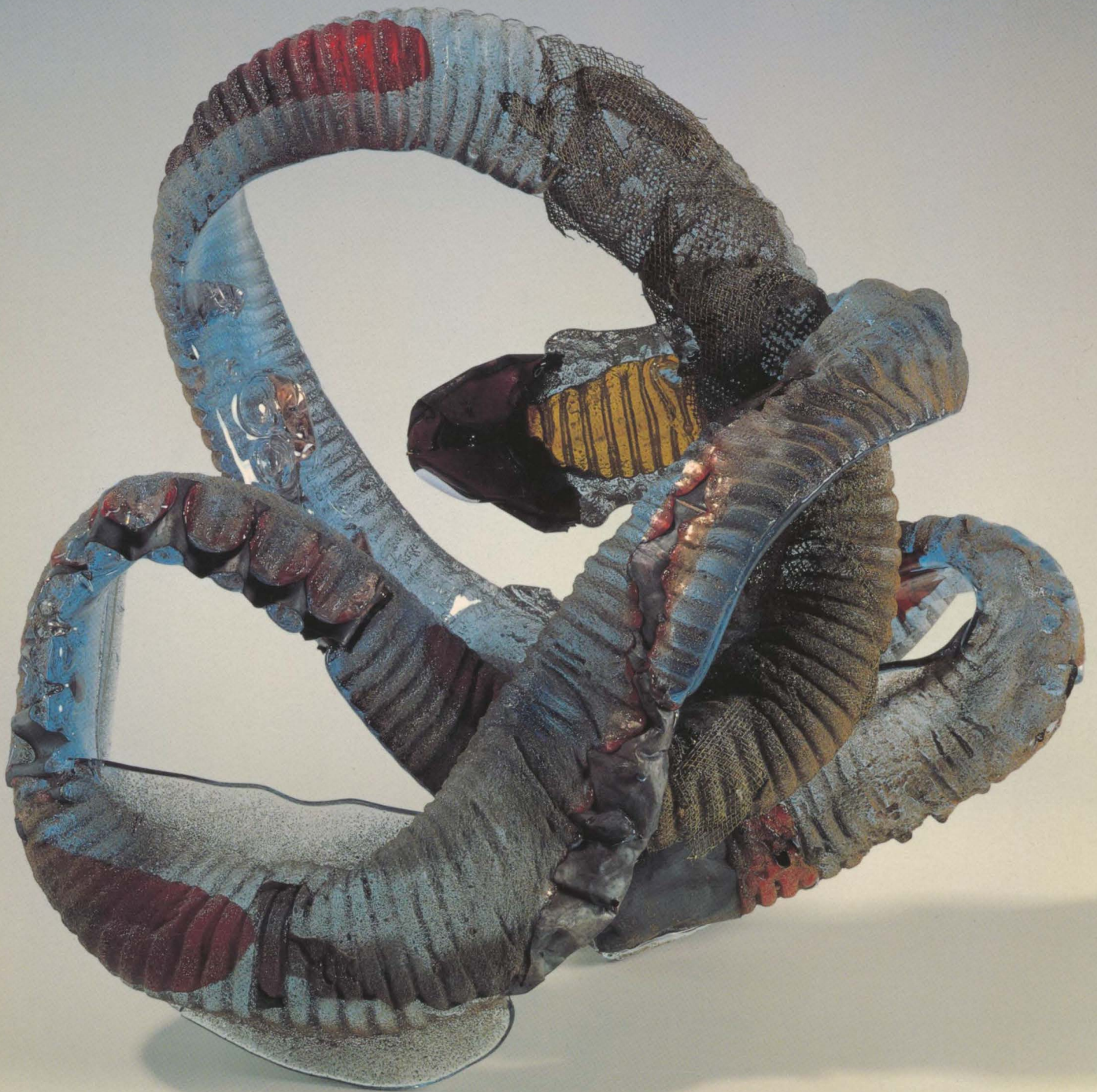


LYNDA BENGLIS



FROM
THE
FURNACE

Front cover: *Curran* 1993 (cat. 15)
Back cover: *Curran* being poured,
Giovanni Glassworks,
Ponsonby.
(photograph: John McIver)

LYNDA BENGLIS

FROM THE FURNACE

Auckland City Art Gallery
15 October – 25 November 1993

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LYNDA BENGLIS: FROM THE FURNACE
AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY
15 October – 25 November 1993

An exhibition organised by the Auckland City Art Gallery in association with the Auckland International Artist-in-Residence Committee.

All works except *Barchetta* and *Contraband* were made by Lynda Benglis in New Zealand under the auspices of the Auckland International Artist-in-Residence Programme during the period 22 February - 30 March 1993.

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Note: All measurements are in centimetres; height before width, before depth. In the case of irregularly shaped works, the maximum dimension only is given.

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FOREWORD

Lynda Benglis is the first artist to participate in the Auckland International Artist-in-Residence programme, the principal aims of which are to enable artists from other countries to make work in Auckland and interact with the local art community.

The committee that administers the programme comprises representatives of three prominent art institutions: the Auckland City Art Gallery (Curator of International Art, Andrew Bogle); Elam School of Fine Arts (Lecturer in Sculpture, Christine Hellyar) and Artspace (Director, Priscilla Pitts). It is supported by a grant from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand.

Benglis spent a highly productive six weeks in Auckland from February to March 1993, and produced an impressive body of works in a variety of media – terracotta, beeswax, glass and sprayed metal. This involved working in a number of factories (a situation she prefers to the studio) which entailed some necessarily hasty negotiations and collaborations with some very creative and supportive artisans and technicians. The Auckland International Artist-in-Residence Committee and the staff of the Auckland City Art Gallery are indebted to all those people who generously gave of their time, materials and equipment to enable Benglis to achieve so much in such a relatively short period of time. In particular we are indebted to Jacques Dereuk of Metal Spray Suppliers NZ Ltd; Dave Holster and Bruce Martin of Holster Engineering Co. Ltd, Tokoroa; John Croucher and John Leggot of Giovanni Glassworks, Ponsonby; Anthony Morris of Morris and James Pottery and Tileworks, Matakana; and Felicity Abbot and Brendon Alley, students at Elam School of Fine Arts, who were tireless in assisting Benglis throughout her residency and documenting her project on video.

Lynda Benglis: From the Furnace is primarily an exhibition of works created by the artist during her Auckland residency. However, two monumental, earlier works, the poured

latex-rubber painting *Contraband* and the sprayed metal relief *Barchetta*, have been shipped to Auckland from the United States to augment the New Zealand works. We greatly appreciate the assistance that the Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, and Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, have provided in making these works available. The Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland, has been appointed by Benglis to represent her interests in New Zealand. We are grateful for their support for this catalogue.

Benglis has proved an excellent choice of artist for this inaugural Artist-in-Residence project. Her outgoing personality, her boundless energy and enthusiasm and her enormous creative drive have made her visit an especially productive and stimulating one. The partners in the residency programme and the Auckland City Art gallery wish to thank her for agreeing to make time in a pressing schedule to come to Auckland, and for producing such an excellent body of work.

Andrew Bogle

Christine Hellyar

Priscilla Pitts

Auckland International

Artist-in-Residence Committee

The Auckland City Art Gallery is delighted to have been included in the partnership of the Auckland International Artist-in-Residence programme. The Gallery, Artspace and the Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland acknowledge the incentive provided by the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand to establish the programme. The Gallery is especially pleased to have organised the exhibition of the striking and beautiful results of Lynda Benglis' fertile residency as well as to being the co-publisher of the exhibition catalogue which has also been supported by the QEII Arts Council. We greatly appreciate Lynda Benglis' commitment to the residency, exhibition and publication and the work of Andrew Bogle, Christine Hellyar and Priscilla Pitts.

Christopher Johnstone

Director, Auckland City Art Gallery

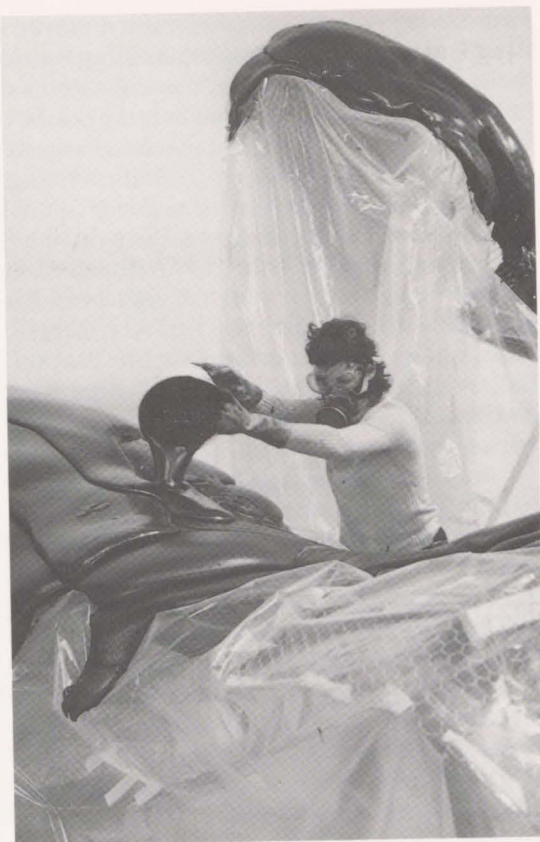
FROM THE FURNACE

BY ANDREW BOGLE

Lynda Benglis made her first big 'splash' in the late 1960's with her 'fallen paintings' of pigmented latex rubber poured onto the floor in a variegated puddle. In an article by David Bourdon in *Life*, February 1970, entitled *Fling, Dribble and Dip*, Benglis was treated to a double-page spread photo-essay with shots of her pouring one of the last latex paintings of 1969 with a gestural abandon that was graphically compared with Jackson Pollock's celebrated action-painting techniques. An inset showed one of Hans Nasmuth's famous photos from the 1950's of Pollock in action.

