

Martina Mullaney

Usually She is Disappointed

The exhibition will be on display from October 8 till November 23, 2018 at Artwall Gallery Embankment kpt. Jaroše and Edvarda Beneše, Prague.

The opening will take place on October 8 at 7 pm at Jelení Gallery, NCSU, Dukelských hrdinů 500/25a, Prague 7.

The exhibition *Usually she is disappointed* by an Irish artist Martina Mullaney borrows its title from the radical feminist manifesto, *Dialectic of Sex*, by Shulamith Firestone. By means of low-res photographs it looks at motherhood, feminism, politics, and the world of work after children. In this series, Martina Mullaney adopted a 'kitchen table' aesthetic. She re-photographed and appropriated images from academic books, borrowed images from her Facebook feed and other Facebook users, all mothers. The exhibition is a selection from more than 200 images and concentrates on the figure of the Missing Mother in the (art)world.

Martina Mullaney sees continuity between her life and work as natural, producing performance pieces that embody the personal-political maxim of the feminist movement. She seeks to critique the forced invisibility of mothers devising solidarity as a practical tool of resistance. This performative technique can take the form of live actions, discussions or the dissemination of images produced by marginalized maternal subjects. Using social media helped Mullaney to further disseminate critique of the neoliberal system that renders care associated with motherhood and (art) career mutually exclusive.

"We can see the impact of this exclusion when we look at the careers of many women artists," states Zuzana Štefková, one of the curators of the exhibition. "After having children, they usually disappear from the scene for a few years. That is also why they often postpone motherhood and wait for the right moment to start a family. In case of many British women artists living in London, this is further compounded by high living costs. Sometimes artists have to choose between art careers and family life."

Mullaney comments on this: "Usually she is disappointed comes from a frustrated place, where the mother is murdered on the site of patriarchy. Mothers are in a difficult position, punished on every front. Neoliberalism has isolated us from each other and the wider world. All mothers work, whether in the home or outside of it, getting to work is a burden that we should not have to suffer."

About the Artist:

In 2009, Martina Mullaney initiated an art/life project titled *Enemies of Good Art* – the title is borrowed from the infamous quote by a British writer Cyril Connolly who in 1938 stated that "There is no more sombre enemy of good art than the pram in the hall". Inspired by her maternal experience that made her a temporary outcast from the art community, Mullaney started an activist platform that soon spanned to include

actions in galleries, discussions (where children are welcome), and interviews regarding art and motherhood. These activities – most of them published online – strived to instigate a change of approach on the part of the British art institutions toward children and to stop the discrimination of parents and especially mothers within the art world.

Contacts:

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Media partners of the project are: Radio 1, Artmap, GoOut, JlbJlt.