

Shoulder to Shoulder: Depicting the Figure

Surveys how artists have represented the body across cultural contexts and artistic movements. Presents cornerstone works in the Museum's collection alongside lesser-seen gems and important recent acquisitions.

Focusing on artworks produced in the 20th and 21st centuries, the exhibition places special attention on sculptures of human bodies displayed alongside works in other media.

Rather than concentrating on a particular trajectory in figurative representation, *Shoulder to Shoulder* is intentionally expansive, including Modernist experimentations with form, depictions of idealized bodies, and works that take up the figure as an expressive site of political consciousness. <https://www.psmuseum.org/special-events-calendar-pd/703-depicting-the-figure>

John De Andrea, known for his life-size sculptural portraits of the human figure, primarily female nudes in naturalistic poses. Casting his sculptures in polyester resin, polyvinyl, fiberglass, or polychrome bronze, and sometimes using friends as models, de Andrea devotes meticulous attention to detail, aiming to capture the uniqueness of each individual. His hyperreal figures are sometimes presented in groups, or as couples in the act of lovemaking, and often incorporate natural hair. His work bears close comparison to that of Duane Hanson and George Segal. <https://www.artsy.net/artist/john-de-andrea>

Duane Hanson, created attention-grabbing, life-sized sculptural portraits of cultural types and clichés, including, perhaps most famously, the “Middle-American” tourist. Hanson's hyperrealistic sculptures are cast from live models and typically formed in bronze or fiberglass resin. He is known for devoting meticulous attention to details like hair, veins, and the various accoutrements—clothing and ephemera—that complete his observational sculptural vignettes. Hanson's life-sized human modeling has been compared to that of artists John de Andrea and George Segal (the latter an inspiration to Hanson when he began to work in realist sculpture) and his use of everyday, found objects often draws comparisons with Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg. <https://www.artsy.net/artist/duane-hanson>

Manuel Neri, the consummate figurative artist, has worked with few models. He assiduously learned the details of these women's faces and bodies, yet his forms are not portraits. They do not communicate narratives, nor are they tethered by the suggestion of a time period.

Neri alters his surfaces with gouges, scrapes and bulges juxtaposed with satiny smooth passages, oftentimes with sweeps of pigment that can vary from bold, primary hues to soft yellow washes over flat white. As this creative process unfolds, Neri—the unmistakable Modernist—becomes more and more discernible in the work. It is as though he draws an imaginary circle around the sculpture and himself, shifting from figurative representation to a highly personal dialog between artist and sculptural object. While Manuel Neri has always worked in interconnected series, one of the most captivating aspects of his practice has been his treatment of each creative endeavor as a distinctive, singular work. His preparatory drawings are often exquisite. Although they have served as paths for solving spatial or compositional problems, the sculptures stemming from them have tended to evolve into entirely different forms, colors, and attitudes.

Manuel Neri is a lifelong California resident. The 87-year-old artist has worked for four decades in a sun-filled former church in Benicia that he adapted as his studio. He taught at the University of California, Davis, for 34 years. Although Neri was associated with the Bay Area Figurative Movement of the 1960s, his life's work has merited his recognition as a significant international sculptor. <http://clarindacarnegieartmuseum.com/works/manuel-neri-the-modernist-figure/>

Neri's method of working is alternately building and taking away. With his bronzes he chisels and hacks and paints as though the material is almost as malleable as plaster. His figures are constantly changing and transforming. "A piece is finished when somebody says take it away", Neri says. Manuel Neri, Introduction by Thomas Albright. San Francisco, Anne Kohn & Associates, 1988.

Alexander Archipenko, (born May 30, 1887, [Kiev, Ukraine](#) [then Russian Empire]—died February 25, 1964, [New York](#), New York, U.S.), Ukrainian-American artist best known for his original, [Cubist](#)-inspired sculptural style. Qualities: expression, power, grace. Questions to ask: Looking at Flat Torso, what quality of the human form does it most convey? What is it about the work that conveys that quality?

Gronk (Glugio Gronk Nicandro) is a Los Angeles-based performance artist and painter. He uses thick layers of intensely colored acrylic paint to create expansive, expressionistic images. His symbols and characters emanate less from waking life than from the unconscious zone where visions and nightmares take shape. <https://americanart.si.edu/artist/gronk-7232>

Luchita Hurtado is still drawing and painting at the age of 97. From the late 1960s to the 1970s, at a time when the artist primarily divided her time between Taos and Los Angeles. During this period, her work shifted from biomorphic abstraction to more figurative representations. This departure was inspired, in part, by the political and social changes occurring in the United States and throughout the world, including the women's liberation movement and the beginnings of the environmental movement. Hurtado was particularly attuned to the activities of the women's movement, and representations of her own body are, as she has put it, an "affirmation of self," an assertion of her own presence and power. Many of these paintings are rendered from above, with Hurtado's breasts, arms, legs, feet and hands partially visible against backdrops of patterned floors, planters, and woven baskets. In stark contrast to the traditional straightforward or three-quarter self-portrait, Hurtado chose to represent herself from a skewed angle in which her body is the only constant within a shifting array of backgrounds and scenarios. These psychologically complex portraits frequently contain symbolic imagery: pears and apples refer to sex and sexuality, yarn and baskets to domestic labor, and toys to children and family. <https://hammer.ucla.edu/exhibitions/2018/made-in-la-2018/luchita-hurtado/>

