

WestminsterResearch

<http://www.westminster.ac.uk/westminsterresearch>

**Circulations and Co-operations: Art, Feminism and film in 1960s
and 1970s London**

Reynolds, L.

This is a pre-publication version of a book chapter published in Applin, Jo, Spencer, Catherine and Tobim, Amy (eds.) London Art Worlds: Mobile, Contingent and Ephemeral Networks, 1960-1980, Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 133-150.

It is included here with permission.

The WestminsterResearch online digital archive at the University of Westminster aims to make the research output of the University available to a wider audience. Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the authors and/or copyright owners.

Whilst further distribution of specific materials from within this archive is forbidden, you may freely distribute the URL of WestminsterResearch: (<http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/>).

In case of abuse or copyright appearing without permission e-mail repository@westminster.ac.uk

Chapter Seven

Circulations and Co-operations: Art, Feminism and Film in 1960s and 1970s

London

Lucy Reynolds

A Question of Collectivity

In the women's issue of *Studio International*, published in 1977, the artist Margaret Harrison observed that the early years of the decade had seen 'the beginnings of a feminist consciousness' and 'a forceful and progressive struggle to write ourselves back into history'.¹ Certainly, the early 1970s marked the articulation and organisation of a united voice of protest and a call for women's rights in all areas of culture and the arts, through networks of emerging women's campaign groups and events. The collective emphasis of these activities is articulated in the 1974 statement for the Women's Workshop of the Artists' Union, which laid out its mission to be both a means of mutual support, and to counter the individualised modes of authorship common to art:

We formed as a collective of women artists because of our common situation/condition. We share similar, if not identical problems of isolation; both from other women artists and the general isolation of artists in a society which is alien to collective creative activity.²

Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock cite this text in the opening chapter of their anthology on feminist art practice in Britain *Framing Feminism: Art and the Women's Movement 1970-1985*. It provides support for their argument that the imperative of collective feminist practice was a 'double-edged assault ... against the myth of

individual creativity which, in practical terms, results in isolation and exploitation for artists, and against the particular experience of women, cut off from each other and from public acknowledgement as artists'.³

However, to what extent were these pressing discourses and activities reaching those women artists engaged in cross-disciplinary art practices such as film at this fledgling point in feminism? More aligned to the visual arts in its experimental forms, yet still related to the discourses and modes of reception associated to cinema, experimental film in the post war period occupied a dynamic yet uneasy juncture between the visual arts and cinema. This essay explores, through the prism of four women working with film in late 1960s London, whether the marginalised status of experimental filmmaking was to have further ramifications for art practices, as the Women's Workshop acknowledge, which were already isolated from accepted discourses in art and film by the nature of their maker's gender. And, just as the Women's Workshop advocated, did the development of collective and collaborative practices offer new supportive contexts for women artists working with film?

Certainly, the different interest groups which burgeoned in the early days of the British Women's Liberation Movement register the experience of community initiated by consciousness raising groups, and the recognition that collective organisation was required for change, a factor already apparent in the strategies of the civil rights movement. Spearheaded by the formation of the London Women's Liberation Art Group in 1970, The Women's Workshop began operating from 1972 as a powerful pressure group for female parity within the Artists' Union, as well as providing an active meeting point for debate and discourse around women and art, both theoretically and practically. As is well documented, the Art History Collective also provided important advocacy and rehabilitation work on the canon of women

artists.⁴ Organisations such as the Women's Free Arts Alliance and the Women's Liberation Workshop later played important roles in advocating equality, visibility and active support for their practices through the organisation of exhibitions and workshops, in response to the lack of endorsement from major art institutions.

In parallel to this culture of burgeoning feminist voices in the visual arts, there were also signs that women working in film culture were addressing lost histories and identifying the patriarchal structures at work within film's modes of production, as well as its on-screen representations. Initiatives such as the London Women's Film Group formed in 1972 to address inequality in the film industry.⁵ The Women's Event organised by Claire Johnston and Laura Mulvey at the Edinburgh Film Festival in 1972, as part of the Society for Education in Film and Television's annual lecture series, sought to write women back into history by screening the films of directors such as Dorothy Arzner, a respected and successful director in 1930s Hollywood who had been side-lined, with related discussions and essays.

In terms of early feminist meeting points between the two spheres of cinema and art activity, crossovers were more evident in discourse than practice. Laura Mulvey and Mary Kelly met as part of the feminist reading group, entitled the History Group, which had formed in 1970 in response to the first National Women's Liberation Conference at Ruskin College. The History Group brought together artists, film critics, art historians and writers such as Sally Alexander and Juliet Mitchell, offering a means of examining Freudian, and later Lacanian, psychoanalytic frameworks in relation to questions of feminism and the patriarchal condition. As Mulvey recalled:

It was then that we started reading Freud and thinking about psychoanalysis

.... As part of a group, one suddenly found the confidence to ask questions from a political point of view The first thing I wrote, in fact, was in The Shrew on the “Miss World Demonstration.” ... Reading Freud, for all of us, was the most fundamental event of the whole group experience.⁶

For Kelly this early influence would later surface in works such as *Post-Partum Document* (1973-1979), and for Mulvey in her seminal text for *Screen* in 1975, ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’.⁷ Although Kelly did produce a short film *Antepartum* (1973) of her naked belly whilst pregnant, *Post-Partum Document*, the documentation of her son’s development from baby to child, functioned as an installation of text and sculptural forms. Likewise *Women and Work* (1974), made collaboratively with Margaret Harrison and Kay Hunt, had used video as a mode of documentation within the exhibition, rather than as an art form in itself.

Where, then, might we locate women artists choosing to work with film as a creative medium at this early moment in the British feminist movement? Can their works be found within the collective circulations of the Women’s Workshop and the History Group, or the discourses of feminist counter-cinema, represented by Mulvey? Or do they remain, either through choice or necessity, outside these spheres of feminist agency, working within other contexts and conditions? Instances of female filmmaking can be found in the *Directory of UK Independent Film-Makers* published in the inaugural 1972 issue of *Cinema Rising*, a short lived London-based broadsheet of independent film. (fig 1) A brief paragraph at the beginning of the article, written and compiled by *Cinema Rising*’s editor Tony Rayns, admits that the ‘definition of independent film making is difficult, since the films differ markedly in approach and intent’.⁸ Rayns stresses that one of the key criteria for entry to the directory is that

they are funded outside the state, television and film industry, concomitantly implying that the filmmakers represented might perceive themselves as engaged in an alternative film practice more aligned to the visual arts. A photographic collage of thirty seven individual artists accompanied the article, spread over two pages, together with individual biographies of those agreed upon by Rayns, and designated experts in the field, as the most significant independent filmmakers then practicing on the British scene. *Cinema Rising's* snapshot of alternative filmmaking culture thus provides rich material for a study of the alliances, ethics and approaches characteristic of that period: from the radical film agit-prop represented by CinemaAction, and advocated in the article by Simon Hartog and Simon Field, to the London Filmmakers' Co-operative's more fine arts aligned axis delineated by David Curtis and Peter Gidal.

