

LOUISE BOURGEOIS



STORM KING ART CENTER



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H. PETER STERN | DAVID R. COLLENS | AMI WALLACH

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MOUNTAINVILLE, NEW YORK

Louise Bourgeois with the marble sculpture #2C20.037 (1990)
at the opening of the retrospective at the Tanager Foundation in Barcelona in 1992.

Published in conjunction with the exhibition

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STORM KING ART CENTER

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

H. Peter Stern, Chairman
David R. Cutler, Director and Curator

Our long and productive association with Louise Bourgeois started in 1978 with the purchase of *Number Seventy-Two (The No Mark)*, 1972.

This seminal work was transported from Louise's storage facility to Storm King, where it was carefully reassembled inside a small heated building with the guidance and expertise of her assistant, Jerry Gosswey. It was prepared for outdoor exhibition by designing a stainless steel grate to drain water through the sculpture and a temporary roof was installed to protect it during the winter. Jerry drove Louise to Storm King to see her sculpture again and to approve it for outdoor exhibition. The sculpture was sited near the museum building in an intimate location with pachyandra surrounding it.

Ten years of being outdoors in rain and humidity took its toll on the marble elements. It became necessary to clean and prepare it for an indoor gallery for long-term preservation. Even with ten years indoors, the marble cylinders lost their shine. Therefore, in 2005 a plan was initiated to again polish the cylinders and also to remove the stainless steel grate so that it could be returned to the original condition it had been in 1975 at the Whitney Museum of American Art, where the cylinders were installed on the floor. This was accomplished in preparation for the 2007 exhibition at Storm King, which celebrates the reinstallation, together with an exhibition in the museum's galleries focusing on her use of clustering forms, as well as works outside the building.

This opportunity would not have been possible without the extraordinary support and generous loans from Louise Bourgeois, courtesy Cheri & Reed, New York, and the excellent work of her devoted staff: Jerry Gosswey, her assistant of many years, and Wendy Williams, managing director of the Louise Bourgeois studio.

It also could not have taken place without the generous support of our many donors and foundations who have supported, not only this particular exhibition, but also other exhibition programs at the Storm King Art Center.

The creation of this catalogue involved the talents of many individuals that we would like to thank: Anne Halbach for her enlightening essay on Louise Bourgeois; Tessa Maloney and Paul Pollard of P&M, Inc. for their excellent work on the design and production; and Meridian Printing for their superb presentation.

We would like to express our deep appreciation to the Art Center staff, who continuously show their expertise and professionalism in preparing for each exhibition, and also the numerous additional individuals and companies who contribute to the success of each exhibition.



Louise Bourgeois in 1979 in the basement of her Chelsea home with the giant
wood sculpture *The Mind-Looming The Other* (1947-49).
Photo © Eric Stein

Louise Bourgeois of Storm King: War and the Rumors of War The Drama of One Among Many

Amos Walach

Louise Bourgeois is in blue. She is outlined in light. It is a day in her Brooklyn studio in 1993, and the filmmaker Marion Capiro and I are shooting her for a documentary.¹

"The connections I make in my work are connections that I cannot face; they are really unconscious connections," Bourgeois is saying, gravely, as if this is a new thought to her. "The artist has the privilege of being in touch with his or her unconscious, and this is really a gift. It is the definition of sanity. It is the definition of self-realization."

In fact this thought, in one form or another, has been something of an artistic creed for her, though usually it is not voiced with such equanimity. Here is an art, Bourgeois often says, that is rooted in the trauma of her childhood.

She spelled it out for the first time in the project, "Child Abuse," which she produced for the December 1982 issue of *Artforum*.²

Some of us are unshaken with the past that we live off it. It is the attitude of the past who never finds the last heaven and it is really the situation of artists who work for a reason that nobody can quite grasp. They might want to encounter something of the past to destroy it. It is that the past for certain people has such a hold and such a beauty . . .

Everything I do was inspired by my early life.

That same year, 1982, Bourgeois became the first woman ever to be honored with a full retrospective at The Museum of Modern Art. She was seventy-one years old, and for the occasion, she narrated a video that inventoried the sources of her childhood injuries: the philandering father, the acquisitive mother, the mistress who was also sister to the child.

In the years since, Bourgeois has expanded on this drama of betrayal, anxiety, and fear. It is a family saga. Louis, the overbearing father, was adept at ridicule and seldom lost erotic pleasures. Josephine, the all-suffering mother, never really recovered from the flu she contracted in the worldwide epidemic of 1918. ("Men are frantic and women are sad," Bourgeois told us for the film.) Louise, the child, was alert to the sexual currents engulfing her home, and too eager to please everyone. There was an older sister, Henriette, who limped, and a younger brother, Pierre, whom Louise tried vainly to protect from their father's poisonous tongue. Her guilt for failing has been lifelong.

These are connections that the sculptor cannibalizes for her work and often rehashes afterwards. She locates the source of the creative impulse in her memories and disdains most discussions about the varied and often radical formal means through which the system is.

To Bourgeois, both material and form are in service of the creative impulse and imbedded in the need for existence. On one of my visits to her studio in 1982, she put it this way: "The focus of my work is that I get rid of my demons. It has nothing to do with a rare or a piece of wood, or material. I am not a craft woman at all. I use them [both and materials] but I'm not crazy about them. I might be excited about an idea. Or about a memory. A material is only a material, nothing else."

