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## ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART FEMINISM IN CONTEMPORARY BOOK AND MAGAZINE PRINTING

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*The paper presents a comprehensive analysis of the features of art feminism in contemporary book and magazine printing, which are reflected in art books, zines and photo books. The distinctive features of the visual language of these publications, their subject matter and genesis are revealed. It is shown that artists reveal more and more courage in displaying their message in a photo book, using their own physicality and psychological experience as a medium. The thematic directions of the modern feminist photobook and the main methods of preparing photographic materials are determined. It is shown that despite the fact that most of the photo books possesses documentary character and reflects naturalistic perspective on woman nature in the form of personal diary or album, the method of appropriation remains relevant, which implies active inclusion of provocative collages and photomontages, that is also characteristic feature of feminist zines and art books. Ultimately, both methods raise the problems of sexism in many aspects, including the issues of abortion, maternity, working and racial genre discrimination, etc.*

**Key words:** *art feminism, zines, artist's book, photo book, self-published magazines, documentary photography, artbooks.*

### **Introduction.**

Contemporary book and magazine publishing are one of the channels through which women convey feminist ideas, covering even wider communication spaces: Internet resources and printing houses, festivals, exhibitions, specific bookstores, personal artist's website. A vivid example of art works that reveal the current problems of society through the personal experience of the author and his thoughts are the feminist photo books that have taken a worthy place in the field of contemporary art-feminism.

The second wave of feminism actualized the researches in the field of women's art in general, the causes of the reasons for its absence before the emergence of a mass feminist movement. Among the early scientific researches, a number of works devoted to the analysis of the nature of women's art, its assertion and development of the protest movement against gender inequality and "sexism" should be highlighted (Linda Nochlin's seminal essay «Why havethere been no GreatWomen Artists?» (1971); Rosika Parker and Griselda Pollock's «Old Mistresses: Women, Art and

Ideology» (1981); Norma Broude and Mary Garrard's «Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany» (1982); Griselda Pollock's «Vision and Difference» (1988) and Lynda Nead's «The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality» (1992)). It is worth noting that the topic of art feminism is quite developed both in popular science and in research papers. Scientists from the post-Soviet space and Western researchers conducted a comprehensive study of the emergence and development of women's (feminist) art, but the main attention is often paid to the founders of the movement of the second and third waves. At the same time, a significant part of the publications are devoted to the art of actionism, performance and video art due to their provocative nature, while the works that reveal the issue of art feminism in book and magazine printing industry are fragmentary and do not give holistic view of the development and features of this direction or indirectly relate to the issue.

The purpose of the study is a comprehensive analysis of the features of photo book as an object of art feminism, its genesis, thematic focus, as well as its distinctive features in comparison with such publications as zines and art books. To solve this problem, a general art criticism analysis of the most famous feminist publications, as well as photo books received recognition in international art competitions and festivals, has been carried out.

It should be noted that nowadays the concept of a photo book and an art book is somewhat vague, since both the first and second types of publications can be simultaneously presented at photobook festivals, as well as art books. However, these terms and the difference between it remain unclear to the average person.

### **Main text.**

Certain women's ways of expressing themselves, including the use of ready-made images in their works, can be traced back to the beginning of photography and are connected mainly with Victorian era [6]. Thus, the appropriation method as a gender-specific activity has its roots in the middle and late 19th century. In part, this was driven by trend to create scrapbooks from photographs, advertising booklets, business cards, postcards with religious texts and decorative die-cuts, known as «scrapbooks» among English ladies in Great Britain, as well as the youth of the United States [5]. However, these works are narrowly focused and served only as an additional hobby never reached beyond a small circle of people.

