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The architect as genius: feminism and the aesthetics of exclusion

Christine Battersby

In this revised version of a lecture given in Glasgow in September 1990, Christine Battersby applies the arguments of her book Gender and Genius to architecture. Previously thought of as female/male dichotomy as the foundation for a feminist aesthetics — not the masculine/feminine dichotomy. It is worth pointing out that such an argument places me at odds with many recent theorists who have looked to the notion of 'architects feminism' (feminine writing) to provide a grounding for a 'feminist-centred' perspective on art, literature and cultural history. By contrast, I claim that post-structuralist discourse that searches out a kind of inscription that is 'feminine' in the way it breaks down the order and identity of a patriarchal society favours males in our culture. For 'femininity' is expected of women, and therefore perceived and valued differently in women. 'Feminine women tend to discourse from the history of culture. And it is notable, in this respect, that the examples given of 'architects feminism' are generally examples of male authors (James Joyce, Nietzsche etc.) who are psychologically 'feminine'.

In this country 'architects feminism' is usually associated with the writings of Hélène Cixous and Julia Kristeva, but my own position is closer to (though by no means identical with) that of Lac, Irigaray who also women the 'feminine', and Cixous and Kristeva concern themselves explicitly with psychological feminism, not with biological sex. Irigaray focuses on female subjects, although Irigaray also differs from me in that she works from within the psychoanalytic framework (despite her hostility to it); whereas I believe that the theories of Freud and Jung (and Lacan) on creativity and aesthetics are too contaminated by a history that takes male bodies and psyches as the norm for masculine/feminine dichotomy.

I argue that we should focus back on what it is to be 'female' in our culture — although I do not mean that in a straightforwardly essentialist or biological way. The category 'female' is itself a social construct, as the writings of Michel Foucault would also suggest. Prior to the nineteenth century, he claims, there were a number of 'frivolous' writers who existed very sexually insubordinate beliefs (hermaphroditism), and who did not have to fit themselves into the exclusive divide either male or female. Our society insists on fitting all human beings — including transsexuals — onto the binary category male/female. Using Foucault's insight I would want to do not as 'possessing a womb, female hormones or chromosomes', but as being 'anyone on a privileged position in a social nexus of power, on the basis of the view one's body is perceived'. Such an allocation involves, of course, a number of complex equations (self-image versus other-image) and difficult gender cases (e.g. transsexuals). But however blurred the boundaries between the two sexes might be, we would nevertheless argue that valuing psychic femininity is not enough for a feminist aesthetic, because what we think of as 'feminine' characteristics of mind were long ago appropriated for an elite group of males — the 'geniuses' — whose deviation from the norms of masculine behaviour were condoned.

There are five separate strands in our modern usage of the term 'genius', all of which have been important in architectural theory. The first comes from romanticism, and is tied with the word 'outsider'. Donaldson: an outsider who is different, who is unique, who is talented — or even extraordinarily talented — could be living on the borders of sanity and madness, the genius sacrifices his own ego, desires and will to that of his Art or the Epoch, which uses him as a kind of shamimistic mouth-piece or puppet. The second is a type of genius that is empirical — the practical person who is interested in the construction, Le Corbusier — and biographies and comments on Le Corbusier — frequently seem to feed on this romantic ideology. However, since Le Corbusier saw himself as belonging to 'The Machine Age' — and theorised machines as tools for self-conscious, individualised ego- other, competing paradigms of genius are also in play in positioning this 'hero of the heroic period.'

The second of these paradigms is related, but slightly different. It comes from the pre-romantic writers of the closing decades of the eighteenth century, and centres on a mental idea that genius requires a specific mode of creative works — particularly the constructed work of the architect. MacKinnon's interest in the 'heroic' is interestingly, we see the importance of what is the maddness of architecture — although the maddness of architecture remains a hidden assumption of MacKinnon's work, since he appears to have used criteria of selection that generated an all male group of architects as subjects, but still left the possibility of female subjects. Moreover, his eventual conclusions conflict with his methodological assumptions and reveres to a form of romanticism in which the genius is a male outsider who transcends (via his femininity) the norms for masculine behaviour.

