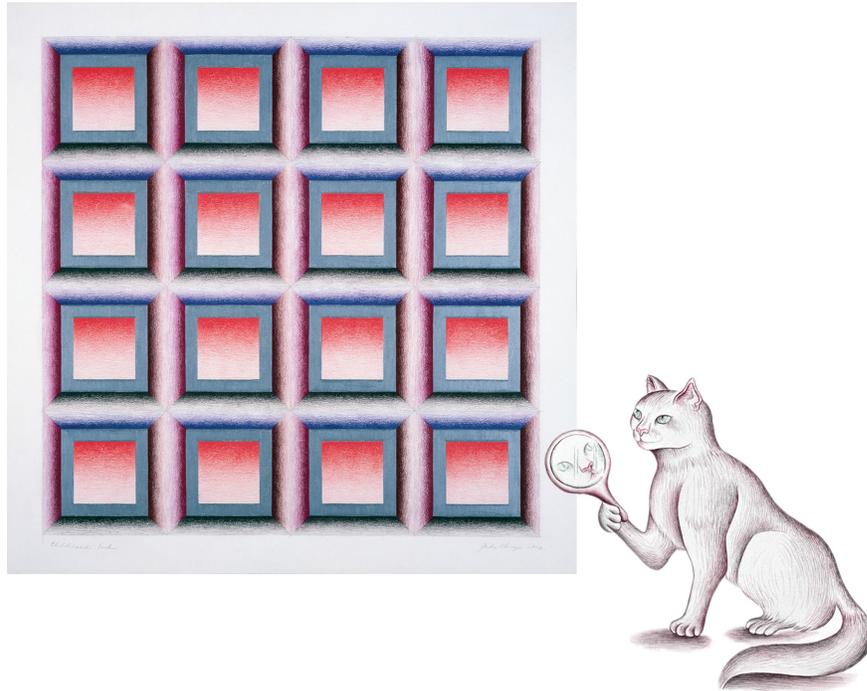




## In Art: A Heroine's Journey

By Liz Hirsch

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Left: Judy Chicago's "Childhood's End #1," 1972. Below: "Cat Gazing Into Mirror," 2004. Credit: Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery ©Judy Chicago/Photo: ©Donald Woodman (2)

We're "ready for a different narrative about women," says the artist Judy Chicago, fresh off seeing the summer blockbuster "Wonder Woman." Chicago – who, after taking her hometown's name partly as a symbolic rebuke of the patriarchy, famously posed as a boxer in the ring for a 1970 Artforum ad – knows a thing or two about the politics of representation. Now, at 78, she's soon to be the subject of a number of important shows. The first, "Judy Chicago's Pussies," opens next month at Jessica Silverman in San Francisco and features both well-known and never-before-seen drawings, paintings and prints made between 1964 and 2004. Some works, like "Through the Flower," are geometric abstractions, while others are more anatomical. (There are also watercolors of her actual cats.)

Then there's Chicago's masterpiece, "The Dinner Party," which the artist revealed nearly 40 years ago at SFMoMA. The piece, a reimagining of the Last Supper with painted-vulva plates and seats reserved for famous women, from Sappho to Sojourner Truth, is now installed at the Brooklyn Museum. (It even made a cameo on this season's "Master of None.") In October, the museum will open a separate exhibition analyzing the work's conceptual origins and influences. A concurrent show at Washington, D.C.'s National Museum of Women in the Arts will focus on the collaborative studio environment in which the project evolved (it involved a team of hundreds), but it's really just a prelude to Chicago's forthcoming 2019 show there, "The End: A Meditation on Death and Extinction." Next spring, meanwhile, Salon 94 in NYC will exhibit Chicago's 1980s paintings of cartoonish male nudes wrestling with rainbows. In both its breadth and depth, this surge of attention is long overdue. But perhaps, as Chicago says, we're finally ready.