Woman's Art Journal

Optimism and Rage: The Women's Movement in Art in New York, 1969–1975

BY CAREY LOVELACE SPRING / SUMMER 2016

Often lost in descriptions of the early days of New York's Women's Movement in art is how dynamic and euphoric the atmosphere was, how charismatic and compelling the personalities. Feminism exploded in the art world there around 1970, with a whirlwind of activism, protests, women-run galleries, journals, and fledgling styles.

There were organizations, too. Among them, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Art Workers Coalition, Women in the Arts, Where We At, the Women's Interart Center, and Redstockings artists. By April 1972, a report given at the Corcoran Gallery's Conference for Women in the Visual Arts in Washington, D.C., estimated that there were some 1,500 members in various New York groups. In her essay, in this journal (see pages 12–20), Ruth Iskin points out that the contributions of the Los Angeles Council of Women Artists (which among other achievements, brought issues of gender inequity in art onto the front page of *The Los Angeles Times*[1]) have not been sufficiently memorialized.

Sadly, such amnesia is not unusual, arguably part of the "Great Silence" that writers have quoted Adrienne Rich as referring to regarding women's role in history. It is something the artist Judy Chicago in particular ingeniously fought against, documenting from the very beginning the feminist programs that she launched at Fresno State University and California Institute of the Arts, a well as the *Dinner Party* installation she created. Others around her learned by her example.

Yet, Iskin's remarks notwithstanding, the West Coast has been more effective at enshrining its history. Indeed, many East Coast groups that played critical roles during the first six years of the Women's Movement in art have virtually vanished from historical accounts, except in the most cursory descriptions. For complex reasons, New York's renegade coalitions lacked devoted chroniclers to take notes or preserve photos. Perhaps survival in the city was, as it is now, so challenging that there was little extra time for niceties like documentation. Perhaps there was also a lack of appreciation of how pivotal these events would be for future generations.

Yet, it was in Manhattan that what was known as Women's Liberation (and now known as second-generation feminism) really took root.[2] Although they were not art groups per se, New York Radical Women (1967–69) and Redstockings (1969–ca. 1975) developed the technique known as consciousness raising, which was to impact art-making everywhere.[3] In CR, as it was nicknamed, women spoke round-robin without interruption on a particular subject (body image, housework, sex, money, children). At the time, this resulted often in the startling realization that feelings (some shameful) experienced in isolation were shared by others—and were, in fact, the result of being a "class" of women. (Most had faked orgasms, been cheated on, hated their bodies, had a hard time asking for a raise, were afraid to express anger.) This was not simply a therapeutic or political exercise: new realms of experience and reality came to the surface.

New York Radical Women organized the 1968 Miss America protest, with its "bra burning," that apocryphal one-liner that helped dramatize women's issues for the first time for a baffled American public; the cabal grew so much in size, it fractured into breakaway groups.[4] The most famous, Redstockings (named after "bluestockings," the nineteenth-century term for intellectual women), propagated texts such as "Sisterhood Is Powerful," "The Politics of Housework," and "Resistance to Consciousness."[5] It, too, quickly grew in number, as women taught others the CR techniques it refined, who taught others in turn.

Many of the early adherents were in the art community (including art historian Eunice Lipton, artist Nancy Azara, and curators Marcia Tucker and Elke Solomon). Joan Jonas was in a CR group and has attributed discussions about whether there was a female sensibility for the development of her 1970 *Mirror Check*, in which, standing nude in front of a live audience situated thirty feet away, she examined, with a small round mirror, details of her body in a way that she could see but they couldn't.[6] Another group launched in September 1970 used CR as a structuring format to critique each other's art; its collective discussions motivated members to develop female-oriented content—significantly before the advent of Feminist Art.[7] For example, in a world that favored hefty, large-scale sculpture, Patsy Norvell, who had been making Robert Morris-inspired Minimalist "stacking" pieces of mirrors and metal, started using a sewing machine, creating wall-works of pleated vinyl, in tribute to forgotten women; Harmony Hammond, a hard-edge abstract painter, began making Bags, consisting of fabric given to her by female friends, which was then attached to shoulder purses, treated with paint, and rubberized. Soon, Louise Fishman began her series of small "angry" paintings, words scribbled feverishly like rapid finger-paintings, dedicated to each member of the group ("Angry Harmony," "Angry Sarah")—the bottled-up rage that CR began to identify and unleash.[8]

