

The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in a rainbow color palette. The colors include shades of red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, and purple. The shapes are irregular and layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. In the lower right quadrant, a solid black diamond shape is superimposed, containing the text 'moca north' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

moca
north

*“What’s the point of playing my
“greatest hits” without inviting those
that inspire me to the party?”*

Catherine Shaw

Indestructible marks the largest show to date of Catherine Shaw, one of Britain’s most significant and under-examined contemporary artists – alongside twenty works curated by Shaw - of high profile and emerging female artists that have influenced and inspire her. Featuring new and never-before-seen MOCA North commissions Catherine Shaw and feminist art icon Beatrice Gaskin, Indestructible explores questions around femininity, the holding and abuse of power, authenticity and truth. juxtaposing the provocative against the playful, in a visual conversation of several decades of boundary pushing work by female contemporary artists.

Works included in the exhibition range from photography, painting and video, to screen printing and digital media; including art by Lee Miller, Beatrice Gaskin, Naomi Escott, Madame Yevonde, Ana Mendieta, Julia Rodriguez , Imogen Reeves and Shaw herself.

Performances

Reconstructions of some of Shaw's most iconic performances will take place daily throughout the run of the exhibition. Witnessing a live performance can be both startling and intimate, and we welcome respectful behaviour towards the performance artists. Please speak to MOCA North team members for further information.

