

Royal Academy of Arts

Hide and Seek

Drawings by Eileen Cooper RA

The John Madejski
Fine Rooms



Do not remove from gallery

Hide and Seek

Drawings by Eileen Cooper RA

The John Madejski Fine Rooms

29 May – 23 August 2015

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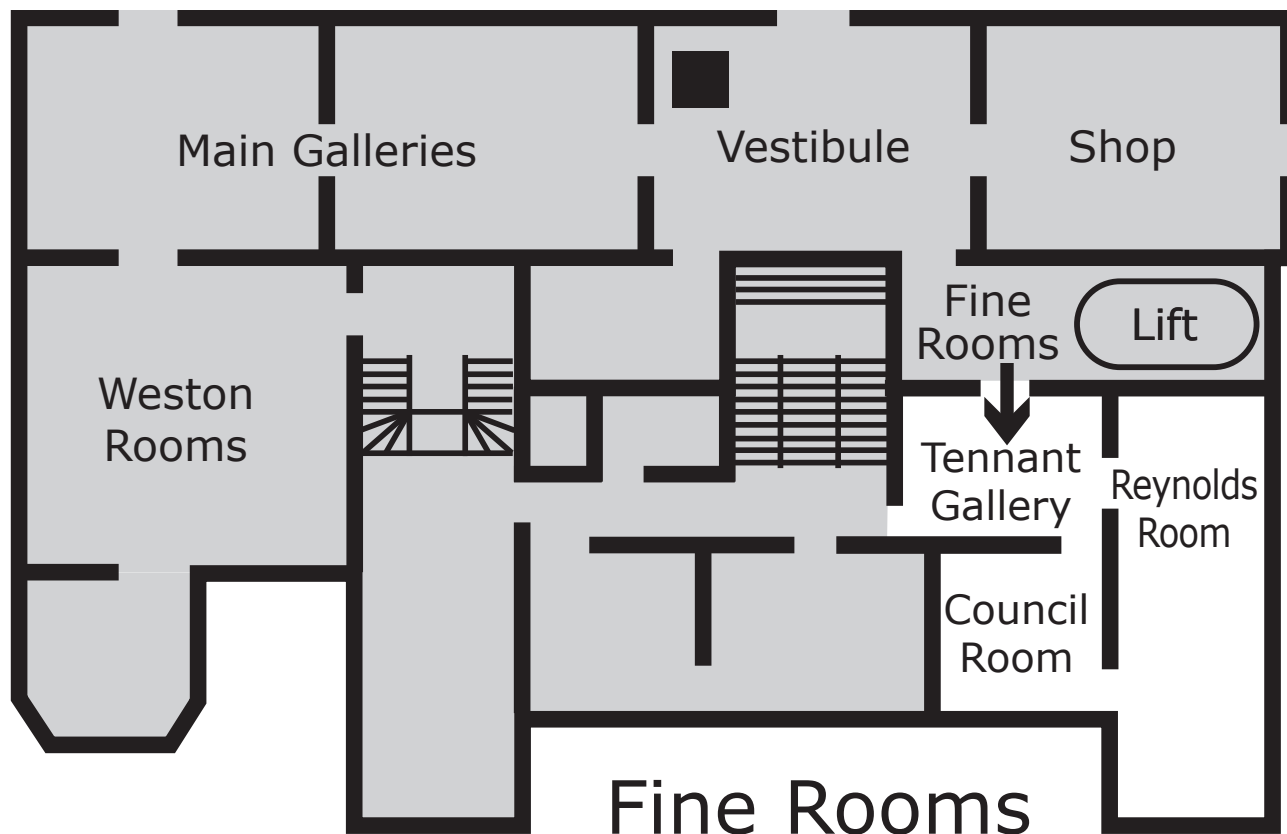
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List of Works