In 1969, slightly later than in university departments or the field of politics or literature, ideas set loose by Women's Lib began tiptoeing into the art world (admittedly haltingly) via the antiwar counterculture, in the form of groups such as WSABAL (Women, Students and Artists for Black Artists Liberation) and Women Artists in Revolution (WAR).[9] "Contrary to the popular image as the wild-eyed radical," critic Lucy Lippard once observed, "artists are usually slow to sense and slower to respond to social currents."[10] It is fairly certain that, founded in early 1969 was the world's first feminist artist organization—an offshoot of the legendary antiwar Art Workers Coalition headquartered near SoHo. It was so early that one of the founders, Juliet Mitchell, admits that she had never before heard the term "feminist." At the time, women were accustomed to being told that things were "not that bad" for them. It occurred to WAR members to canvas high-profile galleries—only to find that "things were much worse than we thought": one artist in twenty was female. Statistics-gathering, predictably, was to become a staple activity of feminist and other groups (including, two years later, the Los Angeles Council of Women Artists). WAR urged antiwar protest organizations they were part of to include "sexism" as part of their mission. They met with the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art to demand matching the population's ratio of females, 50 percent, to their representation in exhibitions—an idea so radical the group was barely taken seriously.

In a status-conscious avant-garde, one of the challenges faced by WAR was that female artists, and women in general occupied the lower rungs of the ladder of prestige. Finally, frustrated with the complete absence of opportunities, a few members banded together with others to themselves stage, in early 1970, the first consciously "feminist" art exhibit, *X12*. ("X is crossed out; their manifesto read, "disposed of as we have been for centuries.") It received condescending reviews.[11]

Critic Lucy Lippard, however, had made a name for herself since the late 1960s with her essays and exhibitions defining Minimalism, Post-Minimalism, and Conceptual Art. She and young avant-garde artists Brenda Miller and Poppy Johnson, along with African American activist artist Faith Ringgold—whose works like *Women's Liberation Talking Mask: With Series #1* (1973) directly reflected CR—had worked together in early antiwar and anti-museum efforts and had been visible members of the Art Works Coalition. Often, women came to feminism through a kind of "conversion" experience, what *Ms. Magazine* called the "click." After having hers while working on a novel on the coast of Spain the summer of 1970, Lippard joined with others that September to initiate an Ad Hoc Committee of the Art Workers Coalition, targeting the Whitney Museum, protesting the low number of women (eight percent in 1969) in their prestigious survey Annuals. The group quickly attracted other alienated, isolated women. Employing colorful tactics such as secreting eggs and Tampax plungers marked "50%" around the museum, besieging the museum with telegrams from well-placed supports, and issuing fake press releases, the group claimed credit for the fact that when the Annual opened December 8, 1970, representation jumped to 20 percent. (Including two African Americans, Betye Saar and Barbara Chase-Riboud, it was the first time women of color had been showcased in a major art museum).[12]

The demonstration attracted international press, and Ad Hoc, as it was known, became a meeting point for women artists, many of whom, unknown at the time, would go on to have substantial careers, in no small part because of the support and skill-sharing they found there.[13] They adopted a kind of free-form discussion, not exactly consciousness raising, but a forum to vent and share experiences. That meetings rotated between artists' lofts provided a chance to visit studios and see the often quite powerful art on view, helping dispel widely held assumptions about the imitative nature of women's art. The group developed a Slide Registry, collecting examples of women's work from around the country.[14] Galleries, museums, lecturers, and Women's Studies classes could draw from this resource, gaining access to art that, in a pre-internet age, otherwise would remain unseen. Ad Hoc undertook other campaigns, for example, pressuring schools to hire female faculty members, and *The Rip-Off Files*, which gathered tales of discrimination from around the country.[15]

