

F is for Fake: The construction of femaleness by the US media
organized by Amanda Parmer
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Becca Albee, Joan Braderman, Emma Hedditch with Laura Mulvey, Jen Kennedy and Liz Linden,
Paper Tiger Television, Elayne Rapping, Martha Rosler

Organized by Amanda Parmer

May 1 – 29, 2011

Opening Reception: May 1st, 6-8pm

It is ironic that today, Feminism, for many men and women, is an issue of the past. In the United States, there is a vague and diffuse sense of equality; that women have the same rights as men, that women earn the same amount (though women are still paid, on average, only 78 percent of what men are paid and the gap is significantly wider for women of color) and that women have equal access to the same jobs (although the Equal Rights Amendment of 1923 is yet to be passed). Politically motivated and propped up by the mass media, stereotypical views of what constitutes the female have become more fragmented, but the ideal has not strayed from the incarnations of the 1960s and 70s that originally spurred the feminist movement. Currently, Feminism's message has been usurped by the media, shifting the landscape so that where we once had a clear adversary (an inside/outside perspective) this boundary has now been blurred. The tools we had used to speak out, and speak up against constructed female roles, have become false allies and are now being used against us or purportedly in tandem with us. The exhibition includes contemporary projects that look at specific historical representations of women in the media from 1929 and 1975; videos made in the 1980s that take up a similar set of inquires but with media representations contemporaneous with the making of the works themselves; and a publishing project that asks visitors to examine these questions in the present moment.

Becca Albee's project takes up the life of Joan Lowell as the subject for this work. Addressing the many personas Lowell took on during her lifetime through photographs, charms, video and performance, Albee contextualizes the writing of Lowell's embellished and fictionalized memoirs, *The Cradle of the Deep*(1929). The popularity of this text and the scandal that enveloped it will serve as the basis for her Skype performance on May 12th with her father Parker Bishop Albee, a

scholar of the author Lincoln Colcord, whose trenchant review led to the demise of Joan Lowell's budding literary career.

Using Laura Mulvey's seminal "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975) text as a starting point, Emma Hedditch filmed Mulvey reading the essay, and in the process, deconstructing Hollywood cinema from a feminist perspective. The video is then cut with clips from the films Laura is referencing and will be screened on May 12th with a discussion to follow.

Paper Tiger Television is a video collective that deploys humor and sarcasm to combat the polished narrative of the media, by offering up starting points to question the media constructions that form us. Throughout the course of the exhibition we will be screening three videos from Joan Braderman's *Joan Does Dynasty* (1985); Elayne Rapping's *Elayne Rapping on Soap Operas* (1985); and Martha Rosler's *Martha Rosler Reads Vogue: Wishing, Dreaming, Winning, Spending* (1982).

The pilot press... (Jen Kennedy and Liz Linden) is a D.I.Y. feminist publishing house that provides a non-hierarchical, unedited, and uncensored look at the self-identified feminist community. Visitors are encouraged to print and bind as many copies of their work as they like; in exchange for this free publication service, they are required to leave a single bound copy of their publications in the pilot press... library. In addition they will be hosting two reading groups over the course of the month based on the texts submitted.

Additional Programming:

Sunday, May 8th at 5pm:

Reading group with pilot press... hosted by Jen Kennedy and Liz Linden

Thursday, May 12th at 8pm:

Screening and discussion with Emma Hedditch

Sunday, May 22nd at 5pm:

Reading Group with pilot press... hosted by Court Square (Lisa Williams and Jaime Schwartz) in conjunction with its current exhibition, *In Visible Ink*, which addresses Hélène Cixous's concept of *écriture féminine* and its modern day manifestations.

Court Square: <http://www.ctsq.info>

Sunday May 29th at 5pm:

Performance by Becca Albee and Parker Bishop Albee

*For the duration of the exhibition, we encourage you to bring your feminist writings to Cleopatra's to have them published with Pilot Press. For more information, please visit www.contemporaryfeminism.com/pilot_press_min.html.

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