

Women in Revolt! Art and Activism in the UK 1970-1990

7 March – 1 June 2025

- Explore almost 100 works by women artists and collectives in this first major feminist art survey show.
- For the first time, this landmark exhibition is presented to audiences for free.



Gina Birch *3 Minute Scream* 1977. Copyright Gina Birch

The landmark exhibition, ***Women in Revolt! Art and Activism in the UK 1970-1990*** will feature over 90 women artists and collectives whose ideas were forged against the backdrop of seismic social, political and economic change during the 1970s and 1980s. Organised in collaboration with Tate Britain and National Galleries of Scotland, this will be its first free entry presentation. This first major UK survey of feminist art celebrates the powerful and often provocative work of women whose radical ideas and rebellious methods changed the face of British culture.

Women in Revolt! explores six key themes, spanning two decades of art and activism. Beginning in 1970 with the first UK women's liberation conference, the exhibition covers topics including the campaigns for equal pay and labour rights, the body and sexuality, maternal and domestic experiences, punk, post-punk and subcultures, Greenham Common and the peace movement, anti-racist campaigning and the visibility of Black and South Asian

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women artists, women's place in the social and economic system of Thatcher's Britain, Disability Arts, lesbian representation, Section 28 and HIV activism.

The exhibition highlights the ways in which women challenged societal norms through their creativity, both collectively and independently, using their lived experiences to create art and fight injustice.

Paintings, drawings, sculptures, installations, textiles, films, photography, and documentation of performances will be shown alongside a range of archival materials, with many artworks on display for the first time since the 1970s.

Visitors will see works by artists who are well known today including Turner Prize winners, side-by-side with an array of artists who, despite their long careers, have been left out of the previous art historical narratives. Posters created by **See Red Women's Workshop** and **Lenthall Road Workshop** directly reflect the demands and concerns of the Women's Liberation Movement. Documentary photography by **Format Photography Agency**, **Mumtaz Karimjee**, alongside mixed medium artists **Bhajan Hunjan** and **Caroline Coon** reflect protests and campaigns and affirming women's central role in the activism of the period.

On the Whitworth's sculpture terrace visitors will see *An Edible Family in a Mobile Home* by **Bobby Baker**. This major artwork contains five life-size sculptures of family members made from cake, biscuit and meringue, which will be steadily eaten by the public. First presented in 1976 in Baker's prefabricated home, the work has been unseen for almost 50 years. Restaged in 2023 at Tate Britain and now travelling to the Whitworth, its interior fully refreshed, this is a unique opportunity to experience this iconic installation for the last time.

The cakes will be baked by Manchester's women-owned and run Long Boi's Bakehouse and assembled by Bobby Baker and her team. Visitors to the gallery will be invited into the house to sample the delicious edible sculptures, welcomed by hosts selected from creative courses at The University of Manchester, and trained by Baker herself. *An Edible Family in a Mobile Home* will be on display at the Whitworth from 7 March until 20 April 2025.

Women In Revolt! opens during Women's History Month. **Olivia Heron, exhibition curator**, said: "We are thrilled to bring this monumental exhibition to Manchester. Celebrating the work of a constellation of women artists, the exhibition showcases the challenges and triumphs they experienced as women during the 1970s and 80s and we hope visitors will resonate with the ideas and urgencies that the exhibition explores throughout."

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

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For all press information, images and interview requests please contact, Melissa McFarlane, Communications Manager at whitworthpress@manchester.ac.uk

Image credit

Gina Birch, *3 Minute Scream* 1977 Copyright Gina Birch

Listings information

7 March – 1 June 2025

The Whitworth, The University of Manchester

Free entry

Exhibition preview

Join us for the Whitworth's Spring exhibition preview to celebrate the opening of the Whitworth's Special exhibition *Women in Revolt! Art and Activism in the UK 1970-1990*

Thursday 6 March 2025, 6pm-8pm

The Whitworth, The University of Manchester

Free entry

Register your interest via the link: <https://bit.ly/WhitworthPreview2025>

Programme

Explore our curated programme of tours, talks and events taking place during the exhibition. More details will be published on our website and social media platforms at

<https://www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk/>

Credits

Women in Revolt! Art and Activism in the UK 1970-1990 is organised by Tate Britain in collaboration with the Whitworth, The University of Manchester and National Galleries of Scotland. Curated by Linsey Young, formerly Curator, Contemporary British Art, Tate Britain, with Zuzana Flaskova, Hannah Marsh and Inga Fraser. Moving Image consultancy by Lucy Reynolds, Senior Lecturer, Westminster School of Arts.

The exhibition has been developed with the assistance of advisors: Professor Griselda Pollock, School of Fine Art, University of Leeds and recipient of the 2019 Holburg Prize in recognition of her contribution to feminist theory; Marlene Smith, artist, curator, and founding member of the BLK Art Group and lead researcher for Black Artists and Modernism with the University of the Arts London and the University of Middlesex; and Althea Greenan, Curator of the Women's Art Library, Goldsmiths, with additional assistance from Stella Dadzie, Suzanne Scafe, Juliet Jacques and Lucy Whitman.

The exhibition at the Whitworth is curated by Olivia Heron, Curator, the Whitworth, The University of Manchester.

The exhibition is generously supported by Friends of the Whitworth, with thanks to our official paint sponsor Little Greene.