Floor plan

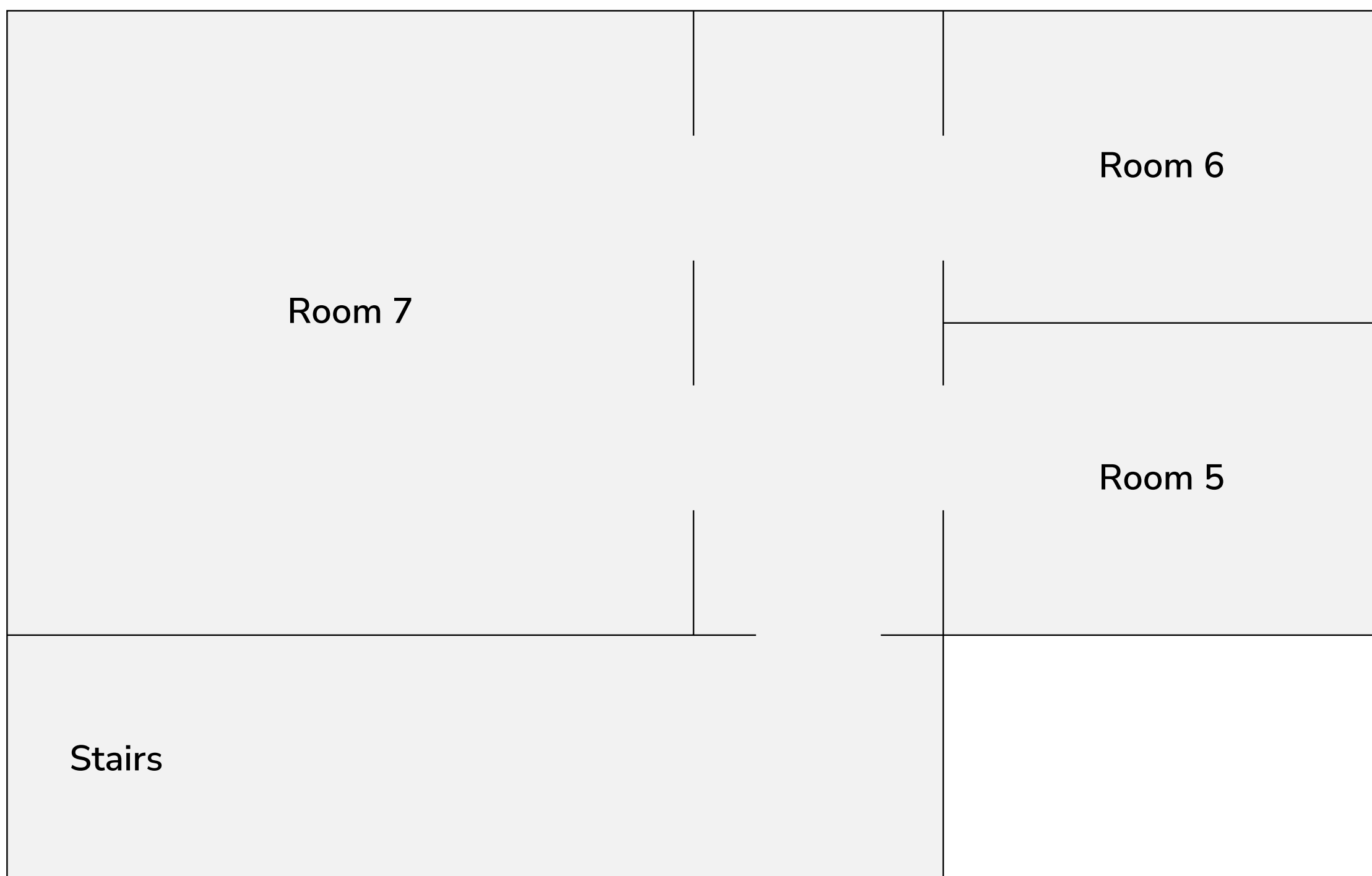


Table of contents

Visual Vernacular

Neon Dreams

Bodies and forms

Brush stroke series 2020

Live and direct

Trump in a nightmare

Indestructible

Visual Vernacular

“Photography and photomontage are a cornerstone of my practice. Legendary artists like Beatrice Gaskin and Barbara Kruger, inspired me from very early on to create worlds and raise questions through the juxtaposition of fragmentary images and text. As I began to explore other media like animation and video, my approach have always been rooted in this.

We now exist in a world where everyone has easy access to photo editing apps, I wonder how much of what we now refer to as meme, has its origins in early political propogandist art and texts. I continue to be inspired by how the next generation navigates this. Context is everything, and authenticity is increasingly harder and harder to assess.”

