

# The Biographical Exhibition as a Problem of Feminist Critique and the Case of the Exhibition Marlene Dumas – Female, 2005<sup>1</sup>

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### The Success of Biography as a Problem

Art history is one of the most successful disciplines in the humanities and cultural studies if one traces the success of one of its main products—the artist's biography or biographical exhibition—and its effects on various areas of Western societies. No other discipline, it seems, has so few problems communicating its subjects to a broad audience as art history manages to do via its exhibition business. The number of museums, exhibitions, and biennials has grown to such an extent in the age of globalization, and the speed with which contemporary artists are canonized has so increased that it seems there is no need to worry about the future of the profession and the future of countless historical and contemporary artists, nor about that of curators.<sup>2</sup>

The question, however, whether this success—apart from its evident advantages—does not instead pose a special problem for a feminist critique that refers to the ideological constructions of authorship in artists' biographies, which are by no means objective and neutral but rather tied to judgments and contain, among other things, attributions related to gender difference. These constructions, with their gender and national myths, have long since been the subject of critical reflection, not only within the humanities and cultural studies but also on the part of artists themselves.

As a self-reflective discipline, art history, especially in the German-speaking world, has been less successful within the spectrum of the sciences precisely because—this is my thesis—one of its types of texts and exhibitions is too successful and too popular. Questions and methods of art history that could make them attractive and connectible for social discourses are overshadowed to some degree by the artist's biography.<sup>3</sup> Coming to terms with the ideological construction of creativity as divine gift, brilliant inventiveness, and *creatio ex nihilo* has been a central theme of feminist criticism for more than thirty years now, which has done us the service of analyzing and showing the essentialist statements about masculinity and femininity that are implicitly formulated in myths of the artists and patterns in artists' biographies.<sup>4</sup> From that perspective, adherence to and the success of the artist's biography is also a manifestation of resistance to feminist insights that such research uncovered for the entire field and hence in no small measure an adherence to essentialist attributions to "female" or "male" artistry.

Even feminist art history and exhibition policies are not immune to the traditional patterns of the artist's biography and produce parallel biographical writings

of women artists who have been neglected (thus far) or forgotten in the history of art.<sup>5</sup> This is possibly the more successful variation on a “feminist” rereading of art history, since the increasing popularization of historical and current women artists represents an opportunity to take up challenges to make those who have been excluded historically visible without having to call into question the constructions of the artist’s biography itself. Intentionally or unintentionally, essentialist attributions to a “female” creativity are likewise tolerated or produced.<sup>6</sup> That conclusion could be reached by observing the present focus of exhibition makers and artists’ biographers on women artists. The subject of the present essay will be a classic example of the popularization of a contemporary artist using the means of the artist’s biography that updates traditional myths about the artist without problematizing them.

An art history that wants to—and must, if it wants to be contemporary—address critical works by contemporary women artists finds itself confronted with a paradoxical task. On the one hand, it must and should make biographical, geographical, and national attributions, since that is in a sense one of its core activities and has (thus far) guaranteed its success. In this way it generates, for example, investments (third-party funding) both from the private and from the state side, which testifies to special interest in constructions of biographical and national identities.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, it has also to call into question its methods for producing biographies, catalogues raisonnés, monographic and biographic exhibitions, which to a decisive degree have evaluative and fictive character. One first step in this self-reflection, therefore, would be to admit that artist’s biography is fictional and to reflect on the patterns for producing such fictions; a second step would be to reflect on the functions of these fictions. Both things, however, are usually denied or silenced, since fiction is not considered a scholarly form of writing if one clings to traditional ideas of scholarship that claim the universal validity and objectivity as well as apparent neutrality of statements.

I would like to point out in response that it is only the admission of and the analysis of the construction of artists’ biographies, for example, that leads to statements that can be regarded today as scholarly, in the sense of situating, contextualizing, historicizing, and analyzing conditions of that which is produced and how.

