

PRESS RELEASE

SILENT HEALTH: Women, Health and Representation

13 April - 18 May

What makes women ill? Why, in modern times, do so many women continue to "suffer in silence" from preventable diseases? Four women artists present work which explores how images can and do influence women's attitudes towards their bodies and their health.

Melanie Friend presents colour portraits which challenge the way society makes women of over menopausal age invisible and includes a soundtrack of views from a diversity of women.

Kate Musselwhite's magazine and poster project parodies the mass media images of sexuality and health found in women's journals and draws attention to the way we absorb advice about our health.

Janice Howard's photo-installation addresses the historical myth spun around femininity; in particular, Woman as Healer/Witch which is still prevalent in the notion of women as 'natural' carers.

A more personal exploration of stress-related dis-ease is revealed in **Claire Collison's** photo-montages. She has used symbolic imagery to visualise how societal pressures and personal expectation contribute to women's vulnerability to illness such as M.E.

This exhibition seeks to re-assert the position of women as active subjects rather than the passive objects of conventional modern health care. The works also directly confront the pressure placed on all women to conform to the young, slim, attractive stereotype - a source of stress and anxiety to many whose bodies do not resemble this image.

Press prints and further information from Rebecca Coggins/Lindsay Lewis

A catalogue - **Silent Health** - is available in the Gallery Bookshop. Price £6.95

SEMINAR - Saturday 11 May 1 - 5 pm

Visual Healing: Working on Women's Health

The panel will include Melanie Friend, exhibitor; Julia Simpson, co-editor of National Union of Public and Civil Servants' Journal and Lorna Waite, reviewer and writer.

ADMISSION £3.00 (£1.50)

(Seminar is supported by Scottish Health Education Group)