



# REALISING MOTHER

INVESTIGATING CONTEMPORARY  
MATERNAL REALITIES THROUGH  
PHOTOMEDIA

## KUDOS GALLERY

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6 Napier St, Paddington NSW 2021

Gallery opening hours:  
Wed - Fri 11:00am - 6:00pm  
Sat 11:00am - 4:00pm

## EXHIBITION

1 - 18 November, 2017

## COVER IMAGE

Clare Rae  
*1D04 from the series 20+9+5, 2015*  
Archival pigment print, 40 x 40cm

# REALISING MOTHER

CURATORIAL STATEMENT  
BY  
ZORICA PURLIJA

MOTHERHOOD STATEMENTS  
BY  
HELEN GRACE



This Project has benefitted from a Student Community and Development Grant courtesy of Arc @ UNSW Limited.

## Curatorial Statement: Realising Mother

*Realising Mother* is a new exhibition presenting photographic, video and blog works by a collection of emerging and established Australian women artists. The exhibition investigates the role of the mother in our culture and the histories that continue to shape that role.

The photographic image is, as always, in flux. We are experiencing a glut of imagery through social media. The photograph has chameleon qualities and can adapt itself to many forms. An excessive media-fed society impacted by globalisation and other causes distorts the image and its meanings.

*Realising Mother* looks at how this affects us all, and explores the issues surrounding the maternal experience. These artists question how we realise and frame images of motherhood and the way the medium of photography has the power to describe real experiences. This exhibition aims to free us from preconceived ideas and myths around motherhood, replacing them with narratives more relevant to our contemporary experience.

Issues explored by these talented artists include; marginalised young mothers, maternal ambivalence, mother daughter relationships, the aging mother, intergenerational inheritance, the loss of identity as mother, the centrality of the mother figure in the family, LBGQT families and the role of the mother in indigenous cultures.

This exhibition takes inspiration from the real experience of photographic artist, and the curator of *Realising Mother*, Zorica Purlija's role as a mother of three. Purlija also recognises the Women's Art Movement in Australia (formed in 1974) and Catriona Moore's book *Indecent Exposures* (1994) as significant contributions to interpreting the role of women and mothers in contemporary society. The work of these important Australian feminist artists from the 70's and 80's was simultaneously serious and morally and ethically driven. Their aims were to create change culturally and socially regarding the female subject, and social and sexual freedoms, interrogating the idea of the male gaze.

*Realising Mother* looks at what has changed in the last forty years because of this important work by feminist artists still in our midst, and the ways artists continue to reinterpret the role of mother.

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*Realising Mother* is curated by Zorica Purlija as part of the Early Career Curator Award, supported by Kudos Gallery with Arc @ UNSW Art & Design and Art & Design Student Council.

## Motherhood Statements

In the 1970s, the original uber-curator, Harald Szeemann, planned an exhibition to be called *La Mamma*, on the theme of motherhood as an alternative to art.<sup>1</sup> For Szeemann, interested in the role of creativity in the formation of the individual psyche, the mother as a figure provides a contrast to the 'bachelor machine' - the (predominantly male) artist as eternally youthful figure who conserves rather than expends his energy by transforming it into art – and especially painting. The 'bachelor machine' (or, as Deleuze and Guattari call it, the 'celibate machine'<sup>2</sup>) involves 'eternal energy flow as a way to avoid death, as an erotics of life; the bachelor as rebel-model, as anti-procreation.'<sup>3</sup>

The figure of the mother, on the other hand, disperses energy completely, more than doubling it in the gift of life itself. The 'bachelor' has an existential need to be an artist, to create; the mother by contrast has no such existential need since she is a self-sufficient, four-dimensional figure of power, a continuum of mass-energy. While the 'Bachelor Machine' exhibition, inspired by Duchamp's *Large Glass* and other similar machines – and machinelike men - was realized<sup>4</sup>, the curatorial 'bachelor machine' proved incapable of properly conceiving and bringing to fruition the grand theme of the maternal and the *La Mamma* project was aborted. Paradoxically, this very archaic idea and immense maternal fantasy comes out of ostensibly the most avant-garde thought of the post-war period.

