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| <p>Reaping Jane, 2019 Tricia Earl</p> | <p>Kicking Jane, 2011 Tricia Earl</p> | <p>Target Jane, 2010 Tricia Earl</p> |

Tricia Earl
Research Project
Great Women Artist: 50 years later, West Texas Ed., AKA: "F*ck the Status Quo!"
Documentary Series, 2020-2021

This project focuses on artist that identify as women and whose work I have curated into the category of protest art. I believe women's work and their action of art making emulates a kind of protest whether that be in the act itself, as a woman, and/or in the subject of the work presented for the viewer to absorb.

The questions I intend to answer begin with the artist lived experience that then edges in to and occupies the work. Unapologetically and purposefully I am focusing on women artist in West Texas, more specifically on the South Plains. In this barren and sometimes isolated land, women artist root themselves in the shifting dirt and wind to take up the charge to move a community to thinking and acting as a collective unit.

The collective is necessary to withstand the implied sense of belonging nowhere and nevertheless persisting to be everywhere. I am asking the same questions asked many years ago that seem to resurface each time women pick up a brush, a chisel, a thread and needle, and hammer into the dirty canvas, the story of our lived experience.

References:

- 1.) K. Hopper, L. Churchill; *Art of West Texas Women: A Celebration*, Texas Tech University Press, 2010
- 2.) L. Nochlin; [From 1971: Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?](#) by Linda Nochlin, ARTNews, May 30, 2015

Earl's Statement

What does it mean to be a woman artist? Is the work feminist because a woman made it? Who decides the answers to these questions? Is it the maker or the viewer? As a curator, I feel I am mapping on to my own work to expose the inconsistencies and downright oversight of women as artists and instead labeled as "women's work". Using interviews of women in their spaces of creativity, I want to document the untold story of how the woman artist evolves into her work and takes a stand against the status quo of the art world expectations and construction. As image makers, I believe it is just as important for the maker to be consciously within her self-identity to produce a strong sense of self in the work. By doing so, and moreover by design, she grants the viewer permission to interrupt, deviate, and object to the art norm. Diving into a subculture of artmaking that changes the social, political and economic make up of women's (art)work, I believe, is the basis of art as defined as protest art.

Women artist have been making protest art to get the attention of gallery owners, collectors, and museums throughout history. Some used more overt "feminine" art making tactics, for example; 1970's Judy Chicago's "C*nt Art" at Fresno State and others used humor, for example; Guerilla Girls, 1980's and 90's; and yes, feminists are funny. We cannot deny, statistically, the large numbers of working women artist and yet we are still listed in the lower percentile of data related to representation, collection, and invitations to exhibit in solo gallery spaces. As many know, women hold up half the sky although finding ourselves in a continued state of oppression to keep that bar of achievement low and out of reach. Women, in higher education, are entering graduate level programs in greater numbers than ever before. We are over half of the adjuncts teaching and climbing the ladder that seems to be adding step after step to make the ladder taller and taller to reach the top.

I have this desire to show women in their active spaces of making and creating to learn the desires, challenges, and successes that drive women to continue to draw, paint, print, sew, sculpt, and design. This collection of women artist voices is an act of resistance to the trope of defining art as "great" only if male. Additionally, the artworks themselves, as a collective, are challenging the power structure of all those "binders of women" to ignite and call out gender inequities still ever present in the new millennium. Gloria Steinem has said that; "The women's movement is the longest revolution." I believe this to be true and I know that the art world is in the midst of that movement. It is the woman artist that collects us and makes us aware of how change can be tough and at the same time liberating. We must tell our stories to move others to shift their feet, dig up roots, and move with the wind to participate in protest. I have witnessed the art collective, of women art collaborators, that picks us up and frees us to think openly about our place in the movement, practicing anti- [insert oppressive-ism's here], example; "anti-racist", "anti-sexist", etc. Women have been doing this work for centuries. Now is the time to wake up others to persist, rise, and strike to make us whole.

Earl Bio

Tricia Earl is an artist, activist and organizer working with photography/videography and currently serves as the Program Manager and Academic Advisor for Texas Tech University Women's & Gender Studies.

Prior to joining Texas Tech University, she worked as the exhibition coordinator at the Buddy Holly Center with the City of Lubbock. Additionally, she has held academic teaching positions, education and curatorial occupations in Lubbock.

She earned a BFA from the University of North Texas, Denton in 1998 and a MFA from Texas Tech University, Lubbock in 2001. Study abroad programs include the University of London, in 1997.

In the early 2000's, Earl and 13 other women artists came together at One Star Gallery in Lubbock, TX for a collective art installation called "Pulp Fiction". The intention of the installation was to create a fictitious yet real "super" woman's living space. Each artist reflected on what it is in themselves that gives them power to create art and focused on the attributes that they wish they could wear on the outside of themselves but feel restricted to hide or hold close to not be found out as having power. Most of the artist began working within their own medium of choice and then found that they wanted to branch out to other styles that challenged the tradition of fine art. This was the first of many collectives that Earl would draw from to create her own work and collaborate with others.

Since 2005, Earl has been an active community organizer in both the Lubbock and University communities. She has been instrumental in escalating presentations, lectures, conferences, colloquiums, exhibitions, panel discussions and multiple film series. Some of her most recent curatorial initiatives include *Nasty Women: Lubbock, TX*. Exhibition. Some of her most notable exhibitions to coordinate include; *¿Y QUÉ? Queer Art Made in Texas*, *Out in the Mainstream: Queer Social Landscape* and her upcoming solo show "See Jane": *The Forth Wave*, set to be exhibited at 5&J Gallery in Lubbock, TX in 2021. The primary objective to her coordinating, organizing and planning achievements has been to provide an open forum to enhance critical thinking, promoting social justice.

In addition to her academic and administrative work, she is an independent artist working with photography since 1986. Integrating historical and emerging feminist practices and theories inspire her research. By combining bits and pieces of repressed stories she explores systematic approaches to defining gender identity, culture and social media through researching propaganda, bias, discrimination, and political agendas. She has presented at regional and national conferences, including; *From the Trenches to the L Word: Lesbian Art in America Twenty Years Later*, *Private Loss, Public Outrage: Revisiting AIDS Activism in the Arts*, both at the Big 12 LGBTQIA Summit, at Texas Tech University, *Nasty Women: From Lubbock to Brussels*, *the Tinder Art Box for Change*, at the National Women's Studies Association annual conference, San Francisco, CA and *Brushfires in the West Texas Social Landscape: Artistic Interventions* at Creating Change: National LGBT Task Force annual conference, Houston, TX.

Earl is working in Studio D, Texas Tech University School of Art and CASP (Charles Adams Studio Project) art space residency, September to December 2020, for her project, *Great Women Artist: 50 years Later, West TX. Ed.*, Aka: "F*ck the Status Quo!". Taking inspiration from the 2010 publication of *Art of West Texas Women: A Celebration* and the 1971 ARTNews article by Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artist?", Earl sets out to lift us out of a sense of women artist working in isolation to a collaborative and collective state of activism through art.

Earl Resume/link to web-site

www.triciaearl.com