At a time when the prevailing minimalist aesthetic of artists like Don Judd, Sol Le Witt, Robert Morris and Carl Andre was predicated on the geometrication of forms and the application of logical processes (such as seriality of components) Benglis' use of 'feminine' and sometimes sexually suggestive forms, combined with her expressionistic methods involving a strongly subjective and spontaneous interaction with the medium, ran counter to the dominant (male) style. The minimalists removed the autographic gesture from their work and practically eliminated the impulsive creative act. Some artists assumed the role of draughtsmen and delegated the manufacture of their artworks to cabinetmakers, metalworkers and spraypainters. Benglis' approach was opposite, celebrating the inspired moment and the direct engagement with the medium in place of the minimalists' cerebral process in which the precise form of the work could be preconceived in scale, detail and finish. By the same token, Benglis felt it necessary to reclaim and legitimise certain luxuriant forms associated with female dress and disparagingly considered as decorative. While the minimalists were rigorously paring forms to their bare bones, Benglis was unabashedly dressing them up.

The way Benglis challenged the orthodoxy of verticality and the canvas support in her 'fallen paintings' and the degree to which the poured latex was allowed to find its own final



Top: Lynda Benglis, *Adhesive Products* 1971, in progress, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. (photograph: Eric Sutherland)
Bottom: *For Darkness; Situation & Circumstance* 1971, Milwaukee Art Museum. (photograph: P. Richard Eells)



form through the exigency of chance, marked Benglis as an artist who was prepared to question the most fundamental of artistic conventions. Indeed this has been borne out over the years by her innovative and open approach to a variety of materials such as polyurethane foam, bunting, sprayed metal, beeswax, video and neon tubing. The most spectacular (but ironically the most ephemeral) have been the polyurethane foam installations of the early 1970's, that cascaded off the walls of the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis; Milwaukee Art Centre; Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and Paula Cooper Gallery, Manhattan, among others.

Benglis produced the voluptuous organic forms of the polyurethane foam installations by mixing an exotic resin with a catalyst (so that it foamed up) then pouring this expanding liquid over terraced armatures made of a framework of wood covered by chicken wire and plastic sheet. By pouring successive layers in this way, with intervening periods in which the underlying layers had time to harden, Benglis created rigid structures that cantilevered off the gallery walls and into the viewer's space, once the supporting armature was removed. Some of these foam installations comprised components that project as much as five metres from the wall.

By pigmenting the foam (for example, with a controlled series of grey tones for the successive layers, according to the steps of a photographer's grey scale; and in another with phosphorescent colours that glowed in the dark), Benglis was confusing the conventional distinctions between painting and sculpture. Like the fallen paintings from which they ultimately derived, the polyurethane foam sculptures were a kind of action painting in which the medium was a liquid. The fact that this liquid expanded into three-dimensional forms was a by-product of the initial gesture. In fact, the generic name that Benglis gave to the polyurethane foam works was 'frozen gestures'. Benglis viewed her polyurethane foam installations and latex paintings as hybrids, "somewhere between painting and sculpture... paintings to be walked around".¹

The voluptuous, free-flowing forms of the polyurethane foam sculptures express an overwhelming effect of arrested motion, the

material having undergone a dramatic transmutation from a fluid and changeable state to one of petrification, like water freezing to ice, or lava cooling to rock. Not surprisingly, Benglis' sculptures are powerfully evocative of natural processes and forms – for example, rock formations, stalagmites, frozen waterfalls, snowdrifts and waves. In other works, Benglis has opted for a more anthropomorphic scale to her work, using her body as a yardstick. The wax paintings, for example, are approximately the length of her arm. "I'm very much involved with that relationship to things that has to do with the body's responses, that set of relationships towards mass and weight, as well as scale".² The elongated format of the wax paintings was partly a result of Benglis' wish to redress what she felt was an unquestioned relationship between image and support in painting.

The rectilinear format is traditional. Frank Stella had challenged this in 1960 by allowing his geometric images to condition the shapes of the supports, but without violating the essential sanctity of the planar surface. Benglis' wax paintings encrust the picture surface with a deep relief texture, like eroded limestone. Some of the wax paintings are half as deep as they are wide, and their tactile qualities make them appear more like sculptures than paintings. Again, like the polyurethane foam sculptures, the terms 'painting' and 'sculpture' independently are inadequate to describe these works. They are painted with a brush but they are all three-dimensional objects, not configurations of pigment on a two-dimensional support. Sculptured paintings would be closer to the point. Benglis used wooden boards as a support for the wax, partly out of an urge to use something other than ubiquitous canvas, but also for aesthetic reasons. "I began to really dislike canvas – the thickness, the weave, and the clumsiness of it."³

Benglis is receptive to new materials and processes, and is quick to see the sculptural possibilities of new technologies. Her use of metal-spraying is a case in point. She was introduced to metal-spraying in the early 1970's in California by sculptor Robert Irwin's friend Jack Brogan, who had recently acquired a metalising gun. Benglis was attracted to the

process, which allows metals to be sprayed like paint. She had been working on a series of knotted sculptures using flexible aluminium screen with bunting soaked in plaster and coated with gesso, which she knotted to create naturalistic forms. As the gesso hardened, the forms became stiff, locking in the configurations. By using the sprayed metal process in combination with these gesso and bunting forms, Benglis preserved the shape of the object while encasing it in a crusty shell like an insect's exoskeleton, giving to the inherently soft or impermanent substrate a rigidity and permanence. It also permitted Benglis to realise in metal, forms that were too complex to be cast by traditional methods such as lost wax.

In the last ten years, Benglis has produced a large body of works using metal-spraying, some, like *Barchetta*, almost three metres long and weighing some 150 kilos. Although metal can be sprayed onto almost any surface (one promotional video shows leaves and an apple being metalised), Benglis has found that metal gauze is the best substrate for her purposes. Although the finished reliefs are distinctly sculptural, they are realised in terms of a two-dimensional material transformed by folding, pleating, twisting and knotting. They are volumetric in the sense that parts of the pleated metal appear to billow as though inflated by wind, but this is deceptive. In actuality, the surface is a continuous skin, enlivened (as if chiselled in deep relief) by sharp corrugations.

Benglis' pleated knots abound with contradictions. They are hard and inflexible, but look deceptively lively and flexible, like drapery. They seem to float as though borne on an updraft of air, but are surprisingly heavy. The chiselled effect implies a subtractive method of sculpting, whereas they are achieved by an accretive process. Although they have allusions to images of classical drapery (the sensuous folds have a formal parallel in the painted drapery that High Victorian artists such as Frederick Leighton, Albert Moore and Edward Coley Burne-Jones made so much of in their nostalgic recreations of classical Greek and Roman life), the metalising process is a space-age technology used almost exclusively in industrial situations.

Benglis' pleated, metalised knots are

strongly reminiscent of certain styles of women's clothing and adornment – notably pleated skirts, bustles and bows, and Muslim women's chadors – while the full forms are often suggestive of the female figure.

Interestingly, the allusions to drapery in Benglis' works are convergent with 'dressing' of the wire mesh by metallising. When she further embellished the metal by patinating or electroplating it, she was effectively clothing the metal fabric of the sculpture with additional layers of material. In some of the earlier knots such as *Klaus* (1974) and *Peter* (1974) she wrapped a jacket of aluminium foil around a core of aluminium gauze, before configuring the wrapped material into a knot.

Dressing has been a primary mode of fabrication in Benglis' art over the years, but she has also used it as a strategy for projecting herself and her art through advertisements, by assuming certain stereotypical personae. The most controversial of these was a photographic advertisement for *Artforum* November 1974, where Benglis appeared naked (except for sunglasses) in a confrontational macho pose holding a massive dildo. The androgyny of this bold artistic statement, Benglis explained, was in order to "mock the idea of having to take sexual sides – to be either a male artist or a female".⁴ In the same way, Benglis' sculpture often incorporates sexually suggestive forms, both male and female in the same work.

In recent years, Benglis has embarked on a body of clay sculptures, cast in bronze, that reconnect with more traditional sculptural processes. Executed in Taos, New Mexico, where she has discovered an excellent foundry, the clay sculptures communicate her joy in manipulating the soft, wet clay; squeezing, kneading and poking with her fingers to shape the malleable material into curiously anthropomorphic totems. Having cast the clay forms in bronze by the lost wax process, Benglis mounts them on irregular pieces of stone from the surrounding desert. Evoking the sensibility of Dubuffet, the bronzes and their bases seem almost fetishistic, like natural objects charged with an animating spirit, rather than something shaped by an artist's hands.

Before arriving in Auckland to begin her project, Benglis expressed her wish to work

again with clay, but in a pottery factory. The following narrative is a condensed account of some of the places Benglis visited during her artist-in-residence project and the processes involved in the making of the works.

MATAKANA

Morris and James Pottery and Tileworks is located at Matakana, a small farming settlement a few kilometres north of Warkworth and about an hour's drive from Auckland. Anthony Morris, who built the business from scratch sixteen years ago, is the creative director and manager of the company. All the clay is dug on the site and is used to make a range of glazed and unglazed terracotta products; mainly tiles, garden planters, kitchenware (such as platters), and garden arches.

When Lynda first expressed her wish to work at a ceramics factory, an effort was made to find one that could extrude clay to a diameter of 150mm. A factory in Avondale was located that makes quarry tiles; however, negotiations for Lynda to work there came to nothing. After a recent downturn in business (prompting layoffs), business was now booming again and a surge in demand for quarry tiles by the farming sector meant the managers were unable to interrupt their production to suit Lynda's schedule. It also appeared fairly obvious that the managers were unenthusiastic about an artist working in their midst.

Anthony Morris, however, showed immediate enthusiasm for the idea of Lynda working in his factory. Morris and James is a cross between a factory and a pottery studio. Although many of the forms for vessels such as vases, urns and planters are extruded, they are generally finished by hand and so are individualised. The large terracotta urns, for example, are hand-beaten with bats to shape them. It is these clay blanks that Lynda decides to work with, after Morris has disabused her of the idea that the clay will withstand the stresses of being configured into knots (a form Lynda has used repeatedly in her work).

Within a short time of arriving at Matakana and discussing her intentions, Lynda chooses

to work with the extruded clay tubes. She spontaneously engages with the pliable clay hugging, pinching, punching and slapping the pristine tubes, which yield to her every gesture. Her movements are incisive – both combative and dance-like; embraces and blows. Taking up a wooden instrument like a bat, she begins striking the clay tubes with violent body blows. The force of some of the blows leaves a deep rectilinear impression in the soft clay. Next, she reaches inside one of the tubes, punching its sides from inside, stretching the clay skin and bringing up 'bunches of grapes' on the smooth exterior surface.