The third idea of genius is again related, and again slightly different. 'Genius' is described in terms of energy-types (usually sublimated — male — sexual energy). When Charles Jencks praises James Stirling with the claim that here at last is a British architect who would handle glass with virility, he is joining this tradition of talking about architecture which has been supposed a profession somehow bound up with masculinity itself. Hence Harry Weese's comments on his own architectural practice:

Buildings are masculine and aggressive. You have to take the long view and assume they will last; therefore they cannot be pretty — the adjective I least like applied to architecture. A building should be handsome, elegant, strong, lean — beauty is too vague an attribute. A building comes from the inside out and has to be gutsy. Structure is the thing.

The fourth way of thinking about genius comes from a more ancient way of theorising artistic excellence. Genius in this sense is (a qualitatively great talent) not a personality-type, consciousness-type or energy-type that is akin to madness. This genius is same — with supernaturality. This notion lives primarily in modern scientific (and pseudo-scientific) literature where it is often filtered in quite contradictory ways with more romantic notions of genius as alien to talent. See, for example, the studies that were carried out in the '60s at the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research at Berkeley, University of California, by K. MacKinnon and his team questioned three groups of architects in an attempt to quantify, grade and measure the talents and personality-coordinates of 'creative persons'. On the basis of a battery of tests MacKinnon concluded that "the more creative a person is the more 'male' he is."

I find it interestingly and surprisingly with Weese's view on the essential masculinity of architecture — although the maddness of architecture remains a hidden assumption of MacKinnon's work, since he appears to have used criteria of selection that generated an all male group of architects as subjects, but still left the possibility of female subjects. Moreover, his eventual conclusions conflict with his methodological assumptions and reveres to a form of romanticism in which the genius is a male outsider who transcends (via his femininity) the norms for masculine behaviour.

The fifth notion of genius still employed today is a more modern pragmatic notion, and the only one that I defend (in a limited sense) as useful for a feminist aesthetics. A person's cultural achievement is evaluated and assessed against an appropriate background of artistic genres and traditions. The genius is the person whose work both both suits the old way and the new way within the tradition, and which also has lasting value and significance. Such a formulation of genius as the one who 'gives the rule to art' has its origins also in late eighteenth-century formulations, and derives from the philosophy of Emmanuel Kant. Clearly, in terms of the way that the history of modern architecture has been narrated, this notion of 'tradiations' has been of
greatest importance. It is of significance that in terms of the way that the past has been parcelled up and divided into traditions within architecture, the genius-figures who are labelled as the originators of 'functionalism', 'brutalism', 'expressionism' and so on have all been male. In recent years this model of architectural history has been shattered with the postmodernist fracture of the modernity of modernism.

But as Arthur Drexler remarked — without a trace of irony — in his Transformations in Modern Architecture: 'Now that imitation is no longer focused on the work of three or four great pioneering figures, the movement of ideas is less from father to son and more from brother to brother'. The postmodernist families remain linkings of males.

I will return to this question towards the end of this paper, and suggest that a feminist aesthetic will concern itself (in part) with detecting the matrixial traditions in which women and how women have created and can create in a discipline that has been resistant to — hostile to — female practitioners and theorists. A feminist architecture will also concern itself with what women mean by the terms of building and the users of buildings that remain the same, however, as concern with the 'feminine' qualities of buildings or architects. Indeed, from the point of view of the masculine/feminine divide, architecture is especially interesting as an area. For the personality of the architect is taken as key in theories of architectural creation; his or her theories insist that architecture is paradigmatically rational and 'masculine', whereas others emphasise intuition, sensitivity, imagination and other so-called 'feminine' qualities of mind. Both sets of theorists nevertheless assume that it is amongst (mature) males that the relevant personality types are most likely to be found. To find the origin of this apparent paradox, it is necessary to go back to the closing decades of the eighteenth century.

