



Release Date: February 20, 2020

Pioneering Artist Lynda Benglis Celebrated in Exhibition



Lynda Benglis, *Phool*, 1980, plaster, bronze wire, and gold leaf, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, Patrons' Permanent Fund and Gift of Dorothy and Herbert Vogel

Washington, DC—In the late 1960s, American artist Lynda Benglis (b. 1941) expanded the boundaries traditionally assigned to media and gender with her bold, physical, and tactile works. Since then, Benglis's endless innovation has made her a critical figure who has bridged and influenced several generations of artists. An exhibition at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, brings together sculptures, paintings, drawings, prints, and videos by Benglis from the Gallery's collection, many of which were gifts of Dorothy and Herbert Vogel that made the Gallery the largest public collection of the artist's work. Made between 1966 and 2003, the 33 works reveal how Benglis has forged new forms by constantly exploring different techniques, materials, and mediums. The exhibition will be on view on the Mezzanine of the Gallery's East Building from March 22, 2020, through January 24, 2021.

Since the start of her career, Benglis has made objects with a variety of malleable materials—like wax and molten metal—that transform from liquid to solid. Included in the exhibition are some of her earliest examples, such as *1st Wax Work* (1966), in addition to later works like *Jeantaud* (1986). A selection of works on paper, an important material to Benglis since the 1970s, includes three large-

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artist's first visit to India in 1979. Also on view is one of Benglis's signature "sparkle knots" and several other sculptures made of pleated, shaped, and tied metal—and in the case of *Moonglow Four* (1985), sand-cast glass and phosphorescent pigment. One gallery screens three of Benglis's pioneering videos from 1972 and 1973, among the earliest examples of investigative, self-reflexive artist videos.

"Over the past 50 years, Lynda Benglis has created a body of work that it is nearly impossible to define. What has remained consistent, though, is her daring approach to testing new materials, pushing against definitions, and always making something new," said Kaywin Feldman, director, National Gallery of Art, Washington. "The Gallery is fortunate to have a broad collection of the innovative artist's work, largely thanks to the generosity of her longtime supporters Dorothy and Herbert Vogel."

Curator

The exhibition is organized by Molly Donovan, curator of contemporary art, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Lynda Benglis

Lynda Benglis was born in 1941 in Lake Charles, Louisiana. After receiving her BFA from Newcomb College at Tulane University in New Orleans, she studied at the Brooklyn Museum Art School in New York. Using materials as an extension of her own body, she has created biomorphic forms that explore the physical gesture. Over the course of her career, these materials have included wax, polyurethane, latex, cast metal, glass, and video. Benglis's work has been exhibited and collected by museums and galleries worldwide including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Modern Art, New York; the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Tate Modern, London; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship (1975) and two National Endowment for the Arts grants (1979 and 1990) and maintains studios in New York and New Mexico.

Related Programs

Shaping Wikipedia: Art+Feminism Edit-a-Thon

March 21, 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

East Building, Library

Register [here](#)

This program, part of [Art+Feminism DC2020](#), a cross-institutional initiative that addresses gender

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reference materials from the library are on hand. The program includes a pre-opening tour of the *Lynda Benglis* exhibition and lunch. Laptops are required (bring your own). Wikimedia DC has two loaner laptops (reserve one by emailing info@wikimediadc.org).

[Introduction to the Exhibition: Lynda Benglis](#)

March 22, noon

East Building Auditorium

Molly Donovan, curator of contemporary art, National Gallery of Art, Washington

Early Video Art

November/December 2020

Emerging in the late 1960s, analogue video was quickly used by artists not only as an alternative to film but also as a viable new medium with specific attributes all its own. This three-part series, programmed in conjunction with the *Lynda Benglis exhibition*, contextualizes her early experiments in video art with those of her contemporaries like Joan Jonas, Lisa Steele, Susan Mogul, and Nancy Holt among others. Selections of recently restored and digitized analogue video art will also include a focus on the artist Steina who, with her partner Woody Vasulka, pioneered the development of early video processing tools.

Press Contact:

Isabella Bulkeley, (202) 842-6864 or i-bulkeley@nga.gov

General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt, Twitter at www.twitter.com/ngadc, and Instagram at <http://instagram.com/ngadc>.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

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For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

Department of Communications

National Gallery of Art

2000B South Club Drive

Landover, MD 20785

phone: (202) 842-6353

e-mail: pressinfo@nga.gov

Anabeth Guthrie

Chief of Communications

(202) 842-6804

a-guthrie@nga.gov

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Exhibition Press Release

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PRESS CONTACT ▼

Isabella Bulkeley

(202) 842-6864

i-bulkeley@nga.gov

Questions from members of the media may be directed to the Department of Communications at (202) 842-6353 or pressinfo@nga.gov

The public may call (202) 737-4215 or visit www.nga.gov for more information about the [National Gallery of Art](#).

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