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Imaging, Desiring, Remembering Home: Home as a Locus of Meaning in the Works of Mary Kelly

Abstract: This article examines selected works by American visual artist Mary Kelly (b. 1941) through the category of the home. Home is theorized both as a physical structure, which shapes female subjects' identity and their life practice, and a profoundly conflicted symbolic site of struggle that allows for a renegotiation of the social contract. The article reads Kelly's early works, *Antepartum* (1973) and *Post-Partum Document* (1973-79), understanding home as a mytho-physical dwelling place, the mother's body, which the artist presents as ideologically interpellated and, at the same time, problematized by her own experience. Kelly's later work, *Interim* (1984-89), is discussed as juxtaposing received ideas concerning femininity with the voices of women who fail to fulfill them, and thus are rendered symbolically homeless. Symbolic homelessness seems also pivotal to the 1992 *Gloria Patri*, in which the artist exposes the cultural alienation of women who enter the military. The 1991 *Mea Culpa* and the 2001 *Ballad of Kastriot Rexhepi* also take up the subject of cultural homelessness. Here, the artist addresses traumatic dimensions of military conflicts, which she understands as tightly connected to the victims' tattered or lost ethnic and national identity. In the 2005-07 *Love Songs*, Kelly changes her focus to envision home as a physical and semantic vessel for the 1970s women's movement voices, which, in her installation, are united by a transparent home-like structure. Finally, in the 2010-12 *Habitus*, co-authored by Ray Barrie, the artist returns to the subject of home, which, in this case, is profoundly disturbed by the lingering context of the Cold War. This article discusses Kelly's diverse uses of the home along the lines of art theory and feminist criticism (Nancy K. Miller, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva) in order to present their social and political implications. It understands home as evoking (utopian?) associations of eternal return or a desired horizon, towards which the spectators are encouraged to travel both through their memory-work and life-activism.

Keywords: Mary Kelly, feminist art, home, cultural homelessness, *Post-Partum Document*, *Interim*, *Gloria Patri*, *Mea Culpa*, *The Ballad of Kastriot Rexhepi*, *Habitus*

The American artist Mary Kelly is most recognized for her 1973-79 *Post-Partum Document*, a project-based installation that documents the first six years of her son's life. It has become a classic of second-wave feminist art, along with Judy Chicago's *Dinner Party* and Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills*. The artist, however, has produced a vast body of work which revolves around several themes. Most notably, in her artistic practice, Kelly addresses war trauma, historical memory and the mother-child relationship, with a particular focus on the symbolic alienation of the

female/child subject and the complex, processual character of the subject formation. The artist creates large-scale installations that allow her to take up and transgress received narrative and aesthetic frameworks by employing experimental means of expression.¹ In accord with Audrey Lorde's claim that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (112), Kelly takes advantage of the inconsistencies, contradictions and silent areas of the dominant discourse and undermines them on various planes: the narrative, the visual, and in the mode of execution. All these are her agents in an attempt to create a representational space that problematizes and fashions women's and children's "negative entry into the symbolic" (Kelly in Tickner 464).

In her works, Kelly often clashes institutional discourse with personal stories of people who have been affected by political or cultural forces that are beyond their control. Kelly's exploration of the ways in which the "personal and the institutional interpenetrate one another" (Castonguay 157) is a multilayered process that produces a palpable sense of her subjects' symbolic alienation. In some cases, it is an effect of the very condition of a gendered and aged human condition, in others—a result of concrete political events that are responsible for their both physical and symbolic homelessness. In a strife for recognition, in Kelly's works, a personal experience is translated into the political, as "the voice of the individual bystander" becomes "a mirror to the broader forces of history" (Kelly in Myers). In this article, I focus on the ways in which Kelly's installations can be read with the category of symbolic homelessness² in mind and, at the same time, as an attempt to signal the possibility of a home, albeit ephemeral or even illusory. I want to suggest that, even though home may not be overtly present in every work, homeliness/homelessness are overarching reference points in Kelly's artistic practice. As I will demonstrate, Kelly's installations aim to affectively and cognitively engage the viewers, beckoning them into a critical enquiry of the existing social contract which produces and reproduces cultural exclusion.