Catherine Shaw





List of Works

Beatrice Gaskin

The time is now, 1978
Photographic silkscreen

Barbara Kruger

You are not yourself, 1981
Text and word art

Catherine Shaw

Raise your fist, 2019
Digital Collage

Clare Prouton

Chronic Confessions Part 7,
2023
Text artwork

Imogen Reeves

Where Now, 2023
Generative image

Catherine Shaw

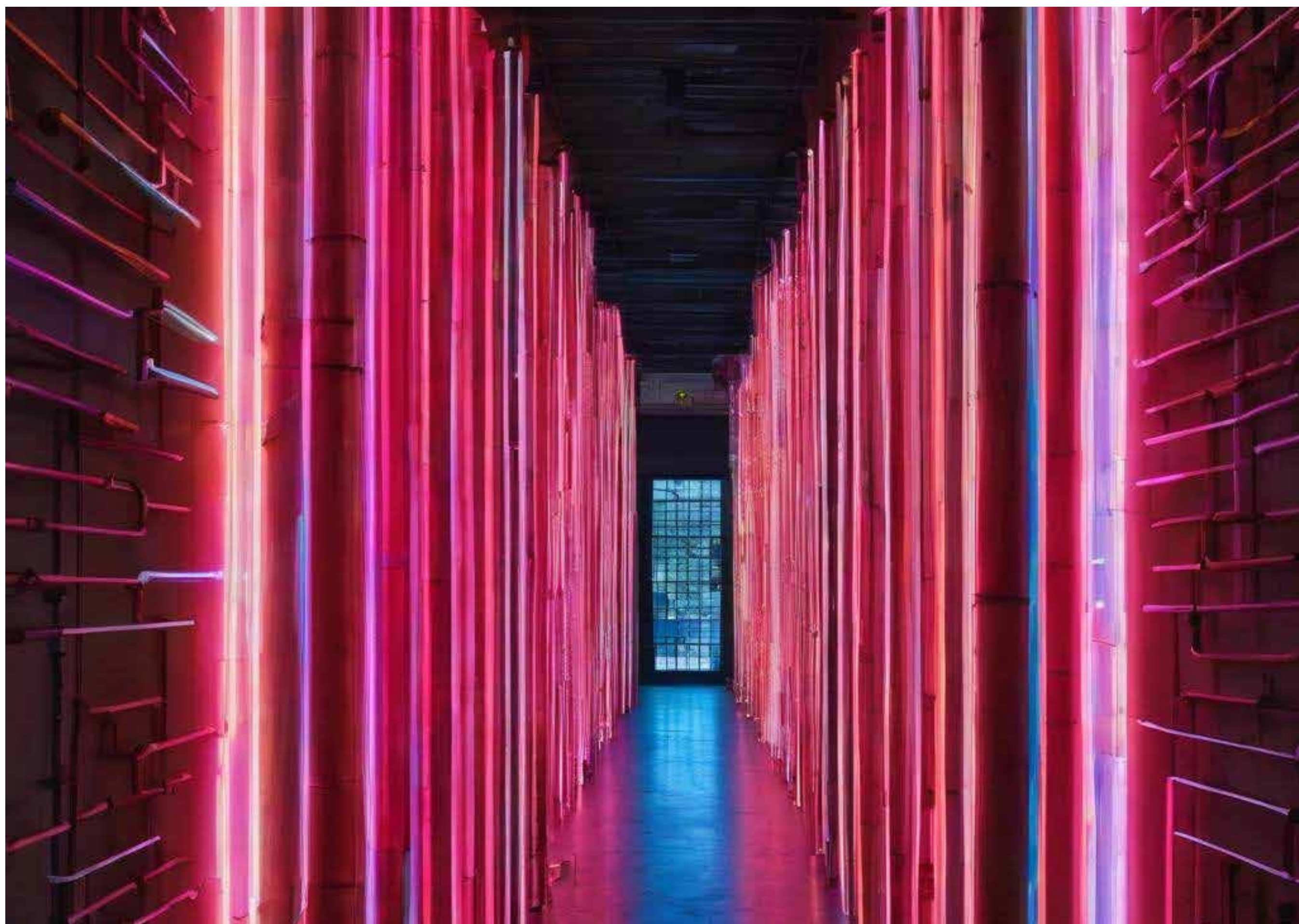
All up in my mind, 2019
Digital collage

Laura Greenway

Mama part 2, 2023
Archive photography

Neon Dreams

In the cacophony of existence, where every object seems to hum its own silent language, these four artworks articulate a conversation beyond words. As Sarah Lucas aptly observed, “everything is language” including the tangible and intangible threads that weave our narratives.



These sculptures stand as objective reflections, inviting viewers to decipher the silent expression of their frames. They stand united, challenging not only the traditional boundaries of artistic expression but confronting toxic behaviours that continue to thrive within the shadows of the arts industry. These neon sculptures aim to disrupt and redefine the discourse surrounding these behaviours. They spark a visual banter that transcends the limitations of spoken language, aiming to provoke contemplation and challenge preconceived notions.

The most recent of these, “Chuck Close’s Dirty Mouth” 2017 is a battle cry inviting us to engage in a dialogue that confronts the uncomfortable and reshapes the narrative.

In a world where the personal becomes political, and the silent language of objects speaks volumes, these neon sculptures emerge as beacons of change, For, in the realm of neon, every flicker, every glow, is a language waiting to be deciphered—a silent revolution against the shadows.

This room presents for the first time a series of abstract brushstroke paintings that stand as a departure from my previous forays into performance, photography, and video art.

All four neon works by Catherine Shaw featured in this room have now been withdrawn by the artist

List of Works

Catherine Shaw

[Chuck Close’s Dirty Mouth, 2017](#)

Neon Sculpture
Courtesy Robin Jones
collection

Catherine Shaw

[I have the attention, 2016](#)

Neon Sculpture
Courtesy Robin Jones
collection

Catherine Shaw

‘There are two types of women, 2017

Neon Sculpture
Courtesy Robin Jones
collection

Catherine Shaw

F**k you pay me, 2016

Neon Sculpture
Courtesy Robin Jones
collection

Introduction to gallery 3

Bodies and forms

In the spirit of my own early inclinations toward self-portraiture, this room features a spectrum of the multifaceted expression of womanhood. My journey with self-portraiture was not a calculated decision; rather, it unfolded organically, much like the fluid lines and shapes that grace the canvases of these remarkable creators.

Catherine Shaw



The female form is not merely a subject; it is a canvas, a vessel, and a mirror reflecting the myriad facets of identity. Through contours and symbolic gestures, these artists dismantle stereotypes and redefine the visual language of femininity. This exploration of identity, agency, and expression, presents the female form not merely as a subject but as a profound meditation on the human experience.



Lee Miller's lens captures the essence of the female form with an indomitable spirit, a presence that transcends the confines of time. Ana Mendieta, a luminary of the feminist art movement, employs earth and body as her canvas, forging a visceral connection with the primal aspects of womanhood, with a stark poignancy that demands contemplation.



Among the emerging voices, Julia Roddriguez adds a fresh perspective, navigating the intricate dance between vulnerability and strength. Her work becomes a mirror reflecting the evolving narrative of the female experience. Each artist returns to the exploration of the female form intermittently, recognizing the significance of our voices within the broader conversation.

