





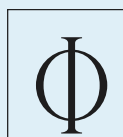




# SARAH LUCAS

AU NATUREL

EDITED BY MASSIMILIANO GIONI AND MARGOT NORTON



**NEW  
MUSEUM**

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# DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

LISA PHILLIPS, *TOBY DEVAN LEWIS DIRECTOR*



*Concrete Boots 98–99, 1999*  
Cast concrete  
7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 11 in (19.4 x 13 x 27.9 cm)

OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS, Sarah Lucas has created a distinctive and provocative body of work that subverts traditional notions of gender, sexuality, and identity. Lucas transforms found objects and everyday materials into absurd and confrontational tableaux that boldly challenge societal norms. The human body and anthropomorphic forms recur throughout her works, often appearing erotic, humorous, or fragmented. Initially associated with a group known as the Young British Artists (YBAs), who began exhibiting together in London in the late 1980s, Lucas has now become a recognized figure in British contemporary art and culture. Her work has been the subject of major exhibitions across the UK and Europe, yet she has never had a survey exhibition in the United States. “Sarah Lucas: Au Naturel” brings together nearly two hundred works in photography, sculpture, and installation, spanning her career thus far, to reveal the breadth and ingenuity of her practice.

The exhibition presents some of Lucas’s most important projects, including her early sculptures from the 1990s, which substitute domestic furniture for human body parts, and enlarged spreads from tabloid newspapers, which reflect objectified representations of the female body. Alongside the photographic self-portraits that Lucas has produced throughout her career, the exhibition features biomorphic sculptures such as her stuffed-stockings *Bunnies* and *NUDS*, the *Penetralia* series, and selections from her striking installations at the Freud Museum in London (2000) and the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2015). These works, which complicate inscribed codes of gender, sexual, and social normativity, have never before been brought together in a single exhibition. Drawing on art historical references, cultural stereotypes, and British tabloid culture, Lucas’s works take a demonstrative stance against puritanism, conformism, and misogyny with distinct irreverence and wit.

I would like to thank the curators of the exhibition, Massimiliano Gioni, *Edlis Neeson Artistic Director*, and Margot Norton, Curator, for their effort to capture the range of Lucas’s vision. Francesca Altamura, Curatorial Assistant, worked closely with the curators, providing invaluable assistance throughout the planning and execution of this project. This exhibition is the result of the combined efforts of the entire New Museum staff. In particular, I would like to thank Karen Wong, Deputy Director; Dennis Szakacs, Chief Operating Officer; and their teams for all of their support in making this exhibition possible. I am grateful to Ian Sullivan, Director of Exhibitions Management, and his team—Patrick Foran, Chief Preparator; Kevin Kelly, Audio Visual Preparator; Christine Navin, Assistant Preparator; Melisa Santiago, Registrar; and Maria Lostumbo, Assistant Registrar—who were instrumental in the planning and installation of this exhibition. Curatorial interns McClain Groff, Anna Hugo, and Anais Reyes provided significant assistance to the project at various stages of its development.

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We are extremely grateful for the tremendous support of Lucas’s galleries. In particular, I would like to thank Sadie Coles, Pauline Daly, Heather Ward, James Cahill, Claudia Fruianu, and Paul Harte at Sadie Coles HQ, and Barbara Gladstone, Miciah Hussey, and Lauren Smith at Gladstone Gallery, for their support throughout the planning of the exhibition. “Sarah Lucas: Au Naturel” would not have been possible without the cooperation of generous lenders, including the following collectors, museums, and foundations: Shane Akeroyd; Boros Collection, Berlin; Bruno Brunnet and Nicole Hackert, Berlin; Ben Clapp, courtesy Adam Gahlin, London; D.Daskalopoulos Collection; Pauline Daly; Gerald Fox; Frank Gallipoli; Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn; Jack and Sandra Guthman, Chicago; Heithoff Family Collection; Gary Hume; ISelf Collection; KUKO Collection, Belgium; La Colección Jumex, Mexico; Margaret and Daniel S. Loeb; Moore Collection; James Moores; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Yana and Stephen Peel, London; Alexander V. Petalas; Elizabeth Peyton; Marc Quinn; Shaun Caley Regen, Los Angeles; Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn and Nicolas Rohatyn; Kenny Schachter; Rosana and Jacques Séguin, London; Adam Sender; Paul and Anna Stolper; Tate, London; Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection, Vienna; Izak and Freda Uziyel; Zabłudowicz Collection; and numerous private collections.

We are very pleased that the exhibition will travel to the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. I would like to thank our colleagues Ann Philbin, Director; Connie Butler, Chief Curator; and Anne Ellegood, Senior Curator, for hosting the exhibition.

This publication is part of a series of major exhibition catalogues copublished with Phaidon Press, and I would like to thank Keith Fox, CEO; Deborah Aaronson, Vice President, Group Publisher; Bridget McCarthy, Assistant Editor; and Simon Hunegs, Editorial Assistant, for their partnership in producing this book. I would also like to thank Joseph Logan and Katy Nelson of Joseph Logan Design for their vision for the publication. Further, I would like to thank Thea Ballard and Dana Kopel, Editors at the New Museum, for carefully editing and overseeing the catalogue. I would also like to express my gratitude to catalogue contributors Whitney Chadwick, Anne Ellegood, Angus Fairhurst, Massimiliano Gioni, Quinn Latimer, Sarah Lucas, Maggie Nelson, Linda Nochlin, Margot Norton, and Anne M. Wagner for offering insights into both the development of Lucas’s oeuvre and the many facets of her practice.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank Sarah Lucas for the phenomenal work she has produced over the past three decades, powerfully addressing themes of sex, gender, death, and religion as they continue to influence contemporary life.

# NO EXCUSES

MAGGIE NELSON

I FIRST SAW SARAH LUCAS'S WORK IN THE 1999 exhibition "Sensation" at the Brooklyn Museum. I was twenty-six years old. Damien Hirst and Chris Ofili were making the headlines in coverage of the Giuliani-targeted survey of Young British Artists, but it was Lucas's work that hit and lodged. I didn't need or want to hear interpretations of *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab* (1992). I got it, or at least I felt I got it, which was enough. It was a wink, a portal, a stab of recognition from across the pond. "I live with remarks like that all my life," Lucas said about *Two Fried Eggs*. "And I think, 'Well yeah, I can make that same kind of remark just like you can, and I make it look fucking good into the bargain.'" Note that she isn't tossing the language back to say—or solely to say—"What a gross phrase, which offends and degrades me." She's saying, "You think you're foul? I'll give you foul, plus a funny, multivalent, good-looking piece of art to boot." Most of my peers and idols at the time—from Tribe 8 to DANCENOISE to Lydia Lunch to Annie Sprinkle to Bikini Kill to Free Kitten and more—were doing something similar. And while I didn't know then about Lucas's shop with Tracey Emin, where they sold their "I'm so fucky," "She's kebab," and "Complete arsehole" T-shirts, ostentatiously making art and partying with kin and strangers until the shop's closing in 1993, I recognize it now as part of an international network of punk, DIY, woman-artist-run spaces fueled by experiment, brazenness, pleasure, and humor—the likes of which we needed then, and frankly could use more of now.

I'm starting with "Sensation" not to rehash the tiresome narrative that dogs nearly every journalistic account of Lucas, which consists mostly of variations on the theme of "Brashest angriest baddest drunkest most in-your-face girl of the YBAs goes on to have many-decade career of totally amazing, probing art—who would have thought?" I'm doing so mostly to note that, to many of us, this narrative sounds like the same willfully ignorant and constricted tune that typically greets female artists with as much raw power and capacity as Lucas has. For her part, Lucas has admirably parried this narrative for years, with sage, patient responses: "I don't know if the work is as 'fuck off' as other people seem to take it";<sup>2</sup> "I always think it's a bit funny, when you see all the shocking things in the world, endless women getting tortured and murdered. You think: why the hell would anyone be shocked by a cigarette in somebody's bum?";<sup>3</sup>

etc. In one of my favorite moments, she turns the tables on a male interviewer who has characterized her work as "pessimistic": "Let me ask you something," she says. "Could it be that my sculptures make you feel so pessimistic because you're a man? Do you feel them to be directed at you personally? What kind of man would you say you are?"<sup>4</sup> When the interviewer says he thinks of himself more as a person than as a man (sigh) and asks Lucas what kind of woman she thinks she is, she offers: "I'm a kindly, maternal even—although I don't have children of my own—middle-aged woman; still quite childlike, with a brutal edge that pops out sometimes, often in the form of a rather masculine sense of humor. I'm optimistic by nature and can generally find something worthwhile in pretty grim situations—or, at least, brighten them up."<sup>5</sup> Would that we all could summon as much lucid self-insight, or have Lucas's capacity for brightening the grim (the uncompromising, allover yellow of her exhibition "I SCREAM DADDIO" for the British Pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale leaps immediately to mind).

All of which is to say: I so value this New Museum retrospective, as it sidesteps the narrative of the mellowing of an angry, feral soul—that "calming down" many inexplicably wish on our most crackling messengers—and instead allows us the time and space to look at the expanse of what Lucas has been doing from the start: making objects that "look fucking good" out of a shape-shifting devotion to questions of anatomy, presence, ambivalence, rudeness, and humor. It's a story of objects, and also of ways of being together—with objects, with each other.

Lucas has long been curious about the alchemical properties of reclamation and *détournement*, especially in regard to gender. "I quite like insinuating myself into blokieness, definitely," she says. "That's why I would say something spurious, like 'I'm a better bloke than most blokes.' But it adds so much to the work I do that I'm a woman doing it. And that fascinates me, why it should be so much more powerful because I'm gender-bending, in a way. But it is."<sup>6</sup> It is, indeed—but as her word "fascinates" suggests, this "gender-bending" exceeds any singular interpretation. It has no fixed tone. It opens up questions, piece by piece. Anatomies detach and reattach to points of origin ("He was the tit," she says of her milkman father); she rotates shapes kaleidoscopically, reflecting the multiple impulses

in her curiosity: "Reasons to make a penis: appropriation, because I don't have one; voodoo economics; totemism; they're a convenient size for the lap; fetishism; compact power; Dad; why make the whole bloke?; gents; gnomey; because you don't see them on display very much; for religious reasons having to do with the spark."<sup>7</sup>

No one has really figured out the workings of reclamation/*détournement*/appropriation, because there is nothing once and for all to figure out. There is a kind of churning, a field of play, and Lucas is all over it, splattering it with questions: "Is smoking masculine? It used to be, but then so did the vote. Is a cigarette masculine? It stands for, in for, something. A nipple? A penis? Is a cigar a way of saying, I have a big dick? Or is it saying, my mother's nipple is bigger than your mother's nipple?"<sup>8</sup> Like William Pope.L, who since 2000 has been distributing flyers reading "THIS IS A PAINTING OF MARTIN LUTHER KING'S PENIS FROM INSIDE MY FATHER'S VAGINA," Lucas is expert at getting us to "look at [the] body in a way we're not used to" (Pope.L's stated aim re: King's body).<sup>9</sup> Also like Pope.L, Lucas is an idea person. But her fidelity to shape and material trumps intellectual dogma, including feminist creed. This orientation allows her, among other things, an unbridled formal exploration of dicks: "As it turns out, a dick with two balls is a really convenient object. You can make it and it's already whole. It can already stand up and do all those things that you'd expect any sculpture to do. In that way it's really handy. I mean I could start thinking about making vulvas but then I'd have to start thinking about where the edges are going to be."<sup>10</sup> Fair enough. (She gets around to this structural problem with her *Muses*, in which legs become the anchor, the vulva or asshole punctuated by a cigarette.)

In 2017, these *Muses* were exhibited in San Francisco in a show at the Legion of Honor called "Good Muse," installed alongside (and sometimes on top of) Auguste Rodin's sculptures. Her work blazed like hot oil through the galleries, demonstrating how forceful and disruptive her gestures can be when placed into conversation with art history. And yet one of my favorite aspects of her work is its palpable disinterest in art qua art. When an interviewer asked Lucas about the first piece of art that really mattered to her, Lucas answered, "I'm not making art about art. I didn't buy a ticket."<sup>11</sup> (Can I get that on a T-shirt?) Relatedly, Lucas has long spurned traditional studio practice in favor of the mess of mold-making on the kitchen table. "The kitchen is the ideal spot for making stuff, and brewing up—ideas, a working philosophy, genius in being ready," writes her boyfriend, Julian Simmons. "Fuck mausoleums and their nine-to-five earnestness, Sarah never had one."<sup>12</sup> I love this weirding of the domestic, this philosophy in the bedroom, but with lots of eggs.

It's a truism that all art (or all good art) somehow transforms the ordinary. But not all art (not even all good art) makes ordinary things feel magic. I don't know exactly what Lucas means when she says she makes dicks in part "for religious reasons having to do with the spark,"<sup>13</sup> but I do know that she is uniquely attuned to that spark. It's not something one can really describe or explain, nor is it



Sarah Lucas and Tracey Emin in front of The Shop, 103 Bethnal Green Road, London, 1993

something shared by all sculptors. (Joseph Cornell, who famously disliked anything that did not grant him access to a force he called “the spark,” or “the lift” or “the zest,” had it too, in spades.)<sup>14</sup> It’s a capacity to work with fairly plain materials until they shimmer into something uncanny and precise, akin to a summoning fetish. “Well that’s it really,” Lucas says when asked how she knows a piece is finished. “It jumps to life. Becomes more than the sum of its parts. Has a character. Is something seen for the first time.”<sup>15</sup> A retrospective allows us to watch Lucas hunt for this zest, this “something seen for the first time,” over a number of years, across a number of mediums: chairs, mattresses, toilets, photographs, resin, rubber, nylons, wax, cigarettes, plaster, concrete, bronze, eggs, and more.

Of aging, Lucas has said: “When you are younger, everything has potential—people you might meet, the world, things that will be in your life. What does start to weigh, as you get older, is a lack of potential. Potential is diminishing all the time.”<sup>16</sup> When I was younger, I would have rejected such a pronouncement as wrong and sad. I would have felt sorry for all those blinkered adults who saw winnowing potential everywhere. Now I think Lucas is describing a pretty straightforward neurological and emotional challenge that typically attends the condition of having lived on the planet for over four decades. But just because potential may be diminishing, you don’t quit looking for it. The hunt deepens, complicates, sends one to roam. I watch a little video online of Lucas buying eggs at a farmers’ market—she needs one hundred, no, two hundred—and I can see her, feel her, hunting.

She’s also desiring. She wants those eggs, she wants that yellow. She wants to throw the eggs, to watch others throw them, she wants to watch them drip. In a little essay called “Classic Pervery,” Lucas differentiates something she calls “the ordinary perve” from “the classic perve.” The former goes in for “pornography of the hardcore or tabloid type, or celebrity, or gratuitous violence”; the latter “is more likely to be rubbing his hands down his jumper, enjoying the soft nap of the wool and at the same time considering putting the kettle on for tea to go with his orange syrup cake.”<sup>17</sup> Needless to say, Lucas is a “classic perve.” “Why else,” she writes, “would an artist spend six months, or years, carving, from life, and scaled up to rather large proportions, a plum that looks like a bum? Why would someone knit or crochet the neck only of a roll-neck jumper and call it a ‘Hot Neck’? Or make a rag doll in a long, old-fashioned, ladies’ dress concealing hairy armpits and a nob and bollocks, and call it Danger Man.”<sup>18</sup> Why else, indeed?

These days we are surrounded by, sometimes drowning in, discourse about “consent.” Given the pathetic state of affairs we continue to suffer under patriarchy, this makes sense. But the conversation leaves vast plains of pervery and desire totally untouched. Political philosopher Wendy Brown explains: “If, in rape law, men are seen to *do* sex while women *consent* to it, if the measure of rape is not whether a woman sought or desired sex but whether she acceded to it or refused it when it was pressed upon her, then consent operates both as a sign of subordination and a means of its legitimation. Consent is thus

a response to power—it adds or withdraws legitimacy—but it is not a mode of enacting or sharing in power.”<sup>19</sup>

One thing is for certain: Lucas’s work enacts and shares in power. “Power. The word keeps coming up,” Olivia Laing wrote in a 2015 profile. “Lucas is aware that she possesses it herself, both as an artist and as a person.”<sup>20</sup> Perhaps this is what Lucas means when she says she believes in “beyond feminism.” Not that feminism didn’t or doesn’t have to do with power. But it’s easy to slip into presuming that power is only out there, something to be wielded against you, something on the horizon to struggle dourly toward. How to be alive—and even more alive—to the power we already have? How to make good pervy use of it, how to not let it turn against you, how to stay on its pulse? As I write this, Lucas’s 2005 sculpture *Liberty* floats into my mind: a plaster arm in Rosie the Riveter formation, a cigarette wedged between index and middle finger, sticking straight up. Juvenile and toxic power mix with an aura of genuine strength, all held together under a title that flickers between irony and sincerity, depending on the light.

Considering Lucas’s recent work with Simmons (*NOB* [2008–13], *Penetration* [2008–10]), and her relationships with other male collaborators and friends (Angus Fairhurst, Franz West, and Olivier Garbay come to mind, along with the “old blokes down at the pub” she quasi-jokingly cites as “[her] main influence”), I’m reminded of Carolee Schneemann, another artist known for her generative, pleasurable enmeshments with men, not to mention for using their genitals to make art. Describing the heterosexual relations she and her peers forged in the 1960s, Schneemann writes, “We were young women taking tremendous freedoms, maintaining self-definition and an erotic confidence in choosing partners spontaneously in the firm expectation of great times to be won together.”<sup>21</sup> Doubtless this was—is—easier said than done. But after hearing so many young women in these #MeToo days recount stories of contemptible sex, zeroed desire, and feelings of powerlessness, it seems especially critical to make space for not just the expectation, but also the lived reality of what Schneemann here describes. Lucas lives it, too. Whether she’s shoveling mud in the Suffolk countryside, smiling at Simmons while wiping herself on a toilet in Mexico with one of her nylon sculptures draped around her neck, or directing a group of women to throw one thousand eggs at a gallery wall in Berlin, she sure seems like she’s having a great time (and making it look fucking good into the bargain).

No doubt this time is marbled with loss, grimness, hangovers, and “brutal edges.” (Who can easily forget the chill of a piece like 1996’s *Is Suicide Genetic?*, in which those words appear in brown graffiti on a scuzzy toilet bowl, as if a last cry for help as their author circles the drain?) But it’s also visibly rich with wit, fearlessness, labor, and laughter (not to mention wet with plaster, yolk, mud, and butter). “I don’t want to be scared of anything,” Lucas has said. “I hate excuses. Loathe excuses. I don’t want to make them, I don’t want to listen to them, I don’t want to live one.”<sup>22</sup> I don’t need a T-shirt for that. I’m going to remember it for the rest of my life.

## NOTES

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4. “Sarah Lucas: au jour le jour,” interview by Massimiliano Gioni, *Art Press* 321 (March 2006): 35.
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6. Martin Gayford, “Would You Adam and Eve It?,” *Telegraph Magazine*, February 28, 2004, 39.
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16. Sarah Lucas, “Situation,” interview by Sadie Coles, *POP Magazine* 24 (Spring/Summer 2013).
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20. Olivia Laing, “How to Be Both,” *T Magazine*, March 29, 2015, 124.
21. Kate Haug, “An Interview with Carolee Schneemann,” in *Experimental Cinema: The Film Reader*, ed. Wheeler Winston Dixon and Gwendolyn Audrey Foster (New York: Routledge, 2002), 185.
22. Gayford, “Would You Adam and Eve It?,” 39.



“Good Muse,” 2017  
Exhibition view: Legion of Honor, Fine Arts  
Museums of San Francisco



# IT'S RAINING STONES

## SARAH LUCAS IN CONVERSATION WITH MASSIMILIANO GIONI

MASSIMILIANO GIONI: *When did you decide that you wanted to be an artist?*

SARAH LUCAS: I don't know. I didn't have any idea about being an artist or about what contemporary art was until I went to college. Obviously I knew a bit about art before that, but I liked art like kids like art. I didn't have any idea about wanting to be the kind of artist that I am now.

MG: *How did you decide to study art, then?*

SL: I left school when I was sixteen: I wanted to get out as soon as possible. I actually went to college when I was twenty-one, to do a foundation course. I was looking for something to do with my life that could be interesting. I didn't want a boring life, so I did give that some thought. And I had worked with somebody who had been to art college and said I might like it. So I started taking some evening art classes. I wasn't necessarily thinking I'd have a career in art, I just thought it would be interesting.

MG: *Your work has often been interpreted as a commentary about class, particularly within British culture. Do you think that had to do with the way you came to art?*

SL: When I left school, I hadn't thought about life after school, I just wanted to find a way out of there. The moment you're out and you start looking through the classified ads, you realize, for the first time, the drudgery of it all, and the limited options you have forced yourself into. I wanted to do everything I could to get away from that life.

MG: *So you came to art as a means of escape.*

SL: Yes, but not right at the beginning. First, I was just taking evening classes to get myself into college. From there I applied to Goldsmiths. At that time I was starting to think, well, I quite liked this and was doing all right, but it was still weird because I couldn't understand what anybody was talking about. There were so many different types of people at college, a lot of them from a different social class than mine. Everybody else had come straight from school, and I had quit school. All the other students looked like they knew what they were doing, but they probably knew less than me because they were just going from one thing to the next, while I was trying

to find my own way. That experience taught me to question myself and others. It was only at Goldsmiths that I was suddenly exposed to contemporary art and became quite serious about it.

MG: *What did your work look like at that point?*

SL: When I was in the foundation course, it wasn't a fine art course: it was more about design, craft, and printmaking. During the summer break between the course and Goldsmiths, I thought I needed to make something that was really art, or something like it, and I started making this map of London from memory. I started on a bit of paper, and it got bigger, and then I realized things weren't in the right place, so I'd tear a bit off and stick it on somewhere else, and the map just grew and grew. It wasn't the whole of London, but it was everything I knew about London at that time. That was the first thing I did that made me think: "This is something." I thought art needed to be good almost independently of me. It needed to be not about me being good at something, but rather about being a thing in itself. The map achieved that, and I took it along to Goldsmiths.

MG: *Before Goldsmiths, were there people you were close to with whom you spoke about art?*

SL: Not really. Not in a way that had anything to do with art history. Perhaps in a general, romantic way as applied to pop music and poetry with a few of my teenage friends. I always had to work and had a lot of part-time jobs. Around that time, I started being a squatter, looking for somewhere to live that was cheap. At the time, in the area of Elephant and Castle, there was quite a big squatters' movement, because there was a lot of run-down property there. I got very involved with that scene: people were forming bands, making their own entertainment, and agitating the council for better housing. It was a whole different world, very communal and very committed. We were working together to fix things and to protest or influence the council. Every aspect of one's life was engaged in this attitude, from politics to music to just everyday life.

MG: *Do you find that this approach had a direct influence on the work you ended up making as an artist? It sounds very much like a do-it-yourself approach—part bricoleur and part punk.*

SL: It's difficult to know what is reflected or not in the work, but the idea of being collaborative and open to other people stayed with me, and that kind of idealistic or utopian tension is still there. The desire to establish equal relations between people, and perhaps even between things, persists in my work.

MG: *Do you think the abrasive quality of your work—the sense of anger that I see in some of your early works, like the cement boots or the shoes with the razor blades—came out of that conflictual relationship between political and social work and mainstream culture? Was art a tool of confrontation for you?*

SL: It's a tricky thing, and I don't know how angry I was, but I've certainly gotten that reputation. In those days, I had no money whatsoever: I had to go everywhere either by foot or by bicycle. I was walking across half of London sometimes. I'd go to a party and have to walk back on my own, and London was a much scarier place at that time. Just to walk around in some areas you had to be a bit tough. I think it was a practicality as much as anything else, because you have to protect yourself.

MG: *Would you say that it was at Goldsmiths that you realized you were going to be an artist?*

SL: I don't think so, actually. I had already been out of Goldsmiths for a year when the "Freeze" show happened in 1988. Being at Goldsmiths was kind of brilliant because it had no syllabus and hardly any academic requirements. If you wanted to speak to a tutor, you made an appointment with them to have a chat, but it was very informal. I wasn't the person that went in for the most teaching in the world, but there were good teachers—notably, for me, Richard Wentworth and Michael Craig-Martin. Many others. It was a good mix. Goldsmiths was also very social and I got to know people who had left the school three years before, and people who had come up behind me. It was like a proper organism, and, in that way, it mirrors what real life is like or what the real art world is like. After the "Freeze" show, I remember thinking, "Oh, I'm just going to stop doing this," mainly because I got so fed up with investing in a load of materials—bricks or blue shiny plastic, or whatever it might be—and filling up my whole room with it, and nobody being interested in it. I thought, "I'm just cluttering myself up here," and I hate clutter.

After "Freeze," when galleries were sniffing around various friends of mine, I started to realize that, OK, this could happen, but I wouldn't say I was sure it was going to happen to me.

MG: *What did you show in "Freeze"?*

SL: The show kept evolving: there were different iterations of it. In the first show, I had some abstract aluminum sculptures that were somehow crushed up. For the second iteration, I showed some brick walls that looked like they were hanging on the wall: they looked like brick-wall paintings, made of actual bricks but still quite abstract.

MG: *When was your first solo show after that?*

SL: It must have been 1991. Between "Freeze" and the first solo show I had pretty much stopped making work. It was just too expensive

and all that stuff was filling up the house: what makes sense while you are in school doesn't make sense once you are out of school. I found myself just doing much smaller things and using newspapers and bits of photography as material, not big cumbersome things, but things that actually interested me. That's how I began to bring more social content into the work.

MG: *It's interesting that you speak about social content, because to me your work is also very much about spending time alone: it's about what people do in their free time. Some of your small sculptures feel like you are just fidgeting with things, and others look like the kind of work that amateurs and hobbyists do. I loved the exhibition of prison art that you curated a few years ago in London, because it highlighted the fact that your sculpture is something that is done to pass time, or perhaps to give value to a time that would otherwise be wasted or perceived as valueless. It's unemployment time.*

SL: Yes, exactly. When we left college, there was this great big dash among the students to get studios. I used to think, "Why do you want a studio if you don't even know what you're going to do yet?" Fortunately, I never cared so much about having a studio, and still don't. After school, I was going out with Gary Hume and I just had a corner in his studio. I can work anywhere.

MG: *In some other works of yours there is a sense of idleness, perhaps drinking beer or just sitting around, maybe a bit depressed, smoking a cigarette or sitting on a toilet, staring at the wall. Some of these works also could be read as a parody of a certain idea of Britishness: all that time wasted at the pub . . .*

SL: I don't know if I have ever set out to parody Britishness, it's just something you can't really take out of me, I suppose. I am quite typical in some ways, although I'm probably not that typical of British women; I'm more typical of British blokes.

MG: *I also find that your work has immortalized a way of life that in the meantime has disappeared. I remember looking at your work at the same time as I was watching Ken Loach's movies, like Riff-Raff (1991) and Raining Stones (1993), and retrospectively it seems to me that both your work and his came to chronicle the disappearance of the working class, instead of its emancipation.*

SL: That might be true, but I didn't do that on purpose. Early on, there was a point when I realized that maybe I'm just old-fashioned and can relate to those disappearing worlds. It's also quite difficult to be objective about those kinds of things. You're caught up in it, and you don't really see yourself: you're just carried away by events. To a certain extent, we are all just the product of the time we live in. You could also say that about being part of a generation, which is something that often comes up when discussing art in the 1990s in London.

MG: *Between "Freeze" and your first show, with its legendary title "Penis Nailed to a Board" (1992), where else did you show?*

SL: I had actually stopped being bothered about being in other shows. But around 1990, I realized I had a bunch of stuff that I liked, and it coincided with some luck, because I was invited by the gallery City Racing to do a show there, and that's how "Penis Nailed to a Board" came

about. Then Michael Landy was supposed to do a show at Karsten Schubert, and he couldn't finish his work in time, so instead he invited a bunch of friends to make a group show, and I was one of those. Then another friend of mine was supposed to be doing something in an old shop on Kingly Street and she couldn't because something had happened in her family, so with two weeks' notice I got to have that show. Everything happened at once. One thing rolled into another, and I had some works that were finished earlier and some things that I just knocked up, and that turned out to be my breaking moment, when people realized I was up to something, whatever that was.

MG: *Where did you show Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab (1992)?*

SL: That was on Kingly Street, in a shop. There used to be this organization called Alternative Art, which helped artists to use spaces that were empty in the West End. This was one of those shops, and I was invited to do something in it. In the front of the shop I put the table with the kebab and fried eggs and there was also the pan for frying eggs. Then there was a room in the back with *The Old Couple* (1991), which is the piece with two chairs and the teeth and the penis. And that was it, which I thought was brilliant. I made both of those pieces quite quickly right before the show. I didn't have a lot of time to mess about. It amused me to think that people would come in to see the table with the kebab. I think it's quite nice to show just one thing, just like that.

MG: *What kind of audience came to see the Kebab piece?*

SL: A lot of people just stumbled on it by seeing the table from the window. The three shows—the one at Karsten Schubert, “Penis Nailed to a Board,” and “The Whole Joke,” which featured *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab*—overlapped, so a few people in the art world saw all three. I remember Lawrence Luhring came to see *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab*, and he was very encouraging. Charles Saatchi bought it, which was weird. My jaw just dropped. I had no expectations. I also met a lot of people during that time who became my good friends for the rest of my life.

MG: *Can you tell me more about “Penis Nailed to a Board”? What did the show include?*

SL: It included the big posters: *Monster Hooker* (1991), *Great Dates* (1992), the ones with the newspapers. There was a piece with a bicycle upside down that was turned into a kind of plinth on which were six or seven photographs of a naked bloke with fruit and veg covering and replicating his genitals. And then there was *Soup* (1989), the picture with the knobs, and the board game *Penis Nailed to a Board* (1991). It was simple, but it felt like I was finding my own voice.

MG: *The whole show must have felt rough and aggressive, with the large tabloid collages. Those pieces are usually read in relation to certain exploitative stereotypes of femininity. But to me, a piece like the bicycle sculpture connects to the tradition of Arte Povera, and before that to the Surrealist fascination with everyday objects and domestic spaces, not to mention Duchamp and his wheel. Were any of these references playing an active role in your work at the time?*

SL: You have to be careful when it comes to influences. All those ideas might have been there, but they become more interesting when you project them onto the sculpture after it has been made. Personally, I wasn't concerned about influences or other people's work: I was more concerned about making something that, however weird, was something I could stand for. It was more about me than about anybody else's work. Then again, you can't take those references out of it, but it's not like I placed them in there. I think I'm actually quite myopic when working. Maybe those ideas say something more interesting about the viewer than about me.

