

aside the dismissal and stating he would not lend any support to my case. His hostility seemed unnecessary at this point, but I tossed it aside as being inconsequential. He had messed up the situation so badly we had to somehow restore some semblance of legal recourse.

Mick Carter presented our petition to Ponte's court. Ponte delayed his decision until we could get an affidavit from Bob Farin as to what he had represented the terms of settlement to be to me.

The details of his affidavit are unimportant except for the critical point, which was that Caricature Posters was to cease printing and selling the Fuck Housework poster. This was not covered in his version; he effectively lied.

And that brings us back to the final day in court.

My lawyer, Mick Carter, stood up and presented the facts that I had been unduly pressed into settlement and the stipulation to stop selling the posters had been ignored and excluded contrary to my directions. My affidavit and Bob Farin's were clearly in disagreement. Judge Ponte known in the business as a tough law and order man, decided to side with the "radical" lawyer. "Mr. Farin is an officer of the court," he stated "so therefore we will honor his statement that the settlement reached had been agreed to by the plaintiff. Motion to set aside dismissal, denied!"

That was it. I had lost at every turn. I had tried to work within the system. I had expected the copyright law to protect me, and found instead that I was on trial, not those who had stolen what belonged to me. As a woman, do I in fact own my creativity, do women who are artists suffer a double oppression? As an artist I must support myself and

my three children with my ideas. If they can be stolen so easily, how will we survive?

I decided to phone Bob Farin to ask him why he lied on his affidavit. He answered the phone. I told him who it was and then asked him if he had heard of the outcome of our petition. "No," he said coldly. Then I asked him why he had lied. "I stated my position and that is all I am going to say on the matter and I am going to terminate this conversation!" "Bob," I stated flatly, "I know you lied and you know you lied. We went over the terms repeatedly and one of the main points was that they were to stop selling the posters, you know that, Bob . . . but nowhere in the dismissal or anywhere else is that spelled out."

"You are being ungrateful!"

"Grateful for what? I have lost my copyright on my work because you lied on your affidavit." I was very, very angry.

"You ungrateful bitch!" And the representative of the "new left" slammed down the receiver.

So we are more or less where we started. Buying shoes for the children is still a problem. Peter's coat is badly torn and the school year is just starting. Other children have new coats. We still take the bus or walk, and our entertainment revolves around our beautiful park. I would estimate that Caricature Posters has sold between 100,000 to 200,000 Fuck Housework posters . . . maybe Larry Seizel has bought some diamond cufflinks to match his diamond stick pin which he wears with his silk shantung suit.

Reprinted from *Feminist Art Journal*.
Summer 1974; Vol. 3, No. 2.

Mother Love - Mother Work

R. L. Annchild

My mother was 29 when she packed our clothes and left my father. I was 6. It seemed we had just moved down to Texas to join my father in a too large house with palm trees on the front lawn, but now we were leaving, without Daddy, without any explanation, After three days in the same clothes our train pulled into Penn Station in Philadelphia and we went straight to my (maternal) Grandmothers. My mother stayed a week, unpacked our bags, separated my clothes from hers, and repacked hers while mine went into a big empty dresser. She was going to New

York, where I'd been born, and where we'd lived for four and a half years before my father got the idea to start his own business in Houston. My mother briefly explained that she was going to New York to get a job because there were more jobs in New York; and that I had to stay with my grandmother until she found one. And then she was gone. Within two weeks time I had no father, and no mother. I was confused and angry. I was afraid to hate my grandmother since she was all I had left; I was too much in love with my mother to hate her, and my father was too far away. I put into my bedtime prayers "God bless my mother and give her a job quick." Jobs for black women in 1956 were few, low paying and menial. My mother was smart and pretty, but she was still black and six months shy of a high school diploma. I don't know what she did during most of those years in New York, but I knew she

never had a "good job" or the right place for me to come live in with her. Year after year I had to be content with occasional weekend visits.

I settled into life without her. There was school, church, lots of relatives, new things to get used to. I never, ever gave up the thought that one day I would be with my mother, and that that was where I belonged.

