Client’s name

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06 May 2019

Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?

The upper-level, influential, decision-making positions in American art and museum and literary institutions, and in academic publications, book publishers, and most other cultural and intellectual establishments, have always been and continue to be dominated by men. This is true in spite of rising participation by women in recent decades. The article throws light on the fact that ale artists always got and continue to get more opportunities, more influential mentors, more public art commissions, more senior jobs in publishing and teaching, and more of the limited administrative and leadership positions in the arts. This has always been seen in terms of aristocracy where male decision-makers tend to show the work of contemporary artists who are men, and history as written tends to support the idea that the most “important” past artists were men. That’s because the great women artists of the past struggled to be accepted, and their work was ignored or even sabotaged, and much of it has now been forgotten or lost.

Artistic works by men are more likely to be reviewed, more likely to be reviewed in major journals, more likely to be stocked by galleries, more budget is spent marketing them, and they thus often make more money than books by women. Which is why, 200 years after the Bronte sisters, women artists still sometimes exhibit their work under male or gender-neutral pseudonyms or initials.

The historic works of influential persona like Frida Kahlo in my opinion also follow the same approach as the article in view. Kahlo was already an incapacitated woman with shattered dreams, however, her art work representations of gender-based stereotypes of the society. Sexism, Eurocentricity, and hundreds of years of rule by men of European descent have contributed to the present-day struggle of the lack of representation of women in the upper management levels of the art world. Women are overrepresented in the curatorial field but rarely make it to the director level positions. If one wants to have an even more nuanced look, they need to examine the disconnect between white feminists in the Women’s Art Movement and the Where We At Collective. The legacies are still very much alive and well as we approach the anniversary of the Women’s Building. Throughout history the role of women has been to keep her husband fed and happy and have babies. They didn’t have the time or encouragement to express themselves. Only female royalty or aristocrats were in a position to express their talents publicly. Still, many female writers and painters hid behind male names so they world be taken seriously. Even now it is very common for a woman writer to use initials, such as, J.K. Rollins and E.L. James, to appear to be masculine, to avoid discrimination. Women have been painting and writing since the beginning of time, yet they were deliberately and systematically excluded from institutions of power and the article highlights that this did not happen by accident. Women were discriminated against and prevented by law from entering universities, from holding positions of leadership and from having agency over their own lives.

The way women live now is a direct result of the discrimination they have suffered in the past; the tendency to ‘overlook’ women’s creative efforts is ingrained and pandemic. It is learned behavior so much so that women themselves accept it without even always understanding it. Yet, again based on my personal experience as an art world observer the artwork by women artists like Kahlo of every historical period are just as interesting, just as accomplished, just as innovative or avant-garde as work by men but remain uncounted for. The need is to realize that women are behind in opportunities and are only very slowly catching up, but they are in no way lagging on the level of artistry or accomplishment.

References

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