

# IMAGES BY WOMEN ARTISTS

Gendering the Art Histories  
of Ibero-America and the  
Iberian Peninsula  
Contexts – Narratives – Practices



**5th/6th  
October 2022**

Annual Conference of the  
Carl Justi-Association  
Warburg-Haus, Hamburg

A cooperation of the Carl Justi-Vereinigung, Universität Hamburg & Universidad Complutense de Madrid,  
sponsored by the Geschwister Dr. Meyer Stiftung

With collaboration of the research project "Imagines of/in Spain in the Contemporary Age. Material Culture, Identity, Performativity"  
(PI: Alicia Fuentes Vega. Funding Institutions: Comunidad de Madrid – Spain and Complutense University of Madrid)



## Wed, 5th October

15:00

### Opening

Welcome address by Michael Scholz-Hänsel (Universität Leipzig) on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Carl Justi-Association & introduction by the conference organisers

### 15:30–16:30 POLITICAL AGENTS

Moderator: Julia Kloss-Weber (Universität Hamburg)

Saray Espinosa (Universitat de Girona). Iberian Feminists: Art as a Trench in the Times of Franco and Salazar

Miriam Oesterreich (Universität der Künste Berlin). Gendered Indigenist Fashion Practices in Post-Revolutionary Mexico

### 16:30–17:00 Coffee Break

### 17:00–17:30 Discussion

### 17:30–18:30 EDUCATIONAL & INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

Moderator: Alicia Fuentes Vega (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Lucía Laumann (Universidad Nacional de San Martín). The Female Students and the Printmaking Workshop. Strategies and Negotiations to Enter the Higher School of Fine Arts “Ernesto de la Cárcova”

Esther Romero Sáez (Universidad Complutense de Madrid). “On the Moral Degeneration of Distinguished Young Ladies”. Representation of the Nude in the Works of Spanish Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries

### 18:30–19:00 Discussion

# PROGRAM

## Thu, 6th Oct

### 9:00–10:30 TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS

Moderator: Gesa Wieczorek (Universität Hamburg)

Henar Rivière (Universidad Complutense de Madrid). The Centrality of the Margins: Graciela Gutiérrez Marx within the Mail Art (Male) Solidarity Networks

Carmen Gaitán Salinas (Instituto de Historia-CSIC). Three Women, One Gallery: The Pecanins Sisters and their Branch in Barcelona (1972–1976)

Sol Izquierdo de la Viña (Technische Universität Berlin). A Woman Traveller in Exile: Lene Schneider-Kainer in the Balearic Islands (1931–1937)

### 10:30–11:00 Coffee Break

### 11:00–11:30 Discussion

### 11:30–12:30 GENDERING THE NARRATIVES OF ART HISTORY

Moderator: Marta Oliveira Sonius (Freie Universität Berlin)

Maria Lluïsa Faxedas Brujats (Universitat de Girona). Notes for a Feminist Theory of Abstraction

Mercedes Valdivieso (Universitat de Lleida). Margarita Nelken. Politikerin, Aktivistin und Pionierin der Kunstgeschichte in Spanien

### 12:30–13:00 Discussion

### 13:00–15:00 Lunch Break

### 15:00–16:00 REVISITING FEMALE ART STORIES – Case Studies I

Moderator: Anna Linder (Universität Hamburg)

Greta Winckler (CONICET – Universidad de Buenos Aires). Colonial Gazes, Patriarchal Gazes: (Counter) Proposals for an Emancipatory Imagination in the Work of Anna Bella Geiger and Guadalupe Miles

Maria Schaller (Universität Hamburg) & Johanna Spanke (Universität Hamburg). Sor Juana’s Body Inscribed. Images of the “Tenth Muse of Mexico” in Contemporary Chicana Art

### 16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

### 16:30–17:00 Discussion

### 17:00–18:00 REVISITING FEMALE ART STORIES – Case Studies II

Moderator: Alicia Fuentes Vega (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Fernanda Pequeno (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro). Lygia Pape: “Eat me” (1975) and “Objetos da sedução” [Objects of Seduction] (1976), in Comparison with the Research Project “A mulher na iconografia de massa” [Woman in Mass Iconography] (FUNARTE, 1977)

Julia Kloss-Weber (Universität Hamburg). Autopoiesis as an Artistic Strategy: Frida Kahlo’s “Plaster Corset with Hammer, Sickle and Embryo” (1950)

### 18:00–18:30 Discussion

### 18:30 Closing remarks

### VENUE

Warburg-Haus  
Heilwigstr. 116  
20249 Hamburg

### ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Amrei Buchholz  
(Akademie der Künste, Berlin)

Alicia Fuentes Vega  
(Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Julia Kloss-Weber  
(Universität Hamburg)



# Images by Women Artists:

Contexts – Narratives – Practices

Gendering the Art Histories of Ibero-America and the Iberian Peninsula

“¿Tienen que ser invitadas las mujeres para estar en el museo?”<sup>1</sup> – „Do women have to be invited in order to get into a museum?” A journalistic debate reacted with this harsh reply to the exhibition *Invitadas* (English: The Invited, The Visitors) dealing with the role of women in the Spanish art system in the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that was recently shown in the *Museo del Prado* in Madrid. The discussion that was sparked by the exhibition shows that we cannot do justice to the urgency of addressing the position of women in art history without also looking at the structural and methodological frameworks.

When aesthetics, art criticism and academic art history – as we differentiate them today – began to establish themselves in the European sciences at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was men who determined theories, practices and discourses. Patriarchal structures arose within which women artists were assigned specific, mostly minor areas both institutionally – for example, by being denied an academic education – and with regard to art practice and artistic representations. The effects of these structural limitations of women as creators of art are reflected even today in their marginalization in different areas in the study and writing of art history. As Griselda Pollock, among others, emphasizes, it is not enough to simply incorporate women artists subsequently into the existing narratives, as this does not fundamentally challenge the patriarchal structures themselves (Pollock 2020 [1988], 17).

