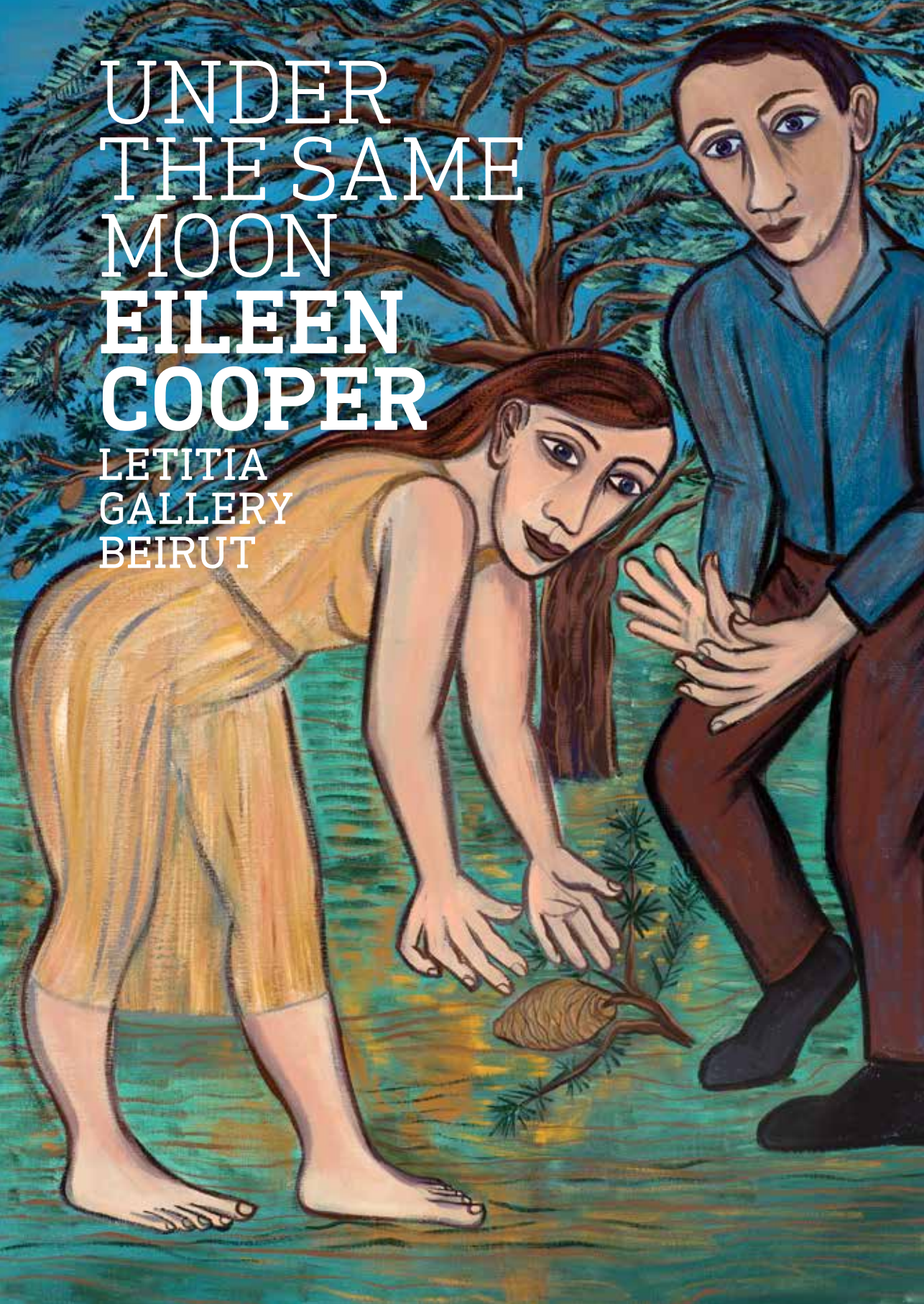


UNDER THE SAME MOON

EILEEN COOPER

LETITIA GALLERY BEIRUT

UNDER THE SAME MOON

EILEEN COOPER

1 FEBRUARY–31 MARCH 2018

LETITIA GALLERY BEIRUT

INTRODUCTION

Letitia Gallery is thrilled to present as its inaugural exhibition *Under the Same Moon*, bringing together a new body of paintings and drawings by British artist Eileen Cooper OBE RA. This is the first exhibition of Cooper's work in Beirut, and her eloquent engagement with Lebanese themes is representative of Cooper's exceptional ability to explore myths and fairy tales, uncovering deeper truths about humanity and what it means to be a woman, an artist, and a mother.

Letitia Gallery is a contemporary art gallery in Beirut dedicated to facilitating engagement with contemporary art in Lebanon through the exhibition of local and international artists. We are interested in innovative and inspired approaches to art-making and, for our first year of programming, have collaborated with leading members of the art world to discover and present work across disciplines and regions – representing Letitia Gallery's passion for the exhilarating breadth of contemporary art.

Beirut already occupies a unique place in the arts. With a rich history and an ever-growing engagement with contemporary art, Beirut is known for artists and exhibitions of exceeding formal skill and conceptual engagement. Additionally, Lebanon's cultural community is at the forefront of expanding international dialogue. Letitia Gallery is proud to present Eileen Cooper's work as its first exhibition within this wider context.

Active since the 1970s, Cooper brings an internationally established and respected practice to Letitia Gallery. Trained at Goldsmiths College and the Royal College of Art in London, Cooper served as the first female Keeper of the Royal Academy of Arts from 2011 to 2017, and her work has been shown extensively in the United Kingdom, Europe, North America, and Asia. Cooper's sensual figuration makes use of symbology and visual metaphor, imbuing each work with a sense of magic realism. The subjects of her canvases engage deeply with the natural world, both corporeally and emotionally, exploring Cooper's unique phenomenology of a decidedly female experience.

For *Under the Same Moon*, Cooper has been inspired by Lebanese history and landscape, tracing elegant linkages between nature, the body, and cultural history. The cedar trees of Lebanon are a particularly evocative presence in a new series of paintings and drawings that relate to her longer-standing use of the tree as a motif. Mosaics also feature strongly, speaking to the intricacies of Lebanese art and design, and the historical connections that Cooper wishes to acknowledge in her life and work.

Letitia Gallery is very grateful to those collaborators who have made this exhibition possible; Monique Bellan, Sandra Higgins, Nadia von Maltzahn, Anna McNay, Malcolm Southward, Lara Tueini, Raya Tueini, Jasmin Pelham, Joumana Rizk and Lauren Wetmore. We extend our especial gratitude to Eileen Cooper whose curiosity, vision, and artistry have set a tremendously high bar for the future of Letitia Gallery.

Annie Vartivarian
DIRECTOR
LETITIA GALLERY
BEIRUT

UNDER THE SAME MOON

Anna McNay

They stood there marvelling at the forest, gazing at the lofty cedars[1]

When Eileen Cooper visited Lebanon in the autumn of 2017, she too, like the ancient Sumerian demigod and king Gilgamesh some three millennia earlier, was inspired by the lofty cedars. An artist whose work has long drawn on the symbolism of and mythology associated with trees, she was struck by their beauty, size, and stability. The artist and writer Emily Carr (1871–1945), describing her native Canadian cedars, noted: 'Cedars are terribly sensitive to change of time and light – sometimes they are bluish cold-green, then they turn yellow warm-green – sometimes their boughs flop heavy and sometimes float, then they are fairy as ferns and then they droop, heavy as heartaches.' Cooper, with a shared artist's sensibility, felt similarly enchanted. Upon her return to London, wanting to make works responding to these great trees, she set out to seek a nearby specimen, eventually chancing upon one in Greenwich Park, south London, which became her model, in as far as she ever uses one, helping to prompt as she began to draw.

Born in Glossop, Derbyshire, on the northern edge of the Peak District, in 1953, Cooper drew from an early age. At 17, she went to the nearby Ashton-under-Lyne College of Further Education, where she undertook a Foundation Course in Art and Design, after which she journeyed south to London, where she studied first at Goldsmiths College (1971–74) and then at the Royal College of Art, under Peter de Francia, graduating in 1977. She was elected a Royal Academician in 2001 and, a few years later, was appointed as the Head of Printmaking in the Royal Academy Schools. In 2011, she became Keeper of the Royal Academy (the first woman elected to the position since the RA began in 1768), a post she held until last summer, with full responsibility for the Royal Academy Schools. It was at the Royal Academy that Cooper met Annie Vartivarian, who invited her to exhibit at Letitia Gallery.

Throughout her career, Cooper has remained true to figuration. From her roots in objective drawing, particularly in the life room, the female figure has always been central to her practice. In her early works, this strong and assertive protagonist was usually unclothed, dressed, Cooper likes to say, in colour. Often alone, the figure – many have interpreted her as a self-portrait, but Cooper insists she is as much you or me as she is her – contorts to fill the space, dancing, climbing, balancing. Her props have included ladders, swings, boats, paint brushes, even a spade. The subject is usually equipped for work, yet sometimes she sleeps – here the potential to dream becomes the focus. Cooper's work, while rooted in the real world, remains full of imaginative possibilities and has often been described as 'magic realism'.