The funny thing about the large tabloid collages is that I hated all that tabloid stuff. It was only when I started making artworks out of them that I started enjoying them. When I first moved to my house in London, I used to get a million pizza leaflets through the door every day. It used to drive me nuts; it used to make me furious. And then one day I just stuck them all to the front door, and after that, I started liking them.

MG: *That's always the dilemma with works that engage popular culture: Is the work critical or complicit, even celebratory?*

SL: Those works are pretty critical, but they aren't as simple as saying I like or dislike that material. Anytime you use something, no matter how disgusting, there has to be some pleasure in it, if only because you transform it and you do something with it, rather than just being passively assaulted by it. But at the same time, I remember that with the tabloid stuff, the funny thing was seeing other people's reactions to it, because each viewer brings her own prejudices to the works. It's about turning things around, really, and the realization that looking at art is a self-conscious business.

MG: *Did you feel there was any difference in the reaction to these works, particularly with the tabloids, depending on who the viewer was?*

SL: I don't think I make things for a specific type of public. I like to be as broad as possible. I'm not anti-intellectual or anything; I just think things can operate on different levels. I want to make works that anybody can relate to, not only the people from the art world, but also the ordinary man or woman on the street, from the particular class I came from.

MG: *And what happened when your own work ended up in the tabloids? I'm sure there were plenty of occasions in which your work was attacked in the press: it's another British tradition.*

SL: The weird thing about the tabloid press is that it exists in its own reality: it just follows itself and feeds itself. It's like a novel with its own characters.

MG: *So you were never really devoured by the tabloids? Not even at the time of “Sensation”?*

SL: Well, you know, just the usual twenty years of remarks about my vulgarity, and a bit of joking and one-liners about my work, not too bad. They've probably got bigger fish to fry.

MG: *Would you say your work was also about the culture of celebrity that was emerging in the 1990s, of which tabloids were an early expression? The defamation of character, the paparazzi, the cannibalism of public figures . . .*

SL: All that was very much in the air, but when I look back on it now, I think that at the time I was quite keen to be different. It used to get on my tits, thinking that I was part of the same scene as everybody else. I was trying to find my voice, not to make work about other art around me.

MG: *Speaking of finding your own voice and being yourself, did you feel the production quality of your work was different from that of your colleagues? In your work there was always a sense of urgency, of basicness and baseness, while others were getting slicker.*

SL: Early on, yes, I think I wanted to keep things simple, rough-and-ready, almost a kind of antistyle, but that also changed very quickly. I like the idea of not having a style and just keeping things together with ideas and an attitude. I felt that it was a very radical thing. But then all this grunge stuff happened, and I was just seen as a part of that, and I didn't want to be assimilated that quickly. I am really not grungy at all. I might be very homemade, and I like making things, and I might be using quite cheap materials, but I am always quite precise, and think of myself as a formalist even.

MG: *Maybe the confusion arises because of the way you play with craft and bricolage, with things that people do to pass time.*

SL: More than anything, I think my early work was related to a certain idea of alternative culture. I left home at sixteen, started squatting, and all the stuff that came with that approach. Even my first shows were in alternative spaces. For me, it wasn't even a strategic choice: it just needed to be that way; I needed to be prepared to be alternative out of necessity, because if I was going to wait about until I could afford a bloody washing machine in a flat, then it was going to be a lot of years. It wasn't possible for me to just become some regular blue-chip artist, and I wasn't even interested in it. I wanted to carry on doing these things, on the ground, with my peers, in alternative ways.

MG: *Do you think The Shop, the project you started with Tracey Emin in 1993, was another type of alternative space?*

SL: Yes, The Shop came out of that attitude.

MG: *The Shop was a kind of open studio and an alternative space, but also operated like a real shop, where people could buy artworks and strange souvenirs. It ran for six months in a rented storefront in the East End. Did you have any model in mind when you started? Any connection with other artists' shops or restaurants or other alternative spaces?*

SL: No. It was just that I was sitting in an Indian restaurant in Brick Lane one day with Tracey, and I had just moved out of the studio with Gary, because I didn't really use it and things had gotten a bit tricky with us, and I thought, “Well, I'll just work at home, then.” But my home at the time was quite small. And as soon as I made that decision, I thought, “I'm going to get bored knocking about here on my own.” I

was talking to Tracey at lunch about maybe getting a studio together, and one of us came up with the idea to get a shop. It was probably her, as she's very canny about business. We went around looking at what was empty and got a shop for six months. We started with absolutely nothing, with no particular idea. There were other things going on at the time: artists running galleries, using empty shops or big warehouses. . . . In the same year that we had The Shop, there was “A Fête Worse Than Death,” which was a kind of street party, with art. The Shop wasn't really premeditated: we just did it.

MG: *Who came to The Shop?*

SL: People just came in off the street. Of course there were friends, people from the art world, but also just people walking by. Everything was affordable, some things were really cheap. On Saturday nights we used to stay open all night, and Brick Lane was one of the few all-night places then. It was interesting because we started with nothing whatsoever, and nobody knew we were doing it. And in the space of six months, people were coming by. Max Hetzler, I still remember, came by at three in the morning. So it just took off, I suppose.

MG: *The entire art system was changing in London around that time. The magazine Frieze had just started and new galleries had opened. It's around that time that you showed at White Cube and at Anthony d'Offay.*

SL: When I did the show at d'Offay, it was really with Sadie Coles, who was working there.

MG: *And that's when you showed the self-portraits?*

SL: I had showed some but in a different configuration, as a kind of sculpture, in a group show in a warehouse, so that must have been 1989 or 1990.

MG: *How did the portraits come about?*

SL: In a sense, they are not self-portraits, because it's not me taking the picture: they were all shot by someone else, but again, it's a way of doing things collaboratively or communally, another form of alternative creativity. A lot of art requires input from others, whether you label them assistants or friends. People don't like to hear that, particularly now, when we are living in a super egocentric time. Instead, my self-portraits are very much about relationships, about being with someone else, and being looked at by or playing with someone else. They are me, but being me is always about being with others. Art takes a lot of people. A life takes a lot of people.

MG: *One always assumes that a self-portrait is somewhat confessional and private. And yours are also so emotional that it's hard to think of them as staged or fictional. It's an interesting contradiction.*

SL: I don't think there is any fiction involved in them. And the fact that someone else might have been behind the camera doesn't mean that I was acting. It's more complicated than that, and more simple at the same time. The photos always happened when I was around people with whom I was intimately involved. The early pictures were

very off-the-cuff, but these things really only happen when you are with other people, not when you are alone. Or maybe it's simply that we become alive only in front of other people, that we are ourselves only in relation to others. In fact, I stopped doing them because I felt the risk of just churning them out, or having to overly stage them.

MG: *The photography of Claude Cabun and Hans Bellmer is an almost direct ascendant of your photography. Were you consciously mining these Surrealist traditions?*

SL: I really don't think that much about art and history. I am just working on my thing. Of course, there are some key moments when something really impresses me. For example, I remember being impressed with Gran Fury at the Venice Biennale around 1990.

MG: *Were you aware of the way in which Martin Kippenberger was also playing with self-portraiture and with images of failure and stereotypes of masculinity around the same time?*

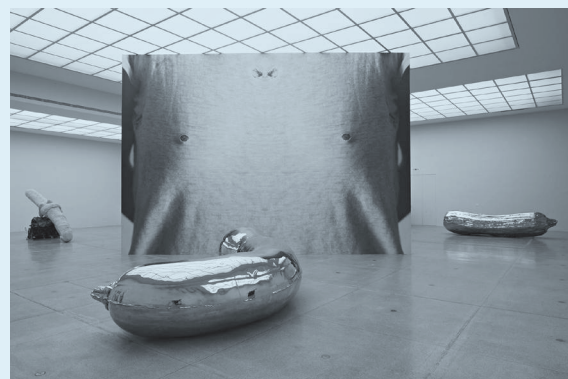
SL: I have always really liked Kippenberger. I like the way he is direct and unapologetic. And I have liked Georg Herold and Albert Oehlen as well, and other German artists from that generation, for the way they combine directness and self-deprecation.

MG: *An issue that your self-portraits raise—along with many other works of yours—is the question of authenticity and sincerity. I think people always assume that your work is very personal.*

SL: People come up with all sorts of fantasies about who I am and what my life must be like. I am habitually honest, but that has nothing to do with my art being confessional or about myself. I think my works, particularly my sculptures, are true to themselves, to materials: that's what really matters. In sculpture, more so than in painting, materials want to do what they want to do. You can't torture them into being something they don't want to be. This principle always stuck with me. At some point I introduced that logic to content as well. I don't want to make it feel like I am imposing a meaning or that I am preaching anything. I like to be true to what the thing is.

MG: *Some might say that your materials are not only modest: they are quite vile, abject, like your toilets.*

SL: Toilets are a very classic example of one of the taboos that we all collude in. They carry a lurid fascination that we're all aware of, but that we don't speak about. And I have always been fascinated with what people write in toilets, the lewd graffiti. I remember that when I was a little girl I asked my father where the rain came from, and he explained that it just goes around and round. The water turns into steam, goes up into clouds, and comes down again. And it's not that different when it comes to the whole plumbing and sewer system: it's actually the same water going around and round again. That's a pretty bizarre notion, isn't it? It's something that always stayed with me. We build all this illusion of hygiene around ourselves, but we are just part of this system, and we don't talk about it: it's a taboo. We are all as clean or unclean as everything else.



Top:

"NOB + Gelatin," 2013  
Exhibition view: Secession, Vienna

Bottom:

"SITUATION FRANZ WEST," 2012  
Exhibition view: Sadie Coles HQ, London

MG: *When it comes to contemporary art, you can't really touch a toilet without bringing up the ghost of Marcel Duchamp.*

SL: Yes, you can't take him out of it, but that's not so bad. I have made other pieces that were more directly related to his work, like *Fig Leaf in the Ointment* (1991). Not that I was necessarily thinking of him when I was casting my armpits for that piece, but I was interested in his erotic objects and his *Female Fig Leaf* (1950) and the way in which, with that sculpture, he made something out of a negative space. In a sense, it's a very macho approach to sculpture, that you take a negative and you make it into something, into a penis.

MG: *The titles of your works often play with language, in ways not too dissimilar from Duchamp.*

SL: I think some of my plays on words come out of graffiti in toilets or from more literary texts. I like language in different forms: it can be dialects or some kind of class accent, or it can be very refined or literal.

MG: *Like your latest portmanteaux and strange neologisms like "I SCREAM DADDIO" or "INNAMEMORABILIAMUMBUM": those titles make me think of the scatological poems of Baroness Elsa, the poet and artist who was a friend of Duchamp and made a sculpture that represented god as a plumbing pipe. Every time I see that piece, I can't help thinking about your work. But enough about art history: I want to ask about how you approach your exhibitions. Many of your shows are conceived as total installations, often staged in unconventional places, such as the Freud Museum in London, the Diego Rivera Museum in Mexico City, the abandoned public baths in Milan, or the Rodin collection at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco.*

SL: I like these types of shows because they connect to the way I was brought up, in the do-it-yourself squatting communities. I have always enjoyed working with other people and creating my own spaces with them. It's more interesting to exhibit in spaces that you can play with, that have a character and a history. Many of these shows were born informally, through relationships with people rather than with institutions. I've always gravitated toward those situations. I feel like I can be myself in them.

MG: *You have described these types of shows as "situations," which immediately connects to Guy Debord and his manifesto Report on the Construction of Situations (1957), which described new forms of art and political participation. It also made me think of the reality TV show Jersey Shore, in which one of the participants is called "The Situation."*

SL: I decided to use the word "situation" to describe a series of shows I did in 2012 and '13 in a space above Sadie Coles's gallery on New Burlington Place. Sadie had rented the space for one year, and she said I could have it for the entire time. Initially we thought we would just have some artwork on rotation, things I'd showed abroad that hadn't been seen in London. But the moment we decided to do it, I fancied doing more with it than just showing existing work, and actually making it into something like a forum. "Situation" seemed the only thing to call it, really. It immediately captured this idea that it was not just an exhibition, but more a type of energy.

MG: *One of your situations was in memory of Franz West, wasn't it?*

SL: Franz was quite a situation type of person. Whenever he was doing a show, he would invite people he liked and other artists to be in it, me included. He liked to let things happen. He always left a bit of room for something unexpected, which is very situationlike. I liked that about him, and I guess he liked that about me. He was a kind of dad, a paternal figure, in a way, but one that connected you with many friends and peers. It was through him that I met the gelatin guys and many other artists.

MG: *Somehow this cult of informality coincided with a phase in which your work was becoming more sculptural. I think that from Penetralia (2008–10) onward, your work has become more self-contained, as though it were confronting the tradition of modern sculpture more directly, on the same ground, so to speak.*

SL: Which is weird and ironic, because at the time *Penetralia* seemed quite slight and explicit in comparison to what I'd been doing before. But, yes, it led to something quite solid, if that's what you mean, a more enclosed form.

MG: *Which also returns in the NUDS (2009–ongoing): in that series, the sculptures appear entangled, literally self-enclosed, as though the form were looking for itself.*

SL: The NUDS are made of very fragile materials, which add to their humanness. Their fragility also prompted me to find a way to make them harder, and that's when I started experimenting with bronze, which connected them to a whole lineage of abstract sculpture. Bronze makes everything a little conventional, which in itself is very unconventional for me.

MG: *Before then, you had mainly used concrete to cast your sculptures.*

SL: Concrete is a bit like toilets or cigarettes. It's a material, a thing, and an image: it comes with a history. Bronze immediately means sculpture. Concrete means many different things. For the shoes and the older boots, I would actually use my own shoes: I had been walking in them for years, so they were also about a personal history.

MG: *You did a lot of casting for your show at the Venice Biennale in 2015.*

SL: But unlike my old concrete boots, the sculptures for Venice were somehow more joyful. I really wanted to do something quite uplifting.

MG: *Maybe that's where a lot of the symbolism came from: I thought there were more direct references to ancient sculpture, with the motif of the fertility figures, the goddess references, and the Sheela na gig poses. Did you feel like you were connecting to a different vocabulary?*

SL: I think that it does go back to *Penetralia*, which was the first show I did after moving to the countryside and leaving London. I was very nervous about that move, but the work reflects a transition from an urban space to a more rural, even geological place. It's as though the sculptures had deeper roots: they are prehistoric.

# CONCRETE DREAMS

ANGUS FAIRHURST

*It's a bit like Escape from Alcatraz: you have to get a nail file if you can get bold of one, saw the bars through. You have to use what you've got, and either it does the job or it doesn't. It is articulating your way out of something.\**

A table anthropomorphized via a T-shirt, two melons, and a vacuum-packed kipper make a crude assault on style. This *Bitch* (1995) is no oil painting. Its means are all there in front of you, below you, and nothing is hidden. To the contrary, what is normally hidden—the unsavory aspect of the usually discreet—is flaunted. There seems to be no saving grace, in conceptual or plastic terms, as *Bitch* propounds instead an exemplary lack of style. It is self-sufficiency according to the means, and no whittling away in the back room: let us see you do it in front of us. Exemplary lack of style means no embarrassment, means not having to say you are sorry. No expurgation of the dirty bits, no fine grooming to put out bowdlerized style, the immorality of distance.

And eat the cake too: this lack of style could still be perfectly composed, so that exemplary means not only making a stand but also being finely tuned. The attention to detail is through an intimate appreciation of the linguistic and plastic elements that are cobbled together. Like the telling details laid out in a joke, nothing is superfluous; exchanges are pared down so that there is almost nothing left, except those objects that lie around apparently innocently and the everyday similes that go through people's heads and come out in nods and winks to acknowledge the unbearable flow of the sexual imperative. It's smutty, it's down the fruit 'n' veg stall, it's a bunch of blokes in the pub, and it knows it's not polite. It dwells on abrupt and brutal reductionism, but in its articulation of bawdiness, there is the enjoyment of the sound of it singing. Don't let the devil have all the best tunes.

Whistling in the dark is the Man with No Name, a troubleshooter with nothing to show but a hell of a lot of attitude, fetched up in a nasty town where loyalties are bought and sold. His morals show up only after a while of dirty dealing. He knows how to handle himself but he proves sensitive to ethics. He is a hybrid creature, crossbred from the Vision of Hell on Earth as a film location for the sensibilities of aspirant filmmakers (aspiring to nobility against the odds).

There is a hybrid creature moving about in Sarah Lucas's work too. This is the fictional artist that, as a vehicle, has become a regular

feature of many artists' schemes over the past twenty years, with antecedents throughout the twentieth century. The particular artist here is as colorfully artificial as Gilbert & George (honesty offered up in a heightened state) but also as abruptly actual as a Robert Gober leg, at times more so. The hybrid creature is the Bitch-Androgyne (Woman with No Name), not afraid of the labels, in fact prepared to make a few of its own, but refuting their determining tendency. Instead, it utilizes their strength and pries them open to become catcher, and harvests their particular rough rhythms to become appreciator.

This creature, for which Lucas supplies her own image to give it a relevant substance, crops up with regularity in the work as a fluctuating ego, which can by inference claim part-authorship of other works that do not contain its image. It first appeared in a group show in early 1992, in six works at the Karsten Schubert gallery in London, which included a photograph of a surly young woman in a leather jacket, glaring sideways at the camera, eating a banana; scabby Dr. Martens boots with toe-cap razor blades; a wax cast giving the finger; and two clay armpit curves complete with hair. On the surface, it was all bitch: tough, uncompromising, unashamedly staking a claim to traditional male territories of bravado, the threat of violence, and the flaunting of the saltier aspects of the body.

The second appearance, almost coinciding with that show, was in Lucas's first solo show, at City Racing in London. The title of the exhibition took those initial implications further and declared her explicit (aesthetic) intent: "Penis Nailed to a Board" (1992). But there were anomalies to the one-track image, anomalies which manifested themselves through formal means. *Penis Nailed to a Board (Boxed Set)* (1991) turned out to be derived from a topical tabloid newspaper article about the imprisonment of a group of consenting male sadomasochists. Any search for clues as to the exact relationship between this highly charged contemporary political issue and the artist (promised by the previous incarnation) was frustrated by the curiously lilting tautology between the headline of the article ("Penis Nailed to a Board in Sex 'Game'") and the transformation of the article into a "board game," complete with a rogues' gallery of wooden "players" made from the images of the arrested men. The real clue to its intentions lay in the fact that the object itself had not been compromised by being rendered obsolete. That is, the relationship between the text and its appropriation into

a physical object had not been lost for the sake of the pedantic completion of an idea. If the "board game" had been actual, if it had had a game structure with rules and instructions on how to play, then the physical state of the object would have been subservient to the concept, and the work would have been a one-liner, a simple one-dimensional pun to make a satirical point directly linked to the original text. As it was, with its door left ajar, the work performed a richer humor, one invoked in the substance of jokes—not the telling of punch lines for comic effect, but the creation of a parallel world that has elements of the one we know rearranged into absurd relationships, with the absurdity then bouncing back to both undermine and enlarge its models at the same time. This parallel world suspends and confuses normal relations and thereby makes all things in it ambiguous, which is the powerful effect of humor (not satire or mockery). As in a joke, *Penis Nailed to a Board (Boxed Set)* means not only what you might expect but also something you could not expect, played out through physical invention.

So, going back to that first appearance, it is not just declaration of intent that is going on, but also initiation of an operational mode, a self-conscious state, not a brutish one, not serious in that sense. *Eating a Banana* (1990) is not a metaphor but knows it looks like one and plays it for laughs as well as straight. It does not fix itself, but can avoid doing so only because it looks so determined. The look, the appearance, is that of the bitch, the female predator and subversive appropriator of maleness, but the real subversive unzipper of stratagems is the androgyne at play, the humorist. (In spring '92, a second solo show, "The Whole Joke," overlapped "Penis Nailed to a Board.") The androgyne half of the hybrid character traveling through the work confounds restrictive definition; simultaneously, androgyny in the physical construction of objects is the transformation of materials. The bold strokes of the headline-grabber and the pitcher of ideas and materials are opened up by the chancer of irregularities and the dreamer.

This transformation and subversion cannot be successfully carried out except from the inside, from an infected quarter, if the appropriation is not to have the cold hand of disaffected study. The creature is imbued with the vitality of the circumstances that contributed to its formation (even though at times antithetical to it), and a sense of the beauty of that vitality is not abandoned. In *Rose Bush* (1993), eight Holsten Pils beer bottles (contents drunk) support the words "rose bush," carved in red cardboard letters and suspended upward on thin wires from the bottle necks. It carries not only the plastic hilarity of the conjuring into improbable lightness of uncompromising materials (just-drunk bottles, foil peeling up around the neck; hastily coiled, dented wire; roughly cut cardboard), but also a poetic joke, sweet romancing words floating from the mouths of the fractious, the language of the hybrid, still loving its roots.

*The best magic comes out of the things that are the most concrete. It's an anomaly—it's there even though you can see what you've got.\**

\*Quotes by Sarah Lucas in conversation with the author, April/June 1995.



This page:  
"Penis Nailed to a Board," 1992  
Exhibition view: City Racing, London

Following page:  
*Laid in Japan* (detail), 1991  
Collage and paint on board  
88 x 56½ in (223.5 x 143.5 cm)



I. PENIS NAILED TO A BOARD

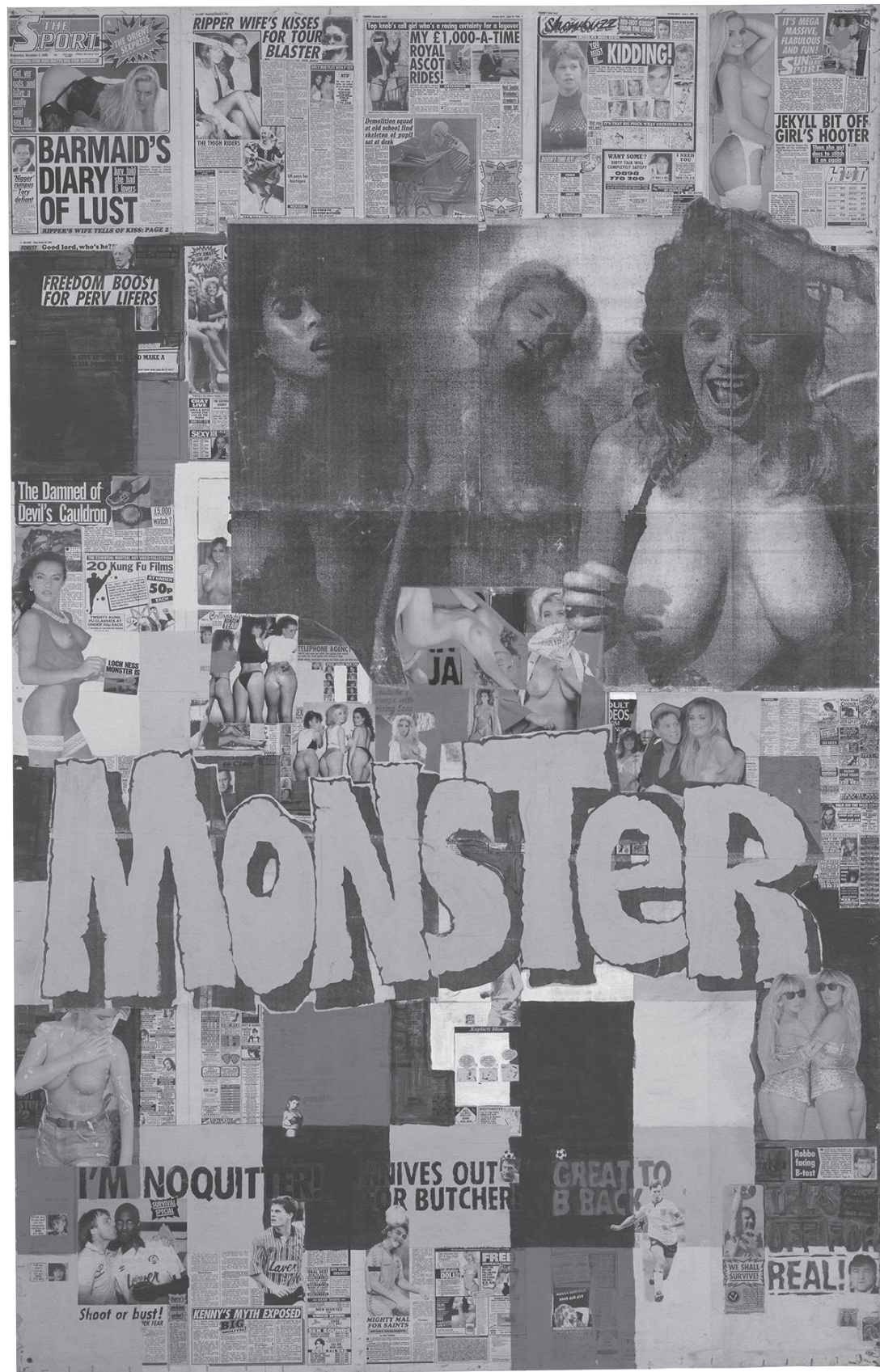
II. COMPLETE ARSEHOLE

III. IS SUICIDE GENETIC?

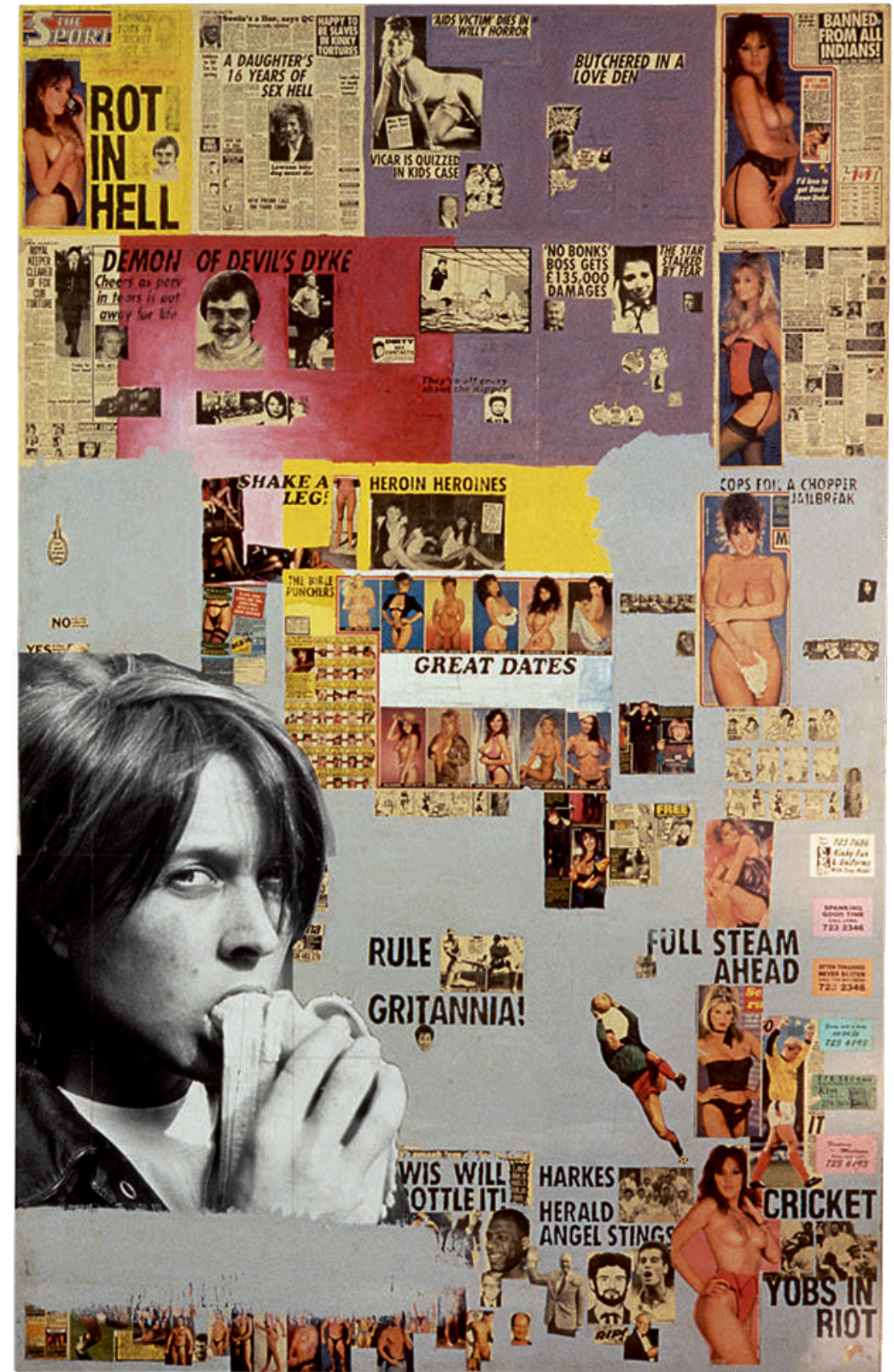
*Penis Nailed to a Board* (1991) was a case in the newspapers. I first saw it in the *Sport*, which is barely a newspaper but, in this instance, they had the story first and it was later taken up by the mainstream press. It involved a number of men who got together for sex, including some sadomasochistic stuff. They were all consenting adults. Unbeknownst to them they were spied on, for several months, by the police. They wound up in court and, as far as I remember, they, or some of them, were prosecuted and sent to jail.

Coincidentally, one of them was called Saxon Lucas. More oddly still, I've managed to lose his picture. I remember him clearly, though. He had a pointy beard and a cigarette on his lip. I was intrigued by the case. While not really wanting to take a stance about what people should make of it, I decided to use it anyway. So I made it into something like a board game, only with no rules of play.

## **PENIS NAILED TO A BOARD**



*Laid in Japan, 1991*  
 Collage and paint on board  
 88 x 56½ in (223.5 x 143.5 cm)



*Great Dates, 1992*  
 Collage and paint on board  
 88 x 56½ in (223.5 x 143.5 cm)

16 SUNSHINE SPORT November 28, 1990

**Madonna's hot swots desperately seeking 'er bottom line**

BY GARY HOODGATES  
ARTY-FARTY models are flocking to sign up for the world's BRAUCHEST university course... Using the aid of SEXY Madonna's honey money success, the SEVEN UP! SPORT has become the most COERCIVE force in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

Madonna's honey money, which she has made available to the sport, has led to a burgeoning of the SEVEN UP! SPORT. The SEVEN UP! SPORT has become the most COERCIVE force in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

By the way, the SEVEN UP! SPORT is a course in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

**Born 'hobby bleats about my weight... now I want someone who loves feelin' folds o' flesh in the sack**

**FAT FORTY AND FLAB-ULOUS**

**FOR SALE**

NO more of those "I'm not fat, I'm just big" excuses. I'm a woman who loves to feel the folds of flesh in the sack. I want someone who can appreciate my curves. If you're looking for a woman who can give you a real good time, look no further than me. I'm a woman who knows what she wants, and I'm not afraid to ask for it. So if you're looking for a woman who can give you a real good time, look no further than me.