The planned conference aims at taking up discourses on the positions of women artists that have been developed in Ibero-America and on the Iberian Peninsula by a profound interweaving of post-/decolonial and feminist approaches. Not only the general conditions for women creating art in Spain, Portugal and the Ibero-American countries – for example in connection with the history of academies – will be examined more closely. We will also focus on the question of when and from which analytical perspectives women artists and their works became the subject of art historical research and how female artists reacted in their works to the structural circumstances.

An initial thought of the conference is that although women artists could not simply act outside the existing power systems based on gender difference, they could reflect on them in their work and thereby at least implicitly challenge them. Thus, the prospective contributions should focus specifically on the modes in which gender differences are broached and mediated in the works of women artists. To what extent do/did women artists use the reality constituting character of art creation – understood as social practice – in a strategic form? How did this lead at least to partial shifts within the established hegemonic discourses? How do these problem constellations interact with questions of coloniality, taking into account that both the Iberian Peninsula and Ibero-American countries share a position of cultural periphery although they are at the same time separated by the colonial wound? Does the overlapping of various regimes of subalternity – as women and as “peripheral” artists – originate specific strategies of empowerment, such as women artists’ networks and transatlantic cultural alliances? And, finally, how do these phenomena become aggravated in intersectional contexts, for example even today when art by women is labelled “indigenous” art.

<sup>1</sup> URL: [https://www.huffingtonpost.es/entry/tienen-que-ser-invitadas-las-mujeres-para-estar-en-el-museo\\_es\\_5f84e14ac5b6e5c3200286ae](https://www.huffingtonpost.es/entry/tienen-que-ser-invitadas-las-mujeres-para-estar-en-el-museo_es_5f84e14ac5b6e5c3200286ae) [03.06.2021]



## Abstracts and CVs





**Saray Espinosa (Universitat de Girona)**

## **Iberian Feminists: Art as a Trench in the Times of Franco and Salazar**

In this proposal, we will analyze the depictions of femininity in the work of Spanish and Portuguese women artists from 1960 to 1985. That is: from the decline and fall of Salazarism and Francoism to the completion of the democratic processes that followed.

Choosing this geographical and chronological framework, allows us to (1) defy the hegemony of the North American paradigm in feminist studies, which condemns otherness-experience to be thought from the model of delay or insufficiency concerning the dominant, and (2) challenge the idea of total rupture with which we often approach contexts of institutionalized violence, thus reinforcing the vision of the countries that experience these processes of government violence as fully passive agents, only able to modernize in contact with the outside world.

To correct these deviations, in our proposal we will pay special attention to the socio-cultural context of creation of these practices, presenting Salazarism and Francoism as biopower-based regimes, where the technologies of sex and gender acted like privileged mechanisms for the population's control (Foucault, 1976). Taking into consideration the rereading of Teresa de Lauretis, we will study some artistic practices that worked as short-circuits of the high-codified technologies of the gender of those regimes. Highly efficient sabotage strategies of the gender roles, even long before feminism, in its official version, arrived in both countries. Finally, we will think about the intersection of the patriarchal and dictatorial systems in the life and work of our artists and ask ourselves if it is possible to speak about an Iberian feminist, like the Catalan feminist Maria Aurèlia Capmany did back in 1970.

Saray Espinosa (1995) is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Art History at the University of Girona (Spain). She has a BA (Hons) in Art History and a BA in Philosophy, as well as a MA in Contemporary Humanities and a MA in History Secondary Teaching. She is interested in the politics of sexual representation, as well as in the relationship between artistic and visual practices and the processes of social transformation and liberation. The foundation of her research lays out in gender studies, visual anthropology, and decolonial studies.

Currently, she is doing a thesis in which she studies the way in which female artists from the Iberian Peninsula explored their sexual identity through art, from 1960 to 1985. With this geographical and chronological framework, the author seeks to account for the specificities of Portuguese and Spanish women—oppressed not only by patriarchy but also by their respective dictatorships—, thus challenging the dominant Anglo-Saxon narrative in feminist and gender studies.

Miriam Oesterreich (Universität der Künste Berlin)

## Gendered Indigenist Fashion Practices in Post-Revolutionary Mexico

Starting from Frida Kahlo's eclectic fashionable self-dramatizations, for which she carefully combined indigenous costumes, peasant clothing, Asian and European traditional and modern garments, accessories and patterns, the lecture will trace how these Indigenist stagings were developed within entangled transcultural networks of avant-garde uses of textiles in art during the European interwar period, and how such Indigenist fashionable practices could also form specifically female-coded art forms and artistic networks.

Miriam Oesterreich, PhD, is Professor in Design Theory and Gender Studies at University of the Arts, Berlin. As an art historian (MA at Freie Universität Berlin) she is currently researching the transcultural entanglements of Mexican Indigenism. She received her PhD (Freie Universität Berlin) with an investigation of early exoticist advertising pictures in the German *Kaiserreich*, 1880-1914 which was published as a book in the Fink/Brill-series "Schriften zur Kunst." She has published in journals such as *RIHA*, *Artelogie*, and *Design & Culture*. She has worked as a research associate at the Universities of Heidelberg and Darmstadt where she deepened her interest in her research foci on Latin American arts, art and migration, and conceptions of the body in art. In 2019, she was Ansel-Adams-fellow at the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. She is associated researcher of the international *Worlding Public Cultures - The Arts and Social Innovation* project and of the Heidelberg Center for Ibero-American Studies. She co-edits the peer-reviewed, open-access digital journal *MIRADAS - Journal for the Arts and Visual Culture of the Américas and the Iberian Peninsula*.

Lucía Laumann (Universidad Nacional de San Martín)

## The Female Students and the Printmaking Workshop. Strategies and Negotiations to Enter the Higher School of Fine Arts “Ernesto de la Cárcova”

When in 1921 the *Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes Ernesto de la Cárcova* (Higher School of Fine Arts “Ernesto de la Cárcova”) first opened its doors, it was conceived both as a coeducational school and workshop where students could learn painting and sculpture. Only in 1932, with a change of its programs, printmaking became available as an area of studies. Around 1944, after the academic program was once again reformed, the Printmaking and Book Arts workshop emerged. During these two decades, the school was the hegemonic training space for engravers in Buenos Aires. Professional artists were the instructors, and artists who sought to become professional gathered within the walls of the Escuela.