The most visible and the most widespread production of popularizing and popular art history—namely, the artist’s biography or monograph, often in combination with a monographic exhibition—can be regarded as a service for a special interest group within our society. Richly illustrated bestsellers and coffee-table books are found as lifestyle symbols and evidence of connoisseurship in the reception rooms of doctors’ offices and business consultants and on the floors of upper management, but also in living rooms in private middle-class homes. Art historical works still convey mostly tales of the life and work of great/brilliant and usually male artists. The involvement of art history in the art world, mediated by art critics and exhibition catalogues, can be described as unconscious complicity with the desires for identification of artists, curators, and the public, who still cling to the model of the exemplary, extraordinary individual. The mirroring of a “community of the initiated” ultimately guarantees the economic success of art history and the exhibition business as a service for a society in which the exhibiting artist has replaced the commissioned artist.<sup>8</sup> Within the compulsion of self-promotion for the exhibiting artist and the pop star and the hyping of self-employment as part of a neoliberal economic policy to make precarious working conditions seem appeal-

ing are historically preformulated. They also apply to curators who participate in the success of the artists they exhibit.<sup>9</sup>

The artist's biography closely dovetails with traditional myths of the artist that structure its narratives and carry on the tradition of models for creativity and artistry derived from art historical writing but at the same time constitutes its material.

The reasons why a majority of art scholars and curators continue to base their work on such models of artist biography seem obvious. Recently, artists' biographies are increasingly being circulated in artists' films, in which they are presented to a broad mass audience. How does a mass audience come to have faith in the patterns of artists' biographies? For that much is certain: in the field of the artist's biography, it is primarily about faith, not knowledge.

Since the early modern era, in which artistic paradigms of craft precision and the fulfilment of common aesthetic norms were replaced by paradigms of the idea and the violation of norms—and artists' myths in the form of creation myths became established<sup>10</sup>—the canonical determination of artists' names and artists' works have the effect of strategies of accreditation in which artists, critics, gallery owners, and curators work together, often without being aware of it. There is constant exchange between these areas. Within the interaction between different types of text and artistic and curatorial activities, a "financial body"<sup>11</sup>—as Lacan calls it—forms, becomes established, and becomes more discriminate.

This is an unconscious, ritualized game within which the object of desire, the object that ultimately escapes, the "art(work)", results, and within which the protagonists become privileged people who, as connoisseurs, decide what art is. In other words, this game is about power, about economic success, and, beyond that, about narcissistic gratifications that can scarcely be quantified but can be read from their effects on the self-misjudgment and self-promotion of "paradigmatic subjects". The addressee of such a claim to recognition is still an audience that will perhaps discover the qualities of an artist only posthumously and is de facto comprised of art historians themselves, of whom it is expected that they will write up for posterity artists who are marginalized in their day and hence elevate them belatedly. Within this system, the intertextual and intersubjective connections are repeatedly made unrecognizable and invisible, because the function of the addressee remains invisible in the unconscious structure of narcissism. The blind spot of art history is thus the narcissistic structure of such a financial body itself, which is centred on the fetish of the artist as exceptional subject.

The diversity of artists' myths and their historically and socially motivated applicability is, however, not arbitrary. They are components of the procedures that the discourse formation of art history employs to produce its types of statements. "Discourses are [...] practices that systematically form of the objects of which they speak".<sup>12</sup> Within the discourse formation, procedures of exclusion operate—including, for example, classification, chronologies, formal analyses, schools, and hierarchies of genre—and one central system of exclusion is precisely the function of the author as well as authorial functions that are appropriated by the actors (artists, curators).<sup>13</sup>

I would like to work out here a case study of the enduring effect of artists' myths and how art historians, even critical ones, unconsciously push these basic patterns into almost compulsive repetitions. Ultimately, I am concerned to show

that the apparent continuity of artists' myths contains current interpretations that refer to the changing social conditions of so-called neoliberalism in the age of globalization and enable us to see therein a shift in the meaning and function of artists' myths especially and precisely when they relate to women.

I would like to analyze as my example here the introductory descriptions of the contemporary artist Marlene Dumas that preceded her large monographic exhibition at the Kunsthalle Baden-Baden in 2005. One central aspect of curating is framing exhibitions with texts as well, whether on the home page, in the catalogue, on in other formats.

