

# Sex in the City

**KUNSTHALLE wien**  
project space

Eva Kernbauer / Gerhald Matt  
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An English translation  
from German  
of the Interview with  
director/curator  
**GERALD MATT**

and artists :  
**NADINE NORMAN**  
**ELKE KRYSTUFEK**  
**ANNIE SPRINKLE**  
**& TANY**

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**GERALD MATT** : *While your approaches are very different, one of the common bases of your works is the socio-cultural condition of sexuality, and the critical examination of its perception and representation. There is a notion that sex in itself is subversive, that it's a threat to society. Do you agree to this, or do you think that, in contemporary culture, sexuality has been incorporated into the regulating realms of the sex industry? This could be discussed as a new model of the repression theory repudiated in Foucault's "History of Sexuality": Repression not through civilization, social order and the state, but through a "liberal" model, the market, the sex industry.*

**Nadine Norman** : Sex is considered subversive which society considers threatening, while it effectively thrives on this at the same time. However, this form of repression through civilization, social order and the state is inter-related to the "liberal" model, the market, and the sex industry. As long as private industry feeds the state via capital, the state and the market are both happy. Popular culture and advertising communications strategies utilize sex and sex appeal to sell almost anything. For example in music video clips you have icons such as Britney Spears whose image portrays a sex kitten, while for a long time she has claimed to be a virgin, which caters to a Puritanism that upholds her image as 'a good girl'. She sells millions. Basically the sex industry or any other industry goes as far as the state allows. Every level of portrayal of sexuality has its levels of classifications, which is how the state sanctions norms and enforces repression since explicit graphic representation of sexuality is just marked x-rated. Sex sells whether via suggestion or explicit. And if the state doesn't sanction it then it still goes out there in illegal ways.

**Elke Krystufek** : The sex industry has an influence only on a small part of selected societies. I think that after all things are regulated through the society itself rather than through the sex industry. There are certainly more people who do not consume and act within the sex industry than actual sex consumers and sex actors.

**TANY** : I recognize sex as a necessary evil within society, and the sex industry serves the societal function of allowing people to fulfill their sexual desires in a manner that is not detrimental to rest of their society or to others around them.

**Annie Sprinkle** : Sex is so many things, from A to Z. It depends. In some cases it's subversive. Our society is nervous about the body in general. Whether it's birth, menstruation, wrinkles, death, sex..., we are taught to deny our animal nature and ignore our bodies. Also female sexuality is so powerful, that it is political, because lots of folks don't want women to have too much power. But somehow if sex is relegated to a porn/whore ghetto, to a bad neighbourhood, or corners of the Ethernet, then it's more palatable, because it's in a place considered low brow and bad. I love to bring the low brow into the high brow. I love bringing work about the sex industry into the classy art world. The art world seems to appreciate sex in a special, intellectual way. The art world is a good laboratory for learning about sex. Sexuality is changing so quickly now, from year to year and decade to decade. Whatever sex is like today, it's going to change soon.

**GERALD MATT** : *Focussing on the topic of female sexual-*

*ity specifically, it still seems hard not to talk in terms of repression and marginalisation. How easy is it really today for women to talk about their sexuality and live it according to their wishes?*

**Annie Sprinkle** : I suppose it depends where you live. I have always chosen to live in places where I felt safe enough to be sexually honest and open and free. I mostly lived in Manhattan, and now I live in San Francisco. And in these cities it's very easy to be free. But when I go some places, I meet with lots of controversy— like lately in Norway and in Ohio... But I simply embrace the controversy as part of the process of being a sex educator/artist. I talk about sex with just about everyone, most of the time. Exploring sexuality is my purpose in life. So it's easy. But sometimes it does get scary, like when people are protesting, and they seem really crazy. A lot depends on one's audience.

**TANY** : In Japan, it's not easy for a woman to speak about sex openly because some people would feel uncomfortable when they see women talking about it. Sometimes, I also feel uncomfortable, and I don't talk about it very much. Unfortunately, women have more risk by having sex, and the women who follow their own sexual desire look too defenceless against the risk they are taking. I think it would be much more fun and educational if the sex industry for women was much more prevalent and the abuse of the man's body as a sexual object could become one of society's moral dilemmas.