An excellent case in point is the 2001 installation *The Ballad of Kastriot Rexhepi*, which traces the links between language and national or ethnic identity. Its narrative is based on a 1999 report published in *Los Angeles Times* (Glover) about the separation of an infant boy from his Kosovo-Albanian family during the

1 For a more detailed description of Kelly's artistic practice, go to: <http://www.marykellyartist.com/biography.html>.

2 In my use of the term "symbolic homelessness," I both underscore the alienating character of culture for women and make reference to Veronica Vivero and Sharon Jenkins' concept of "cultural homelessness." Vivero and Jenkins define cultural homelessness as "an individual's feelings of not belonging to any particular ethno-cultural group" and "not knowing where home is or how it feels," typical for individuals having early-life immersion in more than one culture (13). However, while Vivero and Jenkins refer to the difficulties in one's switching between the codes of culture by not being securely attached to any in particular, in my analysis of Kelly's work, I mean specifically women's alienation within the symbolic order.

Balkan war in the 1990s. First, Kastriot was found and renamed by the Serbian army, then, under NATO's occupation, he was renamed once more, to be finally reunited with his family and regain his original name. In Kelly's installation, the narrative telling the boy's story is printed on worn-out, compressed lint that runs in rhythmical waves around the gallery walls, two-hundred-feet long, forming a horizontal band.³ As noted by Carmen Winant, "Kelly's use of lint—the residue of private, domestic and feminized chores" is a fitting vehicle that employs "her gendered experience" to "navigate and interpret the relationship between historical and linguistic memory." By superimposing a straight line of printed text on a delicate, fluctuating, weary material, Kelly clashes the singularity of the individual with the automatism of the institutional. What is more, the very choice of an ephemeral material signals the way in which large-scale military conflicts invade and tragically affect the lives of individual civilians, pushing them not only out of their homes, but literally—out of their identity. This powerful clash of the institutional and the individual makes *The Ballad* both intimate and epic, as the lost home is but indexed in the rhythmical waves of worn-out lint. This way, the lint becomes a powerful metaphor for the home's fragile yet basic sustainability.

Earlier on, in 1999, Kelly had employed a similar strategy in another installation titled *Mea Culpa*. The work consists of five parts: *Phnom Pehn 1975*, *Buenos Aires 1976*, *Beirut 1982*, *Sarajevo 1992*, and *Johannesburg 1997*, each telling a story of women and children's abuse that was reported to the War Crimes Tribunal. As in *The Ballad of Kastriot Rexhepi*, the domestic is overtly present in the typescripts of the stories, which are printed on lint stretched wide around the gallery walls in framed glass-cases. Here again, the lint can be read as an allegory of a lost home, represented as a semitransparent background, distant and suppressed, yet constituting the very foundation that makes the stories possible. Since the victims' stories both involve an institutionalized procedure of testifying and at the same time present personal stories of mourning, the worn-out lint implies the victims' awareness of the irreversibility of their losses. As pointedly noted by Holland Cotter, the use of "compressed lint produced by drying laundered black clothing—thousands of pounds of it—in a domestic dryer" suggests the figure of a "woman repeatedly washing and rewashing mourning clothes without being able to cleanse them of histories woven indelibly into their fabric" ("Art in Review") and thus explicitly indexes mourning. Viewed this way, the wave-shaped lint, printed over with a perfect lined-up font, visually indexes the clash between the victims' private yet institutionalized testimonies and their singular reminiscence of what has been lost.

However, lint is also connected with healing. It is what is put over a wound to cleanse it and absorb blood, to insulate it from the outside and keep it sterile from retraumatization. Writing on lint, then, can be understood as a therapeutic process, wherein the narrative is inscribed on a material which is woven. The process of

3 In an interview by Maria Walsh, Kelly explains the monumentality of the lint-washing procedure. The artist recounts: "The lint casting process for this work took over six months and 10,000 pounds of weight of washing to finish" ("Corpus").

weaving brings to mind Nancy K. Miller's idea of arachnology where the act of writing is "a signature of a gendered subjectivity" (Beizer 14). Thus, the victims' narratives, disciplined by the regimented order of the printed text, welcome a search for "the embodiment in writing" and a recovery "within representation the emblem of [their] construction" (Miller 272). The lint points to the speakers' home-related psychic resources that make their story telling possible. At the same time, since lint is among the most basic medical aids, it also implies provisional treatment in makeshift conditions (open field hospital? military conflict?), with a very limited access to medical resources: a situation in which one is doing their best, yet they cannot do much. The choice of lint as "the embodiment in writing" may be indicative then of the limited agency of women and children (as well as their physical homelessness) during wartime from which they come to testify.