Yet any canon or survey is marked by its omissions. Searching amongst the facsimiled faces I can discern only four individually named women: Annabel Nicolson, Sally Potter, Carolee Schneemann and Barbara Schwartz.⁹ Elusive amongst the sea of male faces, their images arrest me with questions concerning the place of female practices in alternative film culture in post-war London (fig. 1). We might first situate the lack of women in Rayn's survey in relation to later feminist studies of canon formation, and Griselda Pollock's definition of the veils of naturalisation and universality that seek to validate what she sees as 'the highly select and privileged membership of the canon that denies any selectivity'.¹⁰ However, Pollock's critique of the patriarchal canon within the visual arts cannot give us a complete answer. For whilst female membership to *Cinema Rising's* alternative film canon might appear at first selective and marked by omission, the place of the woman artist filmmaker in the culture of the London art world during the early 1970s is further complicated by the

lack of acceptance of alternative film in both mainstream and feminist art and film culture. This chapter explores how Potter, Nicolson, Schwartz and Schneemann each negotiated the complex terrain of what might be considered a double bind of marginalisation, coming from both their filmmaking peers, as well as their feminist contemporaries in art and film. Tracing the trajectories of their film practices, I ask if they experienced the artistic isolation articulated in the Women's Workshop's statement, and consider what collective strategies they may have turned to in order to counter it.

The Building

Sally Potter, Barbara Schwartz and Carolee Schneemann all reappear in a 1972 article published in *Time Out* contemporaneously to *Cinema Rising*.¹¹ The piece, entitled *Interviews with Three Filmmakers*, was devoted to the question of women working in independent film. According to the opening text, the *Time Out* feature marks the occasion of a programme of films by:

...five film makers (who are also women) at the Co-op on Saturday. If the situation in which they are being presented is something of a ghetto – and it's important that two at least have been involved in similar shows before – it did at least provide an opportunity for a discussion with three of them about their situation as women who make films.¹²

The interviews with Potter, Schwartz and Schneemann in *Time Out* all reflect in different ways their conflicted position as women artists working with film at an embryonic moment for both feminism and artists film in Britain. Their interviews

clearly show that they were aware of the context of feminism, which they are being asked to discuss for the purposes of the article. Potter, for example, is critical about the potential for feminism to express its political aims aesthetically, speaking of how 'women's lib films I have seen all use such outdated and archaic and also reactionary structures'.¹³ Schwartz expresses a positive, if tentative, relationship to feminism's potential to be reflected in her films, referring to Nell Dunn's 1965 book of interviews, *Talking To Women*, as a model for what she would like to explore in her films: 'I guess that's what my films are like - particulars rather than generalities - that's how I can get to understand the importance for instance of the women's movement'.¹⁴

It could be argued that that Potter and Schwartz's reluctance was shaped by their alternative engagement in the pluralistic arts activities of the late 1960s and early 1970s, circulating around the Arts Lab, first at Drury Lane and then Robert Street in Camden, where the London Filmmakers' Co-operative was based until 1971. As artists interested in working with film, Nicolson, Potter, Schwartz and Schneemann bridged a unique transitional moment between the Arts Lab imperative of 'mix all the arts!'¹⁵ Here, film was presented in close proximity to experimental theatre, music and art. The Dairy – the space at Prince of Wales Terrace where the London Filmmakers' Co-op made its base from 1971 – meanwhile, nurtured more visual arts inflected film practices. The blurred boundaries, spatial proximities and contingencies of the Arts Lab are reflected in the distinctive mix of performance and multi-screen projection discernible in Potter's early film work, and those of peers such as Nicolson. Potter remembers the 'vibrancy of the whole concept of an arts lab, of a sort of melting pot, of a free place in the centre of town where you could gather and where you could see an event or a film or a painting or a talk'.¹⁶ At the same time, the rigour

of Potter or Nicolson's enquiries into film's material surfaces and apparatus, as I shall discuss, tempered these counter-cultural indeterminacies, and might also be seen to anticipate the London Filmmakers' Co-operative's later more fine art orientated engagement with modernist concerns.

Furthermore, whilst Potter, like Nicolson, Schwartz and Schneemann was making use of the rudimentary film facilities offered at the Arts Lab at Robert Street, she also pursued an ongoing interest in performance through her association with the performance company Group Events. In this context she developed techniques of improvisation and theatre performance as well as street theatre, happenings and other live events. Works such as her double screen performance *The Building* (1969) as well as her double screen film *Play* (1970) and her later three screen film *Combines* (1972) could be seen as points of convergence across these different cultural contexts. Performed at the New Arts Lab and the National Film Theatre in 1969, *The Building* creates a playful dialogue between film space and live space (fig. 2). Two performers – fellow Co-op filmmaker Mike Dunford, and Leda Papaconstantinou, both of whom Potter had met through her involvement with Group Events – sit on chairs before their screen selves, projected in negative and involved in a series of actions. The movements end, as Potter puts it, 'with the films showing their images crossing and re-crossing from screen to screen and laughing'.¹⁷ (fig 2) Notably, the work foregrounds the exploration of gender roles. At one point the two performers throw off their white overalls to reveal costumes, which Potter describes as 'red satin skin tight clothing with exaggerated padding, so that the woman is exaggeratedly female and the man had great padded shoulders'.¹⁸ The purpose of this caricature of gender was, according to Potter in her *Time Out* interview, 'an attempt to get across the necessity for us to destroy our roles before we can create anything'.¹⁹ *The Building*

suggests not only a nascent interest in the relationship between film and performance, as well as a reference to theatre, but could be seen to explore how an experimental intersection of performance and double screen projection might engage with questioning gender. Made before the articulations and activism of the Women's Liberation Movement were fully established in Britain, Potter uses formal experiment to make a playful and implicit examination of gender roles.²⁰

For whilst *The Building* might be read in retrospect as a beguiling address to the limitations of gender representation and its roles, this was not Potter's stated intent. She describes her primary aim for the piece as how to represent 'pure presence', through the meeting of film with performance in 'a sort of synthesising and reconciling of non form and expanded form'.²¹ But the absence of overt feminist content did not prevent *The Building* being dismissed by her Co-op peers on the grounds of gender. Potter recalls how she felt 'that what I was doing was neither taken seriously nor respected in any shape or form in that context. And especially when it started to involve things like dance.'²² Potter's experience illustrates again the double bind of marginality experienced by women working with film in an experimental context.