FLATTERED  
By the way, the SEVEN UP! SPORT is a course in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

**Phone freaks wanna work Julia's neck**

By the way, the SEVEN UP! SPORT is a course in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

**WAGON ROLLERS**

By the way, the SEVEN UP! SPORT is a course in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

**SEX LINES**

By the way, the SEVEN UP! SPORT is a course in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

**HORRIBLE HOBBSY BOG**

By the way, the SEVEN UP! SPORT is a course in the history of the UK. They aim to seduce the young and ambitious, and get them into the sport.

**FREE**

**SUNSHINE SPORT**  
always tackles **BIG** issues

17 SUNSHINE SPORT November 28, 1990

Fat, Forty and Flabulous, 1990  
Photocopy on paper  
85<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 124<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in (218 x 315.6 cm)

18 SUNSHINE SPORT November 28, 1990

**More fizz, more fun, more frills, more firsts as your frisky Sport grows again**

Britain's favourite newspaper goes **DAILY SPORT**

**SEVEN UP! You can have it every day**

**BEAT BIG RUSH—ORDER NOW**

**YES! I WANT TO GET IT EVERY DAY ON OCT. 7**

**DEAR NEWSAGENT**  
Please order a copy of The Daily Sport on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Also SUNDAY SPORT every week.

**Thanks folks for our BIG success**

**Genuine Adult Contacts**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 362 063

**RAW EXPLICIT ACTION**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 362 063

**HOT AND HORNY**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 362 063

**FEMALE DIRECTORY**  
ALL NEW GIRLS  
0998 234 659

**ESCORT SEX CONTACTS**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 886 413

**ESCORT SEX CONTACTS**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 886 409

**MICHELLE**  
**VIOA**  
**SHARON**  
**LELA**  
**KATHRYN**

**HEIDI**

18 SUNSHINE SPORT November 28, 1990

**Sex snap tube boob ad-ache...**

**SOD YOU GIT... MEN GO WILD FOR MY BODY**

**FREE SCAN SEX TALK**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 362 063

**MIDGET**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 362 063

**JUST SEX**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 362 063

**MIGHTY**  
SEX CONTACTS IN ONE HOUR!  
0998 362 063

**FREE**

**SUNSHINE SPORT**  
always tackles **BIG** issues

**FLUCKY PINK-SIZED HOUSEWIFE BATTLES AGAINST CRUEL SHEEPHARK WHO CALLS HER A PENGUIN...**

Top:  
Seven Up, 1991  
Photocopy on paper  
85<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 124 in (218 x 315 cm)

Bottom:  
Sod You Gits, 1990  
Photocopy on paper  
85<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 124 in (218 x 315 cm)





Soup, 1989  
C-print and photo-collage on MDF  
60 x 48 in (152.5 x 121.9 cm)



Penis Nailed to a Board (Early Version), 1991  
Collage on board  
16 x 13 1/4 x 4 in (40.5 x 33.5 x 10 cm)



*Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab*, 1992  
Table, fried eggs, kebab, and photo  
59½ x 35¼ x 40⅛ in (151 x 89.5 x 102 cm)



*Big Fat Anarchic Spider*, 1993  
Tights and newspaper  
41 $\frac{3}{4}$  in d (106 cm d)



*Mantlepiece*, 1990  
C-print on card, in five parts  
8 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 5 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (21 x 14.8 cm) each

*The Old Couple*, 1991  
Two chairs, wax, and false teeth  
34¼ x 15¾ x 15¾ in (87 x 40 x 40 cm)





*Receptacle of Lurid Things*, 1991  
Wax  
4 x 3/4 x 3/4 in (10 x 2 x 2 cm)



Left:  
*Steely Dan*, 1993  
Wire  
9 x 5 x 3 in (22.9 x 12.7 x 7.6 cm)



Right:  
*Things*, 1992  
Wire and matches  
18 1/2 x 7 x 7 in (47 x 17.8 x 17.8 cm)



*Fig Leaf in the Ointment*, 1991  
Wax and hair  
4 x 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 4 in (10 x 12 x 10 cm)



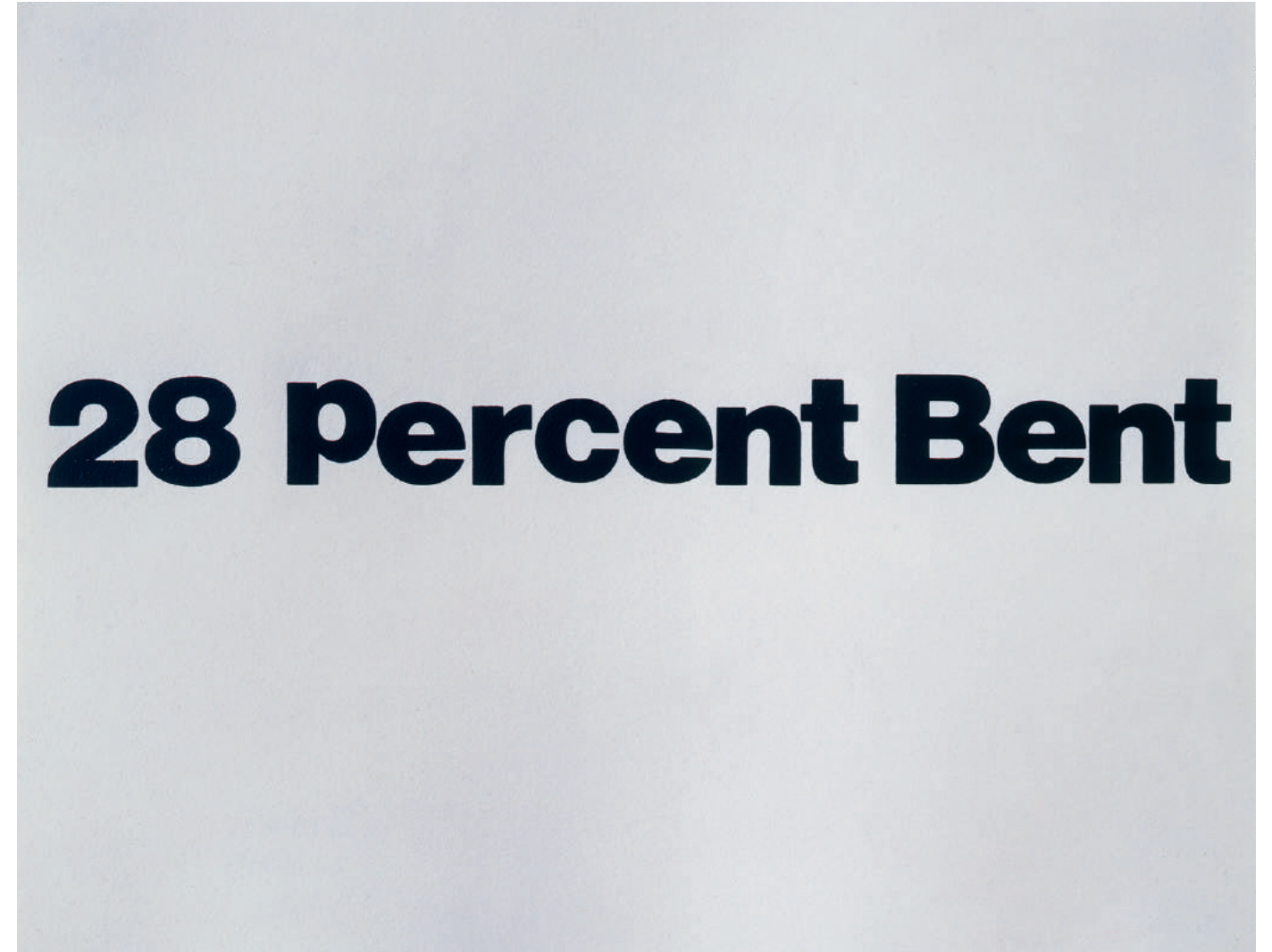
This page:  
*Octopus*, 1993  
Tights, newspaper, and hair on band  
29<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 18<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 9 in (76 x 46 x 23 cm)

Following spread:  
*Au Naturel*, 1994  
Mattress, melons, oranges, cucumber, and bucket  
33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 66<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 57 in (84 x 168.8 x 144.8 cm)





*The Law*, 1997  
Cast concrete  
14 x 18 x 12½ in (35.6 x 45.7 x 31.8 cm)



*28 Percent Bent*, 1991  
Letraset on paper  
7½ x 9 in (18 x 22.7 cm)





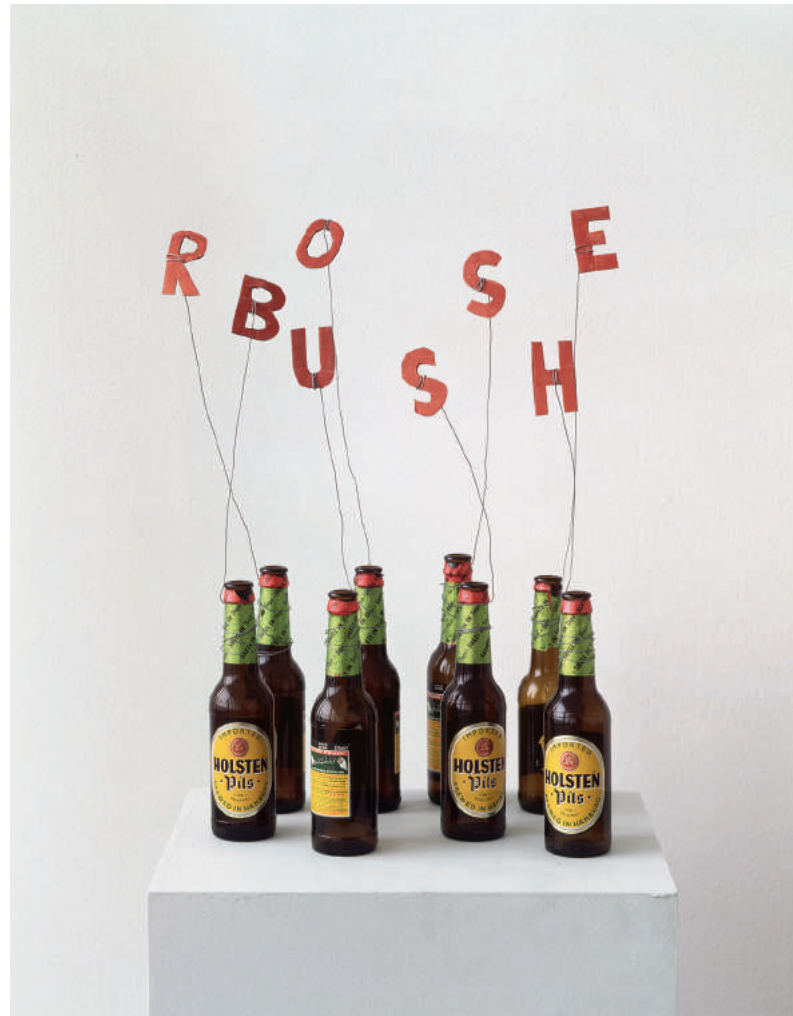


Top:  
*Cock and Spare Balls*, 1993  
 Papier-mâché collage  
 Penis: 7 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 3 x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (18 x 7.5 x 7 cm)  
 Balls: 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 2 in (7 x 7 x 5 cm)

Bottom:  
*1-123-123-12-12*, 1991  
 Boots with razor blades  
 6 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 4 x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (17 x 10.2 x 27.5 cm) each



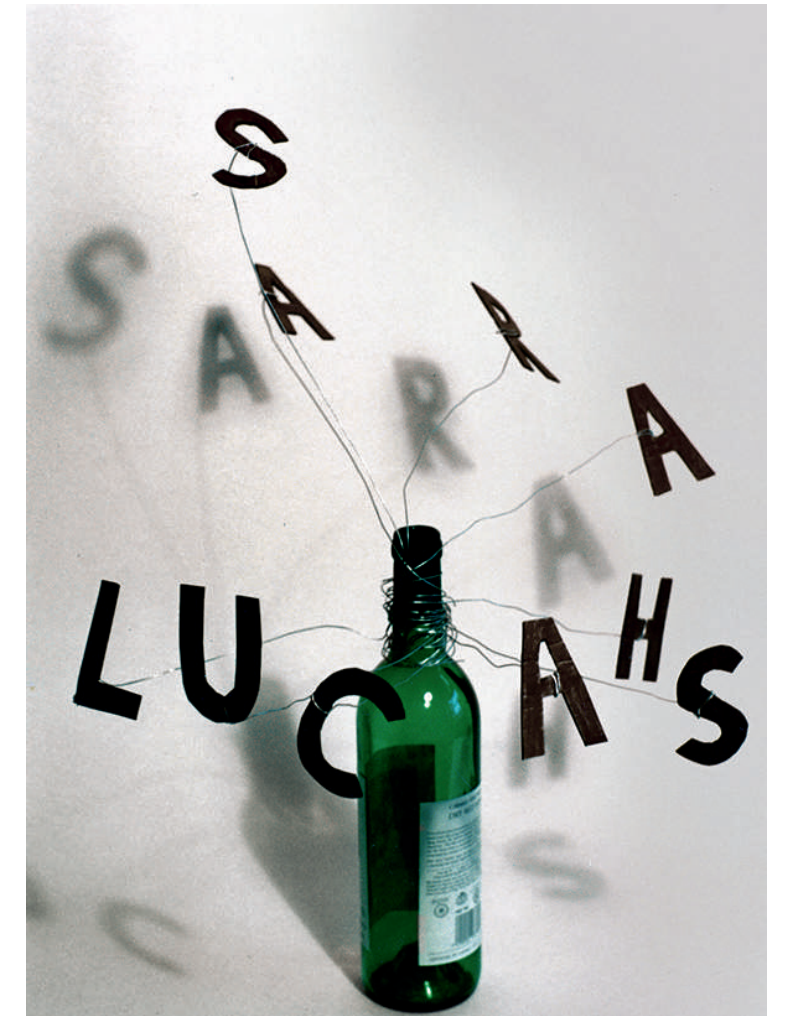
*Mussolini Morning*, 1991  
 Photographs, wire, and vase  
 28 x 45 x 22 in (71.1 x 114.3 x 55.9 cm)



*Rose Bush*, 1993  
Beer bottles, wire, and cardboard  
21 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 15 x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (55 x 38 x 32 cm)



Left:  
*Me, Me, Me*, 1992  
Can, wire, and photographs  
approx. 9 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 9 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (24 x 24 cm)



Right:  
*Sarah Lucas*, 1993  
Wine bottle, wire, and cardboard  
23 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (60 x 40 x 25 cm)

*Eating a Banana* (1990) was the first “self-portrait.” I was doing a lot of photographic work at the time, but I’m not the person behind the camera in any of the shots featuring me. In the case of *Banana*, it was Gary Hume, who I was living as well as sharing a studio with. In general, it has been whoever I was living/working with at the time. It was a random thing. I just happened to be eating a banana and thought it might be good. Ostensibly I was beavering away at something else—I don’t remember what, so it probably turned out less good than the picture.

It’s happened time and time again that some random spur-of-the-moment idea or juxtaposition has proved more fruitful than laborious projects I may have been working on—although it has to be said that these spontaneous notions could have been a reaction to, and relief from, the labor or high-mindedness I was engaged in.

Conclusion: earnestness and hard work are to be regarded with suspicion.

**COMPLETE ARSEHOLE**



*Eating a Banana*, 1990  
Black-and-white photograph  
29½ x 32¼ in (74.9 x 81.9 cm)



*Smoking*, 1998  
Black-and-white photograph  
77 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 49 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (196 x 126 cm)



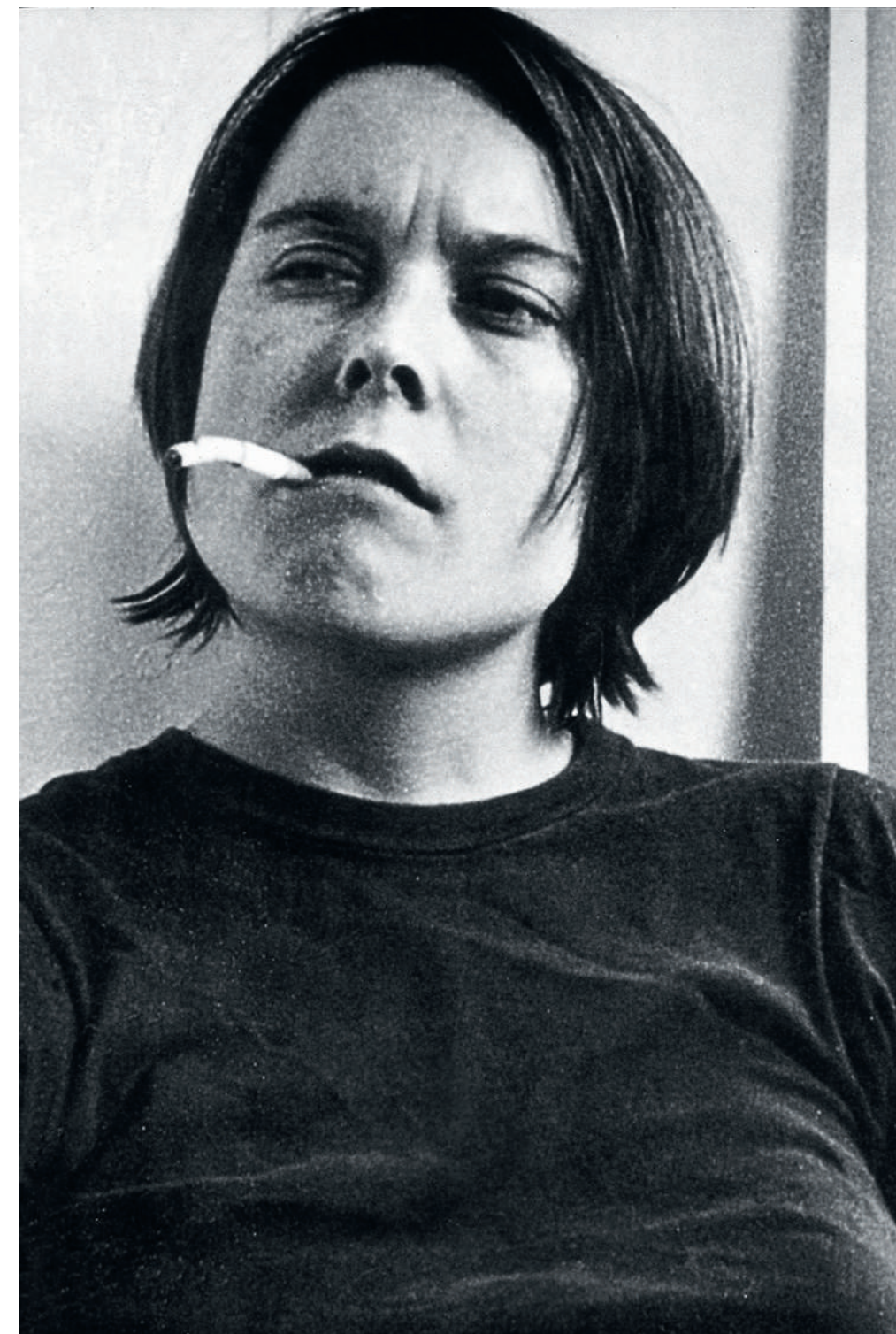
*Prière de Toucher*, 2000  
R-print  
30 x 20 in (76.2 x 50.8 cm)



*Chicken Knickers*, 1997  
C-print  
16<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 16<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in (42.5 x 42.5 cm)



*Laugh?*, 1998  
R-print  
25 x 20 in (63.5 x 50.8 cm)



*Fighting Fire with Fire*, 1996  
Black-and-white photograph  
60 x 48 in (152.4 x 121.9 cm)





*Self-Portrait with Fried Eggs*, 1996  
C-print  
59½ x 40½ in (151 x 103 cm)



*Selfish in Bed II*, 2000  
Digital print  
48 x 48 in (121.9 x 121.9 cm)



This page:  
*Got a Salmon On #3*, 1997  
R-print  
50 x 41<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (127 x 105 cm)

Opposite page:  
*Complete Arsehole*, 1993  
C-print  
36<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 26<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (92.5 x 66.5 cm)

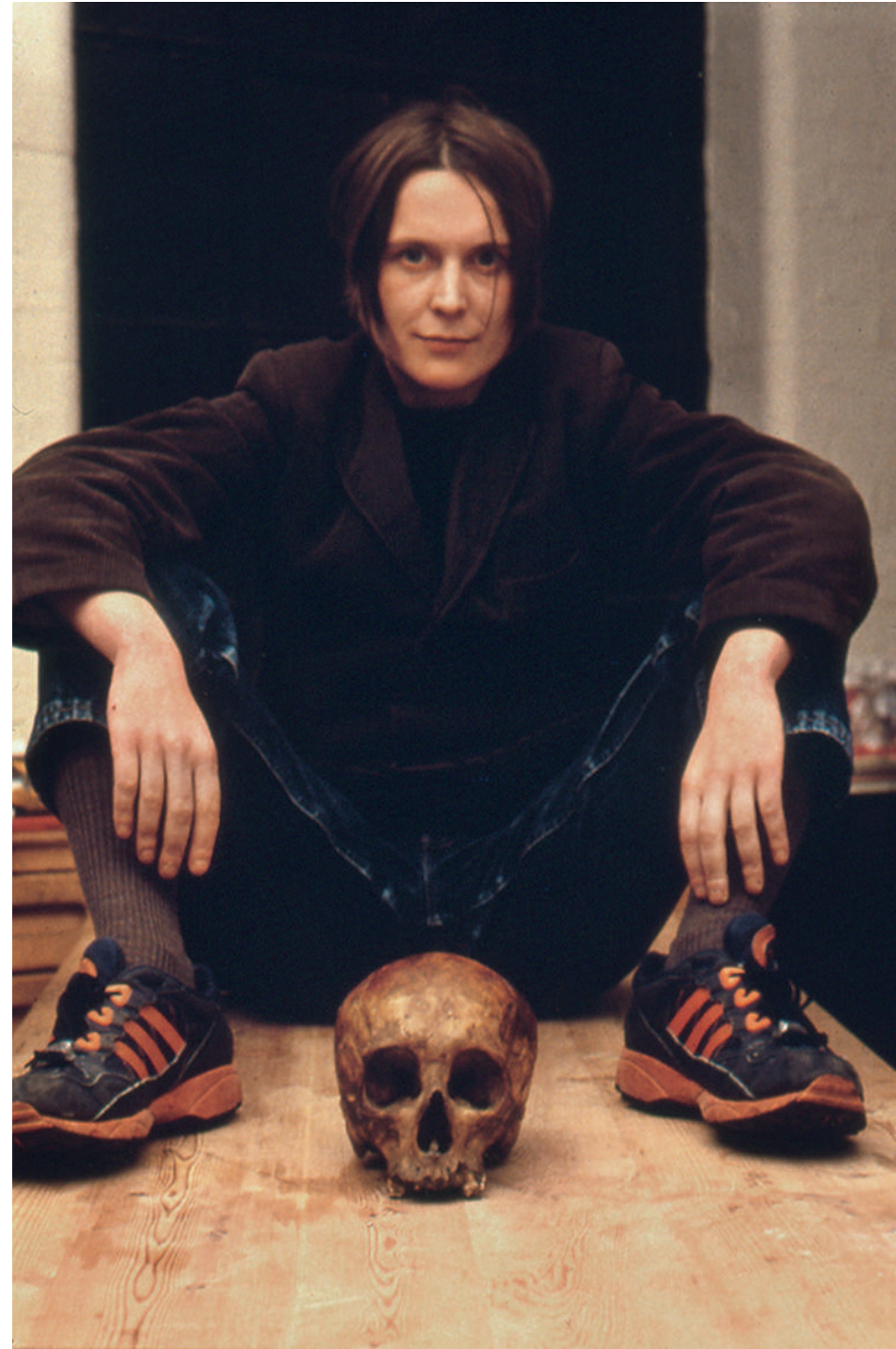




*Self-Portrait with Knickers*, 1994–2000  
C-print  
47¼ x 32½ in (120 x 81.5 cm)



*Got a Salmon on in the Garden*, 2000  
Black-and-white photograph  
69½ x 46¼ in (176.5 x 117.5 cm)



*Self-Portrait with Skull*, 1997  
C-print  
68 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 48 in (174.6 x 121.9 cm)



*Divine*, 1991  
C-print  
22 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 27 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (56.5 x 70.5 cm)



*Red Sky Bha*, 2018  
C-print  
58½ x 44 in (148.6 x 111.8 cm)



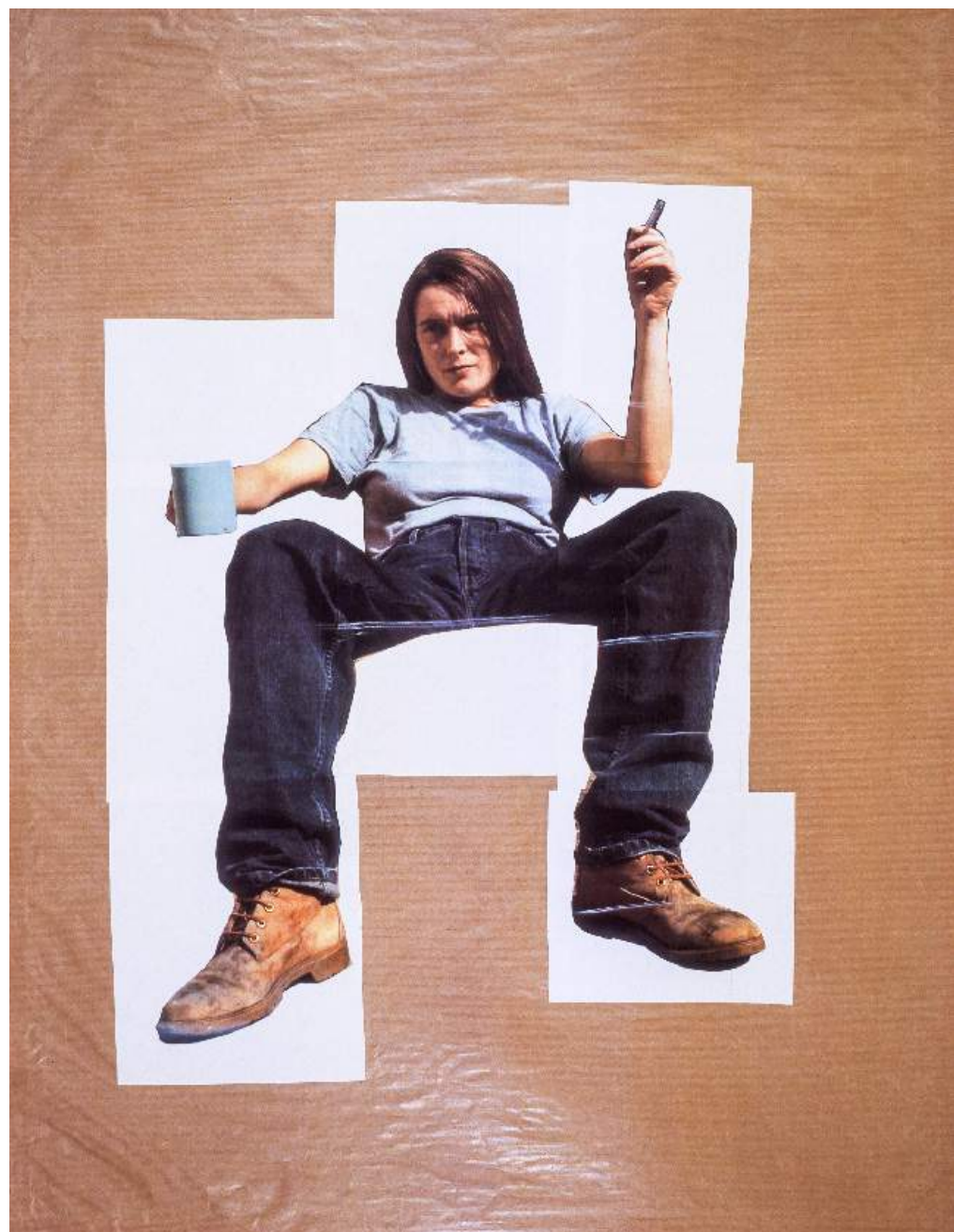
*Red Sky Ha*, 2018  
C-print  
58½ x 44 in (148.6 x 111.8 cm)

I had a dream when I was a girl about sitting on a toilet in the middle a very big, empty room that had windows and a door, all far away from me, out of reach. I never forgot it. The “about to be exposed” feeling. It may have been that, more than the Duchamp urinal, that prompted me to plumb a toilet into the gallery for my exhibition “Is Suicide Genetic?” (Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin, 1996).

Taboos are compelling. How we all collude in them, barely consciously. At that time I was sharing a studio with Angus Fairhurst in Clerkenwell. They were very raucous times. Lots of parties, going on for days sometimes. Lots of walking home through dark, desolate streets in the early hours with a hangover coming on wondering about the meaning of life. I remember thinking, actually banging on about, on the way home one such night: “If this is all there is, this world here. If this is *it*, given infinite possibility, why is it so shabby?” And similarly, if we’re so keen to be alive, to survive, why the self-destructive behavior? Why the smoking, drinking, drugging?

Our studio had a toilet outside at the top of the stairs, one that had been there for donkey’s years. It had seen a lot of action and certainly wasn’t picturesque. Everything was more run-down in those days. And cheap. I was covering a crash helmet with cigarettes, the first cigarette piece I made. At the same time pondering what image I might use for the invitation card. Visiting the loo, it occurred to me to paint “Is Suicide Genetic?” in the toilet bowl with brown paint, which I duly did and photographed for the invite. Later on I un-plumbed the toilet (replacing it with a new one) and put it in an exhibition. Such is the transforming possibility of art.