On a more general plane, lint welcomes other domestic metaphors. On the one hand, Kelly's employment of a permanently stained material suggests a Biblical reading of a stain of guilt that can never be washed out. On the other, Kelly's use of lint engages with the metaphor of life cycle, as, no matter what happens, "there is always washing to be done" (Walsh). This metaphor, on the most down-to-earth level, is informed by lint's connotative attachment with deromanticized domesticity: the daily routine and the tedious, repetitive manual work involved in home-making. These largely undervalued activities, made possible by the infallible womanly presence, are very often taken for granted to such extent that they are unacknowledged. Yet, in fact, they sustain life in the most basic dimension.

The Ballad of Kastriot Rexhepi and *Mea Culpa* are but two installations in which Kelly clashes the private and the institutional in order to interrogate the politics of the domestic and the public. In her early works, *Antepartum* (1973) and *Post-Partum Document* (1973-79), the artist focuses on another area of women's symbolic homelessness: the vastly invalidated mothering experience (cf. Rich; Kristeva; Irigaray, "Women-Mothers"; Bueskens 5-27).⁴ In these two works, the primal home of the child—the mother's body—is understood as an affectively and semantically complex entity that until recently was one of the most severely repressed in Western culture (Kristeva; Walker). While *Antepartum*, which records a looped close-up shot of the artist's hands stroking her pregnant abdomen while the baby is kicking underneath, may seem structurally humble, *Post-Partum Document* is overtly robust in the thematic scope and the mixed-media execution. Employing elements of Lacanian psychoanalysis and other ideological interpellations of the maternal subject, the installation problematizes the gradual loosening up of the

4 It needs to be noted that, especially in Kelly's early works, there is also a strong presence of the economic dimension of domesticity. For example, in *Nightcleaners* of 1975, the artist makes overt references to "domestic labor," "sexual division of labor" and its effects on "the so-called services sector" (in Mulvey 33). When she discusses the injustice of women's condition, she notes that this injustice is "subtly sustained in the home through the naturalization of the woman's role in child care" ("Introduction" xviii).

mother-child's dyad in the context of domesticity. Here, the culturally established "motherhood as institution" (cf. Rich) is juxtaposed with the much inarticulate expression of the mother's lived experience, which is vastly reduced to the private area of the home. In one of the captions, Kelly merges the idea of the home with the idea of the maternal subject, as the mother asks: "What will I do?... when [my son] starts school... when he grows up... when he leaves *home*... when he leaves *me*..." ("Preface" 57, emphasis mine). The artist notes that this existential motherly lamentation over the gradual break-up of the mother-child dyad "continually transgresses the system of representation in which it is founded" (57). By expressing the mother's anxiety over the necessity to restructure herself once the child leaves home, the artist points to a universal yet singular experience of every mother who is challenged to remake her own sense of the self *vis-à-vis* the evolving relationship with her child. On a more general plane, *Post-Partum Document* highlights the temporal character of any home, which, under any circumstances, will eventually be lost. Thus, what Simon Schama has called "the womb and tomb" quality of the non-representational art of Mark Rothko (*Simon Schama's Power of Art*), finds an embodied, yet universal, expression in Kelly's *Post-Partum Document*.

Interestingly for this article, *Post-Partum Document*, an installation which documents a profoundly embodied interaction between the mother and the child, forecloses any image of the body.⁵ By the complete removal of the mother's image, Kelly seems to point to two interrelated dilemmas that can also be approached through the lens of the domestic. First of all, the artist underscores the difficulty of the mother to feel "at home" in a culture which reduces her to an idealized institution and an impossible body (cf. Rich; Kristeva; Thurer; Douglas and Michaels). This coupling has a profound bearing on the cultural functioning of the maternal body, both on the physical and the symbolic plane. As *Post-Partum Document* makes clear, the representational fraud concerning the maternal body poses a significant problem for the mother's own sense of her body. Simply put, the maternal body, which is everybody's primal home, is itself not at home in culture. To highlight this profound difficulty, Kelly makes *Post-Partum Document* thoroughly kaleidoscopic: full of twinkling, multi-discursive exhibits that elude a unifying interpretation and point to the problematics generated by the cultural renditions of the maternal body. The artist states:

