

## Paula Rego

28 September – 12 November 2016

OPENING RECEPTION: Tuesday 27 September, 6 - 8 PM



Paula Rego, *Dancing Ostriches from Disney's 'Fantasia'*, 1995, pastel on paper mounted on aluminium, 150 x 150 cm, Copyright Paula Rego, Courtesy Marlborough Fine Art, London



Paula Rego, *Dancing Ostriches from Disney's 'Fantasia'*, 1995, pastel on paper mounted on aluminium, 150 x 150 cm, Copyright Paula Rego, Courtesy Marlborough Fine Art, London

**Marlborough Fine Art is pleased to present a major exhibition of works by Paula Rego across two floors of its London gallery. Considered one of the leading figurative artists today, Rego draws inspiration from many sources including literature and fairy tales to create mysterious and narrative works.**

On display in the lower level gallery, is Rego's large-scale pastel series *Dancing Ostriches from Disney's 'Fantasia'*, originally commissioned for the exhibition *Spellbound* at the Hayward Gallery, London in 1996 and then acquired by Saatchi Gallery. Marking the centenary of cinema in Britain, artists and film-makers were commissioned to create works portraying the relationship between art and cinema. Both enthralled and terrified by the films of Walt Disney as a child, Rego derived the series from the 'Dance of the Ostriches' in *Fantasia*, a scene that particularly stood out in her memory. Citing Disney as a major artistic influence, Rego regarded his films as a modern counterpart to traditional fairy tales told to her as a child.

Drawing both from memory and her assistant Lila as a life model, Rego replaces the animals with robust women in purposely awkward stances. Striving against the odds, the lumbering dancers challenge attitudes towards the female body and Disney's idealized cartoon characters. Rego states, "*The Ostriches couldn't have been done if I hadn't been the age I am. A younger woman wouldn't know what it was like; longing for things that are not gone, because they're inside one, but that are inaccessible.*"

Paula Rego consistently challenges herself, embracing new ideas, stories and media. On view in Marlborough's first floor gallery is a new large-scale tapestry, *Eagles Daughter* (2016). Based on an 16<sup>th</sup> century folk tale, it tells the story of a beautiful young girl's life, born to a man who was raised by eagles, and betrayed by an ugly, wicked old woman. Produced with textile design at Factum Arte in Madrid, the work was woven by Flanders Tapestries in Belgium. The tapestry is shown alongside a selection of etchings and lithographs including the critically acclaimed series *The Pendle Witches* (1996) and *The Children's Crusade* (1996-1998).

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Rego's expressive works invite the viewer into a world of disconcerting realism and innocence, told through both familiar and imagined stories which are open to interpretation and blur the lines between the grotesque, sinister and beautiful.

A fully illustrated catalogue will be available with an introduction by Jan Dalley, Arts Editor of the Financial Times and author.

The exhibition coincides with a solo display devoted to Paula Rego's works from the 1980's at Frieze Masters, 6 – 9 October 2016. It includes important works from the *Vivian Girls* series inspired by the Outsider artist Henry Darger, much admired by Rego. This constitutes the fourth in a series of single-artist booths presented by Marlborough Fine Art at the fair, following the presentation of Frank Auerbach in 2015, Francis Bacon in 2014 and Victor Pasmore in 2013.

Rego (b. 1935, Lisbon) trained at the Slade School of Fine Art (1952-56). In 1990, she was appointed artist-in-residence at the National Gallery, London. Her work has been exhibited in many of the major museums world-wide. In 2004 she was awarded the Grã Cruz da Ordem de Sant'Iago da Espada by the President of Portugal and a museum dedicated to Rego's work, the Casa das Histórias Paula Rego, was opened in Cascais, Portugal in 2009. In 2010, Rego was made a Dame of the British Empire. Her work is part of numerous public collections including the Arts Council, London, England; Berardo Collection, Lisbon; National Gallery, London; National Portrait Gallery, London; Tate Gallery, Liverpool; and the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. She lives and works in London.

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## EXHIBITION FACTS

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