At this time 'genius' was theorised in ways that allied creativity to the 'natural', to the body and to the 'organic', but in ways that set up a sharp contrast between the genius and the architect. Thus, for example, in his influential Conjectures on Original Composition Edward Young wrote:

'A genius differs from a good understanding as a magician from a good architect: the one constructs by means invisible to him by the skillful use of common tools: Hence genius has ever been supposed to partake of something divine.'

For Young genius is 'the stranger within': a primitive god or force; which works below the level of consciousness, and is allied to instinct, feeling and imagination, rather than to reason, judgement or skill. The work of genius is 'of a vegetable nature'; it 'grows', it is not made'. Its spontaneous growth from a deep and 'vital root' is thus contrasted with the 'sort of manufacture wrought up by those mechanics, art and labour'!

Young's formulation 'genius' is a kind of inner god: that which makes man godlike. But the architecture is contrasted with the genius and hence with the godlike. The situation will be strikingly different, however, by the end of the next century. Then Otto Wagner (proclaimed by some as the 'father' of modernism) could confidently assert that architecture was the most godlike of all the arts:

"Among the fine arts, architecture alone is truly creative and productive: in fact, it alone is able to make forms that have no model in nature yet appear beautiful to man. Even if these forms have their source in natural structures and their origin in the material, the result is so far removed from the starting point to be considered a completely new creation. It is therefore not surprising to hear that we should see in architecture the highest expression of man's ability, bordering on the divine."

Wagner says openly what other modernist architects often merely imply — and something completely at odds with Young's remarks. To understand this double tension (feminine/masculine; godlike/ungodlike) in the theorising of the powers and status of the architect, it is necessary to go still further back into the past history of the concept of genius.

European conceptions of the artist's task were inherited from the ancient Greeks; but the Greeks did not even have a term that meant 'creation out of nothing'. The Greek god-shaped pre-existent matter in the manner of an architect (Plato), or by the processes of giving birth. The ancient Greek artist did not aspire to create; his only task was to imitate nature as it had been patterned by the gods. The Greeks lacked the words for concepts that we now take for granted in discussing the arts: 'originality', 'inspiration', 'genius', 'create', 'creative'. Art on this model was then essentially mimetic: nothing more than imitation. That was how art remained throughout the Middle Ages. Within the monasteries the artist's task was to reproduce divine truth and Christian teaching as faithfully as possible. Authenticity, individuality or self-expression were values alien to the didacticism of the medieval artist. But in a way that made the medieval artists very different from the Greeks, even perfection of form was supposed to be subsidiary to the exact replication of the religious message.

Unlike the Greeks, the Middle Ages had a word for creation out of nothing. It was insist that this was solely an attribute of God. Artists were not godlike; they did not create the new. Originality was not a virtue. Creativity was a theological, not an aesthetic concept. Thus although the term 'masterpiece' comes to us of the arts of that time, it has nothing to do with genius, creativity or early Christian art theory. It signified the piece of work produced by an apprentice who showed sufficient skill or competence to permit admission to the privileges of one of the craft-guilds. As feminist scholar show, women were active in these guilds — despite the need to prove their merit with a 'masterpiece'. Hostility towards women in the arts only increased when the status of women was deemed to be distinguishable from that of the artisan, and the arts in general represented as activities suitable for only the most perfect (male) species of humanity. This happened during the Renaissance. Painting and sculpture began to be occupations for well-born men, instead of manual crafts. And, as this happened, the double tension was re-validated, which was to explain the role of the artist by invoking Plato's account of the relationship between humans and the gods, and in ways that mixed Greek ideas of art and the gods with Christian notions of creation (out of nothing). The artist mirrored Nature: improved, and made more perfect, as God Himself had created it.

