



This is a Leeds Arts University Repository copy of: Now You See Her, Now You Don't

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Abstract

A solo exhibition created in response to the research question “how can sculptural artworks explore the unseen labour of women, the invisibility of the aging female body, and the forced disappearance of women and girls?” Research Process: *Now You See Her, Now You Don't* was an exhibition of sculptural works made with domestic objects and materials sourced from flea markets and second-hand shops across Europe that came together in the gallery space to offer holistic narrative interpretation. Working out of the biographies offered by these objects and materials sculptures take form independent from each other. Engagement with handcrafting processes of making and the adoption of theatrical type installation strategies bring the works together as a cohesive whole. Research Insights: Bringing these artworks together allowed Chambers to develop a focused narrative installation of sculptural works that materialised the complexities of embodied female lived experiences, specifically those that go unseen. The implied theatricality of the exhibition title reflects the placing and lighting of the works in the gallery space, a process of staging which develops Chambers' previous exhibition strategies and generates new insights into the genre of narrative installation with a distinctly feminist inflection. Dissemination: The exhibition opened to the public on Saturday 20th September with a Private Viewing 2.00–4.00pm. The exhibition ran for six months closing on 21st March 2026. An artist talk was held on Saturday 7th March coinciding with International Women's Day. Bury Art Museum and Sculpture Centre is an important cultural institution in Greater Manchester and attracts local, national and international visitors.

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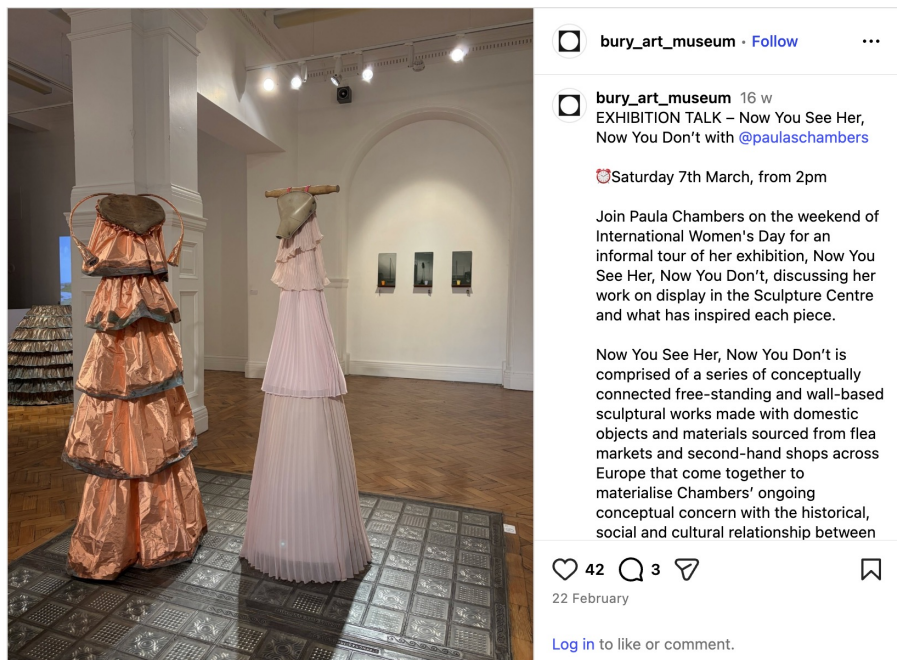
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Now You See Her, Now You Don't

A solo exhibition by Paula Chambers

Bury Art Museum and Sculpture Centre
20th September 2025 – 21st March 2026

Artist talk for international women's day
Saturday 7th March 2026



Now You See Her Now You Don't

A solo show by
Paula Chambers



Launch at 2.30-4.00pm
20th September
Speeches 3pm
All Welcome

Bury Art Museum
& Sculpture Centre
Moss Street
Bury
BL9 0DR

Now You See Her, Now You Don't is an exhibition of sculptural works made with domestic objects and materials sourced from flea markets and second-hand shops across Europe that come together in the gallery space to offer holistic narrative interpretation.

Bury Art Museum
& Sculpture Centre

Bury
Council

Gallery text as wall vinyl

Now You See Her, Now You Don't by Paula Chambers is an exhibition of sculptural works made with domestic objects and materials sourced from flea markets and second-hand shops across Europe that come together in the gallery space to offer holistic narrative interpretation.

The exhibition comprises of a series of conceptually connected free-standing and wall-based works that materials Chambers ongoing conceptual concern with the historical, social and cultural relationship between women and the spaces and objects of home. The title of this exhibition, *Now You See Her, Now You Don't*, references the sleight-of-hand techniques used by stage magicians when things are made to disappear then reappear. Yet it also has wider connotations, for example the unseen reproductive labour undertaken women within the home, the invisibility of women in collective consciousness as they age, and the forced disappearance of women and girls, most usually into some form of sexual slavery.

This body of work prompts the viewer to ask complicated questions about the relationship that women and girls have with the materials, objects and spaces of home, the works appear to imply narrative yet remain ambiguous as to what kinds of stories these might be. But these works are also visually engaging, viewers recognise and identify with the domestic materiality used, and as such can imagine themselves as the protagonist in these stories.

