

October 18, 2000

DEA-föreningen för kvinnomuseer  
Ebba-Lisa Nordenfeldt / Märta-Lena Bergstedt  
Artillerigatan 22  
114 51 Stockholm

Dear Ebba-Lisa Nordenfeldt and Märta-Lena Bergstedt

Thank you for your letter of October 17<sup>th</sup> concerning the representative of women in the collections of Moderna Museet. I should like to give you some information about this.

Firstly, concerning a large part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century I am sure you are aware of the cultural, social and economic reasons why not so many women managed to become successful artists at this time. There has been a revision of the history of women artists and some new figures have emerged. For instance, we are hoping to get regular representation of the work of Hilma af Klint at the museum which has not been done before. But the number of personalities who fall into this category are not so many.

With the regard to the temporary situation you may not be aware that a third of the purchases and solicited donations made by the museum from the time of our reopening in 1998 to the present are works made by women and if one separates out works made by Nordic artists the balance is 50 – 50. Also 50 % of the one person contemporary art exhibitions have been by women artists. In addition out of 28 artists represented in "Organising Freedom – Nordic Art in the 90s", 12 were women and just over a third of the artists represented in "After the Wall – Art and Culture in Post-communist Europe" were women.

Furthermore, we do take gender balance into account when organising the displays of the collection although, of course, we cannot invent artists where they do not exist.

With regard to the work by Bjarne Mellgaard we do not accept that this is in any sense pornographic. Such a view has been born out by the Public Prosecutor, many professional colleagues both within and outside Sweden as well as by the 17,000 members of the public who saw the work before it was removed from display. During this time we only received one complaint.

Yours sincerely

David Elliot

cc: Marita Ulvskog, Minister of Culture  
Margareta Winberg, Minister of Equality