Now she begins to tear at the mouths of the tubes, peeling back the ripped clay like the skin of an orange. Placing the wooden bat inside another tube, she strikes it from within like the clapper of a bell, raising weals on its thick skin.

She sashays between the tubes, casually butting one with her hip, then grasping another in a bearhug, she squeezes it with her knees, collapsing the sides. She calls for another batch of blanks. A trolley with fresh clay tubes is wheeled into the arena and, like the first batch, summarily dealt to. The results are a kind of carnage. The stacks of tidy planters, piled up around the cavernous workshop, bear witness to it.

This process of deformation continues until Lynda has produced some twenty permutations of disfigurement. Most of the tubes have massive lesions to the mouth. The clay is grotesquely folded back like steelplate ripped open by armour-piercing shells. She will later continue on the tubes, the work extending over several days. In the meantime, as if for light relief, she leaves off from the tubes and begins a series of constructions using long hollow rectilinear extrusions of clay. Lynda gathers stacks of these extrusions and binds them round their middle like sheaves of cornstalks. The process of accumulation and construction involved in the 'cubist sheaves' complements the violent impulses embodied in the tortured tubular forms. Also the sheaf motif implies productivity and nourishment in the face of the damage and suffering expressed by the tubes. Standing side by side in this large dim shed, the tubes and the sheaves could represent the walking wounded and the bountiful harvest – war and peace.

Ironically, the sheaves do not survive the drying period before firing in the kiln. After several days of drying in the warm summer air, they succumb to gravity and Lynda decides to abandon them. The 'walking wounded' however, come through almost unscathed and are later fired in one of the pottery's several large gas-fired kilns that are perpetually baking mountainous stacks of the dun-coloured clay products. Emerging from the kiln, the tubes are seen to have transmuted to a bright orange colour, and are noticeably shrunken by the searing heat. Several days of intensive work has produced sixty tubular pieces which Lynda freely embellishes with a black copperslip applied almost calligraphically (that is, with a gestural impulsiveness that accords perfectly with the spirit in which she (de)formed the tubes). A final firing fixes this livery of jet splashes and dribbles on the orange, biscuity clay. Lynda sees the mass of freestanding units as constituting a single work, and specifies that they be displayed on a bed of black sand. She titles the composite sculpture *Sixty at Matakana*.

TKOROA

After a two-hour drive south on State Highway One, Lynda and I arrive at Tokoroa, at the centre of the North Island. Tokoroa is a mill town principally serving the pulp and paper mill at nearby Kinleith. We have come to pick up Lynda's six sprayed-metal knots from Holster Engineering. This is my first visit to the heavy engineering workshop, although Lynda made a previous visit to drop off the stainless-steel mesh armatures of the 'knots' for Holsters to put the 'flesh' onto. The flesh, in this case, is sprayed metal; specifically copper and aluminium. It is strangely quiet in the cavernous workshop; we have arrived at smoko time and all the machines are temporarily idle.

Much of the work Holsters undertakes is for the chipboard and papermills at Kawerau, Kinleith and Napier, for the Wairakei geothermal power station and nine hydro-electric powerstations along the Waikato River. Holsters specialises in metal-spraying, or 'metalising' as it is sometimes called, which they use to reclaim the worn surfaces of such things as turbine



Top & bottom: Lynda Benglis sculpting *Sixty at Matakana*, Morris and James Pottery and Tileworks, Matakana, New Zealand 1993. (photographs: John McIver)



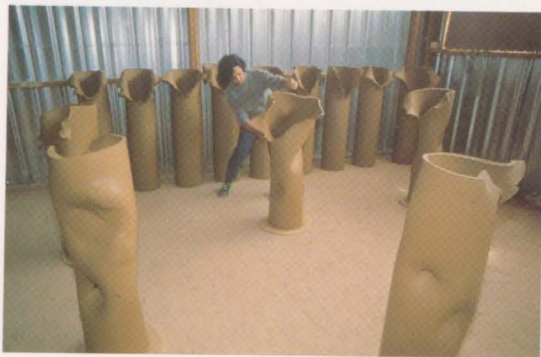


Top: The 'Cubist sheaves', Morris and James Pottery and Tileworks, Matakana.

Bottom: Lynda Benglis sculpting *Sixty* at Matakana.

Opposite, top: *Sixty* at Matakana 1993, terracotta with copperslip. (cat. 21)

Opposite, bottom: *Sixty* at Matakana, detail. (photographs: John McIver)



shafts, gatevalves, woodchip feeders and steelrollers. Bruce Martin, our contact, arrives to meet us and takes us to the spraying booth. Bruce has already sprayed the 'knots', scheduling the work in between more urgent industrial contracts in the previous week.

Lynda uses a fine steel gauze of either bronze or stainless steel to make the armatures for the knots. This is folded and pleated in the first place. She then knots the compressed material to form an elementary composition, before fanning out the pleats to create more volumetric forms, as though the fabric were inflated by wind. The metalising puts the 'flesh' on this 'skeleton'. There are six newly metalised knots, three in aluminium, three in copper. What were sharp pleats in the gauze are now softened by the successive layers of sprayed metal which has a gritty surface. Lynda says that grinding and buffing will be needed to restore some of the angularity to the corrugated surfaces. She adds that the three copper knots will later be electroplated, one in gold, one in silver and one in nickel-chrome.

Here in Holster's capacious workshop, where cylindrical shafts and rollers the size of tree trunks are metalised, then machined to within tolerances of mere microns, Lynda's small crumpled and twisted knots look curiously elegant and vulnerable, like exotic birds. This impression is reinforced by the way that Lynda picks them up, individually, and handles them; caressing their surfaces. In order to exhibit them when they are finished, she decides, they will need points of attachment, so that they can be hung on a wall. Lynda and Bruce conclude the best solution is to make small loops of wire and fix them to the versos of the knots using sprayed metal. This affords me an opportunity to see metalising in action. Because Bruce is using an arc spraygun, I need a darkened visor to shield my eyes from the blinding glare. The noise is deafening as the metal (automatically fed into the handpiece as twin wires) is plasticised by a high voltage arc of current, pulverised by a jet of compressed air and ejected in a shower of sparks. The plasticised metal quickly solidifies on impact and literally glues the metal loop in place instantaneously. The job completed, we pack the six knots in boxes and depart for Rotorua.





Barchetta 1992 (cat. 23)



Tokoroa Series #1 (cat. 8)



Tokoroa Series: Nickel-Chrome 1993 (cat. 11)



Tokoroa Series: Silver 1993 (cat. 13)



Top: John Leggot grooming sand, Giovanni Glassworks, Ponsonby.

Middle: Pouring the glass.

Bottom: Lynda Benglis (front left) levering the pliable glass from the sandbox.

(photographs: John McIver)



WAIOTAPU

There are five in our party, travelling in two cars. The plan is to drive another 50 kilometres straight to the Whakarewarewa Thermal Village and meet there so that Lynda can see the attractions of New Zealand's most famous tourist spot. Lynda and I go in one car. We drive south on State Highway One, but I miss the turnoff to Rotorua just before Upper Atiamuri and drive on south almost as far as Wairakei before we are able to head north again towards Rotorua. This makes for a much more circuitous route, meaning that we may be too late to get entry to the thermal village. Fortunately, two other thermal valleys, Waiotapu and Waiamungu are en route; we decide the best idea is to visit the first one, Waiotapu, then drive on to Rotorua and rendezvous, with the other half of our party, if they haven't already left for Auckland.

It is about four o'clock in the afternoon as Lynda and I pull into Waiotapu (the last time I was here was with New York sculptor Alan Sonfist in 1985). We buy our tickets at the souvenir shop and follow the path through the manuka scrub, crossing a small wooden bridge over a stream. The pungent smell of sulphur dioxide greets us. The sky is overcast and the soft evening light makes the colours appear unusually intense, especially the bald patches of yellow sulphur and red clay that surround the steaming fumeroles.

We follow the signposts along the pathway that detours from one steaming sinkhole to another, most of them diabolically named – Devil's Inkpots, Thunder Crater, Devil's Home, Devil's Bath and so on. Lynda is enchanted by the place; the exotic earthcolours, the burping mudpools, the piping hot Champagne Pool (so called because of the myriad bubbles of gas percolating through the emerald green water) and the bright orange sill that surrounds it; the smokey pastel tints of the Artist's Palette (a steaming mineral-stained sinter pan); the glistening silica staircases of the Bridal Veil Falls over which pelucid mineral waters trickle silently.

Lynda is especially fascinated with the bright orange antimony sill around the Champagne Pool. Clouds of steam swirl about

the surface of the scaldingly hot mineral waters that well up from the bowels of the earth, bearing minerals like gold, antimony and silica. This accretes around the rim of the pool (which covers one-fifth of a hectare) in a sill of bright orange nodules, the texture of which is strongly reminiscent of the early paintings Benglis made of melted beeswax in the 1970's, after which she abandoned the medium. But now, inspired by the Waiotapu doppelganger of those earlier wax paintings and enthused by her experience of painting with copperslip on the terracotta forms at Matakana, she decides to revive the medium and make a new series of wax paintings that reflect the distinctive colours of the geothermal area. Accordingly, she asks that our technicians build supports from composite board according to specific dimensions. She also requires a variety of ingredients such as damar resin, goatshair paintbrushes, purified beeswax, gesso and powder-pigments that will be needed for the encaustic process.

PRINCES STREET, AUCKLAND

In one evening, Lynda completes two wax paintings. The speed which she achieves this is partly a corollary of the encaustic process, since the wax is liquified by heat, unlike other paints that use dilutents such as turps and water, which dry by evaporation. The technical term for wax painting – encaustic – derives from the Greek and denotes the use of heat in the process. Encaustic is one of the oldest paint mediums known and has been in use since 3000 BC when Egyptian artists used it to decorate mummy cases with portraits of the deceased. Encaustic was also used by classical Greek and Roman artists, but it fell into disuse with the development of tempera and oil media and has only been revived in the twentieth century. One of the most famous exponents of encaustic among contemporary artists has been Jasper Johns who used it extensively in the late 1960's and 70's in his 'number', 'target' and 'flag' paintings. Because it is hydrophobic (unaffected by dampness) encaustic shows practically no change during ageing, giving it extraordinary archival properties.

