anne Finlay* (1920) (Fig.15) and *Black and Yellow (*1920) (Fig.16) are both from the same female artist, Dorothy Johnstone (1892-1980). The first one is a portrait of a friend of the artist whom Johnstone met when attending the Edinburgh College of Art.[163] She is depicted in a bold and modern style with vibrant contrasts. As she faces the visitor with confidence from a low angle shot, her dominating physical posture reverses the traditional gendered power dynamics between viewed and viewer, which she somehow seems to be aware of. In much the same way as in Walton's *Vienna at Night*, Johnstone represents her friend as a powerful protagonist, in control of her body and of her condition, in representation for herself. Finlay's portrayed agency strongly contrasts with the representational systems of the male gaze of its opposite wall, as the curation consciously seeks to foster, but presents similarities with its adjacent artwork. *Black and Yellow* is a nude portrait and the only one present in the room. Johnstone invites the viewer into the private space of a bathroom, where a naked woman stands. The model, who is identified as Dorothy Nesbitt, another friend and colleague of the artist, turns her back on the contemplator. A naked female model visually caught in her intimacy is a very often used representational technique which

[161] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Explorer Text for Kitty of Frying Pan Alley".
[162] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Artist and Maker".
[163] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Explorer Text for Anne Finlay".

has justified decades of voyeuristic masculinist points of view. However, the lack of confrontation between the model and the viewer, which usually comfortably serves the violence of the male gaze on women's bodies, does not govern this composition. On the contrary, the wide-open door painted on the left side of the painting, as much as the acknowledged friendship between Johnstone and Nesbitt implies a form of consent between artist and sitter. The depiction of the female body, not entirely and frontally offered to the sight, preserves the model's intimacy and sexual agency, in a manner that counters the scopophilic principle of the male gaze. The production of *Black and Yellow* by a female artist, as much as the representation of the feminine through an 'inhabited' (by opposition to alienated) social and biological female body suggest the predominance of the female gaze.[164]

For all these reasons, in gallery 14, I felt accurately represented in the identification of my gender. I felt represented quantitatively, since the number of artworks by female artists exhibited is higher than in the average museum's display, but also through the curatorial voice of the room, which departs from (a certain type of) feminine experience. While the curation openly reveals some of the mechanisms of the male gaze and of art history's patriarchal nature, it also confers agency to the female characters represented, politically, sexually, and creatively. The room neither presents an alienated 'Woman', nor a victim or puppet of the naturalised regime of patriarchy, as seen in my previous case study. Quite surprisingly, especially since it is implemented in a conventional art museum's structure, the curation of the gallery 14 presents women as *owners* of themselves and reflects my embodied self-narration as a feminist and autonomous living self. The curation of the gallery 14 is, in this sense, feminist. And it felt right.

2. The methodology of surprise: reversed affective dissonance

Feeling right in the heritage museum, feeling at peace, or represented as a woman, is unusual. It is precisely because of the positive nature of my feelings and through the surprise of their existence that affective dissonance was provoked. According to Varutti, surprise is neutral.[165]

[164] Domenach, "Le Regard Féminin à L'Ecran", 151. The term female gaze has been coined by cinema critic Iris Brey. It is defined as a way of looking that, by contrast to the male gaze, does not consider the female bodies as recipients of masculine sexual pleasure or domination. On the contrary, the female gaze acknowledges the biological but also social experiences of the female body, and which invites the viewer to follow and experience them.

[165] Varutti, "Affective Encounters", 133.

It is "neither positive (such as joy) nor negative (sadness)" but it is "a powerful state of enhanced attention".[166] Since feeling right in the museum felt surprising, it encouraged me to reflect on the nature of my emotions. Why was I surprised? What was different in the gallery 14 compared to *S/S23*? At Foam, to draw from Ahmed's statement, the direct interaction with the display merely felt wrong.[167] Patriarchal oppression was perpetuated explicitly through the victimising narrative of the exhibition, its lack of recognition of the male gaze and representational issues affectively expressed. It created the ontological and epistemological dissonance to which Hemmings refers.[168] Yet, at the Aberdeen Art Gallery, the affective dissonance process did not follow a similar pattern. It did not feel wrong because of what was on display and how it was exhibited per se. Something was amiss because, on the contrary, I felt surprisingly right. The representation of women as not alienated that the curation set into place felt comfortable to me as a woman since it consciously acknowledged my living experiences in relation to (or despite) my gender. As I questioned my surprised affective state, paradoxically, my positive feelings became disturbing. What changed this pleasant affective reaction into unsettlement? Its singularity within the nature of its museological context, as heritage museum, but also within its discursive and configurational structure is what provoked surprise at first, and affective tensions after. At the Aberdeen Art Gallery, and, in a larger perspective, within the type of museum to which it belongs, feeling represented as a woman, for myself, is not a norm. Feeling right was so unusual, that it felt wrong: this is *reversed affective dissonance.*

I have argued in the previous chapters that representational entities such as the arts and media, as much as their communication structures like the museum, are hostile environments for women for they participate in women's alienation through their representation strategies. It is particularly prominent in the case of conventional ways of presenting art in museums, whose model and structural organisation have been mostly conceptualised during the 19th century and founded on the period's ideologies. For this reason, the heritage museum is historically bound to the phallogocentric codes of patriarchy (the male gaze) and has been founded on the very absence of women artists and their work.[169] Female visitors are used to seeing numerous rooms with portraits of important male figures and the decorative pendants of their not-so-important wives. They are used to the many contorted nudes, the voyeuristic points of view, the

[166] Ibid.
[167] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 27.
[168] Hemmings, "Affective Solidarity", 148.
[169] Molesworth, "How to Install Art", 504.

sexualisation of female characters, their objectification, and their status of signifiers rather than signified. In other words, and to borrow a phrase from Lisa Tickner, "woman is nowhere in representation for herself".[170] Consequently, my expectations towards the heritage museum, and to the Aberdeen Art Gallery were to not feel accurately represented, nor to identify with the alienated female models hanging on the institution's walls. And my assumptions were met during my visit to the museum, where I consciously followed the official visit itinerary trough the collections. From portraits to marines, from Aberdeen views to French impressionists and from abstraction to realistic depictions, I had already explored the wide range of art historical movements before entering the gallery 14. As I was wandering among the many easel paintings, nothing of museum's objects and discursive framework countered my (normative) expectations.