**Elke Krystufek** : I cannot answer this question in a general context. There are local and individual differences. I do not have any results on this topic coming from my own work, and I don't have any information coming from relevant literature right now.

**Nadine Norman** : I think that most people find it hard to talk about their sexuality, women and men. That is, most people find it difficult to define what ones desires truly comprise let alone female desires or anything related to female sexuality. Desire itself holds great ambiguity since it is hard to determine what factors are at play in its formation, and then to live it out is yet another story. . I tend to think it is more difficult for women to live out their wishes since the perspective on self-empowered females and any overt expression of a woman's sexuality is found threatening. Already the presence of a woman in a public space, in the street for example, her mere presence alone, whether she is actually available or not, alluring or attractive or not, is the focus and object for men's projections and fantasies. Everyday walking out on the city streets I am approached or harassed with : Baby, Baby, Princess, Ça va?, etc., and more vulgar commentary or harassment – male desires which target women as the object for their projections even when the context does not offer a mutual exchange. A woman has to consider if she smiles or not : a far way from expressing her sexuality in any overt way without a number of confrontations along the way.

**GERALD MATT to TANY** : *in "She loves SEX, and she hates SEX", you center on the topic of female sexuality, still a taboo in contemporary Japanese culture. In this video installation, you represent several different female roles talking about their personal approaches to sex. Could you talk about these roles? Are these fictive, typified roles,*

*or are they based on interviews and discussions?*

**TANY** : The women I have created and performed are those who lost the balance of their sexuality, and ended up having extremely positive or negative ideas about sex. The only interview I did was with an actual costume player because I needed to know a costume -players' distinctive air, way to move, attitude, and circle to create the role of the "Costume Player". I met her through a friend, who, beforehand, warned me not to ask her any questions concerning sexuality. Actually, she was just the right person as a model of this role. It was so obvious that she has some kind of problem about sex, and she hates it (sex). At first, I set up each role's age, profession, and character, then, got into the role, and kept talking for 15 minutes entirely ad-lib. Therefore, these women's stories are fiction based on my opinion and experiences, and in a way, this whole video is my self-portrait.

**GERALD MATT** : *How do you envision your roles as artists within your specific sociological climate towards sexuality? Do you see yourself as enlighteners, as provocateurs, as sociographers, as self-expressionists or self-examiners?*

**Annie Sprinkle** : First and foremost I see myself as a whore. I am very entrenched in 'whore culture'. Like if I was black, or gay, or Jewish, I might identify with that identity or culture above all. Secondly, I see myself as a student of sex and a teacher of sex. Thirdly I see myself as an artist. Many whores have been artists and vice versa. I don't consider myself a provocateur, even though my work can be provocative. I see myself as a lover, not a fighter. I want people to feel good and to be happy, and to accept themselves as the perverts-- and erotic God/desses --that they are.

I strongly believe in the ways sex can enhance our lives. Sexuality is not only something that can be used for the enhancement of an intimate relationship, for physical pleasure or procreation. It can also be used for personal transformation, physical and emotional healing, self-realization, spiritual growth, and as a way to learn about all of life... and death. So you could say that I'm a missionary, spreading the gospel of sex as a sort of religion.

**GERALD MATT to Annie Sprinkle** : *But your work is, at the same time, very political, especially in contemporary US society.*

**TANY** : I'd like to be a questioner for various opinions. I believe there is a truth and fault behind the two extremes. I can agree and disagree to the climate that considers sexuality as a social harm and tries to regulate it, but also to opinions that try to liberate sexuality. And when it comes to feminism and anti-feminism, I can do the same. I have no intention of choosing one side. I just show the distortions of different sides, and I think art is an appropriate way for it. I could also write an article or a book rather than presenting this in art.

**Elke Krystufek** : I see myself as a sociopornograph and an artist inherent to the system. My work is always oriented very strongly at an art-historical approach and I am interested in sexuality as a social and asocial phenomenon.

**Nadine Norman** : As an artist, I position myself as a facilitator,

a go between the actual and imagined proposition within the artwork, its manifestation/s and the visitor's role and perspective. Many of my projects implicate not only myself but other women, and also the viewers whereby anyone's interaction (or their lack) is what formulates the object within the work. In effect there is some level of a sociological mirroring of peoples desires found within the artworks.

