

1983

Born Voorhees, New Jersey

2005

BA, French Literature, Fine Arts, New York University

2009

MA, Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

2010

Forthcoming essay, *Allison Smith: Needle Work*, exh.cat. (St. Louis: Mildred Lane Kemper Museum of Art).
“Why the Next CCS Artist Should Be a Psychoanalyst,” *SESSIONS*, no. 1.

2008

Contributor, “The Erotics of Pedagogy,” *Hey Hey Glossolalia*, vol. 1 (New York: Creative Time).

SELECTED TALKS, PRESENTATIONS, AND CURATORIAL PROJECTS

2009

Co-curator, *BROADSIDE*, East Village Radio broadcast, PERFORMA09, New York, New York (November 7)

Contributor, *Picture Parlor IV: Pecha Kucha*, International Studio and Curatorial Program, Brooklyn (July 10)

Curator, “Lora Sana: I Was There and Not There,” Hessel Museum of Art, Center for Curatorial Studies, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York (March–April)

2008

Discussion with Zeynep Oz and Ilja Karilampi, “How We Came of Age,” Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany (July 23)

Graduate Symposium participant, “Dan Flavin: Constructed Light,” Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, St. Louis (April 24–25)

Co-curator, *Second Thoughts*, Hessel Museum of Art, Center for Curatorial Studies, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York (March–May)

Co-curator, *Rules of the Game*, as part of *High Resolution: Artist Projects at the Armory*, Park Avenue Armory, New York, New York (February 21–25)

Where Does the Caged Bird Sing?
On Louise Lawler’s *Bird Calls*
and its Critical Afterlives

Wendy Vogel

Bird Calls (1972, recorded in 1981) by Louise Lawler is a six-minute roll call in which the artist squawks, chirps, and warbles the names of twenty-eight of the leading artists of the time—not coincidentally, all men.¹ Each name is subject to distortion and derision as it is transformed into an individual call. This powerful (and powerfully funny) piece, the artist’s only audio work, may seem anomalous in relation to the subtly acerbic photographs and ephemeral multiples for which she is now known. Yet the work, in its explicit irony and eschewal of the visual, represents not only a turning point in 1970s feminist art production, but a critical model that resonates with contemporary production and curatorial practice that don’t adhere to the notion of a fixed site.

Bird Calls formed the point of departure for a radio broadcast I was invited to curate as part of the artist collective BROADSIDE’s (Alex Fleming and Emily Bellingham’s) twelve-hour marathon of programming on East Village Radio. Created for the biennial PERFORMA09, BROADSIDE’s program envisioned a queer-feminist occupation of public radio space and included material such as recorded music, experimental sound performances, poetry, discussions, and readings that bridged historical and disciplinary divides. We aimed to turn the radio platform into a metaleptic discursive space, defined by Juli Carson in her essay “On Discourse as Monument: Institutional Spaces and Feminist Problematics.” For Carson, a metaleptic discursive space goes beyond a reading of context as a codified set of conditions; instead, it produces a discourse. She uses Jonathan Culler’s definition: “Context

is not given but *produced*; what belongs to a context is determined by interpretive strategies; contexts are just as much in need of elucidation as events; and the meaning of context is determined by events.”² The events of BROADSIDE’s program, disembodied and hybrid, produced a radio context that acted not as a monumental site but as a *satellite* to PERFORMA. This notion of a fluid inhabitation, a temporary occupation of an existing (yet ephemeral) space by a curatorial sensibility, was reflected in the non-visual works chosen for presentation.

For my contribution to BROADSIDE’s program, I paired Lawler’s *Bird Calls* with two contemporary aural bodies of work (Ulrike Müller’s *Herstory Inventory*, 2009, and various live tracks by the Glasgow-based group Muscles of Joy). These works, like our program, do not rely on modernist notions of site-specificity. Rather, initiated through an agitation or prompt, they manifest themselves through alternative channels of inhabitation. This type of transient production is defined by Irit Rogoff as “smuggling,” the touchstone of what she calls the “embodied criticality” of curatorial knowledge production, a flexible operation that disregards boundaries in favor of the cross-disciplinary and imagined. She continues:

“Within this movement the identity of the objects themselves are obscured [sic][...] They function very much like concepts and ideas that inhabit space in a quasi-legitimate way. Ideas that are not really at home within a given structure of knowledge and thrive in the movement between things and do not settle into a legitimating frame or environment.”³

