

#femalepressure

Press statement – 8 March 2013 – International Women's Day

An urgent call for female representation in electronic music and digital arts

Following on from recent public debate on sexism in the German media **female:pressure** is calling for a collective revision of female representation in electronic music and digital arts. We would therefore like to contribute with an analysis of our current working climate.

female:pressure is an international database and support network of women in the fields of electronic music and digital art: musicians, DJs, producers and performers; vocalists; visual artists; booking agents; label owners; researchers and academics in these fields. We have over 1100 members in 56 countries, many of whom are internationally-active professional artists in their specialist fields.

The members of the female:pressure network operate within a seemingly progressive electronic music scene and its subcultures. However, we find that **women are notoriously under-represented in the realms of contemporary music production and performance**. The female:pressure group would therefore like to invite you to take a look at the facts and make the mechanisms of this specific market more transparent.

We have looked into statistics regarding festival line-ups, record label releases and the appearance of women in several top 100 lists. The results are shocking and disheartening, even for us deeply involved in the scene. **Most festivals – whether financed through public funds or not – clearly do not place any value on ensuring an appropriate ratio of female artists, or diversity in general**. This also evidently applies to label releases – in Germany (an epicentre of electronic music and female artists) as much as in many other countries. **Nowadays, a 10% proportion of female artists can be considered above average**. We feel it is unacceptable in the 21st century that we can still end up being the only woman performing at a large festival. We find our female colleagues inspiring and feel that audiences would also like to hear them and see them perform. Please find the results of our research so far here: <http://femalepressure.wordpress.com/facts/>

As a collective body, we believe it is crucial to **raise awareness about this issue and push for more diverse line-ups in festivals and on label rosters** – in terms gender, age, culture, ethnicity and (dis)ability. We do not want to assume that the motive of organizers and curators to book almost exclusively male, white artists lies in pure misogyny. We would rather conclude that they do so because it matches social conventions, because they want to promote their peer group and because they don't consider the socio-political dimensions of their selection. There are more concerning **issues of equality of opportunity and accountability where festivals are largely funded by arts funding bodies** which, in turn, receive financial contributions from a cross-section of society.

We demand a new awareness, an attitude that makes clear that a lack of diversity is uninspired and lazy, socially reactionary and can in no case claim to be visionary – neither presenting the panoply of exciting artists and art of today nor the future. There really is no excuse for the prevalent lack of visibility of a diverse range of competent and exciting artists. **Festival line-ups (especially those that enjoy public funding) need to be aiming for a more representative female-to-male artist ratio**, thereby reflecting the population they hope to serve more closely.

Our work is important to us as a manifestation of a culture with vitality, an expression of our times and our contribution to this cultural dialogue. Of course, we also attach importance to quality, to the mastering of our production tools and instruments, to the sophistication of our musical means of expression and style. **But the crucial point of cultural progress and improvement lies in the interaction with an expert audience:** performance, exchange, feedback, evaluation, releasing, representation, trial and error are essential steps in the development of one's craft and creativity.

Let's be frank – enough is enough. **female:pressure** believes there is no justification for more male-dominated music events. We need – and paying audiences deserve – invigorating and entertaining diversity!

Festival curators, sponsors, label owners, journalists: **Give more opportunities to women!**

Female festival curators, sponsors, label owners, journalists: Don't try to be the better men by only taking 'risks' on established, male artists! **Give more women a chance!**

We look forward to your response and positive developments in this cultural sector in the future. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding this issue.

Here's to a brighter future for the arts.

female:pressure

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