"We just can't find women of quality," was the reason often given by museums about the lack of women represented. As women shared work and experiences in a supportive atmosphere, a new aesthetics began to be generated. For the first time, it was proposed that there might be an ideological factor in such assessments of "quality." Moreover, Lippard herself noticed, in ground round-robin sharing, that when she would exercise her formalist background and dismiss a particular work, another might exclaim, "I wonder how she does that!" "What is good, what is bad?" she began to ask herself. Also she began to realize that, in contrast to the large-scale art-world-approved abstract forms in vogue, a large number of women preferred more intimate forms of art, often involving collage. Much of this speculation found form in the essays that Lippard began to write about women's art, many of which were engendered by her experiences with Ad Hoc. Along with Linda Nochlin's 1971 essay, "Why Are There No Great Women Artists?,"[16] which examined the mythologizing mechanism in art that excluded women, it began questioning the Modernist canon, which would lead to Post-Modernism.

An experienced curator by this time, Lippard knew that to legitimize any new art phenomenon, a museum-quality exhibition was in order. The goal of "Twenty-Six Contemporary Women Artists," which opened April 26, 1971, at the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in Connecticut, was to showcase the accomplished styles she was witnessing. Unusual as a curatorial approach at the time in the gathering Lippard put together was its range of expression, its pluralism, featuring everything from Adrian Piper's live performance in which she hypnotized herself, to Susan Hall's satirical drawings, to Alice Aycock's installation featuring a huge bed of cracked red earth surrounded by maps tracing piping and water systems, to works by Jackie Winsor, and lyrical abstractions by Dona Nelson. (Once again, many for whom this was a significant first exposure went on to have significant international careers.[17])

Other coalitions arose. Ad Hoc was criticized by some for adhering too closely to Lippard's Post-Minimal aesthetics. (They were mostly sculptors, Joyce Kozloff observed, who worked with the grid and no color.[18]) Painter Ce Roser, after attending an Ad Hoc meeting, realized that, yes, it was difficult for female artists, but even more so for those over a certain age, and started phoning abstract and realist painters she knew in their forties, fifties, even seventies (Pat Passlof, Buffie Johnson, Alice Neel, Fay Lansner, Elaine de Kooning)—as well as writers and poets, inviting them to come to her apartment and talk about their concerns. Twenty women attended the first April 1971 meeting. "We all got excited, and then very angry," recalls Roser. "We decided we were going to free ourselves, get divorces, and just work on our own work."[19] Women in the Arts soon had a membership numbering 500, publishing a monthly newsletter featuring short articles about the panels, conferences, readings that were mushrooming everywhere. They demonstrated in front of New York City galleries against low prices for women's work, and in front of Sotheby Parke Bernet protesting that only one female artist, Lee Bontecou, was included in the October 1973 Robert C. Scull auction.

And they organized "Women Choose Women" featuring 108 artists, nominated by the membership, instead of by "experts."[20] Originally conceived as a massive citywide gathering of women's work modeled after the 1913 Armory Show, when the six major museums they solicited all declined to participate, it was scaled down to a single exhibition at the New York Cultural Center in Columbus Circle, opening January 12, 1973. Still, it was the largest such show in history. Visible already were certain tendencies, such as a predilection for fabric and textiles and realist paintings on domestic themes.