I am less concerned with prescribing the absence of the woman's body as image than with problematizing its presence.... [T]he process of disturbing that presence is displaced onto modes of spectatorship: the fragmentation of the visual field, the imposition of a temporal sequence, the intrusion of peripheral vision, the ephemeral effect of light, and... the physical presence of the viewer in the installation. ("Introduction" xxiv)

5 I analyze the absence of the maternal body in *Post-Partum Document* in more detail in "Narrating Motherhood as Experience and Institution: Experimental Life-Writing in Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* (1973–79)," *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 50.2-3 (2015).

Kelly's strategy of slivering the maternal body into multiple incongruous interruptions quick-sands the viewer into the mother's symbolic homelessness of her lived experience. At the same time, this strategy effectively signals the existence of a domestic sphere that disturbs the cultural renditions of the maternal body, presenting the mother's interaction with her child. By displaying in the gallery space visual-narrative images of the mother-child early engagement, which is aimed to affect the viewers, the artist beacons them into a bodily participation in the culturally underrecognized area of early mothering.

In her later works, Kelly further ponders at the problem of women's homelessness within culture. Broadening her scope, in *Interim* (1984-89), the artist focuses on other areas of women's cultural alienation, connected with their age, limited agency and the performative character of "womanhood." The installation consists of four parts: *Corpus* (Body), *Pecunia* (Money), *Historia* (History), and *Potestas* (Powers). Each of them deals with a particular discourse on womanhood that produces and alienates women. For example, in *Corpus*, women's first person narratives address the question of ageing, as represented in various cultural domains. Each narrative is presented on a set of six panels, each titled after late-nineteenth century's Jean-Martin Charcot's categorization of hysterical women. The sets include: *Extase* (Ecstasy), *Menacé* (Threat), *Supplication* (Supplication), *Érotisme* (Eroticism) and *Appel* (Appeal). The way in which the women address the question of ageing clearly reflects the cultural renderings of womanhood: "[W]ell preserved... what to wear... like a man... surprised to catch a glimpse of myself as others see me... preoccupied with looking... being older... so hysterical... feel silly... everyone here so Goddamm young... reduced to a voyeur... hate them..." (in Isaak 485). The narratives betray the speakers' anxiety over their failure to meet cultural expectations concerning womanhood and highlight their awareness of the objectifying gaze of others who may perceive them as misfits.

Other strategies employed by Kelly in *Interim* support the argument of ageing women's cultural homelessness. For example, the artist's employment of the nineteenth-century categorization of female hysterics underscores the durational character of the women's alienation in culture. What is more, the French and Latin terms she employs additionally enhance the impression that ageing women do not belong to the culture of here and now. Unlike Freud's hysterical patients, who produced their symptoms as a result of traumatic past events, Kelly's women focus on their age as the key reason for such symptoms, produced in a culture that worships young age. In their fifties or sixties, the women cease to be perceived as "women."⁶

Clearly, like in the already discussed *Antepartum* and *Post-Partum Document*, *Interim* also engages with the women's failure to successfully perform the culturally desired womanhood. Jo Anna Isaak notes:

6 There is a wonderfully humorous comment by Kelly on the feminine displacement. She notes that "being a woman is only a brief period in one's life" (in Walsh).

If the mother who knows sexual pleasure... is the most severely repressed 'feminine' figure in Western culture, then the middle-aged woman runs a close second... [The] middle age marks... the loss of the assumed [feminine] image, of not being the object of man's desire, of being out of sync with how one looks, of alienation from one's image. (485)

Alienated from their bodies that have been alienated in culture, middle-aged women produce hysterical symptoms. *Interim*'s focus on hysteria is informed by Luce Irigaray's observations on the link between the hysteric and the institutional (1985). Kelly recalls the French scholar, noting that "the hysteric exposes the institution's fundamental misogyny... [and] signifies the exclusion of women from discourse" ("Re-presenting Body" 136). Excluded from discourse, hysterical women strive to communicate from an impossible site. Their agitation and inarticulate talk index, as Irigaray notes, "a hole in [the culture's] signifying economy" (in Isaak 485). Thus, *Interim*'s anxious statements by ageing women, who have thoroughly internalized the controlling gaze of others, express their deprivation of subjectivity and difficulty in establishing their own sense of agency.

