







OUR BODIES,
OUR HOUSES,
OUR RUPTURES,
OURSELVES

Julia Bryan-Wilson

1. BODIES

In 1969, Ida Applebroog was living in Southern California with her spouse and four children. Busy as a mother and an artist, she took refuge every night in the one place she was guaranteed solitude: the bathtub. Every night for two or three hours she would retreat to her watery sanctuary to soak. For a brief period that year she added an extra element to this daily ritual. She brought in her sketchpads and began to draw her own naked body—to be precise, close-ups of her bare crotch—as it was reflected in her full-length mirror. These vaginas, drawn in India ink with a crow-quill pen, are rendered in many different styles: some are detailed and precise, some fancifully exaggerated, some no more than a single, abstract, curved line.

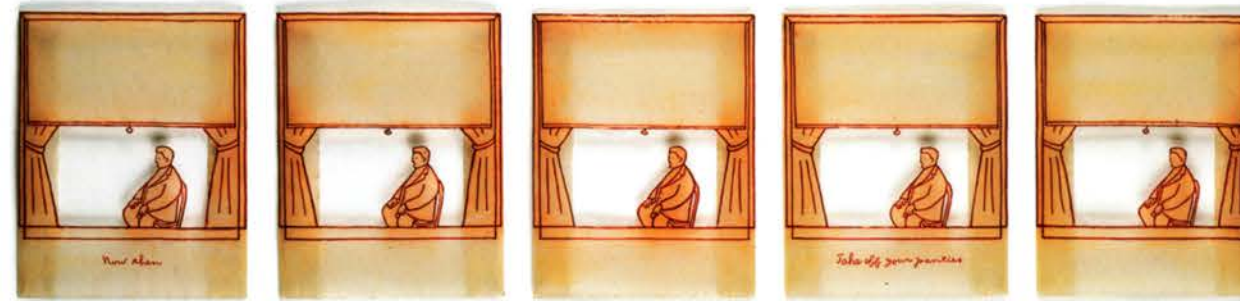
Over the space of a few weeks, she filled several notebooks with more than 150 of these drawings. They were carted with her when she moved to New York in 1974 and then stowed, mostly forgotten, in her basement until she recently discovered them. The intervening forty years took a toll on the drawings, as evidenced by the brown water damage stains that appear to pour down many of the white pages. (While these discoloring water marks are the inadvertent result of the notebooks having languished in leaky boxes, they also poetically hint back to the original scene of the drawings.) A remarkable archive, it not only chronicles a woman in the act of intimate self-regard but also traces how Applebroog as an artist was continually rehearsing and refining her skills as a stylistically limber draftsman.

The vagina drawings constitute a key component of Applebroog's most recent body of work, *Monalisa* (2009), a project that, with its signature figural obsessions and urgent feminist force, feels like an epic culmination of her entire oeuvre. The installation takes the form of a wooden structure covered with more than one hundred images made from the 1969 drawings. Applebroog scanned the drawings and manipulated them both on the computer and as they came out of the printer. The resultant unique images, many with pale washes of pink, gray, or yellow, are on handmade Gampi paper and Mylar that has the translucency of vellum—and skin.

Skin stretched over bony skeleton: Helen Molesworth has referred to Applebroog's installation as "the pussy room."¹ The wooden frame serves as scaffolding for the vagina images, which line its walls inside and out. Some are affixed to four small ladders that lean against its interior walls. This room cannot be entered, but the viewer can see inside through the many gaps, slits, and seams of the patchworked images to the inside. On the back wall hangs Applebroog's larger-than-life-size painting from the series *Photogenetics*,² of a distorted, doll-like figure, reclining against a bloody red background with her legs spread and a direct yet inscrutable gaze. Where the front door would be, an ambiguously gendered face (*Brian*)—also from the *Photogenetics* series—stares out with darkened eyes amid the loose grid of vulvas.