Film at exhibition entrance

'Archer', 2015, by Eileen Cooper RA

Time-based art

Filmed by Charlie Paul @ Itch Film



Royal Academy Large Print is supported by GSK

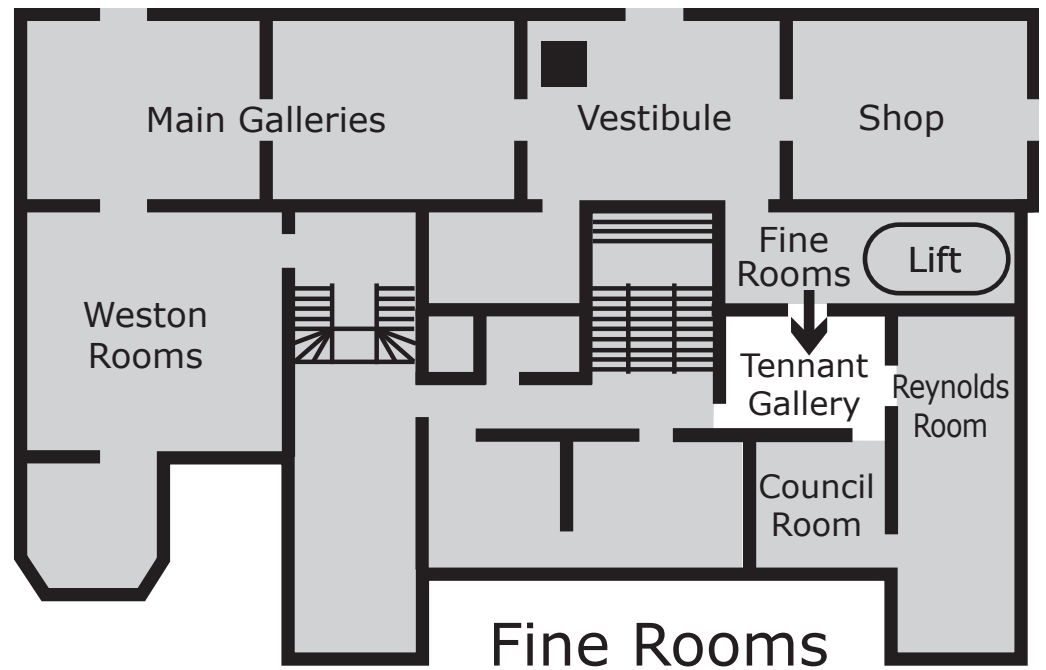
Introduction to the exhibition

This exhibition presents a remarkable body of unique works on paper spanning almost 40 years.