## IS SUICIDE GENETIC?



*Self-Portrait (#5)*, 1993  
Brown paper and color photocopies  
72 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 64 in (185 x 162.5 cm)



*Self-Portrait (#3)*, 1993  
Brown paper and color photocopies  
105 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 61 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (269 x 157 cm)

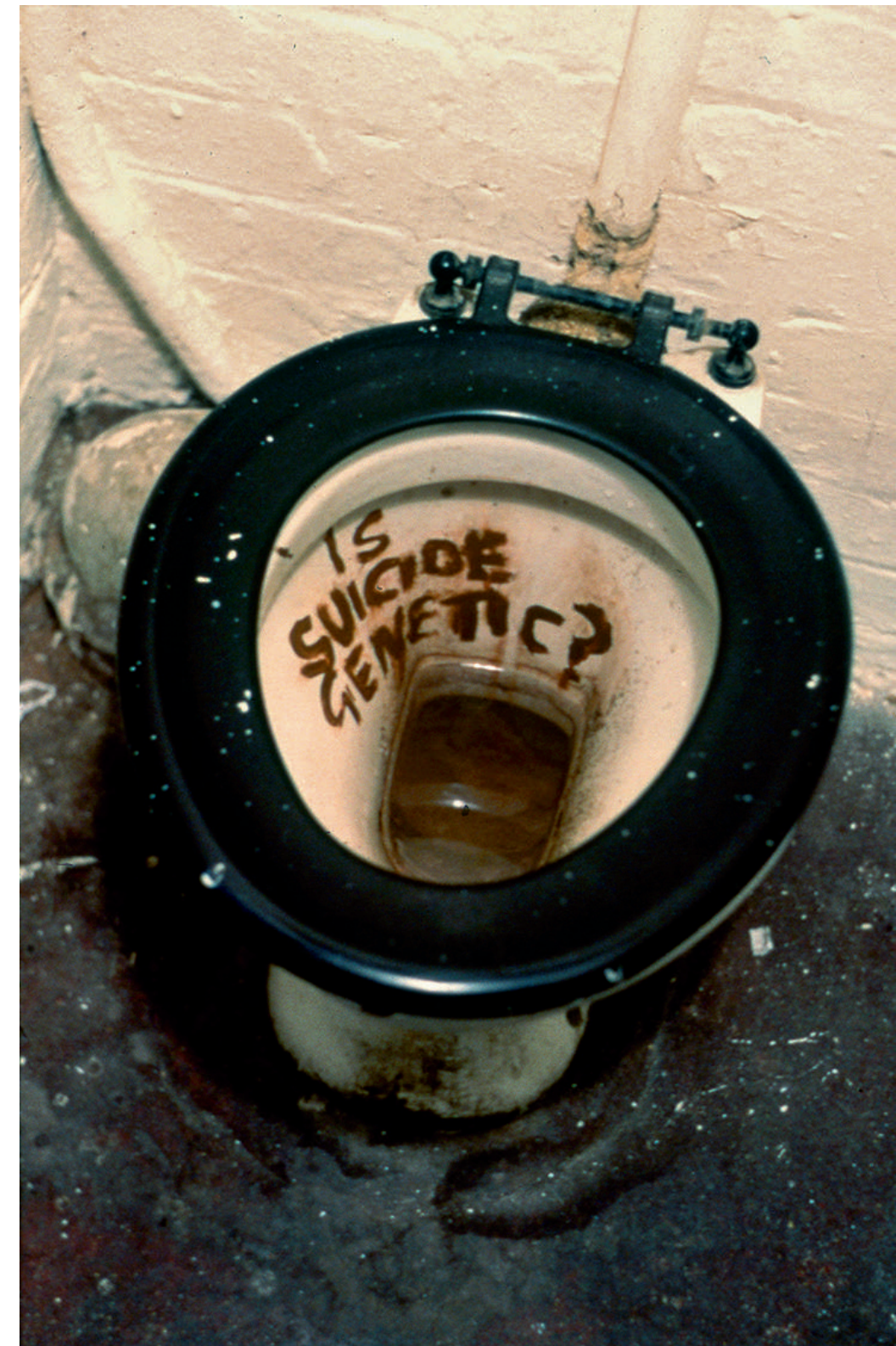


*The Human Toilet II*, 1996  
C-print  
71½ x 48 in (181.6 x 121.9 cm)



*Down Below*, 1997  
Enamel bath and rubber acrylic  
Bath: 21¾ x 23¾ x 65 in (55 x 60.5 x 165 cm)  
Spill: 76 x 70½ in (193 x 179 cm)





*Is Suicide Genetic?*, 1996  
C-print  
21 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 17 $\frac{1}{8}$  in (53.5 x 43.5 cm)



Left:  
*Lionheart (Bone)*, 1999  
Plaster  
2 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (7 x 6.4 x 4.5 cm)



Right:  
*Lionheart (solid gold easy action)*, 1999  
Nine-karat gold (250gm)  
1 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 2 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  in (4 x 6 x 6.5 cm)



*Lionheart*, 1995  
Brass and lead  
1 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  in (4.5 x 7 x 6.5 cm) each





Opposite page:  
*Is Suicide Genetic?*, 1996  
Helmet, cigarettes, burnt chair, and cigarette packets  
39 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 33 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 33 $\frac{1}{2}$  in (100 x 85 x 85 cm)

This page:  
*Nature Abhors a Vacuum*, 1998  
Toilet and cigarettes  
16 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 15 x 20 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (43 x 38 x 53 cm)



Left:  
*Floppy Toilet Twa*, 2017  
 Cast resin and fridge  
 Sculpture: 15 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 14 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 18 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (40 x 36 x 48 cm)  
 Fridge: 33 x 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$  in (84 x 47.5 x 44.5 cm)



Right:  
*Floppy Toilet Dubr*, 2017  
 Cast resin and fridge  
 Sculpture: 18 x 13 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 19 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (46 x 35 x 50 cm)  
 Fridge: 33 x 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$  in (84 x 47.5 x 44.5 cm)



*Inferno*, 2000  
 Toilet, lightbulb, cigar, nuts, and wire  
 17 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 15 in (45 x 52 x 38 cm)



This page:  
*Get Hold of This*, 1994  
Plastic  
14 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 11 $\frac{1}{8}$  in (36 x 40 x 28 cm)



Opposite page:  
The Shop, 103 Bethnal Green Road, London, 1993

# GOD IS DAD

LINDA NOCHLIN

IF GOD IS DAD THEN GOD, AND DAD HIS surrogate, are both dead as doornails. Or are they? This seems to be the provocative question posed by Sarah Lucas's 2005 exhibition at Gladstone Gallery, New York, titled "GOD IS DAD," a blatant but apposite misprision of Nietzsche's inflammatory declaration "God is dead," and one that slides neatly into that Freudian and post-Freudian turf Lucas has been reclaiming for women and the irrepressible classes ever since her memorable installation at the Freud Museum in 2000—and before.

There are two installations on view in the gallery. In the first, an assemblage of bedsprings, cement firebricks, and stockings, the antique springs' repetitive pattern, enlivened by off-beat irregularities and sudden puncturings of the visual order, lies somewhere between Sol LeWitt and Eva Hesse, but its structure is worked out in terms of actual objects rather than abstract forms.

Less attention has been paid to the formal qualities of Lucas's constructions than they deserve, perhaps because they always incorporate recognizable elements, pulling us inevitably toward interpretation rather than formal analysis. Yet both need to be considered together to get at not the meaning, but rather the full impact—the pathos, power, and visual irony—of these uncanny recastings of the most ordinary situations. Here, the empty stockings play against the regular patterning of the bedsprings: abject, certainly, as is the ruined bed. Yet for Lucas, the abject is always embodied as entity, usually as a product, part of commodity culture not generalized as base matter, reduced to the unrecognizable yet evocative *informe*, as it is, say, in Louise Bourgeois's works of the '60s. Lucas's metonymies often take the commodified shape of "container for the thing contained": panty hose for female legs, bra for breasts, car for passengers, or, less usually, metaphorized, as in bucket for cunt or cucumber for prick. Or she can suggest new implications by an unexpected shift of direction. In the bed piece, she perversely changes the orientation of the bedsprings from their normal, passive horizontal position to a more assertive vertical. The raddled bedstead, by virtue of its verticality, assumes a kind of personhood, or, if not that, a definite if exhausted authority, needing to be propped up against the wall but still holding on. (The death of God? We needn't go that far. Dad losing his stuffing? Maybe.) Combining rusty dignity and satisfying

patterning at once, the sheer elegance of the almost-accidental circular design resublimates the junked and discarded bedstead with the contrapuntal music of intricate wire repetitions, interrupted by abrupt insertions of curling white string.

Yet here, as in all Lucas's best work, there is that titillating hint of violence: the stockings forced brutally through the curled wire, the clue in the detective story that makes narrative rise, like a poisonous vapor, from ordinary incongruities. And behind bedstead and stockings, in contrast to the lyrical circular rhythms of the springs, lie the stolid, inert rectangles of the cinder-block wall, constituting another kind of suggestive reality—entrapment, enclosure, the sordid vulnerabilities of class and the housing estate. The imagery here is ultimately propelled by the death drive, calling up Thanatos rather than Eros, reminding us that, if God is Dad, then Dad is Dead and Mum hasn't had too good a time of it, either.

What are the stockings, after all, if not a reminder of feminine vulnerability? Yet they are ambiguous, depending on who is being reminded of what, but certainly they are gender-specific. For women, discarded panty hose are notionally abject objects of identification: we feel for them, or whoever wore them, or for what happened to whoever wore them before they were rejected, thrust into bedsprings or whatever; for men, presumably, they are a sexual trophy, a reminder of past conquests, of female legs possessed, enjoyed, or brutalized—or all three at once.

## *Legs, Stockings, History*

Lucas's hosiery, for the art historian, at any rate, summons up a considerable history of the representation of women's legs as independent bodily fragments, and you don't have to go as far back as the votive offerings—legs, arms, ears, according to the nature of the miraculous cure—of the Catholic Middle Ages to find them. In Manet's oeuvre, legs, fashionably stockinged and shod, are on view as provocative parts of women's bodies, advertisements for further, unseen pleasure, hanging over the balcony in *Masked Ball at the Opera* (1873), or glimpsed as delectable sketchy morsels hidden under the table in letter illustrations. And there is a history of stockings,

too, especially in erotica, like Courbet's *Woman with White Stockings* (1861), where the woman is caught peeling them off and thereby permitting the viewer a tantalizing glimpse of her casually exposed sex, conveniently located at eye level for easier consumption.

It is, however, the empty stocking, the stocking without the leg, that is most suggestive, for—like the empty glove featured in that most intriguing of print cycles, Max Klinger's *A Glove* (1878–81)—women's hosiery assumes an uncanny life and presence on its own, a prime fetish object ripe for representation. In Seurat's *Les Poseuses* (1886–88), a writhing still life of stockings and gloves, presumably freshly peeled from the stately figures of *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884* (1884–86), occupies the foreground of the composition, surely its liveliest point of interest. I am not talking about anything as inert as "influences" or anything as irrelevant as "internationality" here. I am sure, or at least fairly sure, that Lucas never gave a second thought to either Manet, Klinger, or Seurat when she stuck those stockings through the bedsprings. It's just that you can't shake off those resonances, viewer or artist, even if you want to. They cling like Pliofilm to the body fragment or the body container in visual representation, along with their unique, inevitably gendered, individual associations.

Despite such references, in their insistent presence *as* objects—touchable, silky, droopy—Lucas's hosiery rips through the barrier of traditional representation: they are things in themselves, present tense. We could, if we wanted—although we probably don't—rip them free of their "aesthetic" context, put them on and wear them home; just as we could replace Duchamp's urinal in its original location in the lavatory or even pee into it; or, as the artist himself suggested, take Picasso's 1942 *Bull's Head* apart and, restoring it to its origins as bicycle seat and handles, pedal off on it. These maneuvers, I suppose, would be quite literal demonstrations of both use value and exchange value embodied in a single artwork! For besides being, theoretically at any rate, usable, Lucas's stockings are *replaceable*, almost infinitely so; if I chose to make off with the particular pair on view, the artist or gallery assistant could easily replace them with another and it would still be the same piece. Thus the work, for all its formal elegance, must be viewed as conceptual as well as materially unique in its typology.

## *On Freud's Couch*

It was in her brilliant installation in the Freud Museum in 2000 that I first encountered those permutations of a repertory of ordinary, sex-linked objects that constitutes the heart of Sarah Lucas's enterprise: bras, buckets, beds, panty hose. Lucas played out her role as bad-girl rebel here with singular relish and inventiveness, slyly decking out Freud's analytic couch with Kleinian part-objects, but spoofing Melanie Klein, too, in that these were ghosts of part-objects: not the actual breast, object of infantile delight and fury in Klein's canon, but the empty bra; not the actual sex organ, so central to Freud's

theories, but the flaccid panty hose or stretched white briefs; not an actual couch but a suspended futon. As such, they constituted parodies of Freud and his theories, the anti-Oedipal as installation, the snake curled up in the very bosom of Freudianism. Or rather, the commodified skin of the snake. Both the bed, in the form of a suspended red futon mattress pierced by a phallic fluorescent bulb, and the womblike bucket, with the glow of a lightbulb emanating from its depths (the light at the end of the vagina tunnel?), made appearances in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (2000), the pièce de résistance of the Freud Museum installation. Lucas even provided a "Thanatos surrogate" in the form of a cardboard coffin at the base of the piece, literalizing the antagonistic presence of the life and death drives articulated in Freud's eponymous publication from 1920. The bucket as female sex symbol had already, in conjunction with a mattress and a penis surrogate, made its debut six years earlier alongside melon breasts, orange balls, and a cucumber erection in *Au Naturel* (1994). The work reminds us of the involvement of the "natural world" in Lucas's jokey permutations: raw chickens, preferably headless and upside down; bananas; and in one case, a very large dead salmon have all played their role in the construction of the artist's offensive visual puns.

Downstairs in the dining room of Freud's house, *The Pleasure Principle* (2000) showed up as two reconfigured dining-room chairs, one adorned with bikini and bra, the other with underwear vest and briefs, connected with a long, fluorescent lightbulb. I must say I laughed out loud when I saw it, with Papa Freud, godlike in his white beard and frontal pose in a photo above the sideboard, looking down on what he had wrought. Perfect, in its way. And of course, disjointed female legs help set the scene in Freud's study. There, as adjuncts to the meaningful couch, topped by a huge photo of the artist, headless but with a nipple protruding through a well-placed hole in her wrinkled gray T-shirt, are two chairs metamorphosed into the gangly, splayed legs, covered in papier-mâché tights, featuring pop-culture images of eyes and mouths (scopophilia? oral fixation?) of *Hysterical Attack* (1999).

## *Legs and Lucas*

If I have lingered so long over the transgressive but oh-so-apposite interventions at the Freud Museum, it is because, apart from being my first contact with Lucas's work en masse, the project was so important both as summation and source of her figuration. In terms of personal genealogy, the tights-clad legs in Freud's study look back to an omnium-gatherum of the theme in *Bunny Gets Snookered* (1997), and forward to all sorts of future variations, like the abandoned stockings featured in "GOD IS DAD." *Bunny Gets Snookered*, a multfigured installation in Sadie Coles's gallery, had a real snooker (billiards or pool) table in the center, a bevy of splay-legged, stockinged, headless but bent-armed stuffed babes in considerable disarray deployed helter-skelter on office chairs around the floor, an additional

stocking fluttering above their bras. The aftermath of a wild party, say, or a souvenir of more brutal violations; two more colorfully clad *Bunnies* were set right on top of the green baize-covered table, and another group, more realistic, appeared in black-and-white photographs on the wall. Not only Bellmer's dolls but Picasso's surrealist *Large Nude in Red Armchair* of 1929 must be considered as part of the genealogy of these remarkably funny yet deeply depressing figures. Gender difference is at play here, setting these helpless creatures within yet against the "masculine" precincts of the billiard parlor. The pathetic bent-noodle arms, lifted in futile protest, in particular, might be compared with other very different arms in Lucas's oeuvre: the aggressive, overtly realistic ones in *Get Hold of This* (1994) and similar casts that followed, arms making the challenging, macho "up yours" gesture in gritty plaster or hard, shiny plastic (as in the installation of eight of these pieces at Gladstone Gallery in 1995), the very opposite of the helpless, dithering cloth *Bunny* arms.

But lest we accuse Lucas of anything as premeditated as programmatic feminism, in this case or any others, it is illuminating to read excerpts of her own account of the genesis of the *Bunny* figure, as set forth in Matthew Collings's excellent monograph:

The origin of the *Bunnies* is a long story. . . . I made an octopus out of tights stuffed with newspaper. And I really liked it. I thought, "Tights are so sexy, in a way. So I'll do something else with them." I started making a hare and tortoise out of tights but it never worked out. . . . But anyway I got some wires inside the tights and I had newspapers in them, too. And then when I abandoned the hare and tortoise idea, there was something about those gray legs, those gray tights. So I held on to them for a while. And years later, I don't know why, I started on them again. I'd made a cage for *The Law* and I wanted something to go with it, something quite sexy. So I got the tights idea out again. But this time I stuck the chair in. I didn't know where I was going with it; I just thought, well, I'll start again with that. . . . And once I'd got the legs actually stuffed, I wanted to see how they looked, so I just clipped them on the back of this chair and that was it. I added a couple of things, but really that was it. It was brilliant. It doesn't happen very often that you really get that "Eureka!" feeling, and you want to grab a beer or suddenly laugh, and smoke fags really fast, and phone people up and say "You've got to get over here!" Which is one of the things you dream about. And funnily enough, people say, "Why's your stuff always about sex?" Or something silly like that, but I often didn't start with that. It doesn't actually turn into anything until it gets there.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly one of the best accounts of the artist's own experience of the creative process on record, Lucas's narrative makes it clear that the final *Bunny* image emerged out of the very process of object-making and not as the result of some preordained concept about sex

or gender or anything else. Which doesn't mean that Lucas doesn't have strong views and feelings about men, women, gender, and the social order. It just means that particular forms can metamorphose from unexpected sources, that objects can take on new meanings, spring to novel life under unexpected circumstances, and may surprise even the artist herself.

Can we, should we, then think of Lucas as a feminist, her work as feminist art? It all depends on what, in 2005, we mean by feminist. The implications of the term itself are changing, making it possible to approach more and different artists in feminist terms. Certainly, Mignon Nixon, for example, in her innovative book on Louise Bourgeois, *Fantastic Reality* (2005), makes a strong case for the importance of feminism, both the movement and the theoretical structure, in that artist's revolutionary work, work that is often abstract and which has previously been celebrated as perhaps post-Surrealist or just plain postmodernist.<sup>1</sup> More and more, feminism is being conceived in terms that are at once more inclusive and less doctrinaire than at the time of its heroic revival in the late '70s.

Certainly, Lucas herself, when she was just beginning to be an artist, thought of herself as a feminist, propelled by anger at the injustice of the London art world in the early '90s:

One of the reasons I was interested in the feminine was that I wasn't successful. I lived with [the artist] Gary Hume. I was reading a lot of feminist writings and that led to arguments, because I was angry with him for being so successful. And not just him, but lots of other people, most of my good friends. . . . I used to come home furious from openings and fancy dinners, and he'd get the brunt of all that anger.<sup>2</sup>

Lucas's first solo show, 1992's "Penis Nailed to a Board," at City Racing in London, was a near-perfect illustration of how the personal can take shape as the political under the impact of anger, informed by post-Freudian theory and feminism—"without looking particularly theoretical, or even particularly feminist," as Collings has pointed out.<sup>3</sup> It was the arbitrariness of gender identifications, their sleazy crudeness in modern popular representation, that Lucas was after in this show, the way they could still shock and make the public take notice, the way they could still call attention to the arbitrary structure of power relations both personal and social, especially where sex was concerned.

Much of Lucas's early work was autobiographical and aggressively gendered as "masculine," or at least deliberately "anti-feminine" and androgynous: a series of photographic self-portraits like *Self-Portrait with Skull* (1997), where she confronts the viewer head-on in a shapeless jacket, heavy sneakers, and jeans, legs open in a strong masculine thrust—so different from the weak-kneed sprawl of the *Bunnies*. In one self-portrait, she poses memorably in a contemplative attitude on a toilet seat, legs raised, cigarette in hand. She could be either a boy or a girl in the absence of precise sexual indicators, but the image itself calls up, if distantly, Duchamp's provocative

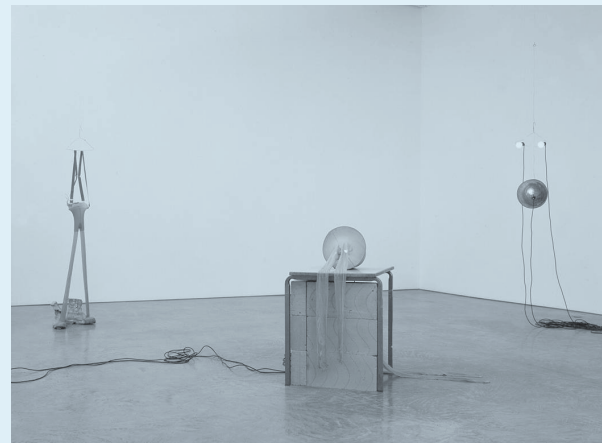
insertion of a urinal into the sacred precincts of the art gallery many years back, and along with it, his scandalous gender play as Rrose Sélavy. In still another photograph, Lucas slouches in a chair in the wide-legged "masculine pose" she favors, but defies specific gender identification with two fried egg "breasts" plastered to her chest. In these, as in so many of her works, femininity and masculinity are represented as masquerade, as constructions rather than essences.

Cigarettes played a big role in her earlier iconography: male-identified and transgressive at once, they might be thrust into a sneering wax jaw (*Where Does It All End?* [1994]); or used, craftsmanlike, to construct complex popular objects, like *Nobby* (2000), a cigarette-covered garden gnome; or more recently, in an ultimate act of kitschy transgression, in the giant crucifix displayed in the Tate's three-person show "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" (2004), where the suffering Christ (perhaps an homage to a friend whom she accompanied and recorded when he had himself ritually crucified in a ceremony in the Philippines) is literally constructed of "coffin nails," the most popular commodified sign of death in our own times.

The exhibition "GOD IS DAD" distills some of the thematics of her previous work in more muted, contemplative form, combining paths with a certain harsh insistence on the melancholy persistence of old objects, old attitudes. Part of its power lies in its critique of a gendered world where the sexes are still anything but equal and certainly far from harmoniously at one. Women may have won the vote, gained a presence in the art world, and much else besides, but, ironize as you will, God is still Dad, and a brutal Dad in too many places, in too many situations. The stocking, the fallen bucket say it all.

## NOTES

1. Matthew Collings, *Sarah Lucas* (London: Tate Publishing, 2002), 89–92.
2. *Ibid.*, 22.
3. *Ibid.*



Top:  
"GOD IS DAD," 2005  
Exhibition view: Gladstone Gallery, New York

Bottom:  
*Get Hold of This*, 1994  
Installation view: "Supersensible,"  
Gladstone Gallery, New York, 1995

# BODY MATTERS: SARAH LUCAS AND THE SURREALIST IMAGINATION

WHITNEY CHADWICK

*We aren't dealing with any absolutes, are we, in this life? We are dealing only with that which is in motion, not what is fixed and absolute. . . . We don't emphasize enough that the work of art is independent of the artist. The work of art lives by itself, and the artist who happened to make it is like an irresponsible medium. . . . It is a kind of race between the artist and the work of art.*

—Marcel Duchamp, the Western Roundtable on Modern Art

*I enjoy being a woman, I enjoy being a hard-hitting angry woman. You won't find very much knitting in my work.*

—Sarah Lucas, interview in the *Guardian*

In the summer of 2017, Sarah Lucas was invited to organize an exhibition of her work under the auspices of San Francisco's Legion of Honor and its new director, Max Hollein. Part of a series designed to commemorate and contextualize the work of sculptor Auguste Rodin on the centennial of his death, Lucas's provocative exhibition, titled "Good Muse," delivered an openness to materials, for which she is well known, and disturbing results, according to some. The outcome was a fascinating and ambitious journey into territories of agency, identity, sexuality, and community informed both by histories evident in the museum's collections and by a legacy of Surrealist exhibition practices formed decades earlier.

Often bathed in dense fog and chill winds, the Legion of Honor overlooks San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge and the Pacific Ocean. It was completed in 1924 and accepted by the city as a museum of fine arts dedicated to the memory of the 3,600 soldiers from California who lost their lives in the First World War. Lucas's exhibition at the Legion of Honor, and her head-on confrontation with the work of Rodin there, marked a dramatic revisionist intervention into both modern and contemporary art. If the journey from Rodin to contemporary art remains a work in progress, Lucas's encounter with the father of modern sculpture led to a map of forces in which histories were revised, materials and aesthetics contested, and certainties challenged.

When Rodin's *Age of Bronze*, begun in 1875, was first exhibited in the Salon of 1877, it elicited accusations that the artist had cast

the sculpture from life, a charge he vigorously denied. Setting up an almost direct and polemical reference to this episode, Lucas's exhibition at the Legion of Honor depended heavily on plaster castings displayed among Rodin's bronzes. In this juxtaposition, Lucas revealed how her sources lay not in the polemics of realism but in its subversion—attained, paradoxically, via the hyperrealistic use of casts of women's bodies.

Bodies matter to Lucas. One might say that bodies are one of the grounds on which she works. They can be massaged into new configurations using eggs, or modeled into new forms using plaster. And they can be bathed in variations of color and light.

Lucas's castings engage with a long sculptural tradition based in representations of the human body, but they often bypass verisimilitude in favor of an effect of estrangement or perturbation—that peculiar sense of unhomeliness that both Sigmund Freud and the Surrealists identified as a defining experience of modernity. In the cast sculptures of Marcel Duchamp and in the works of other artists associated with the Surrealist movement—such as Hans Bellmer, Dorothea Tanning, Jindřich Štyrský, and Dora Maar—the human body is often represented as exploded in a myriad of fragments, forensically recomposed by a meticulous process of casting or direct impression; the result is simultaneously fastidious in its precision and abstract and open in its formlessness. As in Bellmer's photographs, Lucas's bodies appear reconfigured according to an anatomy of desire that shifts forms and organs into new possible combinations of libido and fulfillment.

As in other projects, including her installations at the Freud Museum (2000) and Sir John Soane's Museum (2016) in London and her incursion in the abandoned Art Deco public baths of Porta Venezia in Milan (2016), Lucas staged a complex revision of the art historical canon at the Legion of Honor. The intimate galleries were "largely arranged such that Rodin's works and Old Master paintings from the museum's collection encircle and literally gaze upon Lucas's art," as one reviewer noted.<sup>1</sup> Acting as both disruptive presence in the fabric of the museum and passive object of curiosity scrutinized by the gaze of the mainly male old masters surrounding her work, Lucas placed herself and her work at the epicenter of a series of power relations. She mimicked and amplified the dynamics that museums

typically prefer to keep hidden as they establish hierarchies and organize history according to narratives that are presumed to be objective but are often gendered and otherwise prejudiced. The title of the show, "Good Muse," openly played with the ancillary role typically expected of women in the history of art, perhaps summoning and avenging the ghost of Rodin's lover and muse, Camille Claudel.

In one of the most striking conjunctions, the souls of the damned cringing at the entrance to hell in Rodin's sculpture *The Three Shades* (1881–86) found solace in two small stuffed-nylon "teddies" that Lucas had installed on the pedestal of the statue. Lucas literally and metaphorically debases the sculpture and, by extension, the authority of her presumed master, opposing the durability of bronze with materials that are precarious and soft, and playing with associations typically projected onto domestic space as the realm of the feminine.

If a focus on reappraising the legacies of historical works remains one of the hallmarks of Lucas's artistic practice, it is precisely in the use of the exhibition as a medium and a polemical, political space of action, rather than just in the production of individual pieces, that her critical strategy becomes most apparent. From the days of The Shop—the do-it-yourself exhibition space she ran with Tracey Emin in the early 1990s—to her most recent series of exhibitions, titled "SITUATION" (2012–13), Lucas seems to enjoy an improvisational and gregarious approach to exhibition-making. She has consistently used exhibitions as total environments in which artworks can be reconfigured into new combinations of old and new materials and displayed alongside found objects or the work of other artists, creating unsettling tableaux of domestic bleakness and private bliss.

Again one could find a precedent to these types of exhibitions—particularly for the ones staged in charged sites such as the Freud Museum—in the legacy of the Surrealists' exhibitions, which the Parisian artists conceived as events and demonstrations. As André Breton described it, the format of the Surrealist exhibition was conceived as a "zone of agitation . . . situated at the confines of the poetic and the real."<sup>2</sup> Not only does Lucas's work court the marvelous by way of the domestic, as many works by the Surrealists and particularly by Surrealist women artists did, but Lucas also treats the exhibition as a pulsating unity in which objects and spaces are integrated into a theatrical ensemble.

When the International Exhibition of Surrealism opened in Paris on a frigid day in January 1938, visitors entered into a tactile, theatrical, and experiential world designed to destabilize and rupture any relationship with the real. In preparation for the opening, the gallery spaces had been reconfigured to transport the viewer to a realm in which what they understood to be the feminine principle—seductive, compelling, erotic, disturbing—played a key role in activating a new reality. Visitors entered the galleries through a shadowy corridor lined with sixteen mannequins in various states of dishabille; these female surrogates were embellished with accessories and replacement parts that included peacock feathers and fishing nets, birdcages, an absinthe glass, and a stuffed bat with outstretched wings, among many other bizarre and challenging objects.

The exhibition itself featured work by fifty-nine artists from fourteen countries, among them nine women. Works on display included Meret Oppenheim's now-legendary *Object* (1936), the fur-lined teacup subsequently dubbed "The Luncheon in Fur." Referencing Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's novel *Venus in Furs* (1870), in which a fetishistic play links the erotic with fur, Oppenheim's sculpture came to encapsulate an attitude to art-making in general, and to sculpture in particular, that also informed the work of many other women artists associated with the Surrealist movement. In fact, women artists in the Surrealist group produced some of the most provocative and fascinating symbolic objects, a number of which pointed toward the unstable boundaries between the erotic, the domestic, and the gendered body. Their work opened up a fertile field of research that was later mined by many feminist artists of the 1960s, whose work in turn connects almost directly with that of Lucas.

Particularly notable works in this lineage, aside from Oppenheim's *Object*, include Mimi Parent's *Maitresse* [Mistress] (1996), a small whip with braided blond hair in place of the usual leather strap, and Dora Maar's photomontage *Untitled (Hand and Shell)* (1934), in which a stylishly manicured woman's hand emerges from a seashell as the roiling sea threatens to destroy this composite object. One might also cite the work of Eileen Agar, particularly her endlessly mysterious assemblage *Angel of Anarchy* (1936–40)—which Lucas seems to quote almost verbatim in her *Big Fat Anarchic Spider* (1993)—or the fragile constructions of Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, whom Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp saluted as the only true Dadaist artist. Baroness Elsa's *God* (1917), an iron pipe turned into a theological object of contemplation, certainly anticipates Lucas's fascination with plumbing as a sexual metaphor for both redemption and abjection, while also inaugurating a whole genre of scatological humor, tinted with spiritual tones, which ricochets across the twentieth century.