The first attempts to use ready-made media images or everyday objects as metaphors for emphasizing social problems can be associated with the Dada movement. Among the works of the members of the group, the collages of the artist Hannah Hoch gained fame. Afterwards, many artists from the 70th to nowadays continue turned to her creative heritage. It is worth noting that at that time colleagues were skeptical about the work of Hannah Hoch, as she was one of the first to raise the issue of sexism and discrimination against women. Hoh's experimental works, collected in thematic albums, were cutting-edge for their time. By placing photographs of the mass media that do not have independent value, she turns it into a cultural sign or symbol by transferring it in a new context and playing with its comprehension and meaning and creates a special emotional background. Precisely, the major interest of her work lies in precisely this complex articulation of activism and philosophy without dogmatisms [8]. As a result, her works effectively blurred the

frontiers between European female and African sculpture, questioning the boundaries between the modern and the tribal, object and body, male and female [2].

The beginning of amateur mass «women's art» is often associated with the development of various countercultural movements in the 70s, which caused a growth of the underground press, including «zines» as a products of opposite movement against commercial culture and consumer capitalism, often related to anarchy, culture of protest, politics, cultural issues, etc («zines» are self-published magazines or booklets of a small copies, consisting of original or borrowed texts and images, originally reproduced using a copy machine). Zines are an important part of the art of activism and art feminism and are one of the milestones in its development [10]. These publications have commonly sloppy hand-made nature, combining elements of trash, kitsch, mass culture. Created under the influence of the spread of punk rock culture and the third wave of feminism, they raise the problems of the freedom of the self-expression of woman in the fields of art and society, denying any kind of infringement, such as abortion, independence in manifestations of sexuality., etc. At the moment, there are many resources and several libraries that store Zines. Among the most famous ones with a feminist orientation: Poison Girls (UK), Bendita (Brazil), Bitch (U.S.), Clit Rocket (Italy), Good girl (Canada), Grrrl: Rebel (Malaysia), Pink Punkies (Argentina), Pretty Ugly (Australia) etc.

In modern printing, fan-zines not gained much popularity, although they continue to develop within the narrow framework of certain festivals and the circle of connoisseurs and admirers of the genre. In general, feminist fan-zine, as one of the first manifestations of women's initiative in the art of printing, can be considered as the forerunner of the other type of publications, known as the «art book» or artist's book. An original design approach, a free compositional solution, no censorship and no restrictions in the presentation of material, manifested itself in the use of mixed media and collage. In addition, special attention to the presentation of the visual component, which often performs a key function and role characteristic of an art book, can be clearly seen in zines. The artist's book is an object of art in itself, in which artist employs visual elements to communicate messages [7].

The transition to digital printing methods in the 80s and the availability of digital photography became an impetus for the development of not only zines, but also the author's photo book as a complete project of a photo artist. As a rule, such photo book contains mainly photographic content, but may be accompanied with a small number of texts and is often published through a certain specific publishing house specialized in the art. Nevertheless, contemporary photo books can contain elements typical for zine publishing: inscriptions included in the photo compositions and a wide use of appropriate images from media – however, it is characterized by the dominance of photography as a most active visual component.

Today's collage artists who uses it as a means of discourse about the role of a modern woman in society, for example, is Sanja Iveković, a Croatian artist working with different media She is considered one of the leading artists of the former Yugoslavia and continues to inspire many young artists. Among her works «Double Life» (1975) can be underlined. She placed there 66 photos from her personal life with a similar photos of models from magazine advertisements, that formed specific

pairs in the result. Her other work «Make Up – Make Down» (1978), consists of self-portraits, captured on film. The active use of image of women can be traced in «General Alert: Soap Opera» (1995), that deals with the portrayal of women on television, and «Figure & Ground», a series of collages depicting female models resembling armed terrorists who are smeared with fake blood and dressed in military clothes from leading designers. Another renowned, award-winning artist is Laia Abril, a Spanish photographer, whose work mainly relates to femininity. In the first part of her exploration entitled «A History of Misogyny», Laia Abril documents and makes sense of interprets the dangers and harm caused by women's lack of legal, safe and free access to abortion. She turns toward the past to highlight and show this problem, and considers the questions of ethics and morality to reveal a bewildering array of social triggers, stigmas and taboos surrounding abortion.

