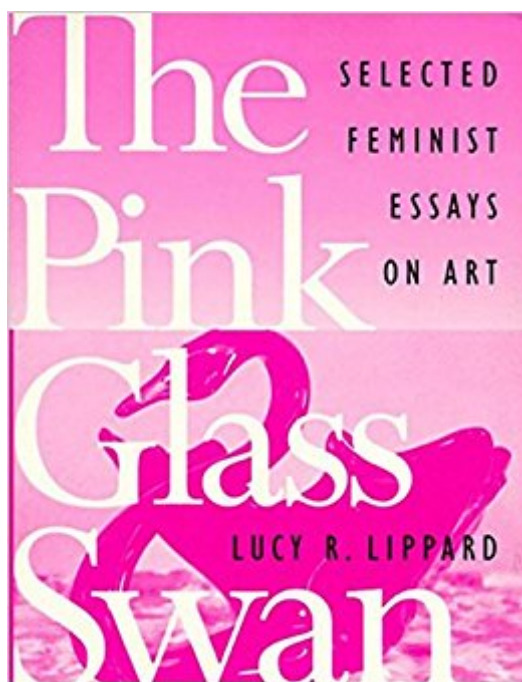


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The Pink Glass Swan: Selected Essays On Feminist Art



Synopsis

In the 1970s, Lucy R. Lippard, author of the highly original and popular *Mixed Blessings*, merged her art-world concerns with those of the then-fledgling women's movement. In a career that spans sixteen books and scores of articles, catalogs, and essays on art, political activism, feminism, and multiculturalism, her engaging and provocative writings have heralded a new way of thinking about art and its role in the feminist movement. This new collection of previously published essays covers more than two decades of Lippard's thinking on the ever-evolving definitions of feminist art, the convergence of high and low art, political and activist art, and the contributions of feminist theory to the politics of identity that infuses the production and exhibition of much of today's fine and popular art. With a new introduction from the author, *The Pink Glass Swan* brings together selections from two of Lippard's leading works, *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Art and Get the Message?: A Decade of Art for Social Change*, and numerous other articles written for newspapers, magazines, and art catalogs across the country.

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Customer Reviews

Ostensibly the topic of these essays is women and contemporary art; however, given the author's own activism, it offers a much broader reading of alternative culture, its politics and practices. A feminist and journalist, Lippard has been penning her accounts of the art world with the acumen of an experienced foot soldier since the early '70s. This collection brings together works from various publications, including the *Village Voice*, *Z* and the *Nation*, along with selections from three of

Lippard's previous books, including *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Woman's Art*. What begins with a commitment to art by women, evolves into an even more radical commitment to change. Having initially worked as a writer in New York to bring women into the mainstream, Lippard ends up establishing herself firmly in the margins: her most recent essays champion global cross-cultural exchanges that take place well outside the limits of the established art world. Her subjects include the well-known feminist artist Judy Chicago and the infamous Guerrilla Girls, as well as the less-known "Garbage Girls" (artists who make art from trash). Her frankly opinionated writing is clear and concise, characterized by a welcome sense of critical flexibility. Lippard calls it as she sees it?albeit sometimes mistakenly?to make accessible the work and politics of many vital and lesser-known artists working today. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Lippard is an eminent art activist, organizer, writer, critic, curator, lecturer, propagandist, and sometimes performance artist who has been committing her vociferous artistic and political views to print since the 1960s. This volume reprints 30 of her many essays originating in *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (1976), *Get the Message?: Activist Essays on Art & Politics* (1984), the *Village Voice*, and elsewhere. The important introduction records her latest (mellowing?) thought and traces the significant part she has played in the feminist art movement. (Most of the feminist artworks peppering her text are up to date, many from the 1990s.) Considered controversial and radical?and perhaps still so to the uninitiated reader?this snappy but occasionally repetitive prose seems mostly right on target, the voice of a maturing idealist committed to eliminating all artistic, cultural, and institutional sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, ghettoization, and marginalization. Lippard is neither a deconstructionist nor an essentialist but a self-styled Socialist feminist, albeit a romantic one, and a cultural feminist, albeit a quasi-Marxist one. Necessary for most art and all feminist collections.?Mary Hamel-Schwulst, Towson State Univ., Md.Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is an excellent anthology of Lippard's essays. I found it especially helpful as I am writing a thesis on "third wave" feminist art. Her essays are thoughtful and insightful without being full of jargon, so even those with no background in feminist theory can get the gist of the writing. Its great to be able to read the oldies and see how much has- and sadly, hasn't- changed. Most interesting are Lippard's updates and introductions to the older essays, in which she prefaces them with how her thoughts on the topics have changed or shifted since the essays were written. This is a really thorough and broad reaching book on art and feminism. I highly suggest it for all feminist artists

(especially younger ones who missed the first wave) and those who study feminism and/or art.

Lucy Lippard's text is written in what is now labeled a 'feminist' narrative because it intertwines art world events alongside the author's awakening to her own liberation. That is, to examine the work of the women artists that were working on their own art- to the side of the men in their lives, in their studios, and in their schools.'The Pink Glass Swan' works wonderfully as an introduction to the historical importance of this paradigm shift in the 1980's. Lippard uses language that strives to include the reader, as opposed to throwing tons of art theory and insider references. And, as you read the text, (in my case along with a class of college students) it becomes clear that this was largely the intention of feminist criticism-- to make it available to everyone to understand and to put into practice. I can highly recommend it.

This book is must for women artists, either young or firmly established. Originally published as From The Center, it helped me to understand my relationship to my artwork and my work's relationship to the various aspects of the larger art world. When I was attending art school, all my fellow women grad students read this book and, interestingly, responded enthusiastically to different sections. Lippard is a grounded, intelligent writer with a wry sense of humor and has a keen sense of observation. Her other books are also excellent, especially *Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory* and *Sense of Place*.

As a young college student and newly marked feminist this book filled in important gaps surrounding women's art and feminism that was lacking in my male-dominated art history classes. It gave me a sense of history and brought up many issues in feminist art I had not yet discovered. It also sent me to library to look up many female artists in hope to find more information. The book was very easy to read and wasn't weighted down with too much academia.

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