

# GAZELLI ART HOUSE

## toute seule

REBECCA ALLEN, CHARLOTTE COLBERT, ELIZABETH MURRAY,  
NANCY SPERO AND RACHEL WHITEREAD

EXHIBITION DATES: 13 JANUARY – 26 FEBRUARY 2017

PRIVATE VIEW: 12 JANUARY 2017

LOCATION : GAZELLI ART HOUSE, 39 DOVER STREET, LONDON W1S 4NN

Following 2016's 'This is Today'\*, Gazelli Art House is delighted to announce 'toute seule'\*, an all female show depicting artistic heroism transcending time. Despite the influence artists had on one another, and collective responses that were made by the surrounding world, this exhibition highlights the solitude - graceful, thought-through, strategic and compassionate individuality of each exhibiting artist and the corresponding decade they represent for the past 50 years, 1970s - 2010s.



© Charlotte Colbert, 2016 -  
*sculpture render*

Nancy Spero, in her activist spirit, responded to the growing political and social instability of the 1970s, from the demise of the US financial system to the Middle East's oil crisis. Notable for her pioneering engagement with these issues, especially feminist art, a different form of language was created whereby artworks began to raise awareness. As her work was visually raw, drawing imagery from current and historical events, a wider response mechanism started feeding onto the artistic expression with a ripple affect carrying outward both the message and consequent action amongst audiences who were intrigued enough to react on the interaction they had with the artwork.

With the demise of the USSR, and in turn unstable, yet hopeful, satellite states in the forefront, the 1980s carried the notion of individualism further. Technological advancements began to take shape with the launch of the Internet, and a decentralised governing system started becoming a possibility and to some degree, a reality. Elizabeth Murray captures this optimistic attitude of the decade with her bravely shaped and playfully coloured canvas works. A disoriented fantastical universe within which a somewhat structured and contained snapshot of a domestic scene is displayed, resembling order within a very disorderly world. And thus the liberal self-expressionism thrived into the 1990s – with cable TV, Internet and developing sub-cultures, the youth of the time was handed a control of their own future.

With a social obsession to develop and grow the individual-self, a certain void became apparent within the communal realms. In the meantime, cuts in social spending in the UK underpinned by a property crash at the beginning of the decade, saw the mood of the country dip. The nostalgia and that state of nothingness is captured by UK artist Rachel Whiteread's sculptures which translate negative space into solid form. Without making a direct correlation between the political and economic welfare of the UK at the time when her most prominent works were produced, the portrayed message of her practice casting familiar objects refers to the change in a space one can refer to as 'home'.

A sense of social responsibility started growing with the international fight against terrorism. Meanwhile, continuing rapid developments in technology paved way to reinforce global communications network. Representing the new millennium, media art pioneer Rebecca Allen's piece is symbolic of her development spanning across three decades, pushing the boundaries of creative expression while utilising cutting-edge technology, which steadily influenced the way artists created work, responded and interacted with the audience and vice-versa. Making a reference to the varying interactive, performance based bodies of work in both the digital and the physical realm opens the dialogue for the future of this medium and its widespread embrace.

Parallel to the creative reflection of the technological advancements, the social impact of hacking and concept of privacy in the 2010s, has once again dipped the engaged international community into a state of uncertainty and anxiety. With her new body of work 'Screen Portraits', Charlotte Colbert creates sculptures made of screens and moving images depicting close ups of her subjects – those that have a personal story to share, or a social or political comment to make. Treading the fine line of language being used at once as a source of communication bringing communities together and alienating them from each other, Colbert's representation of the 2010s brings the duality of our current time to the forefront.

'toute seule' plunges into the world of political and social change over the past five decades, yet leaves a sense of hopefulness that mistakes will be learned from this creative history and a brighter and better future lies ahead.

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## Notes to Editors:

- 'This is Today' was the gallery's largest group exhibition to date, celebrating the influence of artists working and living in Britain during the 1950's and tracing the developments in their individual bodies of work throughout the 1960s and 1970s.
- reference to heroism of Joan d'Arc as modern day figure