A master of this sensibility was Marcel Duchamp, whose infamous urinal also haunts the work of Lucas. As Duchamp wrote in a 1914 note, "one only has: for *female* the public urinal and one *lives* by it."<sup>3</sup> With her own urinals and toilets, cast in pisslike yellow resins, Lucas both glorifies and vilifies Duchamp. On the one hand, the Duchamp that informs her work is the master of gender fluidity and polymorphous sexuality: Duchamp as Rose Sélavy. On the other hand, Lucas evokes the ghost of Duchamp by simply appropriating similar forms and subject matter, immediately revealing his gendered bias; she exposes him as just another guy, a lad like any other, a little too aggressively interested in sex and women's bodies.

More importantly, ever present in the work of Sarah Lucas is the influence of the Duchamp of the 1950s and '60s, the Duchamp of *Étant donnés* (1946–66) and, before that, of the erotic objects titled *Feuille de vigne femelle* [Female Fig Leaf] (1950), *Objet-dard* [Dart Object] (1951), and *Coin de chasteté* [Chastity Wedge] (1954). It is directly in relation to these sculptures that one should see Lucas's *Fig Leaf in the Ointment* (1991), which almost literally quotes Duchamp's title but uses wax and human hair, which the French artist is said to have maniacally abhorred. Similar materials appear in other castings



of body parts, such as *Receptacle of Lurid Things* (1991). In these works, as in many of her early sculptures, Lucas harks back to the Surrealist tradition of the erotic and symbolic object, choosing materials for both their political and personal associations. Referencing locales in which boundaries between the domestic and the public, the masculine and the feminine, are porous, her sculptures display a keen sense of both the human figure and its potential for animation and abjection. Often the latter is intentionally asserted and magnified through associations with otherwise mundane articles of consumption and commodification: eggs broken over nude bodies in a sort of egg bath, kitchen implements undergoing a surreal metamorphosis from the utilitarian to the abject, eggbeater to urinal.

In one instance, a truncated plaster torso reiterates an eighteenth-century sculpture. In another, chairs support bulbous leglike forms clad in nylon stockings that bulge with latent energy, not unrelated to Dorothea Tanning's surreal installation of "soft sculptures" and fetishes at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, in 1972. Just as in Tanning's work, in Lucas's installation the domestic space opens up to become a territory of bottomless fascination or—conversely—of brutal violence. Lucas's own carefully chosen objects, ranging from mattresses to washing machines, resonate with implicit power while not necessarily claiming specific referential meaning. In this regard, her work intersects with that of a previous generation of Surrealist women artists drawn to the inherent power of objects, as well as with the Surrealists' interest in the home as a psychological retreat for fantastical self-discoveries and a space of resistance and refuge against the barbarism of normative behaviors and government regulations.

The Surrealists often responded to draconian laws concerning moral issues in 1930s France with obscenity, as in Hans Bellmer's photographs *The Oral Cross* (1935) and *Untitled (Study for Georges Bataille's Histoire de l'oeil)* (1946). It was literally onto a woman's body that Meret Oppenheim staged her *Cannibal Feast* in the "fetishist crypt" conceived by André Breton for the basement of the Surrealists' "EROS" exhibition, held at the Galerie Daniel Cordier in Paris in the winter of 1959. In *Cannibal Feast*, a live model painted gold lay stretched out in a velvet-lined room; food and champagne surrounded the model as three men and two women reached across her body and ate. Subsequent evenings also included mannequins, food, and naked models. (If anything defines Surrealism in the public domain today, it is probably the movement's associations with food or sex, or both.) As debates around women's rights to their own bodies sadly continue today, Lucas's work seems to engage in another symbolic battle against repressive reproductive policies. If Oppenheim's *Cannibal Feast* remains an iconic image in the history of Surrealism, Lucas's *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab* (1992) brims with a similar energy. The two works, produced decades apart, display a shared commitment to the functional and the abject, as well as to the evocative potential of domestic materials.

*Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab* focuses attention on the table as a domestic object, a simple structure capable of supporting a plethora of other objects. It is at times a utilitarian work surface, at others

an object of sculptural power and nurturance. While *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab* finds precedent in the work of artists who had found new meaning in domestic sources—including Helen Chadwick, Carolee Schneemann, and others—for Lucas its content lay in "not [being] soppy, solemn or frenzied, but dry, witty, clever and sly."<sup>4</sup> In its deployment of the table's various functions and associations, Lucas's assisted readymade may also prove related to Victor Brauner's *Wolf-Table* (1939–47). Brauner's table was originally installed in the 1947 International Surrealist Exhibition in one of twelve octagonal spaces based on the votive altars of pagan cults, each of which corresponded to a sign of the zodiac. The work takes the form of a wolf whose head and toothy open mouth glare from one end of the wooden table. This frightening scene—described by Breton as "that famous table screaming over its shoulder at death and displaying proudly a bulging scrotum"—would resonate for years.<sup>5</sup>

More generally, the horizontal plane of the table is a recurring trope in Lucas's work: in her sculptures and assemblages, she often brings together disparate objects on flat surfaces. Her combinatory science resembles the oft-quoted line by Lautréamont that the Surrealists chose as a motto: "Beautiful as the chance encounter on a dissecting table of a sewing machine and an umbrella."<sup>6</sup> In Lucas's work, these encounters are both more literal and more violent, imbued with a prosaic, almost brutal honesty. In her choice of objects and aliments, in fact, Lucas also throws into high relief differences of class and economic access: on her tables, it is not only the marvelous and the quotidian that carry out their amorous encounters. Her tables are also a theater of the id, in which one parades the dreams that money can't buy, to quote another classic of the Dada-Surrealist avant-garde. On Lucas's tables a class struggle is being fought.

For an artist who has proudly cultivated a position of absolute independence, Lucas has paradoxically proven to be a powerful catalyst for other artists and eccentric figures, who gravitate to her work seeking the freedom from judgment that her practice so outrageously projects. In some cases, these personal relationships have resulted in exhibitions that question traditional notions of authorship and ownership. Among her most frequent accomplices are the artists that congregate in the collective gelitin, with whom Lucas has collaborated on various exhibitions. In 2011, gelitin and Lucas worked together on an exhibition in the medieval town of Krems, outside Vienna. The collective expanded to twenty members in order to make a studio of the museum and produce work on site. "For femininity's sake and because there was a lot of nail-banging and work with hard materials going on in the boys' department, I set about making lots and lots of soft tits," Lucas reflected.<sup>7</sup> Two years later, the artists returned to work at the Vienna Secession, the temple of Gustav Klimt, where they installed a chicken house and released four hens in the exhibition space, letting them roam freely among Lucas's sculptures of enlarged penises, crashed cars, and suggestive vegetables.

A sense of collective participation also informed the realization of Lucas's works for the 56th Venice Biennale (2015), for which she

was invited to represent the United Kingdom. For this presentation, Lucas realized a series of eight sculptures cast from the bodies of various friends and companions—or, more broadly, "muses," as the sculptures are titled. These anatomical fragments capture, with an uncanny mixture of precision and abstraction, the lower halves of various bodies, complete with sexual organs carefully rendered. The process requires patience and courage; it is also, in Lucas's words, "intimate, objective, comradely, physical."<sup>8</sup>

From images documenting the casting process, it appears clear that the realization of these sculptures was carried out in a spirit of communal participation. Aided by a women-only crew, Lucas produced works that shift the focus from women as objects of desire to women as laborers, friends, and accomplices. What the *Muses* seem to suggest is an idea of female community that connects to 1960s feminist discussions about matriarchy and gynocentric societies, and ricochets all the way back to the idealized friendships of kindred spirits and elective affinities that Surrealist artists such as Tanning and Leonor Fini both lived and imagined.

Lucas wrapped the walls of the exhibition space in a warm yellow hue, chosen as an antidote to Venice's brown and dreary winter light. The color was based on the golden light in Sir John Soane's London house, which had also served as a site for the architect's vast collections of sculptures and other classical artifacts, many of which represented fragments of bodies and anatomies in pieces. Lucas, like many others who have visited the house museum, was immediately entranced by the almost sulfurous light that suffused the interior. In 2016, at the conclusion of the Biennale, Lucas presented a selection of three of her *Muses* in the drawing room of Sir John Soane's Museum, another incarnation of her exhibitions staged in unconventional spaces. This time, the title served as a manifesto and, perhaps, a concise and effective summary of her entire career: "POWER IN WOMAN."

## NOTES

1. Clayton Schuster, "Sarah Lucas Squashes Rodin's Idealism," *Hyperallergic*, August 1, 2017, <https://hyperallergic.com/393328/sarah-lucas-rodin-legion-of-honor>.
2. André Breton, *What is Surrealism?*, ed. Franklin Rosemont (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1978), 273.
3. Marcel Duchamp, *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, ed. Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), 23.
4. Matthew Collings, *Sarah Lucas* (London: Tate Publishing, 2002), 40.
5. André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting* (1928), trans. Simon Watson Taylor (Boston: MFA Publications, 2002), 126.
6. Le Comte de Lautréamont, *The Songs of Maldoror*, trans. R.J. Dent (Washington, DC: Solar Books, 2011), 210.
7. Sarah Lucas, *I SCREAM DADDIO*, exh. cat. (London: British Council, 2015), 17.
8. *Ibid.*, 27.



"INNAMEMORABILIAMUMBUM," 2016  
Exhibition view: Fondazione Nicola Trussardi,  
Albergo Diurno Venezia, Milan

# THE RAW AND THE COOKED

MARGOT NORTON

SINCE 1990, SARAH LUCAS HAS BEEN creating photographs that feature her own image, which have come to be known as her self-portraits. The term self-portrait is, however, not entirely correct, for none of these images were taken by the artist. Rather, she explains, they were shot by “whoever I was living/working with at the time”—often someone with whom she shared an intimate relationship.<sup>1</sup> These snapshots capture moments in an intuitive, free-flowing collaborative process that remains central to her work. They are raw and fleeting, yet embedded with the fraught and complex qualities of desire, identity, and power that animate the everyday.

Lucas has described the genesis of these images as “a sort of accident, the images-of-me thing,” but an accident that nonetheless “cemented a relationship between myself and the work.”<sup>2</sup> They are simply “images” of Lucas, and yet they are never neutral. They possess a certain ambiguity that compels the viewer to search the composition for clues—in her clothing, her footwear, the cigarette or mug of tea in her hand, her body’s positioning, the directness of her gaze. Every detail in the shot proclaims its significance, as though the whole were carefully constructed, yet these details may have been entirely unplanned.

It is the friction between intention and inadvertence that makes the works so compelling. Lucas allows viewers’ preconceived notions to complete the picture: Her air of nonchalant confidence may suggest that she is posing as a man, but is that her intention? Or is this the inevitable interpretation of these images in a society in which such gender stereotypes are so ingrained? Rather than mere portraits of Lucas, these images function as mirrors, bouncing onlookers’ preconceptions directly back at them.

## *Eating a Banana*

The first picture taken as part of this body of work, *Eating a Banana* (1990), was shot by Lucas’s then-partner, artist Gary Hume. According to Lucas, it was a random occurrence—“just a thought while eating a banana”—yet the image has much to convey.<sup>3</sup> Wearing a simple white T-shirt and leather jacket (a typical outfit for the artist at the time), Lucas is captured midbite, halfway through her snack.

The left side of her face is hidden by a shaggy fringe of hair, and her right eye meets the camera’s lens as if to divert its gaze.

The phallic fruit had been co-opted in feminist imagery before, most notoriously by art historian Linda Nochlin in *Buy My Bananas* (1972). Nochlin created this comical photograph of a man as sex object in response to a nineteenth-century image of a nude woman holding a tray of apples under her breasts, with the caption “Buy my apples.” Noting the lack of associations of fruit with male sexuality, she mused, “While there may indeed be a rich underground feminine lore linking food—specifically bananas—with the male organ, such imagery remains firmly in the realm of private discourse, embodied in smirks and titters rather than in works of art.”<sup>4</sup> Polish feminist artist Natalia LL also featured bananas in her *Consumer Art* series (1972–75), in which she photographed a group of young female models seductively eating a selection of phallic foods, including bananas, sausages, and ice cream. And Margaret Harrison, one of the founders of the Women’s Liberation Art Group in London in 1970, drew *Banana Woman* (1971), in which a sexualized pin-up model ironically straddles a large banana in lieu of a crescent moon.

Counter to LL’s cheerful allure or Harrison’s overt eroticism, Lucas’s expression in *Eating a Banana* is confrontational, thwarting traditional representations of women as objects of desire. Yet *Eating a Banana* poses more questions than it answers, allowing multiple interpretations beyond a systematic feminist reading. Lucas herself has recognized the importance of these images for their unresolved quality, as if they hold a secret to understanding her sculptural work:

To me the photos are more mysterious than the sculptures, in terms of knowing where I am. They seem to be so much a matter of taking a stance, but even I find it quite difficult to know why they work, or why, when I’m looking through a whole bunch of shots, a particular one works. I think that question “Where am I?” is the ambiguous area of the whole enterprise.<sup>5</sup>

These photographs compel us to attempt to locate Lucas’s identity—is this the artist as herself, or is she performing? Then again, we are all expressive symptoms of the “theater of the everyday,” as sociologist Erving Goffman theorized: “The self . . . is not an organic

thing that has a specific location, whose fundamental fate is to be born, to mature, to die; it is a dramatic effect arising diffusely from a scene that is presented.”<sup>6</sup> Lucas acknowledges this herself:

Everyone makes his or her appearance into a bit of a language. You know what you mean and you know what you’re avoiding. . . . So while it could be anyone in the photos, I would still say it’s about my own identity. . . . I don’t dress a special way and then turn up for a photo—but then again, I do, because dressing is always special.<sup>7</sup>

The image of Lucas in *Eating a Banana* was also pasted onto the bottom left quadrant of *Great Dates* (1992), part of a series of large-scale works she created in the early ’90s from tabloid newspapers. Here, Lucas inserts a blown-up version of her own image among myriad enticingly posed female nudes and newspaper headlines such as “Full Steam Ahead,” “Shake a Leg,” and “Heroin Heroines.” In juxtaposing these image and text clippings, she highlights the pervasive dehumanization of the female body in popular culture, and the ridiculous moral hypocrisy of it all.

Shortly after *Eating a Banana*, Lucas created her only filmic work from that time, *Sausage Film* (1990). She was then spending some time in Rome with Hume, who had been invited there for a residency. The film, shot in one take from a static frontal viewpoint, records Lucas eating a sausage and then a banana, brought to her by a shirtless Hume. Breaking into a brief laugh after being served, Lucas otherwise maintains a cool indifference throughout the film as she concentrates on performing the task at hand: first removing the skins and then patiently, systematically slicing, chewing, and swallowing—a sequence manifesting all the trappings of a Freudian nightmare. Her matter-of-fact encounter with these commonly eroticized foods subverts the suggestive undertones that typically accompany their consumption and parodies cultural representations of women, such as a femme fatale or praying mantis, which engender Freud’s theory of castration anxiety.

While in Rome, Lucas also compiled *Five Lists* (1991), a compendium of slang terms divided into five categories: women, men, homosexuals, masturbation, and excrement (she notes that these appeared to be the principal classification groups for the lexicon of swear words in English). She then organized each list in alphabetical order. The list for the “women” category, for example, starts with “ANIMAL,” “ASS,” “BAT,” “BATTLEAXE,” “BEAUTY” and proceeds all the way down to “WITCH.” After compiling the lists from memory, she described her process:

I took my first look at the overlap. And the hatred. I was already aware, instinctively, since childhood, of a distinction between people swearing humorously, or with venom and bile, I suppose we all are—but I hadn’t thought clearly about how whole classes of people had language stacked against them. Yes there was racism and sexism—in Italy it was rife, my Doc

Martens took the brunt of it, “your grandmother wears army boots” is a popular insult among Italian men. In that context I was distinctly butch. I didn’t carry a handbag either.<sup>8</sup>

In a sense, *Five Lists* can be understood as a kind of glossary for Lucas’s output. She refers to degrading gender stereotypes and sexual bombasts in her work in order to break them, tossing them into the blender along with our expectations.

## *Images of Me*

In the years following, Lucas maintained a steady practice of creating photographs of herself, responding to incidental situations with different poses and props. When producing these images, it was imperative for her and her photographer to act quickly—the shoot would need to happen almost reflexively, soon after the idea occurred. The resulting images are not always treated as straightforward photographs; some turn up in collages (as with *Great Dates*), or are blown up, replicated, and repeated to form mobiles, sculptures, and wallpaper. In a suite of *Self-Portraits* from 1993, Lucas appears in her typical attire—T-shirt and jeans, leather bomber jacket, and work boots—and collaged onto brown paper. Her poses range from crouching to standing to leaning back in her chair with spread legs and a languid defiance—always self-assured and confronting the viewer head-on. Shot with a wide-angle lens, the images are distorted so that her bottom half, and in particular her boots, are enlarged, enhancing the gravitas of her already-commanding image.

In 1993, Lucas and artist Tracey Emin created The Shop, a store and installation that ran for six months. Here, the duo made and sold solo and collaborative work ranging from pins, badges, and T-shirts (with slogans such as “She’s kebab” and “Complete arsehole”) to a chicken-wire altarpiece dedicated to British painter David Hockney. Lucas also frequently cut out small prints of early photographs of herself to make delicate mobiles, with the snapshots hanging from thin wire threads, as in *Mobile* (1993). The following year, she blew up the same images and backed them with mirrored styrene for large-scale mobiles in which the toughness of her likenesses offered a marked contrast to their weightless quality as they floated in space.

The majority of Lucas’s *Self-Portraits* were taken in the mid- to late 1990s, and often include objects as sexual signifiers and visual puns, which are echoed in her sculptural work. The cigarette, for example, is often a protagonist in these images, functioning by turns or all at once as a symbol of deviance, a reminder of mortality, and a phallic stand-in. In *Fighting Fire with Fire* (1996), Lucas holds a limp cigarette in the corner of her downturned mouth as she gazes listlessly into space, while in *Smoking* (1998), she lies in bed and slowly exhales smoke as if enjoying a postcoital cigarette. The just-popped-open can of beer also makes periodic appearances to suggest an ejaculating member, between Lucas’s own legs in *Laugh?* (1998), and in a photograph of a naked man with an exploding can of beer



*Egg Massage*, 2015 (stills)  
Video, sound, color; 4:59 min

at his crotch, which Lucas holds over her own body in *Got a Salmon on in the Garden* (2000). She references the idiomatic expression “got a salmon on” (meaning having an erection) in *Got a Salmon On #3* (1997) as well, a photograph in which she poses outside a men’s lavatory with a large (and reportedly odorous) fish drooping over her shoulder. In *Self-Portrait with Fried Eggs* (1996), Lucas assumes a favored position: reclining brazenly in an armchair with legs spread and feet firmly planted, her macho comportment at odds with the pair of fried eggs slapped casually atop her breasts.

In many of these works, Lucas’s objects push against their typical gender classification. *Self-Portrait with Skull* (1997) features Lucas sitting on the floor, again with spread legs; a human skull, the quintessential representation of memento mori, rests on the floor between them. An interviewer notes that the negative space of the skull’s eyes and nose might resemble “male sex organs,” to which Lucas retorts, “It could be the vagina as an eye. Or the brain as a black hole.”<sup>9</sup> Here, Lucas calls to mind the theory of the death drive as described in Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), juxtaposing it with an evocation of gender’s mutability and masquerade. In *The Human Toilet II* (1996) and *Human Toilet Revisited* (1998), she poses with the sordid yet shapely titular receptacle for human waste—sitting on it nude while holding its companion tank in the former image, crouching atop the toilet bowl and smoking a cigarette in the latter. In both of these images, she engages in moments of contemplation, forgoing any explicit gender signifiers and instead disclosing an all-too-human vulnerability.

Photographs of Lucas have become fewer over the last decade or so, as her sculptural practice has taken precedence. In 2002, Lucas observed that aging is a factor in this absence: “Now it gets harder to go on with it. It’s not just a question of repeating myself. There’s also the question of getting older and how that changes the meaning—it changes the look of what you are doing.”<sup>10</sup> Yet earlier this year, Lucas’s current partner, artist and musician Julian Simmons, shot a series of new photos of Lucas smoking in a leather chair in a red-painted room. The images appear to be shot with a slow shutter speed, so that her movements and the cigarette smoke distort her image. In one, her face seems to have vanished completely, replaced by a puff of lingering smoke. In another, her hand seems to have moved quickly away from her face, leaving a trail of skeletal lines. These recent photographs capture an ethereal quality that recalls the out-of-focus, distorted portraits by twentieth-century British painter Francis Bacon. They reflect the tenuousness of life—an apparent contrast to the sturdiness of many of the early photographic works.

#### *One Thousand Eggs*

While Lucas’s photographs have become less prevalent in recent years, she has continued to engage in collaborative projects, often resulting in joint exhibitions with artists, partners, like-minded co-conspirators, and friends.<sup>11</sup> For many of these exhibitions, she

blows up earlier photographs to create large-scale wallpapers as backdrop to her and others’ sculptures and installations, extending the communal energy of her photographic practice. Lucas lends important insight into the spontaneity and collaborative spirit of her working process in the catalogue for her exhibition at the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, “I SCREAM DADDIO” (2015). In it, she details various adventures with eggs, offering a glimpse into how her everyday escapades with others inform her projects. Her process, arising from these casual situations and interactions, runs counter to a straightforward studio practice—not only in the sculptures on view in Venice, but in her earlier photographic portraits.

In a chapter titled “Honest Vendor,” Lucas recounts how she and Simmons set out to acquire hundreds of eggs from local suppliers near their home in Suffolk, England. Their operation takes an ironic turn when they discover that an egg vending machine had replaced one farm’s honesty box. After finally acquiring their arsenal, Lucas and Simmons, along with their friend, choreographer and dancer Michael Clark, have a go at performing *Egg Dance*, an event based on a reenactment of a traditional medieval egg dance by Monkseaton Morris Men (a UK-based folk-dance club) in a video that Simmons found online. They attempt the dance once more with roughly a dozen additional friends, as a “freestyle” version, and then head to an old quarry to “chuck eggs about.”<sup>12</sup>

These egg-based activities culminate in *Egg Massage* (2015), a film of an event staged on New Year’s Eve 2015 at the home of gallerist Sadie Coles and photographer Juergen Teller. Lucas performs her pseudoritual following dinner, whereby the table is cleared and Simmons lies atop it, nude and surrounded by lit candles, a peach, and a half-cut pineapple. In a manner that recalls Viennese Actionist works such as Otto Mühl’s *Mama und Papa* [Mama and Papa] (1964), but with far more irony, Lucas slathers her partner in raw eggs that she has cracked onto his body. The eggs slide onto the table, eventually coating it in a marbled yellow mucus. Lucas mentions the audience in the film’s credits, and in the Venice catalogue, she makes a specific note of those present:

New Year’s evening 2015  
for woman  
four muses in attendance: Yoko, Sarah, Sadie & Pauline.<sup>13</sup>

Lucas refers to the women she cast for sculptures in her British Pavilion exhibition as “muses”—those who have been sources of inspiration for her—reclaiming the classical term, which traditionally denoted women subjects painted by men. As with many of her projects, Lucas’s series title *Muses* engages with various myths of feminine representation and the tacit implication that the muse is a passive object of desire.

On Easter Sunday 2017, Lucas staged the performance and installation *One Thousand Eggs “For Women”* at Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin. A film, shot by Simmons, follows Lucas and her gallerist Bruno Brunnet as they purchase crates of eggs from a street vendor, which they will use to “paint a wall.” After stopping for a bratwurst, they

head to the gallery, where a group of women join Lucas in throwing the eggs onto a designated wall, covering its surface to create a collective action painting. Artist Shiva Lynn Burgos throws the first egg, before an onslaught of women and girls join in. The event recalls “egg tossing,” an Easter game that dates back to medieval times; early Christians adopted the egg as a symbol of rebirth from pagan rites of spring. Lucas’s event is likewise thoroughly celebratory, endowing her participants with this symbol of renewal, immortality, and growth. By designating the event “for women,” moreover, she puts the fate of the egg—typically understood as the female reproductive cell—into the hands of women, perhaps alluding to political debates concerning women’s rights over their own bodies. As with many of Lucas’s projects, *One Thousand Eggs “For Women”* summons both ancient and self-fabricated mythologies in order to demolish them, invoking a sense of hope through their destruction.

### Uncooked

The title of Lucas’s exhibition at the New Museum, “Au Naturel,” is taken from a sculpture she created in 1994, in which an assemblage of objects suggestive of sexual organs adorns a mattress: a cucumber with oranges for penis and testicles, a pair of melons for breasts, and bucket for vulva and rear end. The mattress is installed slumped in the corner where the wall meets the floor, as if it were reclining. In an art context, “au naturel” commonly refers to paintings of (traditionally female) nude figures, and literally translates from French as “in the natural” or “in the nude.” The term can also mean “most simply,” “most plainly,” or “without makeup,” and, when referring to cooking, “raw,” “uncooked,” or “without seasoning.”

Applying the term to Lucas’s work, “au naturel” speaks to the immediacy, intimacy, and directness of her images. This interpretation suggests a “natural” state, perhaps without the limitations of established social structures and gender conformity—but it also speculates on whether or not such a “natural” state even exists. As philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler proposed:

There is no original or primary gender that drag imitates, but *gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original*; in fact, it is a kind of imitation that produces the very notion of the original as an *effect* and consequence of the imitation itself.<sup>14</sup>

This feedback loop of pretense and tenuousness that Butler describes in her theorizations of gender is echoed in Lucas’s works, and in the mercurial and collaborative processes central to her photographs, videos, and performative installations. As Lucas has said:

I like to play around with gender stereotypes. And I like androgyny. All these meanings are constructs, and they’re quite fragile really. They could be otherwise. . . . Women could be aggressors. Or, sit with their legs astride taking up

two seats on the bus. Men could wear the skirts. Bisexuality could be the normal way for both sexes . . .<sup>15</sup>

Lucas subverts established codes of gender and societal normativity through a process that leaves ample room for accident while manifesting a trenchant sensitivity toward our social conditioning. From her clever transformations of everyday objects to her explorations of sexual ambiguity and the tension between the familiar and the disorienting or absurd, Lucas’s works take a potent stance against conformism and misogyny, and offer an alternative perspective that liberates from the confines of convention. Her distinctive amalgam of acerbic critique, sly irreverence, and devotion to freedom gets right to the core of the fundamental constrictions that govern—and often stifle—our society.

### NOTES

1. See Sarah Lucas, “Complete Arsehole,” in this volume.
2. Matthew Collings, “Admire Own Self,” in *Sarah Lucas* (London: Tate Publishing, 2002), 59.
3. Sarah Lucas, “‘the sound of the future breaking through’ Andrei Costache,” in *Sarah Lucas: SITUATION Absolute Beach Man Rubble*, ed. Iwona Blazwick and Poppy Bowers (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2013), 94.
4. Linda Nochlin, “Eroticism and Female Imagery in Nineteenth-Century Art” (1972), in *Women, Art, and Power, and Other Essays* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 141.
5. Collings, *Sarah Lucas*, 59.
6. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1956), 252.
7. Collings, *Sarah Lucas*, 62.
8. Sarah Lucas, in *NOB*, ed. Jeanette Pacher with Tina Lipsky, exh. cat. (Vienna: Secession; Berlin: Revolver Publishing, 2013), n.p.
9. Beatrix Ruf, “Conversation with Sarah Lucas,” in *Sarah Lucas: Exhibitions and Catalogue Raisonné, 1989–2005*, ed. Yilmaz Dziewior and Beatrix Ruf (London: Tate Publishing; Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005), 30.
10. Collings, *Sarah Lucas*, 73.
11. Lucas has organized joint exhibitions including those with artist and former partner Angus Fairhurst (“Odd-bod Photography,” 1998, Sadie Coles HQ, London); artist duo Colin Lowe and Roddy Thomson (“Temple of Bacchus,” 2003, Milton Keynes Gallery, UK); Fairhurst and Damien Hirst (“In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida,” 2004, Tate Britain, London); the collective gelatin (“LUCAS-BOSCH-GELATIN,” 2011, Kunsthalle Krems, Austria, and “NOB + Gelatin,” 2013, Secession, Vienna); artist Franz West (“The Hamsterwheel,” at the 2007 Venice Biennale and posthumously in “SITUATION FRANZ WEST,” 2012, Sadie Coles HQ, London); and Simmons, her current partner (“TITTIPUSSIDAD,” 2014, Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin).
12. Sarah Lucas, *I SCREAM DADDIO*, exh. cat. (London: British Council, 2015), 44.
13. *Ibid.*, 48.
14. Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” in *The Judith Butler Reader*, ed. Sara Salih and Judith Butler (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 127.
15. Ruf, “Conversation with Sarah Lucas,” 30.



This page:  
*Angel Bulloch*, 2017  
Installation view: “FunQroc,”  
Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin

Following page:  
“Bunny Gets Snookered,” 1997  
Exhibition view: Sadie Coles HQ, London



IV. BUNNY GETS SNOOKERED

V. BEYOND THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLE

VI. GOD IS DAD

I made the first *Bunny* almost accidentally, meaning I didn't have a clear idea of where I was heading with the tights I was stuffing. I hung them on the back of a chair to see how they were shaping up and *Bunny* stared back at me. I called Sadie Coles immediately and said, "You've got to get over here and see this."

It was my first big show with Sadie. We'd found a filthy old warehouse on St. John Street for the occasion. It happened that Sadie was also opening her first gallery on Heddon Street around the same time. She opened with John Currin but hadn't got as far as planning the second show, so she asked if I'd like to do something. In a previous show of mine at Barbara Gladstone I'd made an edition of arm sculptures, *Get Hold of This* (1994), in snooker-ball colors. I decided to apply the same logic to a series of *Bunnies*. We hired the snooker table for the event.