Sometimes the topics themselves touch upon notions that may be difficult or even taboo, or perhaps because what is at stake in this genre of work involves a risk or something that visitors may find uncomfortable. My role as an artist is that of transmission. My artworks are not really about sexuality itself, but rather about the relationship between desires and communications and its exchange.

**GERALD MATT** : *How much do you know about the other three artists' works? Do you have a (female) role model in art or politics or any other field that is important to your work?*

**TANY** : I had a chance to see Elke Krystufek's work in Japan, and I heard about Annie Sprinkle's work. I'm afraid that I don't think I know much about the other three artists. I'm looking forward to seeing their works as a viewer.

I personally am a big fan of Madonna and influenced a lot by her. As an artist, I'd like to follow her attitude to keep challenging and focusing ahead.

**Elke Krystufek** : I know Annie Sprinkle relatively well. Kristine Stiles is an example of somebody important to me as an artist and theoretician. Generally speaking, of course there are a lot of persons, living or dead, important to my work, and my interest continuously vary, which means, that at the most, there are "key figures" that are important within specific time spans.

**Nadine Norman** : I am most familiar with the work of Annie's and more recently Elke's, however, not via the mainstream art contexts, but rather via alternative venues or related controversies.

When my work "Call Girl" in Paris was under scrutiny in Canada's Parliamentary debate with the threat of censorship instigated by the Right Wing Alliance, which was eventually defended by the Liberal Government, it encouraged me to take a closer look at many other international woman artists who have provoked similar circumstances.

Certainly there are numerous women artists and writers that are inspiring, however I think the impetus for my art practice and my interest in art comes from experiences of my own life. My mother committed suicide when I was 8 years old. I grew up in a predominantly male environment, without any female role model. So I would seek out a connection to women via literature and art perhaps as a sort of surrogate. I think the historical lack of representation of women who have shaped history along with a lack of female role models in my own life has certainly played an impact. In my artwork I feel compelled to offer visibility to the female voice.

**Annie Sprinkle** : I don't know the other three artist' work. But I very much look forward to getting to see it. My main role model and mentor is Linda Montano, who is also my favourite artist. She believes that life=art. Her work is actually a lot about suffering, and mine is about feeling good, but we have so much in common never the less. I also admire some of the famous whores who have transcended their roles—such as Gypsy Rose Lee, and Xaviera Hollander.

My main inspiration is my girlfriend Elizabeth Stephens, who is an artist, and a tenured professor of art at University of Santa Cruz. We live together and are very in love. She has a wonderful style, she is a brilliant lover, and I learn from her every day.

**GERALD MATT** : *One of the characteristics of the expansion of the sexual industry into virtual space is the disappearance of the body as a physical entity, while at the same time the naked female body it is excessively represented in magazines, advertisement etc. etc. It is only consequent that in your works, the representation of the female body is central, you work with it performatively. Can you talk about your approach?*

**Nadine Norman** : The representation of a feminine subject via a social body is present in my work more so than the female body. The portrayal of women in advertising and other communications media usually objectifies women, and the representation of art in cultural presentation venues glorifies objects and isolates them from a context. I think society's (and the artworld is a part of society) perspective on both objects and women hold parallel pathologies both of which are addressed in my artworks. The subject of my artworks is not located in the physical object or its make-up, but rather via a proposition and its relation between the context and the viewer. I use performance and collaboration as a tool to elaborate the proposition, and often implicate myself in a performative role since I happen to be the most readily accessible and economical utility at my disposal.

**Annie Sprinkle** : I don't think the female body is "excessively represented" at all. Considering how fabulous it is. It needs to be seen more! But it would be better seen in a much wider variety of ways. For example older or fatter bodies : The female body is such a mystery, so miraculous—the more we see it the better! Generally the female body as a medium is neutral. What the viewer or advertiser or pornographer brings to it is what makes it charged. In my experience, images of the female body are like a mirror held up to people, and they reflect how people view and experience the world. How do I work with my body? Firstly I have a lot of fun with it. I play with my body. Like when I make tit prints, paintings with my breasts as brushes, it's fun. Plus somehow these big boobs make nice paintings! Or when I show my body nude in photos, or show my cervix to the audience on stage, it's fun. But there are also other levels to it. Making the tit paintings is also about people's obsession with breasts. Showing my cervix also says something about people's shame and disgust towards their own genitalia, and my lack of it. Sexuality and nudity are the most interesting subjects there are, and I can't understand why anyone would do work about anything else.