The Escuela Superior was a selective academic institution where student’s artistic training would culminate. Thus, acceptance into the school was determined by a series of rigorous tests. One of the characteristics of the Escuela was that, unlike other artistic education spaces in Buenos Aires, it was coeducational. Especially in the printing workshops, there was a large presence of women among the students. Indeed, between 1933 and 1950, of the seventy-eight students who signed up to take printmaking, only twenty-three were male.

In order to reflect on the ways in which women negotiated their admissions to school, I first intend to analyze some significant cases that allow us to observe how, in practice, acceptance into the School was gendered: women did not have the same opportunities than men. Through a detailed analysis of the two times that women artist Aída Carballo applied to the school, I propose that women applicants chose Printmaking as a strategy in order to gain acceptance into the Escuela.

A Ph.D candidate in History at the Escuela Interdisciplinaria de Altos Estudios Sociales (IDAES), Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Lucía Laumann holds a M.A. in Argentine and Latin American Art History from IDAES and a double B.A. in Fine Arts and Art Education from the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina.

Laumann is a Doctoral Fellow at the I+D+I Agency, at the Centro de Investigación en Arte y Patrimonio (CIAP), Universidad Nacional de San Martín-Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas. Since 2020, Laumann co-coordinates the Art, Gender and Diversity Study Group at the CIAP.

Laumann has authored the book *Una grabadora en sociedad. Aída Carballo y el Movimiento por la Reconstrucción y Desarrollo de la Cultura Nacional* (CIAP-Centro de Estudios Espigas, 2021); the book chapters “Los archivos personales de artistas mujeres: problemas, estrategias y posibilidades para pensar a las grabadoras Aída Carballo y Mabel Rubli”—published in *Historia, mujeres, archivos y patrimonio cultural* (Instituto de Investigaciones Socio Históricas Regionales-CONICET, 2021)—, “Alrededor de la prensa. Las grabadoras en Buenos Aires, entre los talleres y las exhibiciones (1909-1950)”—published in the exhibition catalog *El Canon Accidental*, by National Museum of Fine Arts (2021) and has referred articles published in academic journals.

Esther Romero Sáez (Universidad Complutense de Madrid).

## “On the Moral Degeneration of Distinguished Young Ladies”. Representation of the Nude in the Works of Spanish Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries

During the 19th century in Spain, numerous psycho-sociological treatises and texts—by Darwin, Freud or Gregorio Marañón—insisted on the fact that the intellectual disability attributed to women was closely linked to an unequal and imperfect configuration of their own bodies. Constantly infantilized or branded as hysterical at the slightest transgression, women had been defined as subjects deprived of the ability to produce discourses and images of themselves.

These moral treatises had a great impact on the arguments raised from the academies, where the academicians were trying to prevent women’s access to artistic training. In fact, one of the main debates was the contemplation of the naked body; a question of social and political nature, since the academicians and theorists of the time consider that it could lead to the moral degeneration of women and society. In this sense, it was essential to discipline the gaze of women—and especially of women artists—, building their identity not only based on what they could represent, but rather on what they were allowed to look at.

The present contribution takes as its starting point the cases of the artists Margarita Arosa (1854–1903) and Aurelia Navarro (1882–1968), both considered pioneers in dealing with the representation of the nude in the field of National Exhibitions. With their works, they begin to subvert and defy the power systems based on gender differences. In addition, their contributions have been part of the consolidation of the «modern nude», as Carlos Reyero proposes. A representation of the nude, stripped of idealized conventions, that had to negotiate and redefine ideas such as modesty, the obscene or the pornographic, considering the turning point that photography had meant. Hence, it will be essential to understand the transformation of the gaze regimes, which would determine the work of later artists such as Mari Chorda, Esther Ferrer or Cristina Lucas. Artists who continued a process of (un)learning about the representation of the nude; a process that began at the end of the 19th century and which aimed, above all, to recover the gaze at one’s own body.

Esther Romero Sáez holds a degree in History of Art and an extraordinary award from the University of Valencia. In 2019 she completed a master’s degree in History of Art and Visual Culture at the Complutense University of Madrid, in collaboration with the Reina Sofia Museum. She has been one of the curators of the exhibition *Recreational and political resistances in Madrid during the 90s* (2019, MNCARS) and she has been part of the editorial team of the journal ACTA no4, in which she wrote the article “Public space and 8M: is it possible a room of one’s own?”. She has participated in several seminars and conferences. In 2021 she wrote the chapter “Your cunt is a battleground: strategies for feminist criticism from art and genitality” in the book *Mujeres y resistencias en tiempos de manadas* and, with Carmen Gaitán Salinas, she organized the conference “Linda Nochlin revisited, 50 years later” (Complutense University of Madrid) in honor of Linda Nochlin’s pioneering work as feminist art historian. Since 2020 she has been as a FPU predoctoral fellow at the Complutense University of Madrid, where she is developing her doctoral thesis under the supervision of Estrella de Diego and Alicia Fuentes Vega, a critical analysis of the representations of genitality from a gender perspective.

Henar Rivière (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

## The Centrality of the Margins: Graciela Gutiérrez Marx within the Mail Art (Male) Solidarity Networks

In the increasingly globalised world of the 1960s, a growing number of geographically distant artists started using correspondence not only as a means of communication but also of artistic exchange and co-creation, within the then emerging and marginal field of intermedia art. They built up thus international networks of what is known as “mail art” in English, and both as “arte correo” or “arte postal” in Spanish language(s). These creative networks were at the same time solidarity networks: mail art deliveries often represented more than mere artistic proposals and acquired a political dimension, opening spaces of resistance against the status quo both geopolitically—as they crossed i.e. the Iron Curtain—and within different national contexts—especially those under authoritarian regimes in the American Southern Cone and Eastern Europe—.

Considering these features of the mail art networks, the fact that they included almost no women is striking. Was the solidarity that circulated through their channels out of women’s reach?