If *La Mamma* was unrealized in the 1970s, we can say that it has come to fruition more recently in the spectacular exhibition, *The Great Mother*:

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<sup>1</sup> See Pietro Rigolo, 'Harald Szeemann's *La Mamma*: Or Twiggy, the Willendorf Venus, the Bearded Curator and the Maiden' in *The Great Mother: Women, Maternity and Power in Art and Visual Culture, 1900 -2015*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni, Palazzo Reale, Milan, Aug 26 – Nov 15, 2015. Fondazione Nicola Trussardi/Skira

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (University of Minnesota Press, 1983)

<sup>3</sup> Hans-Ulrich Obrist, 'Mind over matter' (interview with Harald Szeemann), *Artforum International*, 1st November, 1996

<sup>4</sup> See catalogue, *Le Macchine Celibi, The Bachelor Machines*, curated by Harald Szeemann, Alfieri Edizine d'Arte, Venice/ Rizzoli, New York, 1975

*Women, Maternity and Power in Art and Visual Culture, 1900-2015*. Funded by a private foundation, and held in Milan's sumptuous Palazzo Reale, the location seems fitting given that Austrian Empress and uber-mother (of sixteen children, thirteen of whom survived childhood), Maria Theresa once stayed there, when Austria ruled Milan.

This exhibition and Szeemann's failed project have in common the inspiration of Erich Neumann's Jungian universalistic survey, *The Great Mother*<sup>5</sup>, first published in 1955. Both the 2015 exhibition and the 1955 book share a predominantly European world view and one might suggest that the revival of this archetypal view of motherhood is understandable today, in a world in which migrant women perform an increasing proportion of the mothering and domestic care in the West, leaving more room for speculation on the importance of motherhood, as many women themselves become 'bachelor machines' – and a reality they are no longer obliged to experience returns as fantasy.

In the introduction to *The Great Mother* exhibition, Beatrice Trussardi, President of the Nicola Trussardi Foundation, identifies the logic of this imaginary: 'the figure of the Great Mother returns as the evocation of power, the creative force connected with nature and the earth, a boundless strength that encompasses and guides manifold resources in the pursuit of harmonious balance between human beings.'<sup>6</sup>

While mythical mothers may have civilizational status, the archetype as abstract concept has less immediate force in the fully immersive lived experience of actual motherhood amongst those who labour to care – and who care to labour.

Feminist art movements of the 1970s sought to transform what art was by embracing the experience of femininity, motherhood and the body in much more visceral work on domestic labour and the processes of femininity as learned existence. This was reflected most notably in the forms and content of new exhibitions that reached out to different audiences. In the late 1970s in Australia, a series of important processual exhibitions emerged that question of the maternal and women's labour generally in a much more quotidian way. *Mothers' Memories, Others Memories* was a community art

project initiated by Vivienne Binns at the University of NSW in September 1979, and different editions were subsequently developed in rural NSW. In October 1979, the influential and legendary *D'oyley Show* was held at Watters Gallery in Sydney.<sup>7</sup> Inspired by these shows, Jude Adams co-ordinated *The Lovely Motherhood Show*, held at the Experimental Art Foundation in Adelaide in early 1981.

The *Lovely Motherhood Show's* 'open selection' invitation to submit work requested that artists include a statement about the work's gestation, answering a number of questions:

- A. How, When, Where and Why (e.g. when children asleep, 4 hours per week over three months, at kitchen table, in lounge room, with scrounged materials etc)
- B. How long work took to achieve, finished or not.
- C. All interruptions relevant to being an artist and mother.

In retrospect, the invitation now reads as a piece of Conceptual Art in itself.

There are vast differences in resources between the European curatorial projects and the more collective and communally based projects in Australia that are mentioned here. It is notable however, that in both cases the themes of the maternal are explored in contexts that lie outside of major art institutions where it seems the mother does not yet belong. Instead, the innovative space of audience invention in smaller spaces, conventional and unconventional, remains the home for thinking about this excluded experience and its embodied presence. Through photography and video, the perplexities of maternal reality are brought into focus in *Realising Mother*, to investigate what has changed in the last two generations – and what remains the same.

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<sup>5</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An analysis of the archetype*, Pantheon Books, 1955

<sup>6</sup> *The Great Mother*: p11<sup>3</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Womens Domestic Needlework Group, The D'oyley Show : An Exhibition of Women's Domestic Fancywork, Watters Gallery Sydney, October 1979. The exhibition was destroyed in a warehouse fire some years later.*

# REALISING MOTHER

BY  
SERAFINA LEE

The body is the place where relations are formed between you and I. It is the locus for situational encounters and inoculations. It is a contact zone, engendered by an economy of power, knowledge, capital and history. The body does not end at the skin. It is inseparable from the social, cultural and political intersections in which it is produced, regulated and maintained.

