

Dear Christine

A tribute to Christine Keeler

Conceived and curated by Fionn Wilson

'Dear Christine' aims to reclaim and reframe Christine Keeler (1942–2017), a woman castigated for her role in a notorious political scandal in the Sixties. The Profumo Affair was a watershed moment in British cultural and political history which brought down the government of the time. Keeler was shamed in the tabloid press and suffered its full wrath as the dawn of the sexual revolution approached. Keeler, it could be argued, inadvertently challenged the prevailing morality of the time and the hypocrisy of the establishment. As a woman behaving in a sexually-free way, she pushed boundaries ahead of her time.

Keeler lived with the consequences of her notoriety for the rest of her life, saddled with the label of 'prostitute'. As she said: "It's been a misery for me, living with Christine Keeler". Under constant scrutiny from the press, she became a recluse. In the later years of her life, the tabloid press still hunted Keeler, featuring exposé shots focusing on her appearance as an older woman.

Curator Fionn Wilson says: "Christine Keeler is a significant figure in British history yet there is little recent artistic reference to her. I wanted to add to the visual record of her life, which represents themes still relevant to this day including class, power and the politics of sex. The participating artists are women who offer their own perspective on a narrative that has mostly been led by men".

Pauline Boty, a founder of the British Pop movement in the Sixties, painted Keeler in the lost work 'Scandal 63' and as part of 'Dear Christine', artist, feminist and activist Caroline Coon will be exhibiting a homage to the missing painting. Previously unseen photographs will be shown during the exhibition, courtesy of James Birch, a renowned curator and personal friend of Keeler. Contributors to the exhibition catalogue include journalists Julie Burchill and Tanya Gold, art historian Kalliopi Minioudaki and Amanda Coe, screenwriter and executive producer of the upcoming BBC series 'The Trial of Christine Keeler'. The catalogue also includes a foreword from Keeler's son, Seymour Platt.

'Dear Christine' comprises painting, ceramics, sculpture, music, film, poetry, performance, artist talks and workshops.

Exhibiting artists are: **Natalie d'Arbeloff, Claudia Clare, Caroline Coon, Lucy Cox, Catherine Edmunds, Roxana Halls, Sadie Hennessy, Marguerite Horner, Barbara Howey, Shani Rhys James, Sal Jones, Jowonder, Sadie Lee, Cathy Lomax, Julia Maddison, Sonja Benskin Mesher, Wendy Nelson, Sarah Shaw, Stella Vine** and **Fionn Wilson**.

Contributors include: David Astbury, Helen Billingham, James Birch, Julie Burchill, Sarah Caulfield, Katie Chatburn, Amanda Coe, Tanya Gold, Fine Cell Work, Tara Hanks, Charlotte Innes, Charlotte Metcalf, Kalliopi Minioudaki, Bo Gorzelak Pedersen and Seymour Platt.

'Dear Christine' opened at Vane in Newcastle upon Tyne in June (2019) and then toured to Elysium, Swansea in November, gathering momentum and attracting the attention of various writers who were commissioned to create new works to accompany the exhibition (including award-winning Welsh poets/writers Jo Mazelis, Kathryn Gray, Patrick Jones, Natalie Ann Holborow, Guinevere Clark, Mari Ellis Dunning, Gemma June Howell and Jeni Williams).

The final exhibit of 'Dear Christine' takes place in London at Arthouse1 from 2–29 February 2020.

'Dear Christine' has been reviewed in publications including *Art North* magazine by art critic Ian McKay, the *International Times* and the *Morning Star* (garnering a five-star review from writer Jan Woolf). Journalist and writer Julie Burchill comments: "Three years in the making, it is a thing of beauty without cruelty, a balm applied posthumously to the wounds Christine Keeler fatally sustained in the very uncivil sex war of the 1960s". 'Dear Christine' has also been featured by numerous online websites, including *Wales Arts Review*, where associate director Craig Austin calls the exhibition "a remarkable artistic tribute". Journalist Tanya Gold writes in *The Telegraph*: "Christine Keeler is being reframed—about time".