## BUNNY GETS SNOOKERED



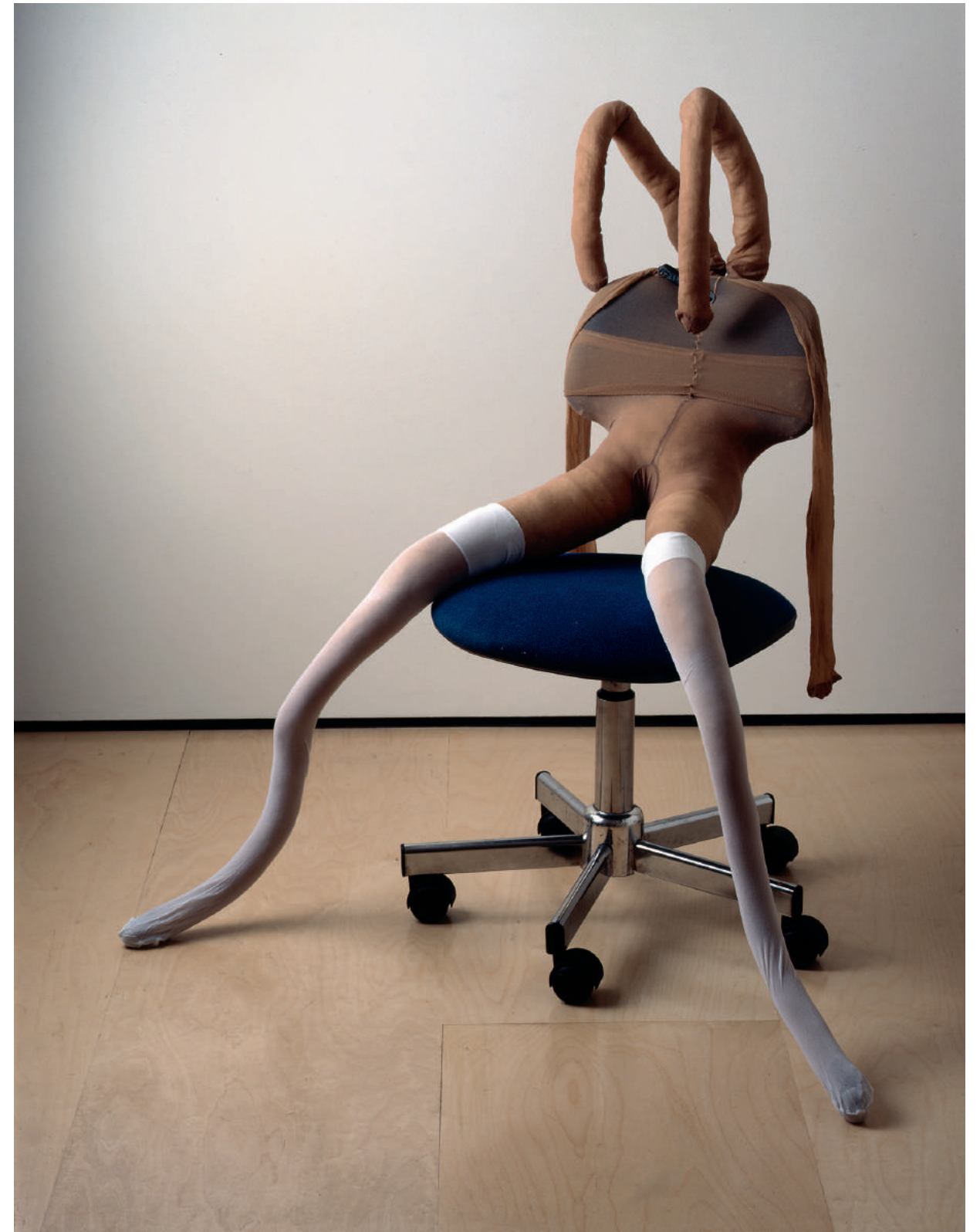
Opposite page:  
*Black and White Bunny* #3, 1997  
Black-and-white print on MDF  
48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)

Left:  
*Black and White Bunny* #2, 1997  
Black-and-white print on MDF  
48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)

Right:  
*Black and White Bunny* #1, 1997  
Black-and-white print on MDF  
48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)



*Bunny Gets Snookered #1*, 1997  
Tan tights, plastic and chrome chair, clamp, kapok, and wire  
41 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 32 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 31 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (106 x 82 x 81 cm)



*Bunny Gets Snookered #2*, 1997  
Tan tights, white stockings, office chair, clamp, kapok, and wire  
40 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 40 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 37 in (102 x 102 x 94 cm)

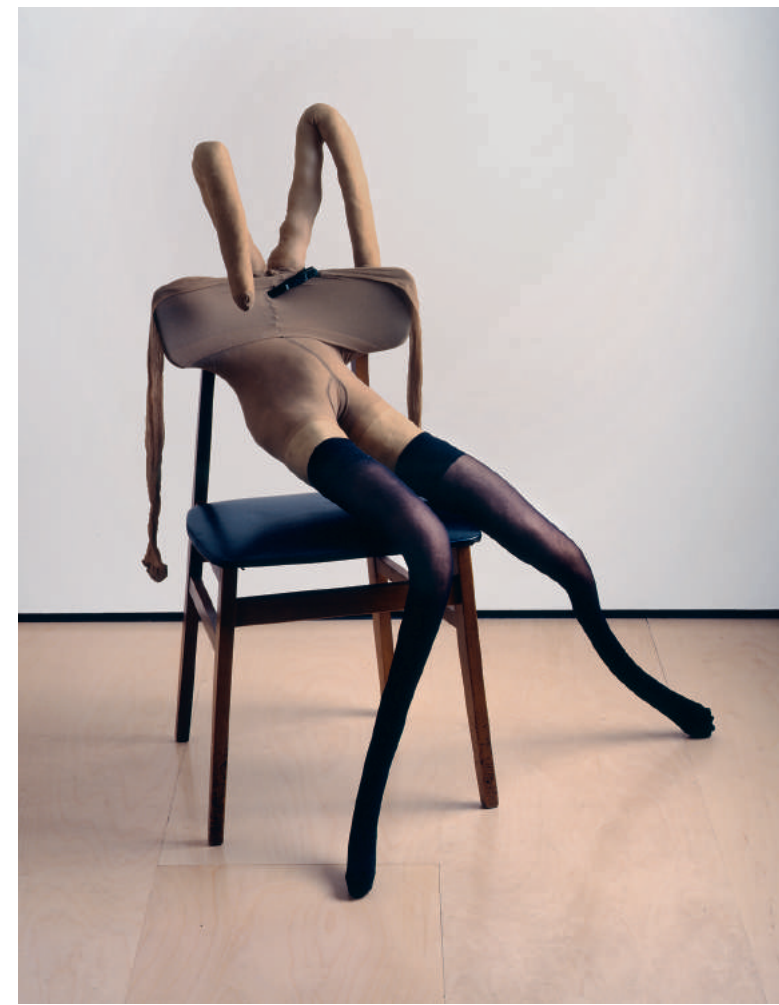




Left:  
*Bunny Gets Snookered #3*, 1997  
 Tan tights, green stockings, red office  
 chair, clamp, kapok, and wire  
 46½ x 16⅞ x 35 in (118 x 43 x 89 cm)



Right:  
*Bunny Gets Snookered #4*, 1997  
 Brown tights, tan stockings, plywood  
 chair, clamp, kapok, and wire  
 39¾ x 38¼ x 37 in (101 x 97 x 94 cm)



Left:  
*Pauline Bunny*, 1997  
 Tan tights, black stockings, wood and  
 vinyl chair, kapok, and wire  
 40½ x 35 x 31⅞ in (103 x 89 x 79 cm)



Right:  
*Bunny Gets Snookered #8*, 1997  
 Blue tights, navy stockings, wood and  
 vinyl chair, clamp, kapok, and wire  
 39 x 34 x 31⅞ in (99 x 86.5 x 79 cm)



*Bunny Gets Snookered #9, 1997*  
Tan tights, yellow stockings, office chair, clamp, kapok, and wire  
41 x 18<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 26 in (104 x 48 x 66 cm)



*Bunny Gets Snookered #10, 1997*  
Tan tights, red stockings, wood and vinyl chair, clamp, kapok, and wire  
41 x 28 x 35 in (104 x 71 x 89 cm)



*How little can sex deliver?*, 1998  
Black-and-white print  
40 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 29 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (102 x 76 cm)

I was invited by James Putnam to make an exhibition at the Freud Museum in London. I had delved into Freud a bit, via Jacqueline Rose and Juliet Mitchell, mostly case studies and short things. The short book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* was my favorite. It made me laugh—his language, the “oceanic feeling,” and his adoption of the penis to make a symbolic point. Not sure this had anything to do with James inviting me. But it certainly helped.

As far as I remember, I only had a couple of pieces ready to go when he asked me; it was a bit short notice (maybe someone else had dropped out?). These were the two papier-mâché *Bunny* chairs, one covered in mouths, one in eyes, cut out of tabloid newspapers, known as *Hysterical Attack* (1999). The rest of the show was a case of running with the ball. We had about a week or maybe five days. I had permission to customize some of Freud’s furniture, the domestic stuff in his kitchen. The museum was also his home in London. I put a bra and pants on one chair with lightbulbs in the bra and a vest and pants on another. I moved the female chair to the dining-room tabletop. The male chair sported a five-foot fluorescent tube from his Y-fronts, which pointed at her. I called this *The Pleasure Principle* (2000). James and I went trawling around furniture shops. I bought a red futon, which I slung over a clothes rail, adding a fluorescent strip through a slash in the material, a bucket with a light in it, and a couple of round bulbs for breasts. Then I added a cardboard coffin, also with a light in it. This became *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (2000).

Sometime before, getting out of bed one morning with Angus, he’d noticed that my right nipple was showing, stuck in a hole in my T-shirt. I suppose the nipple had worn the hole in it. It was quite an old T-shirt, as a lot of my things were then. He grabbed my camera and took a picture, fairly close up. There was only one shot left. I put the film in for developing. Can’t remember what was on the rest of it. I liked the picture and decided to get it printed in the max size available with the printer I used then, about six feet wide, I think. I’d forgotten about it but got a call from the printer saying it was done while we were installing at the Freud. So I got it there and, miraculously, it fit exactly in the alcove space above Freud’s consulting couch.

## BEYOND THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLE



*Hysterical Attack (Eyes)*, 1999  
Chair, collage, and papier-mâché  
29½ x 22½ x 30⅜ in (75 x 57 x 77 cm)



*Tree Faerie*, 1995  
C-print  
51 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 37 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (130 x 95 cm)



*Beyond the Pleasure Principle (Freud)*, 2000  
Futon mattress, cardboard coffin, garment rail, neon tube,  
lightbulbs, bucket, and wire  
57½ x 76 x 85 in (145 x 193 x 216 cm)



*Where Does It All Start?*, 1996  
C-print  
22¾ x 17½ in (57.8 x 44.5 cm)



This page:  
*Wischer Schicksal (Wanker Destiny)*, 1999  
Painted fiberglass, aluminum, wood, mirrored  
glass, motor, control unit, and cables  
25½ x 25⅞ x 25⅞ in (64.8 x 65.8 x 63.8 cm)

Opposite page:  
*Daddy*, 2005  
Wooden plinth, piece of branch, and cigarette  
63⅞ x 14⅞ x 11¼ in (161 x 37 x 28.5 cm)







*Mumum*, 2012  
Tights, fluff, and chair frame  
57 x 32½ x 43 in (144.7 x 82.5 x 109.2 cm)



*Sausage Film*, 1990 (stills)  
Betacam SP video, sound, color; 8:20 min



Opposite page:  
*Tits in Space*, 2000  
Wallpaper  
Dimensions variable

This page:  
*We do it with love*, 2005  
C-print  
22½ x 16⅞ in (57 x 42.8 cm)



*Where Does It All End?*, 1994  
Wax and cigarette  
2½ x 3¾ x 2½ in (6.4 x 9.5 x 6.4 cm)



*Christ You Know It Ain't Easy*, 2003  
Fiberglass and cigarettes  
77 x 72 x 16 in (195.6 x 182.9 x 40.6 cm)



Opposite page:  
*Beer Can Penis / Carling*, 2000  
 Beer cans  
 7 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 6 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 4 in (18 x 15.5 x 10 cm)

Left:  
*One's nob (viii)*, 2006  
 Beer can and cigarettes  
 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 6 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 3 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (21 x 16 x 10 cm)

Right:  
*Beer Can Penis*, 2000  
 Aluminum  
 5 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 5 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (15 x 13 x 7 cm)



*Skull*, 2000  
Human skull with gold teeth  
7½ x 7½ x 6¼ in (18 x 20 x 16 cm)

“God Is Dad” was a poster I saw while walking through Kennington Park. Must have been the late '80s as I lived south of the river then. The billboard was a propaganda vehicle for the church. Made me laugh. And got me thinking about patriarchy.

Years later, 2004 or 2005, I was making an exhibition for Barbara Gladstone in New York. Bush and Blair's war in the Gulf was in full swing. Nothing to celebrate, I thought. I made a very pared-down show using concrete blocks and tights with a few lightbulbs thrown in and an old bed base—the sorts of things in fact that you might just about be able to find amid the rubble of a bombed-out city. It's always possible to make art. When all else fails, it might be all you can do.

Bush is just another word for cunt.

**GOD IS DAD**



*Spamageddon*, 2004  
Chair, tights, kapok, Spam cans, and helmets  
32 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 41 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (81.5 x 105 x 100.5 cm)



*God is Dad*, 2005  
Nylon tights, small lightbulbs, and wire  
47 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 5 in (120.7 x 29.2 x 12.7 cm)

*Something Changed Raymond*, 2000  
Wardrobe, hanger, lightbulbs, rabbit in jar, and mirror  
104 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 74 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 36 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (266 x 190 x 93 cm)







Top:  
*Stanway John*, 2008  
 Polished bronze and concrete  
 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in (39 x 15.5 x 17 cm)

Bottom:  
*Pie*, 2002  
 Concrete  
 1<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in (4 x 16 x 16 cm)



This page:  
*Sex Baby Bed Base*, 2000  
 Bed base, chicken, T-shirt, lemons, and hanger  
 70<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 52<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in (180 x 133.5 cm)

Following spread:  
*Life's a Drag (Organs)*, 1998  
 Two cars and cigarettes  
 57<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 186<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 71 in (146 x 473 x 180 cm) each





*Dead Soldiers*, 2001–05  
Club hammer, wire, and twenty cigarette butts  
9½ x 22½ x 22 in (24 x 57 x 56 cm)



Left:  
*Burger Cunt*, 2005  
Bucket, tights, wire, and paint  
20⅞ x 15¾ x 13⅞ in (53 x 40 x 34 cm)



Right:  
*Accidental Souvenir*, 2005  
Helmet and tights  
6¼ x 9⅞ x 33⅞ in (16 x 25 x 86 cm)



*Cock*, 2005  
Metal cockerel, cigarettes, and glue  
23 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 7 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (60 x 47 x 20 cm)



*Liberty*, 2005  
Plaster and cigarette  
19 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 3 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (49 x 24 x 10 cm)



This page:  
*Unknown Soldier*, 2003  
Concrete boots and neon tube  
72 x 22 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 14 $\frac{1}{8}$  in (183 x 58 x 36 cm)



Opposite page:  
"Beyond the Pleasure Principle," 2000  
Exhibition view: Freud Museum, London

# DESCRIBE THIS DISTANCE

QUINN LATIMER

Ten years since language left,  
and that in its place came  
this atmospheric thunder  
    this lightning,  
in front of the aristocratic squeezing  
    of beings  
of all the noble beings  
    of ass,  
cunt and coc  
—Antonin Artaud

A disappointed woman should try to construct happiness out of a set  
of materials within her reach.  
—William Godwin’s counsel to Mary Wollstonecraft

Q13: How would you like to be remembered?  
A13: As someone who brightened things up.  
—Sarah Lucas

## I. Describe This Distance

Distance is far, nobody said. (Somebody, surely.) How I feel at the moment, on the island of Elba, where I sit at a desk overlooking the sea, considering an exhibition of works on the island of Mexico City (not an island). The artist, Sarah Lucas, is English. I am American. The museum where she showed her work: Mexican. Though the Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli is filled with Mesoamerican objects gleaned from the Teotihuacán, Toltec, and Aztec civilizations, nearly wiped clean from the Valley of Mexico, except for their relics, now exhibited. On the island where a French megalomaniac and brilliant tactician was luxuriously (though not ultimately) exiled, I feel these distinctions are important, and I feel them distinctly. Like distance, whatever that is.

Lucas, too, is concerned with this matter, though her concern often takes the form of or delineates the distance between a word and an image, the thing and its representation, the literal and the

implied, the low-rent and the high, the provincial and the urbane, the sense of humor and the sense of horror. Or the tit and the ass, the cock and the cunt, to be crass—and more plain. As is usually the artist’s wont. Likewise, Antonin Artaud, who late in his life limned the distance “[b]etween the ass and the shirt, / between the gism and the under-bet, / between the member and the let down, / between the membrane and the blade, / between the slat and the ceiling, / between the sperm and the explosion, / ’tween the fishbone and ’tween the slime, / between the ass and everyone’s / seizure.”<sup>1</sup> If the length between these factors can also be physically or emotionally vast, it seems that Lucas herself prefers the shortest distance or circuit possible: the instantly legible, the immediate innuendo, the lightest and swiftest and most economic of connections. So. I should be correspondingly concise. I will try.

Why does the word “shame” come to me, settle on the edge of my thoughts as though on some pale piece of paper, as though some animal? Considering this word, this animal, I see that it is not the English expression but the Greek that interests me here: *aidos*. Its definitions are appropriately vast and kaleidoscopic, and by “appropriately,” I mean so in regards to Lucas’s larger body of work, in which shame is a figure with a hundred different faces, facets, expressions. Her sculptures don’t have faces, no—famously, they might have melons for breasts, buckets or raw chickens or toilet-bowl brushes for cunts, beer cans or cucumbers or lightbulbs for cocks, kitchen tables for torsos, tan tights for limbs, and stained mattresses or burned-out cars or brick plinths for ground and landscape—but you get my point. (The face, as it were, is usually left out—a dash, an ellipsis, an absence, a specter; in this way, its suggested expressions are more numerous.)

So, shame. What does *aidos* mean? In a discussion of Euripides’s play *Hippolytos*, the classicist and poet Anne Carson notes the word’s lexical equivalents. These variously, surprisingly, include “awe, reverence, respect, self-respect, shamefastness, sense of honor, sobriety, moderation, regard for others, regard for the helpless, compassion, shyness, coyness, scandal, dignity, majesty, Majesty.” Also, less surprisingly: “Shames vibrates with honor and also with disgrace, with what is chaste and with what is erotic, with coldness and also with blushing. Shame is felt before the eyes of others and also in facing oneself.”<sup>2</sup>

I myself once wrote, “Waking from this dream, / shame is what dresses me.”<sup>3</sup> What dream? It doesn’t matter. By indicating shame as its result, the reader gets the point. And if it should turn up in Greek lyric poetry “as a component of sexual pleasure,” as Carson notes it does in a passage of Pindar concerning Aphrodite,<sup>4</sup> this also seems right. (In epic poems such as the *Iliad*, the plural of *aidos*—*aidoia*—connotes one’s sexual organs—but of course.) Shame’s basest and barest origination is sex. Thus there is distinct pleasure to be had in shame—our own and others. Lucas knows this. And if sex and pleasure are systems, so is the body, the origin and inauguration of organization and organizations. As these things go, the body—its sex, its pleasure—is regulated by other, more obviously constructed and implemented systems: economic, religious, linguistic, and patriarchal, the latter of which runs them all. But Lucas knows this too. Shame is her card. She plays it well. And when she turns it over, you see pleasure (among other figures) writ on its back.

See, for example, the exhibition for which the artist first gained notice. It was called, straightforwardly enough, “Penis Nailed to a Board.” Mounted in 1992 at City Racing, then an artist-run gallery in south London, the show was titled—as was one of the central works in the exhibition—after a headline in a tabloid from the previous year. The story described a group of sadomasochistic men who sexually terrorized each other for sport (they might dispute this characterization, but then I am not a scholar of their desire). They were then prosecuted in court for, archaically enough, offending public morals.<sup>5</sup>

Lucas’s titular work, from 1991, articulates or ventriloquizes this tabloid story in the form of a profane board game. If you open the game’s box—its mouth, as it were—the underside of its lid offers a facsimile of the original article sans the humiliating grid of mug shots, the publicly circulated portraits that assured their subjects’ humiliation. Inside the box, those men’s individual images have been cut out like teeth and attached to small blocks of wood, which comprise the pieces of the (shame) game. The article and subsequent artwork’s operating principle—the humiliation of private sexual choice arbitrarily and publically prosecuted—conjures up infamous older accounts of the sexually regulated body paraded through the British post: Alan Turing, say, the inventor of the modern computer, who was prosecuted for his homosexuality and forced to take hormones; he killed himself, a kind of state-sponsored suicide.

Among other works in this, Lucas’s first solo show, was *Soup* (1989), a photo-collage that depicted a ground of canned vegetable soup—in disgusting color close-up—over which a series of cutout black-and-white images of heads of penises float atop the peas and carrots and cream of the larger image. The penises, circumcised or not, resemble themselves, weirdly disassembled and cut loose from the bodies they likely (hopefully) attend to. But they also evoke a sea of squinting, protuberant eyes, conjuring a pat Surrealist image à la Luis Buñuel’s 1929 film *Un Chien Andalou*, with its startling scene of the horse’s eye being slashed, and other now-clichéd visual tropes of the same movement. The soup itself, meanwhile, connotes

a certain domestic class, and those on the lower end of it who might be the ones served and serving the stuff.

If the two works I’ve just described don’t, in the end, prove totally formally prescient of Lucas’s more mature work to follow, their themes and attitude do. See the gleanings of modernism’s verdant art historical fields and the callow tabloid news. See the mixing up of signifiers for food and sex, their lurid equivalence and mutable and mutual abasement, like an equation or a joke or a sentence, perfectly balanced. Also the employment of Surrealist, Freudian, Kleinian, and Lacanian psychosexual clichés that have filtered down to popular, general knowledge, so that everyone might get the point. Games, cigars, oral fixation, the unconscious, fetishism, mirror images, internal objects, everyone “gets it,” even if they might not recognize the original referent. Above all, note the literal-mindedness of these works—in their conception, making, and titling—which would come to characterize Lucas’s larger practice. For, in it, she would come to use the literal as both a gift for and an expectation of the spectator, as well as an operating framework, like a joke that ends with an ellipsis, relying on the audience to provide the punch line. As such, her visual and verbal puns turn metaphoric innuendo into expert, endless endgame: “It is what it is.” What it is.

So spills the strange dialectic that courses through Lucas’s oeuvre, dividing it like a river splits a field, creating two mirroring shores. Innuendo, its pleasure, the system on which the artist depends, is usually built of multiple levels of suggestion, inference, and meaning. It is built atop depth, the shadows of meaning that reside in the dark waters below. Thus the pause before the joke suddenly unfolds itself in the audience’s mind, suddenly breaks the surface—*oob*. Revelation depends precisely on those very depths that were previously hidden.

But Lucas’s other system—literal-mindedness—operates differently, oppositely: no pause. No drop into the deep. Things are what they are; the water is clear. Nothing (on the surface, anyway) remains occluded. And to an audience trained to look for Freudian hidden meanings or Surrealist double meanings or elaborate art-world metaphors and stand-ins for meaning, Lucas’s literal, surface meaning—though not verisimilitude, not mimesis—can be just as weirdly disconcerting.<sup>6</sup> In a contemporary world of metaphor and charged and debatable silences, in our bright forests alit with signs and symbols, this straightforwardness provides the spectator with a strange frisson, a darkly distinct and foreign pleasure.

...

On July 20, 1972, Susan Sontag described in her journal the “everything book” that she had been trying to write. “Remember what Richard Howard said five years ago when *Death Kit* came out? I have to find my own form.”<sup>7</sup> Some thirty years later, one afternoon in New York, the same Richard told me that my work needed more id. He was smiling, delighted. He described how he had been walking his dog around New York University, near his apartment, past the many

doors that read “No Entrance Without ID.” These thresholds and their instruction had alighted on him as a revelatory diagnosis of my writing. Now, reading Sontag’s self-revelations from under my mosquito nets in Elba, I wonder what early mentors gave Lucas what advice. It’s relevant because the artist’s singular sensibility seemed to have found its own equivalent and singular form so astonishingly quickly. But then, Lucas likes quickness, economy.

Thus I will attempt to describe her notorious rise just as expediently. Lucas’s 1992 show at City Racing made her famous, assured her entry into the bright young things of the YBAs, or Young British Artists, who would define English art for a decade (and sometimes seem to define it still). Around the time of the exhibition, she landed on the reductionist sculptural lexicon that would constitute her artistic maturity, with its profane, sexualized, anatomical images (at once general and luridly specific) wrought from banal refuse: the bestiary of domestic wreckage that includes food, undergarments, and plumbing, the most base of sexual metaphors.

Just as swiftly, Lucas’s expert employment of language asserted itself. Not simply in her “formal vocabulary,” as critics note of every artist alive and dead, but in her literal use of the vernacular that courses through her works’ titles, which marry the bleak scatological compression of Samuel Beckett to the cheery and slumming contemporary wit waiting with his newspaper for the bus down the street. *Sod You Gits* (1990), for example, took its title from the photocopied tabloid story—about a sexually available female dwarf—that comprises the work. *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab* (1992), with its spectral, faux-Surrealist female form rendered in the aforementioned hangover food, arranged lewdly on a wooden table, has distinct echoes of the crass blue-collar man disparaging a female conquest to his pals (or “bros,” as we would say back home in California; is it “blokes” in London? I have no idea).

Elsewhere, *Steely Dan* (1993) is an objet d’art cock and balls figured in wire; its cousin or conquest (maybe both!), *Rose Bush* (1993), offers the titular words affixed to individual wire stems, which lean out of a collection of beer bottles, composing the most abject and bruisingly affectionate of bouquets. *The Old In Out* (1998), a cast polyurethane toilet, practically goads the critic into scrawling the words “toilet humor” and Duchamp; I succumb. *I might be shy but I’m still a pig* (2000), meanwhile, is composed of a dirty mattress with two hams (or *jamón*) arranged “face down” on it, wearing a pair of white underpants—or “knickers,” as Lucas’s 2005 catalogue raisonné notes, ever vernacularly.<sup>8</sup> (This last work was made for a show in Spain; Lucas likes to work in the local idiom.) As one can see—or read, rather—the artist’s interest in economy of form and meaning extends itself to language: her titles, their jokes, are fast and cheap. The syntax is, too (fast, not cheap). She wastes no time on punctuation—with its indication of contemplation, of time, of long, languorous roads of lyricism—nor on explication. Instead, like Beckett, like a certain kind of protomodernist or modernist poet (Dickinson, Artaud, Pound), she favors sharp and tight syntactical compression.

But time passes. It picks up distance. (Punctuation, even.) If, early in her career, Lucas manifested her literal-mindedness in the vocabulary of the domestic vernacular—everything but the kitchen sink, etc.—she also occasionally did it in the language of modernist sculpture. Her basic reductionism was everywhere apparent, but so were her brisk and blatant nods to high Minimalism. See her Dan Flavin phalluses, pale and diagonal fluorescent light tubes spilling out of the ass of a chicken in *Cock-a-Doodle-Do* (2000), or her Richard Serra–cum–Carl Andre mattress in *Au Naturel* (1994). See her Donald Judd–like colored-cast series of her own thin and profane arms, giving the spectator the English fuck you (*Get Hold of This* [1994]). What she was doing was turning late modernism’s sculptural tropes into another vernacular—or revealing it to be one that already existed.

In Lucas’s steady employment and subversion of vernacular traditions, one can flag, perhaps, her reflexive resistance to ideas of universality as figured by the “universal” body or artwork. The artist’s works—so many bodies—are about class and art and humor and sex and education and pleasure and misogyny. They are, more concisely, about power. As the art historian Amna Malik has noted in her book devoted to Lucas’s *Au Naturel*, “In its vernacular form,” the titular artwork “refuses the universality that English culture had previously aspired to in its imperialist policies.”<sup>9</sup> Or as Virginia Woolf holds archly, irresistibly, in a little book about Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s dog: “[W]hile Corinth has fallen and Messina has tumbled, while crowns have blown down the wind and old Empires have gone up in flames, Wimpole Street has remained unmoved . . . for as long as Wimpole Street remains, civilization is secure.”<sup>10</sup>

Malik herself concisely describes England’s postindustrial economic struggles in the early 1990s, when Lucas first came to the public’s attention. She cites Stuart Hall’s remark that globalization, along with its many entrancing effects, had managed to make Englishness—the colonialist normative hallmark of “universal” civilization—into something strange and other and peculiar, into an ethnicity, as England once made the world outside its island. Certainly, this feels so in Lucas’s articulate and ever-localizing hands.

But Lucas’s adept investigation of the potentialities of the regional vernacular does not limit itself to her neighborhood or nation or nationality, nor to the canon of Minimalism. In the past decade, she has gone back a few pages in the art history books (and then, more recently, a few pages more), landing on yet another sculptural tradition-cum-vernacular with which to ply her trade. With its reclining female nude, organic eroticism, twisty limbs assembled on a stolid plinth, suggestion of expectant orifices, blank torpor, and smooth, bovine “openness,” it’s the biggie—and one that we all get. Oh Henry Moore, oh Barbara Hepworth, oh Hans Bellmer, oh Louise Bourgeois, oh Pablo Picasso. Oh nudes.

## II. NUDS, or, On the Order of Language as Much as That of the Body

Shall we talk about Lucas’s 2012 exhibition at the Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli in Mexico City? I have never been there. Strange since I grew up (relatively) close, in Los Angeles. Strange too, since I did not see this exhibition, entitled “NUDS.” But we often talk—and write—about those things we have not seen in person, places that we have not yet traversed, people we have not met. For example, here I have already mentioned Artaud, Beckett, Bourgeois, Hepworth, Picasso, Pindar, Napoleon, Sontag, Woolf. I have not met any of these individuals; time, its distance, is, of course, an issue. Our only acquaintance, then, is through books or artworks, and from these two things, I must admit, I feel we are all quite close. But distance is a funny thing like that. With its vicissitudes and vagaries, it can be temporal or geographical or emotional, instructive or paradoxical—even dialectical. It can be a physical fact and an intellectual misnomer. What does it name anyway? Distance.

For instance: Two weeks ago I was in Switzerland. There was a little skirt of snow on each mountain that I saw. Now I am south, a full day away by train and boat, on an island off the Tuscan coast. Mountains here are washes of blue set against cerulean sky; spinelike they spill into the silver surface and surfeit of sea. Yet, *die Schweiz oder Italia*, I continue to look at images on my computer of artworks made by an English artist in Mexico. Two weeks—what is that? A distance in which everything and nothing changes. The images I have of Lucas’s show in Mexico City stand before me, ever virtually. Funny how photographs, framed by the discrete monitor of one’s laptop, can be one’s introduction to everything. As such, pink hues and artful piles of bricks, and the Mesoamerican objects that lurk in the dusky background, catch my eye, distract me, punctuating the images as they do, one on top of another. I click through them.

Pale tangles of lithe limbs or bulbous appendages are set on geometric plinths of stacked bricks arranged in neat, modernist grids. Everything is the pinkish-brown hue of skin, clay, earth. One thinks of a series of tones, lambently played: skin tones, earth tones. The soft-sculpture forms—Lycra tights or socks filled lucidly with cotton—have armatures of wire inside them, so the artist has been able to twist and turn, open and close the limbs, as they might be called. The stockings, too, are often knotted at their ends, offering nipplelike punctuation marks to the limber or engorged forms they encompass. Under the tights, the cotton stuffing has the aspect of marble: it seems subtly veined, as with porcelain girls and aging white ladies.

