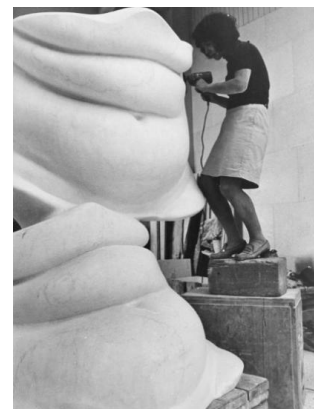
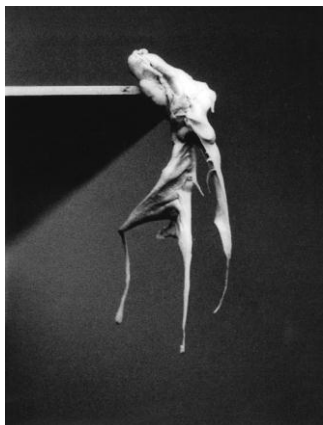


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ALINA SZAPOCZNIKOW: SCULPTURE UNDONE, 1955 – 1972

Major retrospective of Polish artist travels to the Hammer Museum February 5 – April 29, 2012



Los Angeles—***Alina Szapocznikow: Sculpture Undone, 1955 – 1972*** opens at the Hammer Museum this winter and will be on view **February 5 – April 29, 2012**. This is the first major museum survey of the artist's work in the United States. While regarded in her native Poland as one of the country's foremost sculptors of the postwar era, **Alina Szapocznikow** (1926-1973) has only recently begun to receive significant international recognition.

"Sculpture Undone reveals the extraordinary talent and story of Alina Szapocznikow, a woman who sought to establish herself as an independent artist in Warsaw and Paris through precarious health conditions and during a period of great political unease. It is very satisfying to know that her remarkable body of work will not be lost to history and now takes its place alongside artists like Eva Hesse, Paul Thek, and Louise Bourgeois," remarks Hammer director Ann Philbin.

The exhibition, which was curated by Elena Filipovic and Joanna Mytkowska, is organized by WIELS Contemporary Art Centre in Brussels (September 10, 2011 – January 8, 2012) and the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw in collaboration with the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles and The Museum of Modern Art in New York (October 7, 2012 – January 28, 2013). The Hammer's presentation is organized by Allegra Pesenti, Curator, Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts. The exhibition will also travel to the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio (May 18 – August 8, 2012).

Above: Left-right: Alina Szapocznikow. Untitled from *Fotorzezby (Photosculptures)*, 1971/2007. Gelatin silver prints on baryte paper. Sheet: 9 7/16 x 11 13/16 in. (24 x 30 cm). Portfolio: 13 1/8 x 10 9/16 x 1 3/16 in. (33.3 x 26.8 x 3 cm). Collection UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Hammer Museum. Purchased with funds provided by the Helga K. and Walter Oppenheimer Acquisition Fund; Alina Szapocznikow. *Petit Dessert I* (Small Dessert I), 1970-71. Colored polyester resin and glass. 3 3/16 x 4 5/16 x 5 1/8" (8 x 11 x 13 cm). Kravis Collection. Photo courtesy Broadway 1602, New York, and Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne. Photo by Thomas Mueller. (copyright) The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow - Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris; Alina Szapocznikow in Carrara at work on *Grandes ventres* (Big Bellies). Photo Credit: Roger Gain for *Elle*, 1968, © The Alina Szapocznikow Archive - Piotr Stanislawski - National Museum Krakow.

The Exhibition

The exhibition presents the range and scope of Alina Szapocznikow's work in the period from 1955 to just before her untimely death in 1973, at age forty-seven. The loosely chronological installation includes approximately sixty sculptures and fifty works on paper from the last two decades of the artist's career. It sheds light on the experimental quality of Szapocznikow's artistic practice as she transitioned from traditional sculptural media such as bronze and clay to different materials and methods that involved using her own body as the principal matrix of her art. She found new freedom in the use of polyester resin and polyurethane foam. She learned how to master these more malleable and expandable materials, creating a metamorphosis of body and form. Rare recordings and interviews with Szapocznikow will also be displayed, along with a selection of photographs and documents on loan from the Alina Szapocznikow Archive (courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw). Szapocznikow's work can be associated with Lynda Benglis, Eva Hesse, and Paul Thek—artists working during the same period and whose exploration of new sculptural methods and materials have helped to reimagine the traditional concept of sculpture in the twentieth century.

