

Midlife

by Elinor Carucci

Opening reception: Saturday, September 7th 2019 from 2 to 6 pm
Show: December 7th 2019 - February 1st 2020



Gallery FIFTY ONE TOO is delighted to present 'Midlife', the latest body of work from the renowned New York based photographer Elinor Carucci. The exhibition features a complete overview of small scale photographs collected from her recently published and fourth monograph, 'Midlife' (The Monacelli Press).

In this seven-year project of interrelated photographs, Carucci plunges the viewer into a deeply personal journey through her passage of time, both confronting us with loss and intimacy. Her colorful and vivid photographs are very much rooted in the multiple observations on her personal life and closest surroundings, using a varied scope of approaches. Passionate and lively, the color of blood runs through her work, embodying Carucci's life as a woman, entering midlife and losing fertility. The photographs of her abstract paintings—which she carefully made with her own blood—let us dive in a wild, red sea. This color of love, violence and war, refers to being alive, entangled as a red wire in 'Midlife' and to her previous bodies of work, such as 'Closer', 'Crisis', and 'Mother'.

Similar to her earlier work, Carucci explores the passage of time following the relationship with her partner Eran, the evolution of her aging parents' roles as grandparents, her children's increasing independence and the loss of her own uterus, which she recently had to cope with as both a woman and a mother. As Carucci explains in the book's afterword: "a particular, very up-close—almost scientific—way of seeing", the photographs confront us with a disquieting yet familiar focus on a bare nakedness in relation to maturing. Photographs, taken very close to the surface of the skin, attempt to reveal the body in the midst of its life, however always remaining on the surface of it. Capturing multiple, carved lines through the skin, a single grey hair isolated from the head or a portrait of her pain after the medical intervention, Carucci invites us to reflect on a universal yet deeply personal witnessing of maturing life. By photographing her body in midlife, while defying the conventions of youthful beauty, Carucci confronts issues of aging and devaluation; subjects which are widely neglected and feared in our contemporary world.

'Midlife' is a vivid autobiography, where the photographer looks beyond the façades of what we see—as she once stated. Carucci's new work reveals a passionate yet discomforting way of the unspoken rawness attached to a women's midlife. Or to use her own words: "However, my blood looked the same; it had not aged. It seemed as red and as striking as it was when I was five years old. I know it must change over time, one blood test is enough to tell me that, but I can't see it, it's as beautiful as it has always been."

Elinor Carucci's photographs have been included in numerous exhibitions worldwide, including in solo shows at Gallery FIFTY ONE, Fotomuseum Antwerp, London, among others, and in group shows at the Museum of Modern Art, MoCP Chicago, and the Photographers' Gallery, London. Her photographs are included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the International Center of Photography, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Haifa Museum of Art. Carucci was awarded the ICP Infinity Award in 2001, the Guggenheim Fellowship in 2002, and was named the NYFA Fellow in Photography in 2010.

This exhibition is kindly supported by Ilford.