

From The Nuclear Family to Cold War Projects

Roxane Permar

Abstract

This work investigates the seminal and recurring theme of the nuclear issue in my art practice, including the nuclear threat, the Cold War, and, by implication, the second nuclear age (Bracken, Delpech) and the imaginary war (Kaldor). I bring together two “ends” of my career. Early work was driven by politicisation gained through the experience of working in London’s urban environment with feminists, union activists and radical educationalists. The chapter reflects on these influences with specific reference to the anti-nuclear and women’s art movements of the late 1970s and 1980s, considering how the nuclear theme and activist/artist ways of making art emerged and evolved over a decade. The chapter looks ways the combination of nuclear and feminist issues manifested, both in activist and visual terms, and how the major upheavals in world politics in the late 1980s and 1990s resulted in significant shifts in Permar's practice. Activism of the 1980s shaped her art practice in the so-called “second nuclear era” working in very different contexts and situations, with new technologies, increased mobility and within small communities in the northern and Arctic region who shared common strategic importance during the Cold War period. Cold War Projects is an on-going collaborative project with the Shetland-based artist, Susan Timmins. Jointly Timmins and Permar work with other artists, historians and members of the public to interrogate strategic sites active during the Cold War period in Shetland, Scotland and the northern and Arctic regions in relation to Cold War histories and nuclear futures.

Presentation at Conference:

Feminist Art Activisms and Artivisms, Middlesex University, 2018

Publication:

Permar, R. (2020). From Nuclear Families to Cold War Projects. In K. Deepwell (Ed.), *Feminist Art Activisms and Artivisms* (pp. 63-77). Valiz