She's fluent in the languages of psychology, mythology, art history, and architecture with which curators and art historians from Linda Nochlin to Lucy Lippard, Robert Rauschenberg, Francis Morris, and Jean-Claude Baudry have analysed her work, never mind that she always manages to bring it back to the personal. But there is a curious dissonance, which begins with Bourgeois herself, between the broader context of those childhood terrors and the sculpture that results. What's so often missing in all the telling is history itself.

At the age of ninety-five, Louise Bourgeois has lived through one century of wars and into another. At key junctures, historical events have come close enough to breathe down her neck; they've orientated her life and influenced her art. Her personal traumas, like everyone's, are inseparable from her times. But though she sometimes speaks of these events, it is seldom in clear connection to the work.

Storm King. An Geste's marble floor piece, *Number Seventy-Two (The No March)*, 1972 (plate 10), is one of the rare exceptions, together with some of the works that relate to it. The general consensus, from Paul Golder in *de Novo*, to Marie Perle in the *Number Seventy-Two (The No March)* entry in the *Storm King Art Center Collection Catalogue*, has been that *Number Seventy-Two*, which was created during the Vietnam War, invokes the protest marches of the 1960s and 1970s.

In her catalogue for the 1982 MoMA retrospective, Deborah Wye, curator of that exhibition, described the first incarnation of *Number Seventy-Two* in the 1973 Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial:

Bourgeois saw in that presentation a closing of individuals who had banded together in a silent march and mass demonstration, prompted by the political activities of that period. She was also motivated by the idea of showing creatures pressed together symbolically as well as physically in their need to relate, adjust, and ultimately depend on each other.

The nation was on the march, for Civil Rights, Power, Women's Liberation, Native American Rights. The marchers, for the most part, were peaceful, though sometimes the police and the national guard were not. There was violence around the world in 1972—in Vietnam, in Ireland, where Chinese unarmed civilians were killed by British troops in Bloody Sunday; in Germany, where Arab terrorists massacred eleven Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics.

Bourgeois's response to anxiety is to make sculpture.

I cannot tell about everybody's sculpture, only about my own. But my own is a process of alleviating the anguish of fear, day by day, step by step. I transform anguish into something defined.

By the 1970s she was also making action. She had thrown herself into the protests, had joined women and writers on the march. She was familiar with the attractions and complexities of solidarity, what she called the "team spirit." Much of the sculpture in this exhibition is from the 1960s and 1970s, and is conscious of jostling, huddled, accumulated forms. The forms themselves have their roots in her work of the 1960s. The impulse behind them, it has always seemed to me, is as rooted in what historical events did to her family as to the psycho-sexual drama within the family itself.

So an exhibition with *Number Seventy-Two (The No March)* as its centerpiece is a fine excuse for an alternate reading that tries to make connections between the intimacies of family life and the incursions of history as they have expressed themselves in the sculpture. And the place to begin is with the birth of Louise Joséphine Bourgeois, on December 25, 1911, as Joséphine Valérie Françoise Bourgeois and Louis Nadere Bourgeois. Louis had another son, Toéficite him, Joséphine named the new daughter Louise in his honor, and she quickly became his favorite.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Louise Bourgeois was four months short of her third birthday when the guns of August exploded into World War I in 1914. Her uncle David Bourgeois was instantly mobilized, and her father soon joined his brother. David was killed in the first week of the war, even before German troops advanced to within forty miles of the Champs-Élysées.

The Bourgeois family lived in a grand nineteenth-century house in the suburbs of Choisy-le-Roi, but they could not have been immune to the hubbub and panic in the French government fled and citizens prepared to fight and die in the streets. Children are particularly affected by disruption and distress; the hyper-sensitive Louise would have been especially susceptible. Over the Germans were bashed at the Marne, David's family came to live in Choisy.

"The war had to do with the fact that suddenly the family had to split up," Bourgeois told me in October 1982. "There were at this point five children, two being orphans due to the killing of the father in the war. My mother became anxious and followed her husband from camp to camp, taking me along instead of the other children because she felt I was my father's favorite and she wanted to please him."

Imagine what this must have meant: the crowded trains, the sweat, the strain, the wailing/boles of men, the weepers, infectious fear. "I remember her nervousness, and I remember my pain at the time, even though I was very little," Bourgeois has said of her mother and herself. "We would see trains of wounded soldiers going through the countryside from the front, and it was anxiety provoking."



Louise Bourgeois and her parents, Joséphine and Louis, c. 1915.



Louise Bourgeois in front of her mother's lap in front of the family house in Châteaufort, Paris, circa 1914.



Louise Bourgeois's father Louis, nursing medical attention at the hospital in Châteaufort in 1915 after being wounded in the war.

Louise Bourgeois was wounded, and mother and child went to visit him at a hospital in Chartres. There would have been the smell of blood and iodine, the bandages where limbs and eyes had been, the overcrowding because there were so very many wounded, arriving every day.

After the war, her father had changed; Paris was in carnival spirit and he was on the parade. Her mother's influenza triggered the emphysema which eventually killed her. Sadie entered the household as English tutor for Louise and stayed as mistress to Louis.

On the streets were the war casualties, sawn legs, or arms, or eyes or half their faces. After her mother died in 1912, Louise Bourgeois worked as a docent at the Louvre, taking her lunch in the basement with the state pensioned war wounded and amputees, evocative reminders of her earliest experiences. Blindness, amputations, fragmented body parts have been recurring themes in her work.

By the time she worked at the Louvre, she had studied mathematics at the Sorbonne and discovered the wonders of geometry.

Studying geometry, I learned a system in which things proceed without surprise. One is, essentially, safe. That was a revelation: that it was possible to anticipate? You could predict the position of the stars. The sun would rise where it was supposed to. It never failed you. Never betrayed you."

