

The Slide Show

An Introduction

At the invitation of Goldsmiths College Library a group of individuals diverted precious time to visit the Women's Art Library to select images for this slide show. The participants reflect the broadly divergent research interests and practices supported here at Goldsmiths. The aim was to initiate a pleasurable encounter with a collection valued as much for its images as its texts. The brief was more of a wish than an instruction:

The hope is that you will find images that reflect aspects of your research and/or teaching in a thought-provoking way.

I suppose it was meant to sound nourishing. Could I serve up images of women's art that worked a little magic on each of these individuals, either as an act of memory ("Do you have that work by so and so?") or breakthrough ("That's it!") or slow discovery ("There's something about this image...")? In the end not every find, memory or discovery made it to the final selection and this I would say, is due to the images themselves. They inevitably gained their own dynamic as they came together, leading some to reject favourites and others into a self-determining narrative. A number of the selectors were moved to write in response to the experience and I am glad that Maura Dooley agreed to include her poem as a final evocative image to her selection.

The order of appearance in this looped slideshow follows the order in which the invitees found their way to Special Collections: Sarah Kember first and so on. This was research like any other research, driven by scholarship, curiosity and intuition. It was not a matter of rifling through a tidy stock of labeled images doing a mix and match to a preconceived presentation. These images were dragged out of not only memory but plastic slide files, the internet, videos, archive boxes, and shelves as well as scanned from catalogues, books and press invitations arriving in that day's post. At times I felt like the hunter with bird dog: flush the picture out, shoot it, go and retrieve. But no matter how many you bring to the table, you barely assuage the hunger for images.

This slideshow was never intended to act as a survey of the collection and so I make no apologies for the recurrence of certain artists. They are chosen for different reasons and the meaning of the artist's work is enriched by these citings. Each person was limited to broadly 10 images, and since each was an experienced researcher, they were able to accomplish much within this quota. I can look at these images again and again. They contain many revelations for me – the keeper of images can be surprised too. For example Nirmal Puwar re-introduced me to *Album Pacifica* by Mohini Chandra. The title has been familiar to me since its publication but upon seeing the images I realized I knew nothing of this work until now. And I should have. I cannot think of any other set of images that convey the fullness and impossibility of

the archive than this family album of lovingly re-photographed snapshots. They are turned away from the reader and face each other through the pages. We only see the inscriptions at the back, simple prompts for readers who only need a name or date to remember. How far from the exhaustive precision of the scholarly reference are these intimate notes? And yet the image we cannot see we know carries its own authority: a vast archive of associations that Chandra the artist has so stunningly made us aware of. The emptiness of the un-inscribed blanks, speaks volumes to me of the reticence of images, and the rich histories they share with the initiated.

I hope this slide show has succeeded in working something of an initiation between the Goldsmiths community and The Women's Art Library. This collection is full of images of artworks that are unknown, uncollected, uncelebrated. It also boasts volumes of beautifully documented artworks. Which artist's oeuvre will be celebrated in the future? Values shift as our research interests move for example, from the 1960s to the 1980s, from post-modern to neo-political. The need for images remains constant. Of course, in the end, the process is all.

Many thanks to all who took part -- and to Jacqueline Cooke and Janis Jefferies who made the first connections.

-Althea Greenan

Participants: Sarah Kember (Media and Communications), Kay Stables (Design), Maura Dooley (English), Maria X (Drama and Computer Studies), Astrid Schmetterling (Visual Cultures), Nirmal Puwar (Sociology) and Pennina Barnett (Visual Arts)

Sarah Kember

Christine Borland, *Spirit Collection: Hippocrates*, 1999

Christine Borland, *The Aether Sea*, 1999

Christine Borland, *Nephila-Mania*, 2001

Lee Bul, *Amaryllis*, 1999

Petah Coyne *Midnight Cowboy* 2004

Jenny Brownrigg, *Nature Centre* (detail) 2000

Helen Chadwick, *Viral Landscapes No. 3* 1988

Patricia Piccinini, *Game Boys Advanced*, 2002

Patricia Piccinini, *The Young Family*, 2002-3

Dorothy Cross and Tom Cross, *Chiropsalmus*, 2001-2002

Mei-Yee Leung *Untitled*

Elizabeth LeMoine *Wing*, 1994

Kay Stables

Nina Saunders, *Are You Sitting Comfortably?*, 1990

Caroline Broadhead, *22 in 1*, 1984

Caroline Broadhead, *Dress with holes*, 1998

Caroline Broadhead *Over my shoulder III*, 1996

Fran Cottell, *Insistence* 1985 (photo Nick Powell) from 'Conceptual Clothing' 1986-88

Fran Cottell *Insistence II* 1987-88

Susan Stockwell, *Paper Installation*, 1994

Françoise Dupré, *Monoprints*, 1992

Val Murray, *Other People's Shoes*, 1992-94

Françoise Dupré, *Captured Thoughts*, 1992

Angela Edmonds, exhibited in *Unwritten Stories*, 1996

- It's not easy to articulate why I chose these particular images. I started the process of choosing with some notion that my images should have some relevance to my own history in design and textiles and that they should make some connection with the themes and concerns of my department - design. But the more I looked, the more I found myself being seduced by certain images that resonated in some deeper way with almost tacit and recurring threads in things I'm drawn to: the tactile, the opaque and neutral, the orderly and the exploratory. In the end I seem to have chosen images that teeter on the edge of the space between concept, purpose and emotion. It's been a fascinating project to be involved in.