On the contrary, they were reinforced as I entered the gallery 13, the room which precedes my case study. The room exhibits artist James McBey's (1883-1959) *oeuvre* based on his many travels around Europe, North America, and his love for Morocco. "Artist adventurer" is how he is referred to in the room. After the views of Aleppo, the bazaar scenes and the war sketches, the last wall of the room addresses his love life. 'Lovers and Muses' is how the museum categorises the three artworks that constitute this part of the display (Fig. 17). Two of them are identified portraits: one of the artist's wife, *Portrait of Marguerite* (1936) (Fig.18), and one of the wives of one of the McBey's friends, *Rhoda* (1936) (Fig.19). The portraits are quite different, but in both paintings, the models are sitting or lying, in passive postures, and intimately framed. They look straight at the viewer/the artist, Rhoda even seems to interrupt her reading for that purpose, and they maliciously smile. In both portraits, the same light emphasis is made on the models' red lips and their gazes express explicit erotic intentions. The third artwork, *Woman on a sofa* (1929) (Fig.20), presents a different style. Dynamic paint brushes shape a lying woman on a sofa. Through her undone hair, her unconventional posture as much as the large cloth in which she is wrapped (is she naked underneath?), McBey lets the viewer enter her erotic intimacy. Following the traditional masculinist canon, the artist objectifies the models and projects his sexual fantasies onto them, reproducing the well-known male gaze. The textual material of the room, different from the gallery 14's, does not engage with women's representational issues and simply states that the artworks "suggest an exoticism and sensuality rooted in his appreciation of female beauty".[171] Yet, as a European artist and

[170] Tickner, "Nancy Spero", 14.
[171] Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 13- Lovers and Muses".

Middle East traveller at the beginning of the 20th century who associated sensuality with the exotic, McBey participated in the expansion of the colonial movement of Orientalism. In the three artworks, he applied a form of sexually charged mystery that is characteristic of this ideology.[172] In Nochlin's influential article 'The Imaginary Orient' (1983), the author unpacks the gendered nature of the orientalist gaze which scholar Edward Saïd (1935-2003) conceptualised in *Orientalism* (1978). For her, "the motivations behind the creation of such Orientalist erotica, and the appetite for it, had little to do with pure ethnography", but were a way to justify Westerner's ideological assumptions about their superiority: the power of white men over darker races, but equally the power of men over women.[173]

The lack of criticality of the museum's discursive framing in the gallery 13 supports the traditional power dynamics of the art museum, and the positional domination of men over women. As my expectations towards the museum's normative and patriarchal narrative were met, the feminist curation of the gallery 14 appeared as even more surprising and unique, and participated in the elicitation of reversed affective dissonance. The latter revealed the possibility to feel good in the art museum, but also the normativity of feeling wrong in art institutions. Such a contradiction highlights the victimisation and discriminatory nature of women's condition and raises feminist consciousness of representational systems.

3. On the importance of context: isolating to emphasise

In the heritage museum, and in the specific case of the Aberdeen Art Gallery, affective dissonance as curatorial methodology must be understood in its larger museological context. If at Foam, *S/S23* was a temporary show which functioned independently of the actual space and discourse of the museum over four rooms, the gallery 14 and its message on the other hand are embedded in a larger ensemble, a permanent art museum with a historical collection and wider curatorial intent. It is a small gallery in a museum building that expands on three floors, and, at the same time, a unique feminist voice in an overall discourse that is by essence patriarchal. The effect of surprise created between the gallery 14's feminist message and affective experience and the rest of the museum's discourse which I have just described, are tools that provoked reversed affective dissonance.

[172] Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient", 119.
[173] Ibid., 125.

While visiting the gallery 13, my expectations of the museum were not disappointed. However, when I entered the following room and I experienced a positive affective reaction, the two rooms, and their perception, came into conflict. The fact that the gallery 14 felt right, apprehended within the Aberdeen Art Gallery and art history, seemed disturbing. The distinctiveness of the positive feeling revealed the patriarchal nature of representational systems but also of the museum. It brought light to the possibility to feel good in the art museum as women and it unveiled the constructed, unfair and oppressive reality of cultural institutions and of art history towards them. This time, affective dissonance emerged in a reversed way, from the conflict between my sense of self and the non-realisation of my internalised expectations towards my representation within the space of the museum. Affective dissonance, hence, occurred on different levels: through the revisionist status of the room's message in the discipline of art history, through the feminist nature of the gallery 14 within the general curatorial intent of the Aberdeen Art Gallery, but also through its interconnectedness to the architectural space of the museum.