Despite the undoubted changes that occurred during the Renaissance, it is a mistake to suppose that the modern concept of genius first came into existence at that time. Such a claim is often made, buttressed by an apparent reference to Vasari's Lives of the Artists (1550 and 1568). However, although it is true that Vasari was the first to celebrate the lives and powers of individual artists in ways reminiscent of our modern notions of a genius-personality, and although the term 'genius' is sprinkled liberally through modern English translations of Vasari's text, the term 'genius' is not to be found in the corresponding passages in the original. In modern English 'genius' translates a number of Italian phrases, most commonly including the Italian word ingegno — perhaps best rendered as 'ingeniousness', 'ingenuity' or as 'wit' in its old-fashioned sense. It was the equivalent of the Latin genius morum and, as such, it does not carry the connotations of great creativity (or great originality) that are part and parcel of our post-romantic aesthetic.

For the Latin term 'genius' started out as a word referring to the divine forces associated with, and protective of, male procreativity and later became extended to the guardian spirits that watched over a male's life, vigilt and the inheritance that would pass down from male to male. Renaissance women lacked ingegno. This lack was registered in associated terms in Italian and Latin. But it was not this, as such, which was supposed to make women artistic inferiors. This was put down to a deficiency in ingenium: those inherited mental and physical talents that helped an artist conceive and execute his projects. Through to the eighteenth century this lack was theorised in terms of modified forms of Aristotelianism. Aristotle had argued that the superiority of males can be seen in their larger size and in the fact that the reproductive organs have grown outside the body. The mind of Aristotle is supposed, in turn, to be the feminine. Aristotle thus rationalised male superiority by reference to the 'fact' that males are hot and dry; females cold and wet. For Aristotle a woman is a lesser man: a kind of monster or abnormality who, through lack of heat during conception, fails to develop her full (male) potential. In perfect conditions there would be only male children.

According to Aristotle women can't even be said to procreate: they are the sterile sex. Only the male seed contains the formative principle that allows the parent to be the creator of a genus of individuals. The female provides the matter and the containing in which the seed (semen) grows. The male provides the form: his seed is active, and has the power to form the matter or material provided by the female into a human. The woman reveals her lack of formative force through the unshaped mass of semen that has no character. The woman has insufficient heat to allow her own semen to develop, this 'unconceived' blood means that she is wet, as well as cold. Woman, however, is also supposed to affect the proper operation of her mind. The role of the woman within the society was made analogous to that of her womb: as the provider of a suitable environment within which the best individuals (males of certain privileged racial types and families) could advance human civilisation.

The great ingenium of the Renaissance artist was primarily associated with 'masculine' sapienza; with judgement, reason, wit and like. But the Renaissance writers on the arts turned to the Greek and Latin sources for information about what it is that gives some human beings access to the ideas in the mind of God. And what they found was Plato's abstractive view of the poet: not an artist at all (Plato didn't think much of artists) but a kind of medium. In Phaedo Plato claimed:

'If any man come to the gates of poetry without the madness of the Muses, persuaded that skill alone will make him a good poet, then shall he and he works of sanity with him be brought to naught by the poverty of madness.'

The neoplatonist art theorists of the Renaissance extended this view to all artistic activity, whilst
contrasted favourably with the alienating and 'mechanical' labour of the towns. Hence Young's claim that the work of genius is of a 'vegetable nature' that 'grows, it is not made'. By the end of the eighteenth century the English term 'genius' had come to be closely associated with the European ideal of the self that makes a man a pseudo-god, able to create something out of nothing. Genius was no longer linked with rationality, but to superior forms of irrationality, frenzy, emotion, imagination, passion, sensibility, and the like.

For a time the stock descriptions of the genius and woman were so close as to suggest that women would be likely to be the greatest geniuses, if only they could be released from domestic duties. This situation was only temporary, however. To explain what made human beings superior to the animals, or European man superior to the 'barbarians', the theorists of the eighteenth century resorted to the process of exclusion and the non-genius was always described as lacking some quality or qualities: a lack that made his or her output valueless. The descriptions of these deficiencies contradicted each other, but women were usually described as inferior to the animals, and sexual and social creed of classical and neoclassical times and towards the thoroughly domesticated, nurturing and tame 'Angel in the House'. Women — once the sexually greedy, over-emotional, over-imaginative and frenzied sex — were found and sexualised as being natural, guilt, domestic, nurturing, and breathing.

