

Triangle **France** presents

# FEMININE & FORMAL

Eva Berendes  
Monica Bonvicini  
Kristina Braien  
Delphine Coindet  
Julie Dawid  
Tatiana Echeverri Fernandez  
Jenny Holzer  
Séverine Hubard  
Claire-Jeanne Jezequel  
Colombe Marcasiano  
Falke Pisano  
Lili Reynaud-Dewar  
Jessica Stockholder  
Jennifer Tee  
Lina Viste-Gronli  
Julie Voyce

**April 3rd – May 16th, 2009**

**Galerie de la Friche Belle de Mai,  
Marseille**

# FEMININE & FORMAL

16 women sculptors at the Gallery of the Friche Belle de Mai  
Exhibition from April 3rd to May 16th 2009

The origin of this exhibition is the idea of a rough but playful parallel between the history of sculpture and that of women in the 20th century. Modernist goals, universality ; accepted submission to codes and customs, but through force : sculpture achieves the dynamic tension between tradition and modernity. It embodies a unity, an easiness of understanding. At the same time, its misdemeanors are hard to forgive : contemporary sculpture slides fast into parody.

Sculpture indorses its gender, it is of a performative nature<sup>1</sup>. A sculpture that asserts itself as such, brandishes some symbolic content connected to the status of sculpture (it is also the case of painting but video and installation can hardly do that, as they risk to sink more easily into caricature). Sculpture proclaims in a certain way, even though often ironically<sup>2</sup>, its status of « high art » , even if made of cheap materials and rubbish itself. To belong to a gender is to be able to claim oneself of a “standpoint”. Admitting afterwards that it is not omniscient is a good starting point for being able to appreciate the accuracy of its own reflections<sup>3</sup>.

Taking example from biology or physics, art can reinvest itself a posteriori using gender theories as a basis. Some things stay forever lost, but others that have been abandoned can be resumed and improved. Throughout history, women artists found it difficult to put to practice modernist theories because of contextual reasons (and not intellectual or that could be connected to some « feminine » nature), especially due to the world of art professionals (galerists, curators, critics, art historians), mostly men, which delivered interpretations that symbolically reduced their practice, connecting it to their female condition.

One hundred years later, one has to acknowledge that the point of view has shifted and that it is more and more difficult to label artwork as formally « feminine », even if these stereotypes are still being used in everyday language. Paradoxically, it seems important to underline the historical emergence, in the 20th century, of a feminine point of view (besides black, gay and those of communities in general) for, ironically, it is the emergence of a feminine point of view that finally allows feminine practice to be considered neutral. The age-old conflict between artistic subjectivity and alleged universality of the aesthetic language, seems to get even more poisoned if, besides being an artist, one is also... a woman.

It is therefore interesting, at the beginning of the 21st century, to stay quiet for a moment and live the aesthetical experience of art pieces that intend no less than clearly claiming the modernist tradition (and thus objectivity) but being at the same time produced by women artists (and thus belonging to the « standpoint »). The exhibition proposes, beyond this political contradiction, a unique landscape, where

abstraction dominates and criteria crumble in order to make place for a « queer », « strongly objective » sensuality.

Sometimes crisis is not meant to be overcome: according to sociologist Elsa Dorlin<sup>4</sup> « crisis is also the opportunity to produce heterodoxe, contestatory knowledge that undermine and compete dominant theories ». Any resemblance to current situations might, for once, not be coincidental.