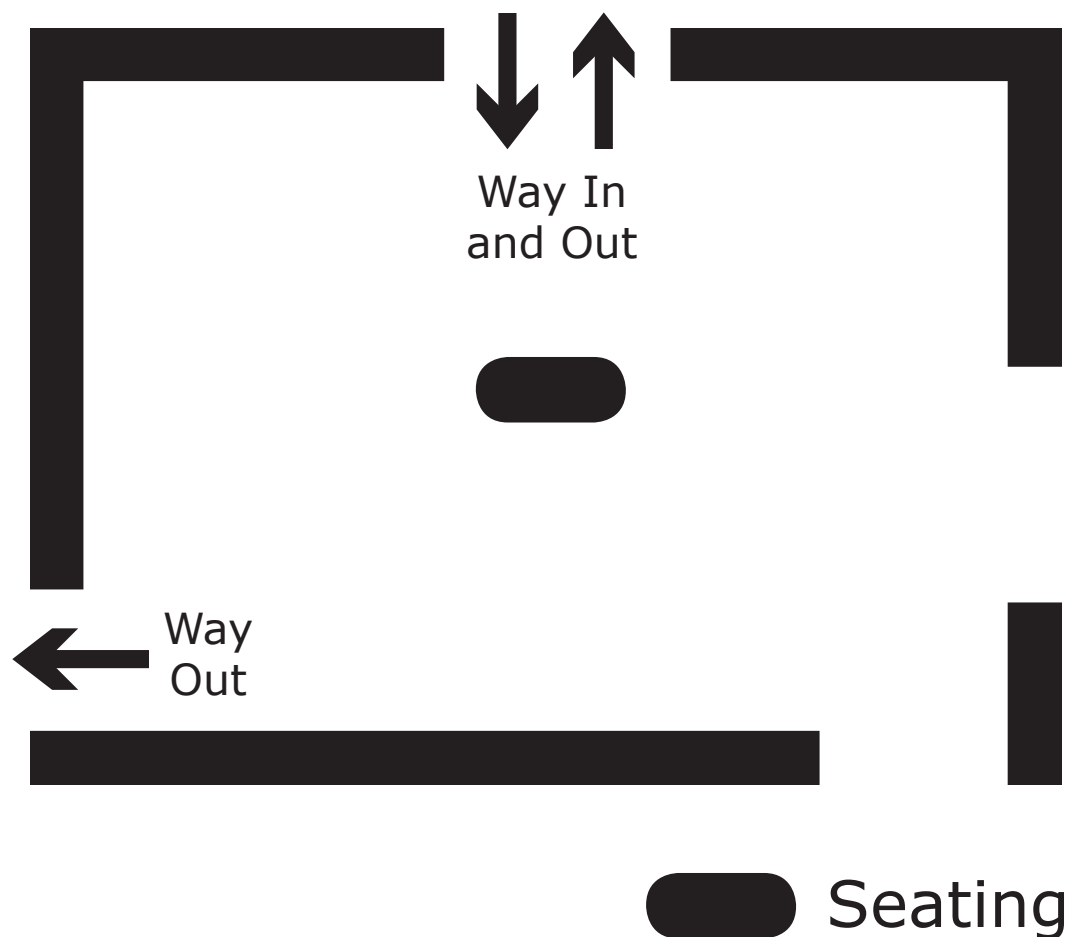
Described as a “magical realist”, Cooper’s practice as a painter and printmaker is underpinned by highly individual drawings, which reveal her working methods and strongly autobiographical preoccupations.

Celebrating themes including, sexuality, birth, family, creativity and identity, Cooper’s distinctive imagery has afforded her much recognition and critical acclaim.

The short film which opens this exhibition gives an unprecedented insight into the artist creating a new drawing, ‘Archer’, shown here for the first time.



You are in
The Tennant Gallery



Introduction to this room

This gallery is dominated by ten previously unseen mixed-media drawings made in 2001, a promised gift from the artist to the Royal Academy's Collection.

Featuring Cooper's iconic figures, they are multi-layered and complex in form.

A celebration of the human spirit, this group of work is suffused by warmth, the artist choosing a rich terracotta palette.

Cooper's figures dance, embrace and create with both joyful abandon and intimate contemplation.

Also shown in this gallery are a number of delicate pencil drawings and key charcoal pieces exploring the notion of self-examination both literal and metaphorical.

In these works, the artist appears to ponder her own self-portrait as she draws and, whilst standing, scrutinises her alter ego as she considers "rebuilding herself".