Lynda, working in a studio provided as part of the residency project, applies the melted beeswax to the supports using a separate brush for each colour. The supports are primed with white gesso. She starts with a measured stroke, using a brush the same width as the support (approximately 120mm). She draws the brush in a continuous sweep from the centre to the support outwards, to one end of the support. Recharging the brush with fresh wax, she makes another measured stroke from the centre to the opposite end. The brush discharges most of its load at the start of each sweeping stroke, creating a smooth patch of wax near the axis. But as the wax quickly cools and exhausts itself on the brush, the mark it leaves becomes progressively thin and broken. When these two initial gestures are repeated with fresh wax, the second layer amplifies the character of the first marks. This continues with each successive brushstroke, building up the texture into a deep relief. The texture is most pronounced towards the ends of the support because that is where the brushstrokes become most broken. Conversely, the centre comprises back to back smooth patches where the deposit of wax was continuous.

Different batches of purified beeswax will often differ slightly in their colour. Depending on the degree of bleaching, the colour can vary from pale yellow to a caramel colour. In *Devil's Inkpot*, Benglis uses mainly natural beeswax, with localised patches of pigmented wax in the central area. Five paintings use pigmented beeswax in a variety of colours – orange, yellow, green, brown – that reflect the predominant colours of Waiotapu and its environs. The natural colours of *Tarawera* evoke the pale organic colours of pumice, ash, clay and sinter that characterise the soils of the volcanic plateau. *Kaingaroa* is predominantly a dark green that is redolent of the vast tracts of pine trees that comprise the Kaingaroa forest, which Waiotapu overlooks. *Champagne Pool* is green and bright orange, evoking the scalding waters and sill of its namesake. *Devil's Bath* evokes the same emerald green and the canary yellow of the sulphur deposits. The depth of wax on these paintings varies considerably, from one or two centimetres on *Champagne Pool* and *Devil's Bath* to as much as six centimetres on *Devil's*

Inkpots and *Kaingaroa*, according to the number of layers of wax. The more layers, the more pronounced the texture, which in several of the paintings is very similar to the undifferentiated forms built up by the action of mineral-laden thermal waters.

The geothermal sites of Waiotapu are intriguing to all visitors, but for Benglis (whose art celebrates elemental forces and natural forms), the grotesqueries of Waiotapu's micro-landscapes are of special interest, because the processes involved in their formation are physically related to the processes she uses – namely accretion. What is unusual about Benglis' New Zealand series of wax paintings is that she decided to revive a medium she had abandoned almost twenty years ago, and that the impetus was a reversal of the normal causal chain of events. Benglis recognised at Waiotapu a physical phenomenon that she had intuitively explored in those earlier wax paintings – and it served as the creative trigger reviving her enthusiasm for the medium.

PONSONBY, AUCKLAND

Giovanni Glassworks, where Lynda has arranged to work on a new series of glass sculptures, is located in Ponsonby. John Croucher and John Leggot, both skilled glassworkers, are partners in the business producing high quality hand crafted glassware – mainly goblets, vases, bowls and the like. They have agreed to help Lynda make a series of glass knots. The first thing that hits me as I enter the workshop is the heat from the furnaces and annealing ovens. Lynda is wearing some very large asbestos mitts and John Croucher is wearing a special heat-resistant visor and smock. Already Lynda has made two glass knots. I cannot see them because right now they are in an annealing oven in which they will cool very gradually over the next twenty-four hours.

On the floor is a wooden frame filled with sand, like a child's sandpit. Leggot grooms the sand with a rake, lays a length of plastic drain coil on it in a figure 'S', and presses it with his feet. When he removes it a hemispherical, ribbed, depression is left in the sand. Lynda,

meanwhile, cuts pieces of bronze gauze from a large sheet and shapes them to fit the curve of the depression. She also cuts strips of shiny copper sheet and folds them into a series of corrugated shapes. Leggot lights an acetylene torch and scorches the length of the depression, driving out moisture, and coating the trench with a powdery film of black soot. Lynda places the bits of gauze and copper into the trench.

Everything is set now for the glass (which has been cooking in the furnace) to be poured. The door to the furnace is unbolted to a blast of heat and the roar of gas jets. A crucible the size of a bucket is gingerly lifted out with giant pincers and carried over to the sandbox. In order to limit temperature differentials over the length of the snaking form, Leggot begins pouring from the middle, working to the ends. (I am reminded of the way Lynda brushed her wax painting, from the centre to the ends of the supports.) The brightly glowing glass pours slowly, like toffee. In this state it is immensely compelling. It only takes half a minute to complete the pour, and already the glass is changing colour from a golden yellow to a cherry red. Leggot applies the acetylene torch to keep the temperature up. The umbilical cord of glass connecting the glowing snake to the crucible is cut with a large pair of shears. The glass now has to be levered out of its trench and quickly configured into a knot while in this viscous state. If moved too soon it will slump; too late and it will become inflexible. Speed is of the essence.

All hands are called on to assist. There are six of us, and each is allocated a specific task. Several are issued with sticks which will be used to lever the glass snake out of its lair. One is directed to jab with a stick around the glass to help vent the heated sand. Lynda gives the signal and suddenly several pairs of hands, holding the sticks like broomhandles, prise the glass from its trench. The glass is still flexible and heavy, so it is no easy matter to support it. Meanwhile, Lynda (her great mitts protecting her from certain burns), wrestles the three-metre length of glowing glass into a complex arabesque. It all happens in a few moments of intense concentration and co-ordination. Then it is over. In what seems like seconds, the glass has already developed rigor mortis and the

knotted shape is locked in. The ruby colour that suffused the glass is beginning to ebb as the knot is carried to an adjacent annealing oven to cool down.

The whole operation is repeated almost immediately. This time, Lynda dispenses with the bronze mesh, using only the copper snippets. She shapes pieces like small caps that she places at the two ends of the snake, enhancing the reptilian effect. The work continues over a period of several days until nine glass sculptures are completed. In several of them, Lynda substitutes icy blue glass (that Croucher and Leggot have especially formulated) for the clear glass of the first efforts. In some of the later pieces she introduces local patches of coloured glass (mainly a crimson-red and a bottle-green) which further enriches them. She names the pieces after streets in the locality: *Pompallier*, *Curran*, *Shellybeach*, and so on.

The overwhelming effect of the glass sculptures (intended or not) is reptilian. The extraordinary heat of the molten glass has been magically transmuted into a frozen energy, petrified in glassy coils like sculpted ice. The ribbing of the plastic draincoil, used to make the depression in the sandbox, has translated into an almost perfect impression on the arched glass which also has a slightly frosted surface from the texture of the adhering sand. In those works where the glass was comparatively stiff while it was knotted, the forms are fuller, implying a kind of muscular power. In others where it was more malleable it has continued to move after knotting and sometimes slumped, suggestive of a sloughed-off skin from which the animus has departed. The versos of the ribbed coil (the surface of the poured glass that remained uppermost during pouring) is extremely smooth and highly reflective.

In places thin flanges project from the main body, the result of the viscous glass overflowing its trench. Gleaming snippets of copper sheet embedded in the crystal-clear body of the glass are clearly visible from the smooth side, and where the corrugations of the copper have dammed the sluggish molten glass it has formed glassy 'toes'. Occasionally where the copper projects from the glass it has been oxidised by the extreme heat, abruptly turning a bluish black. Because of their open forms, which



Top: Lynda configuring a glass knot, Giovanni Glassworks, Ponsonby.

Bottom: Glass knot being placed in the annealing oven, Giovanni Glassworks, Ponsonby.

(photographs: John McIver)



embrace and enclose an interior space, the glass knots present many different profiles. Much of Benglis' artworks over the years have been tied to the wall, limiting the positions from which they can be viewed. Not so the glass knots, which are intended to be freestanding and seen from a variety of angles. The way the glass knots penetrate and enclose space instead of simply occupying it, is especially worthy of note.

Most sculpture is created either additively (modelling, assemblage, construction) or subtractively (carving). Benglis' glass knots are unconventional in that they conform to neither of these modes. Because of the elastic properties of glass, it forms a continuous body which can be distended, and moulded but is difficult to add to or subtract from. The sinuous glass knots are unusually continuous, which enhances their directional thrust, and reinforces a sense of arrested motion. The way that light is refracted by the limpid glass and reflected from its smooth underbelly also imparts to the knots a lively and changeable aspect.

An inherently attractive material, glass has long been exploited for its decorative properties. Although Benglis' glass knots are sensual, even seductive, they are not decorative. An element of menace puts paid to any such impression. More importantly, Benglis' understanding of the intrinsic physical character of her chosen medium, and her ability to direct and exploit this to her own expressive needs, without restricting or denying the natural properties of the glass, ensures a sculptural integrity that much blown and cast glass lacks. A serendipitous spirit pervades Benglis' glass knots. Fortuitous stress fractures and bubbles in the substance of the glass are accepted by Benglis along with oxidation flashes on bare copper and a host of other happy accidents which are an inevitable byproduct of an elemental process involving extreme temperatures. Benglis' role in this process of transmutation is both as creator and witness since a whole host of chemical and physical imperatives come into play during the creative process that are essentially indeterminate. The window of opportunity, when working with glass, is small anyway. Francis Bacon eloquently expressed the relationship between the artist and chance in relation to painting, but his

message is equally applicable to Benglis' glass medium and to other media she has employed:

"... real painting is a mysterious and continuous struggle with chance – mysterious because the very substance of the paint... can make such a direct assault upon the nervous system; continuous because the medium is so fluid and subtle... I think that painting today is pure intuition and luck and taking advantage of what happens when you splash the stuff down."⁵

- 1 Quoted in Rosalind Constable 'New Sites for New Sights' *New York Magazine* (New York) 3, no. 2 (12 January 1970) p 44, requoted in Susan Krane *Lynda Benglis Dual Natures*, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia 1992, p 14.
- 2 Susan Krane's conversation with Lynda Benglis, 30 October 1989, East Hampton, New York, quoted in Krane, p 14.
- 3 Quoted in interview with Robert James Coad in *Between Painting and Sculpture: A Study of the Work and Working Process of Lynda Benglis, Elizabeth Murray, Judy Pfaff and Gary Stephan* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Dissertation Information Service, 1988) 241 (Copyright 1983) requoted in Krane, p 14.
- 4 Quoted in Sandy Bullatore "Lynda Benglis' Humanism" *Artweek* (San Jose, California) 7, no.121 (22 May 1976) p 11, requoted in Krane, p 42.
- 5 Francis Bacon quoted in H.B. Chipp *Theories of Modern Art*, Berkeley 1968, p 620.

