

## Press information

# Museum Folkwang

## Paula Rego retrospective from 16 May 2025 at Museum Folkwang

Essen, 8. April 2025 – From 16 May to 7 September, Museum Folkwang is presenting *The Personal and The Political*, an exhibition of more than 120 works by the Portuguese-British artist Paula Rego. She is known for her powerful, often shocking paintings and drawings that deal with power structures, gender roles, and social injustices. Following solo exhibitions on Maria Lassnig, Joan Mitchell, Nancy Spero and Helen Frankenthaler, Museum Folkwang is now dedicating a comprehensive retrospective to Paula Rego, another key female figure in painting after 1945.



Paula Rego (1935–2022) is one of the outstanding figurative painters of recent history. Her pictures have an explosive impact that only very few artists achieve. Born in Lisbon, Rego developed her unmistakable, stark art in her adopted home of England as of the 1950s. From the very beginning, she dealt with the political reality in her native Portugal, which was a dictatorship until 1974. In the 1990s, this debate led her to paint her so-called *Abortion* series, which she saw as her contribution to the public debate on the legalisation of abortion in Portugal.

The exhibition traces Rego's artistic development as of her studies at the Slade School in London in the 1950s to the 2000s. The focus is on those work series in which intimate, seemingly personal moments are transformed into images of collective experience. This politicisation of the private sphere is comparable to the efforts and methods of the Women's Movement in the 1960s and 1970s, which is why the title of the retrospective is based on the feminist slogan 'The personal is political'. Paper was Rego's preferred medium from an early date. The range of works on display is complemented by selected paintings and examples of the dolls that Rego used for her compositions, which ultimately became works in their own right.



Funded by the Karen and Uwe Hollweg Foundation and with the kind support of Camões Berlín Portuguese Cultural Centre.

### PAULA REGO

#### *The Personal and The Political*

16 May – 7 September 2025

Admission: 9 € (regular) / 5 € (reduced)

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