



# NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

News release

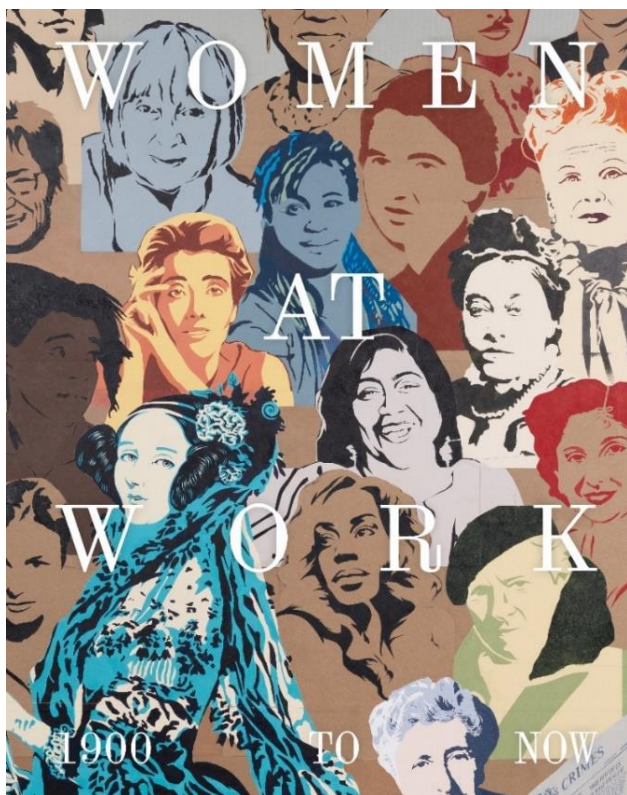
Thursday 31 August 2023

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## New acquisitions, commissions and rare archival images shared in new publication, celebrating the lives of 100 women from the National Portrait Gallery's Collection

*Women at Work: 1900 to Now* features the fascinating and sometimes untold stories of over 100 influential and inspiring women

Supported by the CHANEL Culture Fund,



### **Women at Work: 1900 to Now**

5 October 2023 | £29.95 | 978-1-85514-568-5 |  
280 x 220 mm | 326 Illustrations |  
224 Pages | Hardback



The National Portrait Gallery's upcoming publication, *Women at Work: 1900 to Now*, reveals the research and new acquisitions made possible through *Reframing Narratives: Women in Portraiture*, a three-year project at the National Portrait Gallery supported by the CHANEL Culture Fund.

The book brings together key women in history and sheds light on their work and lasting influence in the UK and internationally. *Women at Work: 1900 to Now* will showcase a selection of over 100 women from 1900 to the present day who have made significant contributions historically, culturally, socially and academically in Britain and beyond.



L-R: *Bella Lack* by Cristina de Middel © Cristina de Middel/Magnum Photos, Commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery in collaboration with Magnum Photos and kindly supported by the CHANEL Culture Fund, 2022–23;; *Caroline Criado Perez* by Susan Meiselas © Susan Meiselas/Magnum Photos, Commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery in collaboration with Magnum Photos and kindly supported by the CHANEL Culture Fund, 2022–23; *Rose Ayling-Ellis* by Olivia Arthur © Olivia Arthur/Magnum Photos, Commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery in collaboration with Magnum Photos and kindly supported by the CHANEL Culture Fund.

The publication will include some of the most recent portraits to enter the Gallery's Collections, including photographs commissioned in collaboration with Magnum Photos and supported by the CHANEL Culture Fund. These include portraits of environmental activist Bella Lack and classicist Mary Beard, captured by Cristina de Middel; activist and campaigner against period poverty Amika George, actor Rose Ayling-Ellis, and environmental lawyer Farhana Yamin, photographed by Olivia Arthur; and author and campaigner Caroline Criado Perez, photographed by Susan Meiselas. Many of the works featured within *Women at Work: 1900 to Now* are currently on display at the National Portrait Gallery following its reopening earlier this year, where 48% of portraits on display in its post-1900 galleries are now of women.

