

Pandora's Key

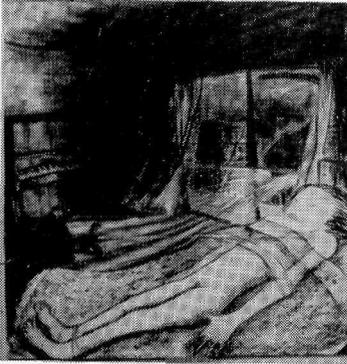


A selection of work by
some of Southwark's
women artists

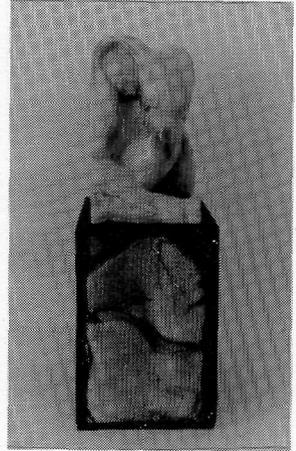
South London Art Gallery
27 March - 7 May 1987

ARTS
SOUTHWARK
LEISURE

Kazumi Honda
'Kanashibari'
Drawing, 1986



Angela Kerkhoff
'Sitting Figure'
Ceramic



PANDORA'S KEY

is an exhibition of work by 24 women artists who live or work in Southwark. It proclaims their achievements, their skills, their sensitivity and their strengths. It does not seek to pursue any single dogma but rather to celebrate the huge range of work being practiced by Southwark based women artists.

Artists have been selected on the basis of their individual talents and because their work meets the exhibition's overall aim to show diverse art forms and styles. In short, artists have been chosen for their differences rather than their similarities. However, there is one thing which they all have in common, they are all women and, it might be claimed, none of their work could have been made by men. This is suggested in the work of some artists, such as Diana Lowe, Anne Michie and See Red who choose to explore feminist issues. Others, such as Jane Barnes, Isia Brecciaroli and Abiola

Ogunsola portray women in a manner that is refreshingly free from the sexual overtones present in the art of most men. Whilst Linda Crook, Kazumi Honda, Delma Hughes and many others use images from their imagination to give their work that special quality of intimacy, of intuitive expression which seems to be unique to women's art.

This is the first exhibition of its kind at South London Art Gallery. Southwark Arts hopes to make it the first of many. **We would welcome enquiries and suggestions from anyone who wishes to be involved in future women's art exhibitions.** Please write in the exhibition's 'Comments Book' or contact:

Southwark Arts
186 Walworth Road,
London,
SE17 1JJ

Tel: 703 3499.

Carol Agana

"I like clay and it likes me back"

Jane Barnes is exhibiting paintings, sculpture and two dimensional work. Many of her pieces use materials which she has found along the edge of the Thames in Bermondsey. See, for example the pieces of china in *'The Emerging Ship'* and the weather worn wood which has been used to make the sculptures *'Girl'* and *'Girl with Hat'*. In contrast, the *'Mother and Child'* series are paintings which relate to traditional images of the Madonna and child and also have a more personal basis in the birth of Jane's daughter.

Isia Brecciaroli comes from a small village in Italy but has made Southwark her home. Her photographs document the personal and political lives of the people of her adopted country. Her images of women at Greenham and elsewhere show the strength of female friendship with great warmth and understanding.

Isia Brecciaroli

'Self Portrait'
Photograph

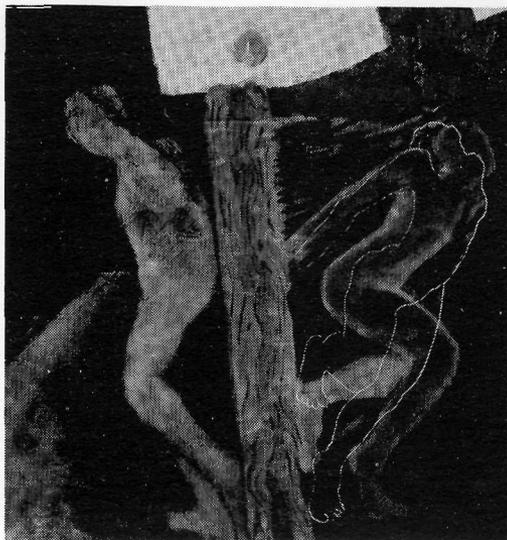


Frances Coleman made these drawings of women's faces whilst she was living in Mexico. The large scale of the drawings and the bold, dark outlines used to describe the faces, combine to produce images of strong and proud women. Frances has also made plaster reliefs on the same theme.

