

# HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

## Bodily Abstractions / Fragmented Anatomies

Hauser & Wirth Monaco  
26 January - 26 March 2022  
Curated by Tanya Barson



This exhibition focuses on artists whose work approaches the body and anatomy in complex ways through degrees of abstraction or fragmentation. In doing so, these artists subvert both the way the body has been traditionally represented in the history of art and the conventions surrounding the (classical or modern) fragment. While it highlights the work of women artists, it also includes work which challenges gender stereotyping and binary or cis-gender categories in favour of gender fluidity, often expressed through a fluidity of bodily form. The show simultaneously addresses new concepts of previously gender-defined strength, sexuality, fragility or illness, love, violence, tenderness, and human relations.

Taking its inspiration in part from Linda Nochlin's essay 'The Body in Pieces: The Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity' (1994), this exhibition will review these ideas through the work of some of the twentieth and twenty-first century's masters: Louise Bourgeois, Berlinde de Bruyckere, Ellen Gallagher, Eva Hesse, Maria Lassnig, Lee Lozano, Anna Maria Maiolino, Christina Quarles, Cindy Sherman, Lorna Simpson, Pipilotti Rist and Alina Szapocznikow. As Nochlin wrote in relation to the work of Louise Bourgeois and Cindy Sherman, among others, 'the postmodern body, from the vantage-point of these artists and many others, is conceived of uniquely as the 'body-in-pieces': the very notion of a unified, unambiguously gendered subject is rendered suspect in their work'.

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On display is a recent short film by Lorna Simpson, 'Walk with me' (2020); based on a collage of three women, their fractured, composite faces are subtly animated so that their eyes blink. Also included is a pivotal work by Alina Szapocznikow, 'Noga (Leg)' (1962), which is a plaster cast of the artist's right leg, marking her shift away from the mere representation of the human form to a tangible imprint of her own body. Here, a detached, single limb, becomes a symbol of individuation and a vehicle of pleasure or eroticism, while also implicating the forces that commodify the female body. A sculpture by Louise Bourgeois, 'Nature Study #6' (1995), belongs to a series of bodily fragments rendered in marble. In the work, numerous smoothly carved breasts, which emphasise the maternal body with its capacity to nurture and regenerate, are contained within a roughly hewn trough or sarcophagus.

'A Lull Gone By' (2021) by Christina Quarles is a deliberately enigmatic, vivid painting teeming with breasts, limbs, torsos, and faces reconfigured into flowing and gender-ambiguous forms. In her work, Quarles explores the different ways in which race, gender, and sexuality contribute to the mingling and questioning of identity.



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Quarles' work is juxtaposed with that of the late Austrian master Maria Lassnig, whose painting 'Selbstportrait als Einäugige (Self Portrait as One Eyed)' (1997) is included in the exhibition. Lassnig's theory of 'body awareness' shaped a Surrealist-influenced method of communicating her mental perception of herself and her feelings through lacerating depictions of her own naked figure.

'Bodily Abstractions / Fragmented Anatomies' explores a variety of aesthetic approaches and techniques such as abstracting, fragmenting, cropping, juxtaposition, mutation and mutilation. The works subvert the fetishization of the female or traditionally gendered body, or its reduction to sexualized parts and surface appearances, and replace it with works that address female-centred or non-binary experience, the outward manifestation of interior feeling, profound psychological states, and intellect.

### Press Contacts:

Alice Haguenauer  
Hauser & Wirth  
alicehaguenauer@hauserwirth.com  
+44 7880 421823

### Hauser & Wirth

One Monte-Carlo  
Place du Casino  
98000 Monaco  
  
+377 92 00 04 20  
monaco@hauserwirth.com

[www.hauserwirth.com](http://www.hauserwirth.com)

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Eva Hesse  
No title  
1960  
Oil on Masonite  
40 x 30.5 cm / 15 3/4 x 12 in  
© The Estate of Eva Hesse  
Courtesy Hauser & Wirth

Alina Szapocznikow  
Herbier bleu I (Blue Herbarium I)  
1972  
Polyester, polychromatic cardboard  
65 x 47.6 x 2 cm / 25 5/8 x 18 3/4 x 3/4 inches  
Photo: Thomas Barratt  
© ADAGP, Paris  
Courtesy The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr  
Stanislawski / Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris / Hauser & Wirth

Louise Bourgeois  
Nature Study #6  
1995  
Pink marble  
48.3 x 88.9 x 61 cm / 19 x 35 x 24 in  
© The Easton Foundation / ADAGP, Paris 2021  
Courtesy the Foundation and Hauser & Wirth  
Photo: Stefan Altenburger Photography Zürich

Berlinde De Bruyckere  
Sjemkel III, 2020  
2020  
Wax, animal hair, silicone, textile, polyurethane,  
metal, epoxy  
196 x 72 x 34 cm / 77 1/8 x 28 3/8 x 13 3/8 in  
© Berlinde De Bruyckere  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth  
Photo: Mirjam Devriendt

Lee Lozano  
No title  
1962-1963  
Oil on canvas over wood  
6.3 x 16.5 cm / 2 1/2 x 6 1/2 in  
© The Estate of Lee Lozano  
Courtesy Hauser & Wirth  
Photo: Stefan Altenburger Photography Zürich