The term 'mother' denotes a common identity. Its body subsists as a singular form. It functions as a stable signifier, writing its historical meaning over its signified subject, like a palimpsest. But what does it mean to inhabit a maternal body? How do we come to understand what a maternal body embodies and postulates? And what implications does reproductive responsibility bear within our gendered economy?

Realising Mother explores the maternal experience and its representation, as it is entrenched within our collective consciousness – its history, its sociality and its residual matter, which makes imminent its physiological syntax. The exhibition presents an anthology of narratives and bodies, as told by 16 contemporary Australian women artists, who each speculate on the discourse and contingency of the 'mother'. Through their convergent and divergent thinking, Realising Mother attempts to reconcile, recompose and rewrite cultural memory and its genealogical bearings. Through acts of deviance, performative declarations of identity and didactic critique, the artists of Realising Mother profess that motherhood is a complex and contingent sociality.

Clare Rae documents the states of transition of her own maternal body in a series of black and white silver gelatin prints. In 20+9+5 (2015), Rae enacts performative gestures as haptic extensions of normative representational politics and affective exchange. Domestic forms, a devoted embrace, the sensuality of its baring – these gestures materialise, and in doing so reaffirm, the maternal body as a palpably effeminate, ethereal and vulnerable subject. However, Rae defies the submissiveness associated with these essentialist, reductive narratives of maternity. Her body is not a passive medium. Rae's performative body summons a critical dialogue between affective experience, being, and representation; as viewers we are implicit in its exchange. Aware of the representational constraints imposed upon the maternal body, Rae exploits a reflective surface to mirror the cyclical mechanisms implicit in the construction and consumption of its image. The absence and presence of her body, its spatio-temporal traversal, is the enactment and interjection of

Rae's own agency within a narrative that purports to define her as subject and object.

Deborah Kelly unsettles historical and social conventions through iconographical re-enactments of the Virgin Mother and Holy Family. Renaissance iconography provides an epigraph for the genealogy of gendered bodies, politicised by ideological structures that regiment desire in the ruling of body and action. Kelly's critical interjection is located within the paradox of immaculate conception – the sanctity of the hymen, its historicity, and ecological constraints. In *The Miracles* (2012), she offers photomontage portraits depicting families of children conceived through Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART). The miracle of asexual conception shares an affinity to the Holy Family, yet its perversion from hegemonic frameworks is often habitually, systemically, rendered as ecological failure. *The Miracles* shines light on this polemic consequence. At its heart is the realisation that ART expands sociological bearings and relational structures, materialising those demographic permutations that expand upon bureaucratic proprieties of family and gender. The work's circular frames render a symbiotic fluidity that proposes familial notions structured by relationality and affect: a critique of the rigid pursuits of gendered tradition and order enforced by institutional bodies. Kelly observes the transformative power of subjugating forces and their imminent, generative potentiality for resistance and negation. *The Miracles* unfolds as a work of reclamation, self-possession and affirmation.

Raphaella Rosella explores the relations between gender, class and race in the construction of archetypes that inform social consciousness. *You didn't take away my future, you gave me a new one* (2012) interrogates the impositions of systemic language and discourse and its foothold in our collective thought, specifically as it shapes our perceptions of motherhood, teenage pregnancy and disadvantaged Indigenous youth. The constructed ideals of 'mother' perpetuate a binary logic that casts Otherness as a marginal and deviant positionality, rendered inept, inadequate and irrevocably impaired. In this series of photographic works, Rosella reframes social conceptions by documenting the lived experience of Nunjul, Tammara and Rowrow, three young mothers burdened by the prescriptive imports of their gender, class and racial identity. Through familiar encounters, domestic spaces, tight framing and the tension of physiognomical contact, these images surface visceral forms of intimacy, which are often omitted, neglected and deflected from the essentialist, reductive (and often mutually exclusive) narratives of the maternal subject and the racialised subject. Through the affirmative

discernment of the women's individual narratives, we see a materialised expression and negotiation of the complex contingencies of the women's own identities. *You didn't take away my future, you gave me a new one* is a critical reflection upon the ways in which the gendered body and racialized body exists as a body living under scrutiny, surveyed, regulated, and denied its own agency. The piece asks us to reflect on our own entanglements with and relationships to these bodies; we too are implicit in its construction and exchange.