**GERALD MATT to Annie Sprinkle** : *I personally like your tit prints as an answer to Yves Klein's use of naked women as brushes : I like the the directness of making prints of breasts only, in its exaggeration and fragmentation, and I like the directness also in the persiflage of an "individual signature". However, seeing photos from the act itself as it is down in your performances – although I have not seen one of your shows so far – I was wondering that if you take other people to press your body down onto the paper, especially men, this does not lead to being used as a stamp, instead of manifesting the fun self-assertion that seems so prevalent in the tit-prints?*

**Elke Krystufek** : An important characteristic of my work is, that I take elements from disparate contexts and try to establish relations between them. A current example is, for example, that I have started to chase people who look decorative or shabby or striking or ugly either from my car or in public transport, and I try to take photographs from them, as if I was a paparazza chasing a celebrity. I also chase sites, not only people as described above. I take the resulting photographs and combine them with texts, which these people would probably never read and which you would probably never find in a "normal" living environment: These are "white cube texts" or "academy texts" or "museum texts", so to say, which, in my work, get into contact with the, probably, uneducated everyday life. I am interested in discovering possible, as yet non-existing links between the art world and the world outside it. I am interested for example in making a connection between Bipa [an Austrian drug store chain] and the museum, because both are producers of contemporary aesthetics. I am only peripherally interested in sexuality, as one social function among many. A large part of my work is voyeurism directed towards myself and towards other people, with a special caution concerning the interaction with others. I think that you can learn a lot from analysing your own voyeurism. I have always been very sceptical towards educational institutions, as learning is so individual, and have also developed my own work as a system designed for learning.

**GERALD MATT** : *What would this voyeurism entail for you? It's a manifold phenomenon, it can be aggressive, or loving and admiring, and it can be an examination of one's own body. Would you say that exhibitionism and voyeurism are two complementary modes of acting?*

**Elke Krystufek** : Voyeurism is such a huge subject. I am not an expert really, I am an amateur voyeur. It's probably curious most of all attributes. It can be addictive, too. I am not sure it has to go with exhibitionism. I think one can be voyeurous on people or objects without these people or objects being exhibitionistic. I have been voyeurous on high mountains recently and I am not sure if those are exhibitionistic on purpose. I have been voyeurous on seas, lakes, signs etc. and now on unknown people, who look deliberately average. I think one doesn't need exhibitionists to throw one's gaze against something or someone. I even think, for the real gourmet, exhibitionists can be quite boring, because they give you what you maybe prefer to steal. They take the fun out of the game.

**TANY** : Through the six roles in my work, I tried to express several kinds of women's emotions aroused when the body is offered to the carnal desire, such as anger, fear, joy, and happiness. Here in Japan, many and various sexual industries are in great demand. Especially, those without physical entity are obviously showing mental distortion of Japanese today. While I was working out the plan of the video, it became one of my important subjects. For myself I can not work on any art that is purely abstract or cerebral in nature. It is a much more personal and visceral reality based form of expression and conversation. I expand myself emotionally, intellectually and spiritually by casting myself in roles and situations that are, by nature, foreign enough to me to cause me to reconsider my self, my life and my role in society. I do not think of myself of as an educator or provocateur so much as an intelligent and observant woman. It is society that finds me subversive through its lack of insight and understanding, because I am anything but.

