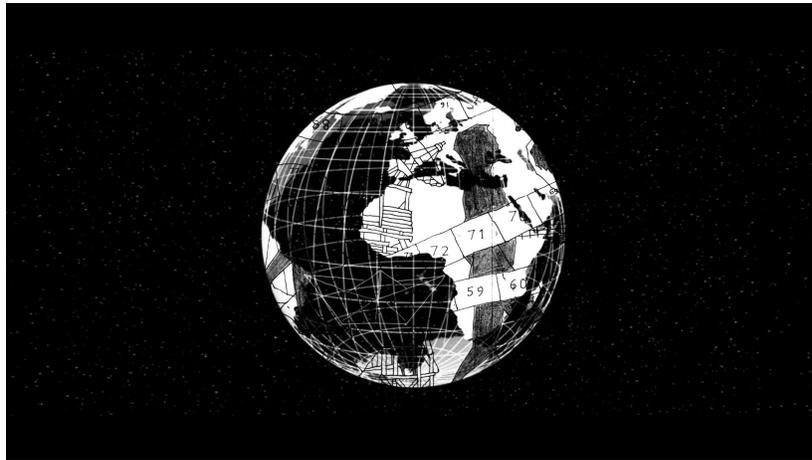


# Cosmic Mothers

30 September - 22 December 2021  
Press view: 23 - 29 September 2021

Group exhibition featuring Bonnie Camplin, Annie Goh, Jackie Karuti, Janina Kraupe-Świdarska, Alexandra Paperno



Jackie Karuti, *The Planets, Chapter 32* (film still), 2017

**On 23 September**, Mimosa House opens its second exhibition at Theobalds Road. The exhibition title is inspired by the 1971 enigmatic painting 'Cosmic Mother' by the USSR artist Galina Konopatskaya. *Cosmic Mother* appears as an androgynous, ethnically ambiguous person holding a baby, both clad in astronaut suits and floating in outer space. The iconography of the work echoes the Orthodox icons of Madonna and Child, seen differently here from the icon's with the traditional golden background. Instead, the figures here float in front of planet Earth.

Belonging to the state-encouraged Socialist Realism painterly tradition, the painting is a representation of the communist ideology based on atheism; the misleading propaganda of women's emancipation; and the Cold War's colonisation of space. What would happen if we chose to look at the image of *Cosmic Mother* through the empowering prism of cyberfeminism and queer science-fiction?

The *Cosmic Mother* image acts as the starting point for reflection on the formation of knowledge and ideology. Artists' works in the show draw on cosmologies, science-fiction, esoteric practices and ancestral systems of knowledge and imagination that go beyond an officially approved scientific discourse. Including video, sound, painting and drawing, the exhibition examines the way alternative and radical knowledge across cultures and geographies acts as a tool to resist a dominant worldview.

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## **About Mimosa House**

Mimosa House is an independent, non-profit gallery space in central London founded and curated by Daria Khan. Dedicated to artistic experimentation and collaboration, we support dialogue between intergenerational women and queer artists. Embracing inclusivity and sensitivity, Mimosa House is a safe and empowering space which focuses on the fluidity of identity and recognises the need for change.

[www.mimosahouse.co.uk](http://www.mimosahouse.co.uk) | [@mimosahouselondon](https://www.instagram.com/mimosahouselondon)

## **About the artists**

Bonnie Camplin (b. 1970, London)

Bonnie is an artist whose work spans drawing, film, performance, music and writing, as well as immaterial and situational research. Refusing typical knowledge paradigms, Camplin draws from subjective experiences to explore the way we relate to and perceive our material, human, and non-human entities.

Annie Goh

Annie is an artist, researcher and performer working primarily with sound, space, electronic media and generative processes within their social and cultural contexts. Her PhD thesis at Goldsmiths University entitled “Sonic Knowledge Production in Archaeoacoustics: Echoes of Elsewhere?” focused on the myth of echo in archaeoacoustics, a field that investigates the acoustic properties of archaeological sites to provide clues in understanding past human behaviour. Combining theoretical reflection and creative processes, Goh’s practice draws on intersectional feminist praxis to question the presumable neutrality of science and philosophy.

Janina Kraupe-Świdarska (b. 1921, Sosnowiec; d. 2016, Krakow)

Janina was a Polish artist, printmaker, philosopher and astrologer associated with the Kraków avant-garde during World War II. Seeking inspiration in a space beyond rational explanation, Kraupe-Świdarska created a body of work featuring elements from alternative spiritualities at a time where religions were banned by the dominant Soviet regime. The geometric forms and symbolism of colors of her paintings that record unconsciousness and transcendence are inseparable from the Polish struggle for individual freedom.

Jackie Karuti (b. 1987, Nairobi)

Jackie’s practice is largely experimental and employs the use of new media through drawings, video, installations and performance art. Her work is founded on ideas around knowledge

production and accessibility as well as the depths of possibility enabled by radical imagination. In her travelling interactive performance, *The Case of Books*, people travel to different library spaces and engage in the process of dusting and talking about the books they find. Resisting traditional education, Karuti writes: “I’m most keen on the possibility of alternate worlds, which defy normalcy, dogma and conventional living.”<sup>1</sup>

Alexandra Paperno (1978, Moscow)

Alexandra is a Russian based artist whose research practice can be situated at the intersection of history, science and art. She studied art in New York at the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, where she received her degree in Fine arts in 2000. The mixed media painting series *Abolished Constellations* is a speculative reconstitution of the first heavenly constellations and Sidereal declinations that have been removed from the celestial map by the International Astronomical Union in 1922. Paperno’s interest in celestial bodies offers a critical reflection on the increased knowledge and standardisation of astronomical science.

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<sup>1</sup> Jackie Karuti, “What We Don’t Know, Won’t Say & Can’t See”, *Artafricamagazine.org*, sept. 2016, <https://artafricamagazine.org/september-2016-jackie-karuti/>