LONG DISTANCE: SANTA FE / AUCKLAND

LYNDA BENGLIS TALKS TO PRISCILLA PITTS

PRISCILLA PITTS: What were the formative influences that led you to become an artist?

LYNDA BENGLIS: I guess I found myself not wanting to do anything else; and I found a way in art to occupy my time – that simple.

PP: What led you to make the kind of work you do?

LB: I wanted to make some sort of recipe that seemed to be rooted in alchemy – the beginnings of painting. I decided to learn about the first paint, and that was encaustic.

PP: Yes, you mentioned in a conversation with Felicity Abbott [Auckland, April 1993] that you like the idea of 'cooking' up your own recipes – and you've played around with materials a lot. The behaviour of materials and the processes you use are often very visible in the work.

LB: I was exploring how we perceive nature; how we perceive gravity; how we view ... what happens to the brain when you look at something in motion. How your body physically relates to



Lynda Benglis 1992
(photograph: Chris Felver)



Lynda Benglis, Greece, 1952.
(photograph: Charles Rogers/Lumens, Atlanta)

something that resembles or represents motion; something that moves but doesn't. I experimented with light and phosphorescence; and that worked particularly well in the polyurethane foam works.

For instance, in *For Darkness: Situation and Circumstances*, a piece which I made in Milwaukee in 1971, there were these waves coming down from the wall. Where the light shone on them at the top they seemed most intense and rose in space. But because of gravity and the flow of the polyurethane, the shadows in the crevices, they were also falling in space.

PP: That idea of the active, perceptual relationship between the viewer's brain and body and the work is similar to ideas in much minimalist work ...

LB: Yes. And like some other artists around that time – such as Jasper Johns – I liked to use subliminal images, icons. Artists are not just designers, they push associations; and they're particularly sensitive to what visual stimulus does to the brain.

PP: What was it like being a woman artist in a male-dominated New York art scene in the sixties and early seventies?

LB: Pretty awful – I was trying to find others like me but it was hard. In the beginning I felt very much alone. The people I looked towards – for instance, Helen Frankenthaler and Joan Mitchell – weren't interested in being associated with the feminist wave.

It was a transitional time. The feminist movement was beginning to find a focus in terms of philosophy and image. The images I was making were an attempt to understand and see what I could make of the so-called 'movement'. I think about it differently today. My interest was always multi-level, to do with multi-sexuality, male as well as female sexuality, and to go beyond sex. It's important to me, then as now, to be known as an artist that happens to be female; but everyone has to go through a discovery of their politic.

PP: *It's a process of self-discovery which is perhaps particularly necessary for younger women?*

LB: Absolutely. But I think it continues throughout your life, that energising of one's art with one's sexuality, one's physicality.

PP: *One of the things you are famous for is the controversial advertisement in Artforum where you posed naked with a dildo. From a feminist viewpoint, this was a highly ambiguous gesture.*

LB: The image was deliberately ambiguous. I was being very playful, very mocking towards sexuality in general.

PP: *It's a pretty aggressive image.*

LB: Totally! It was meant to be funny, scary, attractive, not attractive. The people who responded in *Artforum* at the time were too involved in a kind of inbred late-Marxist politics, they were just too closed, and found all kinds of things wrong with the work. There were five critics ... I cast a dildo for each of them.

PP: *Louise Bourgeois has also posed, wearing furs, with a dildo [her latex sculpture Cock and Ball, photographed by Robert Mapplethorpe in 1982]. Her image is subtler though very suggestive and it certainly hasn't caused that kind of reaction. Was it perhaps your nudity that really upset people most?*

LB: That was an issue. In the image, I was alluding to both the male and the female. I was interested in photographing men at the time – they were my 'objects' ... I guess I realised that the earlier Betty Grable image [a postcard of Benglis in high heels with her jeans dropped to her knees, baring her behind to the audience] was very passive. Someone came into Paula Cooper's [Benglis' NY dealer] and said 'Who did THAT to her!?' – so I knew I needed to confront that issue as well.

But the work was as much a statement about the press. It was at the time of Watergate, and when Nixon resigned there was a real questioning



Lynda Benglis, 'Betty Grable' invitation for exhibition at Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, 1974
(photograph: Charles Rogers/Lumens, Atlanta)

about the press, about power, about the media's ability to cover-up or expose lies. That was partly why I wore the sunglasses. Not only did they give some distance between me and the viewer, but they were the kind that were worn by Martha Mitchell who helped to expose Nixon – and she died kind of suspiciously.

I could have hired someone to pose for me, but the statement wouldn't have been as strong. I never thought about it being my body – if I had I'd never have done it. I thought of it as a work. I was an artist making a point, making a statement. Exposing myself was a way of using the media and at the same time exposing it, stating that the media was involved in a lie.

PP: Apart from the representations of yourself, the various masquerades, a lot of your sculpture also relates to the body, and to your body in particular. The making of many of the works is often strenuously physical, for instance, and the size is often determined by your body strength and size.

LB: Absolutely. The surface is often related to touch and to skin, to being often both attractive and repulsive. I'm saying things about how to 'feel out' the objects, their configurations and how that relates to the body and its movement. Again, I'm thinking about nature, the extent to which I and the material become one.

PP: It seems that your work often plays with ideas of adornment, modes of dress and so on.

LB: So much has to do with things you remember, sensations, smells and so on ... when I was little, I was in a dance class. One of the things I felt was very special was performing in costume. You've probably seen the image of me in the Greek soldier's costume as well. That had a skirt much like the dance skirt in ballet class – one was heavier than the other, but both were full and made of gauze, starched stiff. Another memory was the baton that had sparkles on it, also from dance class; another may be sparkles with Halloween associations, a rubber mask ... fantasy things...

PP: Do you think that aspect of your work – the pleating, the sparkly bits and so on – comes from a specifically feminine experience of the world?

LB: Well, I think women are less afraid than men of responding to these things. It's a matter of conditioning. Women are allowed – or allow themselves – and *should* allow themselves even more – to respond to and use different aspects of the everyday and to place it in a poetic and classic context. Female artists have yet much more to gain; and yet have an aesthetic that can add to contemporary culture, to contemporary art, to contemporary science, because we're rebelling - fuck the conditioning!

Art's a kind of science. It's a puzzling of phenomena, of fact, of piecing things together. You reinterpret and recreate reality. As we grow up, we learn to have so-called 'taste' in our society which results in stylistic analysis. But art goes beyond taste and style. Art enters into poetry and truth. And as an artist you can use things that are not so elegant, that are repulsive as well as attractive. We can ask 'what is the nature of our reaction to this?' I'm questioning by creating a new aesthetic, by rethinking the everyday. Art makes the history of what's happening; at the same time our culture is mirrored through art.

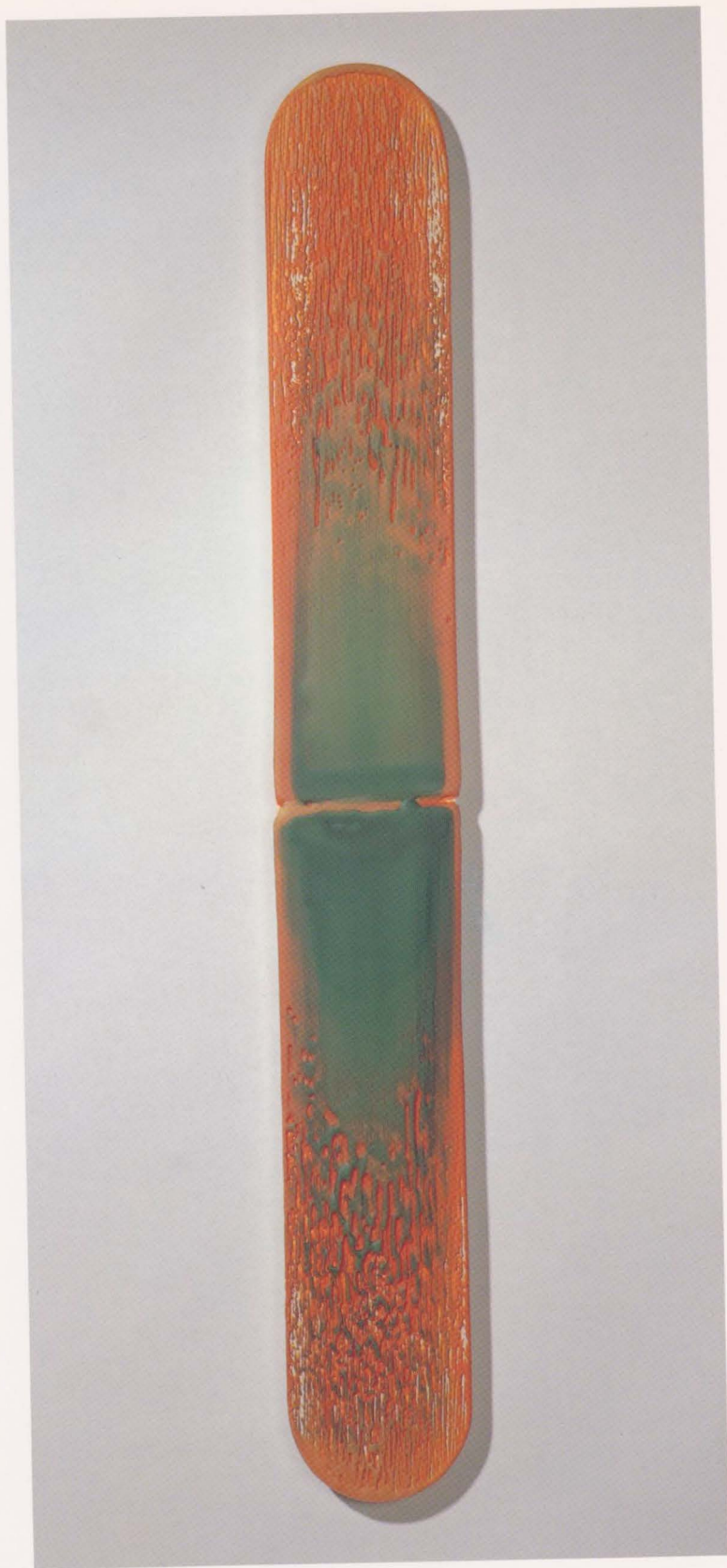
PP: A lesser known aspect of your work is the videos. What made you decide to use video?