From her early years at Goldsmiths, sexuality was a major theme in Cooper's work. When she became a mother, this became linked with fertility and, in turn, creativity. Nurture became a thread running through her practice, with young boys (Cooper has two sons), and sometimes a man, accompanying her female protagonist. Animals, too, frequently recur: the tiger, for example, as a symbol of feminine passion. More recent works have become freer, the figures seeming more at ease in the composition, with a lighter sense of space and the potential for movement. Last summer, Cooper made a series of six linocuts illustrating the ballet *Giselle*. These exploited her talent for capturing poise, balance and movement to the full. There is also the underlying narrative throughout Cooper's practice of what it means to be a

Giselle series, 2017
Linocuts
Somerset Antique 280 gsm
Each 30.5 × 40.5 cm
Edition: 25 each
From top left:
Compose, *Curve*
Release, *Glimpse*
Centre, *Extend*

woman – repeatedly piecing together a developing identity, as artist, mother and wife, and, latterly, as an independent woman, whose children have flown the coop, and who, having stepped down from her role as Keeper of the Royal Academy, now has the time to re-devote herself entirely to her art making. This sense of new-found freedom, of exploration, of self-assertion, and of looking back at history and placing oneself in the larger world narrative pervades Cooper's recent work. In *Blue Duet* (2016), for example, the female figure, in her blue dress, appears to float upwards, becoming one with the sky, sweet-scented flowers strewn all around. In *In the Moment* (2015), the roses symbolise creativity, simultaneously making reference to the Grimm fairy tale *Snow White and Rose Red*, with fairy tales and mythology constituting another cornerstone of her practice.

Cooper's swansong as Keeper was to curate the Royal Academy's annual Summer Exhibition 2017, a salon-style open exhibition, this time with a focus on the international. One outcome was that she was invited by Nadia von Maltzahn to speak at a symposium on 'Contextualising the Art Salon in the Arab Region' at the Orient Institut in Beirut (27–28 October 2017). This, together with a growing relationship with Vartivarian, led to Cooper's visit to Lebanon, and a whirlwind tour of Beirut, Byblos, and the surrounding areas. In her typical manner, as someone who has described artists as 'sponges', Cooper absorbed each new experience and sensation, sight, sound, smell and taste, turning it over unconsciously in her mind and feeding it into her practice.

Having early on studied rigorous life drawing methods, Cooper nowadays draws largely from the imagination, describing it as a release not having to engage with a model, working 'by instinct not intellect'. And so, on her return to London, she began to imagine, seeking here and there the odd prop – including the Greenwich Park cedar tree – and also drawing heavily on Nina Jidejian's book, *Lebanon: A Mosaic of Cultures* (2001). She describes this as going back to her early artistic encounters, when she engaged with reproductions of works by Monet and Picasso, long before seeing the paintings themselves in Parisian museums. Two works in progress, which had been standing in her studio since before her Middle Eastern experience, were brought back out, infused with new Mediterranean light, and became *Cedars, New Romantic* (2017) and *Lemon Tree* (2017). In each, the female figure sits, bare-footed, connected with the red soil, gazing dreamily. The oil paint is applied drily with a brush so that the effect is almost pastel-like, evoking a sense of warmth, even beneath the silvery moon in the former, and the scent of the cedar mixed with the lemon oil becomes a heady mix.

The moon was in fact another key starting point for this new body of work, with the title of the exhibition, 'Under the Same Moon', for Cooper referring to ideas of timelessness and universality, of looking back through history and across geography at different cultures, all of which are united under the same moon. The name Lebanon derives from the same Phoenician etymological root, lbn ('white'), as the Semitic moon-goddess Lebanah, and, as mentioned, folklore, mythology, fairy tales, and even Bible stories, all underpin Cooper's practice. 'These were my first stories and I loved them,' she says. 'And later [I] read them to my own children.' Her work is allegorical and not simply anecdotal, and such references render her motif-filled imagery both personal and universal. A series of linocuts made in 2016, 'Wildwood', explore such symbolism, as, to an extent, do the earlier paintings *Rabbit and Fox* (2012) and *Shadow Fox* (2012), depicting the universal play of using the shadow of your hands and fingers to make a creature come to life on the wall. Cooper came across an image of this in a book and recalls how it immediately struck a chord: 'Things can come at you from a sideways glance, and connect with something you've forgotten about'. These playful acts feel, for her, like miniature dramas, and this

construct of creating a stage set is what her work thrives on – allowing the imagination to run wild and giving it the space to enact its outpourings and to quasi-re-enact some well-known and well-loved ancient tales.

In the painting that bears the same title as the exhibition, *Under the Same Moon* (2017), Cooper's contemporary protagonist gazes, like Narcissus into the pond, across time and space, at a mosaic found in the floor of a small chapel attached to the temple of Eshmun, the Phoenician god of fertility and healing, near the el-Awali river, two kilometres northeast of Sidon in south-western Lebanon. Silently, in this place of sanctuary, she pieces together the tiny shards of herself, filling the gaps, recreating herself from history, creating a new whole. 'I loved the idea of these mosaics surviving over thousands of years,' Cooper says. 'Looking back into history, walking in others' footsteps, under the same moon…' With her new found freedom to travel, Lebanon is the ideal starting point for Cooper, since, as a crossing point of western and eastern cultures, its mixed identity is as pieced together as her own.

Another work depicts a mosaic of Bacchus, the Roman god of agriculture, wine and fertility, copied from one that decorated the floor of the Roman theatre in Byblos. In this instance, it is the male figure who sees himself reflected, while the female reaches instead for the branches of the tree, etched into the stone wall, growing around the window and out towards the light. In the third mosaic-based painting, itself entitled *Mosaic* (2017), the female figure dances atop a mosaic of animals, behind her the turquoise sea meeting the cyan sky – colours quite different from those of Cooper's native land. She recalls the challenge of capturing the fused light of a Mediterranean country in which the sea is so present, with its sunny weather and cool interiors, and the longing to kick off your shoes and walk on those cool stone – or mosaic – floors, just as in this painting. The motif of a missing shoe occurs frequently in Cooper's work, although she cannot explain exactly what it means. A certain kind of freedom, for sure, as well as enabling connection between the sole of the foot and the earth. This metaphor of being able to put down her roots is repeated in both *The Cedar Tree* (2017) and *Cedar Cone* (2017), where the bare-footed female figure seems at one with nature, in touch with the earth, and, in the former, equally in touch with the pink sky, which bathes her completely, giving a glow to the exposed skin on her face and limbs.

Once dubbed 'Britain's new young nudist superstar'[2], Cooper has, of late, tended towards clothing her figures, perhaps, she suggests, as the sexuality so present in her early works has become less pressing. In all of these new works the figures are clothed – the females in diaphanous blues and yellows: the colours of the sea, sky, and sun – but, as with the dancers in the 'Giselle' series, the strength of their bodies is apparent through their garments.

As mentioned, another longstanding concern of Cooper's practice has been motherhood and her children. *Sanctuary* (2017) therefore, with a small boy seated at his mother's feet, a dove on his right knee, could almost be mistaken for a much earlier work (in which birds also featured large). Actually, however, it relates to the custom of dedicating a statuette of a child – usually reclined or seated, holding a dove in the right hand – to Eshmun (the aforementioned god of fertility and healing), and then purposely breaking it to simulate the sacrifice of a child. Fragments of eleven such statuettes of boy children were found in the temple enclosure, amidst the sloping orange groves, where it is supposed they were cast ceremoniously into the sacred canal. Eshmun, so legend goes, castrated himself and died in an attempt to escape the unwanted attentions of the goddess, Astarte, who had fallen unrequitedly in love with him. She, however, brought him back to life and gave him immortality. Accordingly, such sacrifices were hoped to bring health and healing for (sick) children. As Cooper notes, the idea of asking for good health and protection for your children is something that all parents universally understand: the health of your child comes

Wildwood series, 2014
Linocuts
Each 33 × 23 cm (43.5 × 32 cm)
BFK Rives 280 gsm: tan, grey and cream
Edition: 25 each
From top left:
Winter, Willow, Narcissus
Constellation, Real Spring, Harvest, Rosemary
Daphnae, Elder, Diana

intrinsically before everything else.

In *Peace* (2017), the young man curled up under the cedar tree is perhaps one of Cooper's grown-up sons. Protected as the figure is by leaves, the image is reminiscent of *Babes in the Wood*, but the tree is here clearly also a place of shelter – something Cooper felt herself when she stood under her cedar tree. Even allowing for Cooper's deliberate – and often sublime – distortions of scale, the tree in the painting has some growing left to do and the question also arises of who is protecting whom, for the man, curled up as he is, seems to be protecting the roots as much as he himself is being protected by the tree's bough. This bidirectional duality is a reflection on Cooper's own experience of motherhood, as something nurturing and nourishing to both the other (the child) and the self (the mother). 'Having a child also has an amazing impact on your body so then creativity and fertility really seem to become intertwined,' she says. 'And nurture. Nurturing kids, nurturing your creativity, finding time for yourself to express the things that are going on. All of that really fed into my work, really in a very positive way. That's something people don't talk about very often about motherhood: how much it really nourishes you, even though it really exhausts you.'