By excavating and updating a storehouse of images from 1969, Applebroog has produced an installation that glances back to much of her previous work at the same time that it strikes out in an altogether new direction. Though her career has spanned more than four decades and a variety of media, from her early artist's books, to paintings, to video, and to digitally manipulated images, she has been persistently riveted by the violence and dark humor of everyday gestures. The *Monalisa* work also delves deeply into women's sexuality and domestic space, themes she has consistently explored. Its use of seriality formally echoes her earlier multipanel works that show a repeated image, its seeming innocence undercut by the addition of a simple sentence, as in *Now Then* (1980), in which a picture of a seated man in a suit is captioned "Take off your panties" (Fig. 1). Failures in language, psychosexual damage, power inequities—these form the core of Applebroog's practice. Take, for instance,

1. Ida Applebroog, *Now Then*, 1980. Ink and Rhoplex on vellum, 5 panels, overall, 17 1/4 x 56 1/4 x 2 1/4 in.





You are
the patient

I am
the real
person

You are
the patient

I am
the real
person

You are
the patient

I am
the real
person

You are
the patient

I am
the real
person

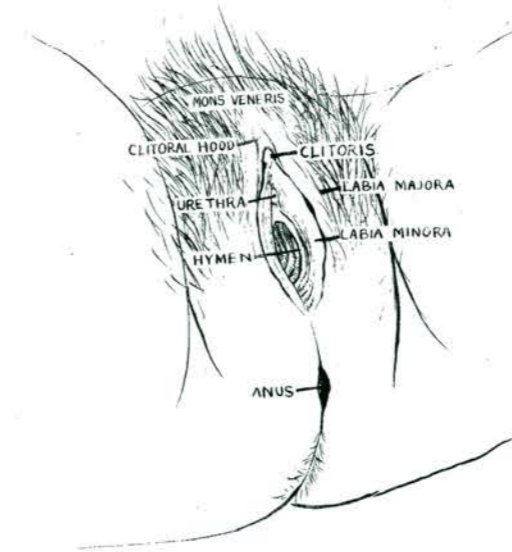
her painting *Emetic Fields* (1989), in which a masked surgeon tells Queen Elizabeth, “You are the patient. I am the real person. You are the patient. I am the real person” (Fig. 2). These staccato statements capture the dehumanization that can accompany the relentless medicalization of the female body.

And it is the female body that is arrestingly at issue in *Monalisa*. Applebroog’s stage of compulsive self-documentation came at a specific moment in history—the flowering of the women’s movement in the United States. Her process resonates among other feminist developments happening around the same moment, and not just in the art world. For instance, the Boston Women’s Health Collective started the research process for its foundational book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* in 1969, which was first published as a photocopied newsprint text in 1970.⁵ The section “Anatomy and Physiology” encourages women to familiarize themselves with their own genitalia, as a way to deobjectify female sexuality and to dealienate women from their most “taboo” parts. Explaining the location of the clitoris, the manual notes, “You will understand this best if you examine yourself with a mirror.”⁴ In fact, as gender studies scholar Michelle Murphy argues, the vaginal self-examination became a crucial exercise in knowledge production through which feminists theorized “women’s experience.”⁵ She describes how radical feminist groups in Southern California in the early 1970s attempted to demystify their own physicality through the experience of looking at oneself “as a woman.”

Applebroog had no knowledge of these other efforts, and her series differs dramatically from the gynecologically-based diagrams found in texts like *Our Bodies* (Fig. 3). In this explanatory hand-drawn illustration, various parts are pointed out and labeled—however, though the vaginal canal is carefully detailed, it is strangely not explicitly indicated and remains an unnamed cavern at the center of the image. By contrast, Applebroog seemed to be using her own body in part as a jumping-off point for formal experimentation. The drawings exhibit her wide repertoire of mark making, evoking everything from the fluid brushwork in Japanese calligraphy to the dense agitation in R. Crumb’s comics. Applebroog’s sure hand animates her lines as tight squiggles bunch together, or thin rivulets scatter across the white page.

2. Ida Applebroog,
Emetic Fields, 1989.
Oil on canvas, 108 x 202 in.
(Preceding pages)

Pubic hair is rendered as a dark, tangled thicket in some, in others as a small, light scribble. In yet others, it disappears altogether. Sometimes the vagina becomes a mere smudge, almost as if Applebroog had inked her own body and pressed herself directly onto the page.