Problematizing the visual and deploying unexpected humor, these audio works by Lawler, Müller, and the Muscles of Joy exemplify an adaptable, collaborative legacy in feminist production that challenges the constraints of traditional



Muscles of Joy, rehearsal image at NICE 'N SLEAZY, Glasgow, Scotland, August 2008, courtesy Leigh Ferguson.

exhibition-making. By situating these three works as part of a larger curated program encompassing multiple formats— itself a discursive collaboration between artists and curators —they enter into the current debate about the state and site of contemporary artistic and curatorial practice. For BROAD-SIDE, the format of the radio, unhinged from a bodily encounter with the works, brought to the foreground not only the question of “why,” but also “where” the caged bird sings. This question brings feminist production into the expanded curatorial field, opening up new readings of these works for discussion and display.

The operations of Lawler’s work that critique the institutions and canons of art are inherent in *Bird Calls*, yet this work goes one step further than the production of her (mostly male) peers of the 1970s in distancing itself from traditional signs of authorship. Like many Conceptual and Minimalist artists, Lawler adopts a variety of what artist Andrea Fraser calls “secondary roles” in her practice, such as writing and curating. Yet, Fraser emphasizes, Lawler’s approach in relation to these activities differentiates itself from that of artists such as Joseph Kosuth and Donald Judd who ascribed the

production of autonomous aesthetic objects and formal experimentation as their primary occupation. These artists wrote in order to articulate a legitimate theoretical construct and to condition the reception of their work, Lawler rejects the idea of the artist as *primarily* an aesthetic object-producer. Instead, she consistently positions herself as a mediator or outsider, examining the discursive framing conditions of art’s reception in order to “disrupt the institutional boundaries which determine and separate the discrete identities of artist and art work from an apparatus which supposedly merely supplements them.”⁴

This resistance to authorship and structures of institutional legitimization is reflected throughout Lawler’s practice, particularly in relation to her attitudes toward feminist collaboration. From 1981 until 1982, Lawler collaborated with fellow artist Sherrie Levine under the name *A Picture Is No Substitute for Anything* to create events and multiples independent of a commercial gallery. The various lectures, souvenirs, and events (such as *Invitation to Swan Lake*, 1981, where they invited art world personae to attend a scheduled performance of the ballet at Lincoln Center) critiqued the manner in which art institutions colonize and co-opt radical gestures, including trends such as Pop and appropriation, to cultivate their own profile or brand. In an interview, Lawler described their project: “Declaring our own gallery was also a way of showing that a gallery isn’t just a showcase; it’s also what’s on display.”⁵ *A Picture Is No Substitute for Anything* recognized that art, whatever form it may take, is always already framed by its inescapable conditions of reception. Fraser added the following rejoinder in her 2005 analysis of the legacy of institutional critique: “It’s not a question of being against the institution: we are the institution.”⁶ The underlying question for Lawler and Levine was to how to create a sense of what Rogoff calls “embodied criticality” in their activities: how could they embed themselves in an institutional structure that gave voice to their

concerns? Lawler and Levine’s gestures, therefore, created an alternative context that responded to and critiqued the systems of distribution and framing, a distinct difference to creating “new” work to fit existing aesthetic paradigms.

It is telling, then, that *Bird Calls* originated not as a hermetic artistic gesture, but rather as a site-specific antagonistic response. In 1972, Lawler and fellow artist Martha Kite installed an exhibition at New York’s Hudson Pier in which all the artists, as well as the show’s curator, Willoughby Sharp, were male. To ward off unwelcome attention on their walks home at night, Lawler and Kite began vocalizing the names of male artists in the form of loud birdcalls, starting with Sharp’s. When artists Jenny Holzer and Stefan Eins asked Lawler to contribute an edition to their Fashion Moda booth at the international contemporary art exhibition *Documenta VII* in 1982, Lawler decided to record and distribute *Bird Calls* as an LP.⁷

The tone of satirical portraiture that characterizes *Bird Calls* (in which, let us remember, Lawler adopts the ultimate voice of *mimicry*—a parrot’s—instead of her own) extended to the packaging. *Bird Calls*’ record sleeve was designed as a type of veiled self-portrait of Lawler herself. She is “depicted” as a parrot looking over its shoulder against a vibrant red background—the quintessential color of punk-inspired rage —(punk being a contemporary vehicle for feminist production in the early 1980s). Stacey Allan writes in a recent article about the work:

“Maybe it is useful to think of *Birdcalls* as a type of vocal bondage assumed by Lawler, posing as the proverbial caged bird and vocalizing her own oppression. Her position is really not so unlike that of the self-aware punk in collar and chains, a rowdy and playful use of self-parody to position herself against patriarchal systems that require women to shackle themselves to male artists, to repeat their names, their styles, their careers.”⁸



Louise Lawler, *Portrait*, 1982, Cibachrome, 19 x 19 inches, LeWitt Collection, Chester, Connecticut, courtesy of the artist and the LeWitt Collection.

Though the *Bird Calls* record was never pressed (the cover exists as a separate photographic work entitled, appropriately, *Portrait*), the work can be related to anti-visual modes of feminist production that have a critical afterlife in contemporary practice: vocal works that signal an absence of visual representation, and the ironic performance strategies of female punk musicians.

Bird Calls, moreover, in its radical removal of the visual in favor of a satirical use of vocal mimicry, signifies a shift in the discourse surrounding feminist art production. This debate has been variously framed in terms of binaries opposing essentialism to constructivism, or “cultural feminism” to “psychoanalytic feminism.”⁹ The constructivist approach, understood to have critically supplanted “essentialist” feminism, was rooted in a larger intellectual trend informed by poststructuralism and postcolonial theory. This constructivist discourse did not offer an easy, positivistic solution to the problem of *political* representation (i.e. anti-sexist



Ulrike Müller, two of ten T-shirts worn at her *Herstory Inventory* audio installation, “Tuesdays on the Terrace,” Dia Art Foundation, Hispanic Society, New York, July 2009, courtesy of the artist.



Ulrike Müller, view of audio installation *Herstory Inventory*, “Tuesdays on the Terrace,” Dia Art Foundation, Hispanic Society, New York, July 2009, courtesy Rey Akdogan.

images of women will directly impact and benefit women’s societal position) but instead signaled a paradigm shift related to the question of aesthetic re-presentation.¹⁰ This paradigm shift, which sought to frame, analyze, and deconstruct the underlying conditions of patriarchal oppression, ignited a firestorm of confusion about how to produce a feminist discourse around imagery coded and consumed through the laws of patriarchy and its institutions, including art history. Artists of Lawler’s generation responded to this issue by adopting anti-visual strategies such as text-based practices, appropriation, and sound-based work. However, in Lawler’s practice and that of her feminist inheritors, the negation of the visual was not an endgame strategy. Rather, it opened up possibilities for thinking about the contingencies of visibility and representation, including the ways in which work can be presented and circulated in self-generated channels such as cheaply-produced multiples, models of participatory exchange, the occupation of public space, and the creation of alternative spaces or networks.

Bird Calls signals a lack of representation (and re-presentation) of women artists through their double omission on Lawler’s artistic “roster” and her disguising of her own voice Ulrike Müller’s *Herstory Inventory* (2009) echoes the spirit of *Bird Calls*. In this work, five female voices recite what at first sounds like as a language poem.¹¹ In fact, it is a list of descriptions, compiled by an archivist, of the iconography of T-shirts found in the Lesbian Herstory Archive in Brooklyn. This archive, which still exists, was established in 1974 for the preservation and promotion of lesbian culture and its imagery.

Herstory Inventory poignantly addresses the marginalization of early “essentialist” feminist (and pointedly lesbian) imagery in contemporary visual culture, particularly in the artworld once psychoanalytic feminism became the dominant mode of theoretical inquiry. With the ensuing theoretical vogues of identity politics and gender performativity, this imagery is ripe for re-investigation. Removing the visual, the voices in Müller’s work create a space within the viewer’s mind for a mnemonic creation of the visual imagery, for which the original may or may not be familiar. (Lawler used a similar strategy