**GERALD MATT to TANY** : *In "Dedicated to my ex-lover" you act in the role of a passionate, dramatic woman kicking the hell out of her ex-lover who has betrayed or left her. It would seem that a "scene" of drama, tears, although not so much of actual aggression, is expected of a woman. You have staged this fictitious "act of revenge" together with your actual ex-boyfriend – can you talk about this work?*

**TANY** : The man in the video was my ex-lover (Makato Aida), he is with a major gallery and has become very well known amongst a younger Japanese generation. We had been together for 7 years while I was attending University majoring in Fine Arts. During our time together I had the ability to meet many people and it also allowed me to engage within the Japanese Art World. When our relationship came to an end Makato soon married another girl. Many people around me felt that it was an uncomfortable subject and generally avoided the topic. But much to their surprise I presented this video as one quick response. It can also be said that Gossip is a major contributor of how art can permeate into the general public's mind and generate popularity. I believe that Hollywood / Show Business can be used as a perfect example. Some could even argue that it is the general public's psychological thirst that craves for any knowledge of the personal lives of the famous and infamous. The field of arts in my opinion is no exception. Gossip and scandalous love affairs used to lend a glow to the art scene in its Golden Age. Presently the art scene has become increasingly smaller causing the gossip to become stagnant rather than perpetuate. Therefore, the gossip that had once surrounded me has now aroused my interest enough to incorporate it into my work. It is my intention that this gossip will make the arts shine someday and it will be up to how beautifully we (Aida and myself) will bloom as artists.

**GERALD MATT** : *Desire and joy entails a loss of control. Louise Bourgeois has expressed this more radically as: "In a woman, sex comes when she loses control." How do you position yourself in a perception of oneself as a sexual object, do you think this could also be experienced as self-asserting and liberating?*

**Elke Krystufek** : No, not at all. I experience joy actively

and as a conscious decision. As I also constantly take care of birth control issues, as a woman, I consider sexuality a thoroughly controlled process.

**Annie Sprinkle** : I have no problem at all with being a sex object. However, when people disrespect me, or judge me, or grab me, or are nasty, then there is a real problem. But to objectify me as a sex object is a compliment. I don't find it that different than honouring a woman's intellect, or honouring her athleticism, or other feature. The question is what is the intention behind it? If I'm walking down the street and a man says "you're sexy", he can say it in a way that is polite and honouring of me, or he can say it in a way that feels mean and rude. What is the intention behind it?

**TANY** : I agree with Louise Bourgeois's expression. Personally, I don't think that sex can directly lead me to a real self-assertion or self-liberation.

**Nadine Norman** : Whether one sees that sex for a woman is losing or gaining control or anything other, either way this can be repressing, liberating or empowering. The act of sex itself does not necessarily imply that one is a sexual object.

In my artwork I utilize myself and other woman as a catalyst to underlie or even undermine the perceptions about the roles of women. In "Call Girl", the availability of the women who were the call girls was offered free to the public. The displacement of the economy in relation to one's desires to meet her and in meeting with her created the opportunity for an exchange where she could be neither bought nor sold. Of course her availability was remunerated via an indirect source. Between the girl 'you call', or what you 'call her', the real object lies in the negotiation of the call girl and the visitor's availability. This kind of exchange is remarkably liberating.

**GERALD MATT** : *The title of the exhibition, "Sex in the City", plays upon the title of the popular TV series "Sex And the City", which asserts itself as a part of (post)feminist emancipatory culture: Women talk about sex, masturbation, promiscuity and lesbian sex are discussed. The discussion and representation of female desire and sexuality alone can be a source of constant provocation. What do you think about this TV series? Do you think that this form of discussion of female sexuality within popular culture can be productive?*

**Annie Sprinkle** : I found Sex and the City rather boring, because I had lived so much of it myself. I had a 'been there done that' feeling when I watched it. But I think any discussion of sexuality in any form is a way of learning and exploring this important and curious part of ourselves. People seem to learn a lot about human sexuality from that tv show, in an entertaining and palatable way.

Women are definitely much freer and open sexually today than say thirty years ago, but we still have a long way to go until we are more sexually evolved and mature and skilled. Being a great lover is an art. To be really good, requires lots of trial and error. Women still need for the world to be a whole lot safer for them.

**TANY** : I've heard about the program, but I've had no

chance to see it yet. I would have watched if I could. Media is on the side not to judge but to be judged. People should be able to see various views in the society on TV, and provocative programs should always exist to give audience an impulse to make their own judgement.