Maura Dooley

Mariële Neudecker, *The Air We Breathe is Invisible*, 1992-1996

Helen Douglas and Telfer Stokes, *Water on the Border*, 1994

Anna Bush Crews, *Reflections on What Makes a Wave Move*, 1996

Sophie Horton, *Thames: Drawing*, 1999

Roni Horn, *Another Water (639-647)*

Vija Celmins, *Untitled (Big Sea No1)*, 1969

Flick Lawes *Humber Breakwater*, 1994

Susan Derges, *Shoreline (detail)* 1998

Anna Bush Crews, *Glastonbury Aftermath*, 1998

The story cannot hold its source,
words cast as bread on water,

dammed, diverted, dry,
doused, divined, daughter,

my river, my city, me,
this body of water.

-Maura Dooley

Maria X

Karen Finley, *Performance*

Rebecca Horn, *Unicorn* 1970-72

Orlan, *Le Baiser de l'Artiste/ The Kiss of the Artist* 1976

Stevie Bezenenet, *Frontier Dreams 1: The Technological Sublime*

Thecla Schiphorst *Bodymaps: artifacts of touch* (computer interactive sound and video installation) 1996

Cindy Sherman, *Untitled (Film Still) No.3* 1977

Bildwechsel, *Enjoy Cyberfeminism* "What is your vision of cyberfeminism?"

OBN conference 2001

Lee Bul, *Cyborg W1*, 1998

VNS Matrix *The clitoris is a direct line to the matrix...the future is unmanned.*

"What is your vision of cyberfeminism?" OBN conference 2001

Suzanne Treister *Vibrators from the House of Brodsky* 1996

Mariko Mori, *Beginning of the End*, 1996

Hannah Höch, *Da Dandy* 1919

Rebecca Horn, *Black Widow (La Petite Veuve)* 1988

Eva Hesse, *Metronomic Irregularity 1* 1966

Future Flesh: Mutations of the Body

My skin is image, surface, medium of recognition.

- Helen Chadwick

Henri Lefebvre conceptualised the body as a means of production of 'social space' and of ourselves as 'social beings'.

I ask: Which body? Whose body? Is it a gendered body?

I ask: What does the body become within a posthuman context? Is it still a gendered body? What does a posthuman body look like? Smell like? Feel like? What kind of space does it produce? Is it a gendered space?

According to Amelia Jones artists, from Andy Warhol to Stelarc and Orlan, have always "exploited the capacity of new technologies to re- and de-form the embodied self." In some cases, technologised 'bodies', such as avatars or telerobots, actually replace the artists' own physical bodies.

I ask: What is the future of the body as flesh? And what transformations does this future hold for the embodied self?

maria x [aka Maria Chatzichristodoulou], Ph.D. Candidate, Goldsmiths Digital Studios

(quotes from Henri Lefebvre, *The production of Space* (Tr. Donald Nicholson-Smith), Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991 and Amelia Jones, "Survey" in Warr, Tracey (Ed.) with Jones, Amelia *The Artists Body* London: Phaidon Press, 2000, p. 40

Astrid Schmetterling

Hannah Höch, *Da Dandy* 1919
Annette Messager, *My Vows* 1989
Liliane Lijn, *Inner Light* 1996
Lily Markiewicz, *Places to Remember II* 1995
Mona Hatoum, *Measures of Distance* 1988
Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger, *Eurydice, no. 12*
Charlotte Salomon, *Life or Theatre*

Nirmal Puwar

Mohini Chandra, *Album Pacifica*, 1997
Mohini Chandra, *Album Pacifica* (detail), 1997
Mohini Chandra, *Album Pacifica* (detail), 1997
Mohini Chandra, *Album Pacifica* (detail), 1997
Alia Syed, *Fatima's Letter* (film still), 1994
Zarina Bhimji, *Out of Blue* (film still) 2002

Pennina Barnett

Doris Salcedo, *Unland* 1995-1998
Doris Salcedo, *Unland, The Orphan's Tunic (detail)* 1997
Ann Wilson, *Mendings, No. 7* 1995
Vija Celmins, *Web* 1992
Maja Bajevic, *Women at Work*, 1996
Mona Hatoum, *Recollection* 1995
Mona Hatoum, *Recollection (detail)* 1995
Eva Hesse, *Constant* 1996
Chohreh Feyzdjou, 1996
Chohreh Feyzdjou, *Product of Chohreh Feyzdjou Boutique*, 1996
Chohreh Feyzdjou, *Product of Chohreh Feyzdjou Boutique (detail)*, 1996

‘ Let us no longer scorn what is soft....’

What draws me to the work I have chosen is the artists' engagement with materials and a rawness of facture. It moves me in ways that are hard to articulate - in the pit of my stomach, at the back of my throat....

I'm interested in the intimate associations of cloth with modes of thinking, feeling, and being in the world - both psychic and somatic; cloth as a multidimensional metaphor for memory, materiality, subjectivity and process.

‘.... there is box- thought, the thought we call rigorous, like rigid, inflexible boxes, and sack- thought, like systems of fabric. Our philosophy lacks a good organum of fabrics.’

Both quotations are from Michel Serres, *Rome, and The Book of Foundations*, 1983