[View a sample of the exhibition catalogue here](#)



PRIVATE VIEW: Drinks reception: Saturday 1 February, 6:30–9pm

EXHIBITION: 2–29 February

SYMPOSIUM: Saturday 22 February, 11am–7pm

VENUE: Arthouse1. 45 Grange Rd, Bermondsey, London SE1 3BH

OPENING HOURS: Thursday–Sunday between 3–7pm or by appt.

TUBES: Borough, London Bridge, Bermondsey

CONTACT: info@arthouse1.co.uk - M: 077131 89249 (Rebecca Fairman)

URL: www.arthouse1.co.uk

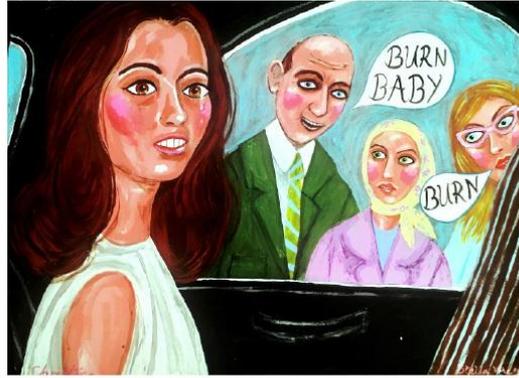
SOON TO BE RELEASED...

The Trial of Christine Keeler

A six-part BBC drama series written by award-winning screenwriter Amanda Coe (also executive producer).

29TH DECEMBER 2019 ON BBC ONE AT 9PM

'The Trial Of Christine Keeler' takes a fresh look at one of the most infamous British stories: the chain of events in the 1960s that came to be known as the Profumo Affair. At the centre of the storm was 19-year-old Christine Keeler – a young woman whom the powerful, male-dominated establishment sought to silence and exploit, but who refused to play by their rules. Starring Sophie Cookson, James Norton, Ben Miles, Emilia Fox, Nathan Stewart-Jarrett, Anthony Welsh and Ellie Bamber. [View Trailer here](#)



- From **The Christine Keeler Collection**, property of James Birch
- Stella Vine**, *Christine, burn baby, burn*, 2012, acrylic on heavy-weight handmade paper, 58.5 x 80 cm, (private collection)
- Fionn Wilson**, *Christine mesmerises*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 50 cm
- Sal Jones**, *I took on the sins of a generation*, 2016, oil on canvas, 122 x 76 cm
- J.V. Martin**, 1964, postcard (appears in the exhibition catalogue)
- Lucy Cox**, *The Chair*, 2018, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 cm
- Cathy Lomax**, *Welcome to the Sixties*, 2017, oil on canvas, 95 x 80 cm
- Caroline Coon**, *Christine Keeler: Anger, Blame, Shame, Ruin, Grief*, 2019, oil on canvas, 122 x 92 cm
- Julia Maddison**, *Remains*, 2017, plastic bag, 70 x 30 cm
- Claudia Clare**, *Christine Keeler: An Uncertain Pilgrimage*, 2019, slip painted earthenware, glazed, with gold leaf, h40 cm x w38 cm

For hi-res images and further details please contact:

Rebecca Fairman (gallery director) 0771 3189249 press@arthouse1.co.uk

or Fionn Wilson (artist and curator) 0797 3832293 fionnw@hotmail.com

Supported using public funding from Arts Council England and Arts Council of Wales



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Vane

1st–29th June 2019

elysium

5th Oct–9th Nov 2019

ARTHOUSE1.

2nd–29th February 2020

ARTHOUSE1.

Gallerist: Rebecca Fairman. 45 Grange Road, London SE1 3BH. Tel: 077131 89249. www.arthouse1.co.uk
rebecca@arthouse1.co.uk