Prejudice against women's art was often subtle. To an almost comical extent, reviews nearly universally used the word "intuitive," even when describing the most aggressive work. Brenda Miller famously wrote a letter to the editor of *ArtForum* protesting the reviewer's comparison of her Post-Minimal wallwork *Subtrahend*, involving mathematically determined lengths of sisal strands, to "crafts more than art," which was the domestic domain to which women were regularly assigned.[21] Less oblique was the occasion that Carol Haerer recalls, when a colleague, Jack Beal, brought dealer Allan Frumkin to her studio. After viewing the canvases she brought out, he departed without response. She could hear the gallerist mutter as they walked downstairs. "I don't want women in the gallery. Women *cry*."[22]

Confronted with what was a typical brick wall when seeking a permanent gallery, it occurred to Barbara Zucker and her studio mate Susan Williams, both accomplished avant-garde sculptors, to found a co-op. However, artist-run galleries, exuding a slight air of desperation, were not held in high regard. Zucker though that "the only thing worse would be a *women's* co-op. A double negative. It was thrilling."[23] So they did it. Drawing from the Ad Hoc Slide Registry, they put together a search committee that included Mary Grigoriadis and Dottie Attie and visited fifty-five studios. Although there had been briefly a Tenth Street women's gallery in the late 1950s, A.I.R. was the first true women's co-op, opening in September 1972 in an old machine shop on Wooster Street renovated by the twenty founding members themselves.[24] By this time, work with feminist themes was beginning to emerge. Judith Bernstein was represented by her monumental-sized "screw" drawings, of actual, very phallic-looking screws. Nancy Spero's *Torture in Chile* (1975) addressed violence against women. Patsy Norvell displayed a diaphanous quilt composed of the hair of members of her CR group. Yet the majority, such as Conceptual Artist Agnes Denes, or Howardena Pindell, who was at the time making Post-Minimal wall pieces, worked in "neutral" styles. The goal was not so much to create a feminist alternative, but, once again, to demonstrate that women did work worthy of inclusion in any mainstream gallery.

A.I.R., whose members are memorialized in Sylvia Sleigh's group portrait (1977–78), was also the site of a Monday evening lecture series that brought together intellectuals and artists (male and female) to address issues in criticism, about the marketplace, and quickly changing art trends of the day. It attained a surprising degree of glamor on the gallery scene and became a petri dish for women's culture in New York. At the opening, one man admitted, "Okay, you did it. You found twenty good artists. But that's it."

Within a few years, thanks to constant pressure by the groups cited above, gallery representation began to increase. Statistically, it was small, from, say, 5 percent to 10 to 20 percent. But proportionally, it was huge, and the upward trend seemed rapid. Art magazines were changing from including no articles at all on women to one or two per month. The greatest beneficiaries of this opening were veterans such as Louise Bourgeois, Alice Neel, and Agnes Martin, as well as younger artists working in Post-Minimalism. Robert Pincus-Witten noted in his eponymously titled book that although the hybrid style was mostly widely associated with male artists such as Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, and Richard Serra, Post-Minimalism's "relationship to the Women's Movement cannot be overly stressed," crediting a female artist, Eva Hesse, with originating the approaches at its foundation in the mid-1960s.[25] With its predilection for "soft" materials and its emphasis on process, Pincus-Witten pointed out, "many of its formal attitudes and properties, not to mention its exemplars, derive from methods and substances that hitherto had been sexistically tagged as female or feminine, whether or not the work had been made by women."[26] Many female Post-Minimalists separated their activism from their art, although a few acknowledged a stratum of feminist content in their work. For example, Mary Miss has stated that her Land Art (1970) as opposed to that by artists such as Robert Smithson or Michael Heizer, who cut into or intervened dramatically in the earth, adopted an intentionally anti-monumental stance.[27]

Painter Joan Semmel, who organized "Contemporary Women: Consciousness and Content," a companion exhibition to "Women Artists: 1550-1950" when it appeared at the Brooklyn Museum, after its Los Angeles premiere, would write, "The price for entrance into the cathedral of 'high art' has been conformity to male modes."[28] Yet, by 1973, a number of New York artists had started dealing with concepts emerging via the Women's Movement. In Semmel's own case, for example: "I was convinced that the repression of women began in the sexual arena and this needed to be addressed at the source."[29] She switched from quasi-expressionist abstractions to attempting to forge an eroticism more sympathetic to the woman's point of view, making the female subject rather than object.