The old connections between the female sex and irrationality did not die out entirely, however. This is where the old Renaissance discourse of 'melancholy', 'the universal' and 'divine madness' came back in. To explain what differentiates the category of genius from the madness of the genius, the old idea of grading, and — grading — madness became more significant in terms of the philosophy of art — with 'melancholy' once again the privileged poetic and artistic madness. How often do we meet the figure of the melancholy poet or artist in nineteenth and twentieth-century texts? How little do we realise how this figure draws on a tradition that makes melancholy a kind of madness that benefits male artists and harms female pretenders to artistic excellence?

The dominant tradition of theorising genius in nineteenth-century poetry, music and music made genius a kind of madness. In these arts the paradigmatic genius was an 'androgyne', with a male body and male sexual energies, but with psychic qualities of sensitivity, emotion and imagination that had, prior to the eighteenth century, been more normally associated with women. 'Androgyne' is a word both from this tradition but 'genius' was also contrasted with 'architect' and 'design', since it was only in the nineteenth century that architecture became generally accepted as one of the creative arts. But once this transition occurred, the architecture of specialization was particularly prone to mixing the Platonic language of 'universal', 'rational' and 'harmony' with the Christian language of 'divine inspiration' and creation. Plato's god had been the first architect, and when the universe, the Aristotelian heaven, had also imposed form on the pre-existing matter by the gods. The misognystic language of production and reproduction merged, but, even so, it was easier for romantic and post-romantic theorists of architecture to position the architect closer to the rational than to the sensual, or the traditional notions of what made males superior to females than was the case in music, poetry or drama.

The old classical associations between supreme reason and the supreme (male) architect of the universe also meant that the activity of architecture was presented as paradigmatic, more as a tool for the whole of human activity. I quoted Wees in writing to this effect in the 1960s; the critic Léon Legrand expressed similar sentiments in the Gazette des Beaux Arts of 1860:

'Male genius has nothing to fear from female taste. Let men of genius conceive great architectural projects, monumental sculpture, and elevated forms of painting. In a word, let men busy themselves with all that has to do with a great art. Let women occupy themselves with those types of art they have always preferred, such as pastels, portraits or miniatures. Or they can study the principles of grace and freshness which alone can compete with the grace and freshness of women themselves.

Thus a kind of territorial apartheid remained in place in the fine arts (with architecture amongst the 'masculine' arts) from the Renaissance until well into the eighteenth century, despite the fact that some theorists had re-valued attributes of mind that were once considered 'feminine' and reassigned them to the 'genius'. Since women were deemed 'unsuitable' by these exclusively male territories of art, there could be no temptations to the truly 'feminine' psyche — at least when housed in a female body. It is worth noting in this respect that the terms 'androgyne' and 'harmaphrodite' were employed in gender-discriminatory ways. An androgyne had clearly defined sexual organs and a counteractive psyche of the opposite gender; a harmaphrodite had ambiguously defined sexual organs. Women architects counted as harmaphrodites, as did those males whose virility was suspect. Note how Otto Wagner's Modern Architecture includes an attack on inferior personalities who enter architecture and become 'harmaphrodites of art and architecture.'"
would either hear architecture as the province of the fully masculine male, or hear femininity qualified and qualified, but only when combined with great creativity. This was a double bind for women, since creativity was conceptualised in ways that made it a displacement of male productivity. From the late eighteenth century on, in a model that we recognise now primarily from Freud, the work of genius was made the sublimated product of male sexual drives. Furthermore, in a model that we associate mostly with Jung, it was claimed that a man can use his inner 'feminine' nature to produce great art whilst a woman's inner 'masculine' nature received a role in cultural production in so far as it is served to inspire male art.

The paradigmatic 'feminine' creator was not a female creator, but a male who transcended normal patterns of masculinity. Similar language was used by Nietzsche to 'tame' the figures of the great artist and the 'superman.' For Nietzsche, the sublimation was generated by the tension between two opposing forces, symbolised by the two Greek gods: Apollo and Dionysus. Apollo was represented as the male, the sublime, the artist, sculpture; Dionysus of frenzy, orgy and music. All 'supermen' were Dionysian; but Dionysus was a Greek god who was both feminine and male. Thus, not only in The Birth of Tragedy, but throughout his writings, Nietzsche described the greatest creators via the metaphors of male motherhood.

