

Data sheet of the exhibition

CONVERSATIONS WITH MYSELF

JO ANN CHAUS



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Produced by

Associazione culturale ONTHEMOVE
in the occasion of Festival Internazionale
di Visual Narrative Cortona On The Move 2020

Curated by

Arianna Rinaldo

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Title	Conversations with Myself
Artist	Jo Ann Chaus
Curated by*	Arianna Rinaldo
Prints and mounting	11 framed prints 40 x 60 cm 10 framed prints 73 x 110 cm 1 lightbox - blow up (to be produced)*
Frames	11 white frames 42 x 62 cm 10 white frames 75 x 112 cm
Linear development	15 linear meters min. (spaces between images and blow ups are not included)
Notes	Text materials are to be printed at the expense of the host organization. Intro texts, biography and captions in Italian and English will be provided by us.

*to be produced at the expense of the host organization.

*any changes to the selection or arrangement of the exhibition should be consulted with the curator

INSTALLATION VIEWS



CONVERSATIONS WITH MYSELF

JO ANN CHAUS

"The job of the artist is always to deepen the mystery."

Francis Bacon

"Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time."

Thomas Merton

"Art is the lie that enables you to realize the truth."

Pablo Picasso

This work is about moving forward, looking out, looking back and around, for answers and clues to understand and digest the world around me. I am looking to discover, to become... something more.

This is a diaristic project in the sense that it is created on a daily basis and documents what I see and where I am. It celebrates the joys and pathos in life, in all of its moods and complexities, bathed in the texture of highlights and shadows, early, late and the in-between.

My goals are to create images that challenge the order of things.

On a daily basis, I think about the roles I've assumed, as dictated by our social system and devise another way of being there for my family and being there for myself. I think about the plight of women, who are relegated to years of child-rearing: it is a suspension and a detour from one's path that demands sacrifice, yet yields connection and learning about yourself in ways never imagined.

I am creating work that illustrates and reflects my current position as a wise elder with history and wisdom to believe and bestow. I aim to make work that reflects the stages of my life, what I've solved and negotiated, and the challenges that are next to unravel.

My work is about trying to understand myself by myself in relation to the people and situations around me. I am drawn to the psychological aspects of how a person becomes, and continues to become, as influenced by the life experience which leaves imprints on our subconscious. There is an ebb and flow to my process as I accept more and struggle less with experience that is beyond my control yet catches my attention.

I am seeing things as they are, at places as they are, at light as it is. I am seeing the elements of my world juxtaposed in harmonious tension, a metaphor for the template of life. As life is a series of adjustments and disruptions, I question the roles I've assumed and adopted, and what it means to be a mother and a mother to daughters who are becoming mothers themselves.

I am on this journey of self-discovery, understanding and 'individuation', a Jungian term defined as "the process of recognizing one's own unique identity, separate and independent from others, and discovering one's life purpose". Indeed, I am trusting myself to feel the full range of emotions, trusting the process and experience of discovery, honoring and celebration.

There are beauty, terror, spills and messes; there is energy, there is dawn, there are lemons, sun and shadows; there is him and there is me, there is them and there is us, there is me and there is them; and there is still me. Photography is a tool. I use the camera to connect myself with the world around me and the world within me; to show it in a light that expresses beauty in an oblique way in which the light creates mystery, tension, and complexity that mimics human existence. It is a compilation and conflation of my history, my background, my ideas and associations, my strength and courage and tenacity, and about the hurdles and hardships I have overcome. It is an ongoing process.

I enjoy my company, meandering, looking, thinking and being in the world without compromise. Having images is not only a record of where I've been, but more a record of how I felt. Without even knowing what the questions are, the answers are into the pictures.

BIOGRAPHY

JO ANN CHAUS

Jo Ann Chaus (New York, USA, 1954) is an American photographer, born in the borough of Brooklyn, now based in the New York metro area. She is a color photographer and printer, influenced by the early color giants as William Eggleston, Stephen Shore, Saul Leiter, and by Elinor Carucci and Jen Davis' intimate family and self-portraiture. She holds certificates from the International Center of Photography in New York City.