Eventually I started visiting her when I had a few days off from school. During one visit she was living in a tiny railroad apartment at the top of endless stairs. Before we got on the subway to go to her apartment she said that she had a "little job" but didn't make much money, and that her place wasn't a good place for me to come live with her. I was relieved after I got there and saw those tiny, sunless rooms that seemed damp and close. The second day I was there a man was shot in the hallway while I was brushing my teeth in the bathroom right by the front door. She held me in her arms for a long time afterwards, she was as scared as I was. Later she took me with her to work, down stairs that were bloodstained to the first floor.

"Work" was making ice cream sodas and selling newspapers in a small corner candy store. I sat on a high stool in front of the malted machine drinking egg creams while my mother told Mr. Al, the West Indian owner of the store, how she just had to get a better job so she could move. I never wanted to go back to that apartment; I thought the best solution would be for my mother to come live in Philadelphia with us, but I don't think she ever considered it.

It was several years before my mother finally got a good enough job with an airlines as a reservations agent. There wasn't much room for promotion, but there were regular hours, frequent raises, and lots of benefits. She moved into a large apartment, and seemed happy and relaxed. I moved in. After seven years things were as they should have been.

* * * * *

I had my first false alarm pregnancy when I was 17. I was a runaway, hitchhiking up and down the West Coast, camping on the beaches of Big Sur. Penniless and content — I had no thoughts of the future more than a few days ahead. I was with a guy who had even less ambition to do something with his life than I and we'd been together for about 6 months.

When I thought I was pregnant I hitched back to San Francisco to get a check up at the Haight Free Clinic. I had many surprising thoughts when I found out the news that I was not at all pregnant. One was that I wanted to have a baby. The next was that I didn't want to get married or live with anyone, I wanted to raise my child on my own. The next thought was that I had to have not just a job, but a career that would support my child and I. I never wanted to be separated from my son or daughter because I wasn't able to support us, nor did I want to depend on anyone else to make that financial security for us. I wanted to have the ability/power of keeping my family together, and I saw the source of that power to be a good income.

I should mention here that I hated working although my only contact with work was minimal. I had worked for awhile in New York in a small boutique. The job was 6 hours a day, and I lived a block away. I was always late; the account books I kept were always off, although it was rare that we made more than a few sales a day. I'd forget to do the small chores set out for me, and I never remembered the prices or exactly which country in the Third World any item was from. My heart just wasn't into work. I hated it. But now that I had my new plan, work had new meaning. At 18 I hitched back to New York alone.

* * * * *

Seven years have passed, I am no longer a daughter, but now the mother of a daughter. My mother died the year after my daughters birth, so she's never seen what I think I was trying to show or prove. That a mother and child can be a family by choice, not by accident, not out of tragedy, not because they have been abandoned or mistreated, but they can begin whole.

When I returned to New York I began an apprenticeship in films as a script supervisor. There was a grant/fund set up to encourage Blacks to break into the mostly all white film industry. (Apprenticing in any category usually took a year — with no pay and there were very few people, black or white, that could afford that.) The (Ford Foundation) grant paid \$100 a week to 12 of us each in a different category. The apprenticeship lasted through my pregnancy.

Both went smoothly, I felt strong and confident. The child that I nourished, somehow nourished me. Having a baby was not a "magic cure". It was simply a decision that changed my life. (Just as my mother's decision to leave my father changed hers.) The kind of decision that is felt before it is known, and its beginning becomes an indistinguishable part of the cycle. I was no longer the painfully shy, insecure, aimless person I'd been. After waiting all those years for a mother, I found that I had the ability to be a mother to myself, to love me. I was surer of my relationships, of my goals, of my future. I was patient through the months of intense learning needed to grasp the job.

