

## KUKJE GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE

### Louise Bourgeois Solo Exhibition *The Smell of Eucalyptus*

Press Conference: December 16 (Thurs.), 2021, 11AM at Kukje Gallery K1

Exhibition Dates: December 16, 2021 – January 30, 2022

Venue: Kukje Gallery K1 and K3

As the final exhibition of 2021, Kukje Gallery is pleased to announce *The Smell of Eucalyptus*, an exhibition of sculpture and works on paper by the eminent French-American artist Louise Bourgeois. On view from December 16, 2021, through January 30, 2022, this is the artist's sixth show at Kukje Gallery, and her first in almost a decade, following those in 2012, 2010, 2007, 2005, and 2002. The exhibition takes place across the gallery's K1 and K3 spaces.

The exhibition's title *The Smell of Eucalyptus*, which comes from one of the works in the show, underlines the central importance of memory, the cycles of nature, and the five senses in Bourgeois' late work. As a young woman in the late 1920s, Bourgeois took care of her sick mother in the South of France, and often used eucalyptus oil for its medicinal properties. Eucalyptus thus came to signify her relationship with her mother, and for the maternal identification that comes to the fore in Bourgeois' old age. It also attests to her belief in the power of a sensory trigger to precipitate an act of recall and bring the past to life (the artist used to burn eucalyptus in the studio to clear the air). Lastly, it is a metaphor for the therapeutic function of art for Bourgeois.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is the suite *Turning Inwards #4*, which belongs to a major body of works on paper that Bourgeois developed in her final decade. Consisting of 39 large soft-ground etchings, the suite showcases the full range of iconography that Bourgeois explored at this time: leaf- and plant-like progressions, eccentric growths of seed- and pod-like forms, figures filled with clusters of eyes, sinewy coils of internal organs, and abstract and semiabstract motifs that reference her sculptural forms. There is a dynamic oscillation between physical tension and release, landscape and the human body, inner and outer reality. As the title suggests, the prevailing mood is one of introspection.

*Turning Inwards #4* is a point of departure for Bourgeois' subsequent formal and thematic explorations. It sets the iconographic lexicon that the artist would go on to elaborate in large hand-painted prints and suites made from the same plates, such as *Leaves (#4)*, *Swaying, Passages (#3)*, *Up and Up*, and others. Sometimes Bourgeois would integrate fragments of text from her diaries and other writings into these works. This pairing of text and image hearkens back to the beginnings of Bourgeois' lifelong engagement with printmaking: in 1947 she published her celebrated portfolio *He Disappeared Into Complete Silence*, which paired nine engravings with nine enigmatic parables.

The works on paper in this exhibition are placed in dialogue with a selection of sculptures from all periods of Bourgeois' career, and share the same formal and thematic concerns. Kukje Gallery will publish a catalogue on the occasion of the exhibition, featuring full color plates of the exhibited works, installation views, and a text by Philip Larratt-Smith.

## About the Artist

Louise Bourgeois, (b. 1911, Paris; d. 2010, New York) is recognized as one of the most influential artists of the past century. Though she worked in several mediums throughout her 70-year career—including installation, performance, drawing, painting, and printmaking—she is most known as a sculptor. From poetic drawings to room-sized installations, she physically manifested her anxieties in order to exorcise them. Memory, love, fear, and abandonment are at the core of her complex and renowned body of work. Bourgeois was named Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Minister of Culture in 1983. Other honors include the Grand Prix National de Sculpture from the French government in 1991; the National Medal of Arts, presented by President Bill Clinton, in 1997; and the French medal of Commander of the Legion of Honor presented by President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008. She represented the United States at the Venice Biennale in 1993, and in 1999 she was awarded the Biennale's Golden Lion for a living master of contemporary art. Bourgeois' work can be found in important collections worldwide and has been the subject of several major traveling retrospectives, including those organized by the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Kunstverein, Frankfurt; Tate Modern, London; the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and Haus der Kunst, Munich.

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**Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010)**

*LEAVES (#4)*

2006

Etching, gouache, watercolor, pencil, ink, colored pencil, and fabric on paper  
151.8 x 49.5 cm