The interaction between figure and tree – whereby two become one – is explored further in Cooper's new drawings as well. *Sapling* (2017) and, to an even greater extent, *Shelter* (2017) might be seen as developments of one of Cooper's earliest and most metaphorical works, *The Sad Tree* (1983), in which she draws the woman as a tree, budding, growing and reaching beyond the frame for the sky. For this, Cooper was inspired by a tiny painting in the National Gallery, London, by Antonio del Pollaiuolo – *Apollo and Daphne* (1470) – depicting a female figure, Daphne, reaching up, with both arms sprouting branches. In a striking parallel to the attempts of Eshmun, Daphne is pleading with the gods to turn her into a tree so that she might escape the unwanted attentions of Apollo. He, however, uses his powers of eternal youth and immortality to render her evergreen. Cooper has long been inspired by this story of transformation, as well as by the symbolism of the tree as something both grounded and stable, while reaching up for newer and better things. Whereas the figure in *The Sad Tree* still struggles and strives to attain, her contemporary mirror in *Shelter*, while her arms are still outstretched, seems content and fulfilled, a far happier tree. In fact, the tree and the woman become one in such a harmonious way as to call to mind the words of the Elizabethan poet Edmund Spenser, dedicated to the Cedar of Lebanon:

High on a hill a goodly cedar grewe,
Of wond'rous length and straight proportion,
That farre abroad her daintie odours threwe;
'Mongst all the daughters of proud Libanon,
Her match in beautie was not anie one.[3]

Long before the Cedar of Lebanon was introduced to Europe in the late 1700s, it was already well known through legends and proverbs. The usual Hebrew word for cedar, 'erez', is of uncertain origin, derived most likely from some dialect of Arabic, and probably meaning 'mighty'. It is mentioned numerous times in the Old Testament, with Hebrew priests being ordered by Moses to use cedar bark as a treatment for leprosy; King Solomon procuring cedar timber to build the temple and palace in Jerusalem; and the prophet Isaiah using the Cedar of Lebanon as a metaphor for the pride of the world. Psalm 104:16 even notes that God personally planted the first Cedars of Lebanon.[4] In the Qur'an, there are four references to the word 'sidrah', most commonly translated as 'lote-tree', but argued convincingly by Dr M.I.H. Farooqi to refer to the Cedar of Lebanon, with its greater height, strength and majesty.[5] The Cedar of Lebanon has been important to various civilisations throughout history. The trees were used by the ancient Phoenicians for building trade and military ships, houses and temples. The Egyptians used its wood to carve their sarcophagi and

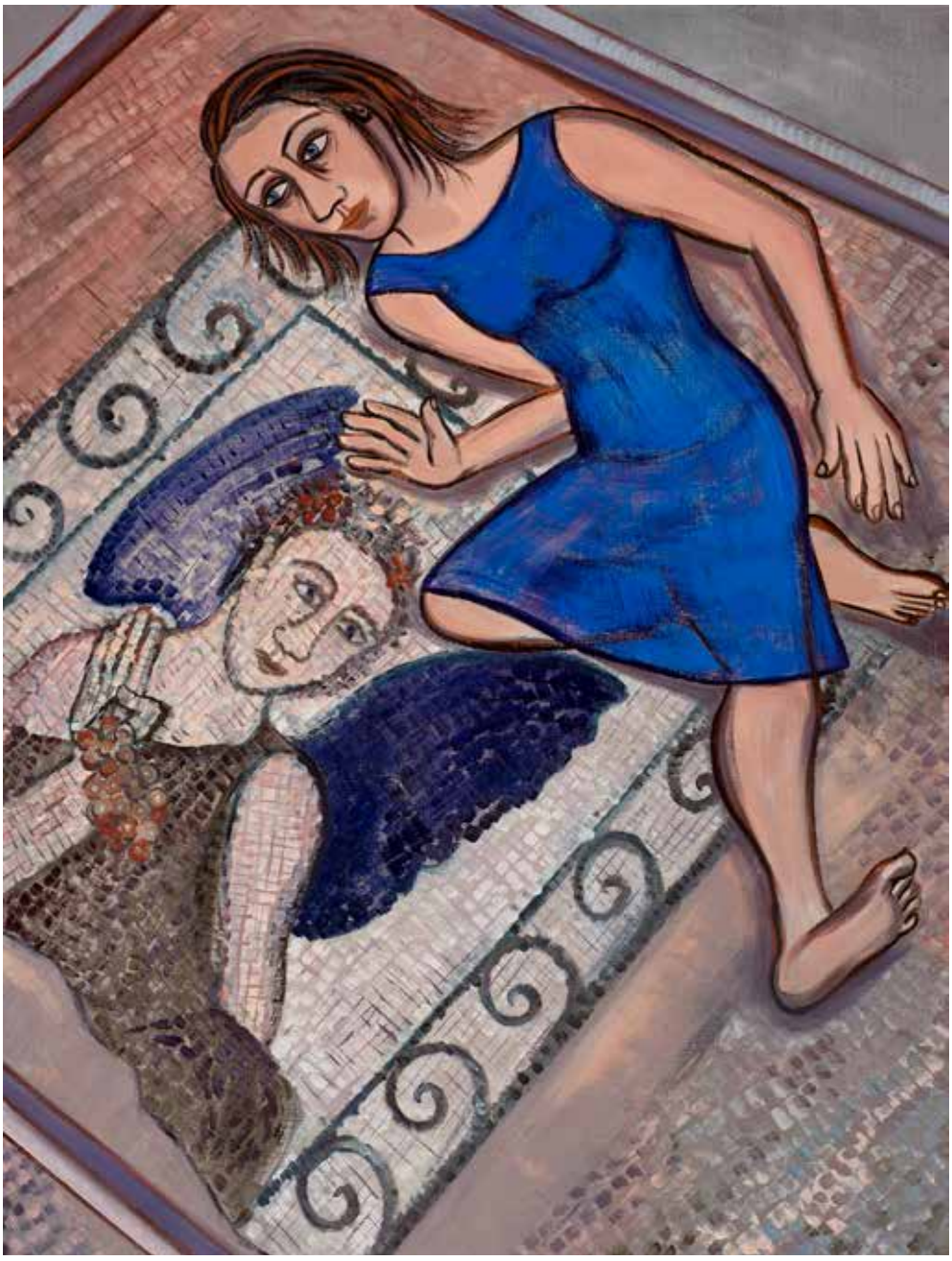
The Sad Tree, 1983
Conté, charcoal and pastel on paper
63.5 × 47 cm

Putting Down Roots, 1985
Oil on canvas
243.3 × 182.2 cm

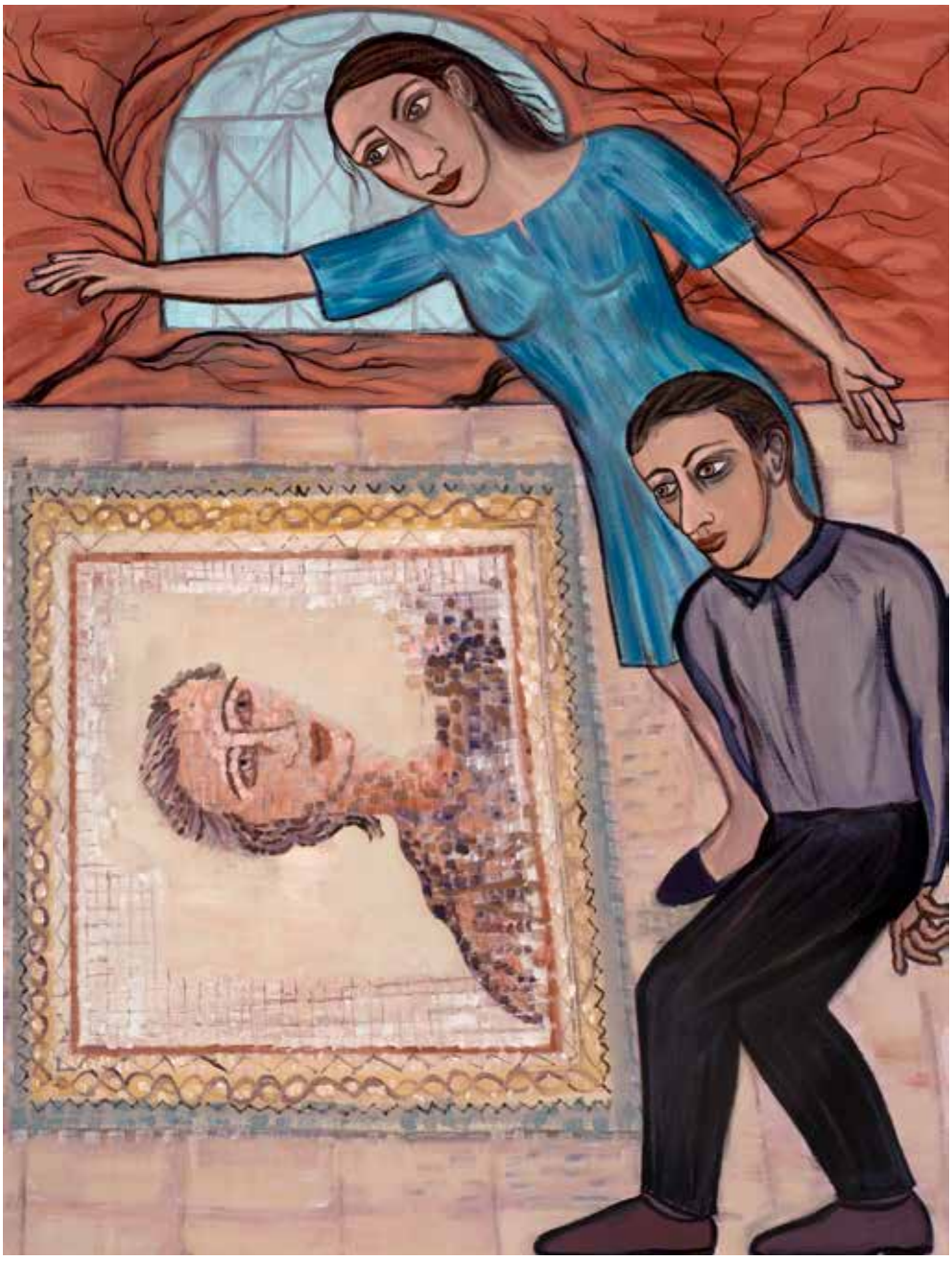
sun-ships, its resin for mummification, and its sawdust was found in the pharaohs' tombs. Nowadays the tree is the emblem of Lebanon and features on its flag. This rich history informs Cooper's response to her visit to Lebanon, with seven beautiful drawings and five paintings all featuring the cedar tree. And yet there is no suggestion of any strain, or of any detouring from the natural course of development of her practice, since trees have always been so integral to it. Just as *Shelter* might be a contemporary version of her earlier *The Sad Tree*, so might Peace depict a later version (with a grown-up son) of *Putting Down Roots* (1985), in which both sons, here just babies, shelter under the leaves of a youthful tree, itself entwined around the mother's legs. While perfectly able to stand alone, there is nevertheless a thread that runs through all of Cooper's works, uniting them with common themes, motifs, references and imaginings.