Linda Crook has lived in Southwark all her life. After working as a teacher and a librarian she finally went to art school at the age of 33. She is a member of *'Redder Splash'* an art group formed in 1984 by women based in Southwark. Linda writes of her work: "I am daily bombarded by capitalism's interpretation of reality. My work is questioning that 'reality', those values, and also for me, expressing how I feel as an individual living within that system. I find it strange and utterly divorced from my own idea of what it means to be human".

Linda Crook

'No-one Sees Them'
Oil on gesso, 1986

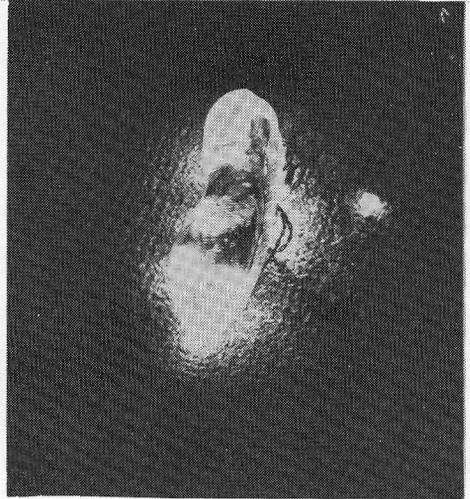


Jane Eyton
'Pecking Order'
Mixed Media, 1986-7



Jane Deakin "My work fundamentally deals with a personalized inner landscape. Colour is of vital importance to what I aim to express. The psychological effect of colour is a driving force as has been the love of the medium of oil paint. I often do my best work when I am angry, but thankfully there is much more joy than anger in the final result. But my concern is also with the darker side, beauty is so often allied with evil. The brighter colours shine so much more vividly when they are in tune with the dark".

Jane Eyton's '*Pecking Order*' hangs from the ceiling; a compelling image of a series of vast birds, one on top of the other, struggling upwards. Jane writes of this sculpture: "As a strong woman my passion is building the image upwards, a flight, a leap, a moment away from total understanding. I love to get my hands dirty, does that seem odd!".



Susan Gamble "I have always thought of photography as a medium to be used as imaginatively as painting. At the time I made this series of work I saw some photographs of the surface of the moon — where you searched amongst the texture and forms for some familiar features". Susan works with Michael Wenyon as *Wenyon and Gamble*. They have a holography studio in Southwark and are currently Artists in Residence at the Royal Greenwich Observatory.

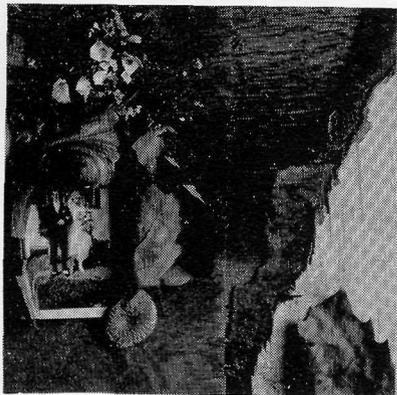
Kazumi Honda "What I want from my paintings is not just visual images but atmosphere, i.e. smell, sound and feelings, all merging into one work. It's always been my aim, but I think it's become more solid since I started painting about my childhood in Japan, it's to do with how I used to feel about myself, my childhood fantasies that were so personal that I could never tell anyone. (Now) it's becoming not only a replica of how I used to feel but also I'm now beginning to integrate ancient memories with more recent experiences such as those in Europe".

Delma Hughes "Women discuss their dreams and often attempt to interpret them. I feel that when I use certain materials my own dreams find a way of showing themselves – often feeling that there are traces of something which only women can understand. I often think of the beliefs my grandmother held and the myths that she lived by which cannot be fully understood. I build and change the materials until I finally reach something which seems part of me, as if I remember something other than what I already know".