June Wayne's involvement with her own art is often eclipsed by her roles as founder of Tamarind and spokesperson for printmaking. *Tenth Memory* exemplifies her command of the most difficult of lithographic drawing media, the tusche wash (a greasy liquid used to create the effect of wash drawing). Here she employs the medium to spectacular effect: the swirling patterns known as retrifications are achieved only with an exercise of great control by both artist and printer. <https://www.artic.edu/artworks/20107/tenth-memory>

Wayne dropped out of high school at age 15 to teach herself. She produced paintings, lithographs, and tapestries during her life. She founded, and from 1960 to 1970, was director of, the Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles. She felt that lithography was an endangered craft and about to become extinct in America. Her vision for Tamarind was a place where artists could collaborate with printers in producing prints that were major works of art. Comments by June Wayne: "Tenth Memory was a 'high' to make. ...this memory of a certain Romanesque sculpture at

Autun in France. A litho technique I had invented in 1958... First I sloshed some great washes of tusche onto a coarsely grained and very dusty zinc plate, hoping that the dust would encourage granulations to take place. I dropped single grains of salt into the washes exactly where needed, hoping they would excoriate the zinc. As the washes dried, an efflorescence began to grow, and over many hours and even days I added more washes and sprayed droplets of tusche where the configuration needed them... Eventually, the entire zinc became a map of positive and negative fragments of tusche and florescence. At that point, I (had black ink applied to the image). Then using bits of wood dipped in lye, I drew into the ink, literally burning in the lines of the figure, folds, and hair. In sum, Tenth Memory is an orchestration of techniques developed little by little.” June Wayne: A Catalog Raisonne, 1936-2006: The Art of Everything, by Robert P. Conway (Editor), Arthur C. Danto (Preface by) .

Tom Friedman. American, born 1965. Packing Peanuts Figure, 2007. known for his ingenious transformations of everyday materials, such as toothpicks, pasta, and chewing gum, into sculpture. In one now-classic work, he carved his self-portrait in an aspirin, poking fun at, yet nevertheless honoring, the traditions of marble carving and miniature portraiture. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/282782>

Brian Bress. American, born 1975, The White and The Yellow (Hunter), 2013. “I think everyone, even adults, feels the power of being acknowledged as the kid on the other side of the glass.” - Brian Bress, 2014. <https://www.studiointernational.com/index.php/brian-bress-art-basel-miami-beach-2014-interview-video-painting-performance> Brian Bress was born in Norfolk, Virginia in 1975, when children’s programming was available to anyone with a TV set, until cable, and then satellite and the Internet, began to change viewing habits in the 1990s. Like many other 30- and 40-somethings today, Bress grew up watching Sesame Street, Mr. Roger’s Neighborhood, Pee Wee’s Playhouse, and Saturday morning cartoons, and their influence is apparent in Bress’s videos, particularly in how he engages viewers. His silent characters cut through, draw upon, and build against the fourth wall, thus acknowledging the relationship between performer and viewer—separated, yet connected and codependent.

Bress also connects with his adult viewers through play, a model that Sesame Street developed. When “learning through play,” an educational and psychological concept used to describe how children learn to make sense of the world around them, children develop social and cognitive skills, mature emotionally, and gain the self-confidence required to engage in new experiences and environments. Bress uses this idea of pedagogy through play—particularly with modeling, make-believe, repetition, and humor— to encourage

his viewers to approach the potentially intimidating media of video art with open eyes and creative, expansive thinking. , Bress inspires imagination and creativity. http://centralpt.com/upload/417/19440_BrianBress_MakeYourOwnFriends_UMFA.pdf

Jack Pierson (born 1960 in Plymouth, Massachusetts) is a photographer and an artist. He studied at the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston. Pierson has made a name for himself with a body of work that includes photographs, collages, word sculptures, installations, drawings and artists books. His "Self-Portrait" series was shown in the 2004 Whitney Biennial and his works are collected by major museums worldwide. He has photographed many well-known celebrities and models, including Michael Bergin, Naomi Campbell, Snoop Dogg, Massimiliano Neri, Brad Pitt, and Antonio Sabato Jr. Pierson's work is regularly commissioned for magazines and he has undertaken photography projects for several luxury fashion houses. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Pierson