3. Illustration in the first edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, 1970, p. 25

Fleshy textures are made palpable in many of the images, while in others the body’s weight and heft evaporate, replaced by a quick rhythmic stroke. Compositionally, Applebroog makes effective use of negative space. Generally, the marks sit low on the page. Though the genital area takes center stage, with only cursory indications of legs and buttocks, sometimes the lower body is more completely represented, with suggestions of more substantial haunches and bellies. A few ink stains and blotches punctuate the fluidity of Applebroog’s lines, and occasionally delicate washes fill the paper as she deploys the full range of tools at her disposal. Yet it is misleading to call this series a purely dispassionate aesthetic exercise, the product of a detached eye. Applebroog depicted her own vagina with little investment in fidelity, and with full awareness that such a form is highly charged, loaded with cultural and symbolic weight.

Like penises, vaginas have variable states; they swell, they retract, they register changes based on sexual

excitement, hormonal cycles, age. Such vulvic variation is apparent in Applebroog's series, as labia droop and protrude, nestle and open. The pussies appear fistlike here, flower-like there. If the self-education manuals set out to clinically and generically map the genitals in an effort to make them normal, Applebroog's drawings instead defiantly embrace the abnormal—and the more they deform, the more they demand new vocabularies of description. They elicit a flood of metaphors both banal and unexpected: a black eye, an unfurled fern frond, a seashell, a tide-pool whorl, a jagged landscape. This is hardly vagina as lack; it is instead an active, productive, postbirth maternal body.

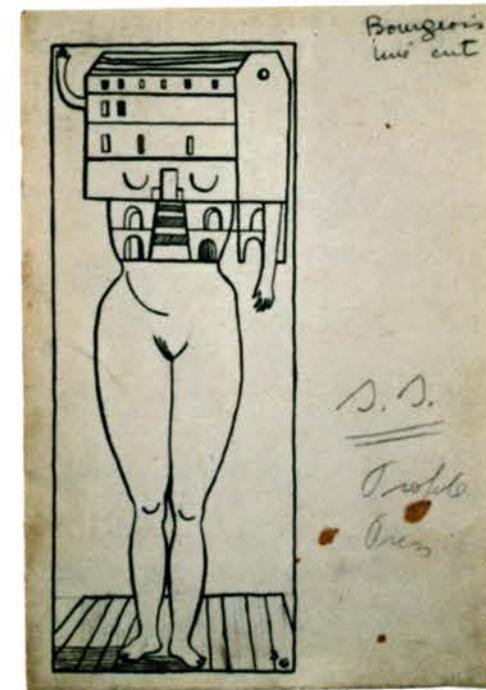
2. HOUSES

Applebroog calls the wooden construction that bears the vagina images a “house.” It is a telling term, for domesticity and its discontents have long been fixations of her work. In depictions of the normative family as a site of terror and pleasure, she implies that there is trouble in the home. In fact, the armature was based on a photograph of a house being built that had only its frame in place (Fig. 4). She made a reduced version of that house-in-progress; its dimensions measure roughly 9 by 12 by 12^{1/2} feet—more a room than a house. The structure exists in a suspended state, caught between fragile openness while at the same time indicating a state of incipient completion.



4. Reference image from Applebroog's studio

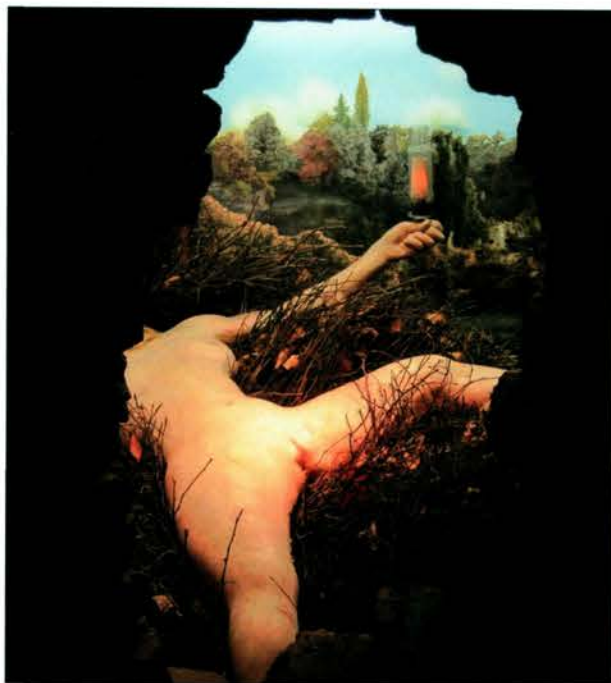
Though Applebroog has in the past utilized unusual display methods, including stacking canvases in freestanding arrangements in the center of the gallery space, this installation offers a conceptual site that reaches beyond issues of presentation and exhibition. The house/room is embedded in feminist concerns, and not just because it is covered inside and out with depictions of vaginas. It speaks to other artwork that conjoins the female figure and the domicile, such as Louise Bourgeois's *Femme Maison* series (1945–47, Fig. 5). Bourgeois puns on the word “housewife” by grafting architectural forms onto women's bodies. As Mignon Nixon observes, the *Femme Maison* works are a visualization of the dream for a “room of one's own.”⁶ For Bourgeois in the late