The articulation between the galleries 13 and 14, indeed, is not simply curatorial and discursive, but also spatial. The museum is not only a scientific and educational entity, but also a concrete space which functions through the movement of the visitors. Its architectural layout directly impacts the visitor's experiences of the museum and its discourse. In the early 1980s, scholars Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson developed a set of theories, the space syntax, to analyse the layout of buildings in relation to social and cultural meanings.[174] In 'Space Syntax: The Language of the Museum Space' (2006), the authors engage with the institution of the museum and wonder: "Does the way in which spaces are arranged into visitable sequences and objects are organised spatially play a role in shaping the experience of the museum visitor?".[175] In my attempt to understand the mechanisms of affective dissonance within the art museum, I expand Hillier and Tzortzi's question to my case study. The text underlines the importance of the configuration of the spaces, in relation to each other, and its resulting impact on the visitor's movement within the architectural structure.[176] The authors apprehend the space through notions of integration and segregation of the rooms in the architectural framing of the museum.[177] In the context of the Aberdeen Art Gallery, the room 14 seems to be fairly integrated with the rest of the museum, if seen on the floor plan (Fig.21). Paradoxically,

[174] Hillier and Tzortzi, "Space Syntax", 282.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid., 283.
[177] Ibid., 285.

however, a study of the space through the space syntax theory reveals its segregated nature within the architectural space of the museum, and, consequently, within its overall curatorial discourse.

The museum displays its collection of artworks and objects in 18 thematic galleries distributed over three floors. The spatial configuration of the art gallery, organised around two atriums on the first floor, leaves significant freedom to the visitor's movement and visit. In this sense, the architectural properties of the museum offer various possibilities to visit the collection, aside from the itinerary recommended by the museum, and can be qualified as probabilistic.[178] However, the gallery 14 does not have direct access to those atriums and must be entered through two other exhibition rooms. As it is situated on the first floor, to see the gallery 14, visitors must reach the stairs, walk through a certain number of other galleries, and cross at least one of the two rooms which spatially frame the gallery 14. If we assume that the visitors follow the path purposefully designed by the curators in numerical order, they must first go through seven rooms before reaching the gallery 14. The architectural positioning of the room, in this respect, suggests its segregated configurational nature within the museum's visit path. The indirect access to the gallery could be accused of isolating its curatorial discourse and of ghettoising the work of female artists through essentialism. It could also be blamed for reducing the feminist message to the single room of the gallery 14. However, if approached through the lens of reversed affective dissonance, the segregation of the room actively participates in the methodology. If the uniqueness and distinctiveness of its curation may be regretted for its poor cognitive input to the museum's discourse, it is affectively reinforced by the effect of surprise and emphasises the emotional and intellectual message of the room. I experienced a similar situation at the Belvedere Museum in Vienna. During the visit, one artwork particularly caught my attention: *Exhausted Strength* by Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller (1854) (Fig. 22). While the artwork depicts a mother collapsing of exhaustion, the museum's text highlights the commonality of such situations for (single) mothers from lower backgrounds, who work during the day and take care of their children at night.[179] Since the Belvedere palace hosts an important collection of mostly modern art, among which Klimt's colourful artworks hold a significant place, *Exhausted Strength'*s curatorial tone was unique

[178] Ibid., 290. In "Space Syntax: The Language of the Museum Space", the authors mention Choi's proposal for two movement models. The first one is a deterministic model, according to which movement patterns are imposed to the visitors by the properties of the space, and the probabilistic model for which free and random movements are allowed.

[179] Belvedere Museum, "Erschöpfte Kraft".

and highly contrasted. Its segregation within the museum's discourse created affective and cognitive dissonance, whose memory particularly lasted.

In this sense, the discursive but also architectural framing of the museum act as supportive tools to the fostering of reversed affective dissonance. Because of its integration within a museum as a whole (a curatorial but also an architectural realm) the experience of reversed affective dissonance requires two qualities. First, its curatorial intent must function independently. As I have established already, the gallery 14 acts as a successful feminist curation through its central theme, selection of artworks and symbolic message in which a female visitors might most probably feel accurately represented or feel at peace. But to be fully effective within its environment, especially here in the case of a heritage museum, the feminist curation should be thought of in relation to the rest of the museum. The uniqueness of the feminist curatorial voice, of the feminist display, and of the affective encounter between the gallery 14 and the female visitors must come into conflict with the overall museum's structure. The feminine standpoint and the central of women's living experiences and empowerment that dominates the gallery 14's curation feels surprisingly right for it acknowledges women's agency and ownership of themselves. Through its discursive and architectural positioning within the Aberdeen Art Gallery as a whole, the room's feminist message is emphasised. It will most certainly remain strong within a female visitor's memory, as it did for me, and give space to the development of feminist awareness and personal empowerment.

Conclusion

It is time to conclude. Throughout the course of the thesis and its writing process, I debated theorising affective dissonance as a methodology for feminist curators. My approach affiliates itself to a movement that marked the curatorial world: the affective curatorship as identified by Varutti.[180] The term captures an ensemble of curatorial works and techniques which purposefully foster emotional reaction among the visitors.[181] It is also a strategy recognised to be highly effective to address difficult histories in the museum. The Jewish Museum of Berlin, its Garden of Exile, Memory Void and Holocaust Tower, designed by architect Daniel Libeskind, are famous examples of affective curations. However, eliciting affects in the museum is not limited to memory work. As Varutti stresses, "the contemporary relevance of affective approaches in museums becomes evident when we consider the central role that affect and emotion play in pedagogical dynamics".[182] Indeed, affects, since they are embodied experiences, engage the audience differently and more profoundly than through a mere cognitive interaction with conventional discourses and representations, which are all based on a rational knowledge canon. Through affects, the chances to create a transformative encounter between oneself and the display are increased, and its lasting effects expanded.[183] Affective curatorship, in this sense, is understood as a tool for any sociopolitical work that museums are nowadays expected to be responsible for.[184] This is why this thesis considers affective curatorship as a suitable framework for an activist and feminist curatorial practice.