It is her two new large pastel and charcoal drawings, *Forest* (2017) and *Blessing* (2017), that best bring together the key aspects of Cooper's practice as a whole and this series of work resulting from her visit to Lebanon. This is perhaps not surprising since, for Cooper, drawing has always been the most significant part of her practice. 'If somebody took everything else away from me, I'd say: "Leave me drawing!"' she says frankly. 'It's immediate, you can do it anywhere, you can challenge yourself with materials and papers, you can tear it and reassemble it, it's so flexible.' For Cooper, the materials are as much a part of the work as the imagery itself, and she also speaks of being 'stimulated' by the paper she chooses and of the 'sheer pleasure' of working with it. In this instance, she chose a tan-coloured 280g BFK-Rives printmaking paper, which she had used before for some of the 'Wildwood' prints, but never for drawing. Working on coloured paper, the pastel colours that she then picks up are already keyed in – here, a natural earthy tone for the trees and soil, but, in *Forest*, also the silvery shadows of moonlight amidst the branches, and, in *Blessing*, as in *The Cedar Tree*, the pink of the sky picked up and enhanced in the fleshy tones of the baby's skin – for here, as indeed in *Sanctuary*, the statuette verges on becoming a living, breathing baby boy. He, and the surrounding pine cones, are symbols of the future generation, fertility and motherhood, while in *Forest* (as also in the painting *Restore*, 2017), this idea is conveyed by the planting of a new sapling. As a result of longstanding deforestation, the Lebanese Environment Ministry set out a 10-year plan in 2010 to increase the national forest coverage by 20 per cent, which is equivalent to the planting of two million new trees each year, plus the creation of several nature reserves. For Cooper, whose work deals so much with ideas of nurturing, this is as if someone had answered any prayers for healing she might have submitted to Eshmun. As the forests are regenerated and nurtured, so too are both her figures seeking sanctuary and protection beneath their boughs, and her Daphne-figures, seeking to ground themselves, put down roots, and yet simultaneously reach to the sky for the greater goods still to come. As aptly as the Cedar of Lebanon represents its native country, so too might it represent the work – and protagonists – of Eileen Cooper.

[1] *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet V, 'The Combat with Humbaba', verse 1–2
[2] Alison Beckett, 'Without Clothes They are Timeless', *Punch*, 10 February 1989, pp. 40–41
[3] Edmund Spenser, *Visions of the World's Vanitie*, Stanza 7
[4] Psalm 104:16: 'The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted'
[5] M.I.H. Farooqi, *Plants of the Qur'an*, 9th edition, 2011, Sidrah Publisher, Lucknow