This paper deals with the work of Argentinian artist Graciela Gutiérrez Marx (1945-2022), one of the few women engaged in the mail art networks. Her work was an important nodal point and had an undeniable activist agency, yet little attention has been paid to it so far. Through a close examination of her mail art projects and theoretical writings, this contribution will deepen the understanding of her aesthetics, showing the resistance and empowerment strategies she developed to confront her double condition of subalternity—geopolitical and gender-based—. Gutiérrez Marx created a symbolic universe of thought and action where margins and marginality took the center stage. She poetically assimilated women’s reproductive power (life) to creative power, traditionally reserved for men (art). By subverting this patriarchal polarity, she fulfilled the Avant-Garde’s wish to close the gap between art and life.

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10

Henar Rivière is a PhD Art Historian and Curator. She is Lecturer in Art History at Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM) and Research and Project Manager at Archivo Lafuente (Santander). She has been awarded postdoctoral and predoctoral fellowships at the Getty Research Institute (Los Angeles, USA) and the Freie Universität Berlin. She has been a Juan de la Cierva postdoctoral fellow at Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (category Formación) and at Universidad Complutense de Madrid (category Incorporación).

She specializes on international intermedia art, with a main focus on action art and experimental writing in its various forms, including mail art and its expansion into the field of artist’s archives. Her more recent publications include “The Marginal Codices of Mamablanca and Graciela Gutiérrez Marx’s Inmost Art”, *Unpaged. How to Revisit History in the Plural Form?* Bucharest, 2021; “Wolf Vostell’s dè-coll/age Magazine. The Editorial Design of Action Art”, *OnCurating*, no. 51, 2021: *Fluxus Perspectives*; and the book coedited with Arantxa Romero *Materia de escritura. Entre el signo y la abstracción en la época del intermedia (1950-1980)*, Madrid, Editorial CSIC, 2022 (in print). She leads the research project “OBASA and Artpool: Collecting, connecting, archiving. The ‘Active Archive’ as Transcultural Alternative on the Global Stage” (UCM, Madrid; Archivo Lafuente, Santander; Artpool Art Research Center, Budapest).

### Three Women, One Gallery: The Pecanins Sisters and their Branch in Barcelona (1972–1976)

In 1971, the artist Ana María Pecanins moved from Arizona to Barcelona with one goal: to open a new gallery in her hometown. Her sisters, the twins Montserrat and Teresa, had already established a gallery in Mexico City in 1964, which was having great success. With their Mexican gallery, the three sisters—exiled there after the Spanish civil war—aimed to promote new artistic movements, different from the social realism officially established in the country. On the other hand, with the gallery in Barcelona—founded in 1972—they wanted to display Latin American artists at a time in which Spanish Informalism took precedence in the peninsular country. To showcase Latin American artists during the seventies in Spain constituted a brave decision, almost nobody showed interest in them at that time. However, it was not easy to support the branch in Barcelona. Ana María Pecanins contributed with some money she got selling her paintings in the United States. But was the Spanish society prepared to receive this art? Some critics were outraged: “how dare they, being Catalans, to open a Gallery for South American artists!” (Emerich 2000, 50).

This proposal aims to study this unknown case, through an interdisciplinary approach, interrelating postcolonial and gender studies. While the latter addresses how three women could undertake this project—without any masculine support—, the former, together with transatlantic studies, tries to answer questions about the presence of Latin American artists in Spain, such as, what was the impact of these exhibitions for Latin American artists? Which narratives did these shows create about Latin American art in Spain? Which was the reception of these artists there?

Carmen Gaitán Salinas is a tenured researcher in the Department of Art History and Heritage, Institute of History CSIC (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas). Before joining CSIC, Gaitán Salinas was a Juan de la Cierva-Incorporación Fellow at Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Previously, she had been teaching at the University of Pennsylvania and Villanova University, she was a Visiting Scholar at the New York University and worked in the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC. She has also devoted her time to study music. Carmen Gaitán Salinas is Titulada Superior de Música (Piano) by the Conservatorio Superior de Música of Málaga and Titulada Profesional de Música (Harpsicord) by the Centro Integrado de Enseñanzas Artísticas de Música Federico Moreno Torroba, Madrid.

Gaitán Salinas has carried out research stays in universities such as El Colegio de México (México), Universidad Nacional Tres de Febrero (Argentina), The University of Exeter (UK) and Universitat de Barcelona (Spain). Among her publications are *Las artistas del exilio republicano español. El refugio latinoamericano* (Cátedra 2019), and the critical editions of Victorina Durán's Memoirs, *Mi Vida* (Residencia de Estudiantes, 2018), and of Manuela Ballester's diaries: *Mis días en México. Diarios (1939–1953)* (Renacimiento, 2021). She has published in high-impact journals such as *Anales de la Literatura Española Contemporánea*, *Archivo Español de Arte*, or *Goya. Revista de Arte*. She has organized panels at international conferences such as the Annual Conference of the College for Art Association (USA) and the Association for Art History (UK). She is an editor of the scientific journal *Enclaves. Revista de literatura, música y artes escénicas*, an international representative of the Society for Iberian Global Art of the USA, member of Instituto de Investigaciones Feministas at the Complutense University of Madrid, and part of the Expert Committee of the Centro de Investigación y Documentación de Artistas vascas, *Prácticas artísticas y Teorías del arte feministas*. Her research focuses on Spanish modern art, gender studies, and the connections between Spain and Latin American art.



A Woman Traveller in Exile: Lene Schneider-Kainer in the Balearic Islands (1931–1937)

My paper examines the period in which the Jewish Austrian artist Lene Schneider-Kainer (Vienna 1885 - Cochabamba 1971) worked and lived in the Balearic Islands between 1931 and 1937 from an intersectional feminist perspective. After undertaking a journey across Asia between 1926 and 1928, the artist visited the Balearic Islands several times and moved her residence from Berlin to Ibiza in 1933. Her activities during that period were determined by her Asian journey: she exhibited her travel paintings and gave a lecture on “the Orient” accompanied by the projection of her photographs in the Conferentia Club in Barcelona. Settled in Ibiza, she opened a guesthouse which she decorated with an Asian collection acquired during the trip. That museum-house in “oriental style” matched with the ancient and exotic character attributed to the Balearic Islands. There, she was hosting the international community of tourists, many of whom were part of a network of exiled Jewish intellectuals and artists that were forced to leave Germany.

