

PRESS RELEASE

'Birth': Origins at the end of life

A Moving Image by Whitney McVeigh

Royal Academy of Arts, London 27th March, 2015

St Christopher's Hospice, London April 15th, 2015

Kurashiki University of Science and the Arts, Okayama, Japan 2nd – 17th July, 2015

Birth is a moving image oral history enquiry into how a group of women have embraced the physical and psychological changes that come with carrying and the birth of children. The work invites women at the end of their life to recount their memories to the camera. How does birth transform the ways in which we relate to life? Does it alter the life course of women? This fundamental aspect of human memory has not been previously recorded and discussed through the eyes of older women. The project examines birth within the context of ageing and palliative care and challenges society's darker associations linked to dying and ageing. The film engages with both the universal and personal; regardless of age or gender, we are all born and the narrative of birth is vital in the wider context of human history.

The project comes under Whitney McVeigh's London College of Fashion research entitled Human Fabric. It is an investigation into our fundamental origins birth itself, brought into focus by women in the last moments of life. We are inviting a diverse group of professionals to engage with the subject of childbirth, ageing, how we process memory and the cycle of life.

Whitney McVeigh was born in New York and lives and works in London. She is currently Fellow in Creative Practice at University of the Arts, London College of Fashion. Her upcoming exhibitions include a solo presentation at St Peter's Church, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, UK, April 2015. Her recent participations to group exhibitions include *Glass Stress*, *White Light/White Heat* at the 55th Venice Biennale and *Unlocking the Diary: Archiving of Nameless Memories* at Folkestone Fringe for 2014 Folkestone Triennial, UK as well as a solo project *Hunting Song* at the Gervasuti Foundation, Venice, in 2013.