TheFeministArtProject
TFAP@CAA DAY OF PANELS
Collective Creativity: Collaboration and Collectives in Feminist Art Practice
College Art Association Annual Conference 2014
Saturday, February 14, 2015 – 9am-5:50pm
Museum of Arts and Design

ABSTRACT

Panel: GATECRASHING: FEMINIST COLLABORATION AND INSTITUTIONAL INTERVENTION

Chairs: Kat Griefen, Senior Lecturer, Institute for Women and Art, Rutgers University and Meredith Brown, Chester Dale Senior Fellow in Modern and Contemporary Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

In the decades since the women’s movement first interrupted the art world’s status quo, feminists have been coming together to create, reform, destabilize, or circumvent the various institutions of art. This panel of prominent artists, art professionals, activists, and scholars will address the numerous ways that feminist collaborations have worked within and against existing art structures to transform the way art institutions do business. Citing commercial, non-profit, educational, and aesthetic examples, the panelists will speak to diverse and sometimes divergent approaches to institution building and intervention within the art world.

Panelists
A.K. Burns, Artist and Educator; Lisa J. Watt, Founder and Principal, Tribal Museum Planners & Consultants; Jorge Daniel Veneciano, Executive Director, El Museo del Barrio, New York; HOWDOYOUSAAYYAMINAFCARAN?, collective.

PAPER ABSTRACTS

A.K. Burns will speak about three major collaborative projects; the socio-sexual video Community Action Center, a work made by and for queer, trans and feminist women that explores the possibility for expanded notions of what constitutes sexual and explicit imagery; the ongoing collaboration with her partner Katherine Hubbard that investigates how historical trauma produces and shifts sub-cultural esthetics, meaning and agendas; and the advocacy organization Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.) that Burns co-founded which fights for equitable remuneration of Artists Fees by publicly recognizing non-profit arts organizations that demonstrate a history of, and commitment to, voluntarily meeting W.A.G.E. certification payment standards. Burns will examine how these various projects diverge and inform each other and ponder when is collaboration feminist and when is it not.

Multiculturalism as Spectacle: Diversity and Institutional Commodification

HOWDOYOUSAAYYAMINAFCARAN?, collective

The word diversity to the art world is akin to the word organic in the food industry. A politically correct stamp of approval; barely contested and lost in it’s own cliché. Case and point was the 2014 Whitney Biennial in which Donna De Salvo, Chief Curator and Deputy Director of Programs at the Whitney, claimed to offer “one of the broadest and most diverse takes on art in the United States that the Whitney has offered in many years.” However, the demographics told another story as only 9 out of 103 were black artists (including one who was fictional). When HOWDOYOUSAAYYAMINAFCARAN?, a collective of 38 mostly black & queer artists (which counted as one participant), withdrew from the Biennial, the art world had to contend with a multicultural PR nightmare that sent shock waves into a supposed post-racial landscape. In this forum, the
apparent yet barely addressed inconsistencies of access and visibility that were brought to light by this political act of defiance will be addressed. The implications and assumptions behind intentional or unintentional tokenist practices will be examined under the lens of institutional accountability and the capitalistic strategies that determine and commodify artistic visibility.

**Doing Things with Museums**

**Jorge Daniel Veneciano**, Executive Director, El Museo del Barrio, New York

Art museums act in gender-political ways. One way they do so is by perpetuating and creating gendered narratives called “art history.” The gate to be crashed, I’d like to suggest, is not singular, nor is the institution it symbolizes; the gatekeepers may be various and variable. Where do we encounter them? On the other side of this issue we should ask: What happens then if and when feminism enters the institution? Is there a difference between an institution that does the work of feminism and a feminist institution? I can offer examples of feminist interventions in museums.