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12 Female Curators and Gallerists on Their Favorite Female Artists

By Dayna Evans



At the start of Women's History Month last year, the National Museum of Women in the Arts [posed a question](#) to their social-media followers: Can you name five women artists? In an attempt to bring the undersung work of women in the visual arts to the surface, the museum (and several others around the country) began telling stories and sharing works from female-identifying artists in their collections. The hope was that by the end of March, hungry art consumers — and total newbies — would be able to name, recognize, and admire female artists *besides* Frida Kahlo and Georgia O'Keeffe.

This was all before Donald Trump was elected president and the budget of the National Endowment for the Arts [was threatened](#), and before the national conversation turned urgently to more important priorities. But many people would argue that art in the [Trump](#) era — especially art made by threatened, marginalized, or vulnerable populations — is even [more important](#) to support now than it has ever been.

Expanding on the NMWA's #5WomenArtists series, the Cut talked to female curators, gallerists, educators, professors, and students about which female artist has had the greatest impact on them. First up in the ongoing series: curators, gallerists, and museum directors.

Lorraine O'Grady



Lorraine O'Grady, *Miscegenated Family Album (Sibling Rivalry)*, 1980/1994. Photo: Courtesy of Alexander Gray Associates/©2017 Lorraine O'Grady/ARS New York.

"I feel blessed to be alive in the world at the same time as [Lorraine O'Grady](#). Early on, she was one of the first artists I remember introducing me to issues of intersectionality and the endless relationship between race and class. I saw myself in her work and was awed by her wit and depth of practice. We are so lucky to have her.

I love [Nefertiti/Devonia Evangeline](#), a performance she first presented in 1980 that has seemingly evolved into other projects including *Miscegenated Family Album*. I learned about that performance in college, and still remember how it felt to be taken with a work that was overtly and simultaneously personal and political. It's also a piece that's relevance has not wavered for the entire time that I have been alive. It has continued to confirm for me that we must defend our own histories, and that protest is, in actuality, a tender act because all politics are inherently personal."

—[Deana Haggag](#), president and CEO of [United States Artists](#)