



To: Sarah Lucas
From: Elisa Allen, Director, PETA UK

1 November 2018

Dear Ms Lucas,

I'm writing as the female head of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) – a group mostly run and staffed by women – and on behalf of our more than 1 million members and supporters to appeal to you not to use eggs or dead chickens in your work. While your intent – to empower women to challenge oppression, sexual dominance, and abuse – is admirable, a true feminist would not support industries in which sexual abuse and exploitation are rampant and female animal bodies are exploited so painfully and miserably. I know this may be startling to you, so please allow me to elaborate:

On today's farms, female chickens and other animals – who are, of course, sentient, able to feel pain, joy, love, and fear – are treated as nothing more than meat, milk, and egg *machines*. They're subjugated, oppressed, and abused, and their reproductive systems are regulated and controlled. On egg factory farms, for example, hens are crammed into wire cages so small that they cannot spread a single wing. Lights are kept on around the clock to maximise egg production, and the hens' calories are periodically restricted in order to force their bodies into a starvation mode that results in an extra laying cycle. They never even get to see their chicks. And when they can no longer produce a profitable number of eggs, usually when they're just 2 years old, they're sent to slaughter. That process is petrifying, and rough handling by abattoir workers often causes broken wings and legs as well as bruising.

Chickens raised for their flesh are bred to grow so large so quickly that their legs and organs can't keep up, and many suffer from heart attacks, organ failure, and leg deformities. The survivors are transported to the abattoir, where they're shackled upside down, their throats are slit, and many are scalded alive.

So, you can understand why your works involving chickens or eggs, such as *One Thousand Eggs: For Women*, seem incongruous to feminists, including those at PETA. We stand up for chickens as well as cows, pigs, and other animals who are treated unjustly. As Alice Walker said, "The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. They were not made for humans any more than black people were made for whites or women for men." They are all individuals, and their bodies and reproductive systems belong to them, not us. Their deaths and suffering are not inconsequential.

If women were treated like farmed animals – if they were forcibly restrained and raped, with a sperm syringe-carrying hand up their insides; if their babies were abducted and murdered; if they were beaten

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for failing to understand where to move to and how quickly – it would be a crime. But when it's done to animals, it's simply part of the "recipe" for making an omelette or chicken nuggets – or in this case, artwork. Please don't support this system.

Women are not just pieces of meat. And neither are the other living beings who are here with us, our fellows. PETA has no desire to stifle artistic efforts, but we hope you'll leave images that support cruelty out of your exhibits and instead feature art that promotes compassion and respect. We're counting on your ingenuity. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elisa Allen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Elisa Allen