#### **Between Feminization and Masculinization: The Case of Marlene Dumas**

The problem begins with the title. The title of the exhibition in Baden-Baden in 2005, *Marlene Dumas: Female*,<sup>14</sup> says a lot and promises a lot: not only does it certify that the artist is, as her name would suggest, a woman, but it also refers to a group of works at the focus of the exhibition that she herself titled *Female*—a portfolio of 211 works from 1992–93 from the Sammlung Garnatz, which formed the core of the exhibition in Baden-Baden. Marlene Dumas (b. 1953), who had been represented already at *documenta VII* in 1982 and had become widely known not least thanks to *documenta IX* in 1992, was also to be certified by this exhibition as an internationally renowned artist. The same was true, as a kind of side effect, of the value of the Sammlung Garnatz.<sup>15</sup> According to the Kunsthalle's home page, Marlene Dumas "is one of the most important, worldwide renowned women artists who have provided crucial impulses in the last twenty years. A native of South Africa, she has dedicated herself repeatedly in her vital creative work to basic conditions of the human within the frame of reference of sexuality, birth, death, and the relationship between the sexes".<sup>16</sup>

I do not intend to address here the various allusions to the authentication of the artist as a "global player", even though the fact that she is from South Africa—obviously not one of the traditional Western art centres—leads to the equally obvious effort to evoke her worldwide significance in the description. I would like to limit myself to describing the strategies for declaring a woman, a female artist, to be one of the "really big names of the international art scene".

For example, the objects of her art are associated with the "basic conditions of the human within the frame of reference of sexuality, birth, death, and the relationship between the sexes". These basic conditions appear as anthropological constants that (not only) in the West are traditionally regarded as also the core activity of women, which is here considered a "female" choice of themes.

It is about a female artist, a woman, who takes the "feminine" itself as a theme. Where or from whom can we get more authentic information about "femininity and creativity" than from a woman, one could argue. Even if the question is immediately recognizable as a rhetorical one, I do not wish to reduce it to the absurd immediately. Such formulations enable one to consciously run through the inner monologues of art historical prose, especially when it pursues certain goals, and how we are all caught up in the production of gender stereotypes, even if perhaps we do not wish to be and even when we are emphatically pursuing an antithetical strategy. In other words, I am not interested in disavowing specific authors, but rather in revealing the power of discourses to which we all constantly succumb if we do not employ the analytical instruments that are available to us in the meantime.

To get the desired information about “femininity”, art historians might first observe the works and compare them to other works from the art historical tradition and perhaps also with other products of the visual culture around us, for example, series of photographs in magazines, advertisements on television, or even our own snapshots—all things that Marlene Dumas has also employed as models.

If the title of the exhibition promises statements about “femininity”,<sup>17</sup> it automatically produces a desire in the viewers to see “femininity”. How can it be depicted? How do we recognize it? From images of bodies with secondary sex characteristics? From stances, clothing, facial features, or hairstyles? The store of cultural codes we have experienced ourselves, remembered or learned from historical sources are called up in order to use them to test. We know the models of femininity that our cultural tradition makes available; with repetition, they become natural; they provide stability.

Can femininity be found in the style of painted or drawn gestures? And, if so, what are its features? Dexterity, tenderness? Or are they to be found in the themes and subjects of the works? And then which ones would they be? Children, everyday scenes, still lifes, self-portraits, or portraits? Is femininity found in the sensitivity of the artist? What effect would it then have on the works? We are already skating on thin ice with the possible answers: as clichéd as these attributions might be, our perception and idea of others and of ourselves are closely tied to them.

But if looking at the images leaves us helpless, then we ask ourselves: Is perhaps the title *Female* misleading? Is it conceivable that the title is part of a marketing strategy? Should we be taken in by the promise of seeing authentic femininity? If looking at the images leaves us helpless, we keep searching, for example, in the texts written about the exhibition.

In the foreword to the catalogue and on the home page,<sup>18</sup> we find the following description by the curators of the exhibition:

Marlene Dumas’s importance on today’s art scene and for many other artists stems from the fact that her works easily bring together what elsewhere is strictly contradictory. Her presentations of the female frustrate and disenchant in a feminist way, so to speak, the male gaze (insofar as this presumes to be taking possession). Also as a matter of course, and with an almost baroque versatility, the artist adopts the role of the—traditionally patriarchal—artist as creator (God) through her drawings, her painting, her poems and reflections, as well as through her teaching activities.