**Nadine Norman** : This show was brought to my attention since friends had seen it and identified with the characters, casting me as being just like Sarah Jessica Parker. As far as TV goes, this show is amusing since it captures the notion of lifestyle and clichés about dating that spectators wish for or identify with. The moment any TV show goes beyond the limit of what is tolerated as politically correct or loses their consumer market it will cease to exist. In *Sex in the City*, the characters are good looking white women with enough money to uphold an attractive lifestyle and one hell of a great wardrobe. Of course if one was to take this further and offer more diversity to attract a broader public who identifies beyond the stereotypical clichés we know, could this not open up peoples perspective and expectations about women, their roles or desires? That would be refreshing to see. But, then again, TV itself does not encourage one to think much at all. Isn't that what TV is for?

**Elke Krystufek** : I have seen the show, but it has not inspired me. Generally speaking, I am not inspired by TV. It's not productive for me as a consumer. As a producer, it could be, but TV producers usually have prevalently material interests rather than intellectual ones.

**GERALD MATT** : *What kind of program would you be interested in producing for TV then?*

**Elke Krystufek** : I would like to produce "The Elke Krystufek Show", which would consist of me as a host and would otherwise incorporate chance. It would be based upon my experiences as a host and developed according to these experiences. There would be no fixed concept and the show would be in constant transformation.

**Nadine Norman** : In my 'I'm available And you?' project, I created the series of 19 videos shorts that function in the same way that real TV publicities do while their structure is entirely different as is their concept since my videos shorts only object of consumption is based on the 'available woman's' availability and related sub- themes : love, complicity, sex, family, work, fantasy, & solitude. Spectators are offered the possibility to present their candidacy to meet 'her' via «[www.iamavailableandyour.com](http://www.iamavailableandyour.com)» interactive website where the lucky winners are selected by an intervening marketing team. The original idea for these videos is to have them exist as real time publicities within a live webcast performance that takes on the form of a TV TALK SHOW, replete with a talk show hostess, the 'available woman' and invited experts. I am really fascinated by the fact that the current Talk Show and Reality Show trends tend to address more controversial topics than the average sit-com, but basically are equally constructed as every other sit-com

**GERALD MATT** : *A much-discussed and controversial topic within feminism has been the role of pornography, thinking also of the feminist PorNo-movement of the '70s and '80s. Within the last decade however, there seems to have been a distinct vin-*

*dication of pornography – Annie Sprinkle is an important example of female conquest of pornography. What do you think about pornography?*

**Elke Krystufek** : I am absolutely not interested in pornography. I do not consume it, and I do not research it.

**Annie Sprinkle** : I find that if I'm really having lots of good sex, then I think pornography is OK. If I'm going through a rough phase in my sexuality, or not having enough sex, then I don't like porn at all. Porn reflects how I feel about sex quite often. Although mainstream porn leaves a lot to be desired. I prefer what I call alternative porn. Or Post Porn. Or seven chakra porn. I'm picky about what porn I like, and there is relatively little. But I think it's absolutely terrific that there is a lot of porn and that people do enjoy it, and make it. I see porn as a folk art. Its' by the people for the people, and it's an incredible record of human history and society.

**TANY** : When I was small, I couldn't see pornography, so I used to draw obscene pictures in secret. Since humankind is no better than a cultural animal, pornography naturally develops in any period of time. It is unnatural to prohibit it. It could contain a socially harmful factor, but we also have to accept that humanity itself contains harmful elements.

**Nadine Norman** : Basically, most of the pornographic industry is made by men for men (until more recently). Most pornography perpetuates the notion of the woman object increasing men's perspectives and expectations for women to fulfill that role. Of course this is also true in fashion, music, video clips and other mass media communications. If the representation of women was more diverse, perhaps this would be actually useful, that is I think men especially seek out visual and graphic stimulate in relation to their sexual needs, so why not offer them more diverse images of women who are also empowered. Of course the whole problem is also that the industry itself upholds high levels of exploitation of women. I am no expert on the subject and I personally do not seem to have this same desire or need to seek out graphic representation of sexual acts and their behaviours.