As I have developed in the first chapter, feminist theory and pedagogies have considered the epistemological importance of affects for a long time, even if the consideration of affects as means for a museum's revisionist agenda or activism sounds rather recent. Feminist scholars have unveiled the dialectical relation between affects and feminism, for they consider that women's oppressive condition is revealed to them through affective encounters. As Åhäll wrote "how we feel (consciously or unconsciously) about the world already tells us about how the world works".[185] How does the world feel for a woman? It might feel good, but it also might feel unfair. It does when social behaviours, political and economic practices impose upon us

[180] Varutti, "Affective Turn", 61.
[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid., 64.
[183] Ibid., 71. Varutti defines these transformative encounters as "intense and memorable museum experiences".
[184] Witcomb, "Toward a Pedagogy of Feeling", 322.
[185] Åhäll, "Affect as Methodology", 38.

an alienated but somewhat naturalised perception of ourselves. It also does when our material conditions and symbolic treatment reflect the domination of women on which patriarchy relies. Feeling, in this sense, is essential to feminism: it is the departure of the awareness of patriarchal injustices. Feminist consciousness, as Bartky explains, is "an altered consciousness of oneself, of others and what for lack of a better term, I shall call 'social reality'".[186] It is the opportunity and very first step to become a feminist for whom decides to engage with the feelings and critical reflections that arise with it.

For a woman, being aware of or recognising that oppression originates from an external hostile force, from patriarchy, is empowering. It implies realising that women are not responsible for their unfair treatment, but victims. While it might not be easy at first, feminist consciousness is also, as Bartky stresses, "a joyous consciousness of one's power, of the possibility of unprecedented personal growth and the release of energy long suppressed".[187] It is a disturbing but effective and lasting didactic practice which can lead to a positive outcome: women's personal empowerment. For these reasons, its elicitation within the museum seems coherent and desirable for feminist curators. But how does one develop a feminist awareness of patriarchal reality? How can it be curated? These two questions have shaped the main argument of the thesis: the proposal of affective dissonance as a curatorial methodology for feminist curatorial practices. Affective dissonance is the emotional reaction towards a patriarchal fact or situation which, for a woman, feels wrong. It is, to quote Hemmings, the experience of the gaps "between self-narration and social reality".[188] If it can occur during any life experiences, I argue in this paper that it can also be fostered within the institution of the art museum.

As a patriarchal environment, the art museum is a space for representation. For realistic representations, but also for symbolic ones, where the semiotic codes of patriarchy dominate. In this sense, the art museum, especially in its convectional form, is a hostile environment for women, for it perpetuates structurally but also symbolically their alienation. This is why implementing affective dissonance within the museum, as feminist curatorial methodology proves to be relevant. Encouraging affective dissonance within the art museum offers the possibility to spark feminist curiosity within female visitors and to raise critical consciousness among them. Since affective dissonance involves the sense of self, it is more likely to engage the targeted visitors on a profound and reflective level. One is more inclined to critically

[186] Bartky, "Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness", 426.
[187] Ibid., 431.
[188] Hemmings, "Affective solidarity", 154.

address a subject which directly impacts and troubles them. It is why affective dissonance as feminist methodology for curation is an opportunity to produce a strong didactic impact among audiences identifying as women.

After having unpacked the conceptual coherence of affective dissonance as feminist curatorial methodology, I have suggested a non-exhaustive number of display strategies which can be used as tools to provoke it. To identify them, I have analysed the mechanisms of my own experiences of affective dissonance at *S/S23* in Amsterdam, and at the gallery 14 of Aberdeen's Art Museum. I recognised two different patterns of affective dissonance. At Foam, affective dissonance was fostered by the direct perception of two contrasting narratives: a victimising and cognitive one and a feminist and affective one. It felt wrong and elicited affective dissonance. At the Aberdeen Art Gallery, on the other hand, I experienced reversed affective dissonance. The dissonance was not provoked by the curation of the gallery 14 per se, but by its relationship with an architectural and discursive framework. Visiting the gallery 14, as a woman, felt right but because of the singularity of its experience within a museum, it felt wrong. It felt right, and therefore it felt wrong. The two typologies of affective dissonance that I have experienced and formulated through my case studies are only a few examples of how affective dissonance might be curated in art institutions and reveal the flexibility and adaptability of the methodology.

Which concrete tools enable curators to design the elicitation of affective dissonance? In this paper, I have identified a few display strategies that can create the affective tension that characterises affective dissonance but also to reinforce it, emphasise it or expand it. For both exhibitions, despite the absence of its name, it was necessary to identify a feminist reading of the curation. At Foam, a feminist narrative was built through the revealing of the constructed nature of women's representations while in the gallery 14, the whole room addressed feminist matters. The latter was explicit and directly experienced, the first one more subtle and affectively perceived. Generating contrast, parataxical juxtaposition, repetition between the feminist message of an exhibit and its conventional and patriarchal character is what shapes affective dissonance as curatorial methodology. By means of troubled definitions and expectations, isolated curatorial voices and surprise, the curator can design the atmosphere of the exhibit, the selection of artworks, their hanging and relation to one another, the scenography, the cognitive and affective narrative among other elements that define the making of an affective display.

If I have declared the efficiency and relevance of affective dissonance as curatorial methodological practice for feminist curators, my argument remained mostly theoretical or

explained through a personal insight. A more quantitative analysis of the topic, the creation of surveys and revision of female visitor's experiences would bring light to the necessity and results of the method. One might accurately point to the precise nature of the targeted female audience. One might question the relevance of methodology for it places the affective work and responsibility to act against patriarchy upon visitors identifying as women. This paper acknowledges feminism as being a societal matter and not a 'women's issue', as it is sometimes understood. Yet, the final aim of affective dissonance as methodology is not only to unpack patriarchal facts, but to didactically provide female visitors with feminist curiosity and consciousness to further decide if to engage with feminism after the museum's visit. If the visitors are willing to develop feminist awareness, then they will also, with most certainty, experience personal growth, empowerment and reclaim *ownership* of themselves, which is the fundamental purpose for the methodology's existence.