It would be a while before anyone could identify a feminist art overall, but Semmel, for one, identified four thematic ideas that "occur with uncommon frequency in women's art: sexual imagery, both abstract and figurative; autobiography and self-image; the celebration of devalued subject matter and media which have been traditionally relegated to women; and anthropomorphic or nature forms…." She noted: "The constant recurrence of self-images and autobiographical references in women's art has paralleled feminist preoccupation with the connections between the personal and the public."[30]

Not surprisingly, artists exploring ideas coming out of feminism in their art were, with a few exceptions, ignored or marginalized by the downtown avant-garde art world; their figuration, intimacy, and exploration of the decorative ran transgressively and decidedly against the art world's preoccupation with scale and with the purist tenets of formalism. Those who explored sexuality, like Semmel, and in particular, mounted any critique or reversal of gender roles, met with outright hostility. In February 1972, Anita Steckel mounted "The Feminist Art of Sexual Politics" at Rockland Community College in Suffern, Long Island, with her Daumier-like satires including her giant Woman series of photo-collages (1973) featuring a monumental female nude (Steckel's own face superimposed) overpowering various urban settings. But it was the drawings of erect penises perching jauntily atop Manhattan skyscrapers, critiquing what she saw as a male-dominated cityscape, that caused a local legislator to demand the one-woman show close. However, Steckel pointed out that it wasn’t nudity that was objected to: “It was okay to show nude women [at the college],” she observed. More specifically, “There was still a prohibition against the ‘eroticized display of male bodies.’”[31]

Similarly, Sylvia Sleigh, for one, who did parodies of classical paintings, for example Ingres’s *The Turkish Bath*, featuring male nudes instead of female, often found herself facing “angry” reactions.” In 1973, Steckel formed Fight Censorship, including Sleigh, Semmel, Bernstein, and Hannah Wilke, among others. At an October 1973 presentation at the New School, Semmel brought in one of her gigantic paintings and Bourgeois sat with *Fillette*, an enormous phallus-sized plaster-and-latex sculpture across her lap.

The Feminist Art Journal, a bimonthly tabloid founded in 1972, reported on such subversive goings-on, covering the women’s-art-oriented exhibitions and scruffy institutions that began to open around the city in addition to profiling overlooked historical figures.[32] The paper chronicled the Women’s Interart Center, created when the WAR merged with Feminists in the Arts, which in July 1971 opened in a fire station on the Lower East Side, the next year transferring to a sixth-floor building in Hell’s Kitchen. Directed by Jacqueline Skiles, it offered exhibitions to any woman asking for one, and provided workshops in silkscreen, life-drawing, writing, poetry, and dance therapy, at $5 per month, “if you can afford it.”[33] Other co-ops opened, such as SOHO20 Gallery in 1973, which, like A.I.R., showcased a range of styles. And there were exhibitions. “Where We At,” at the Greenwich Village Acts of Art Gallery, June and July 1971, became the “first Black women’s art show in known history,” as well as the name of an exhibiting coalition focusing on family and community issues—and eventually an art-based social service organization dealing with race, going into disadvantaged neighborhoods.[34]

In the autumn of 1971, Ad Hoc habitué and Expressionist painter Joan Snyder, had the idea of organizing a series at Rutgers University of solo exhibitions by women. The university’s all-male senior faculty at the time objected to using the university’s all-male senior faculty at the time objected to using the university gallery for such a purpose. But the university library’s director, Daisy Brightenback Shenholm, responded enthusiastically and appointed the Women Artists Series’ first coordinator, Lynn F. Miller.[35] Also slightly outside New York City, at the Suffolk Museum at Stony Brook in October 1972, “Unmanly Art,” curated by June Blum, was the first in-house museum-curated exhibition of female artists, fifty-six in all.