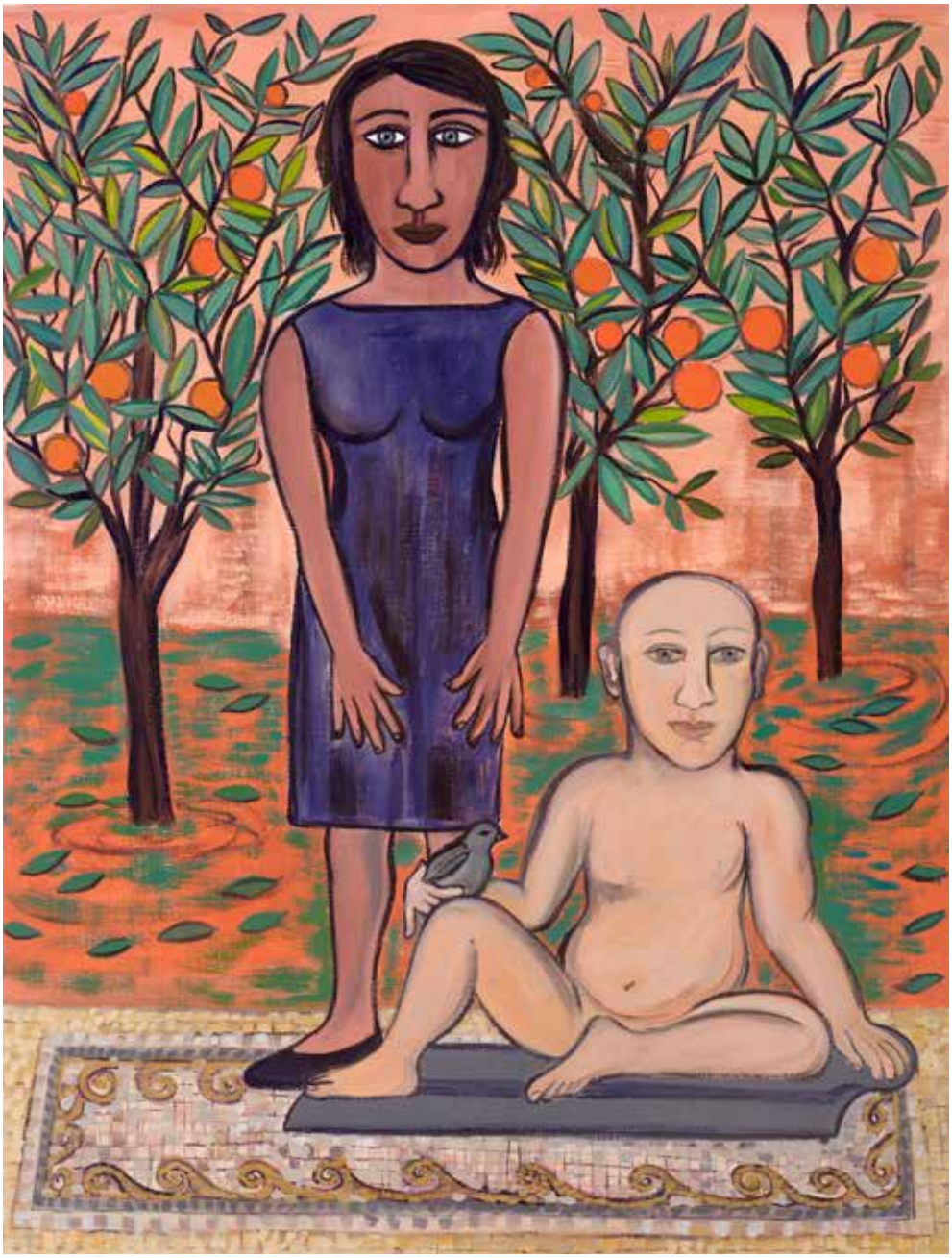


Under the Same Moon, 2017
Oil on canvas
122 × 92 cm



Opposite
Mosaic, 2017
Oil on canvas
122 × 92 cm

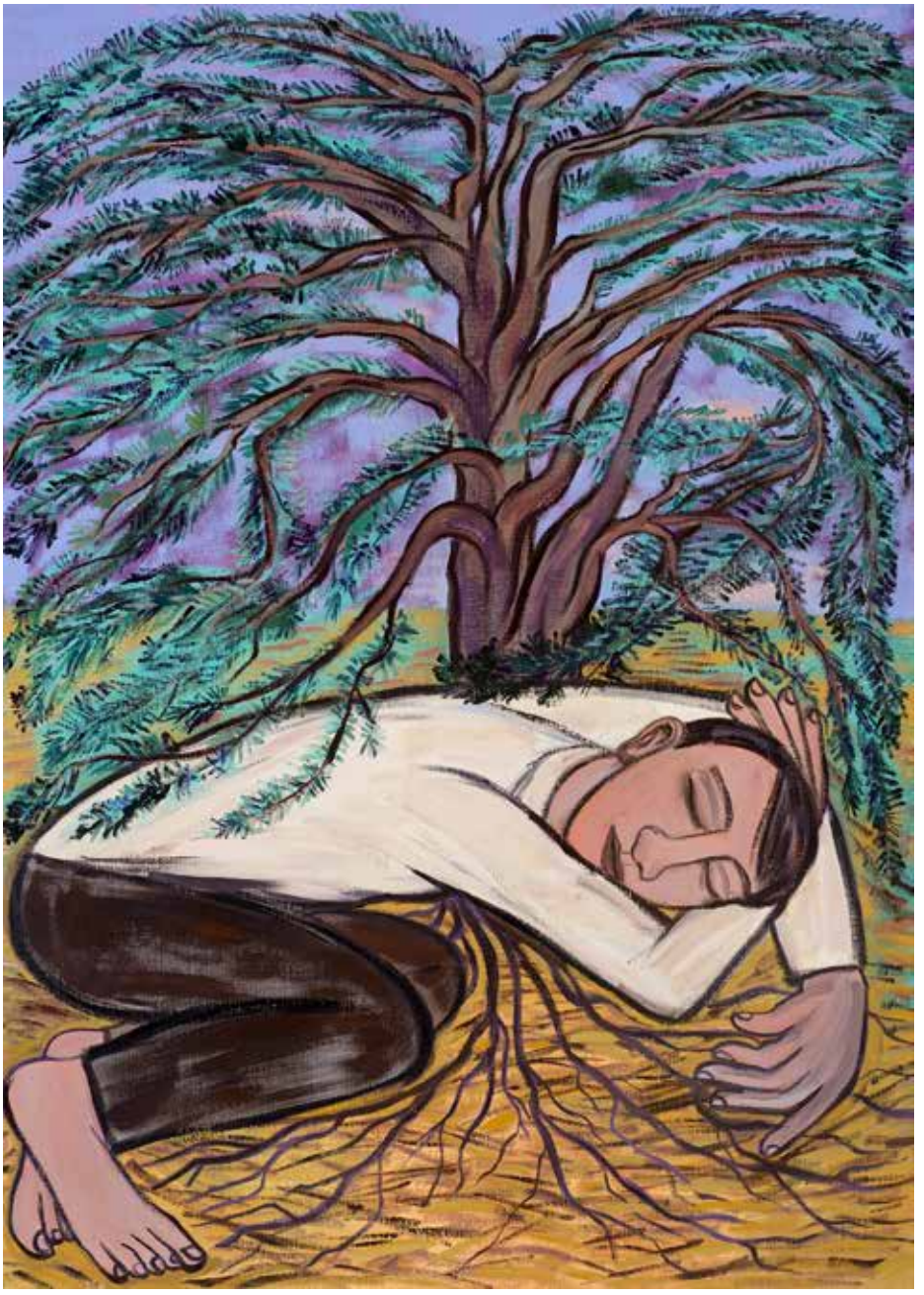
Bacchus, 2017
Oil on canvas
122 × 92 cm

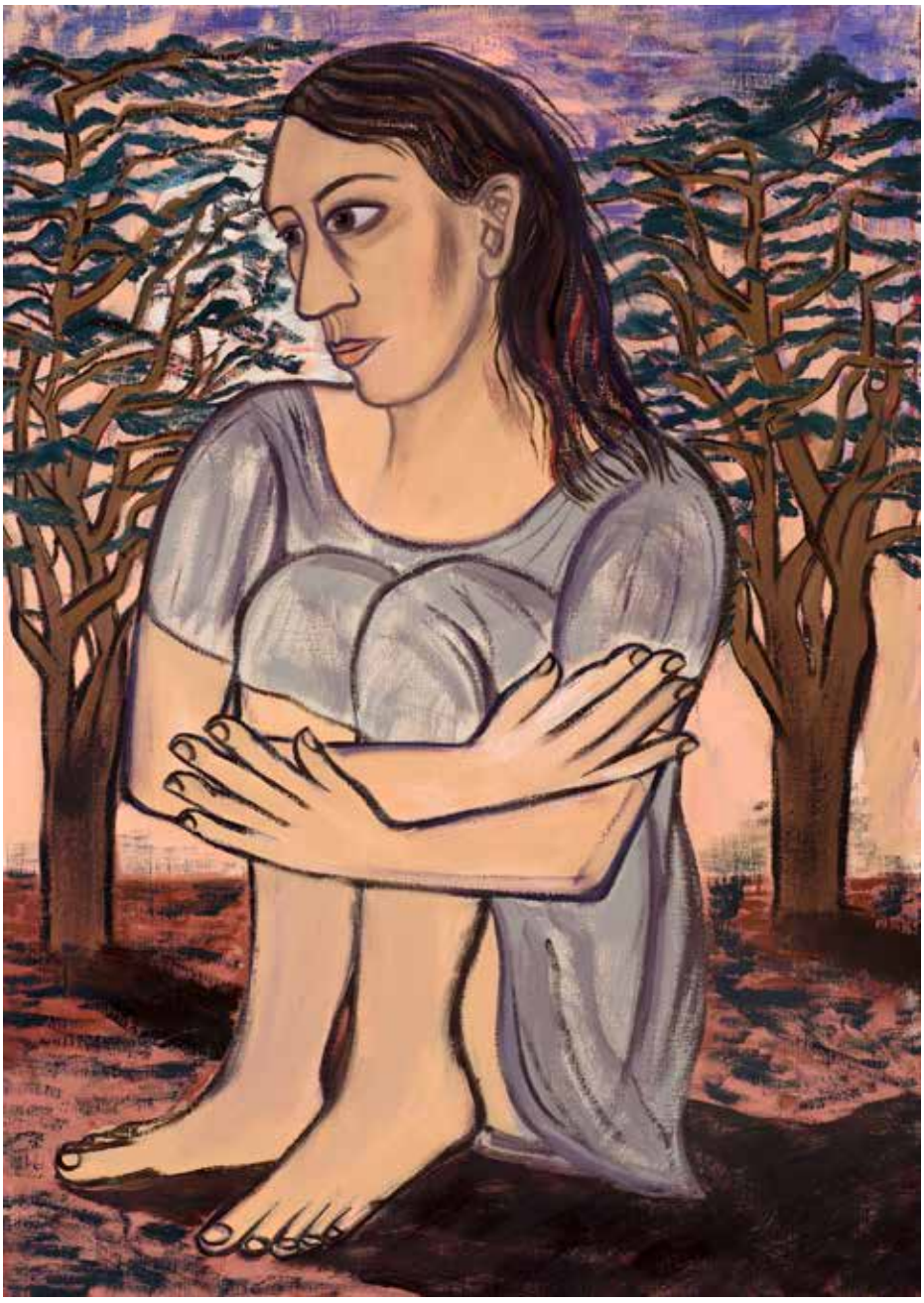


Sanctuary, 2017
Oil on canvas
122 × 92 cm

Opposite
Cedar Cone, 2017
Oil on canvas
122 × 92 cm

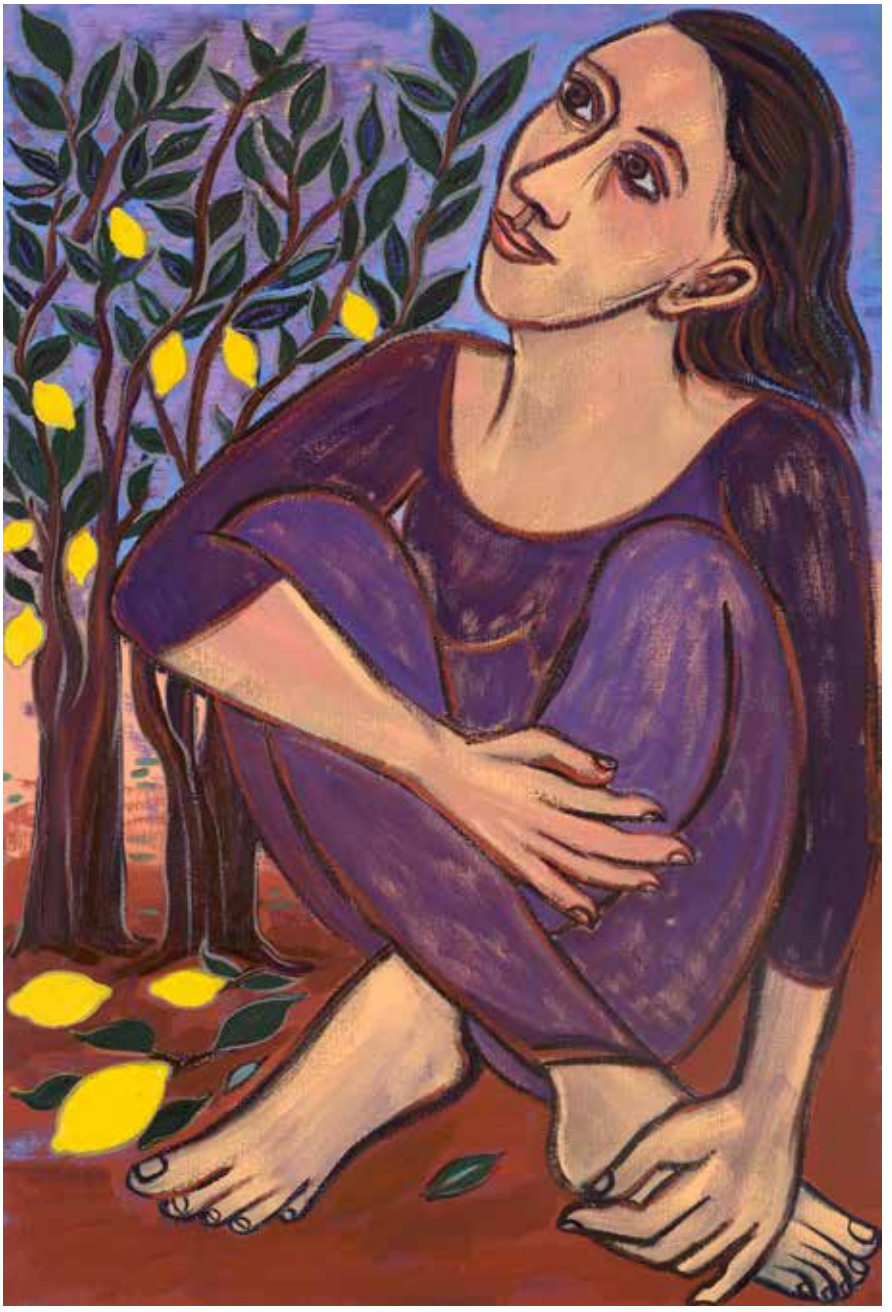
The Cedar Tree, 2017
Oil on canvas
122 × 92 cm





