

Portraits of 20th Century Jewish Women by Chantal Joffe To Fill the Jewish Museum's Lobby

Fourth Offering in Museum's *Using Walls, Floors, and Ceilings* Series

New York, NY – Beginning May 1, two walls of the Jewish Museum's lobby will be filled with over 30 new portraits by the London-based painter Chantal Joffe. This body of work explores Jewish women of the twentieth century, focusing on those who made major contributions to art, literature, philosophy, and politics – including Diane Arbus, Nancy Spero, Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, Susan Sontag, and Hannah Arendt. Portraits of these women and others will be hung salon-style across two walls of the lobby. *Using Walls, Floors, and Ceilings: Chantal Joffe* will be on view from May 1 through October 18, 2015.

Chantal Joffe has long focused on portraiture, and this new series, titled *Hannah, Gertrude, Alice, Betty, Nadine, Golda, Susan, Claude, Nancy, Grace, Diane . . .*, continues her direct and gestural style of painting. The portraits are not exact depictions, but are charged with the artist's technical, conceptual, and emotional responses. Joffe conducted months of research to gather information and generate personal connections to each subject. As part of this process, Joffe assembled well-known as well as obscure texts and images, and chose to represent the women at various stages of their lives. By bringing together such notable historical figures, Joffe has created a universal family album, a tribute to their contributions as well as an inspiration for audiences today. Implicitly present are the women who perished during the Shoah, whose creativity and intellect were lost to history.

This presentation is part of the Museum's ongoing *Using Walls, Floors, and Ceilings* series, showcasing new works by artists from around the globe in the Skirball Lobby. The series builds on the Museum's 1970s program called *Using Walls*, which featured the work of 14 up-and-coming international artists of the time such as Richard Artschwager, Sol LeWitt, Richard Tuttle, and others both within and beyond the gallery space of the Warburg Mansion. Now, 45 years later, the Museum is revisiting this moment in its history by showcasing new work by emerging artists from around the globe. Since the launch in 2013, the series has featured work by Claire Fontaine, Mel Bochner, and Willem de Rooij.

The *Using Walls, Floors, and Ceilings* series is organized by Jens Hoffmann, Deputy Director, Exhibitions and Public Programs, and Kelly Taxter, Assistant Curator.

About Chantal Joffe

Possessing an eye for everyday awkwardness and an enlivening facility with paint, Chantal Joffe brings a combination of insight and integrity to the genre of figurative art. Born in 1969, Chantal Joffe lives and works in London. She holds an MA from the Royal College of Art and was awarded the Royal Academy Woollaston Prize in 2006. Joffe has exhibited nationally and internationally at Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy (2014 – 2015); Saatchi Gallery, London (2013 – 2014); MODEM, Hungary (2012); Mackintosh Museum, Glasgow (2012); Il Capricorno, Venice (2011, solo); Turner Contemporary, Margate (2011); Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase,

New York (2009); University of the Arts, London (2007); MIMA Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (2007); Royal Academy of Arts, London (2005); Galleri KB, Oslo (2005) and Bloomberg Space, London (2004).

Support

Using, Walls, Floors, and Ceilings: Chantal Joffe is made possible by the generous support of Wendy Fisher.

About the Jewish Museum

Located on Museum Mile at Fifth Avenue and 92nd Street, the Jewish Museum is one of the world's preeminent institutions devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, offering intellectually engaging, educational, and provocative exhibitions and programs for people of all ages and backgrounds. The Museum was established in 1904, when Judge Mayer Sulzberger donated 26 ceremonial objects to The Jewish Theological Seminary as the core of a museum collection. Today, the Museum maintains a collection of over 30,000 works of art, artifacts, and broadcast media reflecting global Jewish identity, and presents a diverse schedule of internationally acclaimed temporary exhibitions.

The Jewish Museum is located at 1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street, New York City. Museum hours are Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 11am to 5:45pm; Thursday, 11am to 8pm; and Friday, 11am to 4pm. Museum admission is \$15.00 for adults, \$12.00 for senior citizens, \$7.50 for students, free for visitors 18 and under and Jewish Museum members. Admission is Pay What You Wish on Thursdays from 5pm to 8pm and free on Saturdays. For information on the Jewish Museum, the public may call 212.423.3200 or visit the website at TheJewishMuseum.org.

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