LB: My involvement with video began in the early seventies and continued till 1976, and in 1986 I made a work for MTV. In fact, the videos were known and were very much written about at that time.

I was very interested in contemporary film, so-called 'underground' film, and how it explored physical as well as psychological states. With the video, I wanted to examine the camera's and the monitor's relationship to the body, the dialogue back and forth, and the process of making a video in relationship to the material; the equipment and the image.



Inset, top: Contraband 1969
(cat. 22)
Inset, bottom: Champagne
Pool, Waiotapu, New Zealand.
(photograph: Andrew Bogle)
Main picture, right:
Champagne pool 1993 (cat. 4)

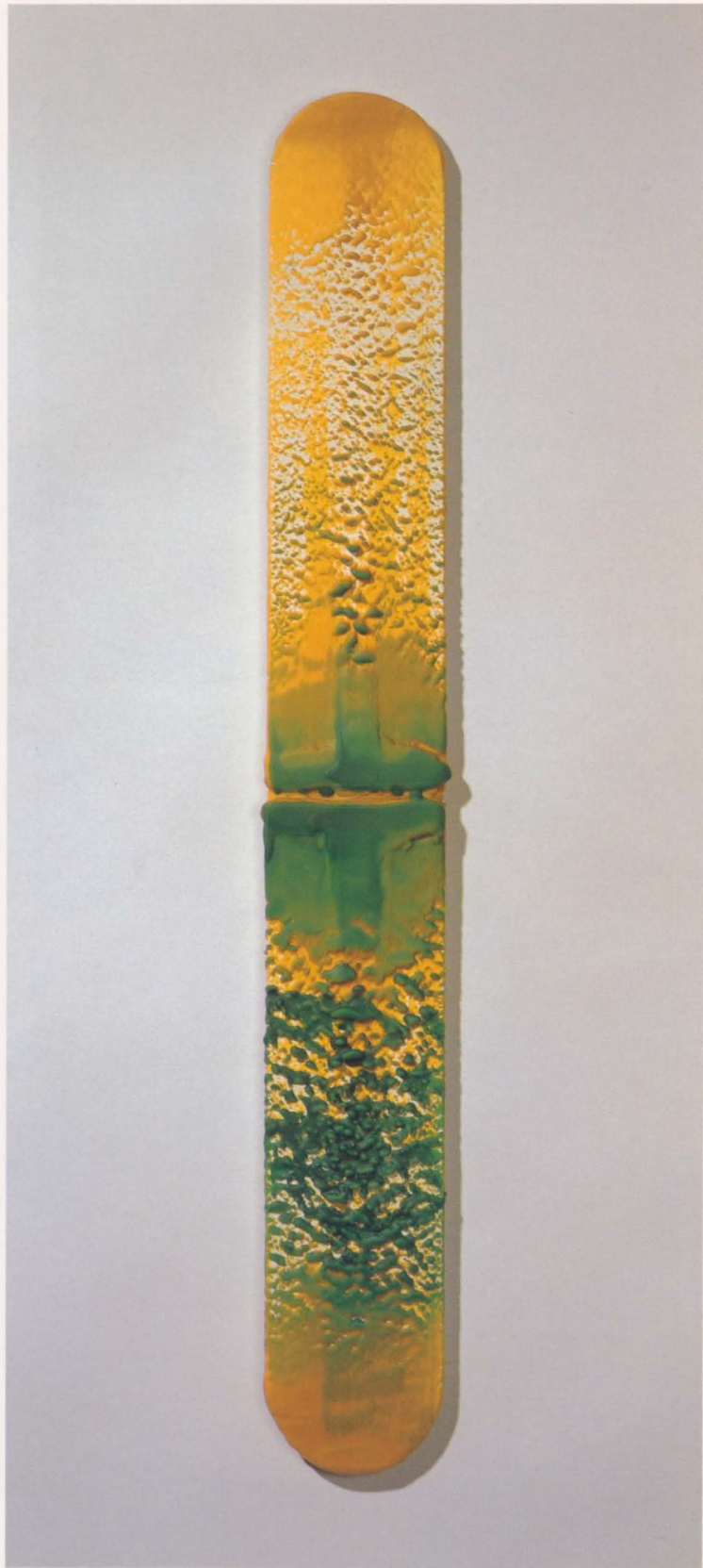




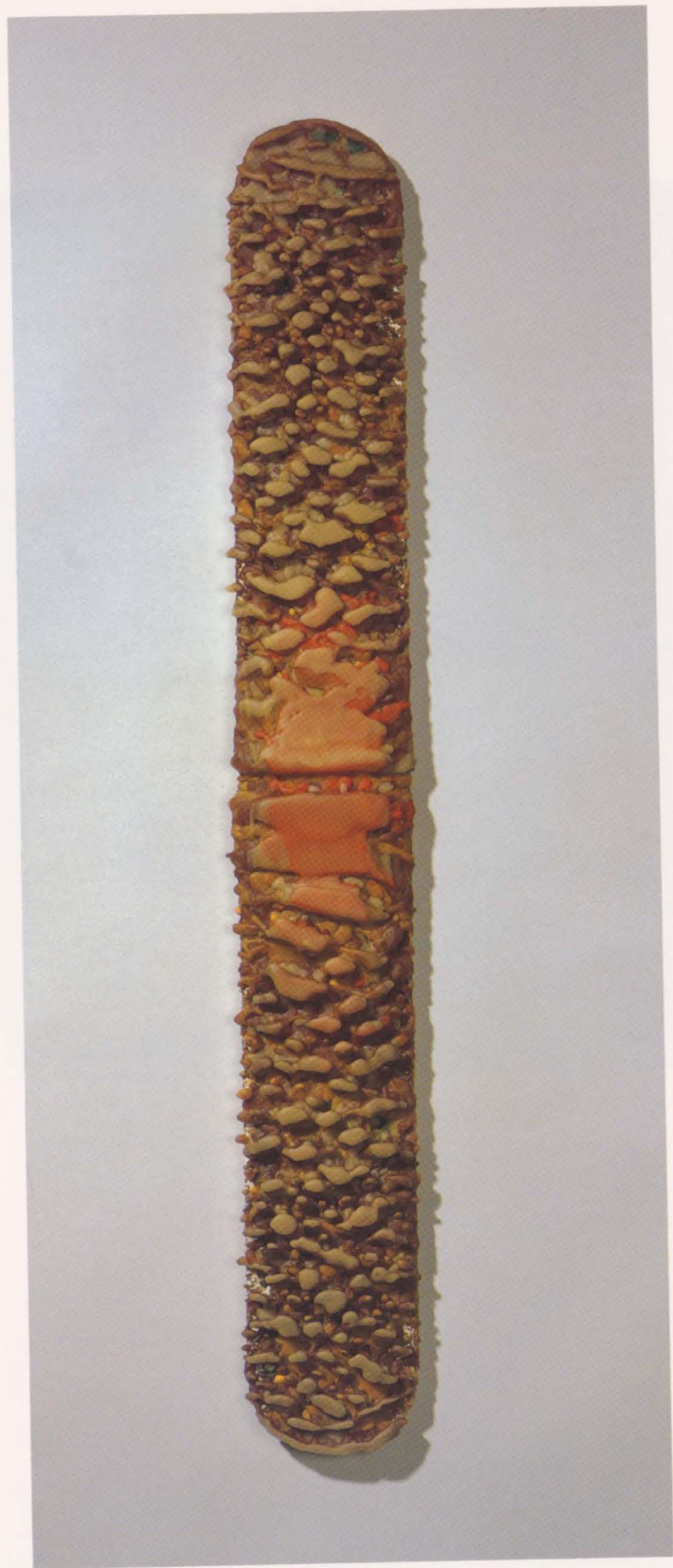
Inset, top & bottom:
Champagne Pool, Waiotapu.
(photographs: Andrew Bogle)
Left: Tarawera 1993
(cat. 6, detail)



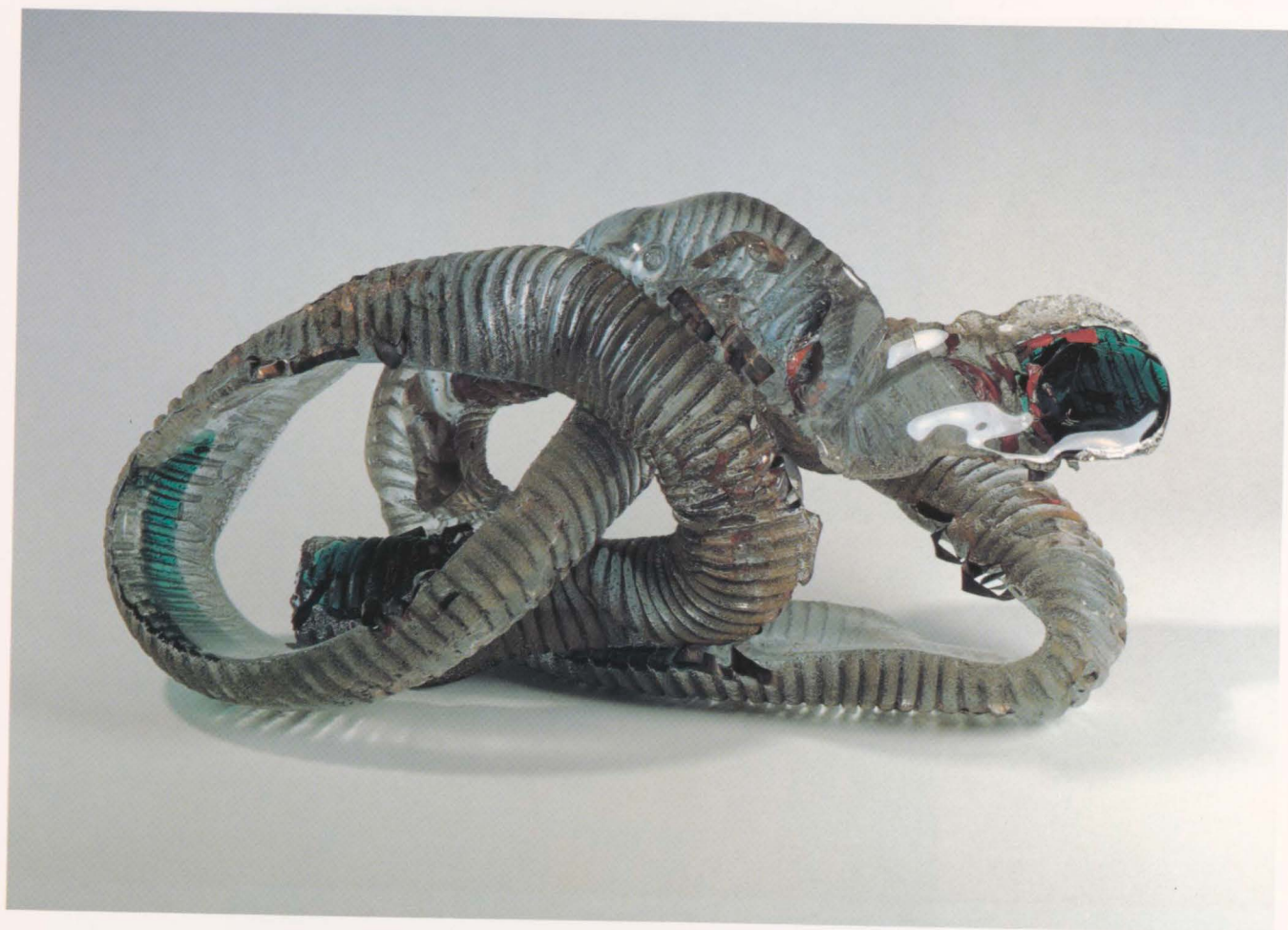
Tarawera 1993 (cat. 6)