Although Potter may have been granted membership to *Cinema Rising's* directory, the dismissal of *The Building* on the grounds of its theatrical content demonstrates the ways in which experimental forms of cinema were engaged in an overlapping system of validation and exclusion emanating from both the film industry and the visual arts, returning us to the coded legitimisations and omissions of artistic practice through which male canons have traditionally been formulated. B Ruby Rich has described experimental film as 'a cinema of the sons' in obeisance to mainstream film as the 'cinema of the fathers'.²³ Lisa Cartwright and Nina Fonoroff have further

defined the alternative film community and the experimental practices associated with spaces such as the London Filmmakers' Co-operative, and its New York counterpart the Filmmakers Co-operative, as 'a patriarchy of experimental film ... with its own standards of "quality" to protect, with an absolute faith in certain principles and ideals, which themselves mirror patriarchal ideology.'²⁴ In the case of *The Building*, Potter's theatrically infused focus on the body could also be seen to exceed 'the modernist logic of formalism' in which, according to Amelia Jones, 'the body of the artist – in its impurity – must be veiled.'²⁵ In her theorisation of the reception of the body art surrounding Potter's contemporaries such as Schneemann, Jones argues that the modernist critic's maintenance of a position of 'disinterestedness' required 'a pure relation between the art object and its supposedly inherent meaning (embedded in its "form", to be excavated by the discerning interpreter)', something which refuses the presence and excesses of the mediating subject, such as the performers in *The Building*.²⁶ This same disinterestedness can also be identified in what Fonoroff and Cartwright have described as the 'positivist science' of North American Structural film, where the 'set of rules that govern it, delineate and restrict the area of inquiry' provide:

no guarantee of freedom from the ideology inscribed within the very materials of film. On the contrary, it reflects the patriarchal ideology from which it originated, and which it continues to serve.²⁷

The performative experiments of *The Building*, therefore, could be seen to place Potter outside the legitimations of the more purist modernist practices to which

filmmakers at the London Filmmakers' Co-operative aspired, following its move from the pluralist conditions and counter-cultural associations of the Arts Lab.²⁸

It could also be observed that these nuanced and implicit forms of exclusion, in which discrimination is disguised within the validations of what is deemed acceptable as art, posed profound dilemmas for women artists at the time, concerning not only the validity of their work, but their sense of identity as artists. Potter would seem to confirm Jones' notion of modernist 'disinterestedness' when she recalls that validation was predicated on the premise that: 'somehow the central work had some kind of neutrality to it, an objectivity, and then there was this *other* thing. Called anything that women made or, you know, was other than that. It seemed to me [this] was inherently a form of marginalisation both conceptually and in the body of work. It was a reason to dismiss.'²⁹ Potter, like other women artists, then and now, felt the need to distance herself from an overt use of feminist discourse in order to absent herself from the negative associations modernism attached to practices with gender connotations, such as dance, in order that her practice be taken seriously, and not reduced to what Potter had referred to as 'this *other* thing'.

Nicolson also expressed ambivalence about direct affiliation or association to feminist concerns. Although a later 1973 film performance *Reel Time* utilised two machines with gender associations – a sewing machine and a 16mm projector – in dialogue, she was clear that:

I don't want to be making a claim that this is a statement about women because I don't think that would be quite right. I was saying something about me. Of course I was aware that I'm a woman and I'm female but it wasn't the political context.³⁰

Nicolson's remarks thus emphasises individual creativity and subjectivity, which are seen as the central traits of the artist in modernity. As Jan Rosenberg has observed, in an illuminating 1979 study of feminist film practices:

The avant-gardists have a more tenuous and ambiguous relationship to the feminist film movement. They continue to make films which explore personal consciousness, sexuality, childhood and other ideas compatible with feminism from a more subjective and psychological perspective than the documentarists.³¹

She also noted that, despite the patriarchal inscriptions of avant-garde cinema, their primary orientation was 'toward the world of avant-garde film and art rather than political feminism.'³² Conflicted by the split modernism requires between their identities as artists and as women, Nicolson and Potter made a clear separation between their individual practices as artists and their involvement in the women's movement.³³

But does this return us to the isolated and individualist conditions decried in the Women's Workshop statement? According to Potter the 1972 *Time Out* grouping of Potter, Schneemann and Schwartz is misleading in this respect. For whilst the Co-op at the Robert Street Arts Lab and the Dairy provided a meeting point for artists interested in working with film, it did not engender a particular collectivity between its female members. It could be argued that for Potter, an experience of collective agency, as well as a space of liberation from the constraints of a prescriptive and discriminating modernism, came from her contact with the collaborative energies and

ensembles of live theatre. After the positive experience of working with Group Events, she attended a one-year course in choreography and dance at the London School of Contemporary Dance in 1971, initiating fruitful collaborations with contemporary choreographers and dancers such as Richard Alston and Siobhan Davies at its base The Place Theatre. This deeper engagement in performance and dance continued in dialogue with expanded notions of film, such as her triple screen film performance *Combines* in 1972. Evoking the temporal and spatial play of *The Building*, *Combines* mirrored live performance with the dancer's onscreen image and gestures. Filmed and performed within the studios of *The Place*, the work suggests that – although film was still an intrinsic factor in Potter's work – more fruitful, and less limiting processes, practices and collaborations were to be found in the spaces and discourses of contemporary dance and live art. (fig 3)

Reel Time: Claiming Subjectivity

For Nicolson, coming from an art school background as a painter, however, the Co-op provided a sympathetic space in which to nurture her growing interest in the potential of the film medium (fig. 3). Nicolson alluded to the sense of 'a critical mass' of other like-minded artists who wanted to explore the potential of film, where 'we weren't the first generation because there had been other people doing it – other artists in history – but in a way we were the first generation that had a number of us.'³⁴ Like Potter, she taught herself the fundamentals of filmmaking on the equipment at the New Arts Lab, resulting in works such as *Anju* (1970) and *Slides* (1971), whose sewn, painted and scratched surfaces demonstrated her interest in film's material qualities. She became fully involved in the Co-op's organisational activities, later curating its cinema programmes, as well as engaging in the modernist debates of process and surface