5. Louise Bourgeois, *Femme Maison*, 1947. Ink and pencil on paper, 10 x 7 in. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

1940s, as well as for Applebroog two decades later, it was a struggle to carve out the psychic space needed to manage being simultaneously wife, mother, and artist. Think back to the bathroom refuge where Applebroog gazed at herself in a mirror again and again with her notebook in hand. The *Monalisa* room, fabricated to hold the bounty of drawings

she had unearthed, harks back to that environment. Here Applebroog has constructed a place that cannot be entered (a kind of boundary or hymen is kept intact) in which the body is reflected back to itself ad infinitum. The room reverberates with vulvas as they proliferate on multiple surfaces.



6. Marcel Duchamp, *Étant donnés: 1° la chute d'eau, 2° le gaz d'éclairage*, 1946–66. Mixed media assemblage. Philadelphia Museum of Art

This multiplicity generates a sense of uncanny replication in which domestic space is defamiliarized and made strange. For Sigmund Freud, it is precisely the uneasy resonance between the *heimlich* (homelike) and its ostensible opposite that produces the *unheimlich* (uncanny)—and female genitalia are among his primary examples.⁷ But Applebroog's structure does not so much conflate the house with the cunt as it raises questions about scopophilic desire and visual access, for we literally *see through* the vaginas as we peer inside. They function as much as windowpane as wallpaper or Sheetrock. This is not room-as-womb: it has nothing cozy about it. Moreover, the two *Photogenetic* portrait faces look directly at the viewer. *Brian*, with its haunting expression, is placed on the outside of the room, as if standing guard. The female figure of the

painting hanging inside the house has an awkwardly lumpy, reclining body whose bared crotch resembles the shaved cleft of the splayed woman in Marcel Duchamp's *Étant donnés* (1946–66, Fig. 6). Duchamp's installation, in which the viewer looks into a ragged peephole in a heavy wooden door, may be the predominant example of twentieth-century art that deploys voyeurism for its mode of address.

Unlike Duchamp, Applebroog has created a vulnerable structure—light-filled, roofless, with walls of paper. It is more akin to Mary Miss's early outdoor works such as *Pool Complex: Orchard Valley* (1983–85), in which the artist uses vernacular materials to engage with how humans intervene in natural space (Fig. 7). Like Applebroog, Miss understands that architectural forms can be as much about risky exposure as they can suggest threatening enclosure. In a related vein, for "Splitting" (1974), Gordon Matta-Clark cut a New Jersey house in half, letting in a bright sliver of sun. As Anne Wagner has insightfully theorized, Matta-Clark's piece allegorizes issues of domesticity and bodily disintegration by rendering crisis in the home as a visible crack.



7. Mary Miss, *Pool Complex: Orchard Valley*, Saint Louis, Missouri, 1983–85

What does it mean to display one's "private parts" as Applebroog has? At stake here is the disruption of the boundaries between private and public spheres—or, to reiterate the famed slogan, the collapse between the personal and the political. Within feminism, the house has a further connotation as the fraught realm of women's labor. In 1969, when she made her drawings, the forms of labor that Applebroog was engaged in—working as an artist, working as a mother—were