Soon after that, she began studying art—at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, the atelier of Roger Bonniot, and the École des Beaux-Arts—and by 1918 was exhibiting her paintings. That year she also opened an art gallery in the space where her father continued the family business of selling tapestries. It was there that she met Robert Goldwater, an American art historian doing research in Paris for his doctoral dissertation, "Primitivism in Modern Painting."

As Europe burned once more toward war, Bourgeois married Goldwater and followed him to New York. Jean-Louis, their first son, was born on July 4, 1919, not quite three weeks after German troops marched into Paris. On November 12, 1941, less than a month before Pearl Harbor, Bourgeois gave birth to their second son, Alain Matthew Clements.



Louise Bourgeois, who created the tapestry *Children from 1921-1927*, probably saw this photograph of children in the London Blitz.



Wounded World War I soldiers. Archival image.

She knew first hand what war was like, as she followed the course of this new one from the safety of New York. That would have been occasion for guilt enough, but her brother Pierre, whom she had assigned herself to protect, was a soldier in this war. He suffered shell shock and was never able afterwards to accommodate himself to life. When she speaks of him now, sometimes she weeps.

Throughout the war, she made prints and paintings which sought to counteract the realities across the ocean by taking refuge in grids inhabited by images of animals, plants, or docile women bearing pots. For the line block *Christmas/New Year's card* she created in 1918, she juxtaposed a map of the Normandy coast with words commemorating D-Day: "Le 6 Juin./Un grand matin/Se leva et sa lumière vint de L'Ouest" ("The sixth of June./A great morning/dawned and its light came from the West").

Bourgeois's practical attempt to lessen the distance between herself and the suffering at home was to organize an exhibition at the Nivola Gallery in 1945, at about the time Allied troops were marching into the concentration camps. "Documents France 1940-1944: An Literature-Presse of the French Underground," included posters, photographs, newspapers, letters, paintings by Picasso and Bonnard, and the writings of Louis Aragon, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Gertrude Stein.

Her initial foray into sculpture toward the end of the war, she has said, was to banish despair after her husband and sons had left for the day. Again, geometry was her solace.

It is probably foolish, but all those triangles of that period, I just couldn't do without them . . . When the men had left, I experienced total chaos, by which I mean outside, a terrible outside. Then I realized that I could have some control over another form of expression, over another world. I could create these forms and then paint them black, expressing sadness. I could put them together, show them on the ground, destroy them. This feeling of power enabled me to control my helplessness. Sculpture was revealed to me as a means of expression thanks to a milk carton, thanks to the simple triangular shape of something useful and indispensable. It had meant that something could be expressed."

As the war ended, she created a studio out of the rooftop of the building in which she lived. She painted herself on that roof, hair wild and screaming in *Child* 1946-47 and *Roof Song*, 1947. By then Bourgeois

was a wild woman, waiting to explode with the frustrations of wartime and motherhood. In the paintings, body and hair bear a resemblance to the recently exploded atomic bomb, though they are usually interpreted as a celebration of her newfound freedom to work in her outdoor studio.

Here she became a sculptor, creating elongated forms assembled from scavenged wood, roughly the height of a human being. As Personages, as they are called, they are quiet and staccato, like the lost man standing in a devastated world. They were solitary, existential figures. But when she installed them for her exhibition at the Peridot Gallery, she grouped them so that they related to one another and animated the entire space.

I re-created all the people I had left behind in France. They were huddled one against the other, and they represented all the people that I couldn't admit I missed.

With *The Blind Leading the Blind*, 1947–49 (plate 1), the earliest piece in this exhibition, her Personages are reduced to rough-hewn wooden pillars, like sets of legs, connected at the shoulder. This was a remarkable formal advance in sculpture: the work stood directly on the floor; its base, as it were, was at the top. At the Peridot Gallery, where it was first exhibited in 1949, *The Blind Leading the Blind* inhabited the space of the viewer, and the viewer could interact with it. So important was this idea to Bourgeois that she was to make five versions of the sculpture, painted red, black, and later in the 1970s, hot pink. The one in this exhibition is cast in bronze, painted red and black, and, unlike the first, placed on a steel base.

I would argue that the *The Blind Leading the Blind* bears a startling affinity to photographs of actual blind leading actual blind during World War I. This sight was a common one, and in the autumn of 1918 John Singer Sargent recorded such a scene he had come upon in Arras, France, in the widely reproduced painting *Gasot*.¹ It is very likely that Bourgeois saw such parades of the wounded for herself on her trips to camps and hospitals or on the streets of Paris. They inhabited her space—side walks and corridors—and she theirs.

Her work has always been grounded in the familiar experience that an incident in the present—a sense memory ignited by sight, sound, smell, emotion—will retrieve primal memories. What is uncommon is how exorcistically available her emotions and memories are to her. In this case, the unconscious connection she prizes would have substituted the aftermath of one war for another, as the marching GI's returned home.

My works are a reconstruction of past events. The past has become tangible to them, but at the same time they are created in order to forget the past, to defuse it, to reflect it, and make it possible for the past to be forgotten.

In the late 1940s, an anxiety would found itself in the Atomic age, after a war that had exposed the lethality so close to the surface of what had appeared to be civilization. The historian Arthur Schlesinger named the time "The Age of Anxiety."

Western man in the middle of the 20th century is tense, uncertain, selfish. We look upon our epoch as a time of troubles, an age of anxiety. The grounds of our civilization, of our attitudes are breaking up under our feet, and familiar ideas and institutions as we reach for them, like shadows in the falling dark.

