

ENSAYO 2 is published by Desiderata with the support of the Fine Arts Library at Universidad Complutense, Madrid and the Paul Klee Summer Academy at Bern University of the Arts. Graphic design: Todojunto / Printed by L'Automática / 200 ex. / Barcelona, October 2022.

Mela Dávila Freire
Borrkampsweg 17, 22761 Hamburg

ENSAYO 2

From: Mela Davila
Subject: Hello and one-question-questionnaire
Date: March 29, 2022
To: Ignasi Aballí, Octavi Aballí, Maïke Aden, Juan Albarrán, Rita Barbosa, Anna Cestelli-Guidi, Carlos Copertone, Silvia Dauder, Lorraine Furter, Dora García, Eloïsa García, Ana García Herrá, Àlex Gifreu, Gustavo Grandal Montero, Viola Hildebrand-Schat, Moritz Küng, José María Lafuente, Martin La Roche, Anne Moeglin-Delcroix, Maïte Muñoz, Camilo Otero, Javier Peñafiel, Javier Pérez Iglesias, Glòria Picazo, Henar Riviere

Dear...

I hope you are doing fine.

On my end, I am doing well, and now about to start a period of research for my PhD project at the Hamburg School of Fine Arts (Hochschule für bildende Kunst, hfbk-hamburg.de) under the direction of Prof. Nora Sternfeld and Anja Steidinger. It is in relation to this research that I contact you today.

My project, which has the provisional title of "Female or Other. Artist Publishing as Seen through the Gender Glass", aims to redefine the historiographical canon constructed for the artist's book, which continues to be overwhelmingly dominated by the works of (mostly Western white) male artists. My intention is to make visible the publications (books and/or other printed matter) of women artists, as well as groups, collectives or other forms of authorial identity whose publishing practices have been consistent and original and yet continue to be overlooked, minimized or completely omitted by art history. In chronological terms, I have chosen to focus my research on the period between 1960 and 1990.

In geographical terms, I want to concentrate on the US, Western Europe and Latin America for a sheer linguistic reason: the languages I master are spoken in those areas.

Throughout my research process, I plan to communicate partial results of my findings in a variety of editorial formats, so as to share them but and, at the same time, to experiment with alternatives to the channels through which academic research is usually disseminated.

Last December I presented in Madrid the first one of these "editorial exercises", *Ensayo 1: el ensayo (polifónico)* ["Test 1: The (Polyphonic) Essay"], which is devoted to non-fiction texts.

In order to proceed with my research, I would now like to circulate a one-question-questionnaire among my friends and acquaintances who, like you, are knowledgeable in the field of artist's publications. If you could kindly reply to this questionnaire, attached, sending me your answer by the end of April 2022 at the latest, I would be most thankful.

You can gladly answer this short survey by email (pasting your answers on an email message) or send it as an attachment, or as a letter, or give me a phone call – or even come by and have a coffee.

Any medium will be fine. My only request is that, if possible, I get your answers by the end of April, 2022. I hope to produce a small publication – *Ensayo 2* – with a summary of the results of this survey and I will certainly send you one copy, if you kindly send me your postal address along with your answer. Please, do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions in relation to this; I will be happy to clarify what you need to know.

I thank you very much for your kind help, look forward to your feedback, and send you warm regards from Hamburg.

Mela

Could you please list three of your favorite artist's publications made by women artists and/or groups, collectives and other forms of authorial identity other than single male artists, for each one of these decades (roughly)?

1960-1970	1. _____
	2. _____
	3. _____
1970-1980	1. _____
	2. _____
	3. _____
1980-1990	1. _____
	2. _____
	3. _____

Some directions to guide your answer:

- Please, include the name of author(s), title and year of each publication if you have this information.
- Please, feel free to add any other information to your answer – links, photographs, comments, pdfs with texts... whatever – about each one of the books that you mention.
- Please, note that I have consciously not put forward any definition of artist's publications beforehand: whatever your own definition is, I will be fine with it. I only find it relevant to point out that when I write "publications" I am thinking of any kind of printed matter, including of course books but also postcards, posters etc.
- Please, send me any other kind of feedback that you consider relevant or simply wish to send. I will also be happy to read it, and thankful.

Essay 02: We Want to Know comes about in the context of the doctoral project *Female or Other: Artist's Publishing as Seen through the Gender Glass* articulated on both the theoretical and the practical (curatorial and editorial) levels, this doctoral project aims to address and correct the dearth of women and collective authors in the current canon of artist's publications generally acknowledged by Art History.