Despite Lene Schneider-Kainer’s success in Berlin during the 1920s and internationally during the 1930s, her work has remained in oblivion, receiving only limited art historical attention. Her status as a Jewish woman who went to exile undoubtedly had consequences for her posterity. By studying her interdisciplinary artistic production and its circulation, as well as looking at her structural circumstances during her stay in the Balearic Islands, my goal is to investigate the negotiation of her own identity and position as a travelling female artist embedded in the turbulent historical background. Additionally, since oriental and southern women were main motif of her depictions and central topic of her conferences, it seems necessary to interrogate her approach to Asia and the South from the intersection between postcolonial and gender studies.

Sol Izquierdo de la Viña is a Margarita Salas-Postdoctoral Fellow (Spanish Ministry of Universities/Next Generation EU) in the Institut für Kunstwissenschaft und Historische Urbanistik at Technische Universität Berlin, under the supervision of Bénédicte Savoy. Recently, she has been co-curator of the exhibition *Whose Expression? The Brücke Artists and Colonialism* at the Brücke-Museum in Berlin. Sol Izquierdo holds a PhD in Art History from Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Her doctoral thesis *A partir de Śākuntala y Ajanta. Recepción y visiones de India en la obra de Ernst Ludwig Kirchner desde una perspectiva transcultural* was awarded with the Enrique Fuentes Quintana-Prize from the Funcas Foundation. In this research project, she explored the reception of Indian art and culture in Germany during the 20th century and examined Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s work with a focus on issues of Orientalism and Indomania. From a transcultural perspective, she also studied the irruption of Bengali modernism. Thus, her work sheds light on modernisms’ entangled processes between Germany and India within the age of European colonialism.

She was also a Predoctoral Fellow (2017–2021) in the Department of Art History at Complutense University, within the Research Group TRAMA. During her PhD, she carried out research stays in India (Visva-Bharati University) and Germany (Kunsthistorisches Institut at FU Berlin, program *Art Histories and Aesthetic Practices at Forum Transregionale Studien*, KHI-Max-Planck-Institut/Staatliche Museen zu Berlin). She has presented her research at international academic forums such as the Centre for Transcultural Studies at the University of Heidelberg, the Kirchner Museum in Davos and the Museo Nacional del Prado. Previously, she specialized in transcultural dynamics with a Master of Art History in Global Context at the Freie Universität Berlin (2017). She was also a DAAD scholar in Kassel during documenta 13 and curatorial assistant at the independent art space SAVVY Contemporary (Berlin) for the documenta 14 exhibition and radio project “every time a ear di soun”.

Maria Lluïsa Faxedas Brujats (Universitat de Girona)

### Notes for a Feminist Theory of Abstraction

The recent exhibition *Women in Abstraction* (Guggenheim Bilbao; produced by the Centre Georges Pompidou as *Elles font l'abstraction*, 2021-22) has been the first major attempt to review, both from art history and from the museological institution, the contribution of women artists to the history of abstract art from the end of the 19th century to nearly the present day. By so doing, it has opened up a great opportunity to delve into some theoretical issues that neither the exhibition nor the texts published in the corresponding catalogue have addressed in depth: namely, the possibility of thinking from a feminist art historical point of view on why and how women have been excluded from the history of abstract art, but also on why, so far, feminist historiography itself has not paid much attention to the matter.

The present communication will try to offer some answers, although they will be very provisional, to some questions that arise from the exhibition itself, or that are suggested in its catalogue. I'll intend to underline, for example, how gender was not ignored in the theoretical discourse of the first abstract artists; on the contrary, it was a fundamental concern, since the "feminine" was always understood as the alterity that had to be excluded or marginalized. And in this sense, I think that it is not possible to write "a history [of abstraction] that is plurivocal and not conditioned by gender", as is suggested in the catalogue, since as I said, gender has always been a fundamental factor in its enunciation, although it may have been overlooked. I consider, in fact, that this should be the starting point of a feminist history of abstraction, and perhaps of a feminist theory of abstract art too, of which I'll intend to present some notes.

M. Lluïsa Faxedas holds a PhD in Art History (2007), and is a Tenure Track 2 Lecturer on Modern and Contemporary Art History and Catalan Art History at the University of Girona since 2015. She is a member of the Chair of Contemporary Art and Culture and of the research group "Theories of Contemporary Art". Currently she is also a member of the international research project "Modernismos ibéricos e o imaginário primitivista". Her research deals with the writing of art history and historiography from a gender and feminist perspective, both in Spain and internationally, with a focus on modern and contemporary Spanish and Catalan art. She has published widely on these issues, and she has also curated some exhibitions, mainly in public institutions. Among her most recent publications we can cite the book, with Pere Parramon, *Art contemporani a Girona, 1994-2019* (2021) and the edition of the book *Germinal. Sobre l'obra de Fina Miralles* (2020). She has published chapters in international exhibition catalogues, and her articles have appeared in international indexed journals. She is preparing two exhibitions, on the Catalan artists Anna Manel-la (2022) and Fina Miralles (2024).



**Mercedes Valdivieso (Universitat de Lleida)**

**Margarita Nelken. Politikerin, Aktivistin und Pionierin der Kunstgeschichte in Spanien [Politician, Activist and Pioneer of Art History in Spain]**

Gradually, one of the many blind spots in art history is coming into focus, as demonstrated by the recent conference (Fall 2021) organized by Verband österreichischer Kunsthistorikerinnen und Kunsthistoriker (VöKK) in Vienna: the view of female art historians, critics, and mediators.

