

HAYWARD GALLERY

Press Release

Date: Tuesday 3 October 2023

Contact: Laura Gosney, Press Manager (Visual Arts), laura.gosney@southbankcentre.co.uk
Megan Edwards, Press Officer (Visual Arts), megan.edwards@southbankcentre.co.uk

Images are available to download [here](#)

This press release is available in a variety of accessible formats. Please email press@southbankcentre.co.uk

When Forms Come Alive Sixty Years of Restless Sculpture

7 February — 6 May 2024

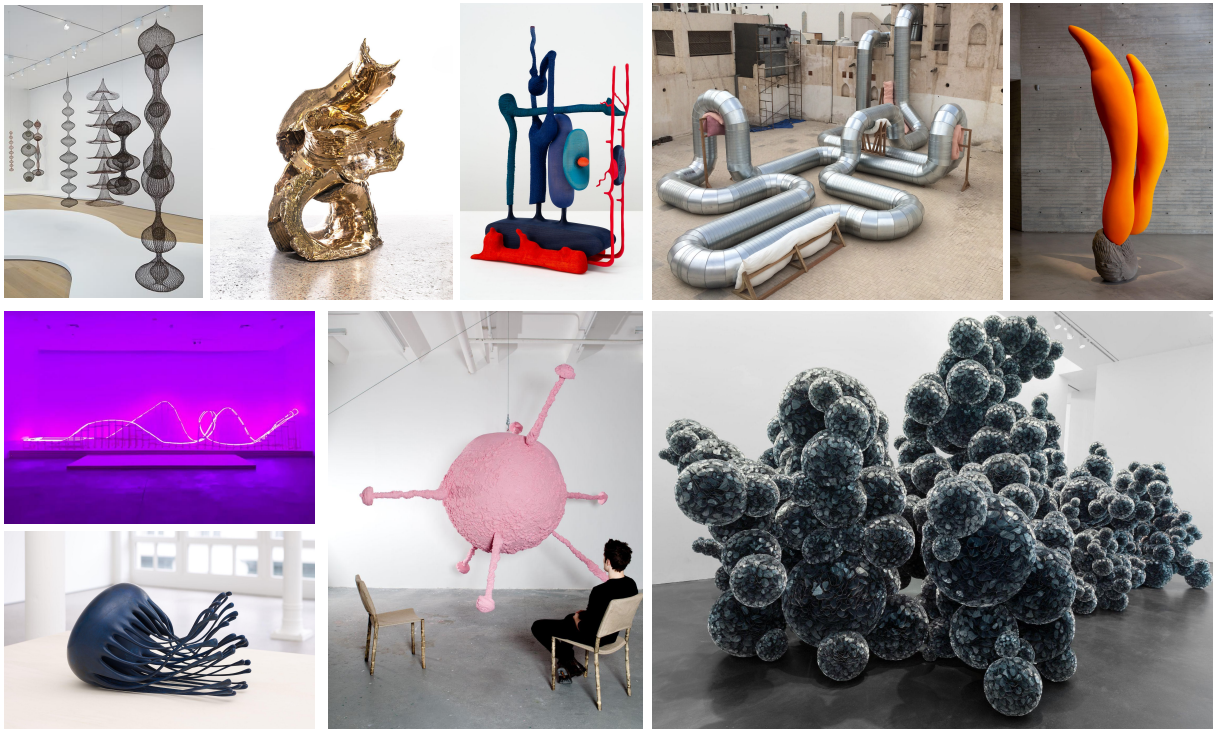


IMAGE CREDITS IN NOTES TO EDITORS

The Hayward Gallery will present ***When Forms Come Alive***, a playful and lively exhibition highlighting the ways in which artists have been inspired by movement, flux and organic growth, from a dancer's gesture to the breaking of a wave, or from a flow of molten metal to the interlacing of a spider's web.