Such ideas have also had their place in architectural theory and commentary. Jenkins' chapter on Le Corbusier in the book, Le Corbusier's Architecture is headed by a sketch made by Le Corbusier in 1945, at the time he was struggling with the authorities over the plans for the modernist Unité d'Habitation block of flats in Marseilles. This image also concludes Jenkins' book on Le Corbusier which explores in more detail the impact of Nietzschean ideas on him. Jenkins comments:

It is a double portrait, perhaps of himself and Apollo, part Divine, part the smiling sun god of reason, part the Dionysian, sensual figure of the underworld...I

It is worth remembering, however, that this apparently 'feminine' approach to modernism is a skewed and associated romantic idea of a rational male who transcends rationality. As Carlo Carrà put it in 1918, 'Women, children and primitive nature are subject to puerile criteria of value, and can ask nothing of "ordinary things" apart from a certain immediate utility. Women are amongst those who can only feel bored and monotone and "diatonic indifference towards everything appraising to pure taste." Thus, says Carrà, "all the mentality of reality is reserved for rare and completely rational individuals," he limits the capacity for transcending fundamental ways that do not produce mere "phantasmagorical illusions" to supra-rational males.

The paintings of his co-worker, Giorgio de Chirico, were haunted by architectural visions of a futuristic city – and were obsessively titled and theorised as 'Melancholy', a type of spectral vision open only to elite (male) personalities. In 1919 he excluded 'the imbecile man, that is, the s-metaphysical man' from the ability to appreciate architectural details other than 'mass and height'. [1] Unacquainted with the terribleness of lines and angles, 'imbecile males' reveal their limited psyche encased as it is within the same sphere as the feminine and infatuated psyche. But we who know the signs of the metaphysical alphabet are aware of the joy and the solitude enclosed by a portico, the corner of a street, or even in a room, on the surface of a table, between the sides of a box. This 'metaphysical alphabet' could only be read by males – males who united strong feelings and reason via access to the terrible, the universal and the melancholy.

More than one recent commentator on postmodern architecture has noted the striking similarities between theoretical statements made by members of the Italian school of Pittrura Metafisica and those of Aldo Rossi, the Italian rationalist who has been so influential on architectural practice consequent upon the break-up of the modernist tradition. Rossi revisits the cultural past to ground a 'contextual' symbolism for architecture that can transcend simple functionalism. But that return to the fathers of modernism to find a way past modernist decline is literally that: a return to a past resonant with male mythologies. Feminist architects also need a return to history to understand the 'spectral ghosts' that are likely to arise via this double appeal to reason and a 'poetic condition of which Arata Isozaki has said 'only silence could speak.' For we need to be aware of the misogynistic mythologies and biographies that are likely to be (deliberately or accidentally) invoked by architects' calls for a return to the 'purity of early modernism or of neoclassicism. Pure – unsullied by questions of sexual ideology – the past was not. There are thus dangers in so-called rationalism, or even in postmodernist pastiche or in ironic quotation of those past traditions. These dangers will have to be exposed via a feminist re-reading of cultural history.

In the first place, this feminist return to history needs to show how gendered is the vocabulary in which art is described and evaluated. We need to recognise that even such apparently gender-neutral terms as 'architect' brings with it a history of female denigration. For women are not simply absent in the histories of architecture because of the (many) material disadvantages that women faced in this field. There have also been ideological reconstructions of that history. These were intensified by the fact that it was only in the nineteenth century that architecture made the full transition from craft activity to 'Art' (with a capital 'A'). To make its new Art status more secure, a particular emphasis was placed on the role of individual creators in the history of European architecture. Architectural history became a succession of 'geniuses' who were described via adjectives and metaphors that made the genius male – albeit sometimes a feminine male.