Finally, in this paper, I have not addressed the impact of affective dissonance as feminist methodology on male visitors or persons identifying themselves differently than through the dominant binarities. I have reflected on the concept of affective dissonance through its feminist definition, which captures women's body and gender experiences. In this sense, the paper does not include other typologies of audiences for the mere reason that it structurally does not address them. However, recollecting the experiences of affective dissonance as feminist methodology of the male and of non-binary visitors might provide an interesting perspective to the full impact of the method. If affective dissonance is treated as a feminist enterprise in this paper, its elicitation among publics and for other social causes would represent a relevant future development and evolution of the methodology. It would, in this sense, enlarge the sociopolitical work that the museum as a healing space sometimes embodies.

Illustrations

Fig 1. Installation view of (from left to right) Sara Cwynar, *Western Costume Jacket (Cheerleader), Skirt (Cheerleader) Showgirl (Bra Top, Long Fringe),* 86.4 x 64.8 cm, *2023;* Sara Cwynar, *Western Costume Los Angeles: Jacket (Cheerleader), Pregnancy Pad, Jacket (Band), Showgirl (Trunks, 1950's)*, 86.4 x 64.8 cm, 2023; Sara Cwynar, *Western Costume Los Angeles: Suit (1780's, Men's)*, 86.4 x 64.8 cm, 2023; at Foam for *S/S23*, 2023 Amsterdam.

Fig 2. Sara Cwynar, *Tracy (Yellow Grid)*, 2023.

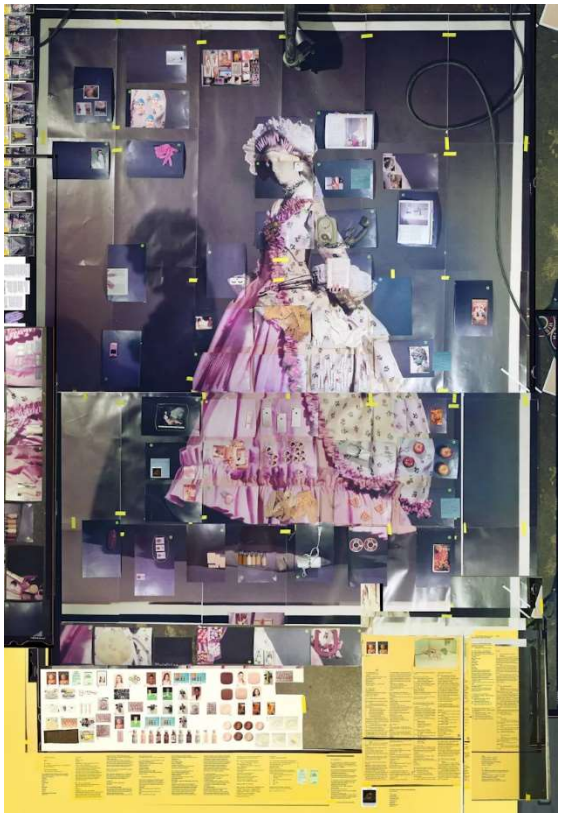

Fig 3. Sara Cwynar, *Doll Index 1, 1779-1950*, 222.3 x 152.4 cm, 2022.

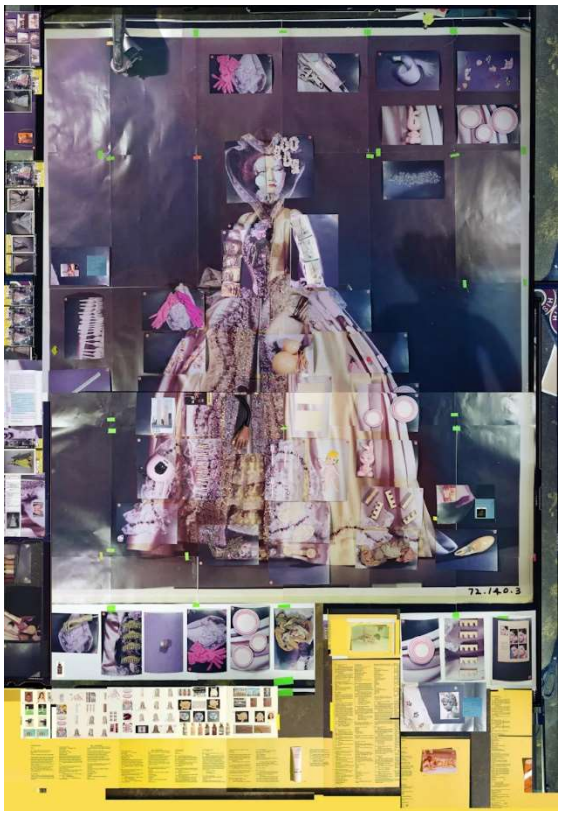

Fig 4. Sara Cwynar, *Doll Index 2, 1779-1950*, 222.3 x 152.4 cm, 2022.

Fig 5. Sara Cwynar, *Pamela as Pamela*, 2023.

Fig. 6. Installation view of Sara Cwynar, *Tracy (Yellow Grid)* (2023); and Sara Cwynar, *Doll Index 2, 1779-1950*, 222.3 x 152.4 cm, 2022, at Foam for *S/S23*, 2023, Amsterdam.

Fig 7. Sara Cwynar, *Ruby on Film in Western Costume,* 2023.

Fig. 8. Installation view of Sara Cwynar, *Ruby on Film in Western Costume,* 2023; and Sara Cwynar, *Doll Index 1, 1779-1950*, 222.3 x 152.4 cm, 2022, at Foam for *S/S23*, 2023, Amsterdam.

Fig. 9. Installation view of the fourth and last room of Sara Cwynar's solo exhibition *S/S23* at Foam, 2023, Amsterdam.