The art of Alina Szapocznikow

The ephemeral condition of the human body and the fragility of life are at the core of Szapocznikow's art. Her investigations of the human figure become more visceral and more poignantly tactile as she began to make casts directly from her own body. Her work jostles between permanence and impermanence, from carvings in Carrara marble, to the precarious assemblages of lips or breasts cast in translucent polyester resin. She experimented as much on paper as she did with sculptural materials, as evidenced, for example, by series of semi-abstract, allusive monotypes. An avid draftsman, her drawings and prints relay the same open, expandable forms as her three-dimensional work. In some, heavily diluted watercolor imparts a dreamy eroticism to Szapocznikow's emaciated figures.

"As she immersed herself in casting isolated parts of her body, a simultaneous decomposition of the figure occurs in her drawings whereby she undoes the figure and reconfigures its parts into singular organisms of her own imagination," says Allegra Pesenti, Curator of the Grunwald Center at the Hammer Museum, who coordinated the exhibition at the Hammer.

Szapocznikow was diagnosed with cancer in 1969 and in the final years of her life she tackled the reality of her illness with characteristic vibrancy, but not without an edge of morbid humor. One series of works entitled *Tumors* (1969) consists of larvae-like forms containing photographic portraits of the artist, scattered on the ground across a gravel surface. In some of her last compositions, Szapocznikow manipulated substances that pass through the human body and are formally altered by it, such as gum, butter, and cigarettes, thus extending the boundaries of her corporeal creations.

In a statement on her practice written in 1972, Szapocznikow claimed, "My gesture is addressed to the human body, 'that complete erogenous zone.'... I am convinced that of all the manifestations of the ephemeral, the human body is the most vulnerable, the only source of all joy, all suffering, and all truth."

She left behind a legacy of provocative objects—at once sexualized, vulnerable, humorous, and political—that sit between Surrealism, Nouveau Réalisme, and Pop Art. Her tinted casts of lips and

breasts transformed into quotidian objects like lamps or ashtrays, her poured polyurethane forms, and her construction of sculptures that incorporate photographic portraits remain as remarkably idiosyncratic and contemporary today as they were when they were first made. As she states in her artistic credo of 1972, "...I produce awkward objects. This absurd and convulsive mania proves the existence of an unknown, secret gland, necessary for life."

The Artist

Alina Szapocznikow was born in 1926 to a Jewish family in the small town of Kalisz in Poland. Before she was out of her teens she had lived in the ghettos of Pabianice and Lodz, and she and her mother, a pediatrician, survived internment in concentration camps, first briefly in Auschwitz and then for a longer period in Bergen-Belsen. Upon release from her incarceration in 1945, she did not return to Poland but forged her identity as a Czech citizen in order to study in Prague. In 1949, following her move to Paris, she was diagnosed with a potentially fatal case of tuberculosis. In 1951, with her husband Ryszard Stanislawski, she relocated to Warsaw, where she won a succession of competitions and received acclaim from the local artistic community. Poland, ravaged by German bombings, was now under Stalinist Communism and marred by social unrest and economic depression. In 1963, she moved back to Paris with her son, Piotr Stanislawski, and second husband, the renowned graphic designer Roman Cieslewicz. Here she was championed by art critic and curator Pierre Restany, and her friends included artists Christian Boltanski and Annette Messager. Following her 1969 diagnosis of breast cancer, Szapocznikow entered a period of intense productivity that lasted until her death in 1973.

Although Szapocznikow's work was acclaimed in Poland during her lifetime, it failed to find the international recognition she strove for. Her only solo exhibition outside of Poland was held in Paris soon after she died, at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 1973 (*Alina Szapocznikow, 1926-1973, Tumeurs-Herbiers*), and only recently has her work begun to be included in museum exhibitions in Europe and the United States. Exhibitions that have featured her work in the past decade include *Paris, Capital of the Arts, 1900-1968*, Royal Academy of Arts, London (2002); *Flesh at War with Enigma*, Kunsthalle, Basel (2004); *Documenta XII*, Kassel (2007); *elles@centrepompidou. Women Artists in the collections of the Centre Pompidou*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2009); *Awkward Objects*, The Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw (2009); and *Seductive Subversion: Women Pop Artists 1958-1968*, The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, (2010).

