

Victoria Miro Gallery

Press Release

After Image

Simryn Gill / Ana Mendieta / Cindy Sherman / Francesca Woodman

23 June to 31 July 2004

Victoria Miro Gallery is pleased to announce *After Image* curated by Glenn Scott Wright. Touching on issues ranging from self-definition to cultural belonging Simryn Gill, Ana Mendieta, Cindy Sherman and Francesca Woodman all use photography of their own bodies to explore identity, sexuality and cultural iconography. The work included in this exhibition crosses three continents and spans four decades from the 1970s to the present.

Simryn Gill is an artist of growing international standing. Singapore-born but Australian-based, Gill's work adds a concern for foreignness and displacement to the debates about nature and culture, masquerade and the body. Her series of photographs called *Vegetation* investigates the mutability of identity and the elusiveness of any straightforward social belonging.

Cuban born, New York based artist, Ana Mendieta died in tragic circumstances in 1985. Throughout the seventies, she pioneered intimate performances for the camera that explored gender, transformation and violence. This exhibition displays images from *Facial Hair Transplant* and *Facial Cosmetic Variations* - both from 1972 – which clearly demonstrate the seminal nature of her artistic practice.

Cindy Sherman's explorations of femininity as a social construct are profoundly influential and sit atop the contemporary art canon. However, the pictures in this show from her *Masks* series (1996-2001) have never been shown in London. These extreme close ups are remarkable for the conflict they engender in the viewer between the inviting proximity of the artist's eyes and the impenetrable, and sometimes repellent masks.

Francesca Woodman produced a remarkable body of work before her untimely death in 1981 aged only 21. Her romantic, surreal, often disturbing black and white photographs reference the history of modernist photography as well as presciently gesture towards more recent art about objectification and the female gaze. This exhibition offers the most substantial showing of her oeuvre in London since her solo exhibition at the Victoria Miro Gallery in 2000.

This presentation of the exhibition has been revised from its premiere at the Fruitmarket Gallery during the Edinburgh Festival last year and recent showing at the Helsinki Art Museum in early 2004.

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