

ART PLUGGED™

Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood

Exhibitions on March 14, 2024



Janine Antoni, 2008, 2000 © Janine Antoni, Courtesy of the artist and Lubling-Augustin, New York, USA

Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood
Arnolfini, Bristol: 9 March – 26 May 2024

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham: 22 June – 29 September 2024

Millennium Gallery, Sheffield: 24 October 2024 – 19 January 2025

Dundee Contemporary Arts: February – June 2025 (exact dates TBC)

Launched at Arnolfini, **Bristol**, **Hayward Gallery Touring's** major group exhibition **Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood** plunges into the joys and heartaches, mess, myths and mishaps of **motherhood** through over 100 artworks, from the **feminist** avant-garde to the present day.

While the **Madonna** and **Child** is one of the great subjects of European art, we rarely see art about motherhood as a lived experience, in all its complexity. **Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood** addresses this blind spot in art history, asserting the artist mother as an important – if rarely visible – cultural figure.



Installation view of Acts of Creation On Art and Motherhood at Arnolfini, Bristol.
Photo Lisa Whiting, Courtesy Arnolfini and Hayward Gallery Touring

Featuring the work of more than sixty modern and contemporary artists, this exhibition approaches motherhood as a creative enterprise, albeit one at times tempered by ambivalence, exhaustion or grief. Acts of Creation explores lived experience of motherhood, offering a complex account that engages with contemporary concerns about gender, caregiving and reproductive rights.

Featuring painting, photography, sculpture, sound and film, artists presenting work across the exhibition's tour include:

Felicity Allen; Janine Antoni; Cassie Arnold; Bobby Baker; Elina Brotherus; Liesel Burisch; Cathy Cade; Lea Cetera; Jai Chuhan; Eileen Cooper; Renee Cox; Dorothy Cross; Rineke Dijkstra; Natalie Djurberg and Hans Berg; Leni Dothan; Marlene Dumas; Catherine Elwes; Tracey Emin; Jessa Fairbrother; Rachel Fallon; Feministo; Fenix; Maeve Gilmore; Anna Grevenitis; Camille Henrot; Susan Hiller; Ghislaine Howard; Elsa James; Chantal Joffe; Claudette Johnson; Mary Kelly; Liss LaFleur; Tala Madani; Sally Mann; MATERNAL FANTASIES; Lindsey Mendick; Mother Art; Wangechi Mutu; Ishbel Myerscough; Everlyn Nicodemus; Catherine Opie; Fani Parali; Celia Paul; Cathie Pilkington; Laure Prouvost; Paula Rego; Su Richardson; Sister Seven; Monica Sjöö; Annegret Soltau; Tabitha Soren; Heather Spears; Nancy Spero; Hannah Starkey; Emma Talbot; The Hackney Flashers; Mierle Laderman Ukeles; Valie Export; Christine Voge; Del la Grace Volcano; Barbara Walker; Caroline Walker; Carrie Mae Weems; Nancy Willis; Hermione Wiltshire; Hermione Wiltshire and Clare Bottomley; Carmen Winant; Daphne Wright; Billie Zangewa.



Paula Rego Untitled 2, 1999, Courtesy Cristea Roberts Gallery

Hettie Judah, Curator of Acts of Creation, says: "Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood is a true passion project: the fruit of long gestation and many years' labour. I am profoundly grateful to Hayward Gallery Touring and our four exhibition partners for sharing my belief that the lived experience of motherhood is an important subject, and one that we might explore with great affection and humour while not shying away from pain and struggle. From the start, it has been my hope that Acts of Creation would be an engaging show with a lively public programme, and I am excited to see how this will evolve with each venue along its tour."

Acts of Creation is accompanied by a lively programme of public events. Additionally, in conjunction with the exhibition is Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood, a new book by Hettie Judah that will be published in July 2024 by Thames and Hudson. The book explores art and motherhood over the last 500 years, looking at both motherhood as the subject of **art** and the circumstance of its creation.



Caroline Walker, Bottles and Pumps, 2022, Courtesy the artist

Gemma Brace, Head of Exhibitions at Arnolfini, says: "We are excited to be working with Hettie and the team at Hayward Gallery Touring on such a timely exhibition addressing themes that have held growing importance to our programme and audiences over the last three years; from exhibitions with Jo Spence, Chantal Joffe, Polly Braden and Paula Rego to the growing diversity of the community partners we work with. With its focus upon lived experiences, we hope in turn it will open up new conversations that resonate for the future."

Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood is curated by Hettie Judah with **Hayward** Gallery Touring.



Anna Grevenitis, Regard series (2015 -). © Anna Grevenitis