

WE ARE: Cash, Guns, and Feminism

By RUTH READER AUGUST 4TH, 2011

<http://bushwickbk.com/2011/08/04/weare-cash-guns-and-feminism/>

(...)

The final artwork 'Grand Slam', a short film by Nadja Verena Marcin, sets itself a part from the first two pieces in many ways. While on a surface level it contains the necessary ingredients of aggression or passive-aggression paired with a sense of tenuousness, the work carries relevancy in a way the others do not. The performance piece shows in slow motion a woman in a tennis skirt as she practices hitting a tennis ball against a blank wall. As the ball strikes the wall with increasing intensity, it begins to leave thick black marks on the wall, as if the ball has been drenched in paint. There are close ups of the woman's thighs, her mouth, her hair, the side of her face as she repeatedly beleaguers the ball with her racket. Everything about this work is aggressive. The deep resonance of the ball hitting the wall. The woman, racquet in hand, forcefully swinging at a tennis ball. The black splotches on the wall, remnants of where the ball has left its mark. But where is that delicate duality? Are we to assume that this woman is the unstable element?

Throughout the piece the main character, who is also the artist, looks increasingly weary. Perhaps worn down by her struggle to return the ball to the wall again and again. Marcin is admittedly inclined towards feminist theory and practices, while striving to create a new context for the feminist conversation. In her performance piece, she seems to ask her audience to identify the struggle present in the piece and beyond. From a cultural perspective the piece seems to mimic other public conversations that at the very least women are having nationally. At this year's Technology Entertainment and Design (TED) conference, Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg [made this very apt point](#), "We don't live in the world our mothers lived in, our grandmothers lived in, where career choices for women were so limited. And most of us grew up in a world where we had basic civil rights." She goes on to say, "Women are not making it to the top of any profession, anywhere in the world." In a [recent article](#) in *Interview* magazine, Gloria Steinmen echoed the same desire for women to redefine what the struggle is with in this day and age. Marcin doesn't exactly answer the question, but the piece suggests that maybe the struggle is more internal than external.