which cemented the Co-op's reputation for a rigorous practice of formal, or so-called Structural, filmmaking during the 1970s.³⁵ Unlike Potter, the materialist qualities of Nicolson's work, which emphasised abstraction rather than drama, enabled a level of acceptance for her work which accounted for its inclusion in programmes at the National Film Theatre and the Tate on Structural Film. Returning us to Jones' concept of 'disinterestedness', it could be argued that the containment of her work within this modernist frame of reference was sustained by a narrow mode of interpretation, which was descriptive rather than associative. Allusions to the traditionally gendered activities of stitching or cloth as a fruitful means to offer alternate interpretations of the threaded fragments of *Slides*, for example, are absent from readings of her work until much more recently.³⁶ Furthermore, the narrow frame of reference with which the work was originally received also stresses just how nascent the articulations of feminism within the sphere of art were in the early 1970s. Potter is clear in retrospect that, when making films between 1968 and 1970, 'There was not a vocabulary. At that time there wasn't really a sort of driving sense of pride about reclaiming female vocabulary.'³⁷ Although the performances, sculptures and films of artists as diverse as Yoko Ono, Niki de Saint Phalle and VALIE EXPORT may have already asserted a female perspective during the 1960s, contemporaneous developments drawing on an explicitly feminist discourse did not become prevalent in the UK until 1971, with the drawings and paintings of artists such as Margaret Harrison and Monica Sjöö, both members of women's art groups.³⁸ Furthermore, the extent to which either Potter or Nicolson were aware of the 1972 formation of The Women Artists Workshop or other related initiatives is unclear, suggesting that at this early point, at least, they were not connected to these circles. The Women's Liberation Movement conference held in London in 1971, and attended by Potter, addressed more explicitly political agendas

to do with equal pay, childcare and domestic abuse, which could be seen to account for the perception of both Potter and Nicolson that, whilst the Women's Movement might improve women's living conditions, it had little impact on their art practices.

However, works such as Nicolson's *Slides, Reel Time* (1973) or her film performance, *Jaded Vision* (1973), where a paper bird dangles and dances in front of the projector beam, extend the artisanal focus of experimental film practice into a tactility that evoked life outside the studio and the gallery. As Guy Brett has noted:

Whereas the typical male attitude has stressed professionalism in art as a special realm from which the other parts of life are shut out, women made no break between their lifestyle and their art practice, they often extracted meanings from materials directly associated with their lives, not with art history.³⁹

Such, it could be argued, was the case with Nicolson's film performance *Reel Time* (fig. 4). For whilst the projector and the sewing machine that structured the performance make compelling allusion to the gendered labour of the sweatshop and the projection booth, Nicolson was more focused on how the apparatus reflected the creative privacy of her studio. She refers to the way in which 'So many things happened once I got those [projectors]. Because they were in my studio. Even though there were projectors upstairs in the Co-op because it was in the same building, once I got my own projectors I just had a relationship.'⁴⁰ By laying a subjective claim, which enfolded her own female identity, to the gendered territory which the cinema apparatus connoted, she might be seen to change the terms by which this technology

is understood, bringing it closer to her own experience and creative practice as an artist, in which a feminist message was implicit rather than overtly stated. (fig 4)

Reel Time was first presented at the London Filmmakers' Co-operative in May 1973, during what proved to be a high point of activity for a version of 'expanded cinema' distinct to the British context. Collective working processes were crucial to the convergences of film, performance and installation realised by Nicolson and the close-knit group of artists connected to the Co-op. In this experimental climate Nicolson and the other co-op members sought to rethink film spectatorship, opening it up to the temporal/spatial conditions of the gallery through the interposition of performance and multi-screen projection.⁴¹ Working with peers such as Malcolm le Grice, William Raban, David Crosswaite and Gill Eatherley, she was able to further her examinations of the potentials of the projection process and its apparatus for a live situation. The results, as one spectator remembered, were an evocative interplay of different sensations: 'It's very hard to pin down your things, my mind is full of images, colours, light, natural light and artificial light, beams moving, nothing still, all these things come to mind.'⁴² In this sense, the dialogues and collaborative events with which Nicolson was involved through the Co-op provided a collective support for the development of her work with film, without recourse to a specifically feminist discourse or its networks. Later in the decade, however, Nicolson did become more deeply involved in feminist collective thought and action, as I shall discuss.

Gill Eatherly, not featured in either the *Cinema Rising* photo gallery nor *Time Out's* interview, might be considered one of the omissions from early canons of independent women filmmakers in London. But whilst her image and her voice are missing from contemporary accounts of the field, screening notes, publicity and published statements attest to her significant and established presence at the Co-op

during the early 1970s.⁴³ Eatherly produced a unique body of films, film performances and film installations through her collaborations with Nicolson and the other filmmakers exploring this multi-disciplinary terrain.⁴⁴ However, like Nicolson and Potter, she also separated feminist concerns from her own practice, despite her sympathy for them: ‘Obviously I was aware of the feminist position but that was enough for me to ...You could be sympathetic with it but you didn’t need to put it into words.’⁴⁵

Home Movies and Roundhouse: London Networks

Barbara Schwartz was also a presence at the Arts Lab and the Co-op during this period. Unlike Potter, Eatherley and Nicolson, however, examples of her work are difficult to track from this period. Shot on 8mm, their titles are tantalisingly evocative: *Home Movies*, *Gina*, *Everything’s Gonna Be Alright*. As Glassner describes them in her article:

Her films are personal; with a genuine impromptu feeling to them - they record streets, faces, rooms but always without self consciousness and without descending to the uncritical myopia of home movies. They’ve wit, perception, immediacy.⁴⁶

Schwartz’s use of a film gauge associated more with the amateur and the domestic returns us to Brett’s observations of an art that draws on the sphere of life. It also suggests an ambivalence towards the Co-op’s emphasis – particularly at the Dairy – on 16mm filmmaking and its connotations of an artisanal artist film practice, rooted in the traditions of experimental film’s post-war practices. However, it was Schwartz’s

interest in experimental film, first in response to the films she saw at the Ann Arbor Film festival whilst undertaking a degree in English Literature at the University of Michigan, and secondly, nurtured at Ken Jacob's film workshops at Anthology Film Archives in New York, that encouraged her to come to London to attend the London School of Film Technique in 1971. Finding the school too industry focused, she shifted her focus to the more sympathetic context of the Co-op and became involved in the activities and films emerging from it. Schwartz found the Co-op a 'mutually supportive scene' not only a 'hotbed of film experimentation', but also one that connected her to experimental music and particularly Cornelius Cardew's Scratch Orchestra.⁴⁷ And like Potter or Nicolson, her 8mm films were often projected as expanded film performances, and were shown at relaxed and intimate gatherings in her flat above the London Filmmakers' Co-op, where they were inflected with the Arts Lab culture of contingency and improvisation. Nicolson recalls an event she performed at the New Arts Lab, where:

She [Schwartz] showed several of her films and then handed round jars of bubbles and asked people to blow them. You could see the bubbles rising in the projector beam and the circles on the screen. Her work always had a beautiful quality of informality. Watching her films in the cinema was like watching them upstairs in the flat where she lives, images of her friends and people she was close to.⁴⁸

In her *Time Out* interview Schwartz raised the issue of the lack of women filmmakers in Britain apparent in *Cinema Rising's* mugshots and modestly claimed this as the reason for the focus on her work: 'I guess it's just because there's not many women

making films in this country that I get my films shown.’⁴⁹ Certainly, she would have noted a stronger female presence in the more established canon of American Experimental film, from founding figures such as Maya Deren to those associated to both underground film and structural filmmaking such as Chick Strand or Joyce Wieland. The *Cinema Rising* directory delineated in general a much smaller and more fledgling alternative culture compared to the American context at the end of the decade. Indeed, the American influence in the realm of British art and experimental film practice through the influx of artists from the States proved significant during this time, and Schwartz was not alone in her migration to London. For fellow artist Carolee Schneemann, London also provided an important, if temporary, point of residence. But whilst Schwartz perceived London as a place of new promise, for Schneemann, as Alison Green has suggested, the four years that she spent in London from 1969 served as a space of rehabilitation, even exile, from difficulties that she had been encountering in America across the intertwined strands of her personal life and her practice as a performer and filmmaker. By going first to Paris and then London, Schneemann ‘was escaping but also joining other friends and entering what she hoped was a more hospitable cultural climate’.⁵⁰

Appearing as an occasional name on workshop rotas and at screening events, records suggest that Schneemann was not so intimately involved in the filmmaking community at the London Co-op as Nicolson, Potter and Eatherley. Eatherley recalls her presence ‘doing shows’, but also makes the distinction that Schneemann’s work was ‘more figurative’ in comparison to their formalist experiments. As Green has contended, when she arrived, Schneemann was ‘already formed, joining a scene in formation’.⁵¹ Indeed, a generation older, she was well established as an artist in the context of the American post-war conceptual movement. Her Kinetic Theatre events

at the Judson Church, as well as large-scale group performances such as *Meat Joy* (1964), and politically charged expanded film performances such as *Snows* (1967) and *Illinois Central* (1968) had received notoriety, perhaps most infamously in the case of *Fuses* (1964). And unlike her younger filmmaking contemporaries at the Co-op, her work, as well as her writings, shows a clear articulation of her relationship to her sexuality and gendered corporeality.⁵² Schneemann's confident presentation of her own body in the act of performance in works such as these, elicits what Amelia Jones has articulated as an 'intersubjectivity of the interpretative exchange' with the audience, encouraging a reciprocity which acknowledges, and makes meaning from, the contingency of the moment, and the intimacies and particularities of this exchange.⁵³ Alongside other pioneers such as VALIE EXPORT and Yoko Ono, Schneemann's use of performance might be seen as one of the earlier instances of a distinct female creative agency being exerted, overturning the traditional role assigned to her by painting and sculpture as a figure of representation, to become an active subject of her own art-making, unfolding through the live event.

However, as her diaries and recollections show, Schneemann experienced hostility, sometimes of an aggressive nature, in response to the explicit nature of her Happenings and performances in London. A harbinger of this negative reaction occurred on an earlier visit to London in July 1967, when she participated in the *Dialectics of Liberation* congress at the Roundhouse, alongside counter-cultural luminaries as diverse as Herbert Marcuse, Allen Ginsberg and RD Laing. As Schneemann observed of the event: 'I was a participant among men who validated each other's work – each other's transgressions of established culture and myth – but who at the same time implicitly mythicized the female as auxiliary, adjacent.'⁵⁴ Schneemann's comments return us to the frustrations of Potter, upon the dismissal of

The Building for being 'other' to accepted modes of modernist validation, and the distrust and misunderstandings that Schneemann had already experienced by virtue of the foregrounding in her work of her subjective gendered experience, were by no means dispelled upon her residence in London.

However, Schneemann found sympathetic networks across London's creative communities during her years in London. It is striking that she did not join the Co-op as a member, preferring to locate, as she had done often in the past, her filmmaking in her domestic environment. As Green notes, by not focusing specifically on the film context she broadened her horizons across London's cultural landscape: 'Her aspiration was to participate in contexts amenable to performance-environments, writings and collaborations as well as to make innovations particular to the medium of film.'⁵⁵ She worked closely, for example, with the artist John Lifton at the New Arts Lab, contributed the ambitious group performance *Thames Crawling* at The International Underground Film Festival in 1970. Michael Kustow, a friend and director of the ICA, also invited her to present a number of events and screenings, such as *Fuses* and her *Naked Action Lecture* of 1968. The range of the work that she developed during her time in London attested to the opportunities afforded her through the networks of the city's art community, but also indicated that she did not limit her conceptual explorations to works solely on film or in performance but also produced series of works on paper. These were sometimes in line with her visceral body-centric practice, such as *Blood Work Diary* from 1972, which displayed paper documents of her menstrual blood.⁵⁶

But other works on paper and installations demonstrated different forms of collaboration or affiliation. For instance, she produced *Parts of a Body House* in 1971 with Felipe Ehrenberg and Martha Hellion for their artists imprint Beau Geste Press.

Schneemann also participated in the show *Microcosm* at the Camden Arts Centre in 1971, alongside artists more associated with Britain's conceptual art movement, such as John Hilliard, John Dugger, David Medalla and March Morrell. Schneemann even returned to the Round House in 1970 to orchestrate a 'sensitization theatre workshop' alongside Cornelius Cardew's Scratch Orchestra and the Cambridge Guerilla Theatre.⁵⁷ Tracing the different performances and exhibitions in which Schneemann participated during her London residence, it is also clear that the city's proximity to mainland Europe enabled her to engage in a range of different projects in Germany, such as the *Electronic Activation Room*, an environment she engendered with John Lifton for Harald Szeemann's 1970 *Happenings and Fluxus* exhibition at the Kunsthalle in Cologne, or her *Road Animation* performance for the 1972 Reykjavik Art Festival in Iceland.⁵⁸

Schneemann's prescient comments about her experience of isolation at the Round House are reflected in the rosters of other shows in which she was the sole woman artist. This was also the case for screenings like that of her 1971 film *Plumb Line* in *The Survey of Avant-garde in Britain* at Gallery House in 1972, an ambitious attempt to bring together practices in performance, film and video from the different cultural spheres of art and independent film, nationally and internationally.⁵⁹ For it could be argued that, whilst Potter, Nicolson and Eatherley found a measure of collective support for their practices, albeit outside the auspices of a feminist collectivism that the Women's Workshop espoused, Schneeman remained an isolated figure. For Green her marginalised status can be theorised as an exilic condition, within and without her own country. I would go further and argue that Schneemann's experience reflects clearly the divisive conditions under which women artists were expected practice their work. Just as dismissive reactions to *The Building* warned