And it continues:

Marlene Dumas sensitizes our perception by countering the photographic standardization of human appearance in the mass media with artistic precision. She does not present her themes as a know-it-all commentator of human existence but rather develops her drawing ambiguously, on the margins of the namable. In the process, she manages—as in *Foreign Thoughts*, 2002, and *Male Beauty*, 2002—to coax by means of subtle nuances of color the sensory presence of the human body from the skin of the paper.

The text delivers an impressive series of statements that can be associated with questions of femininity and masculinity as well as an impressive palette of standard clichés that must be ranked among traditional building blocks of the artist’s biography and of artist myths. We can conclude the following from the text: Marlene Dumas is an internationally important artist, in part because she confidently unites contradictions (that is to say, communicative and balancing, socially competent). Not actually feminist but only quasi-feminist, their dramatizations of the feminine—that is to say, we are confronted with a cultural performance of the

feminine—disillusion and disappoint the male gaze that “presumes to be taking possession”. It will not be able to seize any property; it does not offer him the anticipated images—the text says—without making it clear which images that the male gaze seizing a possession expects. Furthermore, just as much a matter of course as when she disillusions, the text states, she adopts the position or role of the traditional patriarchal artist as God the Creator. As a woman, as a female artist, she plays the role of a man, namely, that of the artist as God the Creator, that is to say, she can only play him; she cannot be him. So, it is a role change or the appropriation of a “male” privilege.

The distinguishing features of her art, the text goes on, are, among others, the ability to sensitize our perception, that she is not a know-it-all (that is, she is in fact modest), that she works on the margins of the nameable, and that she does so with artistic precision. Attributing sensitivity and modesty to a “powerful woman” strips her of her threatening, competing quality. That the artistic work or intention cannot be named is an old topos of traditional art history that makes the quality of art that seemingly cannot be translated into language the touchstone for connoisseurship. The forming of myths continues: in the process the artist manages to “coax by means of subtle nuances of color the sensory presence of the human body from the skin of the paper”.

There are very many gender definitions here in just a few sentences, some of them consciously chosen, others less so. The last qualification in particular, that the artist’s work “coax[es] by means of subtle nuances of color the sensory presence of the human body from the skin of the paper”, is citing the classical Ovidian myth of the artist Pygmalion, who fell in love with an ivory sculpture he made himself and, with Aphrodite’s help, brings it to life. This traditional myth of the artist is the central one to which the idea of the Creator-like artist clings, and it forms the foundation of the talk of the artist as God the Creator, which has found ever new formulations and, especially since the eighteenth century, become more significant again. The way this idea has inscribed itself in myths of the female artist as well has long since been a subject of research for feminist art history.<sup>19</sup> Almost seamlessly, one could also pick up the thread of the ancient competition between artists, which was taken up again in the early modern period, in which the perfect simulation of proper, living life by artists became the touchstone for their artistic quality.

Comparing canvas, paper, or other surfaces that serve as a medium of creative artistic processes to skin should also be seen in this context as a traditional topos associated with the artist-creator. Associating skin and canvas is not infrequently used to present female bodies as allegories of painting and has been problematized by women artists since the 1970s, as the art historian Silvia Eiblmayr demonstrated for the modern era.<sup>20</sup>

The home page quotes yet another topos of myths of the artist, namely, the idea that an artist is one “from the beginning”, that is, reveals his or her talent already as a child. The deferred action of “discovery” is negated: “Marlene Dumas, who is considered one of the very greats on the international art scene, is introduced by Matthias Winzen, who observes, among other things, that it would scarcely be possible to identify a period that could be seen as a key experience for Marlene Dumas’s artistic breakthrough. ‘Everything was already there,’ he notes and proves it with impressive sketches from the period as a student”. The argument is taken from Matthias Winzen’s essay “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman”; he comes to this conclusion after viewing earlier works.<sup>21</sup>

In any case, the authors seem to consider it necessary, when describing the work of an artist who has gotten herself into the position of God the Creator, or is located there, or should be located there, to tell the old story of Pygmalion in a new version. This is supposed to certify that a role change has taken place and that it was a success. In order to prove that a woman artist can create "like a man", it is necessary to dust off analogies from age-old art historical myths.