Devil's bath 1993 (cat. 2)



Devil's inkpots 1993 (cat. 5)



Wanganui 1993 (cat. 17)



Shellybeach 1993 (cat. 16)



Emmett 1993 (cat. 14)



Lynda Benglis, Matakana, New Zealand 1993
(photograph: John McIver)

BIOGRAPHY

Lynda Benglis

Born

Lake Charles, Louisiana, 1941

Education

Newcomb College, B.F.A., 1964

Awards

Yale-Norfolk Scholarship, 1963
Max Beckman Scholarship, The Brooklyn Museum, New York, 1965
Guggenheim Fellowship, 1975
Artpark Grant, 1976
Australian Art Council Award, 1976
National Endowment for the Arts Grant, 1979
Minos Beach Art Symposium, 1988
Delphi Art Symposium, 1988
Olympiad of Art Sculpture Park, Korea, 1988
National Council of Art Administration, 1989

Teaching

Assistant Professor of Sculpture, University of Rochester, New York, 1970-72
Visiting Artist, Yale-Norfolk Summer School, 1972
Assistant Professor, Hunter College, New York, 1972-73
Visiting Professor, California Institute of the Arts, 1974
Visiting Professor, Princeton University, 1975
Visiting Professor, California Institute of the Arts, 1976
Visiting Artist, Kent State University, Ohio, 1977
Visiting Artist, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, 1979
Visiting Professor, University of Arizona Department of Art, Tucson, 1982
Visiting Professor, School of Visual Arts, Fine Arts Workshop, New York, 1985-1987
Visiting Professor, School of Visual Arts, Fine Arts Workshop, New York, Autumn 1991

ONE-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

1969

University of Rhode Island, Kingston

1970

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
Janie C. Lee Gallery, Dallas
Galerie Hans Muller, Cologne

1971

Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge

1972

Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco

1973

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
Lynda Benglis Video Tapes, Video Gallery, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse
Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco
Portland Center for the Visual Arts, Oregon (6/73)
The Texas Gallery, Houston
Jack Glenn Gallery, Corona Del Mar, California
The Clocktower, New York

1974

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco

1975

Fine Arts Center Gallery, State University of New York College at Oneonta, New York
The Kitchen, New York
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
The Texas Gallery, Houston

1976

Paula Cooper Gallery, Los Angeles

1977

Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles
Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco
Douglas Drake Gallery, Kansas City

1978

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

1979

The Texas Gallery, Houston
Dart Gallery, Chicago
Real Art Ways, New Haven
Hansen-Fuller Goldeen Gallery, San Francisco
Georgia State University, Atlanta
Galerie Albert Baronian, Belgium

1980

University of South Florida, Tampa; travelled to Lowe Art Museum, Miami
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles
Portland Center for the Visual Arts, Oregon
The Texas Gallery, Houston
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

David Heath Gallery, Atlanta
Chatham College, Pittsburgh
Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, Michigan

1981

Museum of Art, University of Arizona, Tucson
Galerie Albert Baronian, Brussels
Dart Gallery, Chicago
The Texas Gallery, Houston
Jacksonville Art Museum, Florida

1982

Okun-Thomas Gallery, St. Louis
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
Fuller Goldeen Gallery, San Francisco

1983

Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, Michigan
Dart Gallery Chicago

1984

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
The Texas Gallery, Houston
Tilden-Foley Gallery, New Orleans

1985

Works in Glass, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles
New Works in Glass, Susanne Hilberry Gallery,
Birmingham, Michigan
Glass, Dart Gallery, Chicago
Heath Gallery, Atlanta

1986

Fuller Goldeen Gallery, San Francisco
Tilden-Foley Gallery, New Orleans

1987

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
Landfall Press, New York
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles

1988

Lynda Benglis: Recent Sculpture and Works on Paper,
Cumberland Gallery, Nashville
Full Gross Gallery, San Francisco

1989

Tilden-Foley Gallery, New Orleans
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles
Michael Murphy Gallery, Tampa

1990

Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago
Linda Farris Gallery, Seattle
Sena Galleries West, Sante Fe

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

1991

Dual Natures, Travelling Exhibition: The High Museum
of Art, Atlanta; Contemporary Arts Center and New
Orleans Museum of Art; San Jose Museum of Art
Recent Work, Heath Gallery, Atlanta
New Works, Tilden Foley Gallery, New Orleans
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles

1992

Heath Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia

1993

Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, IL
Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand

TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

1970

Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia
(with Michael Goldberg)

1971

Kunstforum of Rottwell, Germany (with Allan Hacklin)

1977

Hansen-Fuller Gallery, San Francisco
(with William Weege) 1979
Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, Michigan
(with Ron Gorchoy)

1983

Recent Work: Lynda Benglis and John Duff,
Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles

1985

Kohlmeyer and Benglis: Teacher and Student in the 80s,
Pensacola Museum of Art, Florida

1987

*Ida Kohlmeyer/Lynda Benglis: Teacher and Student in
the 80s*, Gibson-Barkam Gallery, Imperial Calcasieu
Museum, Lake Charles, Louisiana
*Lynda Benglis and Keith Sonnier: A Ten Year
Retrospective, 1977-1987*, Alexandria Museum of
Art, Alexandria, Louisiana 1988
Cumberland Gallery, Nashville (with Ida Kohlmeyer)

1989

American Sculptors, New York and Los Angeles, (with
Mark Lere) Kamakura Gallery, Tokyo

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1969

Other Ideas, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan
Bykert Gallery, New York, New York
Prospect 69, Dusseldorf, West Germany
Art and Process IV, Finch College, New York, New York

1970

Highlights of the Season, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut
Three Person Show, Ithaca College, Museum of Art, Ithaca, New York
Art for Your Collection, Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island
Lynda Benglis, George Keuhn, Richard Van Buren, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, New York

1971

Twenty Six by Twenty Six, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York
Paula Cooper Gallery Group, Windham College, Putney, Vermont
Works for New Spaces, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Directions 3: 8 Artists, Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1972

New York '72, Paula Cooper Gallery Group, Greenwich, Connecticut
New York Artists, Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Painting and Sculpture Today, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana
Kent Invitational Exhibition, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio
32nd Annual Exhibition, The Society for Contemporary Art, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
12 Statements Beyond the Sixties, The Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, Michigan

1973

1973 Biennial Exhibition of American Painting and Sculpture, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York
Options and Alternatives, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut
Options 73/30: Recent Works of Art, The Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati, Ohio Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York

1974

Choice Dealers/Dealer's Choice, New York Cultural Center Opening Exhibition, Galerie John Doyle, Paris, France

1975

The Year of the Woman, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, New York
The Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
Artists' Rights Today, Rayburn Building, Washington DC and West Broadway Gallery, New York, New York
Fourteen Artists, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland
Selections from the Collection of Herbert and Dorothy Vogel, The Clocktower, New York, New York.
Travelled to: The Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

1976

Nine Sculptors, Nassau County Center for the Fine Arts, Roslyn, New York
Group Exhibition, Hell Walls, Buffalo, New York
American Artists - A Celebration, Marion Koogler McNay Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas
Colour Photography and its Derivatives, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
The Liberation: Fourteen American Artists, Aarhus Museum of Art, Denmark
Biennale of Sydney, Art Gallery of New South Wales, North Sydney, Australia
Recent Acquisitions, Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York

1977

Five from Louisiana, New Orleans Museum of Art
Recent Acquisitions, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York
Ten Years: A View of A Decade, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois
Contemporary Women: Consciousness and Content, The Brooklyn Museum Art School, New York, New York

1978

Art at Work, Recent Work from Corporate Collections, Whitney Museum of American Art/Downtown Branch, New York, New York
Made by Sculptors, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Gold, The Penthouse, Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York

1979

Contemporary Sculpture: Selections from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York
Pittura Ambiente, Palazzo Reale, Milan, Italy Group Exhibition, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California

1980

Extensions: Jennifer Bartlett, Lynda Benglis, Robert Longo, Judy Pfaff, The Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston, Texas

Current/New York, Syracuse University, Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse, New York

Paula Cooper at Yvon Lambert, Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, France

Painting in Relief, Whitney Museum of American Art/ Downtown Branch, New York, New York

Sculpture in California: 1975-1980, San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, California

Jack Brogan Projects, Baxter Art Gallery, Pasadena, California

Three Dimensional Painting, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois

Drawings: The Pluralist Decade, American Pavillion, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

With Paper, About Paper, Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York

The Pluralist Decade, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

New York City, Galerie Damele Ferreria, Rome, Italy

1981

Decorative Sculpture, Sculpture Centre, New York, New York

1981 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York

New Dimensions in Drawing, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Donne in Arts - Viaggio e New York, Provincia di Genova, Genoa, Italy