Potter, the hostility Schneemann courageously endured for her transgressive visceral practice was punitive, isolating her from her peers in the male-dominated art world. The negative reactions of both artists' male colleagues also suggest the extent to which content, as well as form, that transgressed beyond the codes of modernism became the basis for a gender-based oppression. As Schneemann wrote in an unsent letter to Allan Kaprow in 1974, 'essentially I have stood alone for too long, having been methodically repulsed by those with whom I felt affinity. ... You see I understand *men helping me to sustain what I had but not to enlarge its scope or join them in their world.*'⁶⁰

Three Friends: collective possibilities

But if Schneemann continued to suffer the divisive politics of patriarchy, and Potter moved sideways towards more sympathetic communities in dance and live art, there was a shift towards collective organisation amongst women artists working with film. One outstanding example involves two figures with strongly connections to the Co-op: Barbara Schwartz and her friend, the fellow American Fluxus artist Carla Liss. Carla Liss was the distribution secretary at the Co-op from 1969 until the mid 1970s. Her appointment had been strategic because the foundation of the Co-op distribution collection relied on the donation of prints of American underground filmmakers from Jonas Mekas at the New York Filmmakers Co-op, on the condition that there was a paid member of staff in London to administer and care for them. As a member of Fluxus and part of New York's informal counter-cultural networks, Liss was connected to Mekas and the New York Co-op and was invited to take up the role. As the only paid member of staff in a co-operative structure her presence may have been resented by other members giving their time and support without monetary return.

What is seldom mentioned in the records of the Co-op, or the screenings programmes of this period, however, is her presence as an artist and filmmaker, also working with an expanded practice at the interplay between objects and film projection. Nicolson remembers her 'making perspex boxes with things in them, objects from the countryside, steam, water.' Other works included a four-screen film that evoked a dovecote, which Nicolson has also described:

Some people were gathered in a dark room. High above were images of small circular windows with doves flying round against the light. After a while she gave out some hand wound film viewers for people to look through privately and pass round. The images were like those of the dovecote projected on the walls. She had a transparent box with images from the film drawn on it.⁶¹

Liss also attests to the significant and galvanising American presence in London's filmmaking scene at this period, alongside Schneemann and Schwartz – and in the wake of the Co-op's American founders – Steven Dwoskin and Simon Hartog. There is little written on her ephemeral and responsive film practice, and yet Liss' name can be traced through other more feminist inflected art networks from 1972 onwards. It may be that Co-op colleagues would not have been aware that she not only guest edited the 1973 October issue of *Art and Artists* devoted to women's art but also engineered with Schwartz and fellow American artist Susan Hiller one of the last exhibitions at Gallery House in June 1973.⁶² Notably, the title of their exhibition, *Three Friends*, could be seen to reflect the non-hierarchical forms of collaboration and connection which would become a key strategy in feminist art practices, as The Women's Workshop statement makes clear.

Hiller, Liss and Schwartz had originally proposed a larger exhibition of women's work but Rosetta Brookes and Sigi Krauss rejected it. A preview of the exhibition in *Spare Rib* lamented this, criticising the lack of female representation in an earlier Gallery House exhibition *The Survey of the Avant-Garde*, which had included Schneemann but 'gave us little clue what women are doing now'.⁶³ *Spare Rib*, along with Liss' editorial of *Art and Artists*, gives some detail of the exhibition, which featured *Dove Cote* and screenings of a number of Schwartz's films including, as *Spare Rib* details, *HomeMovie*, 'a highly personal exploration of different techniques, and images that caught her eye'.⁶⁴ Hiller contributed *Transformer*, a wall work constructed of sheets of tissue paper which with its craft materials, haptic quality and glittering ephemeral surface, anticipated an emerging feminist influenced art, where Brett's observation of a materiality referencing the sphere of lived experience outside the formal hierarchies of the studio might take root. In *Art and Artists*, Hiller echoes her peers' concerns about how involvement in feminist activism might connect to her work, qualifying how 'the experience [of the women's movement] is valuable, but the issues are stated in dichotomies which can't be resolved except in the abstract language of politics. I don't think in the abstract anymore, I live that far away from words.'⁶⁵

However, as *Three Friends* and Liss' 1973 issue of *Art and Artists* indicates, the beginnings of collective working processes, and a collegiate spirit informed by the women's movement was soon to burgeon, bringing with it the discourses of *Spare Rib*, *The Shrew* and the Women's Workshop, through which artists such as Tina Keane, and later Catherine Elwes, would create a mode of practice where feminist discourses were explicit rather than enfolded.

Feminist concerns were also more clearly palpable in the later works by all the

women pictured in *Cinema Rising*. A celebration of female creative practice and collaboration could be said to lie at the heart of the films for which Potter was later acclaimed. These so-called 'new talkies', *Thriller* (1979) and *The Gold Diggers* (1983), still used the codes of narrative cinema but now freed them from direct significations of plot and character. Instead the films made visible a discursive mode of cinematic experience and movement, sound and expression where we find, to quote Teresa de Lauretis: 'the disjunction of image and voice, the reworking of narrative space, the elaboration of strategies of address that alter the forms and balances of traditional representation'.⁶⁶ In her performative collaborations with Rose English and her long working relationship with the musician Lindsay Cooper, Potter also demonstrated the significance of a creative feminist infused collaboration within her work.⁶⁷ Nicolson likewise explored the possibilities of collaboration and collectivity. She was one of the founder members of the women artists' film and video distribution collective, *Circles*, and later a guest editor of the Women's Space issue of *Feminist Art News* in 1982.

Nicolson developed a more overtly feminist approach by the end of the 1970s, which moved away from film towards a performance and sculpture practice that celebrated women's collectivity, such as the 1981 piece *Menstrual Hut*.⁶⁸ By the end of the decade Barbara Schwartz had returned to America, where she developed her beguiling film and photographic practice, using the pinhole camera. She also became involved in the New York post-punk music scene, playing in bands such as Disband and the Statics, and co-editing with Glenn Branca the short lived but seminal no wave film magazine *Just Another Asshole*. Schneemann returned to America in 1973 and continued her unique and multi-faceted practice, engaging questions of identity, gender and relationships in drawing, installation, film and video. Liss also returned to

New York later in the decade, where she continued her association to Fluxus and a practice engaging with video and performance.