The figurelike forms appear to be all appendages, extremities, pendulous offerings. Torsos and faces are excised, like trees that are all boughs, branches. Yet the metaphor is not one of youth—or not exclusively. These are not saplings. Instead, they conjure the term (borrowed from some English paperback novel of indeterminate origin and reading) “old girls.” Aged and ageless, like the pagan goddess, with her ancient, antic fertility, after whom a few of the sculptures are named: Sheela na gig.

I notice that the lean laconicism of Lucas’s now-distant works—her earlier figures—here gives way to something at once insistently older and yet less world-weary. There is palpable pleasure here. Also pain. But not so dirty. Though just as dark. I think of Flaubert’s declaration: “The adjective is the enemy of the noun.”<sup>11</sup> Are Lucas’s new works, new bodies, adjectives or nouns? Her oeuvre’s intimate relationship to language seems to beg the question (not on its knees, though). I think, perhaps, the earlier figurative sculptures were nouns: the spectator-reader encountered them and read, “Cock, cunt, car, mattress, boot, chicken, bulb, soldier, slut.” These Mexico works, I decide, are adjectives. It is less what they intrinsically are—bouquets of attenuated limbs set on adobe plinths—than the sensibility and feeling they evoke. Slurry, slutty, lonely, funny, rigorous, regal, fertile, ancient, modern, pagan. Female. Is that last one a noun or an adjective? My mind goes blank.

References to Louise Bourgeois’s organic, amorphous sculptures of female and male bodies colluding, collecting, hyphenating, and to Hans Bellmer’s twisted, featureless, violated dolls, are explicit, yes. I note, appreciatively, however, the lack of Bellmer’s requisite sadism in Lucas’s work (critique of fascism or no, it’s still the female body he was torturing). In the past, Lucas has deftly ventriloquized a casual misogyny, taking up the male pathologizing of women’s work that contemporary artists like the late Mike Kelley employed—imbuing craft and abject materials with it—as well as the Surrealists’ medical and methodical parsing of the female form. Her sometimes humiliating treatment of the female figure might be a feminist critique of that expert level of misogyny and gender pathology in both art and life, or, conversely, a reflexive rejection of essentialist feminist readings of gender positing and positioning, but her attitude toward sexual debasement also occasionally feels much more ambiguous, estranged—and disconcerting.

Take her seminal work *Bitch* (1995), for instance. The work—sculpture and title taken together—conjures rape, or, at the very least, very bad sex. For it, Lucas stretched a white T-shirt over one side of a scuffed-up table, then made two excisions to the underside of the shirt, out of which melons hang heavily, like breasts. A woman, then, on her hands and knees. On the other end of the table, a whole fish dangles, either the table-woman’s cunt or the metaphoric cock of the guy fucking her. The humor here is so black and bleak as to be nonexistent. The work—the *Bitch* in heat—goads the spectator into taking a moralist position, and then encourages them to feel uncool for it, like the woman not laughing at a sexist joke. *Come on, relax*. So Lucas’s position has never been polemical nor particularly clear.

Yet despite the slight echoes of Bellmer’s tortured dolls in this new body of work, and of the male modernist’s treatment of the female nude in general, Lucas’s macho posturing of the past is, here, mostly absent. In its place is a more subtle invocation of the uses and abuses to which mankind has put our bodies: sexually, aesthetically, procreatively. This might be an apropos time to elaborate on the Sheela na gig figure mentioned earlier. I first heard her name when

I was a teenager, in a dazzling, raucous song by PJ Harvey, Lucas's countrywoman ("Gonna take my hips to a man who cares / Heard it before, he said / Sheela na gig, you exhibitionist . . . / Put money in your idle hole").<sup>12</sup> More recently, I found a book that formally described the deity thus: "The common denominator of the Sheelana-gigs is the frontal representation of a standing, squatting or seated nude female displaying her pudenda," it noted. "But whereas the vulva looks big and plump, giving the impression of fertility, the head and chest look bony and emaciated, suggesting old age."<sup>13</sup>

The pagan deity and fertility figure was a kind of dark goddess that represented medieval women's regular occupation and regular death. In childbirth she was, in childbirth she went. For centuries. The witchiness of the Sheela na gig's depiction—her craggy, hollowed-out face and huge vulva, reaching to the ground, open, shameless—is suggested in the spidery limbs of Lucas's Mexico sculptures, their squatting, exposed poses. See *Sheela na gig* (2012), in which a concrete toilet is placed on its side, upon a plinth, so that its egg-like orifice faces you, both Celtic and modern in its pure, smooth, autonomous clarity and roundness. Inside, a soft-sculpture figure hunches, its face a nipplelike appendage, its legs spilling out and open, impudently, onto the adobe plinth.

In another *Sheela na gig* (2012), the same materials present themselves, but the soft figure stays inside its round concrete cavern. Half-hidden, the tangle of lucid, sensual forms—limbs, appendages—equally evokes and quotes a deep psychological interiority and a modern organicism. If the "popular" imagination is the well from which Lucas has long both lightly drawn and darkly drunk, this well also contains the female body as figured, sculpturally, throughout history. We're all acquainted with it. So we see in Lucas's *NUDS* the sensual modernist sculpture surrendering to its equally artful plinth; the requisite nude; even the Social Realist form, that round-bodied, fertile worker made emblematic by Diego Rivera; as well as the Sheela na gig. We see the modern men who would (and did) depict us; we see all the women who would swallow that image, its constant reproduction, then spit it out, our bodies become—what—something else.

But we might go further back, to other suspected fertility goddesses. There are the beautiful and somber Aztec deities of the Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli, ears of corn in their hair, black stripes on their cheeks. Indeed, there is Artemis, in all her varied depictions, the Greek patron goddess of the pain of childbirth (and the favored goddess of Euripides's Hippolytos). There are the famed Cycladic figures, with their moonlike faces, folded arms, pointed toes, and attenuated bodies, meant to be lying down (or carried). These date from the Bronze Age, roughly 2600–2400 BC. They, and their mysterious application, have been described rather wonderfully: "They had perhaps some use in the rituals of the living before accompanying their owners to the grave."<sup>14</sup> It has been suggested that they could have been substitute concubines, divine nurses, conductors of souls, servants, or surrogates for human sacrifice. But mostly they are assumed to be mother goddesses. "The idea of a worshipper in a

gesture of veneration is a possible interpretive alternative but fails to account for the nearly total absence of male statuettes in this characteristic position. Therefore, the view of a female deity of fertility remains the most plausible explanation."<sup>15</sup> Indeed.

There are—from slightly earlier and slightly farther east—the spectacular Bactrian Princesses, as they are known, with their elaborate, formal hairstyles and stylized, bowl-like forms, perhaps shrouding the productivity (and definitely the meaning) going on below. From the prehistoric civilization of Bactria, in Central Asia, these figures are crafted from two kinds of stone: often green chlorite for the heavy body, white limestone for the handsome head. Their grave and massive figures—containing the solemn largesse of landscape or plinth—are wrapped in decorous, patterned robes. Sometimes they are attended to by animals or mythical creatures in seals from the period. They are always depicted as seated or squatting.

Lucas's female-hewing sculptures (though not all, some are less rigorously gendered) are a strange entry into this astonishing matrilineal assembly. Their material is softer, their meaning at once clearer and less assured. Are her figures ironic or sincere in their efforts and effects? Can they be both? What kind of shame—which of the myriad definitions it contains—do they represent in the twisted, gaping, and alert sentries of their limbs? To whom are they directed? What women (or men) will they carry through?

### III. Construct Happiness

"A disappointed woman should try to construct happiness out of a set of materials within her reach."<sup>16</sup> He meant well. Of course, Mary Wollstonecraft also died in childbirth (with his, William Godwin's, child) at some not-so-later date. But such was the eighteenth century, and such are the vagaries of womanhood. Which Wollstonecraft, more than most, knew, being the author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects* (1792). Still, the advice the theorist and writer's husband-to-be offered her brings me to two facets of Lucas's own work that are not often discussed. One is its intimations of depression, disappointment, or futility. The other is its site-specificity, its drawing from local sources, traditions, and wells.

Let's address the latter first, work backward. That seems expedient. So, Godwin's advice. What is the source of my immediate attraction, my intense ardor, for his counsel? Well. It is at once empathic and obtuse, intelligent and hilarious. It is musical. Like a piece of light slipping in, like a knife. Turning to Lucas, such a nice turn of phrase, such a studious recommendation, could easily attach itself to the artist's working practice, as her materials have often been those that are assuredly within her estimable and able reach. Or what the spectator has been encouraged to think of as her reach.

In the beginning, in the 1990s, those materials defined a kind of working-class domesticity as well as a young, high-spirited, and, apparently, often drunk *bohème*. In her early works and installations,

scuffed chairs and tables for eating or working about, as do the nourishment that might ordinarily litter them: smoked fish, kebabs, beer cans, fried eggs, rotting vegetables and fruit, milk (Lucas's father was a milkman, but we won't get too Freudian about that here). So it went with Lucas's other preferred articles, which included cigarettes and toilets and lightbulbs and mattresses and boots and cars. All profane, all quotidian, all usual.

As the artist's increasingly vigorous art career took her to museums around Europe and the rest of the world, she began to pick up these items from local thrift shops near wherever she was exhibiting. The works might then be made directly in the space. It was convenient, topical, and economic. For Lucas, this idea was never just material, but conceptual as well. See her exemplary exhibition in 2000 at the Freud Museum in London, the carefully preserved home of Sigmund and his daughter Anna. Titling the show "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," Lucas used Freud's own dark and ponderous *Mitteleuropean* furniture for her sculptures, dressing his heavy chairs in underwear, undershirts, bras, and lewdly positioned fluorescent light tubes. An enormous image of the artist's chest in an old, worn T-shirt—one nipple poking through a tiny hole in it—was hung above Freud's famous couch, which in her work functioned as the space where his spectral patients might describe dreams of such symbolic happenings as Lucas's (ocular, peeking) nipple.

The artist's show of new works in Mexico at the Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli appears to reflexively mine its immediate surroundings as well, both materially and conceptually. For one, the works were made with materials—adobe bricks, concrete toilets, cotton, a brand of stockings actually called Dorian Gray—culled from Oaxaca, where Lucas stayed and worked during her time in Mexico (the stockings are available on [merceriaactualidad.com](http://merceriaactualidad.com), should you wish to order your own). But the forms and ideas that Lucas's Mexico works embody are also insistently regional. See the formal shadows of the Teotihuacán, Toltec, Mayan, and Aztec objects (both figurative and utilitarian) that rest in the actual shadows behind Lucas's installed works in the dramatic galleries of the museum. See, too, her large line drawing of Leon Trotsky (friend of Rivera and Frida Kahlo, lover of the latter) drafted with cigarettes, and the enormous bust of Benito Juárez, the celebrated nineteenth-century Oaxacan liberal reformer and president of Mexico, who resisted the French occupation orchestrated by Napoleon. Here, Lucas has delineated the smooth, Zapotec planes of Juárez's face in yellow-and-white smokes as well, though they mostly hew to one side of his face, evoking traces of comedy and tragedy masks.

That Rivera created this museum—its dark, volcanic corridors and galleries are filled with his collection of Mesoamerican objects as well as the preparatory drawings for his own celebrated murals—is not missed nor misused by Lucas. The Mexican artist's round and figurative Social Realist line (representative of his politics, the modernism he studied for fifteen years in Europe, and his fervent interest in pre-Columbian art) is all over Lucas's soft sculptures and cigarette drawings, which wear their references gladly. Rivera's fame



"NUDS," 2012  
Exhibition view: Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli  
(kurimanzutto off-site), Mexico City



for womanizing, meanwhile, put into relief by the popular depiction of his long-suffering artist wife, who was famously unable to have children, is everywhere else.

Which brings us back to Godwin's advice to Wollstonecraft and its provident illumination of Lucas's practice. I am, of course, being ironic in fixing Lucas as the "disappointed woman" of his equation. (Just as this fixed, commercialized persona for Kahlo is not completely accurate either.) Yet my irony is not total. If there is little discussion of the depressive element coming up coolly through Lucas's oeuvre, it nonetheless remains fixed in my thoughts, like a hazy hallucination of fog on some sensed horizon.

One critic who has remarked on this suppressed (literally, depressed) aspect in Lucas's work is Matthew Collings. He and Lucas share a kind of dryly English and brashly aggressive populist fervor—short, dirty declaratives populate both of their bodies of work, basically announcing "Get on, then" with surprising consistency. (It's an attitude and atmosphere that I can only marvel at, from my laconic California-born distance.) So it is not surprising, I suppose, that Collings has got Lucas pinned; she has him pinned, too. In any case, the critic has written that "it's possible to get a sense of Lucas as a more human and even conventionally expressive artist than is often supposed. Jokes might be present in her work because life is awful and humor is an antidote to misery—and her art might be about linguistics and sign systems, and identity, and so on, but it might also be about depression."<sup>17</sup>

Depression, abjection, self-abasement: such ideas arise in Lucas's treatment of the female figure in her sculpture, which might be called critical at best, self-hating at worst. I think the truth exists somewhere in the center of those poles, with more magnetic pull toward the former. Still, it is the ambiguity of Lucas's position that imbues her works with their persuasiveness, their inexplicable power. Though the artist is undoubtedly a feminist, she is not a moralist, and her work does not serve as propaganda, nor to illustrate a political position.

But such equivocation, such a lack of clear intention or polemic, also points to Lucas's strange limning of passivity in her body of work. Out of her oeuvre, the artist has constructed a world in which we can actually see or hear our own passive involvement, or lack of engagement, in the systems that surround and surrender us. One lets a sexist joke, or some semiviolent sexual encounter, slide. One lets a colleague call you a cunt (without burning down the building). One lets sexuality become something base and sportif—lewdly recreational or sadly mind-numbing—so as to get through the dark and impoverished day. One allows oneself to be moved by the misogyny of modernism, of art history. One lets oneself—woman or man or one less narrowly gendered—be reduced to the barest and most inscribed sexual or gender or psychological or art historical signifiers, and be seen and known and understood and read as that, just that.

Yet, paradoxically, Lucas manages this—holds up this mirror to her tractable audience—by employing an oddly "positively charged" passivity of her own, to quote a rather expert analysis of Beckett's

postwar works and general sensibility following his time with the Resistance. In the introduction to the second volume of Beckett's letters, Dan Gunn writes that "perhaps, the sight of so much brutal activity had confirmed him for ever in his inclination to a—however paradoxically rigorous and positively charged—*passivity*."<sup>18</sup> Likewise, Lucas's sense of levity and diffident impassiveness, her artfully "casual" metabolism of sexual and economic and political trauma, is a more positively inclined version of the resigned and apathetic ciphers (figures of emotional or material poverty, of sexism, even of war) that have often populated her work. But we might take this argument further. That sense of acquiescent yielding could be understood as Lucas's coy and thoughtful nod to those very modernist reclining nudes—compliant figures par excellence—that her own *NUDS* so supremely quote.

To return to those figures: her own and the ones they reference. Also: depression, mirrors. Lucas's fragmentary bodies, allusive and elusive in their nods to Surrealism, modernism, and now early fertility figures, have often, in their long hallways of referents, left echoes for me of Lacan's famous formulation of the mirror stage. Certainly, the Lacanian *imagos* of the fragmented body haunt and bewilder us, as does the Kleinian idea of internal objects. For Lacan, in the pull or gulf between the infantile experience of a fractured and piecemeal body and the image of wholeness that both mirror and mother supposedly provide, a space or distance develops, a depression or alienation of relations. In this space, dreams or images of the fragmentation of oneself and others arise; bodies are broken piece by piece, and then reassembled into strangely construed "wholes."

Lacan first delivered his treatise "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" at the congress of the International Psychoanalytical Association in Zurich in 1949. From this would come the French psychoanalyst's famous *Écrits*, published in 1966. And thus, this splendid quote: "The mirror stage is a drama whose internal pressure pushes precipitously from insufficiency to anticipation—and, for the subject caught up in the lure of spatial identification, turns out fantasies that proceed from a fragmented image of the body to what I will call an 'orthopedic' form of its totality—and to the finally donned armor of an alienating identity that will mark his entire mental development with its rigid structure. Thus, the shattering of the *Innennwelt* to *Umwelt* circle gives rise to an inexhaustible squaring of the ego's audits."<sup>19</sup>

The "inexhaustible squaring of ego's audits": one cannot compete. Yet it is this dream of damage—this movement from "insufficiency to anticipation," from fragment to whole and back again—that seems to haunt Lucas's works, both old and new. Her early, roughly sketched bodies, with their poverty of material and richness of symbol, were always on the edge of fracturing or incompleteness or misreading. Her series of *NUDS* made in Mexico, on the other hand, have more for the spectator (or infant) to go on: The beige limbs fashioned from women's stockings. The fleshy, globular forms that might be nipples or breasts or balls. The reassuring plinths, long known to raise women (or ideas of them). Yet here too the figures are lacking,

partial. There are no eyes, mouths. Arms are indistinguishable from legs. In *Hoolian* (2013), a fairly straightforward figure sits on its ass, cross-legged, its hands clutching its knees; two breastlike appendages arise where the face should be. What has been amputated, compromised, switched, scavenged?

Or see the bizarre and beautiful *Comunista* (2012), in which a seated figure opens its legs to reveal a pale toilet bowl inlaid decorously with cigarettes, the most vast of vulvas. Or the smaller *Realidad* (2013), in which a figure bears the weight of several bulbous, pale-skin-colored forms down its back, like a branch loaded with ripe fruit (or Eva Hesse's scrotumlike sacks). As has often been pointed out in art historical studies dusted with psychoanalysis, of everything from Christian iconography to Surrealism, the aestheticized dismemberment of bodies, the fragmenting of figures, is perhaps an unconscious attempt at transcending the primal, infantile fear of the body coming apart. By doing (or undoing) this (or us) ourselves, we take control of the process, the system. As is Lucas's way, her *NUDS* both quote these well-known theories and test them, until referent and truth become a blurry mixtape that one cannot stop playing.

So, asks the spectator, what does the mutable, mutilated body offer us? It offers us an *in*, replies the chorus. As dark as that might sound.

#### IV. Mexico: Self, Portrait

In 1936, Artaud—after years of sporadic rest cures in Swiss sanitariums—left France and went to Mexico City on a grant to study Mesoamerican art and culture and to give a series of university lectures on Surrealism, Marxism, theater, and ancient Mexican myths. While there, he also embarked on his chief goal: a vision quest, with the help of peyote and the Tarahumara Indians, which would play out its strange influence on him for the rest of his life.<sup>20</sup> The previous year, he had written a letter to one of his editors, outlining his interest in the country: "I have heard for a long time of a sort of movement deep in Mexico in favor of a return to the civilization from before Cortez."<sup>21</sup>

In 2012, Lucas left England for Mexico, with the aim to create a new body of work in Oaxaca, to be shown at the Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli in Mexico City. As I mentioned earlier, this museum was already filled with the Mexican artist's approximately 50,000 objects collected from the pre-Columbian cultures that Hernán Cortés de Monroy y Pizarro, First Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca, and his legacy of Spanish colonialism cleared. But why not fill the museum some more? Which brings us to the question of this museum, its provenance. Planned in 1933 and constructed ever so fitfully, it was finished by the architect Juan O'Gorman after Rivera's death. It opened in 1963. It is made from black volcanic stone, and its strange, messianic, templelike form and stolidity is apparently modeled on Aztec and Mayan architecture. I would like to see it one day.

Inside, the ground floor offers a literal wealth of Teotihuacán, Toltec, and Aztec objects: icons, sculptures, bowls. Some of these,

I suspect, are likely Tlatilco figurines, hundreds of which were notoriously unearthed in the 1930s under a brickyard in Mexico City. Pulled out by the workers and others, they were then sold to tourists and collectors, including, so legend goes, Rivera. Most of these figures are female, characterized by large, flared thighs and small waists and breasts. From around 1300 BC, they are variously depicted as standing or sitting, holding babies or small lapdogs in their laps. The wide planes of their faces might be regarded as beautiful or grotesque or both.<sup>22</sup> "A distinctly macabre streak appears in the art of the Tlatilco, possessed by a psychological bent that delighted in monstrosities," as one book puts it.<sup>23</sup> Lucas would seem to find some commonalities with her own work here.

The Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli's middle floor shows pieces from Mexico's west coast, as well as drawings, sketches, and plans for Rivera's murals, including one of his masterworks, *Man, Controller of the Universe* (1934), which was realized at Bellas Artes in another part of the city. This middle floor was to be his studio, but that didn't happen—man can't control everything. Nor woman. I once spent a year studying in Madrid. My education and life there seemed generally lacking, or so it seemed to me at the time, so I enrolled in night classes at Bellas Artes, the famous Madrid art school (in Barrio Cortes, no less) where Picasso and Dalí and others studied and loafed. But in the late 1990s, when I was there, it seemed mostly to be known for its genteel bourgeois café on the ground floor. It was indeed lovely, and I often drank *café con leche* there.

In any case, I spent many evenings that year in an airy room on one of the upper floors, drawing a thin, naked young man with an enormous wingspan (I don't mean that in a dirty, innuendo-type way). The model was quite petite and proud—he made me think of Napoleon—and he variously reminded me of both a hawk and a spider. I could never decide which. Anyway, ever since that time I have noticed that each Spanish-speaking country seems to have a Bellas Artes in its capital, a strange gift of colonialism, it seems. Perhaps the one in Mexico City has a good *café con leche* too.

Which is all to bring us back to Lucas's show in Mexico: her portrait of the country through her work there, its portrait of her. This exhibition, this portrait, might then bring us to the question of self-portraiture in her larger oeuvre. It is not a small question, nor is it a small body of work. In fact, as is Lucas's wont with popular knowledge, we all know it. That photograph of her gamely eating a banana, boyish flop of hair falling over her face. The one of her in a chair, legs akimbo, two fried eggs dotting and approximating her small breasts in their wrinkled T-shirt. The blurry black-and-white one of her smoking, chin tilted up, eyes bathetically narrowed, ash as long as a finger. The color one of her on the floor, nearly smiling, nearly mature, a skull between her bent, outstretched legs. A sweetly butch equipoise distinguishes all of them. Also: a kind of femininity. A sense of seriousness and levity both. What is the draw of these images? What, in fact, is the imperceptible draw of most photographs of artists and writers?

We all know it, that phantom yearbook (face-book, rather) of the esteemed creative class: Woolf's long, aquiline profile attended to by

a longer plait of hair; Chekhov with a dog under his arm, leaning back easily; Sontag on her back, arm under her resting head, confidently smoking a cigarette, thinking; Picasso, a bull in his baggy white bathing costume, holding an umbrella for Françoise; Rivera, enormous, crushing some scaffolding, a paintbrush in his hand, or looming over a solemn, flower-bedecked Kahlo; Hesse holding up an enormous sheet of plastic above her dark, sleek head, waves of it refracting at her feet. Add to this Lucas, grimly smoking a cigarette, a good-natured “fuck you” offered by her narrow, amused eyes.

In her Mexico exhibition, I could find no self-portraits of Lucas. And this seems right, as perhaps the pull of Kahlo’s notorious series of self-portraits would have been too much, as the influence or inflection of Tina Modotti’s photos of self and others, or Graciela Iturbide’s seminal portrait of the Oaxacan woman with lizards crowning her head, *Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas* (1979), might have been. Perhaps a self-portrait of Lucas could be located in the work itself, her choices in making it. She’s there in the Trotsky portrait, her cigarettes outlining his familiar features. She’s there in her sculptures, transparent, productive, and yet ever elusive. “Are these fertility statuary or funerary?” some spectral future anthropologists might ask.

Which begs another question (there are so many, it’s true). Is there something heedlessly dark and unwavering in Lucas’s endless assimilation of historical and cultural forms? (Think of capitalism, its hunting and gathering.) Everything, in the end, is channeled through her. We see Trotsky’s portrait crafted from cigarettes, and we think of one between her teeth, eyes clenched. We see her Sheela na gig with its legs open, and our mind goes to Lucas, legs equally akimbo, feet in boots or a beer can placed, ever so lucidly, at her crotch. “Death is a photograph,” Sontag writes.<sup>24</sup> Maybe.

...

“[T]he body is like a sentence that invites us to rearrange it, so that its real meaning becomes clear through a series of endless anagrams,” Hans Bellmer once said, astutely.<sup>25</sup> Endless anagrams might describe Lucas’s sculptural works and installations—so preoccupied with figuring the body, its potential for limits and for change—as well as her self-portraits, in which the artist makes of her image an infinite number of small adjustments, so that as the smaller signifiers change and stack up, the larger meaning becomes, as Bellmer puts it, clear.

But the idea of anagrammatic procedures, of sentences, brings us back to language, as everything invariably does. “But everything is language, including objects,” says Lucas herself.<sup>26</sup> Thus, her deceptive employ of lightness (of tone) and transparency (of meaning)—a kind of constructed gullibility or guilelessness—begs comparison to writers like Robert Walser or Franz Kafka, and their subversive trafficking in the “small,” the “provincial,” the “specific,” and the “story.” Lucas’s bottomless well of reference; her compulsive repetition, until her work becomes almost completely self-referencing; her endless cast of characters; and her adroit use of voice in her titles—all

point to the subtly literary tenor of her project. Which might just be a way to point to its, and her, moral seriousness.

Another literary reference: one theme of nineteenth-century Western novels was the young woman who leaves home, civilization (likely New York or London), for profaner, wilder pastures (Italy, often). There, she discovers herself, the limits of her desire and of her station, and is ruined. Such a conceit touches on and takes from earlier genres, earlier travelers, like those from Spain to the Americas. But let’s look at some later passages, passengers. In search of modernism, a Mexican goes to Europe, reversing the inscribed literary order. Putting it right again, a Frenchman of Greek parentage goes to Mexico, in search of prehistoric spirits and drugs and knowledge. An Englishwoman goes to Mexico, in search of—what? An American, a Californian, goes to Switzerland, to Italy, but finds herself there studying photographs of, what, Mexico. In which kind of distance—practical, geographical, temporal, emotional—do we find ourselves now? The oceans would seem tired of these travelers.

But let’s leave that question. Let’s go back to shame, its pleasure. OK, we’re there now. I’ve read that travelers like palindromes. They promise a return, of sorts. I might have made that up. But I do like them (palindromes, not travelers); there are so many dirty ones. *Tulsa slut*, for one, which sounds like something Lucas might like too. There’s even a palindrome for the island from which I write you. Maybe you know it? *Able was I ere I saw Elba*. There’s also this one: *nipson anomemata me monan opsin*. “Wash the sins as well as the face.” It was emblazoned across public drinking fountains in ancient Greece, later on in English churches, which Lucas might respect, as a lover of linguistic turns and games and entendre.

Nevertheless, in honor of the speculative love of travelers for palindromic returns, I will return to Artaud, which is where we began, earlier today, on my island and wherever you are, but together (well). The French poet, theorist, and theater director once wrote, between trips to clinics in Switzerland and tribes in Mexico and hospitals in France, this: “To know in advance what points of the body to touch is the key to throwing the spectator into magical trances.”<sup>27</sup>

To say that Lucas throws her spectators into magical trances might be overstating it, but then again, it might not. That she knows what points of the body to touch—to create, at will, that very body for us, her audience, and its signs and symptoms and rehearsals of shame, of *aidos*, in all its blue and shimmering meaning—well, that is not in dispute. Not by me. Not by you.

#### NOTES

1. Antonin Artaud, “Artaud the Momo,” in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams: Works from the Final Period*, trans. Bernard Bador and Clayton Eshleman (Boston: Exact Change Press, 1995), 101–3.
2. Euripides, *Grief Lessons: Four Plays by Euripides*, trans. Anne Carson (New York: New York Review Books, 2006), 163–64.
3. Quinn Latimer, *Rumored Animals* (San Jose: Dream Horse Press, 2012), 44.

4. “[S]ilverfooted Aphrodite / shed seductive shame/charming coyness (*aidos*) / on their sweet bed,” Pindar, *Pythian Odes*, in Euripides, *Grief Lessons*, 165.
5. Matthew Collings, *Sarah Lucas* (London: Tate Publishing, 2002), 22–23.
6. Collings elaborates on this aspect and effect of Lucas’s work more fully in his excellent book, cited above.
7. Susan Sontag, *As Consciousness Is Harnessed to Flesh: Journals & Notebooks 1964–1980*, ed. David Rieff (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), 331.
8. Yilmaz Dziewior and Beatrix Ruf, eds., *Sarah Lucas: Exhibitions and Catalogue Raisonné, 1989–2005* (London: Tate Publishing; Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005), 166.
9. Amna Malik, *Sarah Lucas: Au Naturel* (London: Afterall Books, 2009), 9–10.
10. Virginia Woolf, *Flush: A Biography* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1933), 16.
11. Sometimes this maxim is also attributed to Voltaire.
12. PJ Harvey, “Sheela-Na-Gig,” recorded November–December 1991, track 6 on *Dry*, Too Pure Records.
13. Barbara Freitag, *Sheela-na-gigs: Unravelling an Enigma* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 4.
14. J. Lesley Fitton, *Cycladic Art* (London: British Museum Press, 1999).
15. Nikolas Papadimitriou, “The Use and Meaning of Cycladic Figurines,” Museum of Cycladic Art, <http://cycladic.gr>.
16. William Godwin, quoted in Moyra Davey, *The Wet and the Dry: The Social Life of the Book* (Paris: Paraguay Press, 2011). I am indebted to Davey for writing about Godwin’s expert advice to Mary Wollstonecraft.
17. Collings, *Sarah Lucas*, 46–48.
18. George Craig, Martha Dow Fehsenfeld, Dan Gunn, and Lois More Overbeck, eds., *The Letters of Samuel Beckett*, vol. 2, 1941–1956 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
19. Jacques Lacan, *Écrits*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2007), 97.
20. Antonin Artaud, *The Peyote Dance*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976).
21. The editor was Jean Paulhan, of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. In his letter dated July 19, 1935, Artaud also wrote, “I find myself at an important crossroads of my existence.” He went on to note that he hoped to encounter in Mexico a “revolutionary society built on ancient metaphysical foundations where he may apply his vision of healing the split between psyche and civilization through alchemical theater,” as Uri Hertz writes in “Artaud in Mexico,” in *Fragmentos: Revista de Língua e Literatura Estrangeiras*, no. 25 (July–December 2003): 11.
22. Jeanne Cannizzo, “Heads and Bodies: Fragments and Restoration,” in *Interpreting Ceramics* 8 (2006): <http://interpretingceramics.com/issue008/articles/03.htm>.
23. Michael D. Coe and Rex Koontz, *Mexico: From the Olmecs to the Aztecs* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2002), 49.
24. Originally from Susan Sontag’s first novel *The Benefactor* (1963), whose main character was called, interestingly enough, Hippolyte, this quote reappears in her introduction to Peter Hujar’s *Portraits in Life and Death* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 1976). It goes, in full: “Life is a movie; death is a photograph.”
25. Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995).
26. Beatrix Ruf, “Conversation with Sarah Lucas,” in *Sarah Lucas: Exhibitions and Catalogue Raisonné, 1989–2005*, 29.
27. Antonin Artaud, *The Theater and Its Double*, trans. Mary Caroline Richards (New York: Grove Press, 1994).