Margarita Nelken (Madrid 1894-1984 Ciudad de México) is one of the few women Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño listed in his standard work *Historia de la crítica de arte en España* (1975), alongside María Luisa Caturla and Elena Gómez Moreno. She is in many ways a fascinating personality who did not stop at breaking moral taboos of the time. Above all, she is known for her political left-wing activism (she was a deputy three times during the Second Spanish Republic and was forced into exile in Mexico after the Civil War). Throughout all the periods of her life she was active in writing, and it reflects her various facets as a leftist politician, feminist, and art critic. Her writings span many different genres: Novels and short stories, plays, screenplays, translations (from German, French and English), essays, newspaper articles... But above all, she has worked in journalism and as an art critic.

The focus of my proposed contribution is on the latter activity, her role as a professional art critic, to which she devoted herself intensively throughout her life, apart from the years of activity as a politician. Above all, the focus will be on the treatment of female artists, both in her journalistic articles, which appeared in important newspapers and magazines in Spain as well as in her country of exile, Mexico, and in books. For example, she was the first to introduce Käthe Kollwitz to Spanish audiences. In Mexico, where she became one of the leading art critics, she also focused her attention on women artists who, like her, had fled the turmoil of war in Europe (Remedios Varo, Alice Rahon, Leonora Carrington). She also promoted and helped young Mexican women painters (Lilia Carrillo, Eliana Menassé) to break into the art scene.

14

Mercedes Valdivieso is full professor (catedrática) of contemporary art history at the Universitat de Lleida (Spain). She studied art history, classical archaeology and Spanish philology in Cologne (PhD 1986: *Die Generation von 98 und die spanische Malerei*), Munich and Madrid.

Her work and research focuses on Spanish painting and cultural history at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, feminist art and cultural studies (especially Weimar Republic), the Bauhaus, art in public space (memorials) and activism. She has published books and numerous essays on these topics (<http://www.hahs.udl.es/ca/personal-academic/pagina-1/mercedes-valdivieso-rodrido/>), presented papers at congresses, and lectured. She is also curator of exhibitions on the photographers Lucia Moholy (1996), Jeanne Mandelto (1997), Ellen Auerbach (2003) and Marianne Breslauer (2016), as well as on the festivals at the Bauhaus (2005). She belongs to the following associations: Carl Justi-Vereinigung e. V. zur Förderung der kunstwissenschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit mit Spanien und Portugal, Comité Español de Historia del Arte (CEHA), and Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art (AICA).

Greta Winckler (CONICET – Universidad de Buenos Aires)

## Colonial Gazes, Patriarchal Gazes: (Counter) Proposals for an Emancipatory Imagination in the Work of Anna Bella Geiger and Guadalupe Miles

In 1975, the Brazilian artist Anna Bella Geiger made a series of photographic montages called *Native Brazil / Alien Brazil*. An exotic view of the local indigenous populations is exhibited, resulting in their literal and representational capture. Twenty years later, from the “peripheries” of northern Argentina, the photographer Guadalupe Miles begins her series of portraits called *Chaco*, with indigenous people of the Wichí ethnic group, reorganizing an old topic in indigenous imagery: the link with the landscape. In both cases, the body and the territory emerge as central nodes to think about both colonial and patriarchal visualities, including the question of the participation of the artists themselves and their position in local history.

Both works build up a constellation, which undoubtedly includes those of many other artists who share this doubly subaltern character: being a woman in colonized territories. These experiences are thought as what Andrea Giunta calls *projects that emancipate bodies*, which are key in the production of feminist art in Latin America. The two artists penetrate in a field traditionally built by gazes that are not only white but masculine. The postcards and photographs of indigenous people at the turn of the 20th century, as well as the graphic representation of the territories they inhabited/inhabit, were made by male scientists and artists, sold for consumption in local and European metropolises, and as for portraits of women, used to satisfy the desire of the Caucasian bourgeois male. The colonial gaze is a patriarchal gaze. As Silvia Federici indicates, we cannot fully understand colonialism if we do not link it to the patriarchal dynamics in which it is anchored (and the same can be said in reverse).

The proposal of this paper is to explore and question the subversion of colonial visual formulas in the works of these women-artists from the global South, as a rebellious gesture, which contributes to what Giunta calls *fragments of an emancipatory imagination*, anti-patriarchal and decolonial at a time.

Greta Winckler has a degree in Anthropological Sciences from the University of Buenos Aires (Argentina), where she is currently carrying out her doctoral project with a scholarship granted by the National Council for Scientific Research and Techniques (CONICET). Since 2013, she has been a teacher and researcher in the Visual Anthropology Area of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at said university, investigating the relationship between image and politics in its various manifestations. She has taught various undergraduate and postgraduate courses and seminars, as well as university extension courses in the field of Image Anthropology. Her current lines of research focus on the visual formulas of South American political iconography, with special emphasis on the imagery of low-income suburban childhoods.

Sor Juana's Body Inscribed. Images of the "Tenth Muse of Mexico" in Contemporary Chicana Art

After the US annexation of northern Mexico with the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, the United States forced citizenship upon Mexicans who remained in the ceded territories. These inhabitants of the *borderlands*—a term coined by the Chicana-author Gloria Anzaldúa—adopted the self-designation Chicano/a for themselves in the 1960s, when the Chicano Civil Rights Movement emerged in the wake of political equality struggles of marginalized groups in the United States. Chicanas, who were affected by racism and classism as well as gender discrimination, soon began to challenge the male-dominated structures within the Chicano movement. At the same time, they distanced themselves from the largely white and middle-class Women's Liberation Movement because it was unable to address the specific experiences and struggles confronting women of Mexican descent in the United States.

A Chicana feminist movement emerged that used art as a means to address the intersectional experiences of oppression emanating from systems of power, based on ethnicity, gender and economical differences, while navigating their various, often contradictory, identity affiliations. The works created by Chicana artists are characterized by a hybrid iconography that uses a specifically Mexican vocabulary and at the same time can be seen as transnational. Part of this are representations of historical revolutionary leaders and contemporary workers' rights activists, as well as pictorial references to feminist trailblazers such as the Mexican nun, poet and polymath Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, who was presumably a visual artist herself. Our contribution is dedicated to reflecting on images of Sor Juana in Chicana art of the late 20th and 21st century. With a focus on works by (queer) women artists such as Yreina D. Cervántez and Alma López, special attention will be paid to (self-)inscriptions into the female body and their (inter-)medial stagings. Of further interest is the question of whether a reciprocal relationship between artistic production and academic positioning can be evaluated as a specific empowerment strategy in the case of Chicana artists.