Lisa Katzenstein
Ceramics



Sarah Jones
'Inherited Memories'
photograph



Lisa Katzenstein is a 'designer-maker' which, as she explains, means "that I'm a potter who uses industrial batch production techniques to produce single-handedly large amounts of work at a reasonable cost and a consistent quality. As to what my work is about aesthetically, I'll give you a list to ponder; **One** Bakelite **Two** Enamel cook-ware **Three** Fruit wrappers **Four** Chinese Ephemera (i.e. junk) **Five** Eighteenth Century Wedgewood Cream-Ware".

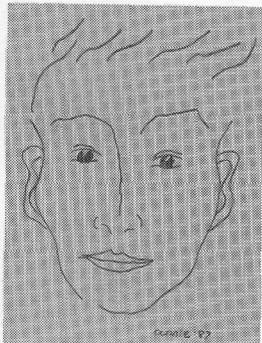
Sarah Jones writes of her photographic series *'Inherited Memories'*: "The fossilised trace of an ammonite reminds me that something had once been there, a fallen leaf that was not grounded, and similarly, a photograph leaves us with a ghostly trace of 'what the camera took'. The past is breathing down my neck! My photographs piece together this incomplete jigsaw of clues, my vulnerable inheritance relies on that which is chosen to be remembered and that which is chosen to be forgotten. The nature of our history!".

Angela Kerkhoff "My subject matter, the shapes my objects take, have developed intuitively. I enjoy manipulating clay, in all the stages from making to firing. Starting work on an object I have a certain image in mind, which can however, change through the process of the actual making. The material itself suggests a lot of different possibilities and subsequently other pieces of work. My feeling about the human figure, it's shapes and movement, combine with the enjoyment of using and extending my skills".

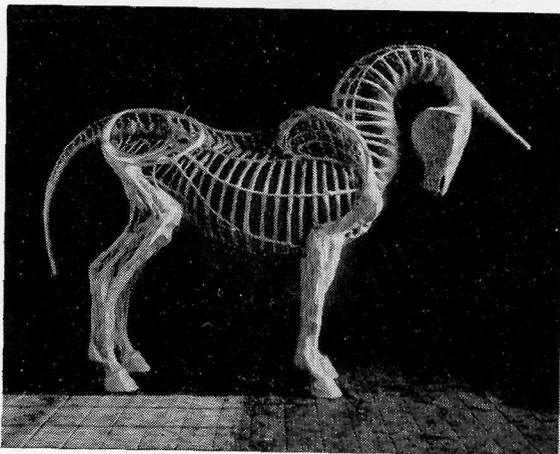
Diana Lowe "I am a painter in my second year at Camberwell School of Art and have lived in London all my life. At the moment my work is influenced by the political graffiti I see around me, and I have used spray paint in various pieces of which the *Angry* series are an example. The *Angry* sign is used by women who go out spraying walls illegally. I used it because I myself am angry with this world we live in".

Cathy De Monchaux Standing nearly 8 foot long '*Unicorn*' is an impressive sculpture, not only for its scale but also for the technical brilliance of its construction. It has a powerful presence this fairy tale creature, which is shown here – like the skeletal remains of a dinosaur – as if it once existed but is now extinct. Cathy is on an MA course at Goldsmiths Art College.

Anne Michie
 'One Face Among Many'
 Drawing, 1987



Cathy de Monchaux
 'Unicorn'
 Mixed Media, 1985



Anne Michie's 'Cushions' aim to make us ask questions about the nature of art and women's role in it. Why, for example, has embroidery, traditionally a women's art form, always been "relegated in favour of the 'male' Fine Art tradition"? What is embroidery? Anne shows how it can be used to write statements and ask questions. This is very different from traditional embroidered scenes of flowers and landscapes. Can a cushion be an art object, or is it a "consumer commodity"? These are just some of the questions which Anne asks.

Sharon Morris's installation '*They Expected to Walk on the Water*' combines a photograph of a view from her Southwark home with a taped commentary. Sharon has written the following poem about this work:

"No communication in or out.
 No letters, phone calls, or trains.
 The airport closed;
 One ship remaining.