The diverse creative and geographic paths that Nicolson, Schwartz and Potter followed could not have been predicted from their presence in the pages of *Cinema Rising* and *Time Out*. However, as I have argued, these photographs and interviews crystallise the double bind of marginality between the overlapping modernist validations of art and artists' independent film, which excluded these artists. At the same time, that very exclusion is complicated by these women's desire to forge an artistic identity as well as contradictions to do with the association of the artist with individual creative practice. The female collectivity implied in Glassner's *Time Out* article was still to come but at this threshold moment Potter, Nicolson, Schwartz and Schneemann each created different works that registered their experiences as women and artists. Likewise they all found ways to negotiate the systems and structures that downgraded and belittled women's work even close to home. These four artists sought out creative support in the diverse worlds of London's creative community, from dance and live art to film and Fluxus in order to make room for their practice in lieu of specifically feminist space. As Hiller has recalled: 'We wanted to say other things, not necessarily feminist political things, but other kinds of things, and you couldn't do that without inventing other ways of going about the whole procedure of making art.'⁶⁹

Hiller's observations show a new confidence about how feminist politics might be acknowledged, even enfolded, into the concerns of the individual artist by a look askance. Like Potter, Nicolson, Schwartz and Schneemann she asserts a subtle opposition to modernism's patriarchal validations: one expressed in the realisation of the creative potential of the materials deemed 'that other thing' – of the body, and of

everyday ephemera. Thus, ‘other kinds of things’ and ‘other ways of going about’ manifest in the convergences, conflicts and dialogues brought forth in the expanded films and performances and installations of the artists under discussion here. Through their excessive and fragmented forms – often centred on the body and drawing on other disciplines from outside the validations of film or visual arts – they address these entwined questions of identity and creative practice, and this moment of an emergent feminist art practice. Hiller concludes that: ‘All that being an artist means is being able to feel and act at a certain level of intensity and meaning. And this can be extended to anything, like doing the dishes, sitting in a cafe. I think that’s really where it’s at.’⁷⁰

¹ See Margaret Harrison, ‘Notes on Feminist Art in Britain 1970-77,’ *Studio International* 193, no. 987 (1977): 212–20, 212.

² ‘Women’s Workshop of the Artists’ Union Collective Statement,’ *Spare Rib*, no. 29 (July 1974): 38, cited in Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, ‘Fifteen Years of Feminist Action’, in *Framing Feminism: Art and the Women’s Movement 1970–1985*, ed. Parker and Pollock (London: Pandora Press, 1987), 3–78, 3.

³ ‘Women’s Workshop of the Artists’ Union Collective Statement,’ 1974: 38.

⁴ See Parker and Pollock, *Framing Feminism*, 1987.

⁵ Founding members included: Esther Ronay, Linda Wood, Susan Shapiro, Francine Winham, Fran MacLean, Barbara Evans and Midge Mckenzie. They actively campaigned for equal opportunities, and made collective films such as *The Amazing Equal Pay Show* (1974). See Margaret Dickinson, *Rogue Reels: Oppositional Film in Britain 1945–90* (London: BFI publishing and Palgrave, 1999).

⁶ ‘Conversation with Mary Kelly’ at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 1983 in Mary Kelly, 1996. Cited from Mignon Nixon, “‘Why Freud?’ asked the Shrew: Psychoanalysis and Feminism, Post-Partum Document, and the History Group,’ *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, Palgrave online (2015): 2.

⁷ Laura Mulvey, ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,’ *Screen* 16, no.3 (Autumn 1975): 6–18.

⁸ Tony Rayns, ‘Directory of U.K. Independent Film-makers,’ *Cinema Rising*, April 1972, 6.

⁹ Yoko Ono is represented with John Lennon.

¹⁰ Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon: Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art’s Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 4.

¹¹ Verina Glassner, ‘Interviews with Three Filmmakers,’ *Time Out*, 17–23 March, 1972, 46–47.

¹² Verina Glassner, ‘Interviews with Three Filmmakers,’ 46–47. It has not been possible to ascertain the other two filmmakers included in the forthcoming screening mentioned in the article.

¹³ Glassner, ‘Interviews with Three Filmmakers,’ 1972: 46.

¹⁴ Glassner, ‘Interviews with Three Filmmakers,’ 1972: 46.

¹⁵ David Curtis, ‘English Avant-Garde Film: An Early Chronology,’ *Studio International*, (November/December 1975), revised in 1978 and republished in

Michael O'Pray, ed., *The British Avant-Garde Film: 1926- 1996* (Luton: University of Luton, 1996), 112–113.

¹⁶ Sally Potter in conversation with Lucy Reynolds, December 2014.

¹⁷ Glassner, 'Interviews with Three Filmmakers,' 1972: 46.

¹⁸ Glassner, 'Interviews with Three Filmmakers,' 1972:46.

¹⁹ Glassner, 'Interviews with Three Filmmakers,' 1972:46.

²⁰ The first meeting of the Women's Movement in London occurred in 1970.

²¹ Sally Potter in conversation with Lucy Reynolds, December 2014.

²² Sally Potter in conversation with Lucy Reynolds, December 2014.

²³ B. Ruby Rich, 'In the Name of Feminist Film Criticism,' (1978) in *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism*, edited by Diane Carson, Linda Dittmar, Janice Welsch. (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 28.

²⁴ Lisa Cartwright, Nina Fonoroff, 'Narrative is Narrative' (1983) in *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism*, edited by Diane Carson, Linda Dittmar, Janice Welsch. (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 136.

²⁵ Amelia Jones, *Body Art: Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 35.

²⁶ Jones, *Body Art*, 35.

²⁷ Cartwright and Fonoroff, 'Narrative is Narrative,' 137.

²⁸ For a detailed account of this shift see Maxa Zoller, 'Aural History: An Online Documentary of the early Years of the London Filmmaker's Co-op 1966-1968,' British Artists Film and Video Study Collection.

www.studycollection.co.uk/auralhistory/index.htm. See also David Curtis, *A History of Artists' Film and Video in Britain, 1897–2004* (London: BFI Publishing, 2006).

²⁹ Sally Potter in conversation with Lucy Reynolds, December 2014.

³⁰ Annabel Nicolson in conversation with Lucy Reynolds, March 2009.

³¹ Jan Rosenberg, *Women's Reflections: The Feminist Film Movement*, UMI Research Press, 1983, 41.

³² Rosenberg, *Women's Reflections*, 41.

³³ Potter recalls attending the first Women's Liberation conference in London in 1971.

³⁴ Annabel Nicolson interviewed by Lucy Reynolds, March 2009.

