

# GALLERY GUIDE

## A PICTURE OF HEALTH: WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS FROM THE HYMAN COLLECTION

### A PICTURE OF HEALTH

How are you? How do you feel? How do you look?

How we feel is often at odds with the picture we present to those around us, using masks and mirrors through which to hide our emotions from the outside world. From a difficult day to weightier worries, our emotional and mental health affects us all.



*A Picture of Health* introduces work by eleven women photographers drawn from The Hyman Collection, each presenting their own 'picture of health' and personal story.

Co-curated with individuals who are experiencing mental health challenges in their own lives, the exhibition's varied works and themes have been selected through a series of conversations and correspondence. Our collaborators have helped us to look deeper, inviting audiences to question what we see, think and feel with each new work.

Exploring what lies behind the camera's exposing eye *A Picture of Health* looks at themes of trauma, from physical to psychological effects; environment, asking how the people we live with and the places

in which we live affect our health and wellbeing; and care, considering the dynamics between the carer and those that are cared for.

The photographers selected represent a diverse range of perspectives and experiences. Paloma Tendero's unsettling portrait, *Veins*, multiplies before us suggesting the coexistence of sickness and health, whilst Eliza Hatch's *Cheer Up Luv* creates a powerful commentary on society's response to sexual harassment. Sonia Boyce tackles the trans-generational trauma of slavery, shown alongside Heather Agyepong's series *Wish You Were Here* which reimagines her subject matter's oppressive origins, reclaiming a space for self-care.

Containing multiple voices, histories and narratives, the range of work allows for both visual and verbal connections to be made, and a variety of faces and feelings to be revealed. Alone each work suggests a different portrayal of physical and mental wellbeing; whilst together they aim to start a conversation (one that our co-curators have generously begun), inviting audiences to consider their own 'picture of health'.

*A Picture of Health* has been co-curated by Keiko Higashi, participants from creativeShift cic and Fresh Art and The Hyman Collection.

## A PICTURE OF HEALTH EXHIBITING ARTISTS

The exhibition features work from the following artists: Heather Agyepong, Sonia Boyce, Eliza Hatch, Rose Finn-Kelcey, Anna Fox, Susan Hiller, Polly Penrose, Rosy Martin (in collaboration with Verity Welstead), Jo Spence and Paloma Tendero.

### ‘LOOK AT THIS SKIN... IT KEEPS CHANGING.’

*A Picture of Health* is accompanied by an artist film programme exploring experiences of wellness, recovery and ageing. The sensory nature of these films presents yet another interpretation of what ‘a picture of health’ might look like.

Artist filmmaker Helen Petts turned to fine art following a road accident that left her with a disability. Working with musicians, her works explore the rhythms, textures and sound of chance events. Here, Petts explores the notion of stillness during a long illness. Focusing on the changing of the seasons, the central figure sees the world around her clearly for the first time.

Photographer Anna Fox’s film of musician Linda Lunus is part of a long-time collaboration, including a series of portraits of Lunus in *A Picture of Health*. In moving from photography to film, Fox creates space for Lunus to share, in her own words, her experience of mental health.

Bristol-based artist filmmaker Vicky Smith has worked in experimental animation and film for over 30 years. *Re:exposure* explores the social, environmental and hereditary factors that impact on the process of ageing. Drawing together the affects of the sun on skin and light on film, Smith reflects on the idea of change through exposure.

*Songs Found Between Sky and Ground* is the documentation of a live performance which took place on Zoom in August 2020. Co-composed over 9 weeks by director and performer Verity Standen and Bristol mental health charity Many Minds, the work explores our collective experience of the natural world during lockdown.

## WHAT DOES A ‘PICTURE OF HEALTH’ LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

As part of the exhibition we asked the artists we have worked with and our co-curators from creativeShift cic to pose their own questions about some of the many complex themes addressed within *A Picture of Health*. These are just some of the questions they wished to ask:

Where are you holding tension? During your walk around the exhibition try breathing into that part of your body.

Where do you feel the most yourself and why?

What or who catches you when you fall?

If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be?

How are you silencing yourself? And What would it be like to speak your truths and who needs to hear?