## About the Artists:

- **Rebecca Allen** (b. 1953) is an internationally recognized artist inspired by the aesthetics of motion, the study of behavior and the potential of advanced technology. For over thirty years her groundbreaking work has pushed the boundaries of art and creative expression in areas of experimental video, virtual and augmented reality, large-scale performance and interactive art. With degrees from Rhode Island School of Design and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rebecca moves fluidly between artist studio and research lab as her research informs her art. She is professor of Media Arts at UCLA and was founding chair of her department. Her current work in virtual reality involves the mysteries of human perception and is linked to research in neuroscience and brain mapping. Allen's artwork is commissioned and exhibited internationally and is part of the permanent collection of Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and the Whitney Museum and Museum of Modern Art in New York. Collaborators include music, performance and visual artists such as Kraftwerk, Mark Mothersbaugh (Devo), John Paul Jones (Led Zeppelin), Peter Gabriel, Carter Burwell, Twyla Tharp, Joffrey Ballet, La Fura dels Baus and Nam June Paik.
- **Charlotte Colbert** is a Franco/British artist and filmmaker who lives and works in London. She is best known for her surreal and dark imagery. Her work has been likened to the surreal work of Toomer, Breton and Dali (Phaidon) and described as "surreal and delicate" (Huffington Post), an "exploration of the human mind" (Vogue) and as "existing in that space dreams and nightmares" (Las Ultimas Noticias). Colbert's photographic work is strongly anchored within the language of film and storytelling. Her pictures are mostly conceived as a series, a sequence developed in script format before being shot. Her work has strong philosophical undertones, and often plays on questions of time, space and identity.
- **Elizabeth Murray** (b. 1940, Chicago; d. 2007, New York) received a B.F.A. from the Art Institute of Chicago (1962) and an M.F.A. from Mills College in Oakland, CA (1964). In addition to her teaching position at Bard College (Annandale-on-Hudson, NY), Murray held visiting faculty appointments at a number of American colleges and universities. Murray first exhibited at the Paula Cooper Gallery in 1974. Murray's work has been the subject of nearly sixty solo exhibitions in galleries around the world since her New York City debut in the 1972 Annual Exhibition: Contemporary American Painting at the Whitney Museum of American Art and has participated in six Whitney Biennial exhibitions since 1973. Elizabeth Murray's work can be found in over forty public collections in the United States.
- **Nancy Spero** (b. 1926, Cleveland; d. 2009, New York) received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1949), and honorary doctorates from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1991) and Williams College (2001). Spero is a pioneer of feminist art. Her work since the 1960s is an unapologetic statement against the pervasive abuse of power, Western privilege, and male dominance. Spero was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters (2006). Awards include a Lifetime Achievement Award from the College Art Association (2005); the Honor Award from the Women's Caucus for Art (2003); the Hiroshima Art Prize (jointly with Leon Golub, 1996); and the Skowhegan Medal (1995). Major exhibitions include Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela (2003); Massachusetts Institute of Technology, List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge (1994); the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (1994); the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1992); and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1988).

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- **Rachel Whiteread** (b. 1963, London) studied painting at Brighton Polytechnic, England, from 1982 to 1985, and studied sculpture at Slade School of Fine Art, England, from 1985 to 1987. Whiteread's work has been included in several solo and group exhibitions. Recent solo museum exhibitions include "Judenplatz: Place of Remembrance," Judenplatz, Vienna (2000); "Transient Spaces," Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin (2001, traveled to The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, through 2002); Serpentine Gallery, London (2001, traveled to Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Scotland); Haunch of Venison, London (2002); "Untitled (Room 101)," Victoria and Albert Museum, London (2003); "Rachel Whiteread in Brazil," Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro (2004, traveled to Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo); "Walls, Doors, Floors and Stairs," Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2005); "Plastiken und Zeichnungen (Sculptures and Drawings)," Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Germany (2005); "Embankment," Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London (2005); Donnaregina Museum of Contemporary Art, Italy (2007); Centro Arte Contemporáneo, Spain (2007); Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2008); Portland Art Museum, Oregon (2009); and "Drawings," Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2010, traveled to Nasher Sculpture Centre, Dallas; and Tate Britain, London).

## About the Gallery:

Contemporary gallery Gazelli Art House supports a wide range of international artists, presenting a broad and critically acclaimed programme of exhibitions to a diverse audience through global public projects and exhibition spaces in London and Baku. Gazelli Art House was founded in 2003 in Baku, Azerbaijan where it held exhibitions with Azeri artists. From 2010, having hosted conceptually interlinked off-site exhibitions across London, Founder and Director Mila Askarova opened a permanent space on Dover Street, London in March 2012. The same year, the Window Project was launched utilising the frontage of the gallery as additional display platform. In 2015, the initiative was remodelled to solely accommodate art school graduates through open call competitions three times a year.

In 2015, the gallery launched its Digital Art House [www.gazell.io](http://www.gazell.io), an online residency for artists working in the digital realm. As part of the gallery's on-going commitment to art education, a series of events and talks are organised to run alongside each exhibition.

For further information on *toute seule*, please contact:

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