How and why are the aesthetics of pornography – as a dense narrative about sexuality in western history – of interest for feminist perspectives? The French road movie *Baise-moi* (2000) directed by Virginie Despentes and the pornfilmdirector Coralie Trinh Thi will serve as a filmatic case for this discussion. This film seems to claim for 77 minutes that gender, sexuality and power are connected – which some ‘hardcore’ feminists have claimed for quite some time. This paper raises the question which kind of aesthetic and political meanings this film generates – a film where aesthetics of violence and pornography are set in filmatic circulation by female directors and pornfilmactresses.

The aesthetics of pornography in some kind of feministic and post feministic setting seem to win acceptance. Female film directors in France have produced films containing explicit pornographic scenes such as Laetitia Massons *A Vendre* (1998), Patrice Cheraeu with *Intimacy* (2000), Virginie Wagon with *Le Secret* (2000), Claire Denis with *Trouble Everyday* (2001), and Catherine Breillats with (for example) *Romance* (1999) og *A ma Soeur* (2001). Through this trend we experience a break with earlier feministic antagonism with pornography as a form of expression.

Is *Baise–moi* a speculative, nihilistic film, as some critics have claimed, or are these aesthetic means used as crass ways of questioning heteronormativ sexual power relations and conventional representations of women and sex in film? I also compare the central rape scene of *Baise-moi* with the rape scene in the French art film *Irreversible* (2002) by Caspar Noè. Questions of realism related to representations of sexuality and violence are central in the receptions of both these films and will be discussed in this paper.