Maria Schaller studied Art History and Classical Archaeology at the Freie Universität Berlin and at the University of Hamburg (UHH). 2015–2018: PhD student in the interdisciplinary DFG Research Training Group 2008 "Interconfessionality in the Early Modern Period". Research stays in Spain, Sicily and Mexico. 2018–2019: Research assistant at the Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, UHH. 2019–2020: Research fellow of the Isa Lohmann-Siems Foundation, annual project: "Einverleibungen" ("Incorporations"). 2020: PhD, "The Heart in Visual Media of Female Religious Communities in the Early Modern Period" (publication in preparation). 2020–2022: Curatorial research assistant at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Since March 2022, Maria Schaller is a postdoctoral researcher at the UHH. Her current work in the DFG Research Group (FOR 5138) "Spiritual Intermediality in the Early Modern Period" focuses on the medial status of the body and body images of Ethiopian saints in Early Modern Ibero-America (Project Head: Margit Kern).

Johanna Spanke studied Art History and Classical Archaeology at the Freie Universität Berlin. 2013–2021: Research assistant at the Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar at Universität Hamburg (UHH). 2014: DAAD Research Grant, research stays in the United States and Mexico. 2016–2019: PhD Scholarship of the Gerda Henkel Foundation Düsseldorf. 2021: PhD: "'It might be fun to do the Capitol in murals'. On the genesis of the photomural in a transnational negotiation process between Mexico and the USA" (publication in preparation). 2021: External lecturer at Institut für Kunst- und Bildgeschichte at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. 2021–2022: Research fellow of the Isa Lohmann-Siems Foundation, with the subproject "(Re-)Claiming Space: Forms of Self-Empowerment in the Works of Chicanx Artists Using the Example of the Group Asco". Since August of this year, Johanna Spanke is a postdoctoral researcher at UHH in the ERC-project "Visual Scepticism. Towards an Aesthetic of Doubt", directed by Margit Kern. Her subproject deals with the artistic reframing of colonial monuments in Latin America.

Fernanda Pequeno (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro)

Lygia Pape: *Eat me* (1975) and *Objetos da sedução* [Objects of Seduction] (1976), in Comparison with the Research Project *A mulher na iconografia de massa* [Woman in Mass Iconography] (FUNARTE, 1977)

This paper proposes the investigation of *Objetos da sedução* [Objects of Seduction], 1976, and the film *Eat me*, 1975, by the Brazilian artist Lygia Pape (Nova Friburgo, 1927-Rio de Janeiro, 2004). We intend to compare the artworks with the research project that the artist carried out for the National Art Foundation (FUNARTE) in 1977 entitled *A mulher na iconografia de massa* [Woman in Mass Iconography] which remains unpublished.

Exhibited in São Paulo, at the Galeria de Arte Global [Global Art Gallery] and at the Modern Art Museum of Rio de Janeiro, the Objects of Seduction displayed objects such as false eyelashes and nails, small mirrors, wigs, lipsticks etc. The film *Eat me* shows a super close-up of a mouth, emphasized as an erogenous zone: the mouth movements point to the relationship between the literal and figurative meanings of the verb to eat which, in Portuguese, means both to eat and to fuck. The research project for FUNARTE addressed the use of images of women by mass culture, proposing the formation of a visual archive of photos of billboards and advertising posters that explored women as object of consumption.

Lygia Pape is an artist of great historical relevance inside and outside Brazil and has recently been gaining more and more international attention. Well known for her pieces produced during and soon after Neoconcretism, the bias of Pape's production that triggers eroticism and gender issues is still little explored, a gap that this paper intends to fill. Produced during the years of repression, when Brazil was under a military dictatorship, the artworks and the research project think critically about the place of women in patriarchal society, questioning their exploitation as an object. Irony and ambiguity prevail in works and in research project, pointing the humour as a way of dealing with censorship. Focus in these works and research project from a gender perspective proposes to locate the artist's production as a response in the double repressive context of Brazilian patriarchal society during the military dictatorship, questioning hierarchies and power relations.

Fernanda Pequeno (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1983) is the adjunct coordinator of the Postgraduate Program in Art History at Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ) and a member of the Brazilian Committee of Art History (CBHA). Between 2019 and 2020, she carried out the post-doctoral research project entitled "The Margin is always very wide" at the Hamburg University with partial funding from DAAD. At UERJ she is an Art History adjunct professor where she coordinates the research project "Art as value". Pequeno is one of the editors of the Concinnitas journal and the author of the book *Lygia Pape e Hélio Oiticica: conversações e fricções poéticas* [Lygia Pape and Hélio Oiticica: Conversations and Poetic Frictions], published in 2013. Between 2016 and 2018 she was the exhibition coordinator at the Cultural Department of UERJ. She is a PhD in Fine Arts from PPGAV/ UFRJ (2014) with a period at the Research Centre for Transnational Art, Identity and Nation, Chelsea College of Arts & Design, in London (2012) with a fellowship from FAPERJ. Fernanda Pequeno also acts as an independent curator since 2009. Among her curatorships, the following stand out: Rivers of Rio (National Historical Museum, 2019), Knots/ Us (Caixa Cultural Center, 2016-17), Play (Bispo do Rosário Contemporary Art Museum, 2013-14), Possibilities of the Contemporary Studio (FUNARTE/ Parque Lage, 2009), Long live to Vila Longuinhas! (Murilo La Greca Museum, 2009), among others.