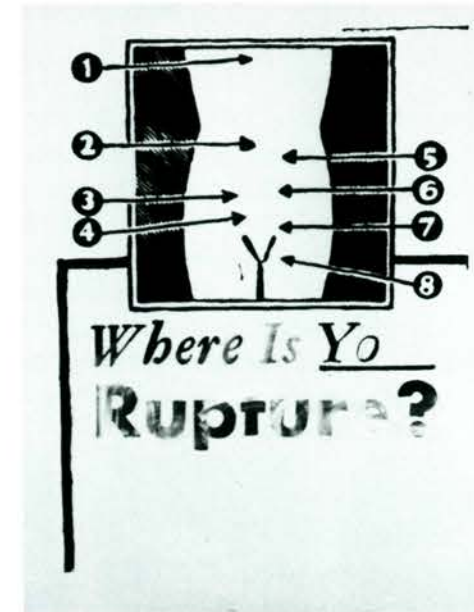
not traditionally valued or justly compensated. The women's movement, in fact, took up the question of the gendered division of labor right at this moment. Housework was increasingly understood as implicated in patriarchal systems of oppression, as outlined in texts such as Pat Mainardi's rallying cry, "The Politics of Housework," first published in 1969.⁸ Thus, in the *Monalisa* project, as in Applebroog's past work, the home is not a stable location but an unfixd nexus of sexist violence, perversion, and thwarted safety, as well as tenderness, secret stolen moments, bodily pleasure, and honest labor.



8. Ida Applebroog, *Form 1.01*, 1969. Muslin and Styrofoam

3. RUPTURES

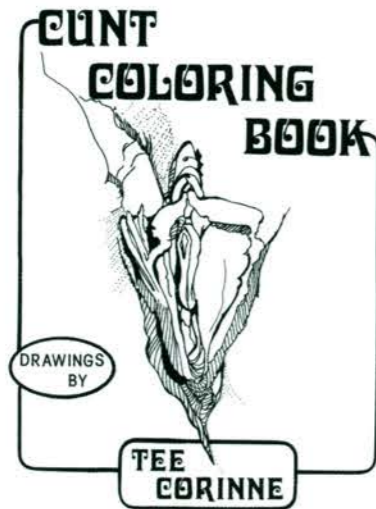
At the same time that she was drawing herself in the mirror, Applebroog was also making large-scale abstract sculptures—soft, sagging works made of muslin meant to be hung “at variable distances from floor and ceiling.” She created forty-three of these forms in all, including *No. 1.01*, a flaccid ladder that slouched against a corner and spilled out into the room (Fig. 8). It bears a strong formal affinity to the contemporaneous work of Eva Hesse, though Applebroog had not yet encountered Hesse's art.⁹ When Applebroog moved to New York in 1974, she discovered the significant overlap with Hesse, by then a well-known artist. Convinced that her own biomorphic experiments had no place, Applebroog destroyed all her sculptures. In fact, it was an era of many breaks, from trashing her previous work to changing her last name from Horowitz to Applebroog. Perhaps the ghost of those discarded sculptures haunts the current project, with its ladderlike pieces.



9. Andy Warhol, *Where Is Your Rupture?* 1961. Oil on canvas, 69 1/2 x 54 in.

“Where is yo[ur] rupture?” asks Andy Warhol, in a piece from 1961 that places numbered arrows over a nude female torso (Fig. 9). Applebroog is similarly interested in

ruptures, especially how they are produced by or inscribed onto the body. Though the vagina drawings evidence a relentless determination to represent herself, they also demonstrate a complicated approach to bodily integrity. Applebroog's work is driven by the idea that we are *discursively* rather than biologically constituted, framed by language and representation and stereotype. "I like it [Warhol's question] because I think it is talking to *me*, I take it as *about me*. It indulges my narcissism: 'Here! Here! My rupture is right here!'"¹⁰ Jennifer Doyle's gloss on Warhol invokes the specter of narcissism—a charge disproportionately leveled against women who make self-portraits. Yet the project of self-scrutiny undertaken by Applebroog in 1969 had little to do with likeness or realness; with the drawings' creative detours and illegibilities, they evince no sense of investment in the vagina as a locus of "truth."



10. Tee Corinne, *Cunt Coloring Book*, 1975, frontispiece

In this, Applebroog departs significantly from some 1960s feminist thinking that insisted on an inherent, "natural" correspondence between self and body. The notion that we *are* our bodies is manifested in the elision of the title *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, one that is repeated explicitly throughout the book. Of course, this is not the case: we are not reducible to our physical selves, and there is nothing "natural" about the women in Applebroog's work (or men, for that matter, as

the category-defying portrait *Brian* demonstrates). The vagina series, rather than remain insistent on the cunt as the primal essence of femininity, uses the body as a flexible framework for imaginative speculation. Among the drawings can be seen some utterly unrecognizable, and radically disembodied, shapes; they look like waves, or shifting air currents, or scrawled cursive handwriting. Such drawings stand in distinction to what Jane Gallop has termed "vulvomorphologic," a logic that, "once in place, would be no less oppressive than phallogomorphic logic."¹¹