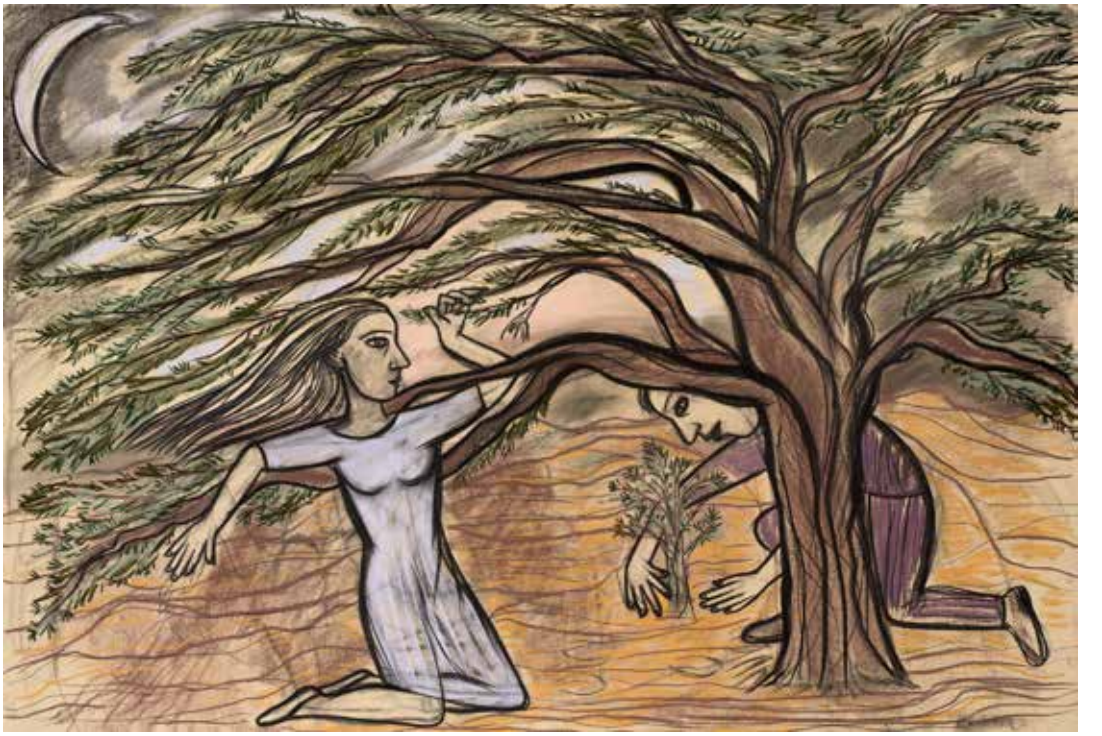
Opposite
Peace, 2017
Oil on canvas
107 × 76 cm

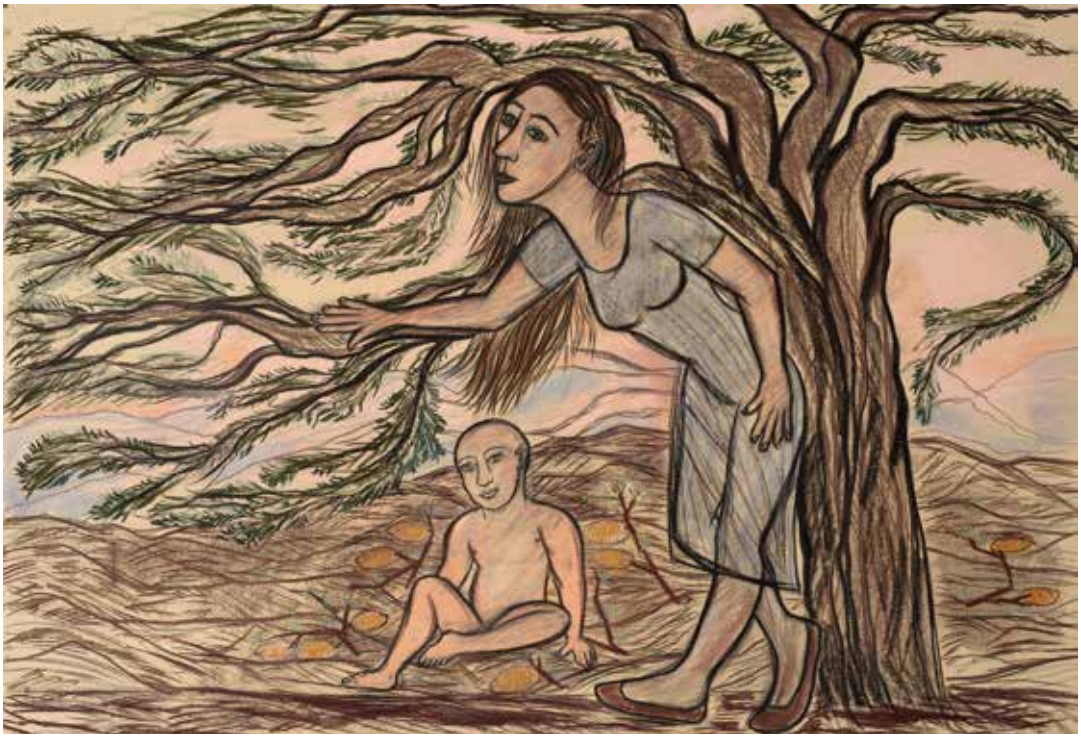
Cedars, New Romantic, 2017
Oil on canvas
107 × 76 cm



