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EDITORIAL

Remember that ludicrous question, "Why are there no great women artists"? As we strolled through "Women Artists: 1550-1950," a show at New York's Brooklyn Museum this month, we kept asking ourselves another question—where have all these paintings been? Hidden, lost, obscured in some cases for centuries, they have now been gathered by Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, many from private collections, others from the holdings of some of the best museums here and abroad. Harris and Nochlin deserve praise for the care with which they selected work of both high quality and extraordinary variety. We longed only for more: more work by the 83 artists, many of whom are represented only by a single painting, and more artists—at least another 150 are listed in the catalogue but do not appear in the exhibition.

The effect of all those paintings together in one space, suddenly, was overwhelming. The black-and-white slides we had seen in women's studies courses had not prepared us for the color or for the range in the size of these paintings—from the tiny miniatures to canvases so large they had to be hung in the Museum's reception hall. What did we like best? The feeling of the brilliant color for fruit, and the presence of unexpected details: a fly before the apricots or a rotted cut lemon to one side of a stunning bowl of purple plums. Two huge canvases were dazzling: Artemisia Gentileschi's "Judith and Maidservant with the Head of Holofernes" and, in a very different mood, Marie Bashkirtseff's "A Meeting"—of poor, young boys in nineteenth-century Russia.

"Women Artists" has already been shown in Los Angeles; in Austin, Texas; and in Pittsburgh. The exhibit in New York will close on November 27. The Brooklyn Museum has kindly provided us with several examples from the show which appear throughout this issue of the *Newsletter*.

Samples of still another unusual exhibit grace these pages. "Women at Work: 200 Years of Life and Labor in New York City," conceived, designed, and executed by three historians, Judy Hilkey, Susan Levine, and Allis Wolfe, may be viewed in New York City through the end of December. Photographs and graphics blown up and attractively displayed are accompanied by selections from historical diaries, poems, and stories. We know that women have always worked, but we have not before seen in one place the variety, the joy and the sweat, the suffering and the achievement. Sweatshops and factories, the home and the beauty parlor, the hospital, the office, the school—all are represented, and more. (Until November 27, the show can be seen at the Educational Alliance, 197 East Broadway; from December 5 through 29, at the Equitable Life Assurance Society, 1285 Avenue of the Americas.)

We are pleased to announce the addition of two people to the staff of the *Women's Studies Newsletter*. Shirley Frank, the new Managing Editor, is a graduate of Barnard College and holds a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from Brandeis University. While writing her dissertation on "The Artist and the Woman in George Eliot's Novels," she taught courses on Women in Literature and Women Writers at the University of Wisconsin/Extension and at Edgewood College in Madison. She acquired her editorial experience at several publishing houses, including Little, Brown, & Co., Inc., and the University of Wisconsin Press, as well as through working on a number of small periodicals and newspapers. She has also written several articles and stories.

Ilene Hertz, the new Circulation Manager, is a "reentry" student at the College at Old Westbury, and a women's studies senior. She began working at The Feminist Press in 1975 as a volunteer on the Educational Projects Committee. In that capacity, she answered correspondence from elementary and secondary school teachers seeking information on nonsexist classroom materials, and she presented a slide show on children's books to various audiences. —F.H.