Autopoiesis as an Artistic Strategy: Frida Kahlo's *Plaster Corset with Hammer, Sickle and Embryo* (1950)

My talk will be a case study that analytically starts from a particular object that is also an extraordinary 'body image', namely Frida Kahlo's *Plaster Corset with Hammer, Sickle and Embryo* from 1950. This object intertwines the sphere of the private or biographical and the artistic sphere in a peculiar way and thus raises the question of how the relationship between life and work can be analytically resolved in Frida Kahlo's case. Art history has for a long time discussed Kahlo's work primarily in terms of the artist's dramatic life story, so that the complex conceptual dimension of her artworks has often been overlooked. Therefore, the aim here is to contribute to a paradigm shift which can be described as a turning away from biographical immanence towards autopoiesis as decisive artistic concept.

The central thesis is that Kahlo's autopoiesis follows a strategy that has only been rudimentarily discussed in research: The artist deliberately superimposed biographical aspects with art-theoretical or art-literary motifs, and through this linkage brought about a systematic dissolution of the supposedly private and personal of 'women art' into a supra-individual and intelligent artistic field of discourse. That means, Kahlo picked up the stigma of the supposed 'privacy of female creativity', but then undermined this reduction by overlaying the private elements with traditional artistical myths and motifs. In this way, Kahlo ultimately brushed binary gender models against the grain or questions and undermines them.

This is attempted to be traced in a close reading which primarily revolves around questions of iconography and the tradition of the self-portrait and concludes with some reflections on the image-theoretical implications of the painted plaster corset.

Julia Kloss-Weber studied Art History, Modern German Literature and Philosophy at the Freie Universität Berlin. In 2010 she finished her PhD on French sculpture of the Enlightenment titled *Individualisiertes Ideal und nobilitierte Alltäglichkeit. Das Genre in der französischen Skulptur der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (published 2014, Deutscher Kunstverlag). After working as a research-fellow at the Alte Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, she returned to the field of the university and started a postdoc-project on Mexican art of the 16th century as member of the research group *Transcultural Negotiations in the Ambits of Art. Comparative Perspectives on Historical Contexts and Current Constellations* (DFG), within the research unit *Glocalization Processes in the Arts of Religious Orders in Early Modern Period*, directed by Margit Kern, from which her habilitation thesis resulted which is carrying the title *Images of Alterity–Alterity of Images. The Transcultural Potential of Images in Processes of Translation between New Spain and Europe in the 16th century*. She held substitute professorships in the departments of History if Art at the Heinrich-Heine-University in Düsseldorf and the University of Bern, and completed her habilitation at the University of Hamburg in May of this year. Currently she is working as a substitute Professor in the Department of History of Art at the University of Hamburg.





# Practical information

## How to get to Hotel Vorbach and Warburg-Haus

- **Using Hamburg public transport (HVV)**

Tickets are bought at the ticket machines in the subway stations or from the bus drivers. They do not have to be devalued. A one-way ticket costs 3.50€. It is usually worth buying a one-day-ticket AB (Tageskarte AB) when you do more than two individual trips on one day. With the day ticket you cannot only use tube and s-trains, but also the scheduled ferries (HVV-Fähren) in the port of Hamburg – a nice alternative for a harbour tour.

**Please note that wearing an FFP-2 mask is mandatory on public transport in Hamburg!** If you can't bring an FFP-2 mask with you, you should at least wear any type of mask (medical mask or cloth mask). You can buy FFP-2 masks in pharmacies or drugstores. Some supplies will be available at the conference.

- **From the airport to Hotel Vorbach, Jahnstraße 63-67**

Option 1. Take the s-train S1 (direction → Wedel) to “Ohlsdorf”, here change to the blue tube line U1 (direction → Volksdorf) to “Hallerstraße”, from here either walk ca. 12 minutes or take bus 114 (→ Dammtor) one stop to “Museum am Rothenbaum”.

Option 2. Take S1 (Wedel) to Hamburg main station (Hauptbahnhof), change here to S21 (→ Elbgaustadt), get off at “Dammtor”; from here either walk a few minutes or take bus 114 (→ Lufthansa-Basis) one stop to “Museum am Rothenbaum”

- **From Hotel Vorbach to the Warburg-Haus, Heilwigstr. 116**

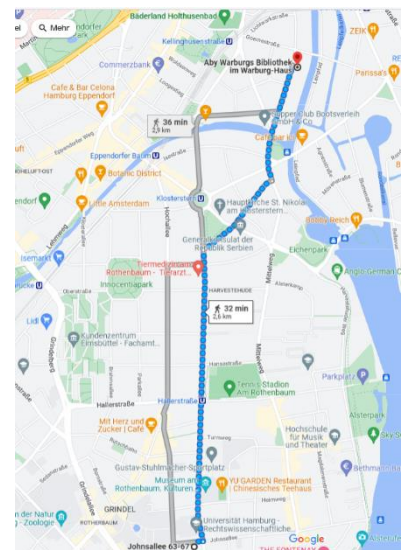
Option 1. Rent a bike and enjoy the beautiful path along the river/lake Alster.

Option 2. Walk. Duration: about half hour.

Option 3. Get on the blue metro line U1 at Hallerstraße (→ Kellinghusenstraße), get off at Kellinghusenstraße and walk for about 8 minutes.

Option 4. Get on bus 114 (→ Lufthansa-Basis) at the stop “Museum am Rothenbaum”, it's six stops to “Bezirksamt Hamburg Nord”, from there walk about 15 minutes.

Option 5. Get on bus 19 (→ U Alsterdorf) at “Böttgerstraße”, go four stops to Streekbrücke, and walk about 10 minutes from here.



## Corona guidelines in Germany

In case of Corona infection you have to make a test in Germany and quarantine for 5 days, even if you have no or only mild symptoms! Upon receipt of a positive test result (rapid antigen test or PCR test), you must isolate yourself for five days. Day 0 is considered to be the day of testing. Anyone who has symptoms is obliged to be tested.

# Images by Women Artists

Gendering the Art Histories of Ibero-America and the Iberian Peninsula.  
Contexts – Narratives – Practices

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> October 2022

## Venue

Warburg-Haus (Heilwigstr. 116. 20249 Hamburg)

<http://www.warburg-haus.de/>

## Organising Committee

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21

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