Nevertheless, by 1975, the progress toward more equitable representation that at first seemed promisingly rapid began to stall, puzzling the many women who had worked so hard for change. This led to the next chapter, during the second half of the 1970s, when groups such as the Heresies Collective, a kind of feminist “think tank,” attempted to examine societal forces on a deeper level. And while equal representation would remain elusive, and intra-feminist disputes begin to rage, an ever increasing amount of art dealing with themes and ideas coming out of Feminism came to the fore, preserved still today thanks to much better documentation than was exercised in those crucial earliest years, with all their fervent optimism and euphoric rage.

[1] Dorothy Townsend, “Threaten Civil Rights Suit: Women Artists Say Museum Discriminates, *Los Angeles Times* (June 16, 1971).

[2] Women’s Liberation began the summer of 1967, with the Chicago Westside Group.

[3] Early feminist pioneers included many artists and art historians: Shulamith firestone, who trained at the Chicago Art Institute; painter Irene Peslikis; painter and later art historian Pat Mainardi; Kate Millett, at the time a sculptor affiliated with the Fluxus Group, among others.

[4] In fact, protestors threw girdles, steno pads, dishtowels, etc., into a Freedom Trash Can.

[5] These essays are available in *Redstockings: First Literature List and A Sampling of Its Materials* (New York: Redstockings, 1969)

[6] Joan Jonas, interview by author, May 5, 2014, Jonas interview, transcript.

[7] Included were artists Sarah Draney, Louise Fishman, Harmony Hammond, Patsy Norvell, and Jenny Snider, and anthropologist Elizabeth Weatherford.

[8] The group staged “A Woman’s Show,” a 1974 collective exhibition at the Nancy Hoffman Gallery. There were no wall labels bearing artists’ names, the point being to show the interrelationship among the works, although the intent was not widely understood.

[9] WSABAL was a guerilla unit consisting primarily of artist Faith Ringgold and her daughter Michele Wallace, a writer.

[10] Lucy Lippard, *Get the Message? A Decade of Art for Social Change* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1984), 160.

[11] Emily Genauer, in the *New York Post*, scoffed: Why, she wrote, did they have to point out they were women? Finding a gallery is hard for any young artist. The exhibition was held at Museum, the Noho (North of Houston Street) artists’ coop that housed the Art Workers Coalition and featured artists Iris Crump, Lois di Cosola, Mary Ann Gillies, Silviana Goldsmith, Helene Gross, Doloris Holmes, Arline Lederman, Inverna Lockpez, Carolyn Mazzello, Vernita Nemec, Doris O’Kane, and Alida Walsh. For a full description, see Vernita N‘Cognita, “My Feminist Art History,” accessed Feb. 4, 2016, http://ncognita.com/my_feminist_art_history.htm.

[12] See for example, *Dictionary of Women Artists*, ed. Delia Gaze, vol. 1 (London: Routledge, 1997): 119.

[13] Active early Ad Hoc members included Faith Ringgold, Michele Wallace, Michelle Stuart, Jackie Ferrara, Mary Miss, Jackie Winsor, Paula Tavins, Camille Billops, Sylvia Stone, Laurie Anderson, Joan Semmel, Joyce Kozloff, Nancy Spero, Agnes Denes, and Louise Bourgeois.

[14] Members of the Slide Registry Committee were Michelle Stuart, Mary Miss, Jackie Ferrara, and Sandy Gellis.

[15] The committee putting the tabloid-format paper together consisted of Maude Boltz, Loretta Denkelman, Joan Snyder, Nancy Spero, May Stevens, and Joyce Kozloff.

[16] Linda Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?,” *Art News* (Jan. 1971). This essay has been reprinted numerous times.

