

Anne Collier
The Modern Institute, Osborne Street
14th March – 21st May 2025
Preview: Thursday 13th March 2025, 5.30 – 7.30pm

You have an eye, it's an image.
 - Sylvia Plath, *The Applicant*, 1962.

Anne Collier's exhibition brings together a selection of her recent and historically significant photographs, spanning the last 20 years. The juxtaposition of self-portraiture and images of pop cultural artefacts, which often depict women, forms an oblique mediation on Collier's artistic lineage, touching on elements of biography.

Marilyn Monroe, Sylvia Plath and Valerie Solanas have all had a substantial, if varied, impact on 20th century feminism. All were born in the 1920s and 30s, were connected to New York City, and suffered tragic ends to their lives, compacted by mistreatment and reported issues with mental health. In their absence, Collier leaves us with a series of items photographed precisely in the neutral environment of the studio: the *Marilyn Monroe – Legends* LP compilation, released in 1976 and featuring songs and scenes from films spanning 1954-1962; the *Sylvia Plath reading her poetry* LP, released in 1977, which includes readings from Harvard College Library and the BBC across 1958-62; and various editions of Solanas' S.C.U.M Manifesto, originally published by Olympia Press in 1967, which argues for the extermination of men and the necessity for women to overthrow society.

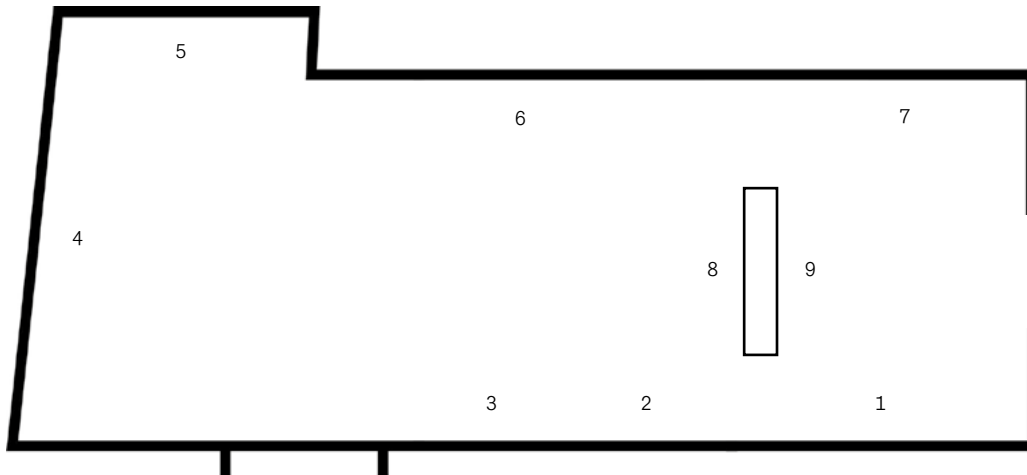
Solanas famously shot Andy Warhol on 3 June 1968, almost killing the legendary artist. Collier's presentation of the *Marilyn Monroe – Legends* LP in *Album (Marilyn Monroe)* evokes Warhol, specifically the silkscreens of the actress which he began just following her death. Collier's piece points to the way Warhol sought to recontextualize tragedy, narrativizing it for his own artistic ends. In contrast, the pile of Solanas' books speaks to a continued reckoning with her contentious legacy and the important place her writing eventually found. Plath's writing was innovative in the burgeoning genre of Confessional Poetry, which contains intimate details of the author's life. These included traumatic memories and reflections on living in a patriarchal society. Collier deftly layers these references and interconnected cultural histories. For all their apparent simplicity the works are compellingly dense, with dialectics of image and object, agency and passivity, past and present playing out in each.