in her 1979 work, *A Movie Will Be Shown Without the Picture*, where she rented the Aero Theatre in Santa Monica to screen only the soundreel to the film *The Misfits*, an emotionally loaded film starring Marilyn Monroe, Clark Gable, and Montgomery Clift made shortly before their deaths.¹²) Yet what drives Müller’s project is not nostalgia for an essentialist era or the desire to codify lesbian imagery into a single, unified aesthetic. Rather, *Herstory Inventory* is meant to reflect the openness and diversity of lesbian and queer imagery, a polymorphous perversity that encompasses everything from demure “coffee-shop lesbian shirts” to ACT-UP slogans to S&M imagery.¹³ Like *Bird Calls*, which imports artists’ names (that stand themselves as modernist monoliths) into a self-consciously humorous form in order to lampoon them, *Herstory Inventory* allows descriptions of various clichéd imagery to butt up against one another in a form that acts equally as homage and satire. Some examples of the T-shirt descriptions that run the gamut from the organic to the explicitly sexual are:

Abstract design with clitoris in the center.
 Profiles of two faces with tongues touching.
 Five dykes driving a car.
 A Woman on a field with a seed sack around her shoulders dropping seeds on the ground.
 Coyote head in a circle, coyote howling.
 A pomegranate cut open and a loaf of bread.¹⁴

Indeed, a resistance to and queering of binaries, both aesthetic and sexual, defines Müller’s and her peers’ work. As an editor of LTTR, a feminist and gender-queer artistic collective that produces journals and organizes exhibitions and participatory events, Müller’s practice is informed by a rich feminist history. But LTTR’s modus operandi differs from that of separatist groups of the 1970s, which sought to establish a utopia *apart* from patriarchal influence *exclusively by and for lesbians*.¹⁵ Rather, LTTR is defined by what scholar Julia

Bryan-Wilson calls a “more permeable, unbounded sense of possible identification”¹⁶ reflected in the shifting acronym, which has stood for everything from “Lesbians To The Rescue” to “Lacan Teaches To Repeat.” That is to say, LTTR is not beholden to an entrenched set of identity politics—through gender (feminist) or sexual orientation (lesbian)—but instead takes up the mantle of constantly reinvented queer performativity theorized by feminist writers such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Judith Butler. Queer theory takes poststructural linguistics to political ends, asserting the power of linguistic slippage (purposefully playful or otherwise) to create constantly shifting and fluid meaning, resulting in new subjectivities.¹⁷ This shifting site of meaning relates to the smuggling inherent in the idea of cross-disciplinary curatorial practice, one that subverts existing institutional structures to produce new contextual readings. Rooted in a sense of “purposeful critical promiscuity,”¹⁸ LTTR’s playful attitude encompasses a variety of wink-wink-nudge-nudge sexual innuendos indicative of a queer(ed) approach to language, as well as the flexibility to inhabit a variety of performance and exhibition contexts.¹⁹

To that end, *Herstory Inventory* has been presented in a variety of formats, including its broadcast on East Village Radio. It was debuted in May 2009 as a live performance at Issue Project Room, an experimental music venue, where the five women read the T-shirt descriptions aloud from notecards. Within the small room, however, the women were positioned among the audience, minimizing the physical and perceptual difference between performer and audience.²⁰ In its next incarnation, at an event called “Tuesdays on the Terrace” curated by Barbara Schröder of the Dia Art Foundation, the five women’s voices were pre-recorded and played over five different loudspeakers installed in the courtyard of New York’s Hispanic Society. The Hispanic Society, which functions as a temporary exhibition space for the currently “homeless” foundation, features Neoclassical architecture

and memorial statues of historical figures on horseback, against which *Herstory Inventory* formed an oppositional sonic intervention. The sculptures performed clichéd images of masculinity, while *Herstory Inventory* chimed in with myriad humorous examples of feminist essentialist imagery, offering an alternative reading of the space in line with queer-feminist practice. In addition, Müller distributed ten solid-color T-shirts in the colors of the rainbow, hand-lettered with the T-shirt descriptions projected via loudspeaker. Worn by friends and supporters in the audience, they embodied a visual analogue to the piece, providing and performing a “hint” to what was being broadcast over the loudspeaker. BROADSIDE’s presentation of *Herstory Inventory*, a purely disembodied audio broadcast prefaced by my interview with Barbara Schröder, presented yet another opportunity to situate the work in an expanded conversation about feminist practice in which the visual was problematized.