<sup>1</sup> as considered by Judith Butler in « Gender Trouble »

<sup>2</sup> for the subject of the « ironist », see the interesting essay of Susan Rubin Suleiman, « Epilogue : The Politics of Postmodernism after the Wall : or, what do We do When the « Ethnic Cleansing » starts ? »

<sup>3</sup> see philosopher Susan Harding's concept of « strong objectivity »

<sup>4</sup> In « Sex, Gender and Sexuality », « Philosophy » series, PUF

« Feminine & Formal »

Collective exhibition with Eva Berendes, Monica Bonvicini, Kristina Braien, Delphine Coindet, Julie Dawid, Tatiana Echeverri Fernandez, Jenny Holzer, Séverine Hubard, Claire-Jeanne Jezequel, Colombe Marcasiano, Falke Pisano, Lili Reynaud-Dewar, Jessica Stockholder, Jennifer Tee, Lina Viste-Gronli, Julie Voyce

Vernissage April 3rd 2009 starting from 18h30  
Exhibition from April 4th to May 16th 2009

Open from Tuesday to Saturday from 14h to 19h

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## Eva Berendes

Born in 1974 in Bonn, lives and works in Berlin



Untitled, 2008  
cotton, metal rail  
curtain: 2,70 x 13 m

Berendes is one of a number of young artists who have been using Formalism – in sculptures, paintings and design objects – not as strategy but as subject. Her geometrically patterned pieces have as much to do with their own interplay of colours and forms as with evoking the long history of those who have also used such compositions. The word ‘abstraction’ here becomes misleading as a description of her work: rather than abstracting a subject to reveal its inner qualities, Berendes’ more contextual Formalism widens its parameters to become about periods, styles, political movements and events that would be considered extraneous to a Modernist art work.



## Monica Bonvicini

Born in Venice in 1965, lives and works in Berlin.



Hammering out (An Old Argument...)

1998

Vidéo, couleur, son  
FRAC Lorraine, Metz

A vandal feminist and heir to the 'anarchitect' Gordon Matta-Clark as much as to the politician Martha Rosler, Monica Bonvicini doggedly lays bare all the ideologies underlying architecture, revealing how much the smallest space proves to be deeply culturally determined and absolutely gender-based, how it is a place of repression, authority (male, intellectual), the embodiment of all the mechanisms of power.

Her video *Hammering out (an old argument)* is one of these enraged reactions, that she knows how to oppose to such postulates. We see an arm, which we guess is female, attacking a wall with a sledgehammer. For her, the wall embodies the transposition of male chauvinist power into the architecture; it is also the locus for all kinds of metonymy: a metaphor of gender and class separation; a theoretical impasse and a place of meaningful silence. Gradually, as the hammer does its worst, the bricks appear through from the layer below; an allusion to this eternal return forced on all creative work, and also to the hidden rhetoric that serves as a conceptual basis for these apparently neutral spaces. 'For me, there is no such thing as a neutral architecture. Nothing is neutral from the moment you open a door and go in somewhere', she says.

## Kristina Bræin

Born in Oslo, works and lives in Oslo



Tilbake  
2008

“The idea of an ultimate comfort and functionality has always frightened me; in its perfection and finitude it is close to death. As I think sometimes: When you have found the perfect chair to sit in, then what? The non-functional and imperfect still has an unsatisfied yearning for something else, something better, in the same way that a mere idea might be closer to the truth than an absolute materialized result. Sitting uncomfortably is so obviously a temporary situation; you’ll have to change position after a while, which may lead to the reflection that there is no absolute way to sit.”  
Kristina Bræin

Kristina Bræin has studied music, art history, architectural theory and painting. Her interest in all these fields gives great amplitude to her way of working. She says: “The act of conducting a choir has connections to the way I feel about composing or “conducting” a spatial situation. Improvising music has given me a method for trusting my impulses also in my visual work.”

## Delphine Coindet

Born in 1969 in Albertville, lives and works in Paris.



*Bluetooth* , 2008

Wood, plexiglas, polystyrene / 12 painted pannels fixed with hinges  
180 x 350 cm

Delphine Coindet's forms are rooted in real life but conceived via computer aided 3D modeling programs. The artist merges low tech with high tech in her pared back, almost diagrammatic representations of objects: strongly manufactured and simultaneously familiar.