Collier's selected artefacts in some way attempt to define the women behind them, and, in turn, her photographing of them speaks to their significance to her own life and thinking. They are linked by a repackaging of female identity and image. *May/June 2009 (Cindy Sherman, Mark Seliger)*, 2009, plays with this process itself, centring the trappings of celebrity 'cool' and self-presentation – not looking at the camera, smoking, wearing black. Sherman has consistently interrogated and played with female archetypes in culture, ever since producing her *Untitled Film Stills*, 1977–80, a series of self-portraits which adopted the aesthetics of 20th-century film. This work elaborates on and complicates Sherman's oeuvre to critique the cultivation of fame and gender stereotypes within the mass media. The piece underlines the dual strands at play in the exhibition, both the process of *identifying* with images and *creating identities* in images.

Collier's works have often walked the line between the personal and universal, and that tension remains consistent here with her own image woven into the presentation; an *Aura Portrait*, taken in a psychic store in downtown Oakland in 2003 and the artist's own eye in *Developing (Anne Collier)*, 2024. By pairing the latter and *Developing*, 2024 – which depicts a sheet of undeveloped photographic paper suspended in a developing tray – Collier aligns the moment of inspiration with the idea of self-creation. In some respects, the pieces function as indirect self-portraits. Solanas' writing, the rainbow of aura photography, and the empty, yet seductive packaging of pop culture artefacts (evidently handled, worn or folded) serve as subtle allusions to confession, melancholy, and feminist thought – or rather they serve as both a conduit and a barrier, oscillating between superficiality and depth. Collier allows the viewer a moment to consider their own identity before each image and in that way she disappears again.

Anne Collier (b. 1970, Los Angeles) lives and works in New York. During 2014-2015, Collier's first major institutional exhibition travelled across institutions in North America, opening at CCS Bard, Annandale-on-Hudson (2014), before going onto MCA Chicago, Chicago (2014), Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2015), and The Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2015). Encompassing around forty works, the iterations of the exhibition explored themes that had defined Collier's practice since the early 2000s. Selected solo exhibitions include: 'Eye', Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore (2023); The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane, Glasgow (2020); 'Anne Collier: Photographic', Sprengel Museum, Hannover (2018) and touring to Fotomuseum, Winterthur (2019); FRAC Normandie Rouen (2018); The Modern Institute, Osborne Street, Glasgow (2017); 'Anne Collier: Women with Cameras (Self Portrait)', Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis (2017); The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane, Glasgow (2014). Collier's work is held in numerous public collections, including: Tate, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; MoMA, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; SF MoMA, San Francisco; LACMA, Los Angeles; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Mumok, Vienna; Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg.

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|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Developing</i> , 2024
C-print
101.5 x 123 x 4.5 cm
40 x 48 3/8 x 1 3/4 in | 2 | <i>Sylvia Plath</i> , 2008
C-print
129.4 x 155.2 x 4.5 cm
51 x 61 1/8 x 1 3/4 in | 3 | <i>May/Jun 2009 (Cindy Sherman, Mark Seliger)</i> , 2009
C-print
105 x 130 x 4.5 cm
41 3/8 x 51 1/8 x 1 3/4 in |
| 4 | <i>Window</i> , 2018
C-Print
200.2 x 118.6 x 4.5 cm
78 7/8 x 46 3/4 x 1 3/4 in | 5 | <i>Developing, Comic</i> , 2024
C-print
101.5 x 123 x 4.5 cm
40 x 48 3/8 x 1 3/4 in | 6 | <i>Album (Marilyn Monroe)</i> , 2015
C-print
121 x 156 x 4.5 cm
47 5/8 x 61 3/8 x 1 3/4 in |
| 7 | <i>Developing (Anne Collier)</i> , 2024
C-print
101.5 x 123 x 4.5 cm
40 x 48 3/8 x 1 3/4 in | 8 | <i>Valerie</i> , 2011
C-Print
96 x 127 x 4 cm
37 3/4 x 50 x 1 5/8 in | 9 | <i>Aura (Anne Collier)</i> , 2002-2004
Color polaroid
34 x 31.8 x 2.9 cm
13 3/8 x 12 1/2 x 1 1/8 in |