

CHARLOTTE ABRAMOW
DIANE ARBUS
ARVIDA BYSTROM
ZACKARY DRUCKER
MARYAM EISLER
YAGAZIE EMEZI
FRANCES GOODMAN
RANIA MATAR
SHIRIN NESHAT

THE FEMALE LENS

OCTOBER 24 - DECEMBER 20, 2019

Each of the women featured in this show are influenced by the world around them and the artists that came before them. Their contributions to art history also offer a contribution to the societal discussion of femininity, gender, and self.

For millennia women have been depicted in art; their forms made into objects that are admired, collected, sold and loved. The Female Lens is a response to the concept of the male gaze, a term coined by Laura Mulvey building on the concept of gaze, introduced by Jean Paul Sartre. Sartre noted that a power dynamic is established through the act of gazing or looking. The gazer is an agent while the gazed upon is made into an object. Mulvey's analysis demonstrates that patriarchal norms have established a system in which the male gaze is seen as normative, and in which women are forced to view cultural offerings through it. The extent to which this normative position has been internalized by women has shaped film, art, and culture. Analysis of the male gaze, and an active engagement with the female gaze provides a counternarrative, and a new exploration of identity and gender. As contemporary artists emulate, engage with, and challenge the gazes with which they have been presented we see larger space being made for greater fluidity and self-determination.

Today, new media allows for women to construct gaze and engage with imagery in an unmediated way. Images by women and of women reach women directly through platforms such as Instagram and tumblr. Images of the female body are used to celebrate women, to objectify them, to sell products, to empower, and in many ways, this is an extension of the way women have been portrayed throughout art history. Through a focus on photography *The Female Lens* is engaging with this new stage in the creating and dissemination of images of the female form.

From the direct gaze of a young child standing hand on hip to the celebratory pose of a mature nude, these subjects of these photographs (and the artists themselves) span generations and extend around the globe. Photographs of bejeweled labia present one literal physical understanding of female, while photographs expressing gender fluidity directly refute the reduction of the concept of female and feminine to the body. Many of these women, staring directly into the camera, or the eyes, of the artist allows the viewer to meet them eye to eye, and enter into a three way conversation between subject, artist, and viewer.

The Female Lens is on view at **Richard Taittinger Gallery**, 154 Ludlow Street through December 20, 2019.

FOR PRESS INQUIRIES

jenna@richardtaittinger.com

FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

#THEFEMALELENS #ICP
#RichardTaittingerGallery #NYCART



Zackary Drucker & Rhys Ernst, *Relationship*, #12, 2008-2014, C-print, 24 x 24 in. (60.9 x 60.9 cm.), Courtesy of the artists and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles

Richard Taittinger Gallery is excited to welcome the new International Center for Photography to the Lower East Side with our first group photography exhibition. *The Female Lens* seeks to explore how the female gaze informs the construction of images and the construction of identity. The images included in this show seek to explore how women see women and to interrogate ideas of femininity, camaraderie, gender, privilege, oppression as well as the other themes that women navigate consciously or unconsciously on a near daily basis.

The choice to focus exclusively on female photographers facilitates a discussion of the role of women in art history, but also in the creation, performance, direction and expression of femininity, gender, identity, and gaze. This exhibition strives to be intersectional while acknowledging that no one exhibition can exhaust these themes. Our exhibition features work by cis and trans women of a variety of ages and nationalities. The conversation created by and between the works of *The Female Lens* begins to probe the themes of gender and identity, and challenge outdated understandings of male and female gaze.

R I C H A R D
T A I T T I N G E R
G A L L E R Y

T +1 (212) 634-7154
F +1 (212) 634-7155
info@richardtaittinger.com

154 Ludlow Street
New York, NY 10002
www.richardtaittinger.com