A silent system
 balanced
 on the edge.

A secret,"



Annie Sherburne
'Funky Fossil'
Felt, 1985

Abiola Ogunsola is a Community Health Worker who has contributed African dolls and a photograph to this exhibition. The following is an extract from Abiola's statement about her dolls: "When I was a child the dolls I played with were fashioned to resemble Europeans. My experiences later on suggest to me that African children or children of African descent need African dolls in order to develop positive self images; to learn to love who they are and to feel that they too are valid and valued members of society. I call dolls my Culture Connections because they link our past to our future".

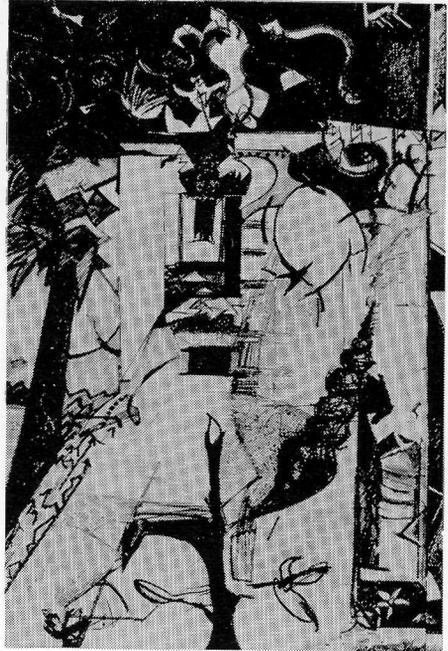
Sara Robertson "Originally I trained as a painter and in print making. Gradually I began to develop work in clay. I am now making pots. My paintings and drawings form an integral part of the process of working and I like to sustain all these aspects of my work". Sara teaches in a Southwark Secondary School.

Annie Sherburne "I am drawn to the idea of the Renaissance woman. Well, for that matter the Renaissance person. I don't like the idea of rigid specialization which inhibits creative freedom; I make hats, jewellery and felt. My felt is like "painting with wool", and can be used as rugs, wall hangings or fabric to cut out and be used for garments or hats. Felt is the oldest form of fabric known, pre-dating spinning and weaving".

See Red "We are an all women's silk screening collective consisting of black/working class women. In 1983 'See Red' received a grant from the GLC for full-time workers, which enabled working class women to learn a very male dominated skill and receive a wage. We feel that it is very important women provide this service in printing because we will have more power over the visual portrayal of women". Since the abolition of the GLC 'See Red' has lost its funding. They ask you to support them by giving them your printing orders. The posters for this exhibition were printed by 'See Red'.

Louise Sheridan "I work mainly on Nepalese daphne bark paper, hand made in the Himalayas, using layers of paint, ink and collage to build up the images. My influences have been taken from travels abroad, most notably time spent in India – 'Outsider' art, folk and primitive art and philosophy. I work as an individual, not necessarily as a woman".

Louise Sheridan
 'Temple Gateway'
 Mixed Media, 1986



Lucy Spanyol "Diagrams and maps convey information about things that cannot be seen directly. The authoritative nature of maps and diagrams have the appearance of being objective in their view of the world, yet this information is dependent upon the attitudes of the society that produces them, upholding a system of beliefs for the society to be served or oppressed. I have used the aesthetic of maps and diagrams to visualize OTHER areas of consciousness, of events and sensations immediate to me".

Lucy Spanyol
 'Chart'
 Watercolour, 1986



Rose Warnock "Since leaving college I have worked in various studios, first in Cardiff and for the past two years in London. In my paintings I place people and things taken from the world I see around me, which I then work on using oil paint and wax, until they take on a significance. The painting then, ultimately, has to stand or fall on it's own merits".

MEET EXHIBITING ARTISTS: Every Saturday throughout the exhibition (excluding Easter) from **2 to 5 pm** one of the artists will be present in the gallery to answer your questions. *Free! Everyone Welcome!.*

FURTHER INFORMATION about the artists in 'Pandora's Key' can be found in the '**Artists' Information File**' which can be obtained at the gallery information desk.