**GERALD MATT to Elke Krystufek** : *you use images of your own body as a material, within an ensemble of images, texts and substances. What does the image of your body mean and entail for you? Do you think that an overkill of meaning, of substance of constant representation, can lead to a liberation towards something like a downsizing to the mere body in itself?*

**Elke Krystufek** : Constant representation rather leads the opposite of a "mere" physical entity. Images always result in distance. My reduction to myself – very often also the face only, without the body – is an expansion of the idea of the black quadrangle, of how to expand this painterly process (a parameter with many concretisations) and how to reduct it ( a person, an idea, which cannot arbitrarily be taken up by other artists, as it is bound to the specific qualities of just this person). There is also an interesting book by Luce Irigaray, entitled "Way of Love", which researches the relation of self-examination and dialogue, among other things. This rela-

tion is also the basis of my work.

**GERALD MATT to Elke Krystufek :** *So would you agree that your work is more about communication, about acting out, entering a dialogue with the outside world rather than about presentation of our own body?*

**Elke Krystufek :** The presentation of my own body can be a part of this dialogue. One of the ideas of Luce Irigaray for example is also that we need to develop a new language for a loving relationship and in my opinion the nonverbal part of self representation also can be a part of this relationship or dialogue. What I tried to explain in my answer is that I am working in a very complex system. Art History has always played a major part in this dialogue and also the modes of self-representation. Acting out in front of an urinal is for example different than in front of a mirror. Or communication with a book is different than with an actual person. There is a lot of nonverbal language in my work. There also does not really exist communication where one doesn't reveal at least a part of oneself.

**GERALD MATT to Nadine Norman :** *in your projects "Call Girl" and "Je suis disponible – et vous?" you have targeted also the topics of availability of the female body and the economics of desire. What is the relation between your performances in art spaces and the realm of the public space?*

**Nadine Norman :** Some of my themes dealing with availability, are more about the relationship between desire and exchange that target the social body rather than the female body, while the portrayal of women and their roles are in question. I tend to utilize the museological framework as a site of transmission between what is public and private. Sometimes the art work itself begins as a proposition outside of the art space as infiltrations within real public spaces (via postcards, visiting cards, publicities, ads). Whether visitors discover the artwork via the artspace or its communications about it being an artwork or whether a visitor discovers the artwork via its infiltrations whether visitors are seeking out 'art' or not as an experience, they are all seeking it out. The notion and myths about what is 'public' itself is at question. Basically I think people are attracted to come to this artwork because of the ambiguity in their own lives or the lack of opportunity for the expression of these subjects or topics. People seem to have a real need for one on one communications and they are willing to use the art venue in a public space for this transmission of something private.

**GERALD MATT :** *What do you think about the term "post-feminism"? Is it important to you? Do you think there is relevance to it?*

**Nadine Norman :** I didn't know it was post! Of course the word feminism or post feminism depending on your cultural context means different things. In France it seems to have negative connotations related to a militancy and man hating perspective. Whereas for the same reason in North America, to say one is feminist is also passé, and it is more common to hear women express that they are humanists. Basically I don't care how you classify it. The fact is that women still do not have the same and equal

opportunities in work or pay, or in positions of power than do men, either in the public sphere or private home except when women use their bodies to obtain that means.

**Elke Krystufek :** Post-feminism sounds rather depressing. "Post" sounds as if something was over and done with already. I think that feminism is still a relevant topic.

**Annie Sprinkle :** I conquered myself a feminist. I wasn't a feminist until I was thirty years old and took a college class about women's issues, and learned what a feminist was and why feminism was important. Many of the goals of the feminist movement have not yet been accomplished, such as equality in government or equal pay, so feminism is still very viable and important. Post feminism is sort of provocative and interesting, but I'm not there. I want the best for women. I want equality for women. For example, a friend of mine said, "the patriarchy is dead". She thought this was an empowering statement, a way of usurping the power of the patriarchy. But there still is indeed very much a patriarchy. Just watch the news, and you see mostly all men in positions of power. Women have lots more freedom now because of feminism. I'm grateful to feminists who made it possible for me to be who I am today. My father was a feminist too. So it's not just women feminists, but some men too.

**TANY :** In terms of doubt over the feminists of our own time, I could sympathize with post-feminists. However, I don't have any intention to protest about lack of awareness about women's sexuality.