List of Works

Catherine Shaw

I have several actually, 2018
Digital Print
12 minutes

Ana Mendieta

Imágen de Yágul, 1973.
Color photograph.
© The Estate of Ana Mendieta
Collection LLC
Courtesy Galerie Lelong & Co
4 minutes

David Scherman

Lee Miller in Hitler's bathtub,
1945
Black and white photograph
4 hours 45 minutes

Julia Rodriguez

She weaves and repairs, 2018
Woven sculpture
Detail from mixed media
sculpture

Julia Rodriguez

Once you have an obsession,
2021
Mixed media, photographic
and digital prints
5 minutes

Madame Yevonde

(Mask) Rosemary Chance,
1938
Tricolour separation negative

Naomi Escott

Clothes Line 1, 2023
Concrete, fabric

Naomi Escott

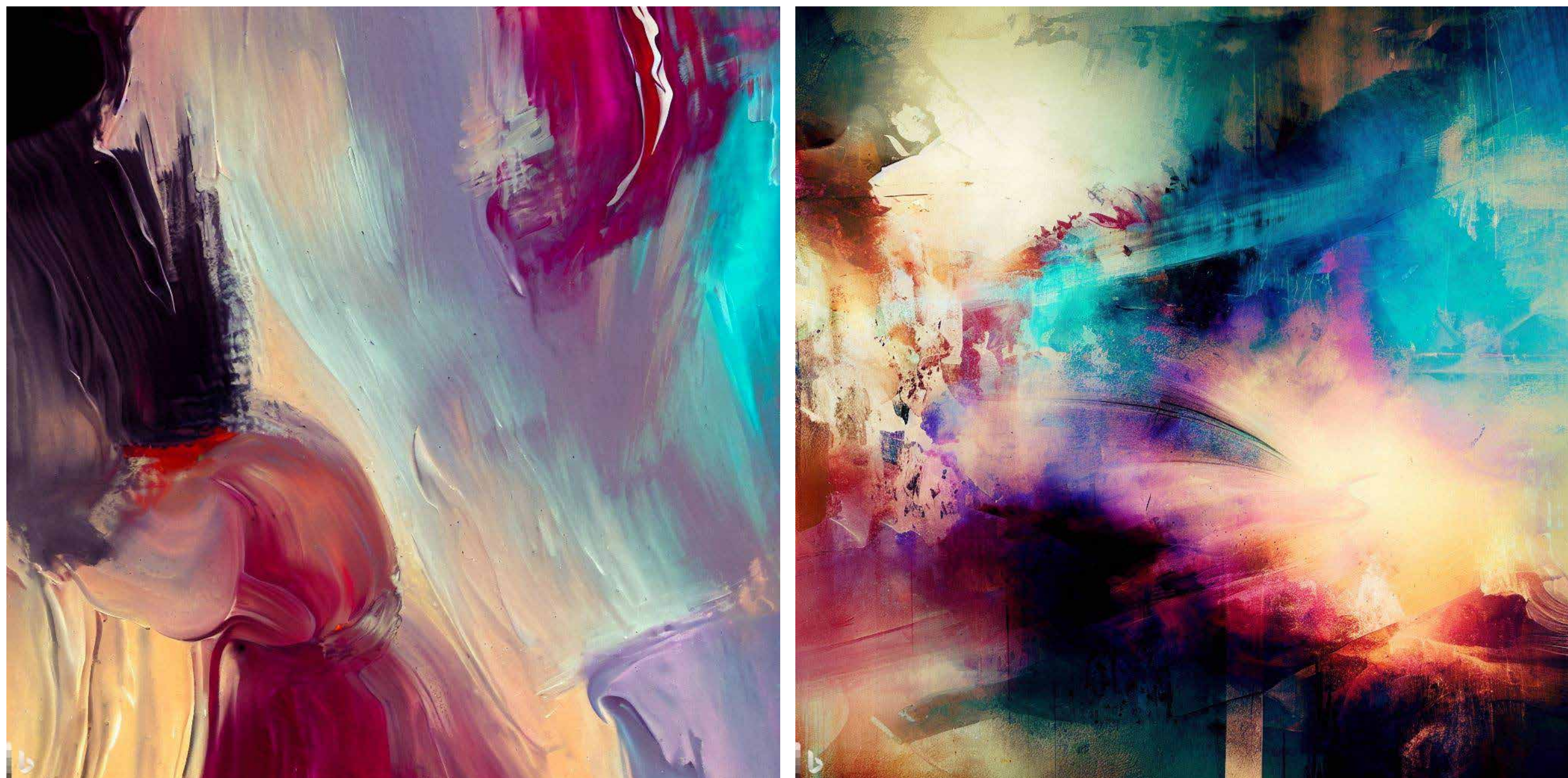
Untitled, 2023
Concrete Sculpture

Abigail Jones

I know one thing, and that is
that I know nothing, 2023
Mixed media

Brush stroke series 2020

In a profound shift of expression, I found myself immersed in the lineage of abstraction, to craft a visual language that transcends the boundaries of the realist.



