



Wunderkammer: the female gaze objectified

Sheila Gaffney

Sculptor Sheila Gaffney and painter Linda Schwab made an intervention into Leeds Art Gallery's permanent collection, creating a dialogue around that which is saved and displayed in museum culture, and making transparent the male gaze implicit within museum collections and cultures. Gaffney created a 'Studiolo' siting her own sculpture, informed by feminism, in the glass fronted 'Models Room', a formerly concealed archive alongside 25 valuable small works and maquettes from the Leeds collection. Schwab created a 'Cavea', enclosing an iconic marble nude with a group of dressed chairs inviting the viewing public to sit in them, look through a peephole and become voyeurs.

Research process:

Practice Research with museum collection-based research led this enquiry which manifested as sculpture, painting and intervention.

Research insights:

The practice led conceptualisation, project management and curation of the gallery based intervention Wunderkammer: the female gaze objectified, alongside its related publication Object, made an original contribution to ways in which the sculpture collections of Leeds Museums and Galleries could be viewed, displayed and understood. The intervention into the collection was the result of a curated interaction between original artworks by artists Sheila Gaffney and Linda Schwab with selected items from the collections. Whilst the exhibited display (and the design of the book Object) provided immediate encounters that embodied questions of gender and authorship in relation to representations of women, the gallery situated intervention and dissemination provoked a wider interrogation of museum ideology. The intervention made an original contribution to ways that artistic methods can introduce civic and private collections to new audiences and individual artworks can be presented as theoretical objects.

Practice and theory were combined in this project in a way that gave material form to scholarly considerations of the following topics:

- female nudes in galleries and museums as made by male artists
- the presentation of works of art in galleries
- the objectivity of museum collections
- the male gaze in museum collections
- how contemporary art relates to the history of art
- feminism and figurative sculpture

Dissemination:

The output was disseminated via exhibition, press and broadcast coverage.



WUNDERKAMMER

The female gaze objectified

Sheila GAFFNEY
Linda SCHWAB

9th March–16th April

LEEDS CITY ART GALLERIES
the Headrow, Leeds LS1 3AA 0532 640975
OPENING TIMES Mon–Fri 10am–5.30pm; Wed 'til 9pm;
Sat 10am–4pm; Sun closed
Admission Free



Photo: Gary Hough









Wunderkammer Slides - Studiolo (Leeds City Art Gallery)

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1. Harry Phillips 1911-1976
Woman Undressing, bronze
Top Shelf

Alfred Gilbert 1854-1934
Model for Chimneypiece c.1908
plaster
Shelf LHS

Peter Scheemakers 1691-1781
Model for figure of 'Abundance' c.1753
terracotta
Shelf RHS

Sheila Gaffney
Pussy Pelmet
wax, found objects
Front

Girl
wax, found objects
Back
2. Jacob Epstein 1880-1959
Hand, plaster
Shelf RHS

Mervyn Lawrence 1868-
The Prodigal Son, bronze
Shelf centre

Ernest Sichel 1864-1941
The Sea-Star, bronze
Shelf LHS

Unknown: Chinese
Temple Figure, cast iron
Shelf Top

Sheila Gaffney
Muff
wax, found objects
Back

Pussy Pelmet
wax, found objects
Front
3. Hamo Thornycroft
Hand, plaster
Shelf Top LHS

Jocelyn Horner
Hands of Sir John Barbirolli
1971-2 plaster
Front Plinth

Harry Phillips 1911-1976
Woman with chair (maquette) resin
Shelf Top

Ernest Sichel 1864-1941
The Sea-Star, bronze
Shelf LHS

G Olsen 19C.
Girl with a Hoop c. 1906, bronze
Shelf RHS (obscured)

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- Sheila Gaffney
Girl
wax, found objects

Jacob Epstein 1880-1959
Hand, plaster
Shelf RHS
4. Studiolo (Collection)
5. Pussy Pelmet (detail)
wax, found objects
6. Sheila Gaffney
Pussy Pelmet
wax, found objects
Front plinths