The oxidised copper crinoline of *The Gatherer* is an interactive work; it has a gap at the back that allows visitors to stand inside the sculpture as if they were wearing it as a skirt. Without an occupant this object still has autonomous presence, it appears to reference the heavy and unwieldy clothing worn by women in the past, yet the wearer has disappeared leading to questions about who this might have been, where she may have gone, and to what end. To help answer these questions the viewer can put themselves in her place, *Now You See Her, Now You Don't*.



Witchcraft for the 21st Century (2022) digital print on wallpaper, plywood, plastic shot glasses, plastic key fobs, salt; *Feminist Escape Route: Attempt No. 13* (2022) artificial hair, oxidised copper pipe, satin ribbon, copper leaves and twigs; *Feminist Escape Route: Attempt No. 14* (2025) dressing gown, hay, mud, coat hanger; *Small Sacrifices (Eve)* (2025) folding stool, plywood, tassel trim, acrylic, wooden apple, pickle forks.





The Gatherer (2023), Copper, film. An interactive work, visitors could enter the sculpture (see above) for instagramable photos



The Space Between Us (2025) wooden clothes horse, plywood, copper foil, self adhesive vinyl, Tupperware, copper horseshoe nails, glass, suede, twigs, copper coated almonds, ceramic, wooden tray.



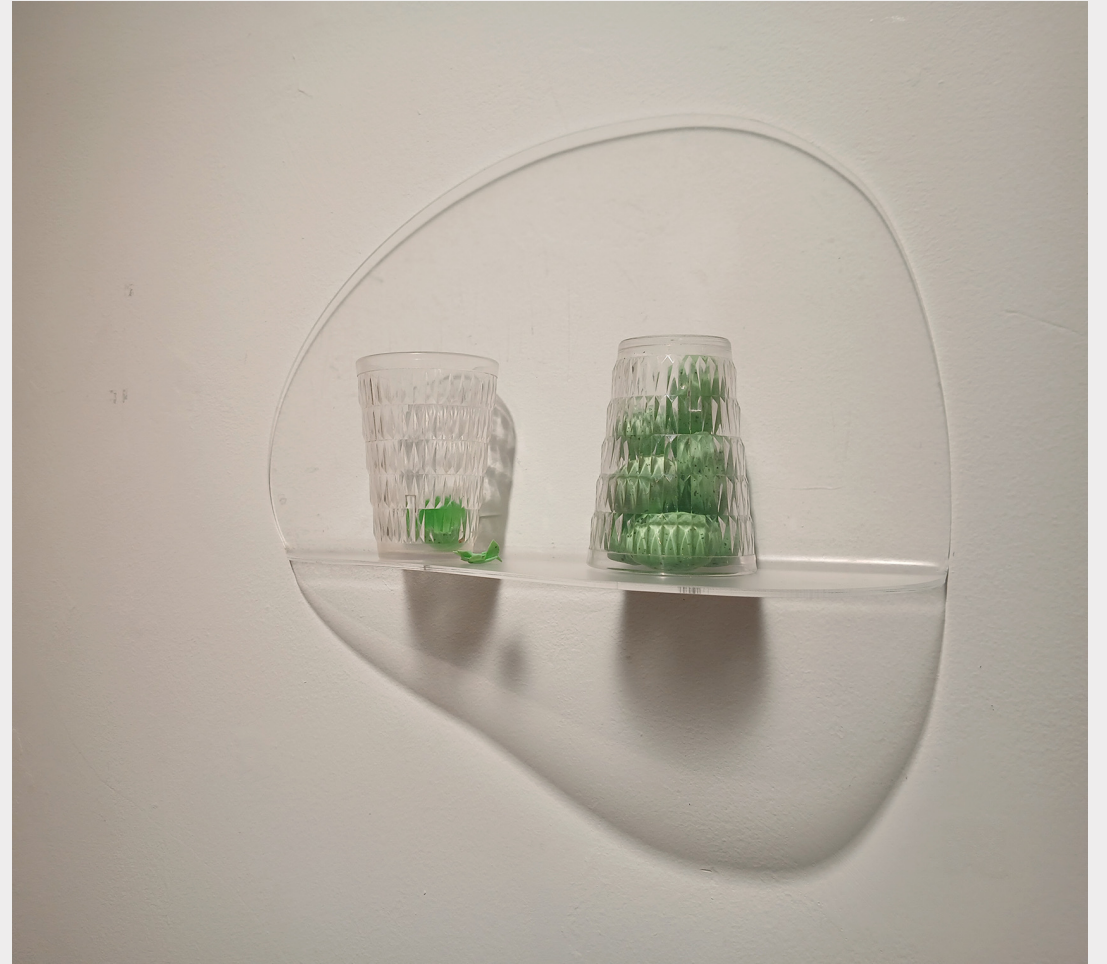
Calling (2025) folding chair, plastic, copper foil, satin rope, copper cow bell, copper leafed brick; *The Prophet (Cassandra)* (2024) projector stand, rubber car mats, tutu, self adhesive vinyl, tassel trim, surveyor's pointer; *Pre-emptive Mourning* (2025) folding tea tray, digital print, tassel trim; *One of Us is Lying* (2025) copper shielding fabric, wooden seat, copper foil, plastic, chiffon, bicycle seat, wooden rolling pin, belts.