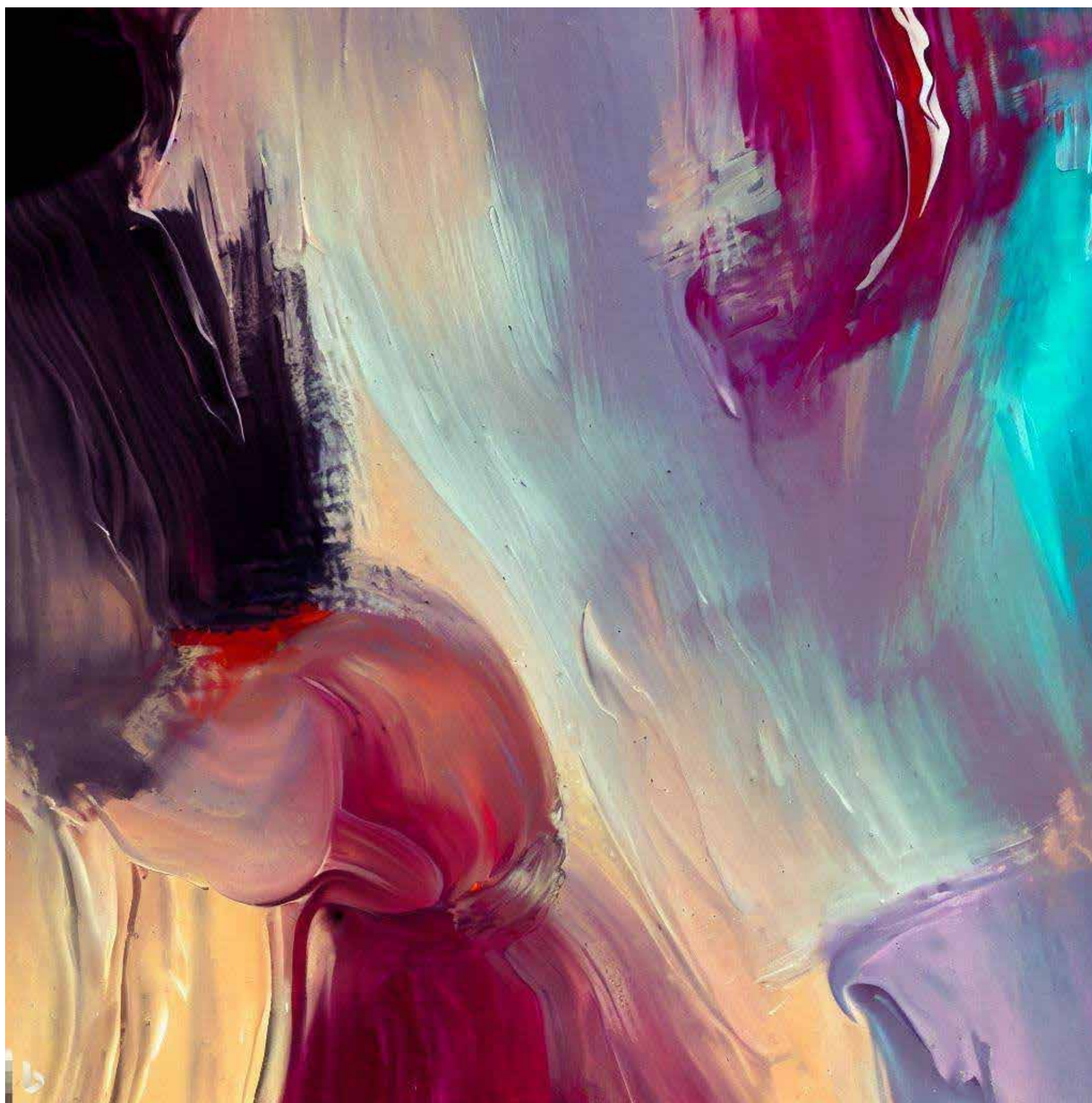
As the pandemic plagued us all in uncertainty and loss in 2020, my pivot towards abstraction felt both poignant and deliberate. In the face of global uncertainty and pervasive pain, the sanctuary of my studio space is a cocoon for introspection and artistic evolution. These canvases bear witness to a deeply personal response to the pandemic, a visceral exploration of emotions in a time when the world grappled with its own fragility. The brushstrokes became an escape and refuge for me.