Sheila Gaffney
Pleat, wax
Back

Edward Onslow Ford 1852-1901
Mother & Child 1879
terracotta
Shelf lower
7. Studiolo including
Deity, wax
LHS
8. Sheila Gaffney
Girl
wax, found objects

G. Olsen 19C
Girl with Hoop c. 1906
bronze
Shelf RHS
9. Studiolo view

Alfred Gilbert 1854-1934
Model for Chimneypiece c.1908
Front

Hamo Thornycroft 1850-1925
Bust of Elfrida, aged 7, 1909
plaster
Back LHS
10. Detail Studiolo
Shelf top LHS

Hamo Thornycroft
Hand, plaster

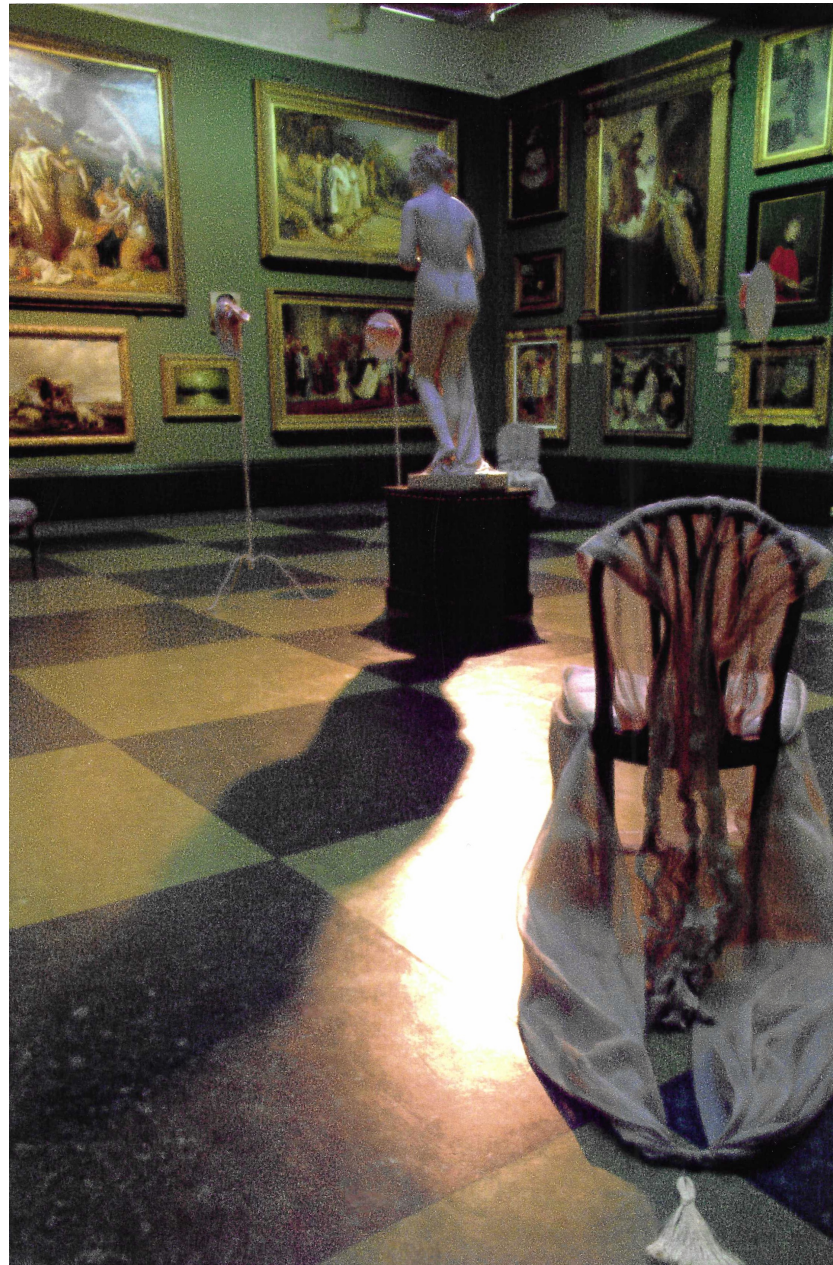


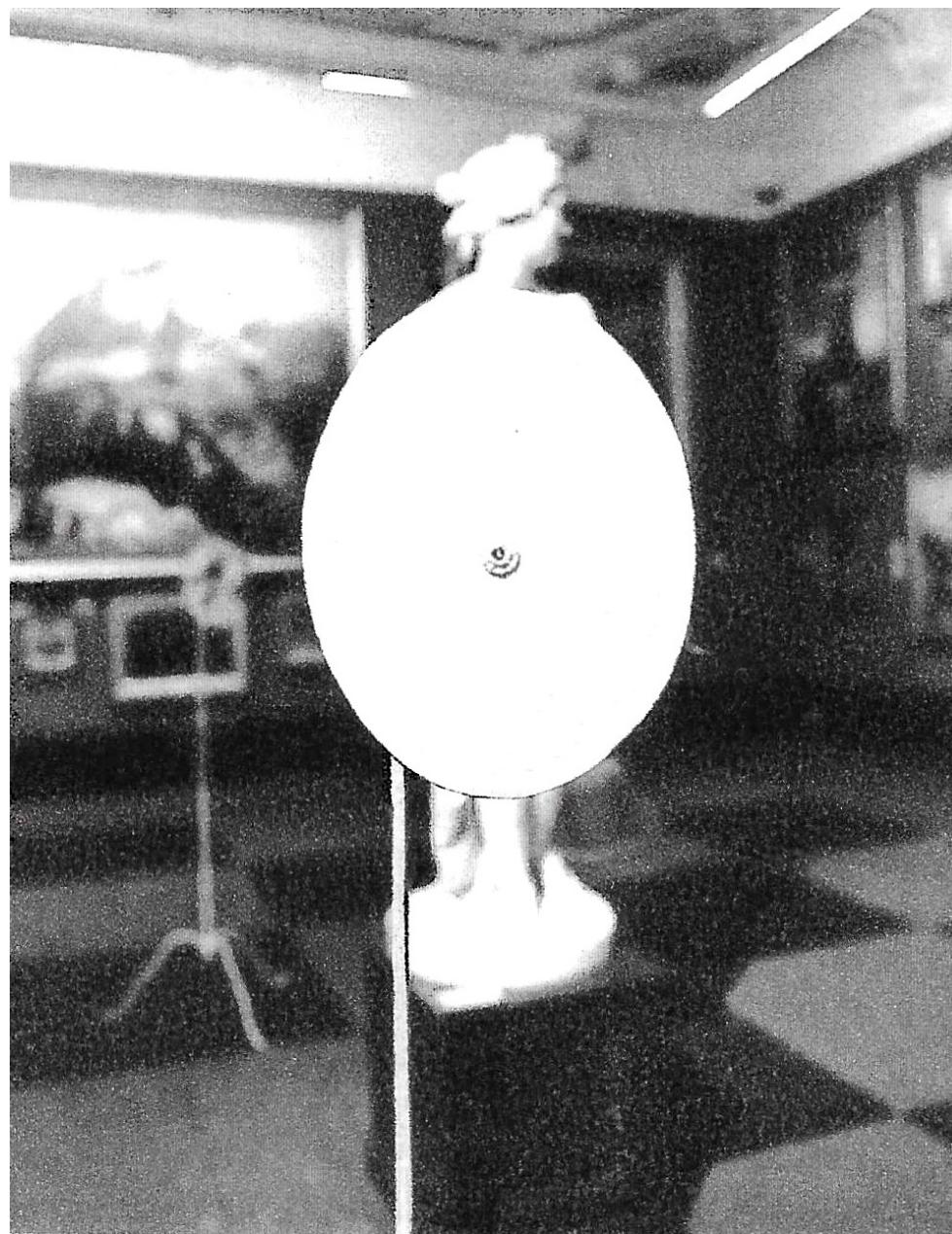
















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