I have selected these passages in order to work through how myths of the artist and of gender function, in part because their authors really wanted to communicate something else. As we can read, they too see in Marlene Dumas an artist who does *not* make use of the traditional expectations of the male gaze. For the expectations of males eager to see (voyeurs who do not want to be seen themselves), the tradition of art history would offer above all erotic female nudes, which were made evident through precise illusionistic perfection. In the opinion of these authors, Marlene Dumas breaks with conventions of seeing and depicting; for that reason, she is also described as—at least almost—feminist, which I can understand if "feminist" is understood to mean a strategy that questions traditional gender patterns, making us conscious of them and thus ultimately trying to thwart them. Matthias Winzen should be given the benefit of the doubt for identifying the feminist deconstruction of relationships of the gaze as a starting point for discourse on Dumas: "At the same time, the to and fro of these gazes takes place within social patterns, and the dominant pattern of the male gaze and the gazed-at female, both in society as a whole and in art, has been analyzed and criticized at great length by feminist and micro-sociological theories of power since the 1970s".<sup>22</sup> In what followed, however, he equated the feminist position with the identification with the role of the victim, which then enables him to describe Marlene Dumas as someone standing between the male position and the female one and hence at the same time not a feminist.<sup>23</sup> She is not allowed to be a feminist, because in the history of art this would be understood as a threatening challenge. This example shows that the habit of repeating gender stereotypes as they are inscribed in myths about the artist has such an immense effect in our culture that even those who are trying to avoid them cannot always get out of the habit.

This analysis of the introduction to the Marlene Dumas exhibition clearly shows how gender definitions are produced in art and in the history of art. They have had and still have influence on different forms of creativity and productivity, on how artists see themselves, and, of course, also on the texts written about them in which their work is evaluated: exhibition reviews, catalogue commentaries, newspaper articles, promotional materials for the art market, and scholarly and trade journals.

This question of the effects that gender definitions or even gender constructions have on art is not a new question for art history; it has been asked by art historians in the German-speaking world for thirty-five years, and even longer in the English-speaking community. For a long time, it was a taboo issue. The question of the effects that gender constructions have had on art historical writing was taboo and will remain so as long as art history, like the other humanities, clings to the claim that it makes universally valid, true statements. Only in recent years has it increasingly become a matter of course for that to be recognized as a justified question, and the view that scholarship and its production are also—indeed especially so—guided by claims to power and interests and therefore can only make claims of validity that are particular, perspectival, and historical and therefore temporally limited has largely gained acceptance in discussions of the crisis in the humanities and cultural studies.

It is, after all, a question of their responsibility to provide insights not only into how we imagine “masculinity” and “femininity” in relation to art objects but also into how we see them in relation to everyday life. Moreover, artists and curators seem to have become a kind of role model as “classical exceptional subjects of the modern era”,<sup>24</sup> and neoliberal ideologies make use of this.

But what is the image of the woman artist? Even today when it seems that all areas of society are open to women, female artists are only exceptionally the focus.<sup>25</sup> And as exceptions they have the function in art historical writing of proving the rule. As exceptions, they can, apparently, only prove the rule if exhibitions and the art criticism and/or art historical writing that accompany them update the models of the artist’s biography and myths about artists in such a way that specific merits can be attributed to female artists without having to question fundamentally the “feminine” or “masculine” aspect of traditional concepts of creativity and of the artist—and hence the concepts themselves. And exhibitions have enormous popular success in doing so. The question is how we deal with the obstructing success of the artist’s biography.

### Notes

1 Shortened and adapted version of the text first published as “Künstlerbiografie, Künstlermythen und Geschlechterbilder im Angebot—Fallbeispiel: Marlene Dumas,” in Oskar Bätschmann et al., eds., *Dienstleistung Kunstgeschichte? Art History on Demand?*, 100 Jahre Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Universität Bern, Festschrift, vol. 2, Imorde, Emsdetten, 2008.