Bill Jacobson, American, born 1955. Song of Sentient Beings #1530. Born in Norwich, Connecticut, in 1955, Bill Jacobson received a BFA from Brown University in 1977 with an independent concentration in Art and American Studies. In 1981, Jacobson received a MFA in photography from the San Francisco Art Institute. Jacobson has shown in galleries and museums worldwide since 1980 and has received many awards, which include a month-long artist residency at Yaddo in Saratoga, NY; Art in Residence at the Institute for the Humanities, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Photographer's Fellowship from the Aaron Siskind Foundation; Photographers Fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Arts; month-long artist residency at the Edward Albee Foundation in Montauk, NY; and a month-long artist residency at Blue Mountain Center in Blue Mountain Lake, NY. <https://www.robertkleingallery.com/jacobson-song-of-sentient-beings/> Bill Jacobson's photographs of the nude body illustrate the ongoing influence of contemporary art movements on photographic creation. The influence of color-field, or stain, painting is evident in the large scale, abstractness, and flatness of Jacobson's nude. The ghostly shape floating in blackness is barely recognizable as a human body. As evanescent as smoke or fog, the out-of-focus image makes reference to earlier photographic movements such as spirit photography, with its ectoplasmic forms, and soft-focus Pictorialism. Jacobson, who was overwhelmed by the impact of the AIDS epidemic on the artistic community, alludes to the fragility of the human body. His blurred technique removes the subject from reality and places it within the realm of dream or fading memory, raising the question of whether the photograph is a representation of reality or a work of human imagination. <http://educators.mfa.org/prints-drawings-and-photographs/song-sentient-beings-1617-66448>

Nathan Oliveira (December 19, 1928 – November 13, 2010) was an American painter, printmaker, and sculptor, born in Oakland, California to immigrant Portuguese parents. Since the late 1950s, Oliveira has been the subject of nearly one hundred solo exhibitions, in addition to having been included in hundreds of group exhibitions in important museums and galleries worldwide. He taught Studio Art for several decades in California beginning in the early 1950s when he taught at the California College of Arts and Crafts (now California College of the Arts) in Oakland. Then, after serving as a Visiting Artist at several universities, he became a Professor of Studio Art at Stanford University. Although Oliveira is often associated with the Bay Area Figurative Movement he was aesthetically independent and felt that his paintings had been strongly influenced by Willem de Kooning, Alberto Giacometti and Francis Bacon. Prior to and during his years in art college, he viewed and was influenced by retrospectives of the European Expressionist masters Oskar Kokoschka, Edvard Munch, and Max Beckmann at the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum. He once stated: "I'm not part of the avant-garde. I'm part of the garde that comes afterward, assimilates, consolidates, refines." During his lifetime Oliveira made notable works in a huge range of media including oil paintings, acrylic paintings on paper, drawings in ink, charcoal and pencil, lithographs, etchings, posters, and sculptures in clay, wax and bronze. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathan_Oliveira

Antony Gormley decided to pursue art after studying anthropology and nearly becoming a Buddhist monk while travelling in India. The human body, his own in particular, has been his subject in sculpture that explores humanity, space and community. He is at pains to explain that these works are not sculptures in the normal sense of being a representation of the subject. "I've never been interested in making statues," he says. "But I have been interested in asking what is the nature of the space a human being inhabits. What I try to show is the space where the body was, not to represent the body itself." "... [U]topia," he says - "the human need to imagine another life in another place and the founding of a better life on better principles. But in today's scientific, rational and globalised world we know there is no better place. In some way we have to deal with the here and now... The persistence of the human form in art is an attempt to deal with that question. Sculpture may now have come down from its plinth and where it belongs is perhaps not very clear. And I've tried to deal with that in a number of ways because I ultimately want to deal with the question of where we fit in the scheme of things." Wroe, Nicholas. "Leader of the Pack". *The Guardian*, June 24, 2005. <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2005/jun/25/art>

Rick Bartow began his practice in the late 1970s following his service in the Vietnam War and after a period of recovery from PTSD and alcoholism. Drawing inspiration from diverse sources, his art is emblematic of a groundbreaking generation that fundamentally shifted expectations and understanding of Native American art while engaging in a global conversation about art, trauma, and identity. However, Bartow's oeuvre—which includes large-scale paintings, drawings, prints, and sculptures—is intensely personal, synthesizing Native American culture and iconography, Western European stylistic models and methods, and Bartow's own experiences with war, addiction, and death. “Rick Bartow's work is inspired by a rare combination of images and imaginings from Native Northwest culture and artistic traditions and contemporary practices from around the world, including Japan, Germany, and New Zealand,” said Amy Scott, the Autry's Chief Curator and Marilyn B. and Calvin B. Gross Curator of Visual Arts. “The result is a fascinating take on the transformative powers of art, spirituality, and the creative process.” Filled with ghostly forms—neither fully animal nor human—that morph before viewers' eyes, subtle color combinations, and deliberate marks that foreground the artist's presence, Bartow's pieces demonstrate a close engagement with the twentieth-century masters, including Francis Bacon, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Haunted by his experience in the Vietnam War, he used his practice to exorcise personal traumas and to recharge his body and mind. In the artist's dynamic paintings and sculptures, motifs from Native art and rituals engage with locations and experiences spanning from his native Oregon coast to his global travels. <https://theautry.org/press/autry-museum-presents-rick-bartow-things-you-know-cannot-explain-2018-04-02>