Opposite
Lemon Tree, 2017
Oil on canvas
90 × 62 cm

Restore, 2017
Oil on canvas
107 × 76 cm



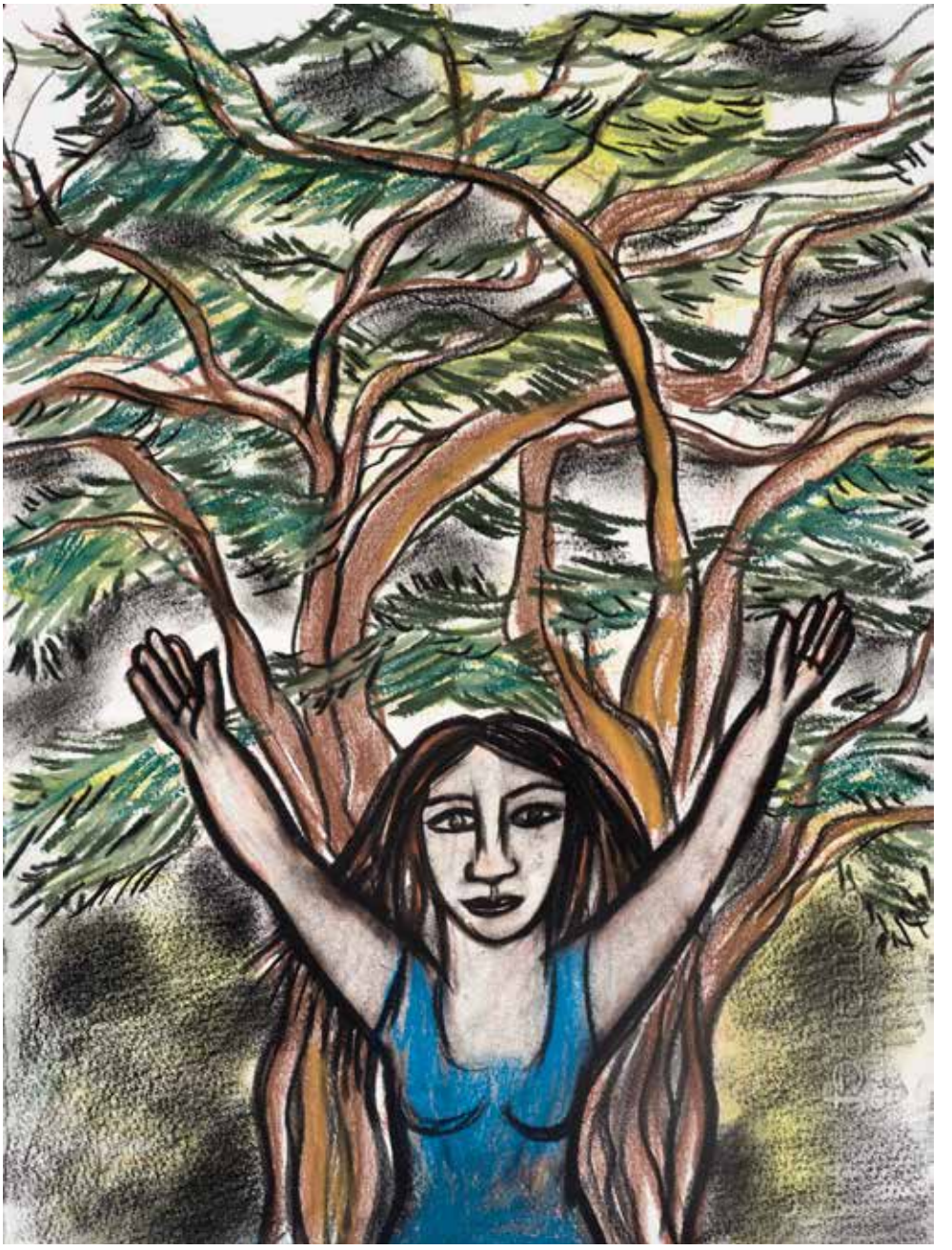


Opposite
Forest, 2017
Charcoal and pastel on paper
76.5 × 113 cm

Blessing, 2017
Charcoal and pastel on paper
76.5 × 113 cm

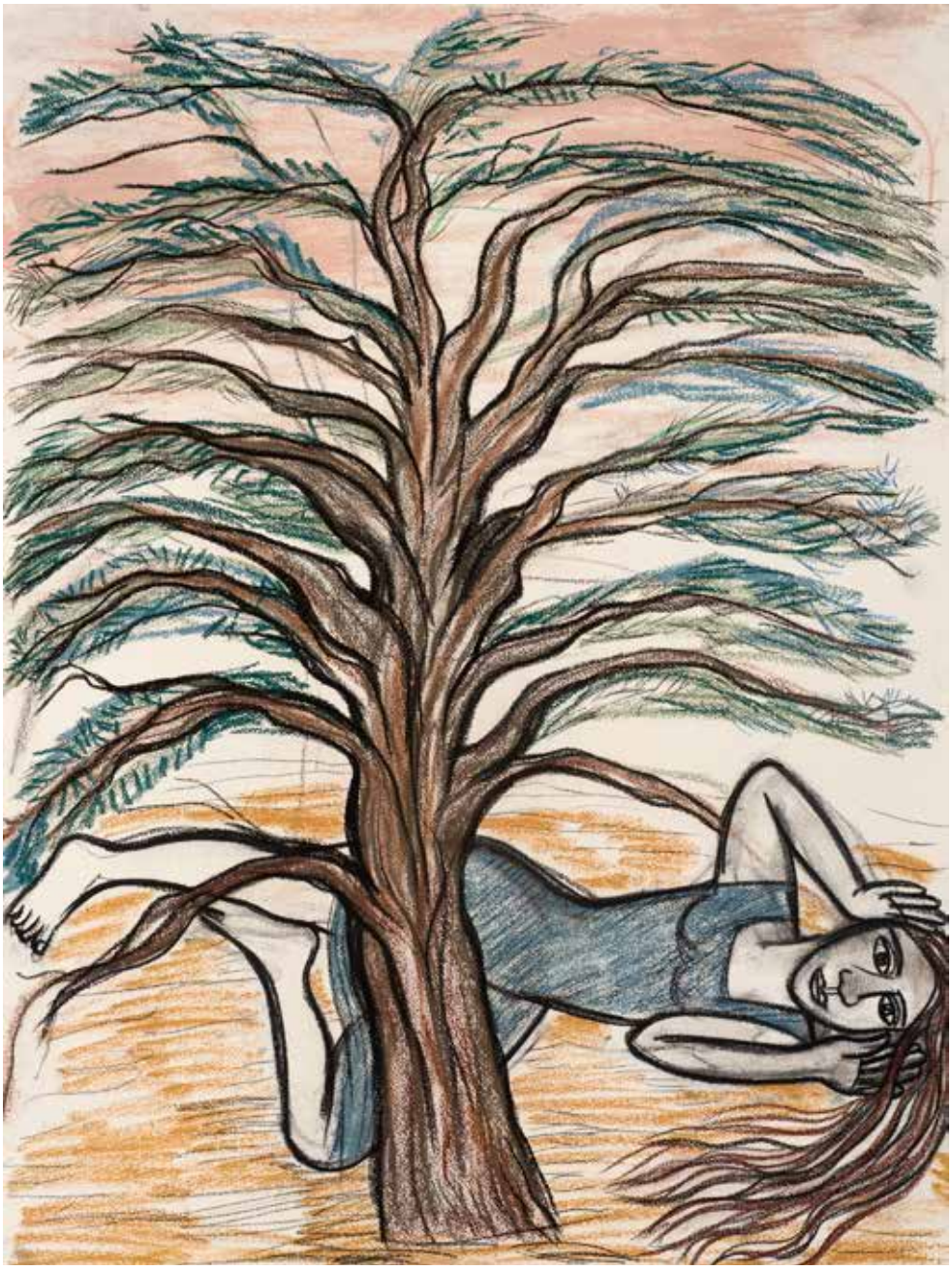
Opposite
Refuge, 2017
Charcoal, ink and pastel on paper
38 × 28 cm

Sapling, 2017
Charcoal, ink and pastel on paper
38 × 28 cm



Opposite
Shelter, 2017
Charcoal, ink and pastel on paper
38 × 28 cm

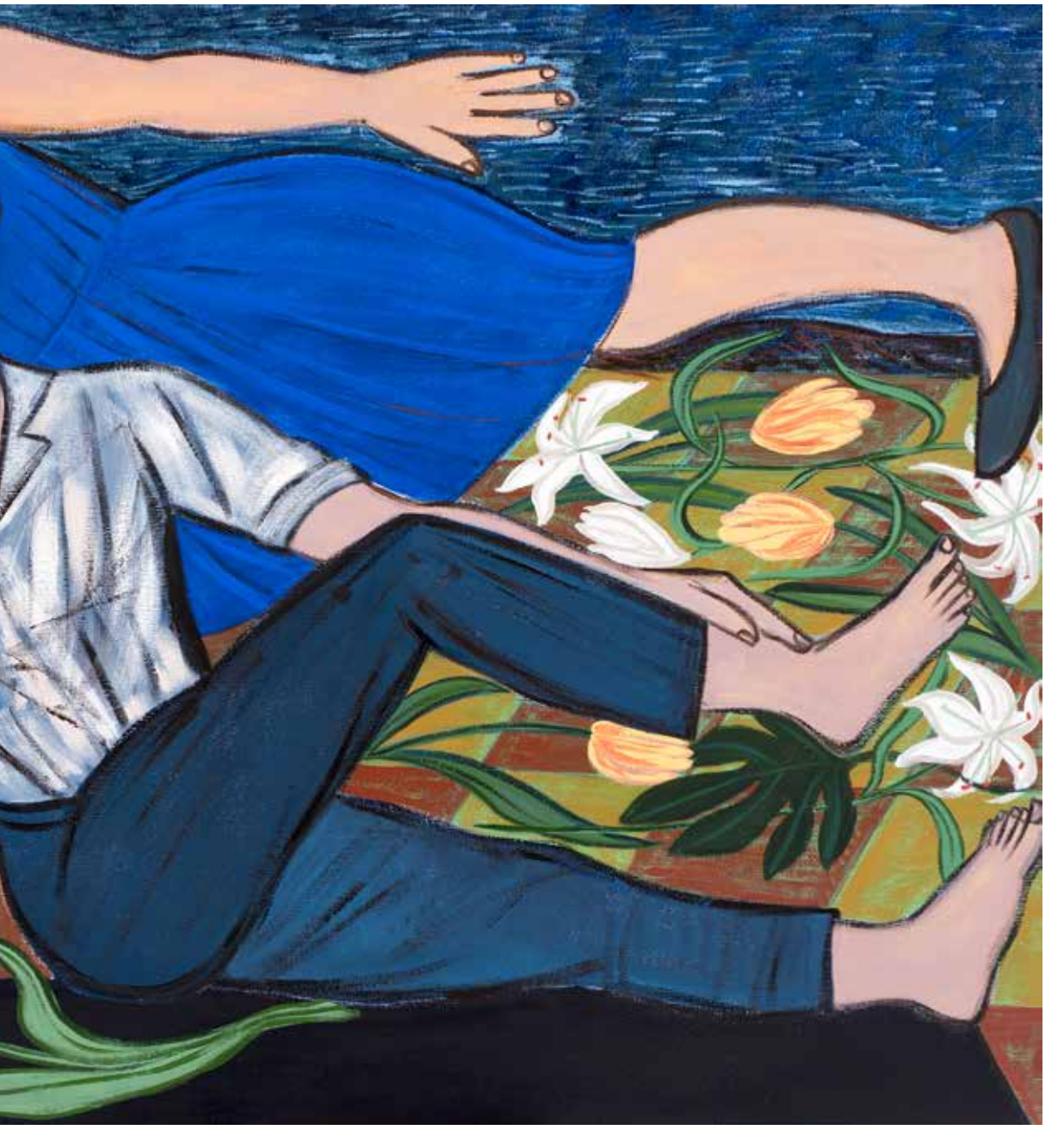
Shade, 2017
Charcoal, ink and pastel on paper
38 × 28 cm



Shivering Cedar, 2017
Charcoal and pastel on paper
75 × 56 cm

P. 38–39
Rabbit and Fox, 2012
Oil on canvas
122 × 153 cm

Shadow Fox, 2012
Oil on canvas
122 × 92 cm



Blue Duet, 2016
Oil on canvas
106.5 × 162 cm

In the Moment, 2016
Oil on canvas
122 × 153 cm

Opposite
Night Music, 2016
Linocut
142 × 95 cm

Diva, 2016
Linocut
142 × 95 cm

Eileen Cooper OBE RA

Career
1953, born Glossop, Derbyshire
1970–71 Ashton-under-Lyne College of Further 1971–74 Goldsmiths College, London
1974–77 Royal College of Art, London
1977–2000 Visiting lecturer at Art Schools throughout the UK, including Falmouth School of Art, Leicester Polytechnic, St. Martin's School of Art, Camberwell School of Art and City and Guilds, London
1994–2006 Part time Lecturer in Printmaking at Royal College of Art
2001 Elected Royal Academician
2002 Honorary Member of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers
2005–2010 Head of Printmaking, Royal Academy Schools
2006 Fellow, Royal College of Art
2011–2017 Elected Keeper of the Royal Academy
2011 Honorary Fellow, Royal College of Art
2014 Honorary Doctor of Arts, Southampton Solent University
2016 Honorary Fellow, Murray Edwards College, Cambridge
2016 OBE for services to Art and Art Education