Anxiety is the game that Bourgeois is in. Lucy R. Lippard has noted that Bourgeois's recital of the themes for *The Blind Leading the Blind* have included "catastrophe," "a chain of pain," "people who were fated to be destroyed together," "women as victims trying to support each other."

Lippard goes on to suggest that

"The Blind Leading the Blind" might also be seen as a pessimistic political statement on regimentation and war. Bourgeois has said that she used the color black during World War II "to make things disappear, all the death and mourning. It was a very real thing. That is a historical pain and very important in American sculpture."

Bourgeois has also offered alternative interpretations of the sculpture, including the oppressive presence of the "father figure." French Surrealism who spent World War II in New York.² Personal history, an history, and world history are often inseparable, but Bourgeois put the emphasis on the latter when she told Lucy Lippard in connection with the sculpture, "If you are able to accept the catastrophe, then personal drama takes second place."³

The Blind Leading the Blind is the first of the works in which repetition, accumulation, and interaction bear the burden of both content and form. One of cathexis Bourgeois created a recurring theme that is the focus of this exhibition.

Rebuilding the past is a task that Bourgeois finds it necessary to repeat again and again, because there is always another reason for it to happen, necessitating another sculptural idea. She spent her teenage years copping her mother's back in a medieval attempt to stem the emphysema brought on by the war and its aftermath. She herself was a mother who made the cradle music, lulled the children. She has spoken of repetition as

The repetitive motion of a line, to correct an object, the licking of wounds, the back and forth of a church, the endless repetition of waves, making a person to sleep, cleaning someone you love—an endless gesture of love.

In their earliest incarnations, as in the bronze *Quarantaine* in the exhibition (begun at the same time as *The Blind Leading the Blind*, but not completed until 1953), the forms from her Personages are simply joined on a base, so that they function as both one and many, in complex formal and emotional relationship to one another and to the viewer.

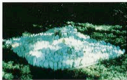
By 1955, the painted wood *One and Others* (plate 5) had become a huddled growth of pointed and genital forms, no one of which made sense alone, but only in this relationship of intense interdependency.

Delia Wye titled her essay for the 1982 Bourgeois MoMA retrospective after this work and what Bourgeois had said about it:

Several years ago I called a sculpture "One and Others." This might be the title of many since then: the relation of one person to his surroundings is a continuing pre-occupation. It can be casual or clever, simple or involved, subtle or blunt. It can be painful or pleasant. Most of all it can be real or imaginary. This is the soil from which all my work grows.



Louise Bourgeois in her early 1970s with the *Small Army* (1968-69) and the 1970s *Small Army* (1968-69).



Louise Bourgeois's *Small Army* (The No March), 1971, installed at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Bourgeois offered a fuller explanation in an artist's statement for the Walker Art Museum in 1976:

My work grows from the dual between the isolated individual and the shared awareness of the group. At first I made single figures without any freedom at all, blind boxes without any openings, any relation to the outside world. Later, tiny windows started to appear. And then I began to develop an interest in the relationship between two figures. The figures of this phase are turned in on themselves, but they try to relate together even though they may not succeed in reaching each other. . . . Gradually the relations between the figures I made become fiercer and more subtle, and now I use my works as groups of objects relating to each other. Although ultimately each can and does stand alone. . . . In my most recent work these relations become denser and more intimate. Now the single work has its own complex parts, each of which is similar, yet different from the others. But there is still the feeling with which I began—the drama of one among many. . . . Eighteenth-century painters made "conversation pieces"; my sculptures might be called "confrontation pieces."

After her father died in 1951, Bourgeois, with never-to-be-revived conflicts to contend with, went into a depression which produced little new work, until her car painter *Louis* of the late 1960s. At the same time, she returned to her concerns with closely packed repetitive forms, and confrontation was their subject. Of the 1968 *Colonnade*, which bears a family resemblance to *Bleuse Figures*, 1971 (plate 14), in the exhibition, Bourgeois said:

My piece "Colonnade," from 1968 represents the protest marches of the 1960s: silent, young, black. It is made from one cube, with the elements, some 30 or 40 of them, carved out of the same block as the base. These elements meet together, stick together, function in terms of being together, in the Martin Luther King civil rights tradition of protest. They are anonymous and they are silent. Silent means nonviolence. Many of the works from that period have civil rights overtones.

She had entered history. The means to engage with the terrors of a war-torn childhood now offered a way into safer, silent, "non-violent" historical events. When she herself joined a march for the first time in 1971, she wore a red armband to protest the paucity of women's work on MoMA's walls. The second time, in 1973, she deflated the language of repetition to create a 30-foot banner on the back of a painting, which, with the help of her friends, she carried to support striking MoMA employees. "Nonviolence," said the banner in every imaginable manner of type. It was an all-purpose cry against injustice, but also

against the danger that the individual would disappear in the anonymous crowd. "Nonviolence" is a habit of speech with Bourgeois, who hasn't the least intention of blending in.

The "No March" also means saying you're almost nobody. You have to merge with thousands like you. This is a passive thing. Whereas the finding of yourself is active, and you must realize that the road is very solitary. You walk alone.

In the *No March* sculpture, which is the three-dimensional realization of the banner, no form disappears. The 1,200 assembled, blind, amputated cylinders may seem similar to one another, but they lean individually, are individually colored, angle in individual directions, relate in multiple, individual ways.