Differences between Applebroog's 1969 drawings and those in early women's health texts have already been mentioned. And such contrasts pertain as well to other, slightly later, artistic projects that dealt with the same subject matter. For example, Tee Corinne published her famed *Cunt Coloring Book* in 1975, featuring page after page of realistically drawn close-ups of women's genitals modeled by the artist's friends and acquaintances (Fig. 10). Corinne explains that she made the book for use in women's sex education classes, and that she further "wanted the drawings to be lovely and informative, to give pleasure and affirmation."¹²

Applebroog's art has never been the terrain of pure celebration; instead, she traffics in ambivalence and negation. In 1975, the same year as the *Cunt Coloring Book*, Applebroog made a multipane vellum work in which a headless person—of unclear gender—sits on a bed and instructs, "Look between my legs." Two panels later, the unmoved body further comments, "I love my promiscuity" (Fig. 11). How does a decapitated body speak? It speaks through its sex, which it flaunts in an attempt to own or contain its own powerlessness. The rift between the word and image produces a sensation of ungainly,

11. Ida Applebroog, *Look between My Legs*, 1975. Ink and Rhoplex on vellum, 5 panels, overall, 17 1/4 x 56 1/4 x 2 1/4 in.



disrupted identity, and this friction between nature and culture is what propels Applebroog's work.

Bodily coherence is seriously compromised in Applebroog's current project as well, with its many amputated legs and the disfigured *Photogenetic* portraits that look as if they are in the process of being melted down. In addition, it is wrong to presume that Applebroog's images refer only to the female body—that to have a vagina is necessarily to be a woman. Jenny Saville's painting *Matrix* (1999), which depicts a person whose naked form bears both female and male markers, serves as a corrective to that presumption (Fig. 12). *Matrix* is a portrait of Del LaGrace Volcano, a transgender activist who agitates for a gender system unrestricted by corporeality. His vividly rendered vagina acts as a visual entry point into the canvas, even as the male materiality of his face disrupts assumptions about equating genitalia with identity.¹⁵ Trans politics have made possible phrases such as “his vagina”—why not accept the body as set of ruptures?



12. Jenny Saville, *Matrix*, 1999. Oil on canvas, 84 x 120 in. Courtesy Gagosian Gallery

There is one more rupture to account for: the fundamental break—revolution, really—that feminism inaugurated within the history of twentieth-century art. Applebroog's work is a

critical touchstone for feminism. A pioneering figure not only within contemporary art history, as a “woman artist with feminist concerns,”¹⁴ she also has been central to feminist politics for decades; she joined the Heresies editorial collective in 1978 and was a member of the Women's Action Coalition in the early 1990s. This revolutionary history cannot be fully written without her.

4. SELVES

“Cunt art” has been a contested label for work that represents female reproductive organs, and it has been unfairly derided as a cliché of feminist art.¹⁵ While many women artists in the later half of the twentieth century have made explicit work by and about vaginas—a few of the most influential examples include Shigeko Kubota's *Vagina Painting* performance (1965), Gina Pane's *Action Pants: Genital Panic* (1969), Judy Chicago's iconic *The Dinner Party* (1974–79), Hannah Wilke's *S.O.S. Starification Object Series* (begun in 1974), and Carolee Schneemann's *Interior Scroll* (1975)—these works are widely divergent in their formal means and purposes. As a literal body part or as an abstracted labial shape, the vagina was variously used to critically contest stereotypes, to aggressively protest media representations, or to honor “central core” imagery. In addition, many women artists have generated variations of erotica, such as Betty Dodson's “love pictures,” exhibited in New York in 1968. Some of the efforts from the 1960s and 1970s could be connected to what Ellen Frankfort called, in her best-selling 1972 book, “vaginal politics.”¹⁶ From art historical works like Gustave Courbet's *Origin of the World* (1866) to medical imaging technologies to new-media pornography, female sexuality has long been an overdetermined site of representation, and feminist artists have been motivated to produce a counterdiscourse as a corrective to those objectifying images.