A step toward a reconceptualization of the visual, however, is echoed in this audio work and its afterlife: Müller is currently giving out assignments to redraw historical feminist imagery from the T-shirt inventory list. She calls this a project of translation; just as textual translation is interpretive and subjective, yet reflects a particular translator’s contemporary mode of discourse, the move from the abstract language of T-shirt descriptions to new visual imagery reflects the prevailing aesthetic trends of contemporary queer and feminist art, authored by and filtered through a number of highly personal approaches.²¹ As Lawler’s sly parrot *Portrait* can be said to translate *Bird Calls* into the contemporaneous visual iconography of punk record cover art, so will *Herstory Inventory*’s drawn “translations” reflect and inform a contemporary feminist context. The cross-disciplinary radio broadcast on BROADSIDE provided a venue to put visually-contingent practices in dialogue with music, poetry, and sound performance.

Lawler’s *Bird Calls* also employed strategies of mimicry, irony, and playful composition used by punk and new wave artists in the 1970s. These performance techniques were analyzed notably by artist Dan Graham (who appears on the *Bird Calls* roster). Graham states in his article “New Wave Rock and the Feminine” that post-punk female performers critically differentiated their production from rock n’ roll as an expression of adolescent teenage male aggression and sexuality.²² Instead, through modes such as feminine self-parody (by Debbie Harry of Blondie), ironically sporting bondage gear (like Lydia Lunch), and relying on polyvocal harmonies and switching instruments (like the bands Ut, the Raincoats and the Slits), they resist easy identification with male audiences as markers of fetishized sexual difference.

This moment of punk musical experimentation has a sphere of influence that extends to contemporary feminist art production. In the 1990s, deskilled and aggressive playing strategies and ironic visual presentation were reignited during the heyday of second-wave feminism and queer theory. Punk and *riot grrrl* groups such as Bikini Kill, Team Dresch, and Bratmobile took these modes of production into female hands, creating independent record labels and underground commercial networks for the trade of products such as records and ‘zines. Mainstream media attention by the fall of 1992, however, threatened to turn *riot grrrl* into a simple fashion trend, forcing the most radical members to impose a “media blackout” in order to restrict production and dissemination to underground forms and channels.

Today, artists like the Muscles of Joy take up many of these punk techniques and present them in a variety of contemporary art contexts, inhabiting this “historical” form with critical acumen. Expanding the notion of the female voice as a subversive creative tool, the Muscles of Joy are an eight-woman collective of visual artists (Anne-Marie Copestake, Ariki

Portoeus, Charlotte Prodger, Jenny O’Boyle, Katy Dove, Leigh Ferguson, Sophie Macpherson, and Victoria Morton) that have been using DIY strategies to build musical compositions since October 2008. Utilizing simple or pre-vocal utterances, basic harmony, found text, and improvised hand-made instruments as musical building blocks, the Muscles of Joy artists are admittedly amateur musicians.²³ Instead of relying on virtuosic instrumental skills characteristic of rock music performance, the members ground their compositions in vocal improvisation honed through participation in amateur women’s choirs.

Like 1970s performers, the Muscles of Joy challenge the notion of hierarchical performance structures in musical groups. Switching instruments after every song and seating themselves in semi-circular arrangements facing one another, their lack of regard for traditional audience identification disrupts expectations of musical performance.²⁴ This precarious balance between an internal, communal dynamic in performance and a carefully considered critical reception aligns the Muscles of Joy’s practice with Lawler’s and Müller’s—those that cultivate a counter-public that has absorbed and subverted the lessons of critical practice. Also relying on humor, through juxtaposition of raucous vocal exclamations or atonal amplified instrumental sequences with coolly harmonized *a cappella* melodies based on the exaggerated “grain”²⁵ of each member’s voice, Muscles of Joy mines the various registers of deskilled punk improvisation—from the aggressive to the twee.