Originally exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1973, *Smaller Stronger—Yes* (The No March) found a home outdoors, under a tree, at Storm King. Bourgeois quite liked The No March outdoors, because the rain would not harm it. However, as it happened, human beings did. The small mobile cylinders proved too much of a temptation to heedless soccerists' hooters, and in 1988, the work was removed for restoration. When it returned to Storm King the following year, it was installed indoors.

Needled in nature, it had seemed to be a different piece, less seeming multitude, more organic growth, and thus aligned to the undulating shapes of breasts and organs, clouds and germinal growths that so often began to populate Bourgeois's sculptures. In many of the works in this exhibition, the body has become landscape, landscape body, as Bourgeois struggles her ongoing dual between the repetitive nature of harmony and of dread.

She may disdain materials for the sake of materials. But often, the material she chooses to embody her emotions affects the form. Beginning in 1967, she began traveling to Italy—first to Pietrasanta and then Carrara—to work in marble. She related the act of carving a multi-part sculpture from a single block:

The transition stems from the fact that the aggressive side of my nature liked the resistance of the stone. Wood is too soft a material, and above all, it's perishable and offers no resistance. Whereas the resistance that must be overcome in stone is a stimulation, like the fact that previous artists use it usually because they're a formidable challenge. It's almost a playing with the impossible.

But the forms in *The No March*, as in *Fountain* (plate 12) and *Grey Fountain* (plate 13), both 1970-71, are actually found forms. They are industrial waste materials, cylinders carved from the core of the stone in the manufacture of vases, often funerary cases. Bourgeois gathered this industrial waste off the curbing floor, sliced each cylinder at an angle, and had it polished.

She was witnessing the possibilities of the most traditional of sculptural materials. Through the accident of process and practicality, she exposed inside as outside, one of her most revolutionary sculpture ideas.



Louise Bourgeois, in a later costume designed and made by her, in front of her *No March* from 1971. Photo: John Deane

It was an idea she had been struggling with in plaster latex, but it owed its initial realization to her experiments with an altogether new material: latex.

Robert Storey, in an unpublished manuscript, notes that she began working with latex in 1963, when she was teaching at Brooklyn College. Plaster clogged the ancient bathroom drains, and she took the hint from her younger colleagues who "were then discovering the possibilities of synthetics."¹ Bourgeois replaced her plaster molds with latex and found that:

Without underlines, you could pull it away. The whole thing starts with the question of working with inside—as opposed to solid plaster—now you are supposed to look inside the sculpture, the inside is more important.²

The distended nipples on the wounded breasts, Storey points out, "are identical to the shape of the post-squirts seen on the inside of a latex mold once it has been pulled away from the cast object."³

Average, "1968–69 (plaster)", is the inside incarnation of latex; *Nature Study*, *Pink Fountain*, 1981 (plaster 3R), the cast inside. Inside/outside continues Bourgeois's symbolic redefinition of "inner world and outer"; of the intimacy of the family drama and the reality of living in a tumultuous world. Like all conflicts in Bourgeois's sculpture, this one is never resolved. There is only transient resolution and the need to begin again.

The inside/outside resolutions that speak to the multitude are the spiders Bourgeois began constructing in 1998. In their varied incarnations they invite viewers to shelter or cover within them; they dominate tall buildings such as Rockefeller Center in New York, domesticate echoing halls such as the Tate Modern in London. Bourgeois has always said her spiders are friendly. They remind her of her mother, and of summers in Connecticut with her children, where the spiders are marauding miscreants.

But these spiders are terrifying, too. They suggest a world gone awry in which what has been small and ignored becomes monumental and menacing. Their multiple legs reach to the floor without a base and are joined at the top, as in *The Blind Leading the Blind*. They look to be handgrip at the joints. They are as overwhelming as a child's journey through a landscape of the wounded. In their unseen and ambiguity, they restate the trauma experienced at the start of twentieth century as emblems for the dangerously confounding twenty-first.

Notes:

1. The documentary recently titled, *Annie Bourgeois: I Live Here, I Feel and I Feel and I Feel* (Working), is scheduled to be completed in time for the opening of the Bourgeois retrospective at the English National Museum in March 2008. Maria Gropius died in August, 2004, at the age of 81 years.
2. "NAME Shows," a property of Louis Bourgeois first published in *Artforum*, 30 (December 1992).
3. Deborah Wyes, "Annie Bourgeois: 'She and Others,'" in *Annie Bourgeois, only one* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), p. 26.
4. From an e-mail version of conversation between Christine Meyer-Peter and Louis Bourgeois, 1986 and 1987, unpublished.
5. Newsweek interview for an article that appeared in *Newsweek*, October 15, 1982.
6. *Agnes Bourgeois and Richard B. Goldfarb*, "Annie Bourgeois," *Interviews*, September 1975, Westminster, Mass. and other (Chicago: Walter Darrk, School of the Art Institute of Chicago 1976).
7. From an October 1982 interview with the author. Various interviews followed, Louis Bourgeois gives an hour interview with Anne Wilkoff in 1982, 1983 and 1985.
8. Quoted from the profile on Bourgeois by Thomas Mearns, *Group Exhibitions in England: American Women Artists* (New York: Simon & Schuster 1977), reprinted in *Annie Bourgeois, Disorientation of the Father / Reorientation of the Mother: Writings and Interviews 1935–1987*, ed. Maria Gropius Bernadine and Maria Gropius Bernadine (London: Victoria Foundation, 1989), p. 124.
9. *Superficial in Belated Way and in Mind*, *The Power of Annie Bourgeois* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1994), p. 27.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Interview for the film "Annie Bourgeois" by Carole Gribard (Paris, 1973), quoted in Maria Gropius Bernadine, "Annie Bourgeois" (Paris: Éditions de la Contemporain, 1986), 86.
12. The painting is in the collection of the Imperial War Museum, London.
13. John Jerry Gennep and Barbara Yelander, *Intaglio*, in *Annie Bourgeois: One Day and Half Day* (Willem Frederik: Paris, 1987), p. 36.
14. Arthur W. Schlegel (Jr.), *The First Letter: The Politics of Freedom* (New York: Vintage, 1965), quoted in *The New York Times*, March 4, 1967, section 4, p. 1.
15. Lucy R. Lippard, "The Blind Leading the Blind," in *Politics of the Street* (New York: New York, 1970), p. 27.
16. *Ibid.* Lippard is quoting from an unpublished interview by Martha Fels, "Annie Bourgeois: A Search for Identity," 1975.
17. Lippard is a 1979 interview by Kay B. Wolford, cited by Agnes Bernadine, and she is intended "of a period, which flows my coming to New York, as a time when also of fatherhood appeared in the same. The time was, the husband as you know some ones of New York, then André (Jacques Matisse) and then Agnes, and then Marie—they were the same in the New York. I was struggling that through the women drawings, the house women, it was a time period. I was very close to her. But this is a time when she comes to New York, usually the wife. The whole scene is to make the strongest of male domain.... That whole group of people make no difference they were very close to me and I was a classical woman actually.... Well, I was 30 years younger than they were. They are my generation but I was very close to them and I became a very strong group. Not this is where the violence came. I've decided that I would say something and that I might say something. Considering my past, my running away from home, from my country and from my father, it was obvious that any fatherhood appearing from France, from going to make the wrong way, and I did. I remember Marie thinking and you could not get close to her.... So I did not feel too well with them and I really distanced them. My work doesn't, so 'The Blind Leading the Blind' is really the blind, as the old ones, you follow them and they drag you down.... The blind men, a half blind, so 'The Blind Leading the Blind' is really the blind, as the old ones, you follow them and they drag you down.... The blind men, a half blind, so the past that comes from living in a patriarchal society because if you do these other people for a while, you know you are not a good deal of your self."
18. Lippard, "The Blind Leading the Blind," p. 26.
19. Lippard in *Annie Bourgeois, Art & Art* (New York, Denmark: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 1995), p. 47.
20. Lippard in Wyes, "One and Others," p. 36.
21. Lippard in "Art Artist's Works," *Design Quarterly* (Willem Frederik), no. 30 (1986), p. 38.
22. Lippard in conversation with Meyer-Peter, p. 124.
23. Lippard in *Paul Gropius in Annie Bourgeois* (New York: University Press in Women Studies, 1985), p. 108.
24. Lippard interview first published 1988, *Robert Miller Gallery*, New York.
25. Jerry Gennep, e-mail to the author, March 6, 2007.
26. Robert Storey, unpublished manuscript.
27. *Ibid.*

PLATES



1 THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

1941-49 • Bronze, painted red and black, on stainless steel base • 70 x 49 x 21" • 177.8 x 125.2 x 53.3 cm,
Courtesy Chace & Reed, New York



1947-53 • Bronze, painted white with blue and black • 80 1/2 x 27 x 27" • 204.4 x 68.5 x 68.5 cm.
Courtesy Green & Reed, New York



3 UNTITLED

1952 • Painted wood and plaster • 63 1/2" high • 36.8 cm. high
Gift of the Collector's Committee, Image © 2007 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.





4 FORET (NIGHT GARDEN)

1955 - Painted wood - 37 x 18 1/4 x 14 1/4" - 94 x 47 1/4 x 37 2 cm.
Greenfield County Museum of Art, Graftonville, Maryland



5 ONE AND OTHERS

1955 - Painted and stained wood - Overall: 18 1/4 x 20 x 16 3/4" - 47.3 x 50.8 x 42.9 cm. - Base: 2 x 26 x 16 1/4" - 5.1 x 50.8 x 42.9 cm.
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



6 DOUBLE NEGATIVE

1963 - Latex over plaster - 19 1/2 x 37 1/2 x 21 1/4" - 49.2 x 95.2 x 29.6 cm.
Collection Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo



7 THE FINGERS

1968 - Bronze, dark and polished patina - 3 x 12 1/2 x 8" - 7.6 x 31.7 x 20.3 cm.
Courtesy Davis & Ross, New York

AVENZA

1968-69 • Latex and fiberglass • 25 x 30 x 46" • 53.3 x 76.2 x 116.8 cm.
Courtesy-Obetz & Reed, New York



AGENZA REVISITED II

Y068-49 • Bronze, silver nitrate and polished patina • 53 1/2 x 41 x 75 1/2" • 136.8 x 104.1 x 191.7 cm.
Courtesy Charn & Reed, New York



10 SERPENTINE

1968-70 - Traversine marble - 69 x 21 x 17 1/2" - 175.2 x 53.3 x 44.4 cm.
Courtesy Chien & Reed, New York



II EYE TO EYE

1970 - Marble - 21 1/2 x 29 1/2 x 29 1/2" - 80 x 75.8 x 75.8 cm.
Collection Agnes Gund, New York





12 FOUNTAIN

1970-1971 • Marble, steel, wood • 11' 10" x 49 1/2" x 32 1/2" • 26.2 x 126.7 x 83.1 cm.
 Courtesy: Chisen & Reed, New York

GRAY FOUNTAIN

1970-1971 • Gray marble and steel • 11 1/2 x 22 x 40" • 28.5 x 55.8 x 116.8 cm • Timber: 11 1/2 x 22 x 40" • 29.2 x 56.4 x 121.9 cm
Courtesy Chem & Reed, New York