American Reliefs, 121 Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium

ICA Street Sights 2, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Developments in Recent Sculpture, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York

Art Materialized: Selections from the Fabric Workshop, organized by Independent Curators, Incorporated. Travelled to: New Gallery of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Ohio; Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California; The Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, Louisiana

1982

US Art Now, Nordiska Kompaniet, Stockholm, Sweden

Views by Women Artists, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources at P.S. 1, Long Island City, New York

Energie New York, ELAC, Centre d'Echanges, Lyon, France

Early Work, The New Museum for Contemporary Art, New York, New York

74th American Exhibition, The Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

Dynamix, The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

New Glass Review 3, The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York

The Americans: The Collage 1950-82, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas

Metals - Cast - Cut - Coiled, Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island

PostMINIMALISM, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Shift: LA/NY, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, California and Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York

New York Now, Kestner-Gesellschaft E.V. Hannover, West Germany

1983

Women Artists Invitational 1983: Selections from the Women Artist Historical Archives, Philadelphia College of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

20th Century Sculpture: Process and Presence, Whitney Museum of American Art at Phillip Morris, New York, New York

Back to the USA, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, Germany. Travelled to: Kunstmuseum, Lucerne, Switzerland; Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart, Germany

Minimalism to Expressionism: Painting and Sculpture since 1965 from the Permanent Collection, Whitney Museum of Art, New York, New York

The Sixth Day: A Survey of Recent Developments in Figurative Sculpture, The Renaissance Society, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

Language, Drama, Source and Vision, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, New York

1984 Olympic Fine Art Posters: 15 Contemporary Artists Celebrate the Games of the XXIII Olympiad, University Art Gallery, California State University, Carson, California

1984

Intermedia: Between Painting and Sculpture, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut.

A Celebration of American Women Artists, Part II: The Recent Generation, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, New York

Forming, Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York

Citywide Contemporary Sculpture Exhibition, Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio

Content: A Contemporary Focus 1974-84, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC

American Bronze Sculpture: 1850 to the Present, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey

American Sculpture: Three Decades, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington

Eight Artists from Paula Cooper Gallery, The Contemporary Art Gallery, Selby Corporation, Tokyo, Japan

1985

Monuments to: An Exhibition of Proposals for Monumental Sculpture, University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach, California

- Dracos Art Center: First Show, New Dialogues*, Dracos Art Center, Athens, Greece
- A New Beginning: 1968-1978*, The Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, New York
- In Three Dimensions: Recent Sculpture by Women*, Pratt Institute Gallery, New York, New York
- Selections from the William J. Hokin Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois
- Body and Soul: Aspects of Recent Figurative Sculpture*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio
- 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- Guerrilla Girls at the Palladium*, New York, New York
- Video Arts Festival*, Stockholm, Sweden
- Workshop Experiments: Clay, Paper, Fabric, Glass*, Brattleboro Museum of Art, Brattleboro, Vermont.
- Travelled to: Wellesley College Museum of Art, Wellesley, Massachusetts; League of New Hampshire Craftsmen, Concord, New Hampshire; The Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts; Science and Industry, Bridgeport, Connecticut; Rochester Institute of Technology, Bevier Gallery, Rochester, New York
- Made in India*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- New York Now: Correspondences*, Laforet Museum, Tokyo, Japan. Travelled to: Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Tochigi, Japan; Tazaki Hall Espace Media, Kobe, Japan
- 1986**
- Connecticut Collects: American Art since 1960*, Whitney Museum of American Art/Fairfield County, Stamford, Connecticut
- Natural Forms and Forces: Abstract Images in American Sculpture*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts and Bank of Boston Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts
- Between Geometry and Gesture: American Sculpture 1965-1975*, Palacio de Velesquez, Madrid, Spain
- Painting and Sculpture Today: 1986*, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Philadelphia Collects: European and American Art since 1940*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Galleries, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York
- 1987**
- Contemporary American and European Glass: The Saxe Collection*, American Craft Museum, New York, New York
- From the Lewitt Collection*, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut
- Structure and Resemblance: Work by Eight American Sculptors*, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York
- Avery Distinguished Professors: Lynda Benglis, Dorothea Rockburne, James Rosenquist*, Edith C. Blum Art Institute, Bard college, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, New York
- The Faux Arts*, La Jolla Museum of Art, La Jolla, California
- A Bountiful Decade: Selected Acquisitions 1977-1987*, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri
- Fifty Years of Collecting: An Anniversary Selection (Sculpture of the Modern Era)*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York
- 1988**
- Lynda Benglis, John Chamberlain, Mel Kendrick, Joel Fisher, Robert Therrien*, Magasin 3, Stockholm, Sweden
- Minos Beach Art Symposium*, Minos Beach Hotel, Crete, Greece
- Knots & Nets*, The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Travelled to: New State Museum, Albany, New York; Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York
- Pilchuck: An Exhibition of Contemporary Glass Sculpture*, Walter Art Gallery, Santa Monica, California
- Video Art Series: Early Experimental Work and Recent Explorations*, Gray Art Gallery, Jenkins Fine Art Center, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina
- 1989**
- Making their Mark*, Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio. Travelled to: New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, Louisiana; Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- American Sculptors*, Kamakura Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- First Impressions: Early Prints by Forty-six Contemporary Artists*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Travelled to: Laguns Glorie Art Museum, Austin, Texas; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland; Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York
- Contemporary Art from New York: The Collection of the Chase Manhattan Bank*, Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama, Japan
- 1990**
- The Radiant Principle*, Penine Hart Gallery, New York, New York
- The New Sculpture 1965-75: Between Geometry and Gesture*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
- Art in Europe and America: The 1960s and 1970s*, Wexner Center for the Visual Arts, Columbus, Ohio
- Amerikanische Videos aus den Jahren 1965-75, The Castelli/Sonnabend Tapes and Films*, Ausstellungsraum Kunsthaus, Stuttgart, Germany
- 1991**
- Focus on Louisiana: Artists from AMoA's Permanent Collection*, Alexandria Museum of Art, Alexandria,

Louisiana

Setting the Stage: Contemporary Artists Design for the Performing Arts, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio

III Biennale de Sculpture, Monte Carlo, Monaco
American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters: 43rd Annual Purchase Exhibition, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York, New York

Little Things Mean A Lot, Momentary Modern, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

1992

Erotiques, A.B. Galerie, Paris, France

Three Louisiana Artists: Benglis, Connell and Kohlmeyer, Masur Museum of Art, Monroe, Louisiana

Her Art Works, juror and participant at national competitive exhibition co-sponsored by the South Bend Regional Museum of Art and the Indiana Women's Caucus for Art, South Bend Regional Museum of Art, South Bend, Indiana

Cross Section, sponsored by American Express, Battery Park City Authority, Merrill Lynch and Olympia and York, Battery Park City and World Financial Center, New York, New York

Clearly Art, Pilchuk's Glass Legacy, Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham Washington. Travelled to: Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, California; Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire; Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia; Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson Arizona; Palm Springs Desert Museum, Palm Springs, California; Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, Tennessee; Brunnier Gallery, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa; Muskegon Museum of Art, Muskegon, Michigan; Birmingham, Alabama; Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Museum of Art, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington

1993

The First Generation Women and Video, 1970-1975, Independent Curators Inc. travelling exhibition

Bodily, Penine Hart Gallery, New York, New York

Creating a Place for People, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Washington, DC

Hunter College MFA Faculty, Hunter College Art Gallery, New York, New York

Coming to Power: 25 Years of Sexually Explicit Art by Women, Curated by Ellen Cantor, Produced by Simon Watson, David Zwirner Gallery, New York, New York

Abject Art: Repulsion and Desire in American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

1. *Kaingaroa* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment
on composite board
98 x 12.5 cm
2. *Devil's bath* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
98 x 12.5 cm
3. *Thunder crater* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
98 x 12.5 cm
4. *Champagne pool* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
98 x 12.5 cm
5. *Devil's inkpots* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
and pigment on composite board
98 x 12.5 cm
6. *Tarawera* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
98 x 12.5 cm
7. *Devil's home* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
98 x 12.5 cm
8. *Tokoroa Series #1* 1993
sprayed aluminium on stainless
steel mesh
maximum dimension 43.5 cm
9. *Tokoroa Series #2* 1993
sprayed aluminium on stainless
steel mesh
maximum dimension 33.5 cm
10. *Tokoroa Series #3* 1993
sprayed aluminium on stainless
steel mesh
maximum dimension 42.5 cm
11. *Tokoroa Series: Nickel-Chrome*
1993
electroplated nickel-chrome and
sprayed copper on stainless steel
mesh
maximum dimension 29 cm
12. *Tokoroa Series: Gold* 1993
electroplated gold and sprayed
copper on stainless steel mesh
maximum dimension 23 cm
13. *Tokoroa Series: Silver* 1993
electroplated silver and sprayed
copper on stainless steel mesh
maximum dimension 27.5 cm
14. *Emmett* 1993
glass, bronze wire and copper
sheet
maximum dimension 64 cm
15. *Curran* 1993
glass, bronze wire, copper sheet
maximum dimension 49.5 cm
16. *Shellybeach* 1993
glass and copper sheet
maximum dimension 60 cm
17. *Wanganui* 1993
glass and copper sheet
maximum dimension 60 cm
18. *Ardmore* 1993
glass and copper sheet
maximum dimension 42 cm
19. *Pompallier* 1993
glass and copper sheet
maximum dimension 52 cm
20. *Sentinel* 1993
glass
maximum dimension 35 cm
21. *Sixty at Matakana* 1993
terracotta with copperslip
(60 parts)
dimensions variable
22. *Contraband* 1969
poured pigmented latex
1028 x 276 cm
*courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery,
New York*
23. *Barchetta* 1992
aluminium on stainless steel
mesh
227 x 247 x 62 cm
*courtesy Margo Leavin Gallery,
Los Angeles*
24. *Rotoehu* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
octagonal, maximum dimension
83.7 cm
25. *Rotomahana* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
circular, maximum dimension
83.7 cm
26. *Rotoiti* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
circular, 83.7 cm diameter
27. *Mauna-Lao-Kilanea* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
octagonal, maximum dimension
61 cm
28. *Sakurajima* 1993
purified beeswax, damar resin
crystals and pigment on
composite board
98 x 12.5 cm



LYNDA BENGLIS

Kahingora 1993 (detail)

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