© The Easton Foundation/VAGA at ARS, New York/SACK, Seoul

Photo: Timothy Doyon

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010)**

*TURNING INWARDS SET #4 (THE SMELL OF EUCALYPTUS (#1))*

2006

Etching on paper

149.9 x 87.3 cm

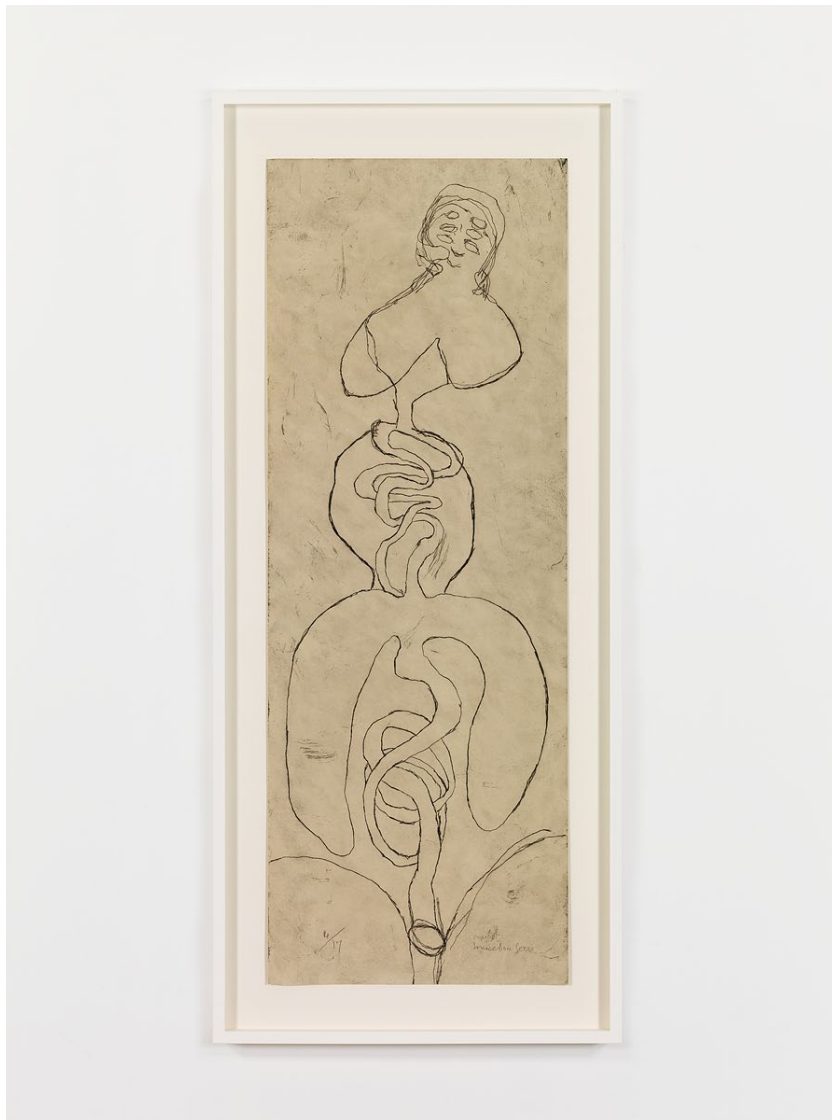
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Photo: Ken Adlard

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010)**  
*TURNING INWARDS SET #4 (I SEE YOU!!!)*  
2007  
Etching on paper  
151.1 x 61.9 cm  
© The Easton Foundation/VAGA at ARS, New York/SACK, Seoul  
Photo: Ken Adlard  
Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010)**  
*TURNING INWARDS SET #4 (JUST LIKE ME)*  
2007  
Etching on paper  
151.8 x 55.2 cm  
© The Easton Foundation/VAGA at ARS, New York/SACK, Seoul  
Photo: Ken Adlard  
Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010)**  
*TURNING INWARDS SET #4 (SWELLING)*  
2007  
Etching on paper, diptych  
Left: 152.1 x 92.7 cm, Right: 152.4 x 93.1 cm  
© The Easton Foundation/VAGA at ARS, New York/SACK, Seoul  
Photo: Ken Adlard  
Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010)**

*POIDS*

1993

Steel, stainless steel, cast iron, and glass  
231.1 x 81.3 x 303.5 cm

© The Easton Foundation/VAGA at ARS, New York/SACK, Seoul

Photo: Christopher Burke

Image provided by Kukje Gallery





**Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010)**

*THE MIRROR*

1998

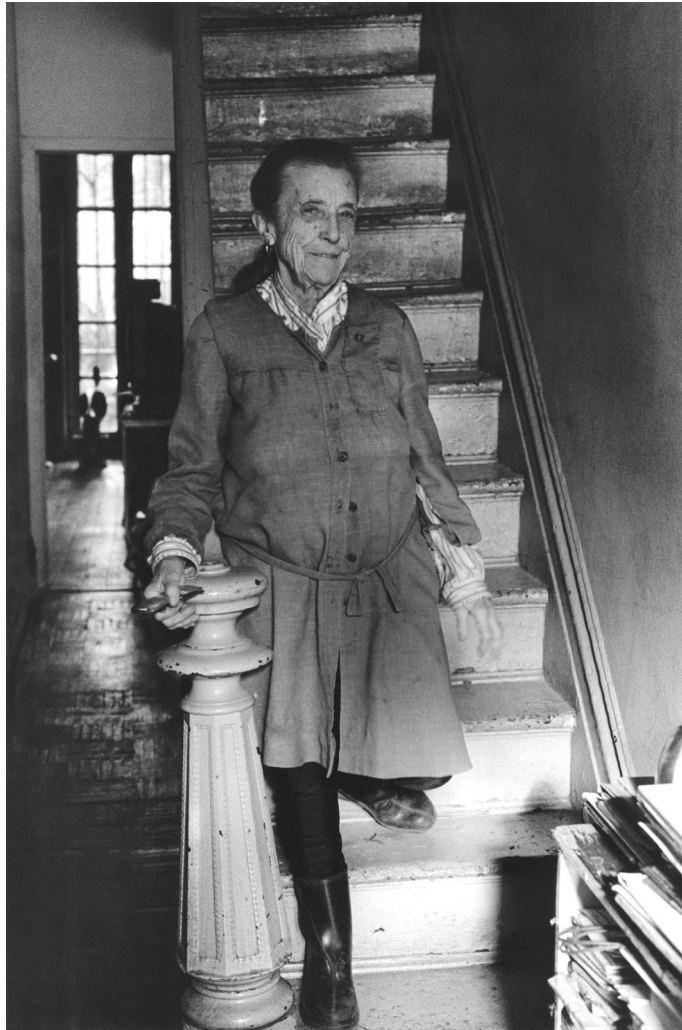
Cast and polished aluminum, wall piece

228 x 91.4 x 106.7 cm

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Photo: Christopher Burke

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Louise Bourgeois descending the stairs in her home on West 20<sup>th</sup> Street in NYC in 1992  
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Photo: Claire Bourgeois  
Image provided by Kukje Gallery