The point of departure in the oeuvre of Delphine Coindet, is a digitally created design of spatial scenarios which the artist translates into reality. Her virtual computer drawings, boasting an artificial colorfulness, are done in a site-specific manner, i.e. they are adapted to individual exhibition projects. On this basis she creates objects and sculptural constellations, frequently hybrids hovering between architectural, designed, and theatrical forms. Delphine Coindet attempts to "redefine the status of the work, going beyond any significance of use" (Hauviette Bethemont). Her virtual model, however, renders such associations less immediate. Viewers eventually perceive something oscillating between reality and fiction.

## Julie Dawid

Born in 1983 in Fumel, France, lives and works in Marseilles.



*Untitled*  
Mixed technique  
3m x 8m

Through her artistic production Julie Dawid doesn't only call into question the image and the pictorial space, but she also tries to draw up a sensitive and intuitive conception of a peculiar universe, the representation of a world not yet petrified. Her approach revolves around the vegetal, it collects rare, hirsute, colourful plants, a herbarium of genetically modified plant species that manifest as a comment on the homogenisation of human as well as vegetal culture. The artist searches inspiration in nature's forms and at the same time her work is nourished by fantastic tales, fables, legends, myths that deal with supernatural worlds. Fiction is constructed and elaborate just like a giant exquisite corpse. The space is that of the narration that can take the shape of tale, of drawing or that of performance.



## Tatiana Echeverri-Fernandez

Née en 1974 à San José, Costa Rica, elle vit et travaille à Londres.



Motherchip 4 and 5  
2006  
various materials  
280 x 25 x 5 cm

Tatiana Echeverri Fernandez makes film and more recently using materials such as sheet glass, steel, wooden logs, found vessels, plaster board, she creates complex layered sculptures playing with the sensuality and connectivity of objects and material. Their often evocative titles, such as “Gangster Woman Before Wedding” bring to mind possible narratives contrasting with the abstraction of the assemblages. Tatiana Echeverri Fernandez also reinvests historical patterns or shapes, proposing a ‘history of the subjective’.

# Jenny Holzer

Born in 1950 in Gallipolis, US, lives and works in New York.



## *Inflammatory essays*

1979-82

60 poster

serigraphy on papier, 43,5x43,5cm each

Early in her career, Holzer began to use text to manipulate the language of pop culture. She developed slogans that were appropriated from common colloquialisms. Truisms, a series started in 1977, were constructed deliberately to challenge the viewer to question the blank-faced consumption of stereotypes. Statements such as, "Men are not monogamous by nature," and "Enjoy yourself because you can't change anything anyway" invaded the city in a variety of media, such as posters pasted anonymously within the public sphere, oftentimes alongside works by graffiti legends. Later, she developed texts that were displayed on LED screens and projected onto buildings, transforming the street into a canvas for ideas, and confronting the audience with the status quo.

In *Inflammatory Essays* (1979-82), Holzer wrote texts that were influenced by major political figures such as Emma Goldman, Mao Tse-Tung, and Vladimir Lenin.

*Inflammatory Essays* were pasted on walls as posters throughout heavily populated areas of the city.



## Severine Hubard

Born in 1976 in Lille, lives and works in Strasbourg, France



*Ohne Brücke keine Perspektive*, 2006  
Installation view, Atelier Frankfurt am Main

Séverine Hubard produces three-dimensional constructions using the rules of DIY (in so much as she uses materials to do what she needs to with, and not for what they are designed to be used for). Her work is somewhat that of a jack-of-all-trades: installations, sculpture, photography, and video. The large constructions, installations and decorative motifs produced in a no-holds-barred way, and the small photo collages apply in each and every instance a language, a technique and a specific method which systematically upset vocabulary and syntax as much as notions of scale and space. By invariably bearing life as it seems organized in mind, Séverine Hubard hijacks what she extricates therefrom, and arranges it as she wishes, in order to disconcert the viewer and throw him/her off balance, by proposing a subversive, cheerful and genial way of looking at things. (frac bourgogne)

## Claire-Jeanne Jézéquel

Born in 1965 in Fontenay-aux-Roses, France, lives and works in Paris



*De-finir (en beauté)*

2008

chipwood, aluminium and plaster

Claire-Jeanne Jézéquel's work and research concentrate on sculpture. She is also teaching at the Nantes Art School. Her sculptures trace lines and define levels. They are balance points without defining space, standard meters that measure their own dimension. They are at the same time abstract, purified but also conceived as « a manner of building a space close to the way we build our living spaces ». Claire-Jeanne Jézéquel uses ordinary materials such as plywood or chipboard that she cuts, folds, breaks, overlaps, imbricates, in order to create imaginary spaces far from scale 1, drawings coming out of the wall. By disrupting our perception of physical places, she imposes us a kind of consciousness of our body and of space.

