

Lecture 18

Art as evidence (LINDA LOULIN) ↳ art historian

- suppressed history of women artists

eg. Self portrait with a maid servant
by Lavinia Fortuna (1577)

- she is the protagonist of the painting (projected as such)
- sits beside the window
- not only paints but also shows that she is also trained in playing the piano.
- the maid servant is holding a book of musical notes
- Lavinia projects herself as an artist not only in painting but also in music.
- Lavinia is also confronting the viewer in the portrait (directly looking at the viewer)

with a
soft gaze

⇒ ∴ assertive but not very
aggressive.

- the painting was originally made to be sent to the prospective groom.
- she was also wealthy enough to hire a maid servant - wanted to depict this in the painting

• Differences in the depiction of women :
agency of women in artworks? (in 18th century)

eg.

Titian's Venus of
Urbino
male artist

these kinds of
paintings would
be gifted during
marriage ceremonies etc.

↓
eg. depicting idealized
images of brides.

dogs have been
understood (since
Renaissance) as

male artist

Lorenzo Lotto's
Lucretia Valier

collaboration
between Lorenzo &
Lucretia to make
Lucretia's portrait
to be gifted to
her in-laws'
house.

don't know whether
the person's
original name
was Lucretia
or not...

• sign of loyalty
idea of small girl
opening a chest -
& household
amenities

↓
can symbolize
child-bearing
ability of the
pleasurable women
& duties.

(Ideas during
Renaissance)

what or does
it represent - the
historical Roman
character by
the same name
(who stabbed
herself to death
by making a vow)

the person is
gazing directly
at the viewer

psychic link b/w
the painted finger
& the drawing
of self-stabbing of
Lucretia (Roman
character) which is
held in the other
hand.

• Views from an intimate world

eg. Mary Cassatt's The Bath (late 19th cent)

{ not a huge social commentary
attention to a really minute detail
of a household - eg bath of a baby

esp.

when
Mary became
a mother.

eg. comparison b/w depiction of women
during the 19th century.

The Bang's Lesson
by Mary Cassatt
women

— interior space
of the household
as women are
not supposed to
go out of the
household to
learn these things
(wealthy woman)
↓
from their attire

Women
Ironing by
Edgar Degas
man

— creepy nature
of ironing
shops in
Paris during
that time.
(late 19th Century)

— objectifying of
women working
in ironing
shops in Paris

Degas not only
depicted this
problem in the
society but
also anticipated

in it (by making
its painting
without consent
of the women
depicted)

- 'Full-time' artist - after domestic work?
wash-technique of A.N. Tagore.

Sunayani Devi (sister of A.N. Tagore)

her painting practice was considered
as 'naïve' during that time.

picked up the wash-technique from
her brother

was not a professional painter as she
also had to juggle with motherhood
& household chores.

So when she stopped doing painting
due to her other work, she was
considered as 'not serious' artist by
others. (criticism)

Painting on "both sides" of the paper.