

BECOMING MODERN  
WOMEN IN BERLIN

A MANIFESTO

BY

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"The woman gets married. The woman gets pregnant. The woman miscarries. The woman is raped.", so starts Aoko Matsuda's *The Woman Dies* and so do many people on this Earth view the life of a woman: as a mere excuse for a plot twist. But not in Berlin. Jane Austen would never have become a writer, had she lived in Berlin, especially if she expected a *A Room of One's Own*: we run on a WG-basis here. To become a writer in Berlin, a woman needs to break out of the shackle of the patriarchy and "make something of herself" and it better be weird. Modern writing women in Berlin are found moving their hips provocatively at *Domicilium* with a passion-red stain on their crotch. They write unrhymed 4-pages-long poems for Tibetan independence, they march at *Karnival der Kulturen* wrapped-up in plastic against plastic waste, in a flesh-pink onesie against meat-eating or naked against... well, clothes. In Berlin we do not want, nor appreciate liberal white women casually expressing their constrictive views of the world.

You can keep J. K. Rowling's badly hidden racism, in her place we would a hundred times prefer the white male Youtuber who scammed the racist British female Trump, Katie Hopkins, with a fake award. In Berlin we go deeper, we do not see gender, nor colour, not even species. You could be a cat with a funny hat, but if you wrote "intersectionality" and "womxn" enough times, we would still publish your work. Show us your carpal tunnel after months of writing for a self-published zine that will be read by your friends, their friends and maybe your mother, although if you have a sad story about your family to share, the better. If you have a loving and caring family that can financially support you in your artistic endeavours, I am truly sorry for you, nobody is perfect. But we have a cure. Keep the writing groups rolling, the independent projects, the genre-bending novels with gender-bending characters with reality-bending world building. In Berlin we pride ourselves in being the underdogs and if you do not know our literary references: educate yourself. If you do not have a fight to fight, find it. Find a partner, a bad one, move in with them, cancel your apartments, change your *Anmeldung* address, pay their rent, support their dreams while you forget about yours, and after a few months, go to therapy (or yoga) and find out that you deserve to be happy, you have daddy issues and your partner is not into polyamory, they just want to fuck around, especially when you are not around. You can explore the idea of writing a love story, but only if the raw Berliner U-Bahn provides the setting for your melancholic drama, if the lovers at some point walk aimlessly via the industrial wastelands and the canal-side haunted by the lost screaming souls of the many addicts who fell in the Spree, or at least one Jew. Never forget the Jews. Remember to quote the coolest neighbourhoods, Kreuzberg, Friedrichshain, if you want a prick character make sure they live in Prenzlauer Berg and never fail to mention that "you didn't move to Berlin for the techno scene", we really care about that. But all this, also a man could do, or a cat with a funny hat, you need more.

Where is your femininity? Where is your motherly side?

Don't you know that *The Woman* in all important tragedies of all times, in the end, dies?

Are you dead?

THERE. YOU MADE IT.