**GERALD MATT to TANY :** *This seems surprising considering your work "She loves SEX, she hates SEX" – is the topic of sexuality here just one arbitrary topic to stage and represent?*

**TANY :** Sexuality is one of my important themes. But it's another story if I protest about it or not. What I do through my creativity is to show my attention to which I am unable to describe or judge. Sexuality is one of my complicated and hard questions and it doesn't seem to be solved through my entire life. I don't even know if I should let myself go to enjoy my self truly by having sex with someone or anyone for instance. I know the joy and the pleasure of sex for sure, but if I completely admit it, my life would lead me to the different place from the destination I wish. For me it's very attempting but frightening to give myself up to sex.

When I was small, I remember that I sexually had interest in women's body. I was longing for my own body to transform and I wanted to touch my own big breast (as my expectation). It's almost like I didn't have sex distinction yet, and I used to take the female body as a sexual object. Then I when my body matured and I experienced what it's like to be a woman while still having the sense of my childhood left over inside me. As an artist who deals with sexuality, I take it as an advantage to be a woman. Men can take women as sexual object or image, but they can't actually possess female bodies and experiences.

**GERALD MATT :** *A last question focussing on your positions as female artists within the art world: What do you think about the situation of female artists, or about the presentation of "female" subjects in the arts today?*



**Annie Sprinkle** : I'd definitely like to see more women artists having the big museum show. I love the Guerrilla Girls, who point out the statistics on women artists being shown versus men. Clearly men get a lot more opportunities in the art world. But I personally don't believe this has been an issue for me. For the work I do, I get more good breaks because I'm a woman. A man doing the kind of work I do I think would have less luck with it than I do. I love seeing art work that's about women, so the more of that the better.

**TANY** : When people talk about artists, it usually means those including in the past. So, I would say female artists still belong to the minority, although the number of female artists is increasing these days. When people see an art work which is soft, delicate, and feminine, for instance, whether the artist is male or female makes a different impression. Since male artists are the majority, they don't need to be conscious of their gender. Women, however, are required to be objective through our creativity. It is like the artists who came to New York from abroad become to be conscious of their backgrounds. I feel sometimes that being a female is an obstacle depending on the content of what I want to express, but I'm satisfied with being a female, and also it's one of the source to keep myself challenging as an artist. As a viewer, I don't like female artists who autistically focus on their insides and present "womanhood" as something complacent that the opposite sex cannot understand.

**Elke Krystufek** : The discrimination of women today is done much more subtle than it used to be, and it is obvious, that women can also be discriminated by women. "Female" topics are very often discriminating to women.

**Nadine Norman** : Evidently more and more women during the last 40 years have gained more visibility in the art world than previously throughout history. But, then again, France for example has still never selected a female artist to represent the Venice Biennale. Me personally, evidently I would earn more money being a Call Girl than creating and presenting an artwork named Call Girl with available girls. I wonder if Annie Sprinkle makes more money from her artwork than from when she was a sex worker? Of course I think its hard to seperate this question without looking at the systemic crisis within contemporary art institutions today. Any topic that is seemingly confrontational or difficult is either marginalised or is sensationalised. It seems there is no middle ground. I think the notion of desire holds a lot of ambiguity, or a lot of cliches. I am not even sure I would know how define a female subject. Though there seems to be certain perspectives expressed by woman and also sometimes about woman or other things that still do not have evident ways for its manifestation.

**GERALD MATT** : *This makes me wonder if the context of the exhibition "Sex in the City" might be viewed also as limiting to you? After all, it's a women-only show, but I hope the topic is not women-only, or if it is, not discriminating?*

**TANY** : Being focused on the theme by participating this show is very exciting. Though I tend to be lazy to see shows, I would go and see this if it was held in Tokyo even

if I were not in. And to join the show I personally have interest is one of the greatest thing for me. Curating female artists in this context make the show clear to the viewer and reasonable I think.

**Elke Krystufek** : If it is no a women -only topic why is there no male artist in the show ? Don't they feel discriminated if no one cares for their sex-lives ?

**Nadine Norman** : The moment I become concerned about being marginalized by such a context, than perhaps it would be more advantage to re-position my perspective and pursue an entirely different and less enigmatic subject. I am simply delighted to be contextualized in the company of other women whose perspectives are so diverse and yet so precise.