What is more, home as a theme runs through other parts of *Interim* in more overt ways. In *Corpus*, the numerous female speakers evoke images of domesticity. One of them imagines herself as a Cinderella "rushing from the ball in a chauffeur-driven limousine," only to "walk home" wearing "rags and wooden shoes," once the clock strikes midnight (in Iversen, "Visualizing" 68). The speaker clashes Cinderella's courtly image with its domestic reverse, as the limo is exchanged for her own legs and the gown for tattered rags. Another woman, surveying a "prospective home that does not quite match her fantasized ideal," dreams of costly improvements that include a kitchen filled with "clean and shiny metallic surfaces" and equipped with "a granite counter, a porcelain sink, refrigerator, [and a] freezer" (71). This image of sterile perfection gives off an aura of "perverse pleasure" (71), evoking associations with the coolness and coldness of a hospital or, possibly, a morgue. Another image of domesticity is that of a woman who, in the absence of her husband, "cleans the Augean stables of their house," focusing in particular on "the toilet bowl and surrounds" (76). It is yet another image that deromanticizes domesticity, as the guardian of the hearth, instead of composing herself in a serene wait for her husband, is engaged in a compulsive yet futile cleaning process.

Clearly, all three home-related fantasies offer fundamentally flawed images of the home: it is either a home devoid of the culturally desired perfect housewife (the rugged Cinderella), or a home that stands as a deadly projection of the perfect housewife's dream (the expensive metallic surfaces of the kitchen), or a home that reveals the flip side of the perfect housewife's strife (the Augean stables of dirty toilets). Hardly reconciled, all three images render home a hostile place that bars women's agency, creativity and, eventually, their sense of being alive. These three debilitating images are radicalized by another, which overly detaches domesticity and creativity, going beyond the perfect-housewife imagery. The voice rhetorically asks "What counts?" and answers: "I'm afraid to say, [it] is not the book written

bravely in the midst of domestic chaos, but the one written in spite of it” (81). Clearly, in all four cases home is not only devoid of homeliness, but is thematized as oppressive, debilitating and utterly alienating.

Gloria Patri of 1992 focuses on another area where the woman is symbolically homeless. The installation “considers the consequences, for women, of adopting the masculine ideal, for instance, demanding the right to go to the front line and kill the enemy” (*Mary Kelly Artist*). Thus, in this case, the woman’s alienation is not connected to her age, but is experienced as a result of transgressing gender roles. The installation features shiny metallic shields, engraved with media reports on the war in Iraq. The shields both replicate and parody trophy-objects that are typically awarded for military acts of masculine bravery. In this project, Kelly specifically focuses on “the role of the state apparatus in forming subjectivity” (Castonguay 157) in women’s performing traditionally masculine military tasks. One of the shields reads:

First she made sure the thigh pads were in the right position, then she went into a funk.... [W]hy was she sweating even before she’d started? She despised it. Despised the woman-thing, the soft thing that severed her will before a hard thing, hard to do, hard to touch, hard to understand like the machine in front of her.... Yes, fast and hardheaded, she’d think in tough metaphors and eject tight sentences in stringent tones, change her hair, her clothes and her name. (Mary Kelly Artist)

The “masquerade of masculinity” structured through “the insignia of battle” (Bhabha 99, 90) requires women to embrace the ideal of hard-bodied physicality and emotional restraint.⁷ The body becomes part of a totality, “the troop machine made up of soldiers” (Iversen, “Mary Kelly” 190), or a fractal-like structure restricted by geometric shapes and straight lines of synchronized units (190-192).⁸ Since femininity has traditionally functioned as the reverse of masculinity, women’s conforming to the masculine ideal is always problematic. As *Gloria Patri* makes clear, in the case of women soldiers, the necessary masculinization of the body translates, at least partially, into their alienation and displacement.

Finally, two more recent works, the 2005-07 *Love Songs* and the 2010-12 *Habitus*, make a more literal use of the home, as both feature home-like structures, employed in symbolic and material senses. In *Love Songs*, Kelly envisions home as a physical, semantic and affective vessel for the 1970s women’s movement voices,

7 Two books that discuss such masculinity are Susan Jeffords’ *Hard Bodies* and Yvonne Tasker’s *Spectacular Bodies*, both underscoring the bodily excess and grotesqueness of hard masculinity in the 1980s American visual culture.