CATALOGUE & PUBLIC PROGRAMS

A fully-illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition. The catalogue includes essays by the exhibition's curatorial team: Cornelia Butler (The Museum of Modern Art, New York), Elena Filipovic (WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels), Joanna Mytkowska (The Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw), and Allegra Pesenti (Hammer Museum, Los Angeles), as well as a timeline by Jola Gola. The exhibition will be accompanied by several free public programs at the Hammer, including film screenings, lectures, and a student event.

Alina Szapocznikow: Sculpture Undone, 1955-1972 is organized by WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels, and the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, in collaboration with the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

This exhibition and the accompanying catalogue are generously supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

The Hammer Museum's presentation is made possible through major gifts from Erika Glazer and Alice and Nahum Lainer. Generous support is also provided by Herta and Paul Amir. The exhibition is made possible by additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Rosette V. Delug, Alisa and Kevin Ratner, and The Audrey & Sydney Irmas Charitable Foundation, and the Consulate General of Poland, Los Angeles.

ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum, a public arts unit of the University of California, Los Angeles, is dedicated to exploring the diversity of artistic expression through the ages. Its collections, exhibitions, and programs span the classic to the cutting-edge in art, architecture, and design, recognizing that artists play a crucial role in all aspects of culture and society.

The museum houses the Armand Hammer Collection of Old Master, Impressionist, and Post-Impressionist paintings and the Armand Hammer Daumier and Contemporaries Collection. The Hammer's newest collection, the Hammer Contemporary Collection, is highlighted by works on paper, particularly drawings and photographs from Southern California. The museum also houses the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, comprising more than 45,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists' books from the Renaissance to the present; and oversees the management of the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden on the UCLA campus.

The Hammer presents major single-artist and thematic exhibitions of historical and contemporary art. It also presents approximately ten Hammer Projects exhibitions each year, providing international and local artists with a laboratory-like environment to create new work or to present existing work in a new context.

As a cultural center, the Hammer offers a diverse range of free public programs throughout the year, including lectures, readings, symposia, film screenings, and music performances. The Hammer's Billy Wilder Theater houses these widely acclaimed public programs and is the new home of the UCLA Film & Television Archive's renowned cinematheque.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

For current program and exhibition information call 310-443-7000 or visit www.hammer.ucla.edu.

Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 11am – 7pm; Thursday, 11am – 9 pm; Sunday, 11am – 5 pm; closed Mondays, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Admission: \$10 for adults; \$5 for seniors (65+) and UCLA Alumni Association members; free for Museum members, students with identification, UCLA faculty/staff, military personnel, veterans, and visitors 17 and under. The Museum is free on Thursdays for all visitors. Public programs are always free.

Location/Parking: The Hammer is located at 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, at Westwood Boulevard. Parking is available under the Museum. Rate is \$3 for three hours with Museum validation. Bicycles park free.

Hammer Museum Tours: For group tour reservations and information, call 310-443-7041.

HAMMER

ALINA SZAPOCZNIKOW
SCULPTURE UNDONE: 1955-1972

FEBRUARY 5 - APRIL 29, 2012

SELECTED IMAGES



1. *Autoportret I (Self-Portrait I)*, 1966. Marble and polyester resin. 16 1/8 x 11 13/16 x 7 7/8 in. (41 x 30 x 20 cm). The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Photo © Fabrice Gousset, Paris, courtesy Piotr Stanislawski and Galerie Gisela Capitain GmbH, Cologne.



2. *Petit Dessert I (Small Dessert I)*, 1970-71. Colored polyester resin and glass. 3 3/16 x 4 5/16 x 5 1/8 in. (8 x 11 x 13 cm). Kravis Collection. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by Thomas Mueller, courtesy BROADWAY 1602, New York, and Galerie Gisela Capitain GmbH, Cologne.



3. *Souvenirs*, 1967. Polyester resin and photographs of Christian Boltansky and Twiggy. Left: 4 1/2 x 1 3/8 x 2 3/4 in. (11.5 x 3.5 x 7 cm); right: 11 13/16 x 8 5/8 x 3 9/16 in. (30 x 22 x 9 cm). The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Courtesy BROADWAY 1602, New York.