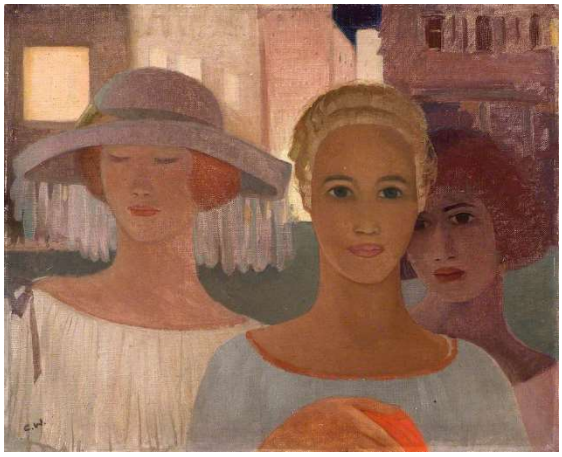

Fig.10. Cecile Walton, *Vienna at Night*, 1921, oil on canvas,76,9 x 63,6 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

Fig. 11. Installation view of the gallery 14 of the Aberdeen Art Gallery, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Fig. 12. Harold Knight, *The Embroideress*, 1923, 40 x 50,4 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

Fig. 13. Sir Oswald Birley, *Kitty of Frying Pan Alley*, 1921, oil on canvas, 126,8 x 101,5 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

Fig. 14. Installation view of the gallery 14, 'Subject and Sitter' hanging, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Fig. 15. Dorothy Johnstone, *Anne Finlay,* 1920, oil on canvas, 145,3 x 100,5 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

Fig. 16. Dorothy Johnstone, *Black and Yellow*, 1920, oil on canvas, 81,5 x 65 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

Fig. 17. Installation view of the gallery 13, 'Lovers and Muses' hanging, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Aberdeen, Scotland.

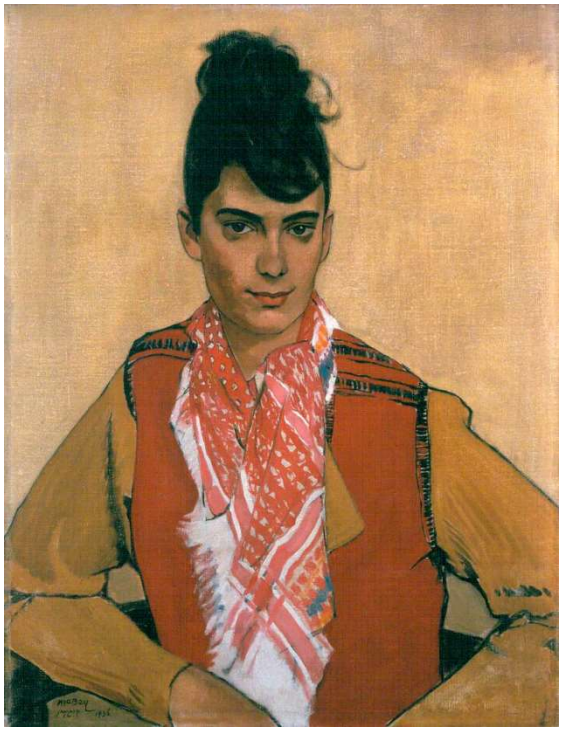

Fig. 18. James McBey, *Portrait of Marguerite*, 1936, oil on canvas, 66 x 50,9 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

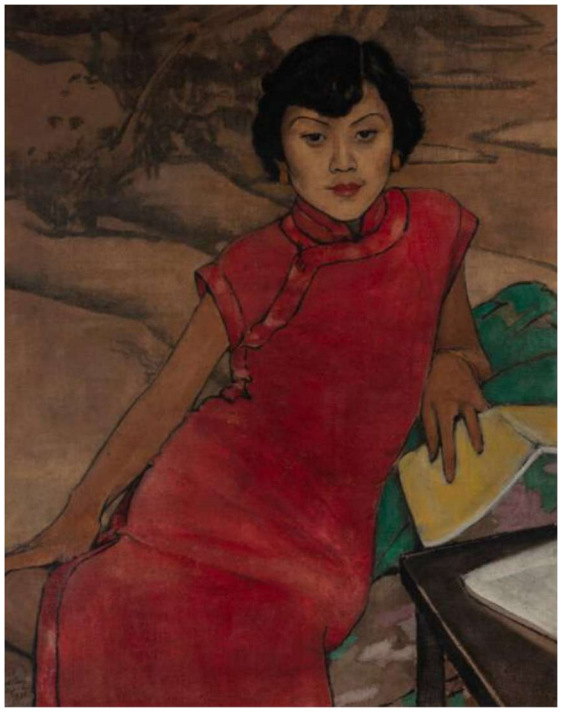

Fig. 19. James McBey, *Rhoda*, 1936, oil on canvas, 81,4 x 66,4 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

Fig. 20. James McBey, *Woman on a Sofa*, 1929, oil on canvas, 40,5 x 54,3 cm, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland.

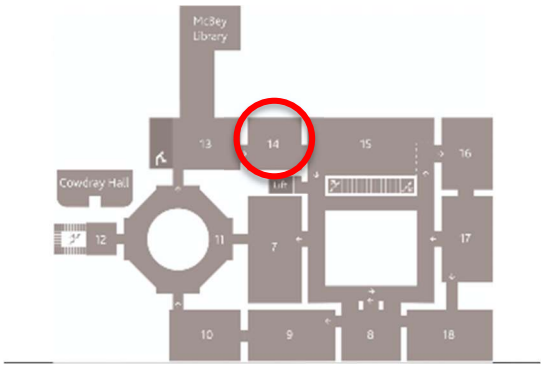

Fig. 21. Floor plan of the first floor of the Aberdeen Art Gallery, Aberdeen, Scotland. The red circle indicates the architectural positioning of the gallery 14.

Fig. 22. Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller, *Exhausted Strength*, 1854, oil on canvas, 63 x 75 cm, Belvedere Museum, Vienna, Austria.