Why an emphasis on 'genius' should have had the consequence of excluding remarkable women from the histories of culture will perhaps become clearer if I distinguish here between two ways of positioning persons who transgress the norm.

1. Outsiders: the exceptional individuals who are seen as fully human but not-quite-normal. Their deviation from tradition is seen as a form of transgression or escape or excess.

2. Others: those who, because of our racist and sexist paradigms of humanity, get viewed as not-quite-human. Their deviation from tradition is seen as a form of struggle to be normal or failure or lack.

Women creators (like so-called 'ethnic craftsmen') have a particular difficulty as they are seen as 'Outsiders', but the position of which the 'genius' is the position of the Outsider. As Kant said, "The genius gives the rule to art: his departure from the norm is put down to excess, not to deficiency. Women artists and architects tend to disappear from the history books since their works are seen as either 'primitive' (in form, a style, a genre) and hence simply as craft, or as deviations from (failures to meet) the craft-norms.

Since women cannot stand in the same relation to cultural traditions as do men, the achievements of women artists need to be understood in terms of manifest cultural, as well as paratextual, patterns of productive work. The past is not a fiction: we have to respect 'the facts' (of who did, and did not, produce influential work, for example). But neither is the past closed in a way that will not permit feminist reconstruction. If Rossi can look back into the past and seek to regenerate contemporary architecture by an appeal to his 'fathers', so can feminists look to the past for a future that will be changed by its 'mothers'. Thus, a feminist aesthetics will need to pick out individual women artists and architects who have been active in the past (and present).

But, of course, by itself this can never be enough. A different way of thinking the craft/art divide and re-assess the importance of work denied the status of 'Art'. We need, for example, research that will show what role women played in the constructing of houses and other spaces in the (lengthy) period when the styles of buildings were dictated by inherited traditions, but also by the collective need, rather than by individual 'designers'.

In those fields that have already been opened up by
feminist scholarship—nineteenth and twentieth-century literature and painting—it emerges that (despite the historical variability of the female predicament), the fact that women were brought up in a society in which they were conditioned to see themselves as Others generated distinctive patterns of female response. It would be remarkable if this were not also true in architecture, particularly because women in our society are conditioned into having a different relationship with their bodies (and hence with place and space) from that of the men. Thus, focussing on the strategies adopted by female producers—and assessing their strengths and their weaknesses—is for me an integral part of the revaluing of artistic values which is required by the feminist project for social change.

FOOTNOTES

1 Batterst, Christina, Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetic, The Woman's Press, 1989
2 Margaret Whitford's important recent book, Lucie Ingrary: Philosophy in the Feminine (Routledge, 1991), positions Ingrary much closer to me than I supposed when I wrote Gender and Genius or even when I delivered this paper. However, Whitford's book is an attempt to understand Ingrary in order "to go beyond" her and I suspect that a certain amount of "thinking beyond" has also transformed Whitford's reading of Ingrary's formidably difficult texts.
3 Jencks, Charles, Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture, Allen Lane, 1973
9 Young, Edward, 'Conjectures on Original Composition' in Edmund D. Jones (ed.), English Critical Essays (16th-18th Centuries), Oxford University Press, 1947, p9
10 ibid, p289
11 ibid, p274
14 Wagner, Otto, op.cit. p63
16 Jencks, op.cit. p182
17 Carrà, Carlo, in Carrà: Massimo, Metaphysical Painters, trans. Caroline Tisdall, Thames and Hudson, 1971, p48
18 De Chirico, Giorgio, in Carrà: ibid p90
19 Klotz, Heiner, The History of Postmodern Architecture trans. R. Donnell, MIT Press, 1984, p. 213. Some of the work of Rossi's students was deliberately designed to evoke pittura metafisica. (Klotz, p. 211 and figure 276.) But Klotz's own commentary also makes analogues between Rossi himself and de Chirico. (pp. 238 ff., see p. 247, for example)
20 Klotz, ibid, p213

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Jencks, Charles, Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture, Allen Lane, 1973