

Victoria Miro Gallery

Press Release

Chantal Joffe • Women

4 April – 7 May 2003

"Joffe is effortlessly fluent in her descriptions of human emotions through manipulated external appearances... she shows the inherent gormlessness to which we are all susceptible, no matter how cool, which reveals our greater humanity." Neal Brown. *Frieze*

The Victoria Miro Gallery is delighted to present *Women* - an exhibition featuring new oil panels by British painter Chantal Joffe. Best known for her small paintings of children and larger bucolic landscapes, this series reveals significant changes. The exhibition will include approximately fifteen paintings depicting individual women in languid poses, many of whom look invitingly at the viewer. While the brush strokes in the new paintings remain sensual and spontaneous, Joffe's palette has shifted to more muted and varied colours and her subjects are now anchored in landscapes and distinct interiors rather than floating in a void.

The paintings have intriguingly ambiguous origins. It is unclear whether the women depicted are real or women brought to life in paint through Joffe's vivid, psychologically accurate imagination. The works shift between appearing to be portraits of friends and looking like anonymous icons torn from the media or concocted in the realm of fantasy. Whichever the case, the paintings have the richness of fiction, as if they captured a moment in the life of a literary heroine.

Joffe's women are complex and contradictory. They appear both demure and defiant, honest and secretive, confident and vulnerable. They express certainty and doubt not just through their figuration but through Joffe's distinctive style of painting whose increasingly mature and assured brush strokes still manage to preserve a sexy tentativeness.

Chantal Joffe (b. 1969) has a BA from Glasgow School of Art and an MA from the Royal College of Art. She attended the British School at Rome and has exhibited internationally including solo shows at Galerie Jennifer Flay in Paris, Monica de Cardenas in Milan and Il Capricorno in Venice.

A thirty-two page catalogue with eleven colour plates accompanies the exhibition.

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