4. *Lampe—bouche (Illuminated Lips)*, 1966. Colored polyester resin, metal, electrical wiring. Ranging from 11 1/4 in. (28.5 cm) to 17 13/16 in. (45.5 cm) high. The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris.

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5. Untitled, 1963. Felt-tip pen and ink on paper. 12 1/4 x 9 in. (30.6 x 22.8 cm). Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Purchase. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer.



6. Untitled (Study for Kwiat-ptak [Flower-Bird] 2), ca. 1959-60. Ink on paper. 11 3/4 x 8 3/4 in. (29.8 x 21 cm). Collection Gail and Tony Ganz, Los Angeles. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer.



7. The artist with her work *Naga (Naked)*, 1961. The Alina Szapocznikow Archive/Piotr Stanislawski/National Museum in Kraków. Photo by Marek Holzman, courtesy the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw.

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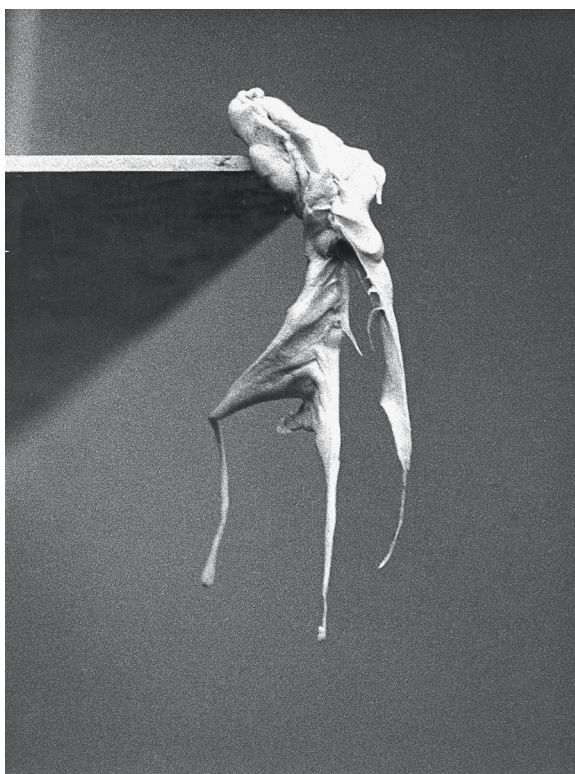
SELECTED IMAGES



8. *Portret wielokrotny (dwukrotny)* (*Multiple Portrait [Double]*), 1967. Colored polyester resin and granite. 29 x 19 x 17 in. (73.7 x 48.3 x 43.2 cm). Collection Sandra and Gerald Fineberg. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by Thomas Mueller, courtesy BROADWAY 1602, New York.



9. *Tumeurs personnifiées (Tumors personified)*, 1971. Polyester resin, fiberglass, paper, gauze. Ranging from 13 x 22 ¹/₁₆ x 13 ¹/₁₆ in. (33 x 56 x 34 cm) to 5 ¹/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₁₆ x 6 ¹/₁₆ in. (15 x 23 x 16 cm). Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Courtesy Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw, and Agencja Medium Sp. Z o.o.



10. *Fotorzeźby (Photosculptures)*, 1971/2007. Twenty gelatin silver prints. Original dimensions: 7 ¹/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₁₆ in. (18 x 24 cm) and 9 ¹/₁₆ x 7 ¹/₁₆ in. (24 x 18 cm). Collection UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Hammer Museum. Purchased with funds provided by the Helga K. and Walter Oppenheimer Acquisition Fund. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris.

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11. *Femme illuminée (Illuminated Woman)*, 1966-67. Plaster, colored polyester resin, electrical wiring 61 1/16 x 22 1/16 x 15 3/4 in. (155 x 57 x 40 cm). Collection Alexandre Stanislawski. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Photo © Fabrice Gousset, Paris, courtesy Piotr Stanislawski and Galerie Gisela Capitain GmbH, Cologne.



12. *Piotr*, 1972. Polyester resin. 80 3/4 x 17 1/8 x 13 in. (205 x 45 x 33 cm). From the collection of the National Museum in Kraków. © The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow/Piotr Stanislawski/ADAGP, Paris. Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Kraków.