## Colombe Marcasiano

Born in 1974 in France, lives and works in Paris



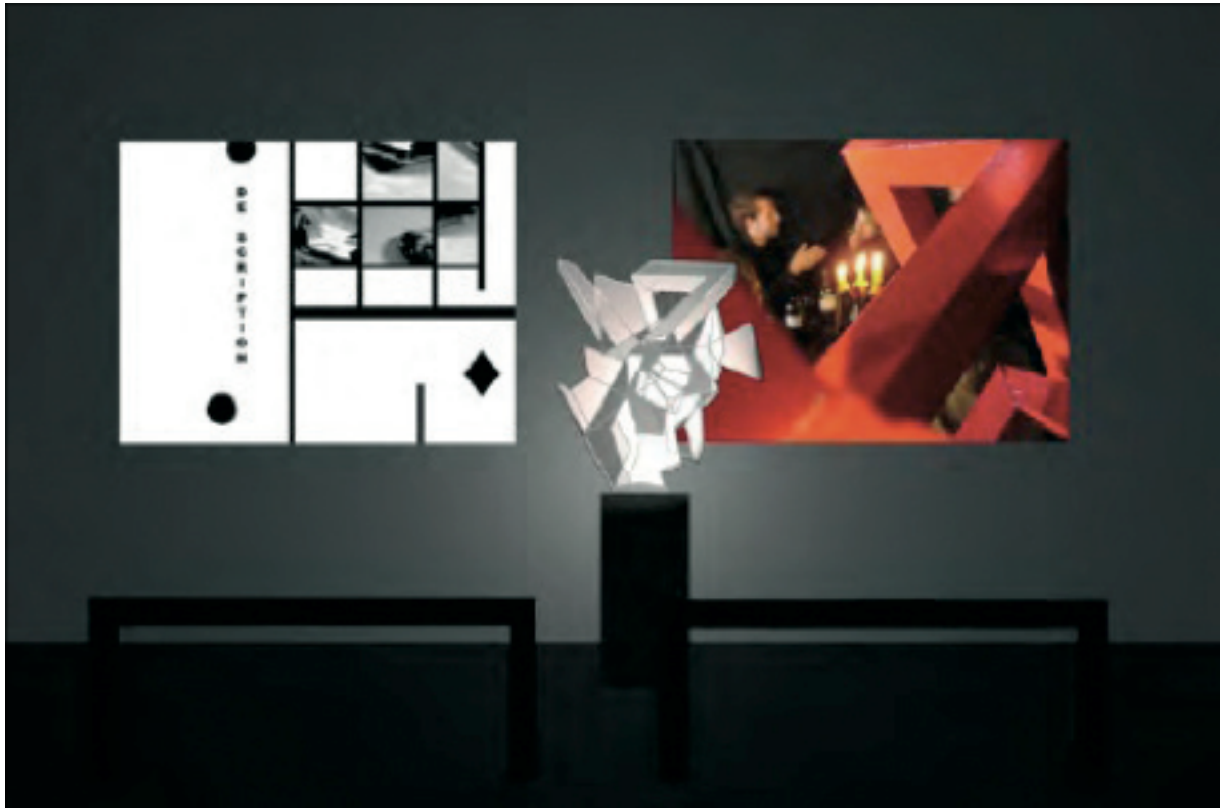
*Palette de survie*  
2007

The modelings, installations and photographs of Colombe Marcasiano are engendered by the world of objects and things that surround us – fragments from nature, furnitures, decorative objects, temporary and random assemblages that display to the one wandering the streets, who knows where to look. These things are re-found through internal fabrication processes rather than found and imitated. The fragile presence of these works imply at times a certain relation to painting, maybe through the relation to the wall which is oftentimes obvious.