I learned the techniques; the note keeping, log making, wardrobe checking, stopwatch timing. You must be on top of the situation through all of the long hours of shooting you are on the set with the director. As the camera moves from angle to angle, from long shot to medium shot to close up, on the same scene over and over, the actors movements must be matched exactly. If there are four people at a table all eating, drinking and talking, you have to know who drank, moved, smiled, pointed, sneezed, got up or ate on which lines. You can't turn to the director and say "I missed that", or "I was watching someone else" or even "*No one* can watch all that!" The smallest mistake could mean losing a good angle or doing a costly reshoot.

You are paid well for this. Today union scale for a forty hour work week is four hundred plus dollars. But there is

no such thing as a 40 hour week. There are always long hours and a lot of overtime. You average six hundred dollars a week on a feature with a moderate budget, and a feature is usually 8-12 weeks. You can work as often as you get calls for jobs. There's a lot of fierce competition for the few jobs that come into New York, and a lot depends on the "wonderfulness" of your personality or who you know, since the assumption is that one script supervisor is as good as the next. (untrue!)

Still for my daughter and I it is an even better set up than I imagined before she was born. The salary has enabled me to be the self-sufficient head of my family. I work one feature a year, some commercials and the rest of the year unemployment insurance. We don't have a car, color tv, summer home, nor is she in private school (some things that most people in my job category have). I work just enough to put money in the bank to cover months of uninterrupted motherhood. When I work I am virtually "away". My on the set hours are generally 8AM to 8PM, the "set" can be anywhere from 1/2 an hour to 2 hours away; after work there is a screening of the previous days work which I must attend. There are night shoots that go from dusk to dawn,

and editors notes to type weekends — if there is a weekend — or nights or early mornings. There is no time for anything other than work. Even a long phone call is too upsetting to the demanding pace kept for those two or three months. Finding babysitters for those unpredictable hours is a job in itself, and I've used every arrangement imaginable.

But the time between films is my time completely. I thought for awhile that the months I worked were a big upset to my daughter. She is now six, and I've done six films. During the most recent film she said "Why are you working now?" I said "I've always worked!" "Oh, you have? But you're always home."

I used to wish my mother was alive to "show her" that I could do what she couldn't. But as my daughter grew and as I grew, the anger that I harbored for all those years because she'd left me — and caused me to run away at 17 — made way for understanding.

Things in 1976 are different from the way they were in 1956. People's reactions to a single mother have changed and working women and mothers no longer look alien on commuter trains.

Women Artists & Women's Studies

Patricia Mainardi

The Women's Liberation Movement in art has the potential to revolutionize all concepts about art as well as about women artists, to rewrite art history to include the accomplishments of all races and classes of women, past and present, and to break down the barriers between 'high' art, which white men define as what white men do, and 'folk', 'decorative', and 'primitive' art, so called because they are primarily the work of women. We not only have the potential to do this, we **MUST** do this because it is everywoman's responsibility to broaden and deepen the revolution until all women are free. We can make ourselves into a deadend street, but in the long run, even we will suffer. The women's movement to date has kept a very narrow focus and has not dealt with these responsibilities. An example is that all of the women artist exhibitions to date in museums, have been 99 to 100% white. As one of the founders of the

Women's Liberation Movement, I can say that I never envisioned it proceeding like this.

Another trend deflecting our movement to freedom is Lucy Lippard and Judy Chicago's attempt to establish a so-called 'feminine sensibility' in art which, instead of freeing women artists from age-old male imposed stereotypes such as pastel colors, womb shapes, infolding forms, seeks to reimpose them with the new found authority that these stereotypes are now coming from 'feminist' women. The effect this has had on me as a feminist artist, though humorous is not exactly what I expected of a women artists movement. Namely that, first, the figurative artists decided that political art is not art. Then, the political artists decided that feminist art isn't political. Now Lucy Lippard and Judy Chicago have decided it isn't even 'feminine'. When Lucy Lippard reviewed the Suffolk Museum Women Artists show, and imposed on it her 'feminine aesthetic' of sensuously infolding shapes, flowers, boxes and eggs, she just could not have been looking at my painting of a tractor. It has taken five years of the women's movement to get me back to where I was before it began.

The only feminine aesthetic worthy of the name is that women artists must be free to explore the entire range of