Call for Papers

FROM BLUESTOCKINGS TO THE GUERRILLA GIRLS – AND BEYOND

Mapping Female Associational Life in the Visual Arts

Session Convenor: Kathryn Brown
Loughborough University

Conference: Celebrating Female Agency in the Arts
Christie's, New York, 26–27 June, 2018

This session enquires into the role of networks by and among women active as artists, writers, curators, dealers, activists, and patrons of the visual arts. By taking into consideration examples drawn from a broad range of geographies and time periods, the session examines how informal sociability spurred the creation of professional relationships that offered women opportunities to flourish as art world professionals. To what extent have women shared connections and knowledge with each other for the purpose of securing their own independence within creative economies? Can the study of female micro-communities broaden our understanding of the scope and impact of 20th-century feminist discourses? Have networks among women extended across geographical, economic, social, and ethnic differences in ways that have impacted beyond the functioning of the art world? The session also seeks to consider new methodological approaches to the study of such networks, including evaluation of their successes, failures, and ongoing significance. If, as Michael Walzer has argued in Politics and Passion (2004), the radical dispersal of women across cultures and social divides has been a “special feature of their historical powerlessness,” this session debates the importance of networks and networking on women’s contribution to, and creation of, diverse art ecosystems throughout history.

Please send proposals for 20 minute papers (250 word abstract) and a short bio to k.j.brown@lboro.ac.uk by 22 December, 2017.