Illustrations Credits

Fig.1. Downloaded 11 May 2024. https://saracwynar.com/

Fig.2. Downloaded 11 May 2024. https://artguide.artforum.com/artguide/oakville-galleries-11165/sara-cwynar-150182

Fig.3. Downloaded 11 May 2024. https://www.foam.org/nl/events/next-level-sara-cwynar

Fig.4. Downloaded 11 May 2024. https://www.foam.org/nl/events/next-level-sara-cwynar

Fig.5. Downloaded 11 May 2024. https://www.foam.org/nl/events/next-level-sara-cwynar

Fig.6. Downloaded 13 June 2024. https://saracwynar.com/

Fig.7. Downloaded 11 May 2024. https://www.instagram.com/p/Cxvt_nxB4F/?img_index=1

Fig.8. Downloaded 13 June 2024. Modified from https://saracwynar.com/

Fig.9. Downloaded 13 June 2024. https://saracwynar.com/

Fig.10. Downloaded 9 May 2024. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/vienna-at-night-108089

Fig.11. Downloaded 13 June 2024. Modified from https://go-eat-do.com/2019/11/aberdeen-art-gallery/sf_aberdeenart_gallery_006/

Fig.12. Downloaded 9 May 2024. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/the-embroideress-107219

Fig.13. Downloaded 9 May,2024. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/kitty-of-frying-pan-alley-106622

Fig.14. Downloaded 13 June 2024. https://www.mackinnonslater.co.uk/portfolio/aberdeen-art-gallery/

Fig.15. Downloaded 9 May 2024. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/anne-finlay-18981963-107207

Fig.16. Downloaded 9 May 2024. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/black-and-yellow-107208

Fig.17. 13 June 2014. Retrieved from https://vt.virtualinclusion.com/aberdeenartgallery/

Fig.18. Downloaded 9 May 2024. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/marguerite-107331

Fig.19. 9 May 2024. Retrieved from https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/objects/11011/rhodactx=869cc1ef3e1a78adab456067737ab1549cc07055&idx=58

Fig.20. Downloaded 9 May 2024. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/woman-on-a-sofa-107325

Fig.21. Downloaded 13 June 2024. https://vt.virtualinclusion.com/aberdeenartgallery/

Fig.22. Downloaded 13 June 2024. https://sammlung.belvedere.at/objects/2454/erschopfte-kraft?

Bibliography

1. Literature

Ahäll, Linda. “Affect as Methodology: Feminism and the Politics of Emotion.” *International Political Sociology* 12, no.1 (2018): 36-52. https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/olx024

Ahmed, Sarah, *Living a Feminist Life*. London and Durham: Duke University Press, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822373377

Bartky, Sandra Lee. “Towards a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness.” *Social Theory and Practice* 3, no.4 (1975): 425-439. https://doi.org/10.5840/soctheorpract1975349

Boler, Megan. “Feeling Power”, in *Feeling Power*, 26-55. Routledge, 1999. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203009499

Boler, Megan and Zembylas Michalinos ,”Interview with Megan Boler: From ’Feminist Politics of Emotions’ to the ’Affective Turn’”, in *Methodological Advances in Research on Emotion and Education*, ed. Springer Cham (2016), 17-30. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29049-2.

Byerly, Carolyne M. “Woman as Sign” *The International Encyclopaedia of Communication*, no.1 (June 2008): 1-2. https://doi-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl/10.1002/9781405186407.wbiecw005

Clover, Darlene E. “Seeing the Unseen Through the Feminist Museum Hack”, in *Doing Critical and Creative Research in Adult Education: Case Studies in Methodology and Theory,* BRILL(Leiden, 2020), 115-124. https://doi.org/10.1163/j.ctv2gjwzkt.16

Cowie, Elizabeth. “Woman as Sign,” *M/F*, 49 -63.

Crabtree, Robbin D., Sapp, David Allan, & Licona Adela. C. “The Passion and the Praxis of Feminist Pedagogy: An NWSAJ Retrospective”, in *Feminist Pedagogy: A Retrospective for the NWASJ Journal*, 2009, 1-29.

Deepweel, Katy. “Feminist Curatorial Strategies and Practices since the 1970s.” In *New Museum Theory and Practice: an Introduction*. Malden, MA [etc.]: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Domenach, Elise, “Le Regard Féminin à l’Ecran.” Esprit 1, no.2 (Janvier-Février 2021): 151-157. https://doi-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl/10.3917/espri.2013.0151

Fisher, Berenice. “Qu’est-ce que la pédagogie féministe?” *Nouvelles Questions Féministes* 37, no.2 (2018), 64-75. DOI 10.3917/nqf.372.0064

Gorton, Kristyn. “Theorizing Emotion and Affect: Feminist Engagements.” *Feminist theory* 8, no. 3 (2007): 333–348. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700107082369

Guth, Doris, “A Short History of Women’s Exhibitions from the 1970s to the 1990S: Between Feminist Struggles and Hegemonic Appropriation”, In *Curating Differently: Feminisms, Exhibitions and Curatorial Spaces*, edited by Jessica Sjöholm, 29-40. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016.

Gynning, Margareta. “Transformative Encounters: Prior and Current Strategies of a Feminist Pioneer.” In *Curating Differently: Feminisms, Exhibitions and Curatorial Spaces*, edited by Jessica Sjöholm, 29-40. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016.

Hardt, Michael. “Foreword: What Affects are Good For”, in *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, edited by Patricia Ticineto Clough, ix - xiii. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822389606-002

Hemmings, Clare. “Affective Solidarity: Feminist Reflexivity and Political Transformation.” Feminist Theory 13, no.2, (2012): 147-161. DOI: 10.1177/1464700112442643

Hillier, Bill and Tzortzi Kali, “Space Syntax: The Language of the Museum Space.” In *A Companion to Museum Studies*, edited by Sharon Macdonald, 282-301. Malden MA: Blackwell, 2006.