How does our family history impact how we see ourselves? and How can we talk about our health without fear?

## RESOURCES FROM A PICTURE OF HEALTH

If you need support or would like to find out more about some of the organisations we have worked with please see the links below:

### Arts on Referral

Bristol Arts on Referral Alliance is a partnership between Bristol City Council Arts & Events, creativeShift cic, Fresh Arts at Southmead Hospital, Knowle West Healthy Living Centre, Central Bristol Children's Centre, Southmead Development Trust and Wellspring Healthy Living Centre who share a vision of the role of arts as an intervention to promote and sustain positive mental health and wellbeing. They deliver art as a therapeutic activity in areas of greatest need and to those who experience low to moderate mental health issues, or those who are in recovery from mental illness and are well-enough to attend a group.

[www.artsonreferral.org](http://www.artsonreferral.org)

### Many Minds

Many Minds is a Bristol based mental health charity that facilitate creative spaces and make performances that put people who identify with experiences of mental ill-health in the driver's seat as a way to break down stigma and trigger generosity and equality.

[many-minds.org](http://many-minds.org)

### Well Aware

Well Aware is a website providing information on a wide range of organisations; support groups, community groups, events and activities that can help improve your health and wellbeing in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

[www.wellaware.org.uk](http://www.wellaware.org.uk)

### Mind

Mind provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

## ABOUT THE HYMAN COLLECTION

The Hyman Collection is the private collection of Claire and James Hyman. It began in 1996 and consists of over three thousand artworks, from across the world, in all media. In the last fifteen years the collection has focused on international photography from its origins to the present. In particular, The Hyman Collection seeks to support and promote British photography through acquisitions, commissions, loans and philanthropy. The collection includes artists working in photography as well as documentary photographers, and historic as well as contemporary photographs. It has an equal number of works by male and female artists and seeks, especially, to support the work of contemporary women photographers.

## FIND OUT MORE

You can listen to audio descriptions of the work and each text panel by scanning the QR code to the right.



Pick up a copy of our free Family Guide which includes activities relating to the exhibition or you can download Free drawing resources, suitable for all ages, which have been produced by BA Drawing and Print students at UWE, Bristol at [www.arnolfini.org.uk](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk)

## ABOUT ARNOLFINI

Arnolfini is Bristol's International Centre for Contemporary Arts located on the harbourside in the heart of the city. Woven into the fabric of Bristol since 1961, Arnolfini is a pioneer of interdisciplinary contemporary arts, presenting an ambitious, eclectic programme of visual art, performance, dance, film and music, carefully curated to appeal to a broad audience.

Housed in a prominent Grade II listed, accessible building on Bristol's harbourside, Arnolfini is an inspiring public space for contemporary arts and learning, greeting over half a million visitors each year and offering an innovative, inclusive and engaging experience for all. An internationally-renowned institution, throughout its history Arnolfini's programme has welcomed artists from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds, supporting and developing their work, investigating their influences and aspirations.

Arnolfini has long-standing relationships with a variety of partners and celebrates the heritage and wide-reaching impact of the organisation through sharing a 60 year archive of exhibition slides, publications and artist book collection. In 2019, Arnolfini relaunched its major exhibition programme with *Still I Rise: Feminism, Gender and Resistance Act 3* and continues to build on the multicultural, diverse and inclusive ethos that has prevailed since its inception. Arnolfini remains at the heart of the Bristol community, always mindful of founding director Jeremy Rees' principle to 'Enjoy Yourself', inviting everyone to join in.

Arnolfini is an independent organisation, proud to be a part of the University of the West of England, Bristol, supported by Arts Council England and the Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust, and run with the invaluable guidance of its Board of Trustees.

## ARNOLFINI WOULD LIKE TO THANK

Arnolfini would like to thank creativeShift cic and Fresh Arts for enabling these conversations to take place, The Hyman Collection for sharing their work, and the Art Fund, The Hyman Foundation and Stowe Family Law for supporting this project.

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

We'd love to hear your thoughts about *A Picture of Health*, you can join the conversation on twitter, instagram and facebook using the hashtags #arnolfiniarts and #apictureofhealth



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