« In my work I am searching for the opposition, the confrontation of the body (object, material) to space (landscape, territory). Most often to the lines, the obstacles, the random constructions that find themselves in position of conflict, the obstacle being the element of this comparing. This is the theme that marks my sculptures and installations.

## Falke Pisano

Born in 1978 in Amsterdam, lives and works in Amsterdam



*A Sculpture Turning into a Conversation* (part zero and part one)  
2006  
Live lecture  
2 dvd's 25 mins.  
with A5 publication

Falke Pisano's lecture-performances, text-based video's, objects and photocopied publications are the elements of a body of work that is distinctly induced by a practice of writing. Although mainly text-based, Pisano's work displays a strong concern with the existence and features of concrete objects, and in particular abstract concrete objects. Using language as a means to re-think the potential of abstraction, sculpture and artistic practice she activates the abstract sculpture as a thought-generating principle and employs the idea of the unstable transforming and disintegrating object as a way to address issues concerning object-qualities, form, construction and engagement.



# Lili Reynaud-Dewar

Born in 1975 in La Rochelle, France, lives and works in Bordeaux



*Les Garçons Sauvages* 2008

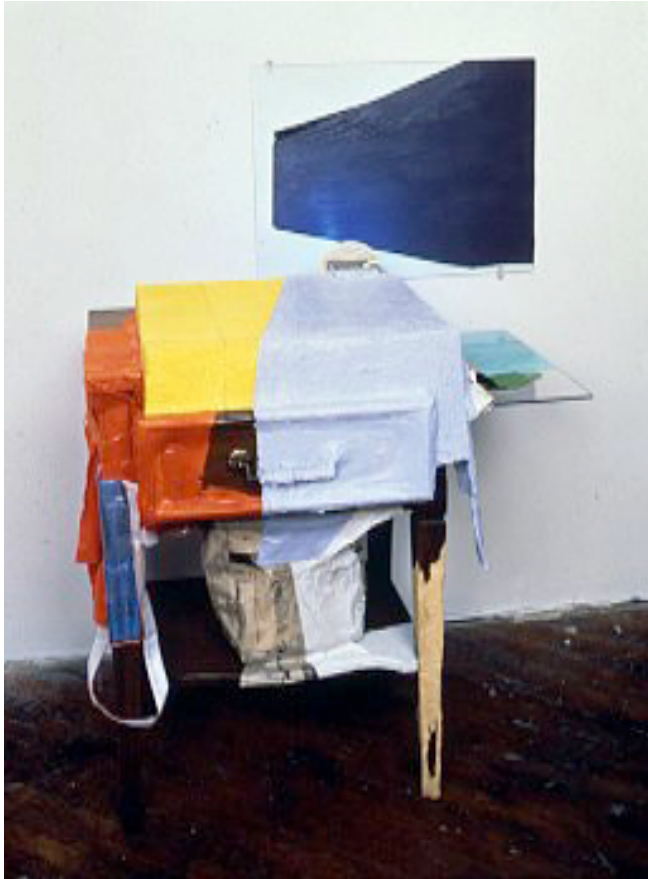
Three wooden columns, photographis prints, different materials  
Dimensions Variable

Using various fragments and products of mainstream culture, Reynaud-Dewar's sculptural works intertwine and imbricate contradictory references in order to disrupt what is legible within them. In doing so, the works build up a kind of enigmatic narration.

Taking images and references as a way to disrupt the design, minimalist and figurative elements in the work, they are used to imply a narrative that is unexpected and unfixed. References such as documentary film, designers such as The Memphis Design group and Studio Bertone and Rastafari culture, are used to superimpose rather than evict each other, which shifts narrative and expectations of what could be fake, appropriation and fiction.