8 Mary Kelly refers to Klaus Theweleit’s *Male Fantasies*, where Theweleit describes the aesthetics of profascist organizations through the categories of totality, the machine, and a formation of a collective exoskeleton. While today’s combat does not involve such specular excess of multiple-bodied spatial formations, the infallibility of an individual working in synchro with others is still absolutely crucial.

which in her installation are united by a semitransparent home-like structure. In the words of the artist, similar to parts of *Interim*, *Love Songs* celebrates the “moment of political misrecognition that constructed the unquestioned unity of feminism” (“Introduction” xxv). This celebration is, however, tinted with nostalgia for a more stable sense of belonging and a more permanent collective home. Importantly, this longing for a communal home is present both in the statements of the second-wave makers and in the voices of younger women, who know the movement only by proxy. The façades of the home-like read, for example:

Everyone had a voice.... The most transformative moment of my life.... What I liked about the women’s group was being able to form my own ideas, and be with friends.... I finally felt connected to something that made personal as well as political sense.... It just seemed right.... We pushed on because we were full of passion.... The high point for me was being with other women and knowing we were part of something bigger than ourselves.... I remember thinking, WOW, a women’s group, a women’s anything! (Mary Kelly Artist)

Significantly, the illuminated from within, green-house-like structure—light and semitransparent—suggests associations with growth (growth of ideas, of transgenerational connectedness), coziness, warmth and being welcome. It emanates a sense of nostalgic, or even melancholic optimism, as the homeliness it promises is still largely declarative and elusive.

The inclusiveness of *Love Songs* stands in stark contrast to *Habitus*. Made in collaboration with Ray Barrie, this installation holds less promise, as it recounts memories of the generation born during, or just after, World War II. *Habitus* is comprised of two structures, titled *Type I* and *Type II*. The first one is based on the Anderson Shelter, the second—on the Morrison Shelter. Both shelters were mass-produced for home use during air raids in Britain, and later their popularity persisted during the Cold War. Since they were obvious and indispensable elements of people’s dwelling places, Kelly has described them as “an extension of domestic space” (in Walsh).

Both *Type I* and *Type II* offer a profoundly unsettling idea of the home, as they merge conventional domesticity with a pre-emptive materialization of a possible nuclear annihilation. In *Type I*, the roof is perforated with texts that are legible only by looking from below, as “the mirror’s effect forcibly maneuvers its viewers underground” (Myers). In *Type II*, the table is covered with conversations that hover over the sleeping space. Holly Myers notes: “Between the visual reverberation of the sometimes wrenching text and the anthropomorphic scale of the structures, which are just big enough to contain a family, the works leave one with a palpable sense of the personal dimension (physical as well as emotional) of geopolitical anxiety” (“Review”). Modeled on actual British shelters, *Habitus* mocks the “my house is my castle” maxim, as it features a perforated shelter—an ultimate oxymoron. What is more, by forcing the viewers to go inside, it welcomes an up-to-date reflection on

the ambivalence of the home. As Dora Apel notes, home, understood “as a protective sanctuary,” in some areas of the world, “has shrunk considerably, narrowing down private space to absurd proportions in portable and nomadic technologies, such as the gas masks” (39). What is more, both *Love Songs* and *Habitus* point to the ultimate ambivalence of the wall that separates the inside from the outside. Either semitransparent or perforated, in both installations, the walls are screens for a two-way traffic that index constant negotiation and a possible threat, welcoming readings through Derrida’s notion of hostipitality (3-18).

In my overview of Mary Kelly’s art, I have aimed to demonstrate the ways in which homeliness/homelessness are operative in her works. In her installations, home can be read as a powerful driving force that promotes a social change, either by exposing the alienating character of domesticity within contemporary culture, or by phantasmatically representing symbolic plenitude and existential comfort associated with the idea of the home, or by exposing the ambivalence surrounding domesticity. Even if only fantasized, such representations may be instrumental in making the unrecognized visible. They allow one to imagine a new reality, made up of more equal subjects, once the present areas of alienation have been socially and politically renegotiated. The many installations that Kelly has produced make this home imaginable, even if not concretely defined. These new possibilities are what the spectators are prompted to engage with, both through their memory work and through their recognition of the areas of cultural homeliness in the contemporary world.

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