



Press Release

Acts of Resistance: Photography, Feminisms and the Art of Protest

Dates: 8 March – 9 June 2024

South London Gallery, Main Gallery & Fire Station Galleries

In spring 2024, an exhibition looking at contemporary responses to photography's long-standing association with feminist resistance will go on show at the South London Gallery (SLG). This collaborative exhibition between the SLG and the Victoria and Albert Museum, (V&A) as part of the V&A Parasol Foundation Women in Photography Project, will open on International Women's Day on 8 March 2024.

Acts of Resistance will bring together works by over 16 international artists and collectives who are using the camera to challenge and move beyond traditional modes of protest photography. This exhibition addresses different approaches to feminist practice which have emerged over the past decade, a period which is discussed as having generated a 'fourth wave' of feminism. The show explores the extent to which this relates to feminisms across different regions and begins to map common concerns including expanding intersectionality, transnational solidarity, and the use of social media and digital technology as a tool for activism.

The exhibition will reflect on key events such as the 'Me Too' movement founded by the US civil rights activist Tarana Burke, which gained global attention in 2017. The movement catalysed societal reckoning as millions of women spoke out against sexual violence, bringing gender inequities and power dynamics into sharp focus. In 2020, anti-rape protests were staged in Bangladesh in response to the rise in violence against women and girls. In 2022 the US Supreme Court overturned *Roe vs Wade*, the landmark piece of legislation that made access to abortion a federal right. Today, women in Iran continue to protest against the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the wake of the death in police custody of Mahsa Amini, an Iranian Kurdish woman who was arrested in September 2022 for not following Iran's strict female dress code.

Presented thematically, the show begins with work that addresses the still salient issue of a woman's right to bodily autonomy. Drawing upon thousands of archival photographs, American artist **Carmen Winant** considers the labour of women's health clinic workers and abortion care providers across the Midwest in the US. Iranian artist **Hoda Afshar** explores the symbolism of images circulating on social media to stage portraits which reference the ongoing women's rights protests in Iran.

The exhibition will also explore the notion of institutional failure and the varying role of power in structural oppression. Italian Australian artist **Raphaella Rosella**, alongside several co-creators—her family and friends—confront bureaucratic forms of violence enacted by the carceral state in Australia. Their counter-archival process resists 'official' state records by recentering intimate relations of love and care that transcend the boundaries of carceral institutions. South African artist **Sethembile Msezane**'s practice explores issues around spirituality, commemoration and African knowledge systems.

Revisiting feminist histories is a further thematic section of the show. American artists and activists **Tourmaline and Sasha Wortzel's** work *Happy Birthday, Marsha!* 2018 pays homage to

the transgender rights activist Martha P Johnson and their role in the Stonewall uprising in 1969. Apsáalooke (Crow) artist **Wendy Red Star** surfaces alternative indigenous histories in her exploration of the Crow Indian Reservation which imposed a patriarchal structure of land allotment on the matrilineal Crow society.

The exhibition's final theme focuses on feminist futures. Indian artist **Poulomi Basu** envisions the future of the planet in relation to women's existential rights to water, fire, earth and air; highlighting how a lack of access impacts women's education, reproductive justice and climate change. In her *High Heels Project* (2011-) Japanese artist **Mari Katayama** created high heeled shoes for prosthetic wearers, through long-term collaboration with many individuals and corporations. Posing a fundamental question about the body in society, the project demands freedom of choice as a basic premise open to all, regardless of whether they have a disability or not.

Acts of Resistance also includes the work of artists **Laia Abril, Guerrilla Girls, Nan Goldin, Sofia Karim, Zanele Muholi, Tabita Rezaire, Aida Silvestri, Sheida Soleimani and Hannah Starkey.**

The exhibition will be accompanied by a public programme curated by writer and activist Lola Olufemi. Details will be announced in early 2024.

Exhibition at the South London Gallery in partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum as part of the V&A Parasol Foundation Women in Photography Project. Curated by Sarah Allen, Head of Programme, South London Gallery and Fiona Rogers, The V&A's Parasol Foundation Curator of Women in Photography, with Lily Tonge, Curator, Exhibitions and Events, South London Gallery.

Exhibition supported by The Bukhman Foundation

Public programme funded by The Ampersand Foundation

Additional exhibition support: Elizabeth Brooks and the Exhibition Supporters' Circle

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For further press information, images and interviews please contact Anna Jones, Head of Communications: anna.jones@southlondongallery.org

NOTES TO EDITORS

Address and Opening Hours

South London Gallery, Main Building: 65–67 Peckham Road, London, SE5 8UH
South London Gallery, Fire Station: 82 Peckham Road, London, SE15 5LQ

The gallery is open Tuesday – Sunday.

www.southlondongallery.org

Social Media

Twitter: [@SLG_artupdates](https://twitter.com/SLG_artupdates)

Instagram: [@southlondongallery](https://www.instagram.com/southlondongallery)

Facebook: [South London Gallery](https://www.facebook.com/SouthLondonGallery)

TikTok: [southlondongallery](https://www.tiktok.com/@southlondongallery)

List of Artists

Laia Abril, Hoda Afshar, Poulomi Basu, Nan Goldin, Guerrilla Girls, Sofia Karim, Mari Katayama, Sethembile Msezane, Zanele Muholi, Wendy Red Star, Raphaela Rosella, Aida Silvestri, Sheida Soleimani, Hannah Starkey, Tourmaline and Sasha Wortzel, and Carmen Winant.

Raphaella Rosella's co-creators are: Dayannah Baker Barlow, Kathleen Duncan, Gillianne Laurie, Tammara Macrokanis, Amelia Rosella, Nunjul Townsend, Laurinda Whitton, Tricia Whitton, and family.

About the V&A

The V&A is a family of museums dedicated to the power of creativity. Our mission is to champion design and creativity in all its forms, advance cultural knowledge, and inspire makers, creators and innovators everywhere. We share a 5,000-year-old story of creativity through exhibitions, events, educational programmes, digital experiences, conservation, research, and an ever-evolving national collection of over 2.8m objects spanning every creative discipline. vam.ac.uk

The V&A Parasol Foundation Women in Photography Project is a major international curatorial programme that supports women in photography. Generously funded by Ms. Ruth Monicka Parasol and The Parasol Foundation Trust, the project encompasses a curatorial post and an ambitious programme of activity that spans acquisitions, commissions, research, education, displays and events.

About the South London Gallery

The South London Gallery (SLG) was founded in the 19th century by philanthropist William Rossiter to 'bring art to the people of south London'. Today the gallery comprises its original site at 65 Peckham Road; the Fire Station which opened to the public in 2018; Art Block, a space for local children and families on Sceaux Gardens Estate, and two permanent gardens.

The SLG has an international reputation for its contemporary art exhibitions by established, mid-career and younger artists and programme of film and performance events. Its highly regarded, free education programme includes a peer-led young people's forum; family workshops; artist-led projects and commissions on local housing estates; and a programme for looked after children.

Lola Olufemi Biography

Lola Olufemi is a black feminist writer and Stuart Hall foundation researcher from London based in the Centre for Research and Education in Art and Media at the University of Westminster. Her work focuses on the uses of the feminist imagination and its relationship to cultural production, political demands and futurity. She is author of *Feminism Interrupted: Disrupting Power* (Pluto Press, 2020), *Experiments in Imagining Otherwise* (Hajar Press, 2021) and a member of 'bare minimum', an interdisciplinary anti-work arts collective.

South London Gallery Core Funders



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