

Agata Jakubowska, Poznań (Poland)

All-Women Art Initiatives in the Aftermath of World War II

One of the aspects of the post-1945 art world that has not been researched yet is a (dis)continuation of a tradition of all-women art exhibitions. It is a well-known fact that they emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century as one of the strategies for professionalization of women artists. They continued to be organized in the inter-war period and the 1930s saw the flourishing of only women expositions in many countries, and also on international level, e.g. *Exposition d'oeuvres de femmes artistes* (1933 in Amsterdam, 1934 in Warsaw) and *Les femmes artistes d'Europe au Jeu de Paume* (Paris, 1937). Narratives regarding women's art almost always see a continuation of this type of activities only in the exhibitions organized in the 1970s and later in conjunction with the development of the so called second women's movement. The period between 1945 and 1970 remains a blind spot in these histories, whereas societies of women artists and other institutions continued their work and organized multiple all-women expositions.

This presentation offers a comparative study of only-women exhibitions and other similar actions undertaken in the aftermath of Second World War in three European countries – Austria, France and Poland – in which different political systems developed, which resulted i.a. in varying art world systems and gender ideologies. I will analyse to what extent they continued the pre-war tradition and how turbulent political, social and cultural changes influenced their organization and ideological significance.

Agata Jakubowska is Associated Professor and Deputy Director at the Department of Art History, *Adam Mickiewicz University* in Poznań. She is the author of e.g. *On Margins of the Mirror. Female Body in the Polish Women Artists' Works* (in Polish, Poznań 2004), *Multiple Portrait of the Alina Szapocznikow Oeuvre* (in Polish, Poznań 2008), *Awkward objects. Alina Szapocznikow* (ed., Museum of Modern Art, distributed by the Chicago University Press, Warsaw 2011), *All-Women Art Spaces in Europe in the Long 1970s* (ed. together with Katy Deepwell, Liverpool University Press, forthcoming). She is currently working on a project devoted to the history of women-only exhibitions in Poland and on a book on the Polish sculptor Maria Pinińska-Bereś (1931–1999).