Selected solo exhibitions
2018 *Under the Same Moon*, Letitia Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
2018 *Night Music (or Labour of Love)*, The Cornhall, Diss, Norfolk
2017 *Till the Morning Comes*, The Fine Art Society, London
2017 *Eileen Cooper: A Woman's Skin*, Wolfson College, Cambridge
2016–2017 *Hide and Seek, Drawing 1977–2014*, touring to Swindon Museum and Art Gallery and The Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate
2016 *Love-in-Idleness*, Rook and Raven Gallery, London
2016 *Between the Lines*, Galerie MIRO, Prague, Czech Republic
2015 *Hide and Seek, Drawing 1977–2014,* Royal Academy of Arts, Tennant Gallery and Fine Rooms
2015 *Garden*, Rabley Dawing Centre, Wiltshire
2014 *Eileen Cooper RA, Paintings and Works on Paper*, Atelier Rose Gray, Hale, Cheshire
2013 *Edge to Edge*, Art First, London
2012 *Aldeburgh Beach Lookout Project*, Suffolk
2011 *Showing Off*, Art First, London
2010 *Collages*, Sir Hugh Casson Room, Royal Academy, London
New Work, Arts Club, London
2009 *Dreams of Elsewhere*, Art First, London
Crosscurrent, Brook Gallery, Budleigh Salterton
2008 *Crossing*, Art First Projects, London
Taking Stock: The Printmaking Of Eileen Cooper RA, Clifford Chance, London and The Cornerstone Gallery, Liverpool Hope University
2007 *Deeper Water*, Art First, London
2006 *An Encore: Eileen Cooper*, Art First Projects, London
2005 *Time of Your Life*, Art First London
2004 *Subject Matter – Paintings Drawings & Prints*, Glasgow Print Studio
2003 *Eileen Cooper, 50*, Art First, London
Eileen Cooper at 50, A Celebration, Art First, New York
2002 *Passions: New Work on Paper*, Art First, London
Passions, Art First, New York
2000 Raw Material: Eileen Cooper at Dulwich Picture Gallery, London
Raw Material Part II, Art First, London,
Homecoming – The Prints Of Eileen Cooper, Clifford Chance, London
1999 *Second Skin: Eileen Cooper in the 80s and 90s*, touring to Wolverhampton, Nottingham and Eastbourne
1998 *Open Secrets*, Art First, London
1998 *Graphic Work*, Bridport Arts Centre, Dorset
1997 *Graphic Works*, The Gallery in Cork Street with Benjamin Rhodes, London
1996–97 New Graphic Works, touring Darlington, Harrogate and Scarborough
1995 Bohun Gallery, Henley-on-Thames
1994 *Eileen Cooper at Sadlers Wells Theatre*, London
Shapechanger, Benjamin Rhodes Gallery, London
1993–94 *Lifelines*, touring Lancaster, Exeter, Newcastle, Brighton, Sheffield and Warwick
1992 *Drawings*, Benjamin Rhodes Gallery, London
1990 *Paintings, Drawings and Prints*, Benjamin Rhodes Gallery, London
1989 *Works on Paper*, Benjamin Rhodes Gallery, London
1988 Benjamin Rhodes Gallery, London
1987 Artsite Gallery, Bath
1986 Castlefield Gallery, Manchester
1985 Blond Fine Art, London, Artspace gallery, Aberdeen
1983 Blond Fine Art, London
1982 Blond Fine Art, London
1981 House Gallery, London
1979 AIR Gallery, London

Selected group exhibitions
2017 Winter Group Show, Linden Hall Studio, Deal, Kent
You see me like a UFO, Marcelle Joseph Projects, Ascot, England
Good Nature, Candida Stevens Gallery, Chichester.
Cut, Glasgow Print Studio, Glasgow, Scotland
Mono: an Exhibition of Unique Prints, Flowers Gallery, London
Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, coordinated by Eileen Cooper, Royal Academy of Arts, London

Women Artists: a Conversation, The Fine Art Society, London
2016 *Strange Worlds: The Vision of Angela Carter*, Royal West of England Academy, Bristol
Towards Night, curated by Tom Hammick, Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne.
Surface Cutting, Keepers House, Royal Academy of Arts
Icon, Candida Stevens Fine Art, Chichester.
2015 *She Came to Stay*, Rook and Raven Gallery, London
The Royal Academy at Wolfson, Wolson College, Cambridge
Good Figures, Mall Galleries, London and Jerwood Gridshell Space, Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, West Sussex
Delineations, Drawing at Art First, London
Figuratively Speaking, Heike Moras Art and Marcelle Joseph Projects, London
2014 *Master Drawings*, Beaux Arts, London
Marcelle Joseph Projects, At Home Salon
Jerwood Drawing Prize 1994-2014: Artist as Selector, Jerwood Gallery, Hastings.
Royal Academy Summer Exhibition (selector and exhibitor)
Underexposed: Female Artists and the Medium of Print, Studio 3 Gallery, University of Kent
Wildwood, Rabley Drawing Centre, Wiltshire
Embrace, The Wilson, Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum
2013-14 *RA Portfolio Diamond Jubilee Gift*, Queens Gallery, Buckingham Palace, London
2012-13 *Encounter, The Royal Academy in the Middle East*, Cultural Village Foundation-Katara, Doha, Qatar
The Mechanical Hand: 25yrs of Printmaking at Paupers Press, Kings Place, Gallery, London
2012 *Eileen Cooper & Sara Lee: The Peninsula Project*, Stoneman Gallery, Penzance
Encounter, The Royal Academy in Asia, Institute of Contemporary Arts, Singapore
Twelve Royal Academicians in Edinburgh, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh
2011 *Contemporary Monotypes*, Glasgow Print Studio
20 Years, Art First, London
Print, Stoneman Gallery, Penzance
The Discerning Eye, Mall galleries, London (selector and exhibitor)
Bite, Mall galleries, London
2010 *Academicians* (with David Mach, Neil Macpherson and Michael Visocchi), Glasgow Print Studio
Originals, Mall Galleries, London
2009 *ZOOM*, Art First, London
A Tribute to Hugh Stoneman Master Printer, Lemon St Gallery, Truro
Confluence, APT Gallery London and Stoneman Gallery Penzance (curator)
Originals, Mall Galleries, London (selector and exhibitor)
2008 *Dialogue*, Art First, London
Hugh Stoneman – Master Printer, Tate St. Ives, Cornwall
10 (The Chris Orr Printmaking Years), Gulbenkian Galleries, Royal College of Art, London
2007 *Leben Lieben*, RISE Gallery, Berlin
2006 *Translations – Re-working from the National Gallery*, Art First, London
Drawing Breath – 10 Years of the Jerwood Annual, Wimbledon College of Art, London and (touring UK and Sydney, Australia)
2004 *The Jerwood Drawing Prize*, Jerwood Space, London
Tradition and Innovation, Scarborough Museum and Art Gallery
Visual Wit, Royal Academy, London
2003 *Art First in Print*, Art First, London
The Divine Comedy, Art Space Gallery, London
E'xPress – Printmaking From The Royal College of Art, Royal College of Art, London
1999–2000 *Hand To Hand* (with Julian Stair), Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead and Art First, London
1998 *The Contemporary Print Show Part I*, Barbican Centre, London
1997 *The Body Politik*, Wolverhampton Art Gallery
1996 *Spirit on the Staircase, 100 Years of Print Publishing*, Royal College of Art, Victoria & Albert Museum, London
1994–95 *An American Passion, The Susan Kasen Summer & Robert D Summer Collection of Contemporary Painting*, McLellan Galleries, Glasgow and Royal College of Art, London
1993 *Contemporary Art at the Courtauld*, Courtauld Institute, London
1992 *The New Patrons, Twentieth Century Art from Corporate Collections*, Christie's, London
Myth, Dream and Fable, Angel Row Gallery, Nottingham
Innocence and Experience, South Bank Centre, London and Manchester City Art Gallery, touring (Hull, Nottingham and Glasgow
20th Century Women's Art, New Hall, Cambridge
1991–92 *Look Here Upon This Picture and On This*, selected by Norbert Lynton, South Bank Centre, touring exhibition
1991 Woodlands Art Gallery, London with Paula Rego
The Outsider: British Figuration Now, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, Italy
Postmodern Prints, Victoria & Albert Museum, London
1989 *Picturing People*, selected by Norbert Lynton, British Council tour (Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong and Singapore)
1988 *The New British Painting*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati and touring (USA)
1987 *Conversations*, Arts Council touring exhibition
1986 *The Flower Show*, selected by Norbert Lynton ,Stoke-on-Trent Museum
John Moores, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool
1985–87 International Biennial of Graphic Art. Ljubljana, Yugoslavia
1985 *Ten Years at Air*, Air Gallery, London
Hand Signals, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham
The Passion and The Power, Gracie Mansion Gallery, New York
International Festival of Painting, Cagnes sur Mer, France
Proud and Prejudice, selected by William Feaver, Twining Gallery, New York
1984 *The Image as Catalyst*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

1982/83/87 Whitechapel Open, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London
1982 Nuremberg Drawing Triennial (Purchase Prize)
1980 *Women's Images of Men*, ICA, London
1977–2017 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London
1974–6 New Contemporaries Exhibition, Camden Arts Centre, London

Awards and commissions
2017 Coordinator, Royal Academy Summer Exhibition
2010 and 2013 Artist in residence, Alayrac, France
2009 Curator and coordinator, Royal Academy Summer Exhibition
Selector, *Originals*, Mall Galleries, London,
2008–09 Artist in residence, Lewisham College
1999 Arts & Humanities Research Board, Award for Ceramic work, *Ceramics from a Fine Artist*
Cover and illustrations for *Meeting Midnight* by Carol Ann Duffy, published by Faber & Faber
1998–9 Artist in residence, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London
1986 Frontispiece for Thrown Voices by Carol Ann Duffy, published by Bernard Stone
1982 Staircase Project, ICA, London
Purchase Prize, Nuremberg Drawing Triennial

Selected public collections
Arts Council Collection
Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery
Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
British Council
British Museum
Dallas Museum of Art
Imperial College, London
Kunsthalle, Nuremberg
Manchester Art Galleries
Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate
MIMA, Middlesborough
New Hall Art Collection, Murray Edwards College, Cambridge
Newport Art Gallery
Open University, Milton Keynes
Otter Gallery
Pallant House
The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent
Royal Academy of Arts
Royal Collection
Swindon Art Gallery
Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne
University of Warwick Art Collection
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Walpole Library, Yale University, USA
Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester
Wolverhampton Art Gallery

COLOPHON

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