

Paula Rego

Drawing Breath

13 October- 18 November 2023

Opening on Friday 13 October at 6pm

13 rue de Téhéran
75008 Paris

Catalogue with texts by Nick Willing and Amélie Adamo



Depression No. 3, 2007
pastel on paper, 107 x 78 cm
Courtesy Ostrich Arts Ltd. and Victoria Miro © Ostrich Arts Ltd.

Paula Rego's dream world was forged from the traditional Portuguese tales and legends she was told as a child. Having fled Salazar's totalitarian regime in 1951 to study art in London, Rego soon found herself immersed in the stimulating climate of English painting at the time.

Openly influenced by Goya, Ensor and Hogarth, she developed a singular and powerful body of work that confronts the critical issues of contemporary society.

"Drawing is like breathing", she used to say. Prone to frequent bouts of depression, she used drawing to fight it. Several of the works in this exhibition bear witness to this struggle, and show how drawing enabled her to confront the complex emotions that assailed her on a daily basis.

In the months leading up to her death on 8 June 2022, Rego personally selected the twenty works on paper that make up this exhibition. Exhibiting in Paris was very close to her heart.

Paula Rego was born in Lisbon on 26 January 1935 and died in London on 8 June 2022. She was the only woman artist of the London School, whose members included Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, Frank Auerbach and Leon Kossoff. In 2018, a major retrospective exhibition was devoted to her at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris, "The Cruel Stories of Paula Rego". From 20 July, the National Gallery in London is showing a large mural, Crivelli's Garden, commissioned from the artist 30 years ago. This is her second exhibition at Galerie Lelong & Co.

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