Like Lawler and Müller, Muscles of Joy also express a contingent relationship to the visual and flexibility in presentation. In a manner synonymous with that of LTTR’s queer modality, they inhabit spaces and create context-based responses, generating new material and meaning for these contexts while doing so. For a gig in 2008, group member Katy Dove created a series of animations to pre-composed songs.²⁶ Another performance opportunity included an invitation to

accompany a silent film.²⁷ In this way, the shape-shifting work can inhabit the space of a soundtrack or reverse soundtrack, resisting a clear hierarchy between the visual and the aural. Their adaptability extends to projects of “translation”: Keith McIvor, a fellow Glasgow-based artist and musician, invited the Muscles of Joy to interpret a traditional Brazilian protest song for an upcoming compilation CD. They responded by creating both an *a cappella* and an instrumental version. Muscles of Joy’s production lends itself as easily to radio broadcast as gallery-based performances, challenging the strategies of visual representation of artists’ work in defined institutional spaces. Their presentation, however, on BROADSIDE’s program on East Village Radio, was the first time their work had been sonically juxtaposed with practices like Lawler’s and Müller’s. This format fostered and reinforced correspondences between diverse practices, from the musical to those that moved toward the visual, responding to a curatorial prompt.

These three practices (Lawler’s, Müller’s, and Muscles of Joy’s) approach the question of feminist practice from different historical and geographic perspectives (first-generation vs. second-generation, European vs. American.) Yet what ties them together is the recognition of a shift from the politics of essentialism to the politics of representation, a politics that bears out in the discourse of “smuggling” and inhabitation that categorizes both contemporary feminist practice and contemporary sites of curatorial knowledge production. This project is rooted in the politics of anti-visibility that grounded *Bird Calls* within a specific theoretical discourse about psychoanalytic feminism and institutional critique. But these works also reflect a mode of criticality, untethered from the physical site of the institution, that reflects not only the feminist call for a paradigm shift but for a reconsideration of visibility as such. BROADSIDE’s presentation, which used the radio format as a space with an “invisible” audience and a long format, imagines new readings of these works in a format

that more closely mirrors the ephemeral, shape-shifting way that information is commonly (virtually) received today. This flexibility, emphasizing ideas over objects, reflects the ways that non-visibility can be parlayed into a statement about contemporary feminist practice.

Notes

- 1 The full list of twenty-eight artists who appear in Lawler's *Bird Calls* are Vito Acconci, Carl Andre, Richard Artschwager, John Baldessari, Robert Barry, Joseph Beuys, Daniel Buren, Sandro Chia, Francesco Clemente, Enzo Cucchi, Gilbert and George, Dan Graham, Hans Haacke, Neil Jenney, Donald Judd, Anselm Kiefer, Joseph Kosuth, Sol Lewitt, Richard Long, Gordon Matta-Clark, Mario Merz, Sigmar Polke, Gerhard Richter, Ed Ruscha, Julian Schnabel, Cy Twombly, Andy Warhol, and Lawrence Weiner.
- 2 Jonathan Culler, *Framing the Sign: Criticism and its Institutions* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988). Juli Carson quotes Culler in her discussion of how the New Museum acted as a metaleptic discursive site in the 1980s, hosting two feminist exhibitions practically back-to-back that exemplified contrasting feminist positions: "essentialism" (the exhibition by the lesbian collective "En Foco/Heresies," June 1983) and "psychoanalytic" feminism ("Difference: On Representation and Sexuality," curated by Kate Linker and Jane Weinstock, December 1984). This turned the institution into a site for discussion and debate. Carson, "On Discourse as Monument: Institutional Spaces and Feminist Problematics," in *Museums after modernism: Strategies of Engagement*, ed. Griselda Pollock and Joyce Zemans (Blackwell: Malden, Mass.; Oxford; Victoria, 2007), 192–195.
- 3 Irit Rogoff, "Smuggling - An Embodied Criticality," accessed at <http://www.eipcp.net/transversal/0806/rogoff1/en>.
- 4 Andrea Fraser, "In and Out of Place," in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 438.
- 5 Louise Lawler, in conversation with Douglas Crimp, "Prominence Given, Authority Taken," *Grey Room* 4 (Summer 2001): 79.
- 6 Andrea Fraser, "From a Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique," *Artforum* (September 2005): 283.
- 7 Lawler, quoted in Crimp, 80. Documenta VII, curated by Rudi Fuchs, was taken to task by critics such as Benjamin Buchloh for its curatorial modus operandi to reinscribe the myth of autonomous art production by promoting trends such as Neo-Expressionist painting, while downplaying the then current critical models such as conceptual art, institutional critique, and appropriation. For an extended discussion of this exhibition and Lawler's stationary work that was eventually included in the Fashion Moda booth in place of *Bird Calls*, see Benjamin Buchloh, "Documenta 7: A Dictionary of Received Ideas," *October* 22 (Autumn 1982): 104–126.
- 8 Stacey Allan, "Role Refusal: On Louise Lawler's *Birdcalls*," *Afterall* 20 (Spring 2009): 111.

