

Dolle, Coco, "Cultural Rebels: Feminist Art Appreciation at Independent Fair," *Whitehot Magazine*, 13 May 2023.



## Cultural Rebels: Feminist Art appreciation at Independent Fair

[Independent Fair](#) until May 14

By COCO DOLLE May 2023

In the last decade, women's visibility in contemporary arts has made incredible progress thanks to fourth wave generation feminist artists and art professionals determined to squash toxic patriarchy. Elevating other women and instating diversity were priorities. Not only women have supported each other reclaiming history by rewriting it - as seen in Katy Hessel's book [The Story of Art Without Men](#) and [Glitch Feminism](#) by Legacy Russel, they have also taken major leadership roles at prominent museums from the Louvre to Tate or the Brooklyn Museum, read the recent [NYT](#) article. Nonetheless, polls reported by the [Washington Post](#), show that feminism has a bad rap.

Understandably following the giant leap provided by technology, a new generation of young adults seem to be doubtful of further feminist agendas. They appear to be consumed with trending futurist themes, market positioning and strategic UGC, i.e. user-generated content. Raised empowered with an embedded concept of freedom and a sense of sovereignty from the use of digital platforms, the new generation of Americans seem to have forgotten how women's activist engagements helped cross heavy limitations in the artworld and in society at large. That gallery representation for female artists and WOC was just made possible through decades of hard work by rebellious spirits standing against systemic abuse, defamation and silence.

Hence, I was pleased to see galleries at Independent that made a point to focus on feminist art from now and then.



*Lynda Benglis, Artforum T-Shirt, 1974, courtesy of Susan Inglett Gallery*

[Susan Inglett Gallery & Specific Object](#) presented a booth titled *An Assault on American Prudery* with works by three female artists expanding from pornography media imagery: Yayoi Kusama, Beverly Semmes and Linda Benglis. In the early 70s, Yayoi Kusama embarked on a bold marketing strategy inserting her naked performance happenings to porn publications. She appeared in the centerfold of 'Playboylike' tabloids, the first issue of *Screw Magazine* and *Bachelor*. In 1969, she opened a boutique on 6th avenue in New York, selling transgressive orgy fashion, nude homosexual and lesbian dresses. A body painting studio was made available where you could rent nude models by the half hour. Continuously drawing eyeballs, the series of magazine spreads and nude photography relate Yayoi's infamous trajectory that led her to today's massive worldwide collaboration with fashion brand Louis Vuitton.