2 Horst Bredekamp speaks of this “successful history of art history” in Horst Bredekamp, “Einbildungen,” *Kritische Berichte* 2000, No. 1, pp. 31–37.

3 Examples of connectivity include comparative analyses of iconology, theories of the symbol, concepts in semiology and the theory of perception for the “image” as a component of conscious and unconscious cultural communication. The claim of art studies to be a leading field of scholarship is expressed in the German-speaking world, for example, in the proclamation of an “iconic or pictorial turn”, which is a symptom of lost theoretical terrains. On this, see Sigrig Schade, “What Do Bildwissenschaften Want? In the Vicious Circle of Pictorial and Iconic Turns,” in Kornelia Imesch et al., eds., *Inscriptions/Transgressions: Kunstgeschichte und Gender Studies*, Kunstgeschichten der Gegenwart, Peter Lang, Bern, 2008, pp. 31–51. [http://blog.zhdk.ch/sigrigschade/files/2013/07/WhatdoBildwissenschaftenwant\\_000.pdf](http://blog.zhdk.ch/sigrigschade/files/2013/07/WhatdoBildwissenschaftenwant_000.pdf).

4 Among the most important pioneers were Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology*, Pantheon, London, 1981. See also the summary in Sigrig Schade and Silke Wenk, “Strategien des ‘Zu-Sehen-Gebens’: Geschlechterpositionen in Kunst und Kunstgeschichte,” in Hadumod Bussmann and Renate Hof, eds., *Genus: Geschlechterforschung und Gender Studies in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Kröner, Stuttgart, 2005, pp. 144–84, chap. 3: “Autorschaft und Autorität: Künstler und Kunsthistoriker im Kampf um die Macht des Zu-Sehen-Gebens.”

5 This debate has been ongoing ever since feminist approaches led to the first large exhibition of women artists. See, among others, Sigrig Schade, “Was im Verborgenen blieb: Zur Ausstellung ‘Das Verborgene Museum,’” *Kritische Berichte* 1988, no. 2:91–96; there are various case studies in Kathrin Hoffmann-Curtius and Silke Wenk, eds., *Mythen von Autorschaft und Weiblichkeit im 20. Jahrhundert*, Jonas, Marburg, 1997.

6 On this, see Sigrig Schade, “‘Künstlerinnen und Abstraktion’: Anmerkungen zu einer ‘unmöglichen’ Beziehung in den Konstruktionen der Kunst-

geschichte," in Ulrich Krempel and Susanne Meyer-Büser, eds., *Garten der Frauen: Wegbereiterinnen der Moderne in Deutschland, 1900–1914*, Sprengel Museum, Hannover, and Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, Ars Nicolai, Berlin, 1997, pp. 37–45, esp. 42. Exhibition catalogue.

7 This is often supported by national institutions such as the Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaften (The Swiss Institute for Art Research), which provides funds primarily for research, archives, inventories, and publications related to Swiss artists. This poses a problem for the research horizon of such an institution. Support for artists that is partially funded by the state is always national in orientation; it has to legitimize itself with the argument that it creates potential for identification with the nation. Critics who want to claim competence in their own country or for their "own" art scene abroad write about Swiss, German, French, or South African art or artists (or, less problematically, art or artists from Switzerland, Germany, France, or South Africa) and thus are following the tradition of Nikolaus Pevsner's *The Englishness of English Art* (1956), that is to say, they find themselves in the dilemma of having to define the specific national characteristic of artistry or creativity—however they are constructed—and hence of making essentialist statements per se.

8 Oskar Bätschmann, *Ausstellungskünstler: Kult und Karriere im modernen Kunstsystem*, DuMont, Cologne, 1997; see also Sigrid Schade, "Kunstgeschichte," in Wolfgang Zinggl, ed., *Spielregeln der Kunst*, Verlag der Kunst, Dresden, 2001, pp. 86–99.