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Bobby Baker's *An Edible Family in a Mobile Home* is presented by Daily Life Ltd. in partnership with Tate, and the Whitworth, The University of Manchester. Supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Tour dates

Women in Revolt! was previously presented at Tate Britain from 8 November 2023 – 7 April 2024, and at National Galleries of Scotland from 25 May 2024 – 26 January 2025.

List of artists

Brenda Agard; Simone Alexander; Bobby Baker; Anne Bean; Zarina Bhimji; Gina Birch; Sutapa Biswas; Tessa Boffin; Sonia Boyce; Chila Kumari Singh Burman; Shirley Cameron; Thalia Campbell; Helen Chadwick; Jennifer Comrie; Judy Clark; Caroline Coon; Eileen Cooper; Stella Dadzie; Poulomi Desai; Nina Edge; Marianne Elliott-Said (Poly Styrene); Cosey Fanni Tutti; Aileen Ferriday; Format Photographers Agency; Chandan Fraser; Melanie Friend; Joy Gregory; Hackney Flashers; Margaret Harrison; Mona Hatoum; Lubaina Himid; Amanda Holiday; Bhajan Hunjan; Alexis Hunter; Janis K. Jefferies; Claudette Johnson; Mumtaz Karimjee; Rita Keegan; Roshini Kempadoo; Lenthall Road Workshop; Linder; Loraine Leeson; Alison Lloyd; Rosy Martin; Rita McGurn; The Neo Naturists; Houria Niati; Hannah O'Shea; Pratibha Parmar; Symrath Patti; Ingrid Pollard; Jill Posener; Franki Raffles; Samena Rana; Su Richardson; Liz Rideal; Monica Ross; Erica Rutherford; Maureen Scott; Lesley Sanderson; See Red Women's Workshop; Gurminder Sikand; Sister Seven; Monica Sjöö; Veronica Slater; Penny Slinger; Marlene Smith; Jo Spence; Suzan Swale; Gee Vaucher; Suzy Varty, Christine Voge; Del LaGrace Volcano; Kate Walker; Jill Westwood; Nancy Willis; Vera Productions, Shirley Verhoeven.

About Bobby Baker

Bobby Baker's acclaimed intersectional feminist practice includes performance, drawing, and installation, and persistently exposes the undervalued and stigmatised aspects of women's daily lives, exemplified by pioneering works such as 'Drawing on a Mother's Experience' (1988) and 'Kitchen Show' (1991), which was recently acquired by the Arts Council Collection.

In 2019 a retrospective of Baker's work featuring paintings, sketchbooks, storyboards and prints made between 1970 and 2019 was presented at La Casa Encendida, Madrid, curated by Clara Zarza. The exhibition, titled 'Tarros de Chutney', included the artist's acclaimed 'Diary Drawings' (1997–2008) and a selection of 'Timed Drawings' made by Baker in 1984 when her children were small, shown for the first time.

Born in 1950 in Kent, UK, she graduated from Painting at St. Martins School of Art (1972, now Central St Martins) and holds an Honorary Doctorate from Queen Mary University London.

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An Edible Family in a Mobile Home opens at the Whitworth from 7 March – 20 April 2025.

Audiences will be able to see the show during these opening hours:

- Wednesday: 10.30am–4pm
- Thursday: 2pm–8pm
- Friday: 10.30am–4pm
- Saturday: 10.30am–4pm
- Sunday: 10.30am–4pm

About the Whitworth

The Whitworth is proudly part of The University of Manchester, operating as a convening space between the University and the people of the city. Founded in 1889 for “the perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester” it continues this mission today in new contexts. The gallery, its park and gardens are home to the collection of over 60,000 works of art, textiles, sculptures and wallpapers and provides a platform for artists from around the world. The Whitworth is driven by a vision to actively seek and manifest connections between art, creativity, and their role in developing a more resilient and caring society through its exhibitions and award-winning civic engagement programme.

Gallery opening times

Tuesday to Sunday 10am–5pm, Thursday late opening until 9pm

www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth

Related materials:

Exhibition Catalogue and Collection inspired products

Women in Revolt! Art, Activism and the Women's Movement in the UK 1970 – 1990 the catalogue is edited by Linsey Young, featuring contributions by Alice Correia, Zuzanna Flaskova, Rachel Garfield, Juliet Jacques, Dorothy Price, Lucy Reynolds, Ash Reid, Amy Tobin and Linsey Young. Designed by Roland Brauchli.

Available to buy in the Whitworth Shop:

<https://thewhitworthshop.com/collections/women-in-revolt>

Podcast

The exhibition is accompanied by a six-part podcast exploring the themes of the exhibition including artist interviews with Su Richardson, Margaret Harrison, Rita Keegan, Lucy Whitman, Pratibha Parmar, Gina Birch, Loraine Leeson, Sutapa Biswas, Gee Vaucher, Shirley Cameron, Roshini Kempadoo and Caroline Coon. Conceived by Linsey Young and produced by Rosie Oliver for Tickertape Productions.

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/f/feminist-art/women-in-revolt-podcast>

Playlist

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Listen to our curated Spotify playlist, created in response to *Women in Revolt!*

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3u8PNNFYH3OFdiu9FACkag?si=435cd9a50754415d&nd=1&dlsi=c766ed029aa74080>