

# PRESS RELEASE

## JUDY CHICAGO

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: A series of JUDY CHICAGO exhibitions and events in the UK for the first time since 1985***

Judy Chicago is an artist, writer and activist whose work set the agenda for women's art over the past five decades. A pioneering force who came to prominence in the late 1960's and early 1970's, she helped re-shape the male-dominated art landscape by creating innovative work from a woman's perspective - reacting to social and political injustice during revolutionary times.



**Judy Chicago** at the *Sublime Environment* performance, 2012,  
Photo © Donald Woodman

**Judy Chicago**, Boxing ring ad, Jack Glenn Gallery from Artforum, December 1970  
© Judy Chicago, photo by Jerry McMillan

Her art and her ideas continue to exert a palpable influence on generations of women artists who came after. In 2011 her contribution was recognised and in some ways rediscovered during *Pacific Standard Time*, the California-wide celebration of the history of the L.A. Art Scene which saw sixty cultural institutions collaborate in one

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six-month long initiative (<http://www.pacificstandardtime.org/>) and featured work across various media by Judy Chicago. The artist is widely represented in museums and public collections worldwide.



**Birth Hood** © Judy Chicago, 1965 (finished 2011), sprayed acrylic on car hood, 42.9 in. x 42.9 in. x 4.3 in, photo © Donald Woodman

**Bigamy Hood** @ Judy Chicago, 1965 (finished 2011), sprayed acrylic on car hood, 42.9 in. x 42.9 in. x 4.3 in, photo © Donald Woodman

November 2012 sees Chicago exhibiting in London for the first time since 1985. Riflemaker will show paintings and sculpture from as early as 1963, a decade before the artist co-founded the influential feminist art programmes at California State University, Fresno, and CalArts which led to *Womanhouse*, the world's first large-scale public feminist art installation.

The Riflemaker exhibition also includes a rarely seen test plate and runner drawing for *The Dinner Party* (1974-79), a symbolic history of women in western civilisation, which has now been seen by over one million visitors. *The Dinner Party* is on permanent display at the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum,

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New York.



**The Dinner Party**, installed in its permanent home at the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, collection of the Brooklyn Museum of Art © Judy Chicago, 1979, mixed media, 48'x42'x3', photo © Donald Woodman.

Simultaneously, Judy Chicago's first UK museum show opens to the public in London on 14<sup>th</sup> November at Ben Uri, The London Jewish Museum of Art. Surveying a range of themes from the feminist era onwards, it features more recent, intimate and autobiographical works on paper, including *Autobiography of a Year* (1993-94), a visual diary series of 140 drawings, along with *Retrospective in a Box*, a recently completed suite of prints surveying the artist's career to date.

A number of works will be on display to the public for the first time, these will encompass a broad range of media, including photographs of Chicago's early performances; drawing; printmaking; painting and needlework, which map the influence of this artist on today's generation, where close associations can be drawn. Contextual

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works by important contemporary women artists who explore areas of commonality: Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010), Helen Chadwick (1956-1993) and Tracey Emin (born 1963) will form an integral part of this exhibition.



**Autobiography of a Year Drawing 133**, Keep that free female spirit XI,  
© Judy Chicago, 1994, mixed-media on magnini paper, 15" x 11", photo © Donald Woodman

A definitive overview of the artist's career can be found in the newly launched book *Judy Chicago* which will be published by Lund Humphries in October.

This fully-illustrated monograph accompanies the exhibition of Chicago's work at Ben Uri and presents a unique perspective on the artist's work, highlighting selected major themes from four decades,

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explored across a wide range of media. The book has been edited by Rachel Dickson the Head of Curatorial Services at Ben Uri, with contributions by Judy Batalion, Frances Borzello, Diane Gelon, Alexandra Kokoli and Andrew Perchuk.

In Liverpool: *Voices from The Song of Songs*, a series of six paired prints with accompanying documentation, will be exhibited in The Black-E Gallery. The series was based upon Marcia Falk's translation of Biblical love songs and explores mutuality of desire and a shared enjoyment of sexual pleasure. In addition, an illustrated monograph will be launched, *Women, Art, and Society: A Tribute to Virginia Woolf* by Judy Chicago - originally delivered as a lecture in 1982 on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of Virginia Woolf's birth.



**The Dinner Party – Detail**, Virginia Woolf Placesetting © Judy Chicago, 1979, collection of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, Brooklyn Museum of Art, photo © Donald Woodman

The artist recently gifted two *Birth Project* works to the Birth Rites Collection at the Midwifery school at Salford University, the only collection of contemporary artwork dedicated to the subject of childbirth. These needlework pieces are typical of Chicago's decision

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to appropriate the 'feminine arts' – embroidery, needlework, quilting – and use them in an atypical way, or combine them with 'masculine' skills such as welding and woodwork. It is this combination of media and subject matter that gives Chicago a unique voice in the cannon of contemporary art.

**For further information please contact Alice at Theresa Simon & Partners, 020 7734 4800, [alice@theresasimon.com](mailto:alice@theresasimon.com)**

### **Notes to editors: UK exhibitions and events:**

**November 8:** opening of the *Voices from The Song of Songs*, a series of six paired prints with accompanying documentation, plus the publication of *Women, Art, and Society: A Tribute to Virginia Woolf* by Judy Chicago - originally delivered as an illustrated lecture in 1982.

**November 12:** opening of the *Deflowered* exhibition at Riflemaker, London, which will include works from 1963-71 including the iconic Car Hood sets along with works in plastics, ceramics and glass, demonstrating the artist's broad range of technical and aesthetic skills.

**November 13:** opening of the *Judy Chicago* exhibition at the Ben Uri Gallery, London, which will include intimate works on paper, set in a historic context.

**November 14:** Whitechapel Art Gallery, Judy Chicago in conversation with Frances Borzello and Andrew Perchuk.

### **The book: *JUDY CHICAGO***

Lund Humphries (published October 2012) 200pp, edited by Rachel Dickson, Head of Curatorial Services at Ben Uri.

### **Featuring contributions by:**

Judy Batalion - Canadian art historian and writer who discusses Judy Chicago and 'memoir'. Frances Borzello - art historian and writer, who presents an overview of Chicago's artistic career. Borzello co-authored with Chicago the publication *Frida Kahlo: Face to Face* in

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2010. Her latest book, *The Naked Nude*, a look at the contemporary nude, will be published by Thames & Hudson later this year. Diane Gelon - original administrator for the Dinner Party UK tour, 1984-85, writes on the history and background to the UK tour Alexandra Kokoli - Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, writes on Chicago and the other artists on display from current feminist academic perspective. Andrew Perchuk - Deputy Director, Getty Research Institute in California, writes on Chicago's early works in California in the 1960s - early 1970s.

### **JUDY CHICAGO: (b. 1939 Chicago, Illinois)**

One of the pioneers of Feminist art in the 1970's and a major figure in contemporary art, Judy Chicago articulated her feminist vision not only as an artist, but also as an author and educator, most notably founding the Feminist Art Program at California State University, Fresno, as well as facilitating the first major feminist installation and performance space, *Womanhouse*.