

Article

The Politics and Aesthetic Choices of Feminist Art Criticism

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Abstract: This article explores feminist art criticism from the point of view of aesthetics/politics in global contemporary art. It is based on the author's experience as an art critic and founding editor of *n.paradoxe: international feminist art journal* (1998–2017). Reading articles published in the previous two decades both for the journal and outside it, it became possible to identify how subjects produce specific objects in art criticism that demonstrate different locations and standpoints in thought and how these align with criticism from broader feminist political theories. This is an exploration of the aesthetics/politics both in, about and beyond feminist art criticism. The methodology presented analyses feminist art criticism using a model of clusters of concepts that draws on Anne Ring Petersen's examination of identity politics, race and multiculturalism from 2012. Feminist analyses in which this approach has been attempted are discussed: Sue Rosser's 2005 analysis of cyberfeminism and Tuziylne Jita Allan's 1995 discussion of black/womanist/African feminisms. The article identifies four types of feminist art criticism: liberal feminism, materialist feminism, feminist cosmopolitan multi-culturalism, and queer post-colonial feminism. The aims, methods and approaches of these tendencies are outlined to demonstrate the differences between them. The article concludes with a discussion about the futures of feminist art criticism.

Keywords: feminist aesthetics; feminist politics; feminist art criticism; feminist art



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This article explores feminist art criticism from the point of view of aesthetics/politics. Art criticism appears divided into “art writing” or “art theory”. The first is seen as reactive to current exhibitions, artworks or artists and closer to journalism; the second is seen in largely pedagogical terms or as an academic exploration of theoretical concerns in contemporary art. In neither is it the case that discussing artworks produced by women artists (which manifest their own aesthetic qualities or might be identified as “feminist art”) determines the type of art criticism written (as a political gesture, intervention or in the name of “feminism”). There exists much writing about women artists or feminist subjects in art, which is decidedly not sympathetic to feminisms, but is still about the art that women produced and some of this writing, especially when it is publicity, simply uses feminism as a label to promote work without serious attention to the content/context of feminist politics. The latter is known as “artworld feminism” and for many, it is “not-feminism”.

Art criticism of contemporary art is always “after” the event/the exhibition/the work; its claims for “now” time, for a zeitgeist, for being in the moment or the latest phenomena, are always a reflection on what already exists—even when in journalism/art magazines, this time is shortened to a few hours, rather than the months of journal or book production. This trait it shares with philosophy in so far as it is a commentary on what already exists, especially previous texts. The reading may be productive in the future because it contains a possibility beyond the timeframe in which it was written. The negotiation between reading the artwork and relevant theories for a critic is the result of both political decision-making and aesthetic choices, even if this is understood as cultural politics with a small “p”. How the subject/object of feminism appears in the text, therefore, represents a political/cultural choice by both critic in their relation to artwork and artist, but also one wherein the engagement/encounter with the artwork or artist mediates and challenges this relationship

The Choices Of Criticism

Michal Rosen-Zvi



The Choices Of Criticism:

The Choices Of Criticism Book Review: Unveiling the Power of Words

In a global driven by information and connectivity, the ability of words has are more evident than ever. They have the capacity to inspire, provoke, and ignite change. Such is the essence of the book **The Choices Of Criticism**, a literary masterpiece that delves deep into the significance of words and their affect our lives. Published by a renowned author, this captivating work takes readers on a transformative journey, unraveling the secrets and potential behind every word. In this review, we will explore the book is key themes, examine its writing style, and analyze its overall affect readers.

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