The authors of feminist photo books in their work mostly explore their individual experience, hence the very personal and intimate nature of these publications. Often they involve themes of acute female experience (aging, loneliness, the difficulties of motherhood, illness), with a clearly social issues.

This peculiarity distinguishes them from «male» photo books due to the sentimental personal and even intimate character combined with the naturalistic approach to the images. Artworks created by an artist in book formats, self-published or published by galleries, limited editions to sometimes none, inexpensive to exclusive collector's items, these are few characteristics which artists books [9].

One of the first books of a personal nature, a kind of «diary» that reveals the personal and intimate details of the author's life, is Nan Golding's book «The Ballad of Sexual Addiction» (1970s). A photographer captured her friends, acquaintances, lovers and herself in the homely and intimate atmosphere, which was an absolute innovation in the field of photography. In her work, she raises questions of a woman's personal and sexual freedom, her role in society, as well as the struggle between autonomy and stagnation [3].

The visual range of a photo books concerned with various feminist issues, is often represented by photographs, the purpose of which is to explore one's own physicality. Among this direction, the works of Eleanor Carucci, a famous Israeli-American photographer can be distinguished. Her photographs are included in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art New York, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Houston Museum of Fine Art, among others. The «Diary of a Dancer» (SteidlMack, 2005), and «Mother» (Prestel, 2013). are intimate books, which reveal the author's inner life, demonstrating the physical and emotional nudity in photographs: the journey to motherhood, diseases and aging. All of the photographs are made in a naturalistic and «documentary» manner with purpose to gain the maximum expressiveness of daily images with a sharp focus. Part of the pictures are photographed on dark and light neutral backgrounds in a minimalistic manner (possibly in studio with one additional light), the other part – in different locations (in shops, at home, otherwise). In her latest work, Elinor often refers to selfie as a direct way of taking photographs for an art project.

Portraits of women of the working class, made between 1985 and 2015 in places from Minnesota to Mississippi, hidden intimate details of life in the outback, on

which the book «Wood River Blue Pool» by Jo Ann Walters (Ass. Prof. Photography, The State University of New York) is based, sharply raises the question of the formation of woman's identity in a relatively isolated working [4].

Of undoubted interest is the photo book «Pearly gates» by Anastasia Lazurenko Winner of the Ukrainian Dummy Award 2016. In her work, Anastasia rethinks the understanding of female beauty imposed by the glamorous and commercially oriented aestheticization of thinness, youth, perfect skin that has filled the space of modern media. She sees the beauty in ordinary young girls, showing it in a naturalistic way and in an everyday setting that is radically different from a glossy photograph. Contemporary feminist photo books actively raise issues of ethnic or racial origin, gender reassignment, criticize the impact of the development of digital and bio technologies on the formation of an ideal female image in the eyes of the layman Mayumi Hosokura – «New Skin» [1]. It should be noted that collage remains one of a fairly popular method of creating such works.

### **Conclusions**

It is shown that contemporary photo artists have shown increasing freedom over the visual appearance of their messages, which involves their own physicality and psychological experience as a medium. This approach of direct and naturalistic dialogue allows to attract a larger audience than through the performative practices, which, by their nature, have a narrower circle of viewers and participants. The objects of the photographs are the house, the elements of everyday life, one's own family, one's own physicality and everything connected with it. Most of these books have a basic book form and structure. It is determined that within the framework of women's art environment, two directions were formed: one shows global social problems through the perception of a woman based on her own personal experience and body; the second is connected with the reflection of the problems of a certain stratum of the population, as a belonging either to another race, disadvantaged segments of society, etc. the subject or object of which are women. Thus, a significant part of the works in women's art is devoted to typically «feminist» problems, and have an explicitly or indirectly social character. Most of the pictures in the photo book claim to be documentary. At the same time, the method of appropriation can be implemented in the art book consisted of provocative collages that raises the problems of sexism in many aspects and remains relevant. Thus, art feminism in modern book and magazine printing continues to be a form of protest, where women challenge the commercial art of perfectly retouched magazine photographs and the appearance of women in mass-media space.

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