As Applebroog's 1969 drawings demonstrate, the vagina is also a fruitful visual stimulus. How does a woman look at herself? And how does the lesbian viewer encounter images of vaginas both as familiar self and as desired other? What are the methods of female spectatorship? Unlike



13. Joan Jonas,
Mirror Check, 1970.
Performance photograph
by Roberta Neiman

Joan Semmel, whose self-portraits are based on the artist's own gaze down the length of her body, Applebroog made her drawings by looking in a mirror, thus producing a head-on orientation of the crotch on the page (there are a few, however, that break this mold). The mirror as a tool for seeing oneself differently brings to mind Joan Jonas's performance *Mirror Check* (1970, Fig. 13), in which the artist examined her nude body with a handheld mirror in front of an audience that was seated a short distance away. In Jonas's piece, viewers were not granted access to the artist's reflection—and neither was an audience allowed to witness Applebroog's works at the time of their creation. It is vital to remember that they went unseen for decades.

Female genitalia exist on the boundary between the outside and the inside of the body. It is this very nexus—that tension between self-disclosure and interiority—where portraiture is at its most incisive. Among the pages and pages of vaginas in the 1969 notebooks, a drawing quite unlike the rest stands out. It is an image of the artist's face, sketched three times with three distinct affects (Fig. 14). Barely recognizable as a portrait of the same person, the face transitions from sharply angular to slightly jowly to fully apple-cheeked. The expressions are somewhat inscrutable:

is she pensive, resigned, fearful, bitter, or just serious and observant? Both drawn from life, the faces and the cunts are psychological portraits of states of mind, a project of potent introspection—Applebroog faces her vagina.

The late 1960s brought a push to make female sexuality more visible. As Michelle Murphy claims, “although the vagina has long been marked as inscrutable and unknowable—the site of women's secrets—in the history of medicine, psychoanalysis, and even some feminist theory, the feminist self-help movement recoded the vagina as accessible and knowable through commonsense and transparent techniques, like looking at your face in a mirror.”¹⁷ But the ideologically freighted vagina is not equivalent to the face (though it, too, is ideologically marked), and Applebroog's *Monalisa* project returns to the stubborn fact of flesh, particularly its ability to make audiences uncomfortable.



14. Ida Applebroog,
Group L:6, 1969. Ink on
paper, 10^{5/8} x 8^{1/4} in.

From Marlene McCarty's drawings of teenage girls with their vulvas visible through transparent clothes (Fig. 15) to Tracey Emin birthing dollar bills, women artists in the



15. Marlene McCarty,
Pamela Knuckles—
November, 1984, 1995–99.
Graphite and ballpoint
pen on paper, 78 x 51 in.
Collection Caroline Van
Hoek

last decade have engaged with the 1970s preoccupation with vaginal art.¹⁸ Recent performance work by artists like Ann Liv Young point to other generational returns to this moment, though some of this work is tinged with brutal spectacularization. It would be convenient for a linear art historical narrative to say that Applebroog's drawings prefigured these efforts, but this is a fantasy origin, an invented beginning. Her forgotten stash functions instead as what might be called an unconscious archive, as it speaks to the many women who have been fascinated with parts of themselves that have

been coded dirty or shameful. The drawings that rushed out of her in a frenzy are in some respects ambivalent—fearlessly frank but also, maybe anxiously, kept out of sight and erased from her memory.

What kinds of selves and forms of self-representations will unfold as gender identity continues to shift and slip? Feminism remains a theoretical and political formation through which such questions are asked. Applebroog's new tour-de-force project does not just look back in time, with its decades-old drawings rescued from slow disintegration. It importantly includes a replica of a house in the process of *being built*—in this, it signals an optimism that also moves toward the future.

It could be said that all acts of production—not just the creation of self-portraiture—are embedded in autobiography. Even writing criticism. Picture this: a teenage girl in Houston, Texas, goes to see an art exhibition in a local museum on a school field trip. On the walls is Applebroog's fifteen-year retrospective *Happy Families* (1990). The teenager is struck by this art in a way she never before believed possible—she is moved by its lacerating humor, its dark sensuality, its vibrant material presence. The art calls to her insistently and directly; she feels the images tapping into her own fixations with messy embodiment, illness, class shame, coming out of the closet, and domestic disturbance. Because she attends a public performing arts high school, she tries to find a way to process how the art affects her. She does a performance inspired by the show entitled *Homage to Ida*, the details of which have—probably thankfully—become hazy in the subsequent twenty years. The performance is not a success; she decides her investments lie in looking at art rather than practicing it, and she commits herself to the study of feminist art. In the spirit of Applebroog's unearthing of her own past, I offer this anecdote, even if it puts me at risk of accusations of narcissism. For yes, that girl was me: Applebroog's art redirected my life. I cannot wait to see what she does next.