*Realising Mother* extends beyond an anthology of narratives and bodies. Each artist reveals the ways in which the maternal body is always and already made public. It is a body sculpted and produced at the intersections of social, cultural and political discourse, and its reproductive potential commissions it as a public resource of human capital that must be surveilled, regulated and maintained. As each artist in *Realising Mother* critiques the construction and perpetuation of archetypal notions of motherhood, gender, class and race, we question the veracity of our cultural memory. As each artist articulates a critical subjectivity that reclaims their own agency, we question notions of autonomy and agency as a socially selective privilege granted to specific bodies. We consider our own relations and involvements with these bodies. We are urged to adjust our own positionality to afford an expanded logic, one that realises the maternal body as unmoored from its genealogical and representational constraints. We are called to engage with the maternal as a complex and contingent sociality, as generative of new forms and trajectories, and as an open source in a perpetual state of becoming.

## Donna Bailey

### *Zane's Birth Midwinter 2001*

*Zane's Birth Midwinter 2001* belongs to an intimate family archive of photographs that I was making around the turn of the century and which were strongly tied to my own maternity. My cousin's children, Isabaella, Pearl and Zane, were all born at home, I was pregnant with my youngest child Alice when Pearl was born and breastfeeding her when Zane was born.



Donna Bailey, 'Zane's Birth: Midwinter 2001'. 150 x 127 cm.



## Theresa Byrnes

### *Being Two* 2015

*Beings* was a series of paintings done in 2006. The *Beings* series is about relationships, two people, the primary relationship being mother & child. The commonalities at the birth of most beings is water, swaddling fabric & love. In these works I use swaths of fabric to hold ink & water to make marks. Soon after I completed this series I decided to get amongst the fabric and under the dripping ink and be a being within a "Being" leaving a shroud and thus the performance "SleepStain" resulted in 2006. Now I am a mother, my child & I will lay together & leave a mark.

Theresa Byrnes, 'Being Two' (Video Still) 2015. Washi Torinoko, 165 x 110 cm.



## Lottie Consalvo

### *Compartmentalise 2013-14*

Lottie Consalvo undertook a year long performance called *Compartmentalise* where for one year she lived with minimal possessions. She reduced her clothing to one or two items in each category (eg: shoes, dresses, pants) and culled household content to singular items (eg: 1 x bowl, knife, glass). All other belongings were sold, boxed, bagged and jarred for the duration of the performance.

The idea was conceived after the birth of her son, she had lost control over her time, her home, her life. She started buying jars to put the contents of her pantry into. She became obsessed with the satisfaction of putting things from one container into another. She was trying to control her things to feel control in her mind.

An exercise in performing time, the piece explores relationships between absence, presence, chaos and control, whilst also questioning our preoccupation with material possessions.

Lottie Consalvo, 'Compartmentalise' 2013-2014.  
Blog, Online blog: [www.compartmentalise.wordpress.com](http://www.compartmentalise.wordpress.com)





## Ella Dreyfus

### *Intimate Distance 2014*

A younger and older woman face each other across an empty space, suggesting strong emotions and affective encounters. In both photographs the portrayal of a mother/daughter relationship is implied and the dark area between each pair reflects the complexity, disconnection and distance between them. In reality these women are unknown to each other; their partnership exists solely within the context of these fabricated images. I photographed the subjects alone in the studio, and then selected photographs that resonated strongly and situated them in close proximity

to each other to form dynamic, disconnected, and familial relations. Viewers may read these double portraits from their own perspective, reflecting on the subject of mothers and daughters.; interpreting the looks and gazes between the women to form their own personal narratives.

*Ella Dreyfus, 'Intimate Distance 2' 2014. 65 x 125 cm.*

## Denise Ferris

### *Vestment 2004*

*Vestment* acknowledges the maternal predicament -- its eternal hold in a cycle of perpetuity and the invisible magnitude of its social and personal value. Recognising the inherent maternal competition between self and other, *Vestment* both honours the maternal and is represented by casein's intrinsically conflicting mixture of milk and poison.

The sheet connects us — the body, the baby, the mother — shawl to shroud.

*Vestment* evokes the sacred, a garment worn to show rank or privilege, a ceremonial robe of maternal genealogy, whose monumental influence affords a hallowed name.

Defiantly domestic, the simple sheet is the calm of caring; the cool, clean folds of the nursery and the sickbed; the starched linen of the hospital, the nursing home, the medieval folds of the Byzantine Madonna and the shroud for the body.

