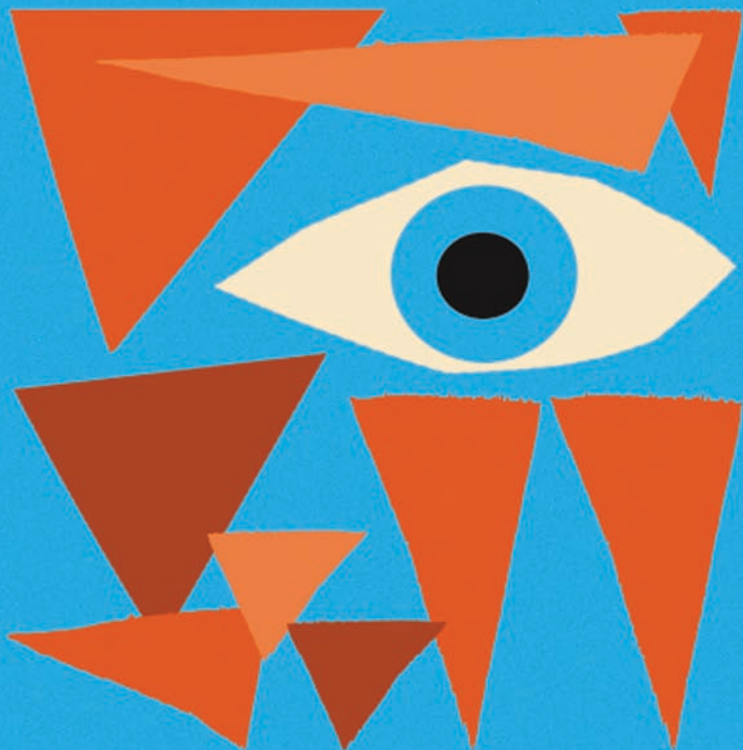


A MACAT ANALYSIS

GRISELDA POLLOCK'S

VISION AND DIFFERENCE

FEMINISM, FEMININITY AND
THE HISTORIES OF ART





An Analysis of

Griselda Pollock's

**Vision and Difference:
Feminism, Femininity
and the Histories of Art**

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The Macat Library is a series of unique academic explorations of seminal works in the humanities and social sciences – books and papers that have had a significant and widely recognised impact on their disciplines. It has been created to serve as much more than just a summary of what lies between the covers of a great book. It illuminates and explores the influences on, ideas of, and impact of that book. Our goal is to offer a learning resource that encourages critical thinking and fosters a better, deeper understanding of important ideas.

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Three allow us to fully understand a problem; three more give us the tools to solve it. Together, these six skills make up the

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REASONING – creating strong arguments

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CRITICAL THINKING AND *VISION AND DIFFERENCE*

Primary critical thinking skill: INTERPRETATION

Secondary critical thinking skill: CREATIVE THINKING

Vision and Difference encourages readers to interpret visual images in relation to the social, cultural, and political context in which they were produced. It highlights the importance of interpretation, making it clear that interpreting an artwork is a political process that will be affected by our past experiences, value systems, and prejudices. This text illustrates how the reader might clarify the meaning of an artwork using a feminist approach. This style of interpretation considers the lives and experiences of women, and the ways that visual images contribute to the construction of gender.

Griselda Pollock's *Vision and Difference* does not provide an exhaustive study of art history; rather it gives readers the analytical tools to create new connections and readings. Pollock does not restrict her methods to one historical period or artistic medium, instead she gives examples across a broad range of sources, demonstrating how her ideas might be applied to any number of artworks. From Impressionist landscapes to Pre-Raphaelite portraits, photography, advertising, and sculpture, Pollock charts the formation of modern attitudes toward women. Not only does she provide feminist re-readings of works by male artists, such as Degas and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, but she also considers the work of their long-forgotten female contemporaries, such as Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot. Both art historians and artists can adopt her theories, and easily create new approaches to the production and analysis of artworks.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE ORIGINAL WORK

Griselda Pollock (b. 1948) is a renowned critic and art historian. Her feminist approaches to art history have changed the way that images of women are understood and interpreted. Her research champions the work of female artists, and she has written extensively on the work of male artists from a feminist perspective. She is currently Professor of Social and Critical Histories of Art at the University of Leeds.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE ANALYSIS

Karina Jakubowicz completed her PhD on gardens in the work of Virginia Woolf at University College London. She now teaches at University College London and works with the National Trust. She recently published *Garsington Manor and the Bloomsbury Group* with Cecil Woolf Publishers. Much of her current work focuses on the importance of gardens in the work of early twentieth century writers.

ABOUT MACAT

GREAT WORKS FOR CRITICAL THINKING

Macat is focused on making the ideas of the world's great thinkers accessible and comprehensible to everybody, everywhere, in ways that promote the development of enhanced critical thinking skills.

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Professor William Tronzo, University of California at San Diego



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WAYS IN TO THE TEXT

KEY POINTS

- Griselda Pollock (b. 1949) is a renowned art historian, artist, and critic.
- Published in 1988, *Vision and Difference* argued that visual images are products of their political context. Pollock stated that art produced by sexist societies often featured and perpetuated patriarchal* ideas.
- *Vision and Difference* is a landmark text that paved the way for a new approach to art history. Pollock made strong connections between certain artworks and the society in which they were produced, and challenged traditional conceptions about what makes an artwork valuable to historians.

Who Is Griselda Pollock?

Griselda Pollock was born in 1949 in Bloemfontein, South Africa, and moved to Canada in 1956. Her family then moved to Britain in 1962, and she attended Queen's College, London, an independent girls' secondary school. In 1967, she went to Oxford University to study Modern History, graduating in 1970. She then attended the Courtauld Institute, University of London, where she completed her MA and PhD. She received her doctorate in 1980 for a study on