Julia Bryan-Wilson is associate professor of contemporary art and director of the Ph.D. Program in Visual Studies at the University of California, Irvine.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Helen Molesworth, personal correspondence with the author, November 2009.
- ² Applebroog produced the *Photogenetic* series (begun in 2003) using a complex process in which she models small figures out of clay, photographs them, and manipulates the digital images both in the computer and as they come out of the printer before the ink has fully set. She adds other materials to the surfaces to create multilayered mixed-media works.
- ³ The initial version of this book was explicitly written by the Boston Women's Health Collective as a curricular manual for "a laywoman's course" on feminist health education and was titled *Women and Their Bodies: A Course* (Boston, Mass.: New England Free Press, 1970). An expanded, commercial edition was published by Simon and Schuster in 1973 as *Our Bodies, Ourselves*; the new title moved from the distancing third person (*their* bodies) to the more emphatically possessive first person (*our* bodies). For more on this history, see Kathy Davis, *The Making of "Our Bodies, Ourselves": How Feminism Travels across Borders* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007).
- ⁴ Boston Women's Health Collective, *Women and Their Bodies*, 13.
- ⁵ Michelle Murphy, "Immodest Witnessing: The Epistemology of Vaginal Self-Examination in the U.S. Feminist Self-Help Movement," *Feminist Studies* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 115–47.
- ⁶ Mignon Nixon, "Femme Maison (Woman House): What's So Funny about Fetishism?" in *Fantastic Reality: Louise Bourgeois and a Story of Modern Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), 53.
- ⁷ Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny* (1919), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), vol. 17, 219–53.
- ⁸ Pat Mainardi, "The Politics of Housework" (*Redstockings*, 1969), reprinted in *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation*, ed. Shulamith Firestone and Anne Koedt (New York: Radical Feminism, 1970), 28–31. Writings by French

- theorist Christine Delphy examining the unequal division of labor from a feminist perspective first appeared in 1970; see Delphy, *Close to Home: A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression*, trans. Diane Leonard (New York: Harper Collins, 1984). Helen Molesworth has lucidly discussed the centrality of gendered labor in 1970s feminist art in her "Cleaning Up in the 1970s: The Work of Judy Chicago, Mary Kelly, and Mierle Laderman Ukeles," in *Rewriting Conceptual Art*, ed. Michael Newman and John Bird (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 107–22.
- ⁹ Briony Fer has discussed the connection between Hesse's work and Applebroog's no-longer-extant sculpture in her *Eva Hesse: Studiowork* (Edinburgh: Fruitmarket Gallery, 2009).
 - ¹⁰ Jennifer Doyle, *Sex Objects: Art and the Dialectics of Desire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 102.
 - ¹¹ Jane Gallop, *Thinking Through the Body* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 96.
 - ¹² Tee Corinne, *Cunt Coloring Book* (1975), unpaginated. More recent efforts to document and glorify female variation include the photographic compendium *Femalia* (San Francisco: Down There Press, 1993).
 - ¹³ Judith Halberstam discusses this painting, and Volcano's response to it, in *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).
 - ¹⁴ Ida Applebroog, quoted in Benjamin Lignel, ed., *Ida Applebroog: Are You Bleeding Yet?* (New York: La Maison Red, 2002), 122.
 - ¹⁵ For a detailed examination of these debates, see Amelia Jones, ed., *Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party" in Feminist Art History* (Berkeley: University of California Press in conjunction with the UCLA Armand Hammer Museum, 1996).
 - ¹⁶ Ellen Frankfort, *Vaginal Politics* (New York: Bantam Books, 1972).
 - ¹⁷ Murphy, "Immodest Witnessing," 131.
 - ¹⁸ For more on shaved crotches in particular in recent art, see Jerry Saltz, "Pudenda Agenda," *Village Voice*, April 16, 2002, reprinted in *Seeing Out Loud: The Village Voice Art Columns, Fall 1998–Winter 2003* (New York: Figures, 2003), 74–77.