[17] Artists in the exhibition were Cecile Abish, Alice Aycock, Cynthia Carlson, Sue Ann Childress, Glorianna Dancenport, Susan Hall, Mary Heilmann, Audrey Hemenway, Laurace James, Mablen Jones, Carol inne, Christine Kozlov, Syliva Mangold, Brenda Miller, Mary Miss, Dona Nelson, Louise Parks, Shirley Pettibone, Howardena Pindell, Adrian Piper, Reeva Potoff, Paula Tavins, Merrill Wagner, Grace Bakst Wapner, Jacqueline Winsor, and Barbara Zucker.

[18] Joyce Kozloff, interview by the author, Sept. 15, 1995.

[19] Beryl Smith, Joan Arbeiter and Sally Shearer Swenson, *Lives and Works: Talks with Women Artists*, vol. 2 (Lanham, MD and London: Scarecrow Press, 1966), 124.

[20] The judges panel consisted of Pat Passloff, Ce Roser, Sylvia Sleigh from WIA, Linda Nochlin (Vassar), Elizabeth C. Baker (Art News), and Mayio Amaya and Laura Adler (New York Cultural Center).

[21] Brenda Miller, “Letters” *Artforum* (April 1973): 9. See also Cynthia Fowler, “Brenda Miller and Post-Minimalist Art,” *WAJ* 36, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2015), 16.

[22] Carol Haerer, interview by the author, Sept. 16, 1999.

[23] Barbara Zucker, interview by the author, Sept. 15, 1997.

[24] A.I.R. founding members were Dotty Attie, Rachel Bas0Cohain, Judith Bernstein, Blythe Bohnen, Maude Boltz, Agnes Denes, Daria Dorosh, Loretta Dunkelman, Mary Grigoriadis, Harmony Hammond, Laurace James, Nancy Kitchell, Louise Kramer, Anne Healy, Rosemarie Mayer, Patsy Norvell, Howardena Pindell, Nancy Spero, Susan Williams, and Babara Zucker.

[25] Robert Pincus-Witten, *Postminimalism* (New York: Out of London Press, 1977).

[26] Ibid., 16.

[27] Mary Miss, interview by the author, March 20, 2014.

[28] “Contemporary Women: Consciousness and Content” opened at the Brooklyn Museum Oct. 1–27, 1977. From press release, Sept. 20, 1997. Brooklyn Museum Archives. Records of the Department of Public Information, Press releases, 1971–1988, 1977, 022–23.

[29] Joan Semmel, *Joan Semmel: Across Five Decades* (New York: Alexander Gray Associates, 2015).

[30] Ibid. 29.

[31] Richard Meyer, “Hard Targets: Male Bodies, Feminist Art, and the Force of Censorship in the 1960s,” in *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, ed. Lisa Gabrielle Mark (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007): 362–83.

[32] Cindy Nemser, Patricia Mainardi, and Irene Moss were editors.

[33] “New York: Activities by, for and about Women in the Arts,” *Women’s Caucus for Art Newsletter* (April 1976), 6.

[34] Early members of Where We At were Carol Blank, Kay Brown, Vivian Browne, Carole Byard, Gylbert Coker, Jerri Crooks, Iris Crump, Pat Davis, Linda Hiwot, Doris Kane, Mai Mai Leabua, Dindga McCannon, Onnie Millar, Charlotte Richardson, Faith Ringgold, Ann Tanksley, Modu Tanzania, and Jean Taylor. Other artists who would hold membership during the group’s evolution included Brenda Branch. Janette Burrows, Linda Cousins, Asiba Danso, Dimitra, Jeanne Downer, Miriam Francis, Rafala Green, Deidre Harris, Claudia Hutchinson, Crystal McKenzie, Mari Morris, Madeline Nelson, Millie Pilgrim, Hurtha Robinson, Akweke Singho, Saeeda Stanley, Gail Steele, Joan Stevens, Priscilla Taylor, and Ann Wallace.

[35] The first year, it featured one-person shows by Mary Heilmann, Lorraine Forte, Mae Rockland, Nancy Azara, Audrey Hemenway, Roberta Richman, Pat Steir, and Joan Snyder. It later was renamed the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series.