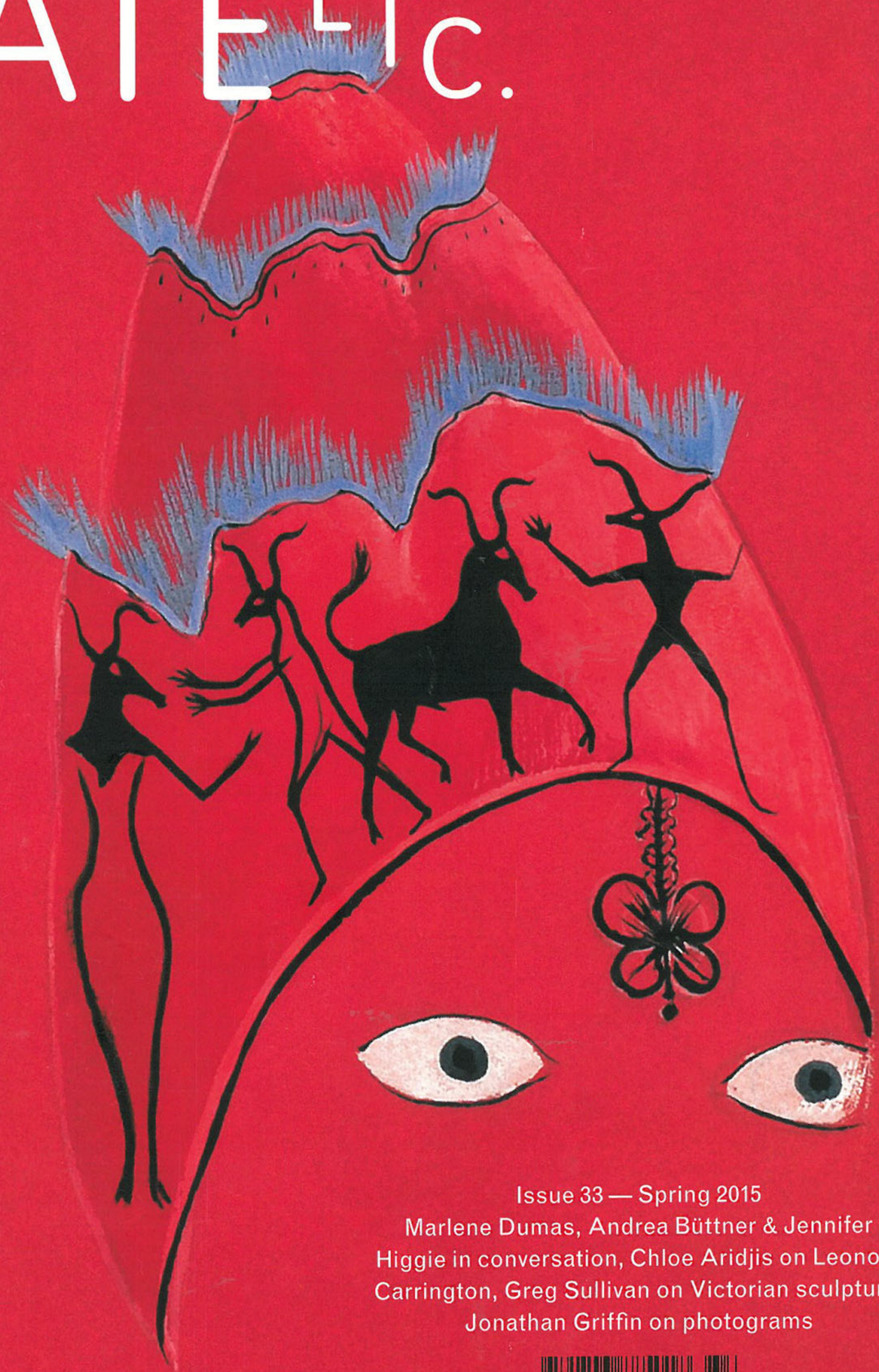


TATE ETC.



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Marlene Dumas, Andrea Büttner & Jennifer
Higgie in conversation, Chloe Aridjis on Leonora
Carrington, Greg Sullivan on Victorian sculpture,
Jonathan Griffin on photograms



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**Caitlin Davies on Roni Horn's
*From Still Water (The River Thames, for Example) 1999***

Caitlin Davies is a writer. Her book *Downstream: A History of Swimming the Thames* is published by Aurum Press in April.

From Still Water (The River Thames, for Example) was presented by the American Fund for the Tate Gallery, courtesy of the American Acquisitions Committee, in 2005.

This is me, under the water. You see the face in the middle, with two eyes and a long nose, like a distorted Venetian mask? That's where I am, underneath, a solid black shadow swimming towards you.

I first swam in the Thames as a child, laughing as I struggled against the current. But I forgot all about it until I started a journey downstream to research swimming stories for a book.

Then I went back to the Thames, to swim in the lush upper river, around a London dock, and in the estuary near Southend. The Thames is never Still Water and river swimming is not like being in a pool, there are no clear beginnings or endings,

you follow the curve and every view is different.

Last month I swam at Marlow. The air was seven degrees, the water 17, and the river was smoking. It was cold for a fair weather swimmer, enough to give me an ice cream headache, but I had to submerge myself and get fully under.

That's when I had a moment of panic. I feared I would have to lie on my back, put up my hand and say: 'I can't do it, get me out and on the boat.'

Looking at this picture, I'm waiting for someone – something? – to surface. I can't stay under much longer; I was never that good at holding my breath. The water is inky and tastes of bracken. I'm waiting for myself to come up.



Roni Horn, from the series *Still Water*
(The River Thames, for Example) 1999,
lithograph on paper, 77×105.5cm