

A new 9000 sq ft exhibition space – Victoria Miro 14 - opens to the public for the first time with an exhibition of work by the renowned American painter

Alice Neel: The Cycle of Life

23 May – 21 July

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 6pm

Access via Victoria Miro, 16 Wharf Road, London N1

Victoria Miro 14 was completed in October 2006. The new 9000 sq ft private exhibition space, adjacent to the original gallery, now opens to the public for the first time with the second ever presentation of Alice Neel's work to be held in Europe.

Alice Neel (1900 – 1984) was the foremost American portraitist and one of the most engaging painters of her times. Her exhibition at Victoria Miro 14 includes paintings from the 1940s to the 1980s and will show subjects ranging from infancy to old age. Neel was an acute observer of character and painted with an honest eye and trenchant wit. Her paintings of mothers and babies reveal her deep understanding of their close bond while her depictions of the elderly reveal an empathy for the changes in body and mind that accompany old age. In between she scrutinizes the vulnerability of the child, the gawkiness of adolescence, the energy of youth, the wisdom of middle age, and the serenity of later life. Few 20th century artists have documented the life cycle with as penetrating a gaze as Alice Neel.

Born near Philadelphia in 1900, Neel studied at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women. A member of the Works Progress Administration Programme in the 1930s she became a painter with a strong social conscience and equally strong left-wing beliefs. These led her to move from the comfort of Greenwich Village to Spanish Harlem in pursuit of 'the truth' and there she painted casual acquaintances and people she encountered on the street among the immigrant community. A friend of left-wing writers and artists she was adopted as a feminist icon during the 1960s and 1970s, at which time she moved to the Upper West Side. Her engagement with the art world came in the form of a series of dynamic portraits of artists and curators many of which are now in major museum collections throughout the United States. In 1974 she presented a retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, an event that was repeated in 2000, marking the centenary of her birth.

The exhibition is organized in collaboration with Jeremy Lewison Limited which advises the Estate of Alice Neel.

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16 Wharf Road
London N1 7RW
www.victoria-miro.com

open Tuesday to Saturday
10am to 6pm, admission free
tubes, Old Street and Angel

Victoria Miro 14

Victoria Miro 14 is both a private and public exhibition space of **Victoria Miro** and will only be open to the public for special exhibitions and projects.

Victoria Miro 14 is conceived by Claudio Silvestrin Architects and executed by the project architects Michael Drain Architects. The new 9000 sq ft exhibition space, which is situated next to the original gallery, introduces an innovative type of art environment. The building comprises three core elements; private galleries, viewing rooms and offices and domestic areas, all of which combine to provide a unique setting for experiencing and living with art.

Victoria Miro 14 sits on top of a refurbished Victorian brick building in NI, and includes spaces within the building, which interlink with the new extension on top. The building is approached through a terraced garden to the rear, alongside Wenlock Basin. This sensitively landscaped water garden provides an informal and unexpected approach to the building.

The concept for the **Victoria Miro 14** was to create an environment where architecture and nature combine to provide an inspirational environment in which to view art. A recurring element in the design was to encourage the viewer to look upwards, both internally and externally. From City Road, one has a clear view of the white sculptural form of the new space, which appears to hover above the existing building. The eye is drawn by Ian Hamilton Finlay's elegiac neon installation, *The Seas Leaves the Strawberries Waves*, which illuminates the south façade through spectacular 6m windows. Internally the work soars above the 10m atrium on the second floor, which reveals tantalizing views to the spaces above.

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Press Release

Victoria Miro

Artprojx and Victoria Miro special presentation

ALICE NEEL

a documentary by Andrew Neel

Produced by SeeThink Productions

ALICE NEEL, a new and intimate documentary about the American painter will premiere in London on Monday 21 May at Artprojx at Prince Charles Cinema (7 Leicester Place London WC2). The screening coincides with the opening of *Alice Neel: The Cycle of Life* at Victoria Miro (23 May - 21 July 2007).

In ALICE NEEL, director Andrew Neel, Alice Neel's grandson, puts together the pieces of the painter's life using intimate one-on-one interviews with Neel's surviving family and personal archival video. The documentary explores the artist's tumultuous life, legacy and determination to paint her era. The film features interviews with artists Chuck Close and Marlene Dumas, Robert Storr, Dean, Yale School of Art, and Neel's children.

Portrait painter Alice Neel (1900-1984) was a self-described collector of souls who recorded her sitters on canvas through six decades of the 20th century, among her subjects were Andy Warhol, Bella Abzug, Allen Ginsberg and Annie Sprinkle. Neel always sought the "authentic", moving from Greenwich Village to Spanish Harlem just as the Village was gaining reputation in the art scene. She sacrificed almost everything for her art delving so far into the psyches of her sitters she would almost lose herself. Yet Neel was also a dedicated mother, raising two sons in the bohemian world she inhabited.

ALICE NEEL premiered at this year's Slamdance Film Festival. Director Andrew Neel's previous film DARKON, which he co-directed with Luke Meyer, premiered at last year's SXSW Film Festival, where it won the Audience Award. ALICE NEEL is a SeeThink production. The film opened in New York on Friday, April 20th at the Cinema Village (22 East 12th Street between 5th Avenue and University Place). ALICE NEEL has not been rated by the MPAA. Running time is 82 minutes.

You and a guest are cordially invited to the following screening: Monday 21 May, 6.30pm

Artprojx at Prince Charles Cinema, 7 Leicester Place London WC2. RSVP to events@artprojx.com

<http://www.aliceneelfilm.com> <http://www.seethink.com> <http://www.artprojx.com>

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