9 Marion von Osten made this fact a theme of the exhibition *Be Creative!* at the Museum für Gestaltung in Zurich: Marion von Osten and Peter Spillmann, eds., *Be Creative! Der kreative Imperativ*, Museum für Gestaltung, Zurich, 2002. Exhibition catalogue. See also Marion von Osten, ed., *Norm der Abweichung*, Theorie: Gestaltung 3, Voldemeer, Zurich, 2003.

10 Ursula Link-Heer, "Maniera: Überlegungen zur Konkurrenz von Manier und Stil (Vasari, Diderot, Goethe)," in Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and K. Ludwig Pfeiffer, eds., *Stil: Geschichte und Funktionen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Diskurselements*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1986, pp. 93–114.

11 Jacques Lacan, "Of the Gaze as *Objet Petit a*," in idem, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan, Hogarth, London, 1977, pp. 67–119, esp. 112.

12 Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Alan Sheridan, Pantheon, New York, 1972, esp. 49. See also Schade, "Kunstgeschichte" (see note 8), p. 96.

13 Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," in idem, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (see note 12) pp. 215–37.

14 Matthias Winzen, ed., *Marlene Dumas: Female; A Collaboration with the Sammlung Garnatz*, trans. Pauline Cumbers, Kunsthalle Helsinki, Nordic Watercolour Museum, Skärhamn, and Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, in cooperation with the Sammlung Garnatz, Snoeck, Cologne, 2005. Exhibition catalogue.

15 The collector is even also allowed to express himself in a "Preface": "Marlene Dumas' art caught the attention of my wife and myself at an early stage, and her works subsequently became one of the main focuses of our collection. Meantime, Dumas is regarded as one of the really big names of the international art scene." See Eberhard Garnatz, "Preface," in Winzen, *Marlene Dumas* (see note 14), p. 6.

16 The wording found on the home page today is no longer identical to the version of 2006; today it states: "On closer inspection of the works, however, Dumas's refinement is revealed in the simple, her exact calculation in the spontaneous, the breadth of her intellectual interests and points of contact in the frame of reference of sexuality (*Leather Boots*, 2000), birth (*Warhol's Child*, 1989/91),

death (*The Missionary* (2002–4), and the relationship between the sexes (*Immaculate*, 2003).” Accessed 17.03.2016. <http://www.kunsthalle-baden-baden.de/programm/show/22>.

17 Still on the home page today (see note 16): “In the series *Female*, for example, she studies in 211 drawings the representability of the feminine.” She herself states: “I don’t admire only one type of woman—I love many types of women. But it’s also not only about reaching to interpreting images of women, it’s also about the joy of creating beings that do not exist in real life. It’s more about the pleasure, but will always stay unknown.”

18 The text on the home page was changed after the exhibition ended and no longer corresponds exactly to what is cited here. [The first quotation (“Marlene Dumas’s importance ...”) is from the original version of the website; the translation in the catalogue has been adapted accordingly. *Trans.*] It is a compilation of various motifs that can be found in the texts by several authors in the catalogue, including the foreword of the catalogue (p. 8). In the catalogue, the “frustrate and disenchant in a feminist way, as it were” of the website has been replaced by “frustrate [...] in an almost feminist way.” The version quoted by me can be found at [http://hosting.zkm.de/kbb/archiv/arc\\_dumas.html](http://hosting.zkm.de/kbb/archiv/arc_dumas.html).

19 Hoffmann-Curtius and Wenk, *Mythen von Autorschaft und Weiblichkeit* (see note 5).

20 Silvia Eiblmayr, *Die Frau im Bild: Der weibliche Körper in der Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Reimer, Berlin, 1993.

21 Matthias Winzen, “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman,” in idem, *Marlene Dumas* (see note 14), p. 36.

22 Ibid., pp. 39–40.

23 Ibid., p. 40.

24 Sigrid Schade, “Kunstgeschichte,” in Wolfgang Zingg, ed., *Spielregeln der Kunst* (see note 8), pp. 86–99; Schade and Wenk, “Strategien des ‘Zu-Sehen-Gebens’” (see note 4), pp. 144–84.

25 Isabelle Graw, “Es kann nur eine geben: Überlegungen zur ‘Ausnahmefrau,’” *Texte zur Kunst* 11, No. 42, June 2001, pp. 79–88.

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