List of works, clockwise in order of hang

Woman Rebuilding Herself I

1991

Charcoal

Private collection

Designer

2011

Pencil

Collection of the artist

The Idealist

2011

Pencil

Collection of the artist

Narrative

2011

Pencil

Collection of the artist

Girl in Blue Dress

2013

Ink, gouache and pastel

Marcelle Joseph Collection

Promised gift of ten drawings from Eileen Cooper to the RA Collections

Top row left to right

Potter

2001

Ink, conté, pastel on white Japanese paper

Child

2001

Ink, pastel, conté, gouache on natural Japanese paper

Jump

2001

Ink, pastel, conté, gouache on natural Japanese paper

Twins

2001

Ink, pastel, conté, gouache on natural Japanese paper

Dance

2001

Ink, pastel, conté, watercolour on white Japanese paper

Second row left to right

Hold

2001

Ink, pastel, gouache on white Japanese paper

Red Sun

2001

Ink, pastel, conté, gouache on natural Japanese paper

Wake

2001

Ink, pastel, gouache on natural Japanese paper

Jig

2001

Ink, pastel, conté on natural Japanese paper

Kick

2001

Ink, conté, pastel on white Japanese paper

The Visit

2002

Charcoal

Private collection

Leap of Faith

2008

Charcoal

Collection of the artist

Woman with Cats

2013

Charcoal

Collection of the artist

Trapeze II

2012

Charcoal

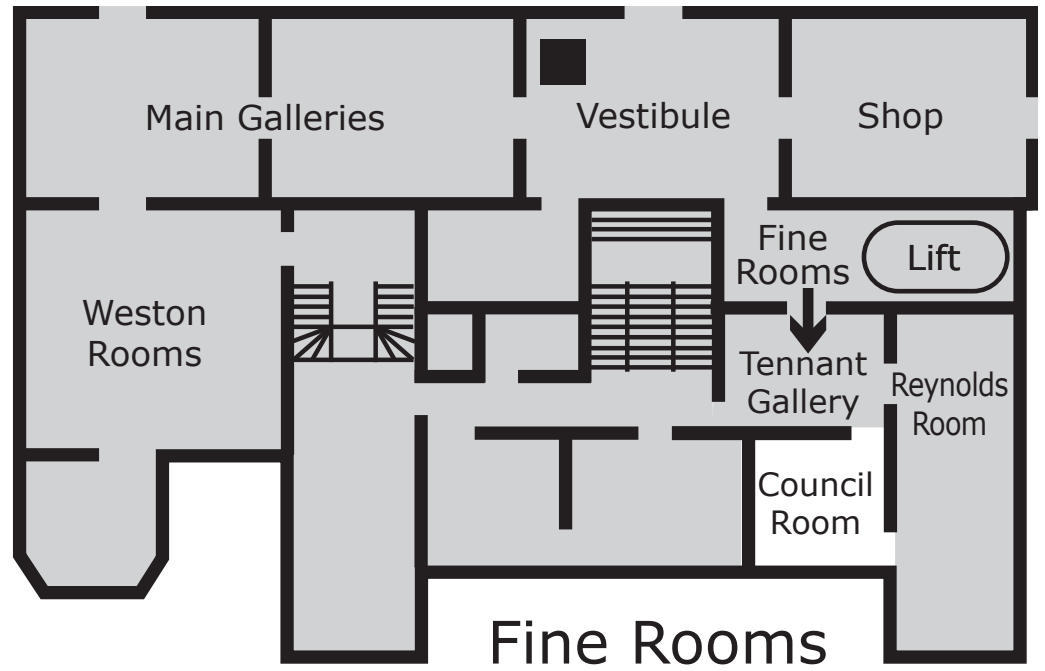
Collection of the artist

Archer

2015

Charcoal and pastel

Collection of the artist



You are in
The Council Room



Introduction to this room

The key themes of motherhood and family which have dominated Cooper's life and working practice are explored here in a selection of simultaneously bold and tender charcoal and pastel drawings.

Weighted with the intensity of exhaustion, 'Late Night Feed' (1985) and 'The New Baby' (1988) possess a particular emotional rawness perhaps only felt by a new mother.

The broader theme of the family unit; parenthood and the bond between siblings, is also examined; a couple and their children lie peacefully contemplating the night sky and two sisters are drawn intertwined.

Although best known for her characteristic female figures, 'Little Man' (1984/1985) shows the father with a tiny baby precariously balanced on his palm.

Energised flowers and vines weave their way through some of these drawings; there is a sense of the power of nature here, as the forms seem to take on a life of their own.

