

MK&G CAVES
IN TO
RADICAL
FEMINISTS!

The 'male gaze' condemned by the Guerrilla Girls – the observation of the female body from a masculine viewpoint – is being countered in our exhibition by works that focus on female self-representation and draw attention to feminist concerns. It quickly becomes clear that there is no single defining style or 'feminist look'. Rather, what these works have in common is an underlying attitude. They lend visibility to marginalised individuals and groups, either by inviting a broad range of creatives with disparate voices, or by presenting a diversity of designers, imagery and aesthetic positions, or by choosing a certain typeface.

On display are feminist publications and posters. In the 1970s and '80s, *Courage* explored alternative modes of organisation; *Ypsilon* gave a voice to women from Germany's eastern states after reunification in 1990. Anke Feuchtenberger breaks with established forms of narrative and portrayal, *Hugs and Kisses* with gender stereotypes. *Spring magazine* offers a platform for female graphic artists, and *Missy Magazine* unites pop culture and feminism. Protest posters convey important issues taken up by the women's movement during the 1970s and '80s, and roughly 200 zines offer insights into the current queer-feminist discourse.

CALL FOR FEMINIST ZINES

In July 2022 we issued a call for feminist zines on social media and through various networks. The term 'zine' is derived from the word 'magazine' and signifies a type of publication that is usually designed, written and issued by independent creators in small editions. Zines are an important form of activist publishing, since they can be inexpensively produced. Easy to make according to self-determined criteria, they defy established critical standards and conventional objectives: their design and layout often has an amateur look, the writing is intentionally subjective, and no attempt is made to turn a profit or reach a mainstream audience. Consequently, zines are difficult to find and collect. The 'open call' format not only responded to this situation, but also reversed the usual curatorial process: instead of seeking out specific designers, we issued a request for submissions. In this way, the museum received a much broader spectrum of work than if we had relied on our own limited contacts.

Around 200 designers and authors responded to our 'Call for Feminist Zines'. A few designers declined to send in their work, because the MK&G's current funding structure prevented us from paying for submissions. In a first attempt to change this, we invite you to support the *collecti*f* project, which is presented in the next room. Many thanks to all those who submitted their work and everyone who shared the call on their networks.

HANDLE WITH CARE!

You are welcome to pick up the zines.
But please handle with special care!

We intend to preserve these zines in the collection for future generations. They were generously donated by the designers, who approved hands-on use. We are very happy that the objects do not have to be displayed behind glass – and we put our trust in your delicate touch. If you would like to purchase a zine, you can contact the author directly. Should the contact information be missing, please write to grafik@mkg-hamburg.de.

Please do not move the zines more than 2 metres away from the shelf, as this will trigger an alarm.

'FEMINISM - COOL AND INCLUSIVE'

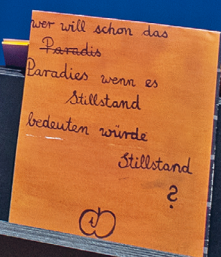
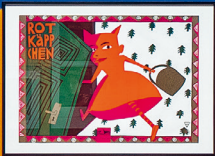
Missy Magazine is bold, loud, polyphonic. Founded in Hamburg in 2008, *Missy* combines feminism with pop culture and reports on both in a clear, confident and engaging manner. In the 'Glossary against panicking over words', terms like 'intersectional' are explained. The 'Radar' section draws attention to events and publications, and there are numerous interviews and essays on such themes as 'Culture & Society', 'Politics & Protest', 'Sex, Body & Style'.

The German magazine's design is consciously 'feminist', which is evident on two different levels: it uses a special 'gender star' (asterisk) that has the same size and position as a lowercase letter. Often appearing superscript in German texts to make words gender-inclusive, the star is integrated here in a more assertive manner. Only typefaces by FLINT (Female, Lesbian, Intersex, Non-Binary, Trans) designers are used in order to support these communities and draw attention to their work. A wide palette of typefaces is employed to reflect the diversity of voices heard in each issue on a visual level as well. The selection of illustrators and photographers is based on a balanced representation of people of colour, queer and white individuals. *Missy* has decisively contributed to the changing image of feminism and to the growing force of intersectional feminism.