- 9 Cultural feminism vs. textual, psychoanalytic, or semiotic feminism are the preferred terms used in Juli Carson's essay "On Discourse as Monument: Institutional Spaces and Feminist Problematics", 195.
- 10 Griselda Pollock defines this paradigm shift historically and theoretically in her chapter "Feminist interventions in the histories of art," in *Vision and Difference* (London, New York: Routledge, 1988), 1–17.
- 11 The speakers are artists Ulrike Müller, Emma Hedditch, Nancy Brooks Brody, Zoe Leonard, and Megan Palaima who all have what Müller calls an existing relationship toward the material in the Lesbian Herstory Archive. Brody and Leonard are two original members of the queer collective Fierce Pussy, who have been artists in residence at the Herstory Archive and produced an exhibition about its material entitled "Mining the Archive" in March 2009.
- 12 Lawler, in conversation with Crimp, 80.
- 13 From the author's conversation with the artist, November 5, 2009.
- 14 From "Herstory Inventory Sample" PDF, available online at http://um.encore.at/sites/default/files/Herstory_Inventory_Sample.pdf.
- 15 Helen Molesworth touches on this very idea, contrasting the split between separatists, who were seen as creating an oppositional form of feminism to mainstream 1970s essentialism, with groups like LTTR. She says of the contemporary collective's tactics: "Better to create a counter-public sphere, one interwoven with the existing world ... but nonetheless a self-generated framework." Helen Molesworth, "Worlds apart: Helen Molesworth on generations of feminism," *Artforum* (May 2007): 102.
- 16 Julia Bryan-Wilson, "Repetition and Difference: Julia Bryan-Wilson on LTTR," *Artforum* (Summer 2006): 110.
- 17 See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Queer and Now," in *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993): 1–23 and Judith Butler, "Critically Queer," in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 223–242.
- 18 Bryan-Wilson, "Repetition and Difference," 109.
- 19 LTTR has been invited to participate in many exhibition and performance contexts, such as "Explosion LTTR" at Art in General (July 17–August 5, 2004), "Exile of the Imaginary: Radical Read-In at the Generali Foundation" (January 19, 2007) and "LTTR at WACK!, a one-day event at PS1." For a full list, see <http://www.lttr.org>.
- 20 From the author's conversation with editor and art historian Barbara Schröder, November 6, 2009.
- 21 In conversation with the author, November 5, 2009.
- 22 Dan Graham, "New Wave Rock and the Feminine," in *Rock My Religion* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 116–137.
- 23 "There had been a few occasions when some of us had been the in the same place and dabbling in playing instruments. All but one of us was in 'The Parsonage' choir, so that had brought us together too. Vikki, Leigh, and Anne-Marie all had been in bands before, and had played in one together called The 5-piece Horse Family. I think the rest of us have a little training in something from when we were much younger—Arike played in a brass band, Sophie was in a school jazz band, Jenny comes from a family of

folk musicians—and wanted to do more, and also perhaps to explore a different process other than our visual art practices, and spend time in good company doing something creative." Sophie MacPherson and Charlotte Prodder, an email to the author, November 5, 2009.

- 24 Dan Graham states of female punk groups in the 1970s: "During the performance, female group members may appear to refer only to themselves...or they may achieve what is read as "male" proficiency and power in their playing [...] In either of these cases, male audience members may find it difficult to project identification onto the performers," "New Wave Rock and the Feminine," 116.
- 25 Roland Barthes theorizes the "grain" of the voice in relationship to what Julia Kristeva calls the "geno-song," an individual utterance issuing from the materiality of language. Barthes defines it as "the materiality of the body speaking its mother tongue; perhaps the letter, almost certainly *signification*." Roland Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," in *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 182.
- 26 The title of the film was called Welcome and was composed based on footage filmed at the caravans at Balfron, where Dove was in residence. At the Center for Contemporary Arts Glasgow, November 28, 2008.
- 27 The Muscles of Joy composed a live soundtrack with Helhesten to the silent film *The Seashell and The Clergyman* (1927) by Germaine Dulac (16mm film selected from Cinenova, woman's film archive) at Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, November 30, 2008.