Spanning over 60 years of contemporary art, this unique exhibition will include a range of energetic sculptural forms that seem to ooze, undulate, blossom, erupt and sprawl in the gallery space, inspiring fluid and shifting realms of experience that will surprise viewers at

every turn. *When Forms Come Alive* will bring together works that engage in a dynamic and urgent exploration of physical experience in contrast to a world in which everyday encounters are increasingly digitised.

The exhibition will feature the works of 21 international artists, namely **Ruth Asawa, Nairy Baghramian, Phyllida Barlow, Lynda Benglis, Michel Blazy, Paloma Bosquê, Olaf Brzeski, Choi Jeonghwa, Tara Donovan, DRIFT, Eva Fàbregas, Holly Hendry, EJ Hill, Marguerite Humeau, Jean-Luc Moulène, Senga Nengudi, Ernesto Neto, Martin Puryear, Matthew Ronay, Teresa Solar Abboud** and **Franz West**.

Ralph Rugoff, Director of the Hayward Gallery, says: *"Intricate, exuberant and playful, the works in this show will take visitors on an adventure into a world of fascinating forms. Whilst they avoid directly representing the human body, most of these artworks evince a compelling corporeality - they remind us that there is a comedy, as well as a politics, of form."*

Embodying a playful rebuke to rigid geometries, the sculptures in *When Forms Come Alive* will evoke the pleasures of spontaneous gesture and movement, the poetics of gravity, and the experience of sensation itself. In addition, the works will engage viewers in ambiguous encounters with uncanny forms that cannot be easily identified or labelled. For example, **Jean-Luc Moulène's** knot-like constructions explore paradoxical volumes defined by surfaces that have neither inside nor outside, whilst **Teresa Solar Abboud's** brightly coloured sculptures, at once naturalistic and surreal, embody an intractable, dynamic otherness. Alongside **Tara Donovan's** intricate installation that brings to mind a sprawling, otherworldly molecular constellation, these artworks defiantly proclaim that nothing in the world stays the same, that everything is moving, seething, changing and transforming. These works, and the exhibition as a whole, will illuminate how sculpture, by embracing its potential as our most restless medium, can be an indispensable vehicle for rediscovering and recovering lost dimensions of physical experience.

The exhibition will open with sculptures from the 1960s and 1970s by postminimalist and process-oriented artists, including **Lynda Benglis and Senga Nengudi**, showcasing how form is inseparable from a sense of transience and transformation – an aesthetic developed in pointed contrast to the sleek monolithic structures created by many male artists of the time. Later works from artists such as **Phyllida Barlow** and **Nairy Baghramian** pick up on this anti-monumental character, presenting deliberately awkward forms that evoke fleeting states of being, or relationships in flux.

Works from artists **Franz West, Olaf Brzeski** and **Matthew Ronay** utilise forms to conjure the abject, comedic and absurd. The unexpected bulges and curves in these sculptures might evoke associations to living organisms from one viewpoint, but when seen from another angle, they suggest geological formations or melting ice cream. Meanwhile, with its neon, rollercoaster-like structure, **EJ Hill's** large-scale sculpture triggers memories of radical motion and visceral highs, to which the artist links the politics of Black joy and the historical exclusion of African-Americans from amusement parks in areas of the USA.

Organic life will be a key departure point for many of the artists in the show. Inspired by her observations of natural forms, **Ruth Asawa's** wire sculptures made in the 1950s and 1960s nest spherical forms inside hourglass shapes, suspended from the gallery ceiling to enable

their subtle motion. Made from silk, **DRIFT**'s kinetic *Shylights* mimic the folding and unfolding of flowers that close at night, whilst **Marguerite Humeau**'s multimedia sculptures echo the gills of mushrooms and honeycomb-like structures to conjure scenarios of organic metamorphosis and adaptation.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a richly illustrated, hardback catalogue that explores the artists and their work in detail. The book will include essays by Hayward Gallery Director **Ralph Rugoff** and art historian **Natalie Rudd** which expand on the key themes of the show, citing the artists' work within the context of postminimalism, and exploring formal and material innovation in sculpture across the past half century. Texts on each artist by a range of writers will accompany a broad-ranging selection of images.

