

War - What is it Good For? For Further Information Contact Christine

International Women's month 2022, a reflection. Last week I was with Althea Greenan, she had pulled out a sample of their existing poster collection at the Women's Art Library.¹ This week I met up with Suzy Mackie from the See Red Women's Workshop² and she talked about the labour, or possible burden of caring and providing context for their poster collections (and other posters from the same era) in multiple spaces.

I would love to be looking at these posters as objects or artifacts, words, images and a visual language that was once needed in the distant past. In this moment the sentiment and message of these three posters feels way too eerily contemporary.

Barbed wire. Mushroom clouds from nuclear weapons. Maps of Europe. Connected geographies. The fragility of the spider web. The Women's symbol. Demonstrating a desire for peace. Women of Europe wanting peace. West via East. Red, a bloody red. Those distinct suffragette colours, white, purple, green. No year. No author. Noone left behind.

A threat of peace. A protest for peace. Is there ever really peace? Or only peace for a few. Or only peace for many? When do we achieve peace for All? How do we imagine peace without war? Not a speculative exercise. Sometimes there is privilege in speculation.

Last year marked forty years since the Welsh group "Women for Life on Earth" marched from Cardiff to Greenham Common, Berkshire, England, to protest against the decision of the British Government to permit 96 Cruise nuclear missiles to be stored there.³ The women at Greenham used actions, posters, and songs to protest against the nuclear missiles and gain attention. Greenham Common Peace camp remained active for 19 years until it was disbanded in 2000.

Part of the story or history held within the textures of these posters is community, collective processes, creativity, silkscreen printing, labour alongside distribution, just a message and or information. The other part is the places we find them now. The archives.⁴ What values do these collections hold? and who gets to see them?⁵ How do we know they are there?⁶ How do we utilise them in this moment?

From the West to the East to the West: Women Want peace. Women are stronger than bombs. For further information contact Christine.⁷

^[1] Women's Art Library, Goldsmiths, University of London

^[2] Red Women's Workshop

^[3] http://www.greenhamwpc.org.uk

^[4] Women's Art Library Poster Sammlung WAL/10

^[5] STICHWORT. Archives of the Women's and Lesbians' Movement

^[6] Tweet by Aida Wilde and Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski as part of a comission by the Women's Art Library, 2015

^[7] Holly Pester, Ask for Sara: A Day of Gossip, Anecdote and Feminist Art Practice in Archives, London: Book Works/Women's Art Library, 2015



Foto / photo: Jakob Dietrich

ENTRÜSTET EUCH! [DISARM YOURSLEVES, GET OUTRAGED!], 2022

Sekretariat für Geister, Archivpolitiken und Lücken / Secretariat for Ghosts, Archival Politics and Gaps

In Zusammenarbeit mit / In collaboration with Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski, Lina Dokuzović, Margit Hauser und/and Sassy Splitz

In Kooperation mit / In cooperation with STICHWORT, Archiv der Frauen- und Lesbenbewegung

Fotografie / Photography Julia Gaisbacher

Das Projekt wurde für die Ausstellung AGGRESSIVE PEACE im Kunstraum Memphis in Linz entwickelt (14. Mai - 8. Juni 2022).

The project was developed for the exhibition AGGRESSIVE PEACE at Kunstraum Memphis in Linz (May 14 - June 8, 2022).