STRUCTURAL CRITICISM AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The feminist magazine *Courage* was published in West Berlin between 1976 and 1984, serving the left-wing, feminist, anti-establishment scene as an organ of communication. As one of the most important women's periodicals of the 1970s and '80s, it exemplifies how feminist criticism often challenges conventional structures: the editorial board experimented with alternative organisational forms and flat hierarchies. Decisions were made on the basis of majority (grass-roots democratic) opinion, and a focus was placed on the personal development of employees apart from their productivity. Roles and tasks remained flexible, so that people were continuously learning – often from one another – as they switched from writing to marketing or other areas. The magazine's diverse content also underlined the broad scope of feminist criticism. *Courage* offered feminist perspectives on such topics as violence, rape and sexual abuse, prostitution, abortion, health, sexuality, the workplace, the military, war, and the exclusion of women in the realms of politics, culture, science and economics. The magazine always treated feminism as a global phenomenon and drew attention to female genital mutilation in Africa and the emergence of oppositional women's movements in Eastern Europe.





PRE-DIGITAL DESIGN AND POST-UNIFICATION FEMINISM

'*Ypsilon*, the magazine from a woman's viewpoint' was launched in 1990 as an 'East German counterpart to *Emma*', according to editor Kathrin Rohnstock. The magazine aimed to give 'Eastern women' a voice and counter the one-dimensional perspective of Western media. The exhibited correspondence offers insights into the magazine's inception. Its design was entrusted to Kerstin Baarmann, Heike Grebin and Daniela Haufe – the women comprising 'grappa design', which ranked among the avant-garde of graphic art in the early 1990s. The first issue was made with analogue printing methods, before production gradually shifted to digital technology.

The works shown here provide tangible evidence of the design process in the pre-digital era. With today's computer technology it is very easy to manipulate texts and images, moving them around on a page, changing scales and creating distortions. This was much more difficult back in that time. First using phototypesetting and later computer typefaces, the text and images were manually arranged to create a printing template. Pictorial elements had to be drawn or cut out. Typelayering and superimposed images were created with the help of transparent papers and foils.

TENDER TO ALL GENDER

The magazine *Hugs and Kisses* explores the connections between design and gender. Its team asks: 'What should a queer magazine look like? Not a gay or lesbian magazine that calls itself 'queer' because it sounds hip. This is a question that *Hugs and Kisses* can't really answer – but we make an attempt in every issue and invite everyone to participate. [...] We do not regard identity as a fixed category, but rather as a mutual process. And *Hugs and Kisses* should fuel that process', especially through its 'visual content', such as photo sequences and illustrations.

Published in Hamburg from 2007 to 2013, *Hugs and Kisses* was distributed nationally. Its editor Christiane Stephan is a photographer and an active participant in the left-wing subculture. She also organises concerts and parties, contributing in a variety of ways to the visibility of the queer scene in Hamburg and helping to build networks. *Hugs and Kisses* emerged 'from the deep desire to create something of my own. I wanted to make a magazine that puts a focus on queer topics and people, as well as their lifestyles and backgrounds. So I just followed the DIY principle, jumped into the deep end and got started. Of course I had a great deal of support from my friends, without whom it wouldn't have been possible.'

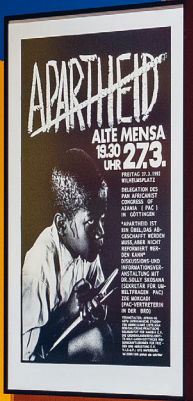
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL DRAWING AS A FEMINIST PRACTICE

Anke Feuchtenberger's multifaceted work has wide-ranging significance. As a comic artist, she creates idiosyncratic characters that break with conventional forms of portrayal and draw the reader into what are often dark, complex, dreamlike landscapes. She creates atmospheric pictorial worlds and expands the genre of comics to include new aesthetic and narrative styles. Since 1997 she has taught at the HAW Hamburg and served in the role of equal opportunities officer. As a professor, she encourages her students to engage in autobiographical drawing and also regards this as a feminist practice that enables people to liberate themselves from external labels and standardised narratives. As a poster artist, she has created explicitly feminist works, such as those for the Independent Women's Association (Unabhängiger Frauenverband). In 2007 Anke Feuchtenberger founded the MamiVerlag together with her partner Stefano Ricci. In addition to producing their own experimental book projects, they use their reputations in the international comic scene to support a new generation of graphic artists. Thanks to a donation of her own works to the MK&G, examples from Anke Feuchtenberger's oeuvre are preserved in the museum's holdings.