When Forms Come Alive: Sixty Years of Restless Sculpture is curated by Ralph Rugoff with Assistant Curator Katie Guggenheim and Curatorial Assistant Anusha Mistry.

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS

Image Credits (from left to right, top to bottom)

1. Installation view, *Ruth Asawa*, David Zwirner Gallery, New York, NY. September 13- October 21, 2017. Photo © Laurence Cuneo. Artwork © 2023 Ruth Asawa Lanier Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Courtesy David Zwirner.
2. Lynda Benglis, *Power Tower*, 2019. White tombasil bronze 228.6 x 179.4 x 172.2 cm © Lynda Benglis. Courtesy the artist, Pace Gallery and Thomas Dane Gallery. Photo: Davin Lavikka/Pace Gallery.
3. Matthew Ronay. *Brontes, Strops, and Arges*, 2023. Basswood, dye, primer, plastic, steel. 28.25 x 19.5 x 7.25" / 71.8 x 49.5 x 18.4cm © Matthew Ronay. Courtesy the artist and Casey Kaplan, New York. Photo: Matthew Ronay.
4. Holly Hendry, *Homeostasis*, 2014. Galvanised steel ducting, meranti wood, cushions, fan, air. Installed at Courtyard C, Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (2014). Copyright Holly Hendry. Courtesy the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London and New York.
5. Teresa Solar Abboud. *Tunnel Boring Machine*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Travesía Cuatro. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Long-term loan of Fundación Museo Reina Sofía, 2022 (Donation of TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary)). Photo by Fernando Sendra.
6. EJ Hill. *A Subsequent Offering*, 2017. Courtesy the artist.
7. Franz West. *Epiphany on Chairs*, 2011. Photo: Michaela Obermair/Atelier Franz West © Archive Franz West, © Estate Franz West
8. Tara Donovan, *Untitled (Mylar)*, 2011/2018. Mylar and hot glue. Dimensions Variable. Installation view, MCA Denver. Photo: Christopher Burke. Courtesy the artist and Pace Gallery.
9. Jean-Luc Moulène. *Méduse (Paris, 2018)*, 2018. Courtesy the artist and Galerie Greta Meert.

Exhibition Listing Information:

When Forms Come Alive: Sixty Years of Restless Sculpture

7 February - 6 May 2024

Hayward Gallery, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX

Full price standard: £18

Concessions available & Southbank Centre Members go free

The Hayward Gallery opening times:

Wed – Fri, 10am – 6pm

Sat, 10am – 8pm

Sun, 10am – 6pm

Further information:

www.southbankcentre.co.uk

Twitter: [@haywardgallery](https://twitter.com/haywardgallery)

Instagram: [@hayward.gallery](https://www.instagram.com/hayward.gallery)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/haywardgallery/

About the Hayward Gallery

The Hayward Gallery, part of the Southbank Centre, has a long history of presenting work by the world's most adventurous and innovative artists including major solo shows by both emerging and established artists and dynamic group exhibitions. They include those by Bridget Riley, Bruce Nauman, Anish Kapoor, Lee Bul, Andreas Gursky, Tracey Emin, Jeremy Deller, Kader Attia and Matthew Barney, as well as influential group exhibitions such as *Africa Remix*, *Light Show*, *Psycho Buildings* and *Space Shifters*. Opened by Queen Elizabeth II in July 1968, the gallery is one of the few remaining buildings of its style. The Brutalist building was designed by a group of young architects, including Dennis Crompton, Warren Chalk and Ron Herron and is named after Sir Isaac Hayward, a former leader of the London County Council.

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to six Resident Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra). www.southbankcentre.co.uk

For all press enquiries please contact:

Laura Gosney, Press Manager (Visual Arts), laura.gosney@southbankcentre.co.uk

Megan Edwards, Press Officer (Visual Arts), megan.edwards@southbankcentre.co.uk



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**SOUTHBANK
CENTRE**