A key work in this group, 'Haunted' (1991) returns to the theme of the disembodied head, this time the figure is in water, contemplated from below by a child.

Nurture, another important preoccupation within Cooper's practice, is not only represented here by the intense parent/child bond, but also in the affectionate 'Boy with Bird' (1992).

Here, the kneeling figure carefully protects his charge as a mother protects her child, but in the knowledge that one day it must be set free.

List of works, clockwise in order of hang

The New Baby

1988

Charcoal

Private collection

Bathing

1987

Charcoal and pastel

Private collection

Late Night Feed

1985

Charcoal

Private collection

Guardian IV

2000

Pastel

Collection of the artist

Woman with Red Cheeks

1989

Charcoal and pastel

Private collection

Boy with Bird

1992

Charcoal and pastel

Private collection

Stargazing

1991

Charcoal and pastel

Private collection

Haunted

1991

Charcoal and pastel

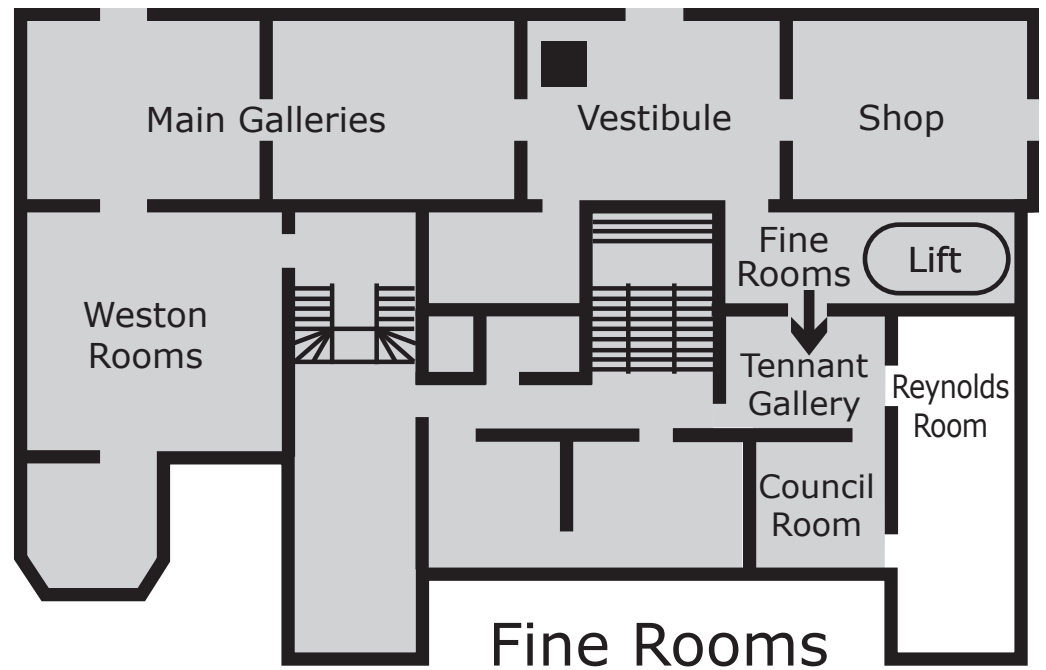
Collection of the artist

Little Man

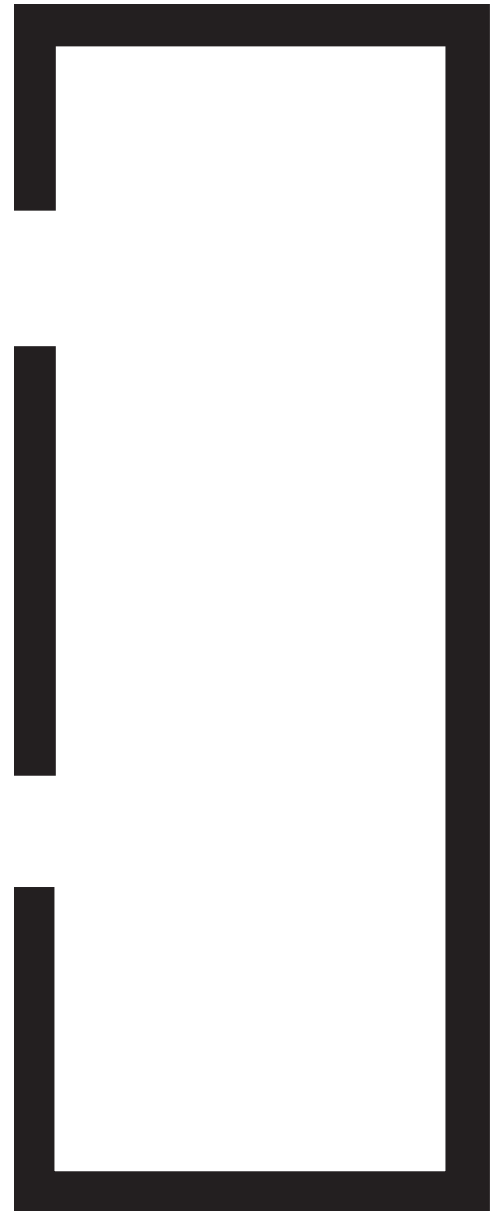
1984/1985

Charcoal

Private collection



You are in
The
Reynolds
Room



Introduction to this room

The themes of sexuality, playfulness and fantasy are explored in this gallery.

Cooper's work often contains an energy and dynamism which is prevalent in several early drawings including 'Climbing the Ladder' (1977).

Key to the creation of tension and movement in these works are the visible traces of the artist "working out" her composition, as the figures seem to bend and stretch around the precariously balanced ladder.

This effect is particularly pronounced in 'Higher and Higher I' and 'Higher and Higher IV' (1982). It is not clear whether the male and female figures drawn here are clawing the ropes to swing towards or away from each other but regardless, the resulting frenetic sexual energy is powerful.