Catherine Shaw

Wall Label

Catherine Shaw
Untitled Series, 2020
Paintings

With Shaw's brush stroke canvases we see a reflection of an internal landscape, a visual symphony that echoes the artist's emotional response to imposed insularity.



The departure from realism serves as a coping mechanism—an intentional move away from the concrete to navigate the nebulous territories of emotion. They invite viewers to lose themselves in contemplation.

As we engage with these abstract compositions, we are invited to share in Shaw's journey, a journey that marks a profound shift in artistic expression and a courageous response to the universal struggles of our time. In the strokes and hues of these paintings, we find solace, reflection, and a poignant reminder of the artist's resilience in the face of adversity.

Live and direct

Step into a provocative realm of feminist exploration with a symphony of performance videos and animations that are not merely spectacles, but immersive experiences: challenging, feminist, and profound.

These moving images carry a nuanced meaning, implying a corporeal presence even in their absence. Each frame, each sequence, becomes a vessel for the exploration of power dynamics, endurance, and the complex interplay of identity. From the mid-1980s to the present, these works serve as a testament to the enduring nature of artistic expression, each iteration carrying its own character and narrative.

The feminist undertones of all the creations are palpable, challenging societal norms and expectations. In the fusion of power play and endurance, the viewer is invited to confront discomfort, question authority, and traverse the terrain of gender dynamics. Visual narratives unfurl layers of meaning, prompting us to reassess preconceived notions about the body, identity, and the endurance of the human spirit.

As you navigate curated space, be prepared for a visceral journey—an exploration of fleshiness and the profound expressiveness that lies therein. These performance videos and animations are not just artworks; they are invitations to engage, provoke, and challenge the boundaries of our understanding, all within the feminist, defiant spirit that echoes the enduring legacies of artists who have paved the way before me

List of Works

Catherine Shaw

Dissasociated, 1998

Video

12 minutes

Catherine Shaw

Rip it up, 1996

Animation

4 minutes

Catherine Shaw

Situation 8, 1990

Filmed Performance

4 hours 45 minutes

Beatrice Gaskin

How to make a female Artist,
1980

Still from black and white

16mm film

Susanne Francis

And the heavens opened,
2023

Detail from mixed media
sculpture

Paula Varjack

So you have a drink, 2021

Digital Video

5 minutes

Catherine Shaw

Languish, 2008

Still from 23 hour performance



Trump in a nightmare

This room features the 360 degree black-and-white digital video entitled “Trump in a Nightmare.” It echoes the disquieting reverberations of an era, responding with unapologetic candour to the tumultuous overturning of Roe vs. Wade.



As the title suggests, “Trump in a Nightmare” encapsulates a moment of societal unease, a visual meditation on the repercussions of decisions that ripple through the fabric of autonomy. The black-and-white palette, stripping away the distractions of colour to reveal the raw, unvarnished truth. It’s an aesthetic mirror reflecting the stark realities we face.

This piece is an exploration of the surreal within the confines of reality. This digital video unravels layers of meaning, urging viewers to confront the discomfoting narratives that permeate our collective consciousness.

As you immerse yourself in the arresting imagery, allow the piece to unfurl before you like a vivid nightmare—one that captures the essence of a tumultuous era, a commentary on power, decisions, and the ever-shifting landscapes of societal norms. “Trump in a Nightmare” is an embodiment of the artist’s voice, a testament to the enduring power of art to mirror, challenge, and provoke reflection in the face of societal upheaval.

Wall label

Catherine Shaw

Trump in a nightmare, 2022

Cylindrical Video installation

22 minutes

Indestructible

In 1932 a photograph of Lee Miller's eye was attached to a metronome by a spurned Man Ray – devastated after his muse had left him, he called it “Object to be Destroyed”.

At an exhibition in 1957 a group of students took him at his word and destroyed it, Man Ray rebuilt it, and then called it “Indestructible Object” – and that's what both of these women, and so many in this exhibition were: Indestructible.

This performance commissioned by MOCA North is in tribute to them, and the impact of their work.

It will only be performed once.