

Eileen Perrier: A Thousand Small Stories

Exhibition at Autograph, London

17 April – 13 September 2025

Curated by Bindi Vora

This spring, Autograph presents a new exhibition contemplating class, cultural identity and belonging through the photographic portrait.

Since the 1990s, Eileen Perrier has used photographic portraiture to forge connections between people, acknowledging the profound value of being seen. Her first retrospective, *A Thousand Small Stories*, will be on view at Autograph's gallery in East London from 17 April – 13 September 2025.

Often using makeshift studios, Perrier brings her sitters together around shared experiences of kinship, interests or place. Her work has evolved into a form of social engagement that powerfully visualises individuality – encouraging us to look beyond social and cultural divides.

Perrier uses the tropes of 19th century European and contemporary African studio portraiture to contemplate how class, cultural identity and belonging are represented through the photographic portrait. Born and raised in London, the artist frequently encountered questions about her heritage, finding herself caught between her upbringing and her dual Ghanaian and Dominican diasporic heritage. This sense of ambiguity is central to Perrier's work, examining how identity can be shaped by both geographical and cultural contexts.

Creating inclusive environments in her practice as both an artist and teacher, Perrier has influenced generations of photographers. *A Thousand Small Stories* is the first retrospective of the artist's work, bringing together three decades of photographs.

The exhibition opens with *When am I gonna stop being wise beyond my years?*, her recent series addressing the realities teenage girls face while grappling with social media, body image and misogyny. Perrier's interest in the elusive politics of beauty is also reflected in her iconic portraits from the late 1990s and early 2000s, *Afro Hair and Beauty Show*, highlighting the significance of hair and hairstyles as symbols of cultural pride and resistance.

Perrier works with and within communities, this spirit of collaboration extends to her own family in *Red Gold and Green* (1997). In this series, she collaborated with first, second and third-generation British Ghanaians to create portraits in their London homes. Using vivid fabric to create a temporary studio, these images are an important lesson in improvisation and draw on the long tradition of African studio portraiture.

These are shown alongside portrait projects spanning Perrier's career, from gentle explorations of kinship and memory in Ghana, to a lively community beauty salon in Brixton.

A Thousand Small Stories forms part of Autograph's continued commitment to curate and preserve the legacy of important black women practitioners such as Perrier, and to ensure that their significant contributions to the canon of photography are recognised.

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Notes to Editors

Media contact

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Press images and interviews are available.

Address and ticketing

Autograph, Rivington Place, London EC2A 3BA

Entry is free. Visitors can book timed tickets [on Autograph's website](#) or visit anytime the exhibition is open

Links and tags

[Exhibition webpage](#)

[Visiting information](#)

@autographabp on Instagram and TikTok

About the artist

Eileen Perrier (born 1974, London, UK) is an artist with dual Ghanaian and Dominican diasporic heritage. She specialises in capturing lived experiences through documentary and portrait photography. Since the 1990s, she has worked in both the UK and internationally, and is a senior lecturer of photography at Westminster University.

Her work has been widely exhibited, including displays at The Photographers' Gallery (UK); Tate Britain (UK); The Whitechapel Gallery (UK); Hayward Gallery (UK); and The Centre Pompidou (France). Perrier has completed residencies with Light Work x Autograph and Kunsthalle Schirn. Her works are represented in private and public collections, including Arts Council England (UK); Autograph (UK); Foundling Museum (UK); Light Work (USA); Sindika Dokolo Foundation (Angola); Tate (UK); and Wedge Collection (Canada).

New Artist Commission

Autograph has commissioned Eileen Perrier to create a new series of work reflecting on young people's passage into adulthood in London. These works will be displayed on the side of Autograph's building and a set of prints will enter Autograph's [collection of photography](#).

Also at Autograph

Dianne Minnicucci: Belonging and Beyond. Exploring how vulnerability and discomfort in front of the camera can become acts of self-discovery and collaboration. Free exhibition 17 April - 13 September 2025.

About Autograph

Established in 1988, Autograph's mission is to champion the work of artists who use photography and film to highlight questions of race, representation, human rights and social justice. Through doing so, we invite people to explore the creative and critical power of visual representation, in shaping our understanding of ourselves and of others. autograph.org.uk

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