Contributions to the new publication from design critic Alice Rawsthorn and physicist and lecturer Emma Chapman, as well as the Gallery's CHANEL Curator for the Collection, Dr Flavia Frigeri, and curators Georgia Atienza, Magdalene Keaney, Constantia Nicolaides and Dr Alison Smith, all punctuate the timeline of inspiring women with thematic essays. They highlight the wider role of women in different fields, including science, design, literature and activism, in addition to essays on self-portraiture, celebrity culture, and photography.

*"Women at Work challenges the foundation of how we think about women's careers by uncovering alternative networks of exchange and probing the cultural, institutional, social and political factors that have traditionally shaped the mainstream narrative and defined difference."*

Dr Flavia Frigeri

CHANEL Curator for the Collection at the National Portrait Gallery

*"Now, more than a century after the founding of the House of CHANEL, we are thrilled to support the landmark book, Women at Work."*

*The women in Women at Work excelled, despite the forces of opposition. It is in celebration of their spirit of persistent innovation that the CHANEL Culture Fund is proud to partner with the National Portrait Gallery during such an important moment for culture in the United Kingdom."*

Yana Peel

Global Head of Arts and Culture CHANEL



L-R: *Leyla Hussein* by Jason Ashwood © Jason Ashwood NPG x199650; *Maria Elena Björnson* by Steve Speller © Steve



*Women at Work: 1900 to Now* features many women whose contributions to society are widely known, such as Bernardine Evaristo, Beatrix Potter, Zadie Smith, Zandra Rhodes, Vivienne Westwood, Virginia Woolf, Amy Winehouse, and Malala Yousafzai. However, the publication also features many women who are less known for their achievements, such as Hella Pick, a correspondent who reported on the French student revolts of 1968; Hannah Dadds, one of the first female tube drivers; Mairi Chisholm and Elsie Knocker, two pioneering nurses who worked on the front line in the First World War, *Phantom of the Opera* set designer Maria Björnson and activist Leyla Hussein.

The publication includes the recent National Portrait Gallery commission by artists Jann Haworth and Liberty Blake, *Work in Progress* (2021–22); a seven-panel mural celebrating the breadth of female achievement through the 130 historical and contemporary inspiring women that it depicts.

*Women at Work: 1900 to Now* is set to publish on 5 October 2023 and will be available to buy in the Gallery's shops, and within the trade. It is also exclusively available for pre-order on the National Portrait Gallery shop website: [npgshop.org.uk/products/women-at-work-1900-to-now](https://npgshop.org.uk/products/women-at-work-1900-to-now).

To mark the launch of the publication, the Gallery will host a special in-conversation event on Friday 20 October. Authors Dr. Flavia Frigeri, CHANEL Curator for the Collection at the National Portrait Gallery, and award-winning design historian, Alice Rawsthorn, will be in conversation with renowned writer, Jennifer Higgie about the making of the book and its wider themes. Tickets will be available soon.

## ENDS

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For further press information, images and interview requests, please contact:  
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*Women at Work: 1900 to Now: In conversation with Jennifer Higgie, Flavia Frigeri and Alice Rawthorne*  
Friday 20th October  
National Portrait Gallery, Lecture theatre  
7-8pm  
Tickets available soon.

### **National Portrait Gallery**

Founded in 1856, the National Portrait Gallery tells the story of Britain through portraits, using art to bring history to life and explore living today. From global icons, to unsung heroes, our Collection is filled with the stories that have shaped, and continue to shape a nation. We celebrate the power of portraiture and offer encounters with some of the world's greatest and most exciting new artists, promoting engagement with portraiture in all media to a wide-ranging public by conserving, growing and sharing the world's largest collection of portraits.

### **CHANEL Culture Fund**

The CHANEL Culture Fund partners locally for global impact, promoting the singular approach of the House of CHANEL across the arts. Extending a century of philanthropic cultural commitment, its goals are to spotlight women artists, advance the new and the next, and to activate history to define the future. CHANEL is also committing to a series of long-term partnerships with leading cultural institutions around the world to create new programmes that will support innovation in creative and cultural thinking. Partnerships include the National Portrait Gallery [London], The Centre Pompidou [Paris] and Power Station of Art [Shanghai].