Essay 02: We Want to Know presents the results of an informal survey carried out between March and July 2022, which consisted of a single question: respondents were asked to send the reference of up to nine artist's publications dating from between 1960 and 1990 and authored not by individual male artists, but by women, collectives or other identity forms.

The survey was sent to 35 people of diverse nationalities, ages, genders and walks of life, who share a close connection to contemporary art – either through work or as a side-line – and are well acquainted with the arena of artist's publications.

Of the 35 addressees, 25 sent feedback that at least partly matched the aim of the survey. Only one of the interviewees queried – and then, only initially – the relevance of the exercise. A high number of responses were accompanied by expressions of surprise at the lack of knowledge which the survey had suddenly made apparent, or apologies for just being able to send fewer than nine references.

Based on the responses received, the first step was, for clarity's sake, to discard periodicals (magazines, fanzines, etc.) and the (few) publications for which no visual information was readily found through an initial quick search. The remaining pieces are presented in this document as a list, in chronological order, with a picture of each and only minimal data identifying them.

The contents of this list provide "raw" material from which the research will be further developed. Since such research has not been carried out yet, it is possible that the list will contain some errors or gaps in the information, for instance when there is a discrepancy between the time at which a publication was conceived and the time when it was printed – sometimes years or even decades later –, which appears to have happened quite often. It may also be that not all the works listed fall under the general definition of "artist's publication" on which the research project is based. This definition certainly covers photobooks and all kinds of ephemeral printed publications, but not *livres de peintres* or illustrated books, while visual poetry works remain, for now, in a grey area about which no definitive decision has been reached.

The validity of this list as a reliable reference index is therefore very limited. However, the aim of this publication is not to present verified data, but rather to share a first set of results that will demonstrate, in a primarily visual way, the abundance of material from which this research project will draw and develop further.