Kooiman, Mirjam. *Next Level: Sara Cwynar - S/S23*. Amsterdam: Robstolk, 2023.

Lennon, Kathleen and Whitford,Margaret. “Introduction”, in *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology,* Routledge, 13-22. 2012. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203216125

Massumi, Brian. “The Autonomy of Affect”, in *Parables for the Virtual*, Duke University Press 25-48. United States, 2021. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781478021971-005

Molesworth, Helen. “How to Install Art as A Feminist”, in *Women Artists at the Museum of Modern Art, (*New-York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010), 499-513.

Mulvey, Laura, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”, in *Visual and Other Pleasures*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1989.

Nochlin, Linda. “The Imaginary Orient.” *Art in America* 81 (1983): 119-191.

O'Neil, Eileen. “(Re)presentations of Eros: Exploring Female Sexual Agency” in *Gender, Body, Knowledge: Feminist Reconstructions of Being and Knowing,* 68-91. New Brunswick: Rutger University Press, 1989.

Pedwell, Carolyn and Whitehead, Anne. “Affecting Feminism: Questions of Feeling in Feminist Theory.” *Feminist Theory* 13, no.2 (2012), 115-129. DOI: 10.1177/1464700112442635

Pollock, Griselda. *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism, and Histories of Art*. London: Routledge, 1988.

Richter, Dorothee. “Feminist Perspectives on Curating.” *OnCurating* 29 (2016): 64- 75.

Roger, Simon, “The Terrible Gift: Museums and the Possibility of Hope without Consolation.” Museum Management and Curatorship, 21, no.3 (2006); 187-204. DOI: 10.1080/09647770600202103.

Seigworth, Gregory and Melissa Gregg. “An Inventory of Shimmers.” In *The Affect Theory Reader.* Ed. Gregory Seigworth and Melissa Gregg. Durham: Duke UP, 2010. 1-28. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822393047-002

Shouse, Eric. “Feeling, Emotion, Affect”, in *M/C Journal*, no 8 (6), (2005). https://doi.org/10.5204/mcj.2443

Sutherland, Gilian. “‘A Sort of Bogeywhom No-One Has Ever Seen’? The Nature of the Search.” *In Search of the New Woman: Middle-Class Women and Work in Britain 1870-1914*, 1-17. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316137000.001

Telliez, Clara, “The gallery 14 of the Aberdeen Art Gallery and its feminist methodological approach”. Unpublished MA essay, University of Leiden, 2022.

Tickner, Lisa. “Nancy Spero- Images of Women and La Peinture Féminine.” Nancy Spero (Institute of Contemporary Arts (London)), 1987.

Varutti, Marzia. “Affective Encounters in Museums.” In Heritage Ecologies, edited by 1st Edition , 129-144. Routledge, 2022. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315101019-11.

Varutti, Marzia. “The Affective Turn in Museums and the Rise of Affective Curatorship”, *Museum Management and Curatorship* 38, no.1 (2023);61-75. DOI: 10.1080/09647775.2022.2132993

Witcomb, Andrea. “Toward a Pedagogy of Feeling: Understanding How Museums Create a Space for Cross-Cultural Encounters.” In *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies*, edited by Andrea Witcomb and Kylie Message, 321- 344. John Wiley& Sons, Ltd, 2015.

2. Websites

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, “Gallery 14 - Art of Empowerment.” Collection Gallery. Accessed May 9, 2024. https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/exhibitions/240/gallery-14--art-of-empowerment?ctx=09535ce9ffc550b15a88a74e480602184c87571f&idx=19

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, “Explorer Text for Kitty of the Frying Pan Alley.” Collection Gallery. Accessed April 27, 2024.

https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/objects/6656/kitty-of-frying-pan-alley?ctx=ec70b431a24b9bdf4eafca44e85406608c5f3180&idx=8

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Explorer Text for Anne Finlay." Collection Gallery. Accessed April 27, 2024. https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/objects/427/anne-finlay?ctx=ec70b431a24b9bdf4eafca44e85406608c5f3180&idx=3

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Organisation and History." About us. Accessed June 12, 2024. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AAGM/about-us/organisation-and-history

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Political Reform." Collection Gallery. Accessed June 12, 2024. https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/exhibitions/240/gallery-14--art-of-empowerment?ctx=09535ce9ffc550b15a88a74e480602184c87571f&idx=19

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Artist and Maker." Collection Gallery. Accessed June 12, 2024. https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/exhibitions/240/gallery-14--art-of-empowerment?ctx=09535ce9ffc550b15a88a74e480602184c87571f&idx=19

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums, "Gallery 14 - Subject and Sitter." Collection Gallery. Accessed June 12, 2024. https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/exhibitions/240/gallery-14--art-of-empowerment?ctx=09535ce9ffc550b15a88a74e480602184c87571f&idx=19

Belvedere Museum, "Erschöpfte Kraft." Sammlung Online. Accessed June 12, 2024. https://sammlung.belvedere.at/objects/2454/erschopfte-kraft?

ICOM, "Museum Definition", Standards and Guidelines, ICOM, accessed March 10, 2024, https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/

Foam, "Next Level", Accessed May 10, 2024. https://www.foam.org/talent/next-level

Foam, "About", Accessed May 10, 2024. https://www.foam.org/about

Towards Emancipation ? Women in Modern European History, A Digital Exhibition and Encyclopedia, "The Colors of the Website: Purple, Green and White", Accessed May 1, 2024. https://hist259.web.unc.edu/the-colors/

100 Women Encyclopedia Britannica, "Women's Social and Politcal Union", Accessed May 1, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/explore/100women/associations/womens-social-political-union