In 2016 Jo Ann self-published "Sweetie & Hansom", a sixty images book with original text, about her parents, siblings and husband. Jo Ann Chaus has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and holds special recognitions and awards. Among these: Critical Mass 200 exhibition (2019) and PDN Emerging Photographer Fall 2019. Her photographs are part of the permanent collection at the Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, Arizona.

ADDITIONAL TEXT

It is mid-October, just after my birthday.

I've traveled to a rental house in Maine with a friend, prepared to make new work and see what beckons us.

We've been to this area many times; it never disappoints.

The air is pure, I am anonymous.

There are no expectations, no one to attend to, nothing to do except be, feel, and create.

It is a respite.

We've traveled by car, a 9 hour drive, with a trunk full of props, costumes, and possibilities.

It's a fall afternoon. My friend is gone for the day; I am alone in the house.

I've already been to the meadow, as an English country aristocrat in a sensible coat, headscarf, and wellies, walking the grassy moors. I've been to the greenhouse in a yellow raincoat, protected from the dampness inside.

I've been to the loft with the blue crushed velvet wing chair, and the pink bedroom with maroon bedspread.

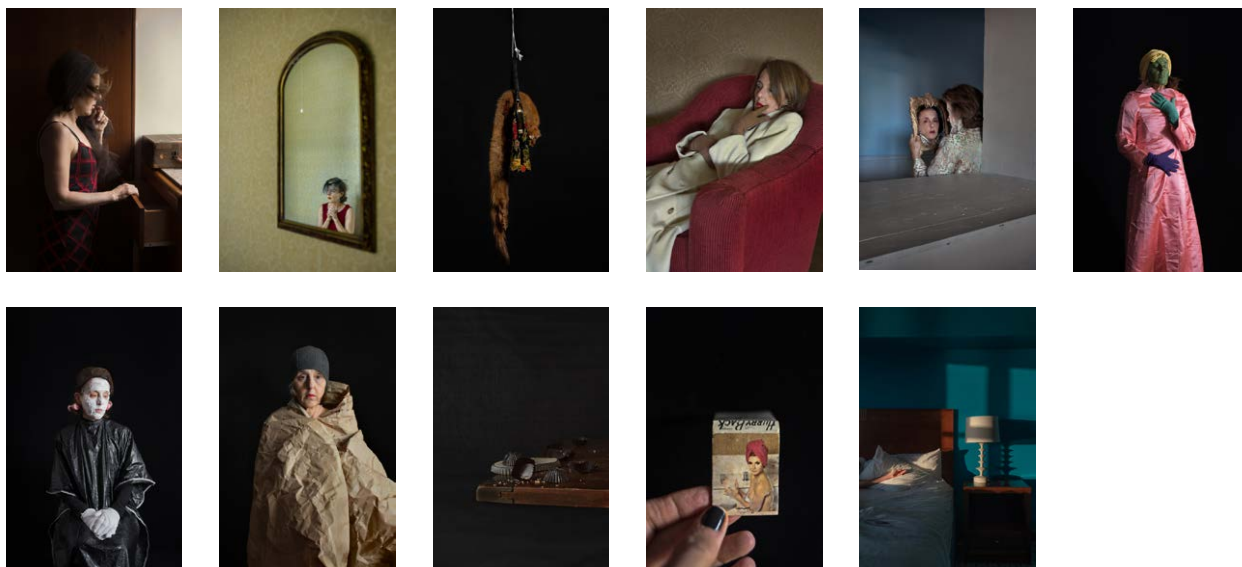
I've descended the steps into the living room, barefoot, looking towards the kitchen at the two caddy corner

windows and the knotty pine cabinets; the light is soft and warm. I want to become the coiffed woman, queen of the kitchen, or slave to it, in this room. I slip into my old green dress and tie my mother's apron around my waist. I have become her, here at the kitchen sink, prim and proper, alone in the stillness of the house. I'm washing a dish or preparing a meal, but I'm somewhere else, out there, in the meadow, in a dream, dancing, or making love.

I remember.....and here I am.....and what will be.....and here I am.

Jo Ann Chaus 2021
Kitchen Sink

PRINTS 60x40 cm



PRINTS 73x110 cm



BLOW UP