Two monumental large-scale drawings are featured; 'Giant' (1993) and 'Tree House II' (1990).

Complex in its preoccupations, the latter embodies the playfulness of Cooper's imagery. A contented family unit is represented but there is a darker undercurrent within this drawing; fantasy is at work.

In these magical worlds, the female figure contemplates her passage through life with biblical undertones as she travels by boat ('Challenge' 2008) and donkey ('Journey and Chariot', 2003).

Cooper's characters also encounter mystical animals within imaginary landscapes in some of her most recent drawings ('Fawn and Hart', 2014).

List of works, clockwise in order of hang

Fawn

2014

Charcoal and pastel

Collection of the artist

The Family

1984

Pastel and conté

Collection of the artist

Challenge

2008

Charcoal and pastel

Christopher & Alex Courage

Woman with Boots and Dog

2002

Pastel and charcoal

Collection of the artist

Moving a Picture

2002

Charcoal and pastel

Private Collection

Journey

2003

Charcoal and pastel

Collection of the artist

Another Journey

2003

Charcoal and pastel

Jeremy Levison

Hart

2014

Charcoal

Collection of the artist

Sisters

1992

Charcoal

Private collection

Tree House II

1990

Charcoal

Collection of the artist

Showing the Flower

1983

Charcoal and conté

Collection of the artist

Giant

1993

Conte and Chalk

Mary Moore

The Sad Tree

1983

Charcoal

Private collection

Figure with Ladder

1979

Charcoal and pastel

Collection of the artist

Climbing the Ladder

1977

Charcoal and pastel

Collection of the artist

Woman with Yo-Yo

1982

Charcoal, pastel and conté

Collection of the artist

Higher and Higher IV

1982

Charcoal

Collection of the artist

Higher and Higher I

1982

Charcoal

Courtesy of Ian Taylor

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Thank you.

Molly Bretton, Access Officer



InTouch  **at the RA**

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