DISTANT FIGURES

1971 - Marble and stainless steel - 21 x 31 x 45" - 53.3 x 78.7 x 114.3 cm.
Courtesy Chem & Reed, New York





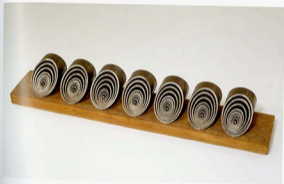
15 NUMBER SEVENTYTWO (THE NO MARCH)

1972 • Marble and travertine • 20 x 100 x 100" • 50.8 x 254.8 x 254.3 cm.
Collection: Sam King Art Center, Mountville, New York



NEST OF SEVEN

1978 • Steel and wood • 10 x 62 x 11" • 25.4 x 157.4 x 27.9 cm.
Courtesy Chaim B. Reed, New York



PASTORAL RECALL

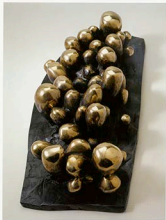
1979 • Wood • 108 x 90 x 66" • 274.3 x 228.6 x 167.6 cm.
Private collection, courtesy Christie's, New York





18 NATURE STUDY, PINK FOUNTAIN

1986 • Pink marble and steel • 16 x 33 x 21" • 40.8 x 83.8 x 53.3 cm.
Courtesy Cheri & Reed, New York



19 UNTITLED (FINGERS)

1986 • Bronze, black and polished patina • 4 x 8 1/2 x 18 1/2" • 10.1 x 21.5 x 46.9 cm.
Courtesy Cheri & Reed, New York

UNTITLED (WITH GROWTH)

1989 • Pink marble • 31½ x 21 x 57" • 80 x 53.3 x 144.7 cm.
Collection Ginny Williams Family Foundation, Denver





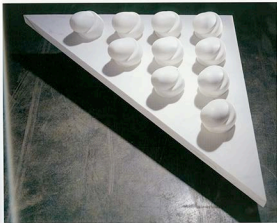
21 THE NEST

1994 • Steel • 101 x 109 x 108" • 256.5 x 430 x 407.3 cm.
(Collection San Francisco Museum of Modern Art)

1995-96 • Aluminum • 83 x 39 x 115" • 210.8 x 149.8 x 292.7 cm,
Courtesy Drim & Road, New York



1968-2002 • Marble • 8 1/2 x 69 1/4 x 25" • 21.5 x 177.1 x 63.5 cm.
 Courtesy Gagosian, New York



1 • **THE BIRD LEADING THE BIRD**

1987-89 • Bronze, painted red and black, on stainless steel base
79 x 69 x 25" • 171.8 x 175.2 x 63.8 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

2 • **QUASARSANA**

1982-83 • Bronze, painted white with blue and black • 90 1/2 x 27 x 27" • 230.4 x 68.7 x 68.5 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

3 • **UNTITLED**

1992 • Painted wood and plaster • 63 1/2" high • 101.9 cm. high
Gift of the Collectors Committee, Hugo & Helmut Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

4 • **SOEIT (NIGHT GARDEN)**

1983 • Painted wood • 37 x 19 1/2 x 19 1/2" • 94 x 47.9 x 47.2 cm.
Granville County Museum of Art, St. Arnold, Minnesota

5 • **ONE AND OTHERS**

1993 • Painted and stained wood • 18 1/2 x 25 x 16 1/2" • 47.3 x 58.8 x 42.9 cm.
Collection Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

6 • **DOUBLE NEGATIVE**

1982 • Latex over plaster • 19 1/2 x 32 1/2 x 38 1/2" • 49.2 x 82.2 x 79.6 cm.
Collection Helen M. McLean, Chicago

7 • **THE FINGERS**

1981 • Bronze, dark and polished patina • 3 x 12 1/2 x 8" • 7.6 x 31.7 x 20.3 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

8 • **AVENUE**

1986-89 • Latex and fiberglass • 21 x 30 x 46" • 53.3 x 76.2 x 116.8 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

9 • **AVENUE REVISITED II**

1986-89 • Bronze, silver nitrate and polished patina • 53 1/2 x 41 x 79 1/2" • 135.8 x 104.1 x 199.7 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

10 • **SERPENTINE**

1988-90 • Travertine marble • 49 x 21 x 17 1/2" • 125.2 x 53.3 x 44.4 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

11 • **EYE TO EYE**

1976 • Marble • 31 1/2 x 29 1/2 x 29 1/2" • 80 x 75.8 x 75.8 cm.
Collection Agnes Gund, New York

12 • **FOUNTAIN**

1970-1971 • Marble, steel, wood • 11 1/2 x 49 1/2 x 30 1/2" • 29.2 x 124.7 x 83.3 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

13 • **GRAY FOUNTAIN**

1970-1971 • Gray marble and steel • 15 1/2 x 22 x 66" • 39.3 x 55.8 x 167.6 cm. • Timber: 11 1/2 x 21 x 46" • 29.2 x 53.4 x 121.9 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

14 • **DISTANT FIGURES**

1971 • Marble and stainless steel • 21 x 31 x 45" • 53.3 x 78.7 x 114.3 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

15 • **NUMBER SEVENTY TWO (THE NO MARCH)**

1972 • Marble and limestone • 20 x 132 x 138" • 50.8 x 334.8 x 351.2 cm.
Collection Storm King Art Center, Mountville, New York

