

ANDREA GEYER

Michael Wilson, Andrea Geyer, Hales Gallery Review, Artforum, Summer 2019, p.288

REVIEWS

This body of work, brought back more than forty-five years later, complemented other reappearances this spring. Serendipitously displayed at Red Bull Arts, across town from Schor's Lyles & King show, was Gretchen Bender's installation *Flash Art*, 1987, which threw shade at the painter David Salle, favorite son of the 1980s, for his depiction of women. The year before Bender made the work, Schor's first published essay appeared in the premier issue of the journal *ME/AN/ING*, which she and the artist Susan Bee ran between 1986 and 1996. Titled "Appropriated Sexuality," it was a pull-no-punches critique of Salle in which she concluded: "A vicarious suicide, David Salle savages women rather than savage himself. This is considered appropriate sexuality, and this is a source of his market value." This sentiment was echoed by the radical feminist author Andrea Dworkin in 1981, in a text now excerpted in the recently published anthology *Last Days at Hot Slit*: "In pornography, men express the tenets of their unchanging faith . . . to ward off recognition that a commitment to masculinity is a double-edged commitment to both suicide and genocide."

Men creating any kind of image of a woman were taken more seriously than women committed to taking seriously their own depictions of themselves, their interior lives, or the structural ideology mediating and generating their sense of reality. As Schor relates in the intro to her essay collection *Wet: On Painting, Feminism, and Art Culture* (1997), a curator once sat in her studio puzzling over whether to understand her paintings as mostly political or purely formal. Schor wanted to say, "Stop right there, the whole point is that they are both!" Breaking down binaries is of top concern these days, and she's been doing it all along.

—Paige K. Bradley

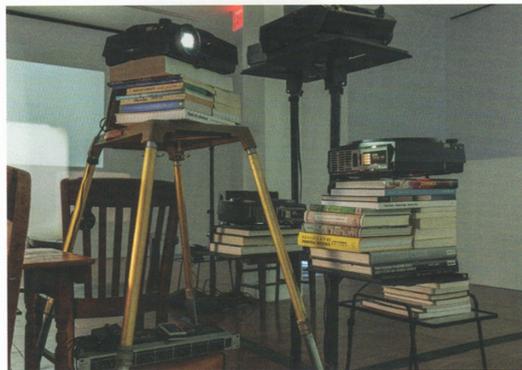
Andrea Geyer

HALES GALLERY

For many viewers, the 35-mm slide projectors of Andrea Geyer's *Feeding the Ghost* (all works 2019) evoked darkened college seminar rooms. Her use of multiple such devices was entirely consistent with the studious tone that they connote. In fact, Geyer's project, shown as an installation at Hales Gallery, was originally presented as a performance lecture at Manhattan's Dia Art Foundation in October 2018. It consisted of several functioning but empty projectors—some perched on stands, others teetering atop stacks of books—surrounded by wooden tables and chairs. It also featured an audio recording of Geyer describing the time she watched the late Belgian filmmaker Chantal Akerman perform an hour-long reading from her 1998 book *A Family in Brussels* at Dia in October 2001.

If this accumulation of nested references threatened to overwhelm, the effect was perhaps not entirely unintentional. Geyer's practice consistently addresses the complexities of social and political history, and the ways other artists engage these issues—so such a density of information is to be expected. Akerman's reflections on death, survival, and memory included in *Feeding the Ghost* spark a branching meta-narrative in which Geyer's identity gradually becomes confused with that of the filmmaker, their experiences echoing one another in defiance of any singular or linear account. (Akerman's text documents the life of her mother, whose husband is nearing death. The story is interwoven with larger politically and economically driven currents of loss throughout modern Europe.)

Geyer entwines Akerman's tale further into her own, meditating on the lives and deaths of artist contemporaries and on the profoundly unsettled and uncertain climate of New York post-9/11. This fusion of voices was initially confounding but ultimately relatable—a sympathetic



Andrea Geyer, *Feeding the Ghost*, 2019, slide projectors, projector stands, books, sandbags, furniture, lamps, 60-minute voice-over. Installation view.

attempt to find common ground between outwardly diverse experiences that gained traction the more we heard Geyer's melancholic recitation. The sense remained, however, that her aims were likely better realized in her performance at Dia last fall, with the audience seated in the middle of the room. Freed from any obligation to spend a full hour with the piece, most visitors to Hales would likely have heard a mere fragment—the work performed as a souvenir of itself.

The visual resonance of *Feeding the Ghost* remained intact, its multiple overlapping blank projections recalling another slide-projector piece, Luis Camnitzer's *Art History Lesson*, 2000. A more diffuse atmosphere and still more disjointed set of remembrances would have taken precedent over the switchback on mortality and the encroachment of past into present that was advanced in the original version. And two large unframed silk-screen prints that lurked in the half-light toward the back of the space functioned to point in yet another direction and to lend the exhibition its title, "On this day." One depicted the activist athletes Colin Kaepernick and Eli Harold of the San Francisco 49ers, while the other showed the gun-control activist and Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting survivor Emma González. The pieces were hung from their corners and inscribed with the word *WITNESS* in white lettering, suggesting an unreconstructed homage to key figures in current sociopolitical debates. These works formed an oddly blunt accompaniment to the show's larger, explicitly "retro" vibe, dragging us into the American here and now. Yet they also accentuated the didacticism of Geyer's installation. After all, listening to a story is one thing, but sitting through a lecture quite another.

—Michael Wilson

Lauretta Vinciarelli

JUDD FOUNDATION

Bringing to light the women artists who lived in the shadow of their more famous male partners is hard. To focus on Lauretta Vinciarelli (1943–2011), we must extricate her legacy from her ten-year relationship with Donald Judd as a professional collaborator, friend, and lover. Between 1978 and 2000, Vinciarelli was a distinguished professor at New York's Columbia University, where she taught studio courses that questioned the values of modernist architecture through the study of building typologies. The Italian-born artist's cultural interests were vast, ranging from Greek and Latin literature to classical music and opera. Vinciarelli's spiritual searching was incredibly catholic, too, imbued by the writings of Saint Augustine and the philosophies of Zen n