# Jessica Stockholder

Born in Seattle, US in 1959, lives and works in New Haven



Sans titre, 1990

Painting, tissue, plastic, glass  
80 x 73,5 X 61 cm et 51 x 39 cm

Stockholder is a pioneer of multimedia genre-bending installations that have become a prominent language in contemporary art. Her site-specific interventions and autonomous floor and wall pieces have been described as “paintings in space.” Stockholder’s complex installations incorporate the architecture in which they have been conceived, blanketing the floor, scaling walls and ceiling, and even spilling out of windows, through doors, and into the surrounding landscape. The artist explodes the boundaries between painting, sculpture and architecture to construct a new perceptual space.

Found objects, ranging from oranges to neon tubes, discarded household fabrics and decontextualized building materials are massed and lyrically intertwined with profusions of vivid colour. Her architectonic installations engulf the viewer, recalling Schwitters' Dadaist collages, spliced with the formal concerns of 1950s abstract painting and redefined through a postmodern sensibility. Her work explores the body in social and cultural space to generate a complex formal and conceptual experience.



# Jennifer Tee

Born in 1973 in Arnhem, the Netherlands, lives and works in Amsterdam



*Skyline*

2006

Raadszaal Stadsdeel – kantoor Zuid Oost, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Public commission

Jennifer Tee's work shows a few very prominent characteristics. Her videos, sculptures, installations, environments and performances play with mythical elements and create new dialogues that somehow never completely break with older storytelling elements and themes. Lines of thought, inspired by her own life and surrounding, religion, mythology, anthropology, language and travels are brought together in often colourful and layered works of art that are all interconnected, but that are complete in themselves and have their own logic. The elements and objects are used to create new story-like elements among themselves, without simple endings.

Her exhibits sometimes have the character of a situationist-style, temporary, autonomous zone, in which she offers people an opportunity to discover and explore universal fascinations with religion, mythology and play within themselves and others.

# Lina Viste Groenli

Born in 1976 in Oslo, lives and works in Oslo



Exhibition view *Grace Jones Sculpture Project*  
2008  
Galerie Gaudel de Stampa, Paris

Since graduating from The National Academy of Fine Art in Oslo in 2003 Viste Grønli has been preoccupied with the formal and performative aspects of sculpture. Many of her works are concerned with the materialisation of linguistic terms, words and expressions. She explores collective references in language and the strategies involved in the construction of concepts. By giving material form to words and letters, she probes not just language and the semantic meaning of words, but also our understanding of them. Formal aspects, strategies in choice of materials and sizes, and issues relating to the situation and site-specificity are equally important aspects of her production.

Lina Viste Grønli recently finished a six-month residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, and is currently working on a book of her work entitled *Grace Jones On Sculpture*, published by Torpedo Press.

Venues where Lina Viste Grønli has exhibited include UKS, Fototgalleriet, The Vigeland Museum and Astrup Fearnley Museum. Her work is currently on view at Galerie Jones, Cologne.

# Julie Voyce

Born in Woodstock, Ontario in 1957, lives and works in Toronto, Canada



*Back to My 20's*  
2007  
linocut on kozuke paper  
ed of 10

The work of Toronto-based artist Julie Voyce shows a delicate balance of grit and grace, gambling and thrift and a constant sense of wonder.

Julie Voyce has been developing her current series of abstract screen prints since 2000. Her challenge was to produce an entire body of work using the same three colours (transparent cyan/orange/black). Each abstract print was resolved using only two or three colours. Pre-computer paste-up, drawing and re-photo-copied photo copies are employed to construct the images which are then printed on white paper. With good orchestration the printmaker can make two or three colours seem like many more.

The compositions are inspired by everyday life - gleaned in the course of daily errands, transit rides, trips to the museum, trips abroad and objects that unexpectedly catch the artist's attention at home. Doctor Seuss served as her muse. Over time, Voyce's imagery emerged as layers of shapes and dots. Her signature style is immediately recognizable and was achieved through an analytical approach to printmaking, tempered by a fondness for drawing

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