16 • **NEST OF SEVEN**

1978 • Steel and wood • 10 x 62 x 17" • 25.4 x 157.4 x 27.9 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

17 • **PARTIAL RECALL**

1979 • Wood • 136 x 90 x 66" • 345.3 x 228.6 x 167.6 cm.
Private collection, courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

18 • **MAJURE STUDY, PINK FOUNTAIN**

1984 • Pink marble and steel • 14 x 33 x 27" • 40.6 x 83.8 x 68.3 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

19 • **UNTITLED (FINGERS)**

1986 • Bronze, black and polished patina • 4 x 8 1/2 x 18 1/2" • 10.1 x 21.5 x 46.9 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

20 • **UNTITLED (WITH GROWTH)**

1991 • Pink marble • 31 1/2 x 21 x 17" • 80 x 53.3 x 168.7 cm.
Collection Gregory Whitehead Family Foundation, Denver

21 • **THE NEST**

1994 • Steel • 101 x 169 x 138" • 256.5 x 430 x 401.3 cm.
Collection San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

22 • **IN AND OUT #2**

1995-96 • Aluminum • 83 x 39 x 110" • 210.8 x 99.1 x 280.3 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

23 • **UNTITLED**

1988-2002 • Marble • 47 1/2 x 49 1/2 x 37" • 21.5 x 127.3 x 93.9 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

We are also delighted to be able to present the following sculptures in addition to our curated exhibition which Louise Bourgeois has generously lent to us, courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York.

24 • **SPIDER**

1966 • Bronze • 126 1/2 x 298 x 258" • 320.3 x 756.9 x 654.9 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

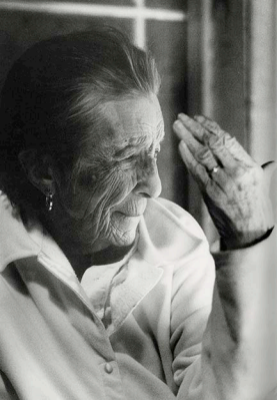
25 • **EYE BENCHES I**

1996-97 • Two Benches in Black Zimbabwe Granite • each: 68 1/2 x 33 x 45 1/2" • 173.8 x 104.1 x 114.9 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

26 • **EYE BENCHES II**

1996-97 • Two Benches in Black Zimbabwe Granite • each: 48 x 77 x 40 1/2" • 121.9 x 195.3 x 118.1 cm.
Courtesy Cherm & Reed, New York

* Includes in exhibition



LOUISE BOURGEOIS

Louise Bourgeois was born in Paris in 1911. She entered the Sorbonne to study mathematics in 1930 but left the following year to study art and art history at the École des Beaux-Arts, the École du Louvre, the Académie Julian, and at the studio of Fernand Léger during the 1930s. In 1938 she married American art historian Robert Goldwater and immigrated to New York City where she has since lived and worked. They adopted the first of three sons, Michel, in 1939. Bourgeois gave birth to Jean-Louis in 1940 and Alain in 1941. Her marriage to Goldwater lasted until his death in 1972.

Her first one-person exhibition was in 1945 at the Bertha Schaefer Gallery in New York and her sculpture was first shown in 1949 in a solo exhibition at the Peridot Gallery, New York. She exhibited regularly in New York throughout the following decades. The first museum acquisition of her sculpture occurred in 1951 when the Museum of Modern Art in New York purchased *Sleeping Figure* (1950). Bourgeois is the first woman to be given a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1982) and since then her works have been exhibited widely throughout the U.S. and Europe. Her first European retrospective was held in 1989 at the Frankfurter Kunstverein. In 1993, she represented the U.S. at the Venice Biennale. In 1997 she was presented the National Medal of Arts by President Clinton and in 1999 she was awarded The Golden Lion for a living master of contemporary art from the Venice Biennale. In 2000, she was commissioned by the Tate Modern in London for the inaugural installation at Turbine Hall. Among numerous international projects over the last decade were retrospectives at the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Kyunggi-Do, Korea, in 2000 and at the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg in 2001 (their first exhibition of a living American artist) and the Rockefeller Center, New York. Louise Bourgeois: *Spiders*, organized in association with the Public Art Fund. In 2002 The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia, Louise Bourgeois at the Hermitage. In 2003-2004 Sigmund Freud Museum, Vienna, Austria, *A View from the Outside*. Louise Bourgeois: *The Relic Child* in 2005 Wilfredo Lam Center Havana, Cuba. Louise Bourgeois: *One and Others*. In 2006 Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Maryland, Louise Bourgeois: *Femme*; Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts, Louise Bourgeois: *The Mouse Child*. In 2007 the Stern King Art Center, Mountville, New York, Louise Bourgeois. Louise Bourgeois will be the subject of a touring retrospective (being organized by the Tate Modern in London, England, Louise Bourgeois: *Retrospective* and will be on view at that location from October 2007 to January 2008. It will travel to the following locations from February 2008 to May 2009. The Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California; and the Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. She is represented in New York by Chown & Read.





25 EYE BENCHES I

1996-97 • Two benches in black Zimbabwean Granite • each: 45 1/2 x 53 x 45 1/2" • 123.8 x 134.6 x 115.9 cm.
Courtesy Chaim & Reed, New York



26 EYE BENCHES II

1996-97 • Two benches in black Zimbabwean Granite • each: 48 x 77 x 46 1/2" • 121.9 x 195.5 x 118.1 cm.
Courtesy Chaim & Reed, New York

LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

Louise Bourgeois
Cham & Read, New York
Sturm King Art Center, Mountaineer, New York
Collection Ginny Williams Family Foundation, Denver

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