³⁵ A term first coined by P. Adams Sitney to discuss tendencies towards a formalist foregrounding of process, material and film apparatus in late 1960s American artists filmmaking. This acquires a different emphasis in its British dimension, of which key spokesmen were Malcolm le Grice and Peter Gidal. However it should be stressed that practices at the Co-op during this period were varied and did not all adhere strictly to non-narrative and formal principles.

³⁶ The contemporary exception to this is Laura Mulvey's 1978 lecture to the Oxford Women's Studies Committee, 'Film, Feminism and the Avant-Garde,' in which she refers briefly to how Nicolson 'has used the old tradition of women's applied arts to experiment with film as material,' citing *Reel Time*. Published in Mary Jacobus, ed., *Women Writing and Writing about Women* (London: Croom Helm, 1979). Reprinted in Michael O'Pray, ed., *The British Avant-Garde Film: 1926- 1996* (Luton: University of Luton, 1996), 213. For contemporary readings of Nicolson's films see: Felicity Sparrow, *Annabel Nicolson*, Luxonline Profile.

[www.luxonline.org.uk/artists/annabel_nicolson/essay\(1\).html](http://www.luxonline.org.uk/artists/annabel_nicolson/essay(1).html) and Lucy Reynolds, *British Avant-Garde Women Filmmakers and Expanded Cinema of the 1970s*, PhD thesis, University of East London, 2009. Available online at ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.536627.

³⁷ Sally Potter in conversation with Lucy Reynolds, December 2013.

³⁸ For more detailed information about early feminist art initiatives see Parker and Pollock, 'Fifteen Years of Feminist Action', 1987, and Kathy Battista, *Renegotiating The Body: Feminist Art in 1970s London* (London: IB Tauris, 2013), especially pages 17–21 for context and for information on Kelly and Schneemann.

³⁹ Guy Brett, *Through Our Own Eyes: Popular Art and Modern History* (London and Baltimore: GMP/Heretic and New Society Publishers, 1986), 149.

⁴⁰ Annabel Nicolson interviewed by Lucy Reynolds, March 2009.

⁴¹ For a contemporary account of British Expanded cinema of the period see Deke Dusinberre, 'On Expanding Cinema,' *Studio International*, vol. 190, (November/December 1975): 220–224. For a more recent account see: Lucy Reynolds, 'Filmaktion: New Directions in Film Art', in *Centre of the Creative Universe: Liverpool and the Avant-Garde*, edited by Christoph Grunenberg, Christoph and Robert Knifton (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007); and Lucy Reynolds, 'Magic Tricks? The use of the shadow in British Expanded Cinema,' in *Expanded Cinema: Art, Performance, Film*, edited by Duncan White and A.L. Rees (London: Tate Publishing, 2011).

⁴² Annabel Nicolson, 'Annabel Nicolson at the Co-op,' in *Light Years: A Twenty Year Celebration of the LFMC*, leaflet published October/November 1986, 43.

⁴³ See in particular her entries in Peter Gidal, *Structural Film Anthology*, BFI, 1976.

⁴⁴ For details of Eatherley's work see Reynolds, 'Shadow Play', 2010 and Reynolds, *British Avant-Garde Women Filmmakers and Expanded Cinema of the 1970s*, unpublished thesis 2009.

⁴⁵ Gill Eatherley interviewed by Lucy Reynolds, December 2008.

⁴⁶ Verina Glassner, 'Interviews with Three Filmmakers,' 46.

⁴⁷ Barbara Ess (formerly Schwartz), email correspondence with the author, January 2015.

⁴⁸ Nicolson, 'Annabel Nicolson at the Co-op,' 41.

⁴⁹ Verina Glassner, 'Interviews with Three Filmmakers,' 47.

⁵⁰ According to Green, what had made New York inhospitable was not only the persecution that Schneemann feared for films and performances critical of US policy in Vietnam, and the hostility and marginality she still experienced within the art community there, but also a need to find a space to recuperate following the painful break up of her marriage to James Tenney. Alison Green, 'Intermedia, Exile and Carolee Schneemann', in *Across the Great Divide: Modernism's Intermedialities, from Futurism to Fluxus*, edited by Christopher Townsend, Alex Trott and Rhys Davis (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 141.

⁵¹ Green, 'Intermedia, Exile and Carolee Schneemann,' 147.

⁵² It has been argued that her participation in other artist's performances, such as Robert Morris' *Site* (1964), wrote her in a passive position.

⁵³ Jones, *Body Art: Performing the Subject*, 34.

⁵⁵ Green, 'Intermedia, Exile and Carolee Schneemann,' 148.

⁵⁶ See Battista, *Renegotiating The Body*, 38-9.

⁵⁷ See Jonathan Cott, 'Play Power in London,' *Rolling Stone*, 19 March 1972, 15.

⁵⁸ For details of these and other works relating to her time in London and Europe, see Carolee Schneemann, *More than Meat Joy: Performance Works and Selected Writings* (New York: Documentext, McPherson, 1979), 202–215.

⁵⁹ Curated by Sigi Krauss and Rosetta Brooks, included screenings and performances by Malcolm le Grice, Herman Nitsch, Stuart Brisley and Anthony McCall.

⁶⁰ Schneemann, *More than Meat Joy*, 195.

⁶¹ Nicolson, 'Annabel Nicolson at the Co-op,' 42.

⁶² The issue contained an interview with Joan Jonas and Simone Forti, as well as 'Elements of Science Fiction': fragments of writings, citation and conversation between Susan Hiller, Carla Liss and Lynne Tillman in *Art and Artists*, (October 1973): 29-33.

⁶³ Rozsika Parker, 'Arts editorial', *Spare Rib*, (June 1973).

⁶⁴ Rozsika Parker, 'Arts editorial', *Spare Rib*, (June 1973).

⁶⁵ Hiller, Liss and Tillman, 'Elements of Science Fiction,' 33.

⁶⁶ Teresa de Lauretis, 'Rethinking Women's Cinema,' in *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism*, edited by Diane Carson, Linda Dittmar, Janice Welsch (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 158.

⁶⁷ See Battista, *Renegotiating The Body*.

⁶⁸ Nicolson developed this dome like structure as a space for female reflection and contemplation for her 1981 curatorial residency in Norwich School of Art, which culminated in the exhibition 'Concerning Ourselves', including herself alongside the artists.

⁶⁹ Susan Hiller, '3,512 words: Susan Hiller with Jorg Heiser and Jan Verwoert,' in *Susan Hiller: The Provisional Texture of Reality: Selected Talks and Texts 1977 - 2007*, edited by Alexandra M Kokoli (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2008), 130.

⁷⁰ Liss, Hiller and Tillman, 'Elements of Science Fiction,' 33.