NARRATIVE DRAWING AND COLLECTIVE WORK

Spring regards itself as a platform for female graphic artists and lends visibility to their work. *Spring* magazine consists of contributions by various women artists based on a common theme, such as 'freedom' or 'work'. The respective theme is intentionally left open to individual interpretation, but all of the participants share an interest in 'narrative drawing'. The spectrum ranges from classic comics to hand-drawn artwork. Spring was founded in Hamburg in 2004 and has been organised according to grass-roots democratic principles from its inception. Themes, colours, the selection of guest artists and many other decisions are made on the basis of voting or discussion and consensus. Some of the invited participants choose to become members of the collective, consistently providing new impulses. The exchange of ideas is based on constructive criticism – solidarity is cultivated instead of competition. The Spring collective also illustrates the importance of role models: many Spring members were students of Anke Feuchtenberger and name her as an important inspiration.

lesbica
osien
mas
latze
nohko
ov dese
sussies
to life
the bies
stich bies
PAMINA
SIVE PROBLEM.
PROPORTIONS
perrBlogzits.com



shit habits



okcupid 4
Kein-familien-haus
Perspektiven auf Familie und Genet

ntscheide

WOMEN
ON
AEROPLANES

SEX SELLS

QUEEN
BIBI FREISCHNEIDER



ARCHIVING

ACTIVISM

These protest posters give insights into the German women's movements of the 1970s and '90s. Not only is the variety of themes impressive, but also the diversity of visual strategies. Some of the works were designed and produced by trained graphic artists, while others were created by amateurs. A portion were professionally printed, others duplicated on copy-ing machines. The designs also reveal assumptions that were made about the viewing public: Do they have much time at their disposal? Can they look at the poster from a close distance? How much do they know about the respective topic? Do they need to be convinced? Are information and education the primary aims? Or solidarity? Networking? Provocation? Empowerment?

In the hallway you can find additional examples from the collection of roughly 200 feminist protest posters in the museum holdings.

FEMINIST (MIS)READINGS

The designer Rebecca Stephany demonstrates how feminist perspectives can evolve when engaging with problematic works. On the occasion of the Badischer Kunstverein's 200-year jubilee, she was invited to explore the catalogue archive. The result is the publication *200 Sisters Souvenirs – 200 years of exhibition catalogues, side notes and slippery images, a feminist exhibition (mis) reading*. Extracting images from the roughly 300 publications in the archive, Rebecca Stephany rearranged them in ways that create new contexts and connections – for example, numerous portraits from the 1920s to the 1940s do not clearly reveal the subject's sex.

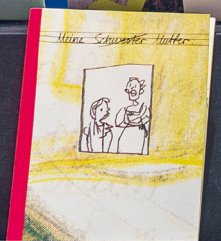
In addition, she turned her archival research into usable and wearable objects like cotton tote bags, bookmarks and industrially woven lanyards. On these ribbon bands, the many sexist statements and text fragments encountered by Rebecca Stephany in the archival publications collide with a few encouraging, self-confident or imaginary statements by female artists. In a photo shoot staged at the Kunstverein, association members modelled the product line, which also included modified pre-used bags and shirts.

The project is documented online at: <https://200sisters-blog1.tumblr.com/>





Small informational text blocks on a blue wall, including a list of names and a paragraph of text.



Woman is defective and hissterial
...a male game boy

Dr. Thomas Aquinas

A well balanced girl is the one who
has an empty head and a full cunear

Book of the Week

Lock Core

Life for women
is not the same
as for men
it encourages
children

ERTSON

TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MISOGYNY IS A SERIOUS AND PERSISTENT PROBLEM,
THE AVAILABILITY OF GUNS, IS A TYPICAL ONE OF THE MOST TOXIC PRODUCTIONS

www.gunstopit.com

