

Ministère de la culture et de la communication

*Concours externe pour l'accès au grade de professeur des écoles nationales supérieures
d'art*

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**Épreuve orale d'admission de langue
Langue anglaise**

Cette épreuve orale consiste en une conversation à partir d'un texte en anglais.
(préparation sans dictionnaire : 20 minutes ; durée : 20 minutes ; coefficient 1)

Avertissements :

- l'usage de la calculatrice, d'un dictionnaire ou de tout autre document est interdit ;
- avant de commencer, vérifiez que le sujet qui vous a été remis comporte toutes les questions ; signalez aux surveillants tout de suite les anomalies éventuelles (page manquante, page illisible...).

Ce document comporte 2 pages au total :

- Page de garde (1 page)
- Sujet (1 page)

Comix Creatrix : 100 women making comics

The Comix Creatrix exhibition at the House of Illustration is groundbreaking. Women have most likely been making graphic images since they realised sticks could leave a mark in mud – “Bear in cave – move on quickly” may have been an early example – so it’s safe to say this ground has been trodden for a very long time, but here lies the double whammy of gender and discipline. A female making comics has to navigate these two old chestnuts because our society’s preference for considering the male presupposes that other genders (there are more than two) are of less importance, and the discipline of making comics/graphic novels has generally been regarded as light entertainment in comparison with blokes chipping stones or spreading coloured oil on to canvas (excuse me – did my objectivity just slip?).

And so, despite the fact that I wish we were in a time when there didn’t need to be an exhibition of women making comics, I’d like to send a round of applause up to Olivia Ahmad and Paul Gravett, the two curators who have produced a really interesting and informative show, and ask them, please, to produce a catalogue documenting this important gathering of works, so others can research what has so studiously been brought together, pick up the baton and move forward from here.

Let’s go back to the second of those chestnuts, the hierarchy of discipline in relation to the seriousness with which the work is considered. We all know William Hogarth’s pictures, which captured the social and political condition of the country in the 1700s, and then George Cruikshank’s images, which did the same in the 1800s – and we know today that these images are perceived as a reading of the condition of that time and those people in that place. But most of us have not heard of Hogarth’s contemporary, Mary Darly (whose image *Corporal Perpendicular*, 1775, begins this exhibition). Darly was “among the first professional caricaturists in England.

Satirical imagery not only takes a reading of what is, but also layers on to that reading the human response to what is, so why, today, from a fine art point of view, are comics and their makers largely dismissed as insignificant? Elitist attitudes frequently mask a deep-rooted fear of change but to quote the marvellous, and sadly recently deceased, geographer Doreen Massey, “The mountains move at the rate our fingernails grow,” nothing is ever fixed – nothing can stay still, and this applies not only to our physical environments but also to those ideas and images that are put into the environment, and to the reception of those ideas and images.

At the opening of Comix Creatrix, just when I was hoping to reveal that this genre is not restricted to narrow boundaries, a large wall text tells us what we are looking at: “The art of comics is a distinct form of illustration. Comics use illustration to convey a story, an idea, information or even something abstract. Whether accompanied by text or not – these images are not only to be looked at, they are to be read.” I beg your pardon, but isn’t it true to say, we all read every kind of image we see. So let’s enjoy how rich and unfixed this genre can be [...] beginning with the work of Charlotte Salomon. Shortly before Salomon’s appalling early death in Auschwitz at the age of 26, she hid her paintings depicting life for a young Jew under Hitler. Salomon’s glowing, brightly coloured paintings positioned in this Comix Creatrix exhibition challenge the fixture of the wall text. [...] The reputation of light entertainment held by comics and graphic novels hides considerable and serious research that now underpins contemporary practice exploring this discipline.