The hands that held me, basic tools of nurture, arrested by age lying redundant on a sheet, the fabric of modesty, the bond reversed.

My baby daughter and my dying mother.

Articulating the maternal, these photographs come into existence because of a chemical coexistence. Though the milk appears visible, the poison is hidden, suspended in the blended emulsion. Exposed to sunlight, the emulsion forms a hardened colloid, each substance trapped inside the other, inseparable. A milky odour emanates from the print's hardened surface.

I developed this 'language of casein' milk prints, to convey duality and ambiguity, loss and maternal pleasure, assertion and transgression, and significantly ambivalence and resistance. Metaphorically, the toxin and milk suggests the emotional conflicts of mothering. Interrogating the emotional geography of mothering, these works picture the unacknowledged burden of care work as well as mothering's state of permanence.

Denise Ferris, 'Untitled' from *Vestment 2004*. 112 x 79 cm.





## Deborah Kelly

### *The Miracles 2012*

*The Miracles* comprises 37 performed photographic portraits of families with children conceived through various Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART). In the images are single parents; same sex, transgender and opposite sex couples. The families contain children conceived through the use of ART; technically, miraculously, the products of virgin births. Their portraits are modeled on Renaissance era Holy Family paintings of disputed provenance, attribution or authenticity. *The Miracles* was devised and produced over several years by artist Deborah Kelly, who travelled the country with photographer and lighting designer Alex Wisser to make portraits with the families who had answered an open call.

Deborah Kelly, 'The Miracles After after del Sarto' from *The Miracles 2012*. 45 x 45 cm.

## Teena McCarthy

### *Self Portrait as Bush Mary 2016*

I use the self-portrait as a 'Bush Mary' to honour my Italian Mother, my 'Barkinji' Aboriginal Grandmother, and the divine fertility spirit Mother Earth, herein called the 'Holy Trinity'.

The work references the late 19th century Victorian photographic trope of the 'Hidden Mothers', and hence, used as a metaphor for the aboriginal women who worked as domestic servants on outback stations in and across Australia.

In Northern NSW, these women were known as the 'Bush Mary's'. Whilst hidden in the outback landscape, the 'Bush Mary's' would cook, clean, and mind the children of the Colonists. My work intends to make the once hidden, visible again.





## **Sally McInerney**

***Photographs(1983-2011)***  
**The Difference 2017**

A man may have a child and never know;  
A woman giving birth is split in two.

"A suicide at the Gap was a commonplace affair. Everyone knew why a person committed suicide: if it was a man, because he couldn't pay his bills or had no job; if a woman, because she was going to have a baby."

- From "Seven Poor Men of Sydney", by Christina Stead, 1934.

*Sally McInerney, 'Portrait of Jay' 1994. 30 x 23 cm.*

## Rafaela Pandolfini

**02-02. 2014-15**

Rafaela Pandolfini's private performance *02-02* (2014-15) and resulting video tracked the nine-month gestation of pregnancy through a ritualised, repetitive dance. Pandolfini danced nightly in her living room or bedroom after Rozsa, her eldest child, was asleep. Pandolfini's performance stemmed from a verbal commitment to her partner. There was no formal contract or manifesto, but a private promise. Through the process of creating *02-02*, the record was incidental; Pandolfini danced for herself and for a sense of accomplishment that commitment to a task or a project can bring: 'I ... loved the whole thing for the movement, the sound and mapping my moods. And for giving me the sense that I had something on'. Credit curator Amelia Wallin, *MAINTAINING THE MANIFESTO*.



*Rafaela Pandolfini, '02 - 02', 2014-15. live performance and video.*



## Clare Rae

### **20+9+5**

*20+9+5* is a series of black and white silver gelatin prints, made between October 2014 and May 2015. The series was first exhibited at Sutton Project Space in May 2015.

The subject matter is new territory; I photographed myself within the Sutton Gallery Project Space whilst pregnant and again after giving birth. As most of my work is cantered around my experience of the female body, here I have created images with the body in extremely "feminine" states.

*Clare Rae, '1D04', from 20 + 9+ 5, 2015. 40 x 40 cm.*



## Raphaella Rosella

### *Tricia and Ty-Leta 2016*

With teenage pregnancy stereotyped as a social problem, most dominant discourses do not consider the limited choices available to many young women experiencing 'disadvantage'. As a consequence, becoming a mother at a young age can be perceived as an irrational and irresponsible choice. However, for many disadvantaged youth, becoming a parent young may not be a failure of planning but instead a tacit response to the limited choices and opportunities available to them.