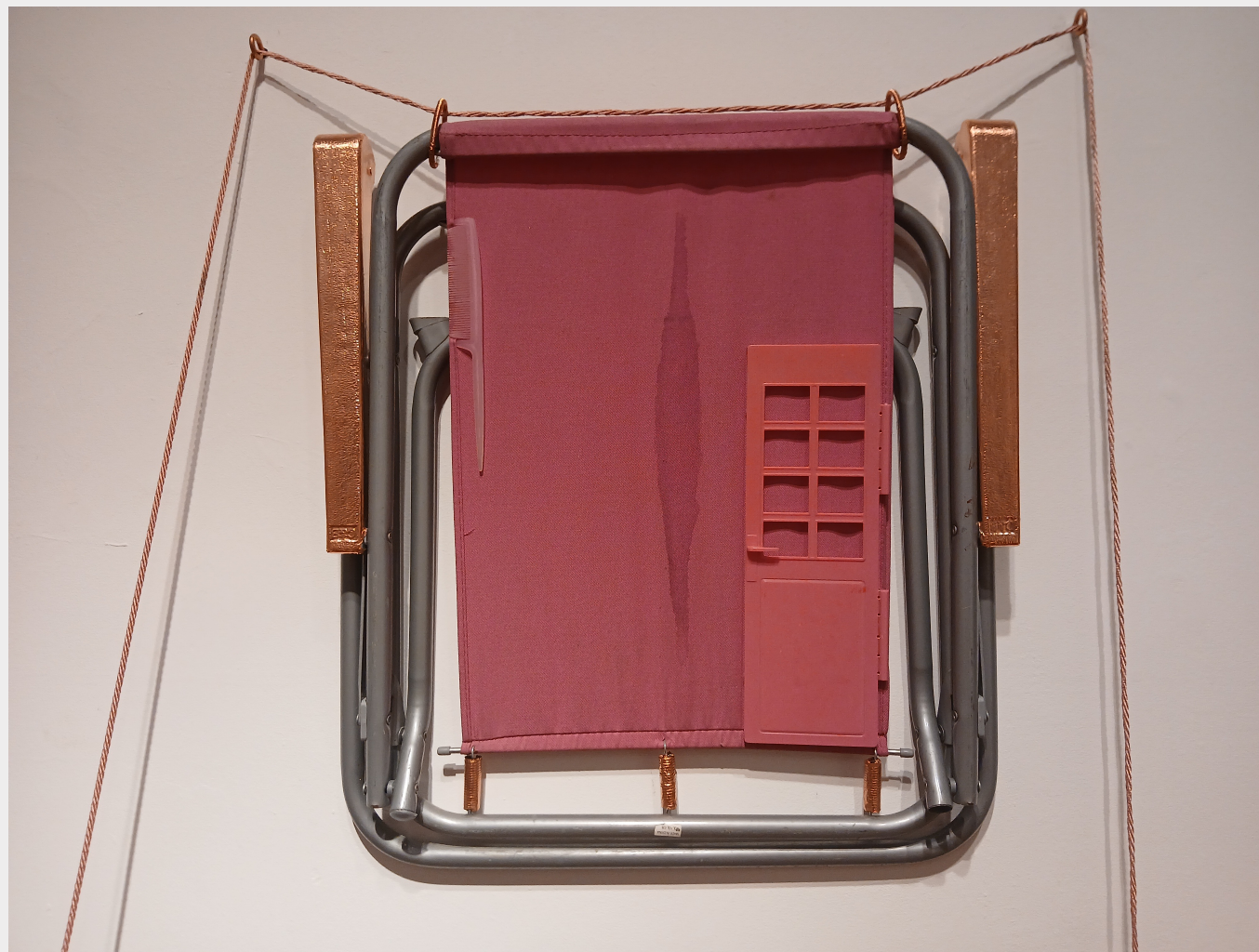
Pre-emptive Mourning (2025) folding tea tray, digital print, tassel trim; *Sacrificial Carpet*(2025) carpet, barbeque forks, satin tassels, waste paper basket, fake fur, acrylic mirror.



Lady Garden (2025) digital print on chiffon; *Belly Stone* (2024) glass paperweight, cotton yarn glass beads, hanging basket bracket; *Feminist Escape Route: Attempt No. 5* (2022) plastic shovel, suede, copper, satin joggers, coat hanger, hanging basket bracket



Belly Stone (2024) glass paperweight, cotton yarn glass beads, hanging basket bracket; *Feminist Escape Route: Attempt No. 15* (2025) plastic



Calling (2025) folding chair, plastic, copper foil, satin rope, cow bell, copper leaf brick



Witchcraft for the 21st Century (2022) digital print on wallpaper, plywood, plastic shot glasses, plastic key fobs, salt