WE WANT TO KNOW



- A1. Eva Aeppli, Les livres de vie, 1959
- A2. Lygia Pape, Livro da criação, 1959
- A3. Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt, Typetexts, 1959
- A4. Lygia Clark, Caminhando, 1963
- A5. Lygia Pape, Livro do tempo, 1963
- A6. Warja Lavater, Imageries, 1963
- A7. Lygia Clark, Livro-obra, 1964
- A8. Lygia Clark, Monument in All Situations, 1964
- A9. Yoko Ono, Grapefruit, 1964
- A10. Elena Asins, Cuaderno de viaje, 1965
- B1. Alison Knowles, By Alison Knowles, 1965
- B2. Helen Levitt, A Way of Seeing, 1965
- B3. Lygia Clark, Livro sensorial, 1966
- B4. Mirtha Dermisache, Libro N. 1, 1967
- B5. Alison Knowles, The Big Book, 1967
- B6. Alison Knowles, The House of Dust, 1967
- B7. Barbara T. Smith, Xerox Coffin in Self-Defence, 1967
- B8. Valerie Solanas, SCUM Manifesto, 1967
- B9. Lee Lozano, Private Book 1, 1968
- B10. Bernardette Mayer, Story, 1968
- C1. Ana Peters, Estampa Popular Valencia, Calendari Any 1968, 1968
- C2. Blanca Caparoso, Sexus. Domaine du délire, 1969
- C3. Hanne Darboven, Ausstellung mit 6 Filmprojektoren nach 6 Büchern über 1968, 1969
- C4. Neide de Sa, s. t. [¿Ponto?], 1969?
- C5. Lucy Lippard, 4,492,040, 1970
- C6. Elena Asins, Cantos de Orfeo, 1970
- C7. Elena Asins, Divertimentos en el viaje, 1970
- C8. Nicki de Saint-Phalle, My Love, ca. 1970
- C9. Dorothy Iannone, The Story of Bern [or] Showing Colors, 1970
- C10. Lee Lozano, Dropout Piece, 1970
- D1. Judy Chicago, One Woman Show, 1970
- D2. Mira Schendel, Untitled, 1971
- D3. Amélia Toledo, Divino Maravilhoso, 1971
- D4. Joyce Wieland, True Patriot Love, 1971
- D5. Eleanor Antin, 100 Boots..., 1971-1973
- D6. Lourdes Castro, Album de Naissance (ombres portées), 1972
- D7. Lourdes Castro, Grand herbier d'ombres, 1972 [2002]
- D8. Lucy Lippard, Six Years..., 1972
- D9. Carole Scheeman, Parts of a Body House Book, 1972
- D10. Athena Tacha, Different Notions of Cleanliness, 1972
- E1. Athena Tacha, Expressions, 1972
- E2. Paz Muro, La prohibición agradece, 1972
- E3. Hanne Darboven, Information, 1973
- E4. Kirsten Grimstad and Susan Rennie, The New Woman's Survival Catalog: A Woman-Made Book, 1973
- E5. Cecilia Vicuña, Sabor a mí, 1973
- E6. Lourdes Castro, Un autre livre rouge, 1973
- E7. Irma Blank, And so on..., 1974
- E8. Vera Chaves Barcellos, Testarte 1, 1974/1976
- E9. Lucy Lippard, C. 7,500: An Exhibition Organized by Lucy R. Lippard, 1974
- E10. Annette Messager, Ma Collection de proverbes, 1974
- F1. Colita and José Manuel Caballero Bonald, Lucés y sombras del flamenco, 1975
- F2. Tee Corinne, Cunt Coloring Book, 1975
- F3. Mirtha Dermisache, Untitled (Postcard), 1975
- F4. Concha Jerez, «Fusilados esta mañana» (Recuperación de una noticia), 1975
- F5. Annette Messager, La femme et, 1975
- F6. Tomaso Binga [Bianca Menna], Alfabetiere murale, 1975-1976
- F7. Lygia Clark, Meu doce Rio, 1975-1984
- F8. Suzanne Lacy, Rape Is, 1976
- F9. Agnes Denes, Sculptures of the Mind, 1976
- F10. Anna Maria Maiolino, Série livros objetos, 1976
- G1. Genesis P. Orridge, G.P.O. v G.P.-O, 1976
- G2. Mieko Shiomi, Spatial Poem, 1976
- G3. Elvira Leite, Quem te ensinou? Ninguém, 1976-1977 [2016]
- G4. Helena de Almeida, Estudo para dois espaços, 1977
- G5. Ida Applebroog, Dyspepsia Works, ca. 1977-1981
- G6. Eulália Grau, Orden publico, 1978
- G7. Martha Rosler, Service: A Thrilogy on Colonization, 1978
- G8. Barbara Kruger, Picture/Readings, 1978
- G9. Mirella Bentivoglio, Io, 1979
- G10. Eugénia Balcells, Ophelia, variacions sobre una imatge, 1979
- H1. Vera Chaves Barcellos, Da capo, 1979
- H2. Graciela Gutiérrez Marx, Grupo de familia — Reconstrucción del mito / Los códigos marginales de Mamablanca, 1980
- H3. Lyn Hejinian, My Life, 1980
- H4. Gabriele Schmidt-Heins, Stundenbuch, ca. 1980
- H5. Lenora De Barros, Leporello of Poema, 1980/1981
- H6. Magali Lara, Una mujer se peina, 1981
- H7. Joyce Mansour, Le Grand jamais, 1981
- H8. Susan Meiselas, Nicaragua, 1981
- H9. Pauline Oliveros, Initiation Dream, 1981
- H10. Martha Rosler, Three Works, 1981
- I1. Barbara Schmidt-Heins, Gezeiten, 1981
- I2. Laurie Anderson, Big Science, 1982
- I3. Alison Knowles with George Brecht, The Green, the Red, the Yellow, the Black, and the White, 1983
- I4. Barbara Fahrner, Sprachbuch, 1983
- I5. Susan Hiller, Sisters of Menon, 1983
- I6. Jenny Holzer, Abuse of Power Comes as No Surprise, 1983
- I7. Susan King, Women and Cars, 1983
- I8. Barbara Fahrner, Die Bibliothek von Babel, 1984
- I9. Sónia Lins, Livro da árvore, 1984
- I10. Neide De Sá, Livro vazado, 1985
- J1. Guerrilla Girls, Posters, 1985
- J2. Celeste West (ed.), Words in Our Pockets, 1985
- J3. Nan Goldin, The Ballad of Sexual Dependency, 1986
- J4. Adrian Piper, My Calling (Card) No. 1 and No. 2, 1986-1990
- J5. Elena Asins, Zettel. Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics, 1986
- J6. Clarissa Sligh, What's Happening With Momma?, 1987
- J7. Anna Jotta, A Coragem de Lassie, 1988
- J8. Burgi Kühnemann, Die Weise von Liebe und Tod des Cornet Rilke, 1989
- J9. Karin Innerling, Grenzgänger oder die Balance des Glücks, 1990

ENSAYO 2

WE WANT TO KNOW