

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



art possibilities. We who have been labeled, stereotyped, and gerrymandered out of the very definition of art must be free to *define* art, not to pick up the crumbs from The Man's table, in this case labeled infolding forms, circles, pastels or whatever. We must begin to define women's art as *what women do*, not try to slip and squeeze ourselves through the loopholes of the male artworld.

This task is being made more difficult by the refusal of female art historians to live up to their responsibilities as feminists by showing us that women have made art in all forms, styles and sensibilities. Their refusal to do this forced me to take time out of my own painting to research and rewrite the art of quilt-making in this country for the *Feminist Art Journal*. Quilts not only prove that the labels of 'high' and 'folk' art are meaningless, except to sexists, but also prove that there is no single female sensibility, since women made quilts in every style, form, color and design, according to their individual sensibilities. But, unfortunately, we find even those who call themselves feminists agreeing with The Man that women have done nothing of value in art. As Linda Nochlin put it, "The fact, dear sisters, is that there are no women equivalents for Michelangelo or Rembrandt, Delacroix or Cezanne, Picasso or Matisse, or even, in very recent times, for de Kooning or Warhol." With friends like that, The Man can go on vacation. Instead of teaching and researching the accomplishments of all races and classes of women in art—African women, Indian women, Oriental women, as well as white women—and instead of teaching that art is bigger and more inclusive than a painting on a wall, a revolutionary act that would bring them into direct conflict with institutionalized white male supremacy, women art historians are teaching bullshit courses called "The Image of Women In Art"—a fancy title for another course on men's art. This rip-off subject is spreading like a disease through all areas of women's culture—a male supremacist reaction to the demands of women to reclaim their own heritage. There are courses on the 'image of women' in film which don't look at women's films, 'image of women' in music, which don't listen to women's music, 'image of women' in literature which don't read women's writings, and 'image of women in art' which don't look at women's art. The Man has buried women's accomplishments, and most women academics seem content to leave them buried. Interestingly enough, the Black community has not fallen for this sham. 'Harlem on My Mind', Hoving's 'image of blacks' attempt almost provoked riots, and Black Studies Departments are hip enough to only give courses in African Art and Black Art.

Women art historians, while showing great timidity in challenging the sexist, racist, and classist distortions of art history, have been most vociferous in challenging economist discrimination that affects them directly. If we can get them to put the energy into art that they put into their hiring, tenure, and salary demands, the revolutionary potential of the women's movement will be closer to being realized. Until that happens, however, we have a situation similar to one in which women doctors want more medical

school admissions, but refuse to actively support women's rights to control our own bodies. We will also have a situation in which the students are more feminist than their teachers and will refuse to support either their economist demands or their male chauvinist 'women's studies' courses.

Women academics who call themselves feminists but ignore or degrade the accomplishments of all races and classes of women in art, and women critics and artists who seek to re-impose male stereotypes on the creative freedom women artists are just beginning to win, are doing to our movement what The Man himself has not been able to directly accomplish. They do not deserve our support.



Lenor Fini  
*La Fille de Macon*, oil, 1949