Using a static channel on a television as sources of light for her bedroom, Tricia breastfeeds her baby daughter Ty-Leta. Her partner Troy was in and out of jail during her pregnancy. He'd often call her daily and send her love letters and baby name suggestions. He was again serving time when this photo was taken. We both sat and breastfed our babies while we talked about Troy and his time in jail. I visited Tricia and Troy the other day. Troy was recently released again. He told me that he's only spent 3 birthdays outside of jail since the age of 9. He'll be 30 soon.



Raphaella Rosella, *'Tricia and Ty-Leta'* 2016. 90 x 90 cm.



## Sarah Rhodes

### *Mother tongue 2012 - present*

Investigates the relationship between language, place and cultural identity. I am exploring a place, listening to its stories, hearing the Aboriginal phrases translated into English and using my camera to see and visualise this relationship.

In this series of images, young siblings play in the river of life. They explore the body of water's anatomy while continually reconnecting with their mother, sometimes finding comfort in her arms.

The children's mother is a Wonnarua woman strongly and actively supporting her community in researching and learning about their culture. She is one of the few teachers of the Wonnarua language and led the making of her community's possum skin cloak.

Learning our traditional languages is key to understanding and connecting with the land we live on.

*Sarah Rhodes, 'Mother Tongue #3' 2012. 64.5 x 71.5 cm.*



## Anke Stäcker

### *Family Legends*

These photos are from a body of work titled *Family Legends* where I have used dolls to reconstruct impressions and experiences from my childhood in post-war Germany. This involved imagining and creating possible scenarios about what had happened to my parents' generation during the Nazi Regime and war.

For the image *Family Portrait with Dog* I thought of the wealthy families who had supported the ideologies of the Regime and profited from the war. I wondered what it would be like to be the mother of such a family willing to sacrifice her children or to be complicit in the killing of others.

The images *Into the Dark* and *Flight* show mothers suffering the consequences of such behaviour.

Anke Stäcker, *'Flight'* from *Family Legends*, 2012. 60 x 90 cm.



## Julie Sundberg

***Seven, Fourteen, Twenty-one, Twenty-eight.***  
**(1996-2017).**

In this series time plays over the canvas of my daughter's body in a study of identity, revealing the fleeting and internal.

*Seven*, a response to her recurrent nightmares, marked the beginning of my art practice. *Fourteen* focused attention on the physical transition to womanhood, which came laden with vulnerability, anxiety and brooding teenage discomfort.

In *Twenty-one* and *Twenty-eight* rhythmic echoes of gaze and stance counterpoise the earlier work. Body confidence replaces discomfort and the inner transition of maturity comes into focus. The adult work frees me from stereotypes of acceptable mothering, the bitter accompaniment to creating art with my child's nude image as a starting point.

Julie Sundberg, 'Fourteen #2', from 7-14-21-28, 2003.  
40 x 40 cm.

## Miho Watanabe

### *Awareness of Between-ness: Mother and paper bag*

Miho is creating awareness of between-ness, a doorway to a concealed realm.

She believes the meaning of space, time and mind are hidden in 'between-ness'. Her work creates photography as a means of memory and painting as a means of connection in between reality and the concealed realm.

*A paper bag 2017*

"In those cases, use this."  
my mother said

Just a paper bag  
Just to put napkins in my bag

It's been used  
Used until deteriorated  
Deterioration created something  
Something critically important

Peaceful softness  
Intricate creases  
Humorous holes  
Self-immolating protection  
Unconditional kindness  
Beauty within

Now I cannot throw it away.



Miho Watanabe, 'Mother and paper bag #4', from *Awareness and Betweenness*, 2017.  
42 x 30 cm.



## Anne Zahalka

### Rewriting 2017

Rewriting explores the relationship between a mother and her daughters following their separation before the onset of the Second World War as exiled Jews from their home in Vienna. The love and anxiety her mother feels and fears for her daughters is palpable and reminds us of this unbridled bond. Based on the letters written by my grandmother to my mother and transcribed in English, these letters have been sent on to my own daughter currently living in England.

Anne Zahalka, 'Rewriting 2017' 2017. Video production: Orson Heidrich. Pinboard: letters, photographs and other ephemera, 81 x 50.5cm.

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