“NUDS,” 2012  
Exhibition view: Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli  
(kurimanzutto off-site), Mexico City

# SCULPTURE FROM BELOW

ANNE M. WAGNER

OVER THE YEARS, SARAH LUCAS HAS SAID little about the implications and origins of her sculpture, though both are topics that interviewers inevitably want to explore. So far, what she has revealed about her work's roots has mostly been presented in brisk, even off-hand terms. For example, when Beatrix Ruf, one of the curators of Lucas's eponymous 2005 survey exhibition at the Kunsthalle Zürich and Tate Liverpool, asked the artist how and why she made her first sculpture, she answered flatly, "I've no idea"; by then, she said, its roots were buried too far in the past. The only concrete detail she could summon to pinpoint a beginning concerned *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab* (1992), a piece that was, if not her first sculpture, certainly a breakthrough work. She recalled that, rather like Jasper Johns's dream of painting the flag, the crucial idea "came to me in bed one night": what the piece needed was its signature kebab.<sup>1</sup>

If we want a more substantive origin story, one that addresses the material production of Lucas's sculpture, surely there is more traction in the idea that, as the artist put it elsewhere, "sculpture makes itself."<sup>2</sup> This brief phrase suggests not that sculpture is autonomous or self-generating, but that to trace the steps in the making of a sculptural object is to discover that the work depends on something more and less than the artist alone. By these lights, the artist's labor is as much conceptual as physical. No surprise here. But think what this means. If sculptural making results from a trip to the shops and a stop for a snack, this is possible only if an artist *already* has an idea, whatever its origins; if, that is, she already understands the everyday objects she is after—the things themselves—as freighted with formal and communicative weight.

As Lucas does: she describes her main task as the mining of the semantic possibilities of everyday things. Her whole practice follows from this precept. When she announces, "Everything is language, including objects," or declares, "Composition is my work," she is characterizing her approach to sculpture as an arrangement, a placing—or better, a re-placing—of objects in the world.<sup>3</sup> Once the fried eggs and kebab that gave their names to her breakthrough artwork were placed, plateless, on a table (the two round shapes more or less in the middle, the open-faced—or open-lipped—pouch at one side), and then joined by a photograph recording this arrangement, an oral erotics, complete with fantasy organs, was set alight.

Caught up in the charged scenario—the body as meal, the meal as body—the frisson of dominance was offered to the viewer through both arrangement and photograph.

How, then, does a Lucas composition work? Surely it begins with the artist's chosen materials, and with her alertness to the many lives of language; her recognition that ordinary objects carry connotations and values, analogies and equations, that register how speakers evaluate the world. These processes transform eggs and kebabs, or melons and cucumbers, into sexual signifiers. And more than this, they allow an assemblage of such objects, displayed on a table or a mattress, to stand for the body as a sexual thing. The game Lucas plays with her compositions may resemble the rabbit/duck confusion, but only loosely: to equate the breast with an egg or melon is not to confront the viewer with an optical quandary. Instead, the play within a Lucas composition happens at the level of both language and vision, because the artist has literalized—materialized—an all-too-familiar bodily pun. Her works operate within a minefield of analogy and suspended disbelief. So the egg is a breast is a melon? Yes! And each moment of delighted recognition sets off an explosion of mildly off-color comedy, like a whoopee cushion at Christmas dinner. We need to believe, if only for a moment, in the referential powers of resemblance, which, when prompted by Lucas, is easy to do.

Yet language is not sculpture, and what this account leaves out is Lucas's mostly unspoken engagement with sculptural form. (By unspoken, I mean simply that she does not often unpack the references within her work for the interviewer's microphone.)<sup>4</sup> Yet here too we might wish to speak of language in order to invoke sculpture as a culturally bounded practice, a communicative category with shared structures and means. Can we think, if not of Lucas "speaking" sculpture, then about her objects as inflected by a distinctive dialect?

Consider, for example, a work by the artist mentioned, if only obliquely, above. This is *Au Naturel* (1994), which, with its mattress, melons, oranges, bucket, and cucumber, was memorably presented in 1997 at the Royal Academy of Arts exhibition "Sensation." There it was, leaning against the gallery wall, melons bulging from slits in the mattress, bucket agape, cucumber erect: Need I say more? Well, yes, because that was not all. The nudge and wink in *Au Naturel* (nakedly present in both title and work) take aim at another

notorious piece made using a bed, Rachel Whiteread's foam-rubber sculpture of a slouched mattress, *Untitled (Amber Double Bed)* (1991). The contrast is clear. Tucked into Lucas's bed are cockily vulgar stand-ins for the bodies that, despite the inescapable literalism of its replicative process, Whiteread's work leaves to the imagination. For Whiteread, bodiliness in sculpture can only be conjured in its absence; the amber of *Untitled (Amber Double Bed)*'s color and title only distantly references a bodily form.

One way of understanding Lucas's response to Whiteread is to argue that *Au Naturel* is rather like a bawdy caricature or a risqué charade. We are at the pantomime once again. In other words, Lucas's piece serves to spell out what the earlier work kept concealed or repressed. The bodies absented from Whiteread's sculpture—or if not absent, then made present only in its appeal to individual fantasy—are, in Lucas's construction, fruitfully evoked, if not figured literally.

Behind everything I have written in the preceding paragraph lies a struggle to stick to polite language, a struggle not to write, for example, about *Au Naturel* as brazenly ballsy—or perhaps even worse. I think this impulse comes from the work itself. It is rare to encounter sculpture that is so serious in engaging the defining corporeal presence and bodily urgency of sculpture while simultaneously so intent on reworking that presence "from below."

Sculpture from below. If the phrase has something to say about Lucas's sculptural idiom, this will be because it still retains something of its 1960s currency: the idea of a history told from the ground up. For historians, this is the viewpoint of repressed minorities, of women, workers, servants, anyone forced to look up to the powers that be. These are categories defined less by class than by social position, the sites from which the world can be turned upside down; it is from here, remember, that women have imagined the reversal that would put them on top.

Within this brief compendium of catchphrases, placeholders for decades of scholarly work, lies a possible key to the earthiness of Lucas's work, what it hopes to gain from "lowering" itself to embrace off-color allusions and analogies. An appropriate comparison might be a poet who steers a course between vivid immediacy and downright scatology by writing in slang. Such a writer clearly has more than local color in mind. Lucas does too. In fact, she has devised a whole new category of sculptural expression; her works partake of the ordinariness that in speech we term slang.

Let me try to spell out what this proposition means. Its claim is not merely that Lucas's work is aggressively impudent, though this is certainly the case. But more than this, her art wagers everything on a rephrasing of the "normal" bodily proprieties of sculpture. Its transformations can shock or amuse, and sometimes do both. It frequently adopts the strategy, to borrow a term from the theorists of verbal slang, of dysphemism: unlike its opposite, euphemism, dysphemism is a "reaction against pedantry, stiffness and pretentiousness, but also nobility and dignity."<sup>5</sup> What is right and proper gives way to the vulgar, the familiar, the joyfully mundane.

Of course, Lucas's sculpture is not speech, and analogizing its characteristics to those of slang should not obscure the fact that its impudence is material, behavioral. The only way to take sculpture down a peg is to make objects that are recognizably sculptural themselves. And this is precisely what Lucas has done. Her invocations of the history of sculpture give her work both currency and critical charge.

Take, for example, her use of women's stockings and tights, all offering a variation on the beige that in the language of lingerie stands for female flesh. From the moment nylons entered Lucas's work in the long series of *Bunnies*, which began in 1997 with *Bunny Gets Snookered #1*, they not only figured the feminine, but also brought with them memories of the other stockings deployed in twentieth-century sculptural practice: stretched and draped in Bruce Conner's 1964 meditation on female narcissism, *Looking Glass*; used as wrappings for the marble eggs of a monumental spider in Louise Bourgeois's 1999 *Maman*; or turned into ropes and bags, as deployed in the dramatic sand-filled pouch sculptures produced by Senga Nengudi in the late 1970s. Nengudi's *R.S.V.P. I* (1977) is a prime example, not least for the dysphemistic commitments its maker, like Lucas, brings to her task.

Nengudi's work evoked a body, or bodies, simultaneously full and tight-stretched. Their legs straddling the gallery corner, they torturously summon, and contrast with, the furthest extremes of sculptural modernism. For points of comparison, we might well recall the metallic tension of Vladimir Tatlin's *Corner Counter-Reliefs* (1914–15) and the twisted torsion of Eva Hesse's *No Title (Rope Piece)* (1969–70). Nengudi's work speaks back to both precedents, even while insisting on the bodily associations summoned by its chosen forms. Says Nengudi, "I am working with nylon mesh because it relates to the elasticity of the human body. From tender tight beginnings to sagging . . . the body can only stand so much push and pull until it gives way, never to resume its original shape."<sup>6</sup>

Like Nengudi, and like the other artists her nylon pieces summon, Lucas mines the bodily and sculptural semantics stockings can be made to convey. Stuffed with cotton fluff or wadding and stiffened with wire in the distinctly non-voluptuous series of *Bunnies*, they evoke flaccid arms and legs; in the more classically sculptural *NUDS* (2009–ongoing), by contrast, they wrap and twist like pale entrails turning endlessly in on themselves. In Lucas's more recent works, like *Mumum* (2012), they multiply into an orgy of bulging breasts. Here, the distended nylon skins ring the changes on race and skin color (the *NUDS*, by contrast, insist they are quite classically white), while miming nipples of all sizes and kinds.<sup>7</sup> Again, nothing euphemistic here; instead, the work deploys a negative hyperbole that aims to figure the female body as a site beyond or before language: for Lucas, the land of *Mumum* is an erotic pornotopia, its mammary plenitude capturing some of the affective complexity of the female form.

There are real risks to making sculpture from ordinary materials and things. Chief among them is the possibility that the transformation of object to artwork never quite happens, despite the elasticity



"Penetralia," 2008  
Exhibition view: Sadie Coles HQ,  
69 South Audley Street, London

that, since Marcel Duchamp's readymades, the latter category has shown. Lucas has run this risk quite knowingly, particularly through her growing commitment to having works cast directly from life—which is to say, from objects readily encountered in ordinary experience. A partial list would include fruits and vegetables, flints and driftwood, even a swaggering pair of high leather boots. All this and more has been translated into concrete, in the case of the boots, fruit, and vegetables, and into plaster for the rest. The one material is gray, rough, and grainy, the other bleached white and tight pored. Both reach deep into the age-old tradition of replicating forms with minimal trouble and expense. Casting turns out to be a bit like cooking; once the basics were discovered, things have stayed basically the same.

But why cast anything at all? And why this set of things? The explanation lies in the possibility that casting offers Lucas the ability not only to reassert the ordinary as defining her work, but also to insist it does so in a deep-seatedly sculptural way. Sculpture needs casting to create surrogate things, stand-ins for objects when the thing itself is not enough. Casts multiply what is singular, provide permanence to the ephemeral, stabilize what is entropic, and offer further efficiencies of form. And finally, casting is selective: in making one thing into many, it suggests that the original was worthy of note.

What Lucas has chosen for doubling and, potentially, redoubling, are objects of a kind that human cultures have always valued, along with others that update this category for the present day. If her concrete marrows and squashes have the fullness of the votive vegetables offered to fertility gods around the ancient Mediterranean, then the simulacral footballs she has produced in this same workaday material also speak to present-day Mediterranean cultures, as well as those further afield. And if concrete seems a mundane medium for such votive gestures, the same matter-of-factness characterizes most objects. Mere material surrogates, they need only act as lightning rods for our beliefs. Such objects, to cite Arjun Appadurai, are "goods that are incarnated signs."<sup>8</sup> Preciousness need not play a role. Lucas's cast works bear out this rule in spades. Roughly made, emerging from the mold with the pits and flaws left by a rough-and-ready process, they have nothing of the fine-grained delicacy that Henry Moore, to invoke one twentieth-century example, could wrest from his concrete works.

What they do share with Moore—in particular, with the hand-sized plasters he called maquettes—is the effort to capture the figural potential of found materials, bones and flints and the like. As for Lucas, for Moore the figural often meant the erotic; the decade that saw him working most productively with his cherished found objects, the 1960s, was also the period during which he produced, in the shape of his two- and three-part figures, the most specifically erotic of his forms.

Needless to say, Lucas is not Moore. Yet when, in the series of hand-scaled sculptures she calls *Penetralia* (2008–10), she too turned to flints and other found materials, joining them together

as quasi-magical creatures, wands, and tools, her eroticized joinery brought with it an acknowledged primitivism rather like Moore's. Certainly, for both artists, the languages that humans once upon a time devised to convey, even to commemorate, their own carnality, are to be mined and expanded even now. Both seem bent on discovering—or recovering—some half-remembered yet potentially still vital force. There was a time when men and women read the shapes of the ordinary things around them for the untold power they exerted over daily life. Like Moore before her, this Sarah Lucas still aims to do. The result is a set of sculptures that not only remember the deep magic to be found in everyday objects, but also devise ways to tap into it again.

## NOTES

1. Beatrix Ruf, "Conversation with Sarah Lucas," in *Sarah Lucas: Exhibitions and Catalogue Raisonné, 1989–2005*, ed. Yilmaz Dziewior and Beatrix Ruf (London: Tate Publishing; Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005), 29. For the implications of Johns's dream of painting the American flag, see Fred Orton, *Figuring Jasper Johns* (London: Reaktion, 1994), 98.
2. Sarah Lucas, interview by William Corwin, "The Interview Show," Clocktower Radio, August 1, 2011, <http://artnair.org/show/sarah-lucas>. A transcript of the show was published in September 2011 in the *Brooklyn Rail*; see <http://www.brooklynrail.org/2011/09/art/sarah-lucas-with-william-corwin>.
3. Ruf, "Conversation with Sarah Lucas," 29–30.
4. At the same time, there is no doubt that Lucas herself is well aware of the power of the pun. Witness the brief exchange between Lucas and Carl Freedman: "CF: 'You approach sex in a humorous way a lot of the time. Your dick pieces, the visual puns with vegetables.' SL: 'Yeah, that's the way I think most people think a lot of the time. If I go down the Chapel Market one day and buy a cucumber, the guy I'm buying it off winks when I'm buying it. Life's imbued with this continual innuendo, especially here. If you're walking along with this bloody great marrow, especially in the summer, people will be winking left right and centre, nudging the person they're with.'" See Sarah Lucas, "A Nod's as Good as a Wink," interview by Carl Freedman, *Frieze* 17 (June–August 1994).
5. Eric Partridge, *Slang: To-day and Yesterday* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1933), 14–15.
6. Thomas Erben, "Répondez s'il vous plaît: Nylon Mesh Pieces, 1975–77," press release, 2003, [http://www.thomaserben.com/artists/sengaNengudi/2003/nengudi\\_2003\\_prelease.php](http://www.thomaserben.com/artists/sengaNengudi/2003/nengudi_2003_prelease.php).
7. The 2010 display of Lucas's *NUDS* (2009–10) at the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens thrived on the implicit relationship of her pale pieces, each displayed on its own pedestal, and the subtly fleshlike surface of sculpture in marble.
8. Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 43. See also Robin Osborne, "Hoards, Votives, Offerings: The Archaeology of the Votive Object," *World Archaeology* 36, no. 1 (March 2004): 1–10.

# SHAMELESS

ANNE ELLEGOOD

*It serves me right for putting all my eggs in one bastard.*  
—Dorothy Parker

One thing you may not know about Sarah Lucas is that she is a master egg poacher. While it is fried eggs that have made their way into her work—irresistible as surrogates for breasts—it is her skill at poaching eggs that may be the key to understanding some fundamental aspects of her approach to sculpture. A fried egg is like an image, acting as the representation of something familiar. But a poached egg is all about process. Poaching an egg requires care, attention, and patience—yet it also involves risk, a bit of stabbing in the dark, and a willingness to lose a little something in order to gain something more. Experience, knowledge, and confidence are essential, but equally fundamental to the task are instinct, a light touch, and a certain kind of belief. The demands inherent to poaching eggs mean that few take the time to become genuinely good at it; most opt for the briskness and simplicity of the fried egg or the everything-but-the-kitchen-sink potential of the scramble.

Strange as it sounds, one could argue that Lucas sets about making her sculptures like she might poach an egg. Eggs are one of the most ubiquitous foods there is, and when it comes to materials, she is similarly drawn to the readily available, the familiar, the quotidian: cigarettes, stockings, newspaper, lightbulbs, a bucket, a chair . . . and more cigarettes. She grabs whatever is at hand or has been in her orbit for some time, like a soiled mattress found on the street or a grungy toilet from her studio. Yet Lucas does not make her choices blindly, without intention or an explicit interest in these objects, in their physical properties as well as their metaphoric or symbolic weight. She is drawn to these things because she genuinely loves them. They are part of her life, essential to her reality. And once these seemingly humble, not particularly valuable or distinctive materials are in her hands, they are transformed into something singular, just as the unassuming egg is made into something exquisitely fluffy, warm, and delicious when poached by an expert. Lucas has the kind of touch with sculpture that makes everything look easy. She takes up the most straightforward action—tipping over a bucket, filling up the tub, sitting in a chair, hanging up a muddy pair of boots—with a conceptualist’s simultaneous frankness and trickery (of course

it’s a chair . . . until it’s something else) and a traditional sculptor’s ability to transform one material into another as if through alchemy. Light becomes water; concrete appears as hardened, encrusted dirt; beige acrylic paint is made into dirty bathwater. There is a directness to Lucas’s work, as though something that has been stuck in her head comes out fully formed. Yet one can simultaneously feel her openness to intuition. Her way of making room for the unplanned is perhaps the same type of opening up to the unconscious that comes with therapy. It’s raw and unfettered and honest, but there is a structure surrounding it that makes it possible; you still have to find a shrink, make the appointment, and show up before you can tap into those feelings.

Amid the importance of process and dexterity of making, Lucas’s works have an abiding sense of humor. Some might understand her wit and absurdity, especially the rude or crude kind—as in the series of sculptures titled *Get Hold of This* (1994), which literally flip off the viewer, and *Got a Salmon on (Prawn)* (1994), a group of nine photographs of a naked man using the foam from a can of beer to mimic ejaculation—as a commentary on the high-mindedness of art or as a clever capitalization on the type of imagery and headlines propagated by tabloid news to capture our attention. (Indeed, Lucas has incorporated aspects of the tabloids into her work, both in response to their pervasiveness and popularity and simply as material for papier-mâché.) Yet these interpretations suggest a level of cynicism that seems decidedly not the point for Lucas. Sure, she’s having fun, perhaps at everyone’s expense—including her own. But her humor is also a pointed critique of the cultural standards and institutional biases she finds problematic, and it is deployed not with scorn or ridicule, but with a sense of optimism that can only emanate from someone who genuinely cares. Rather than mocking the false modesty or duplicitous morality that seems to permeate every crevice in society these days, she uses humor in a manner established by some of the most radical artists and social critics, like William Hogarth, Dorothy Parker, and Richard Pryor. Lucas engages strategies such as wit, satire, and scatology not only to shine a spotlight on hypocrisy, but also to model what change is possible when we forgo bias in favor of allowing people to express the full range of their subjectivities.

Lucas’s work argues for the potential for creativity to be used in the service of imagining alternative realities. This may be most evident in her skewering of gender stereotypes and the inclination toward androgyny in her works. Some of her early photographic self-portraits, such as *Eating a Banana* (1990) and *Self-Portrait with Fried Eggs* (1996), explicitly call attention to her gender in a manner that seems to challenge the viewer (and, by extension, the art world) to dispense with assumptions about women artists. Gazing into the camera with a direct and unmediated boldness, Lucas presents herself as an artist to take seriously. Yet one can’t help but enjoy the unabashed humor in Lucas underscoring her femininity by positioning two fried eggs on her breasts, while at the same time sitting wide-legged in the style of the most flagrant “manspreader” on the subway, blatantly disregarding the decorum of public space. In other self-portraits, she appears to be more in drag; in jeans and a T-shirt with short hair and no makeup, she can easily pass for a man. The title of *Got a Salmon On #3* (1997), in which Lucas wears a turtleneck and pinstriped blazer and has a large fish slung over her shoulder, suggests a euphemism for an erection, further complicating a reading of her gender as easily defined or contained.

From Greek mythology to William Shakespeare to Marcel Duchamp, there is a long tradition of cross-dressing in literature, theater, and the arts. Moreover, there are numerous examples throughout history—from Joan of Arc to jazz musician Billy Tipton—of those who have dressed as men in order to gain access to power or privileges otherwise disallowed under patriarchy, or in order to live a queer life with less risk of persecution. Lucas’s overt references to male artists such as Andy Warhol and Jeff Koons both acknowledge their influence and point to the inequalities that have marginalized women artists. Her androgynous self-portraits are in some sense a celebration of cross-dressing, but she is also determined to shed light on how we are indoctrinated in rigid notions of gender that rarely reflect individuals’ actual gender identities, which tend to be far more fluid and adaptable. Numerous sculptures and photographs from the late 1990s and early 2000s use a range of objects to mimic breasts: melons, coconuts, lemons, and balls covered in cigarettes, some attached to the surface of a piece of furniture and others held aloft with bras. Beyond a parodic deformation or graffitilike prank, these embellishments are a kind of insistence that we reimagine not simply the female form in art, but reconsider also the role of women themselves in the arts. Lucas’s proliferation of tits is humorous and seemingly lighthearted, yet it serves as a constant reminder of the limitations placed upon us through social norms. *Nude #1* and *Nude #2*, both from 1999, contain full, round breasts as well as unmistakable phalluses, crude yet charmingly charismatic renderings of intersexual figures who fall outside of conventional categories.

In addition to works that embrace the playful masquerading of gender or an almost juvenile obsession with breasts and penises, Lucas has created undeniably ambiguous quasi-figurative forms, recasting sexual identity as something that embraces an abundance

and range of genitalia yet defies definition. While one might initially perceive the corporeal forms that comprise Lucas’s series of *NUD* sculptures—nylon tights packed with cotton stuffing—as individual bodies, arms and legs akimbo, or multiple figures entwined beyond distinction, they can also be read as strangely potent combinations of sexual organs, composed of penises, nipplelike protrusions, and orifices both large and small. Their power lies in the sense of possibility they embody; despite their somewhat grotesque abstraction and reduction of the human form, they also appear to be nearly bursting with a peculiar humility and vulnerability. With their dimpled surfaces and pallid skin tones, these strange nudes look as though they may topple over or collapse without the care and assistance of others.

Among her own generation, Lucas shares company with artists such as Kara Walker and Nicole Eisenman, whose strong opinions and use of explicit imagery have at times provoked controversy and at others occasioned high praise. While she may be more of an optimist than some of her predecessors and contemporaries who have trafficked in social satire and caricature, an appraisal of Dorothy Parker’s writing seems an apt description of Lucas’s work: “Caked with a salty humor, rough with splinters of disillusion, and tarred with a bright black authenticity.”<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it is the allusion to grit that evokes Lucas’s proclivity for dirty used mattresses or a toilet soiled beyond respectability, or the risk that one’s art might cause even the relatively minor harm of a splinter that seems to fit. But it may be the mention of authenticity that captures Lucas most of all. Hers is not a self-serving brand of authenticity that implies that she speaks for a generation, a nation, or even a community, or traffics in oversimplified ideas about right or wrong, facts or falsehoods, what is deserving of praise or should be maligned. Instead, Lucas’s authenticity is the kind that is not anointed but earned, secured after years of being vulnerable enough to be herself. Insightful and disarmingly honest, her humor expresses positions that are quite poignant, and arises from a sincere desire to speak out about the marginalization that some experience in contrast to others’ overbearing righteousness and self-absorption. The sense of strength radiating from Lucas’s often-deadpan approach and her insistence on depicting the corporality and inevitable flaws of the human form in ways that some viewers may find disconcerting do not overshadow the genuine vulnerability in her work. On the contrary, they open up a space for it. Despite the big personalities of many pieces, Lucas’s sculptures, much like Parker’s writing, are sometimes stark and always incisive, never including more parts or materials than necessary. In this sense, her sculptures are like a well-played chess match; one makes each move while thinking three moves ahead, hopeful that three moves will do the trick. Nothing is superfluous, and thus there is a rigor and precision to the choice of each element, and the ways in which it is deployed in relationship to the others, that makes Lucas’s sculptures highly intelligent and utterly absorbing.

Like many of us, Lucas has described often feeling embarrassed as a child, and she allows herself to tap into that emotional space

to create sculptures that can be deeply affective. *Happy Families* (1999) portrays a family that is far from joyful, with its miserable figures composed of clothing and foods—like a whole chicken and canned fish hanging from a garment rack—as if confined by their circumstances. And her sculptures featuring mattresses or woven metal bed frames have an undeniable melancholy. However, the sense of embarrassment that she puts forward is, importantly, without shame. She takes sexual desire, emotional demands, and fetishistic preoccupations to be ordinary parts of the human experience—to be celebrated, not repressed, and made visible and normalized through jokes, punning, and other forms of humor. Her series of *Bunny* sculptures from the late 1990s is a perfect example of flipping the potential for humiliation on its head to propose that empowerment and vulnerability can coexist. Nude figures composed of variously colored stuffed stockings, these skinny, headless “bunnies” have been understood to deflect the male gaze through Lucas’s abject treatment of the female form. Yet, more than a response to the objectification of the female body, the *Bunnies*—in their abundance (Lucas has made numerous of these sculptures as well as photographs of them) and resolute postures, slouched in their chairs with legs splayed open like they don’t give a damn—become an army of marginalized figures taking back control. They are flawed, weak, and deformed, but they are also humorous and oddly seductive—and shameless, in the best sense of the word.

## NOTES

1. Originally from a review of one of Parker’s books in the *Nation*, and quoted in Marion Meade, *Dorothy Parker: What Fresh Hell Is This?* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 177.



This page:  
“The Encyclopedic Palace,” 2013  
Exhibition view: 55th Venice Biennale

Following page:  
“I SCREAM DADDIO,” 2015  
Exhibition view: British Pavilion, 56th Venice Biennale



VII. NUDS  
VIII. PENETRALIA  
IX. MUSES

*NUDS* sort of popped out. One day Julian and I were rummaging in one of the sheds in the garden and came across an old screwed-up *Bunny*. Julian became fascinated by it. We kept it around us for a bit. It was warm that day and we spent most of it on blankets in the garden. The object had a curious allure and vulnerability. Over the next days I set about making some similar objects from scratch. I made about ten or so. They happened very naturally, all different. Slightly lewd in their nakedness. We named them “cuddle fiends,” after ourselves. Something about their babylike quality got me thinking about my relationship with my mum. That’s where “nuds” came from. She called being naked “in the nuddy.” She also called sadists “saddists.”

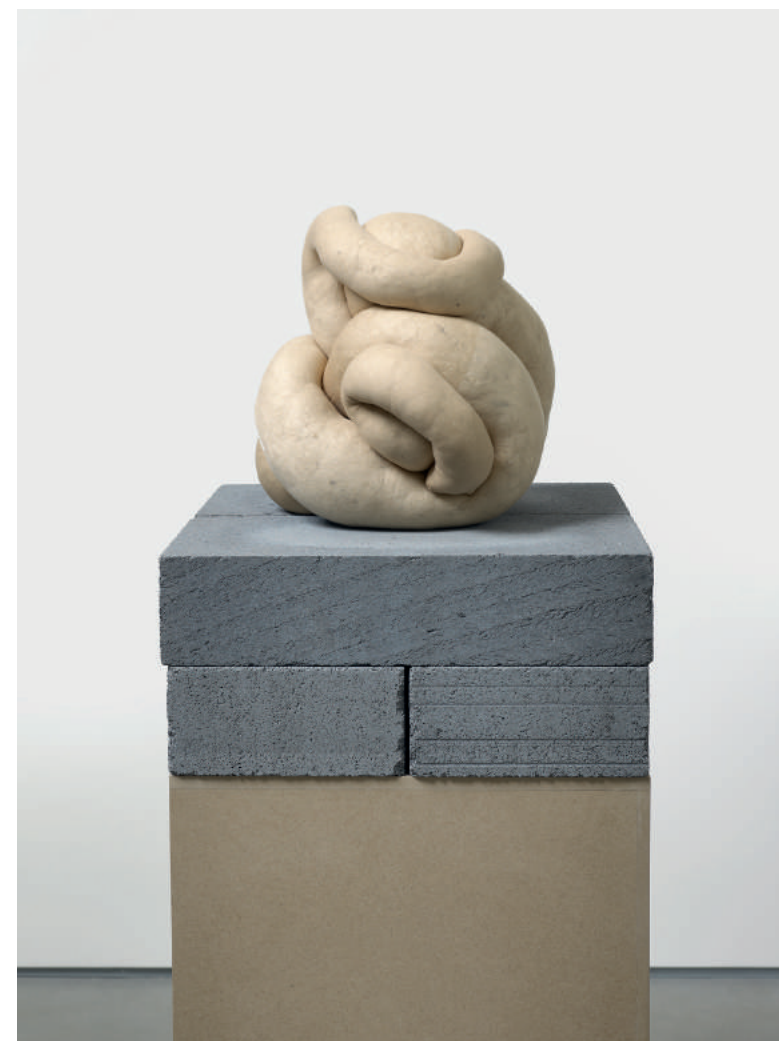
Not sure about the spelling, but “sad” is the important bit. True, I think.

**NUDS**





*NUD 24, 2010*  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
17<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 17<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in (45 x 35 x 45 cm)



Opposite page:  
*NUD 19*, 2009  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
49 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 16 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 17 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (126 x 43 x 44 cm)

Left:  
*NUD 5*, 2009  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
13 x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (33 x 30 x 32 cm)

Right:  
*NUD 10*, 2009  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
12 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 14 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 14 $\frac{3}{8}$  in (32 x 37 x 37 cm)



This page:  
*Lupe*, 2012  
Tights, fluff, wire, and adobe bricks  
Sculpture: 22½ x 16½ x 17¾ in (57 x 42 x 44 cm)  
Plinth: 39¾ x 17¾ x 17¾ in (100 x 45 x 43.5 cm)



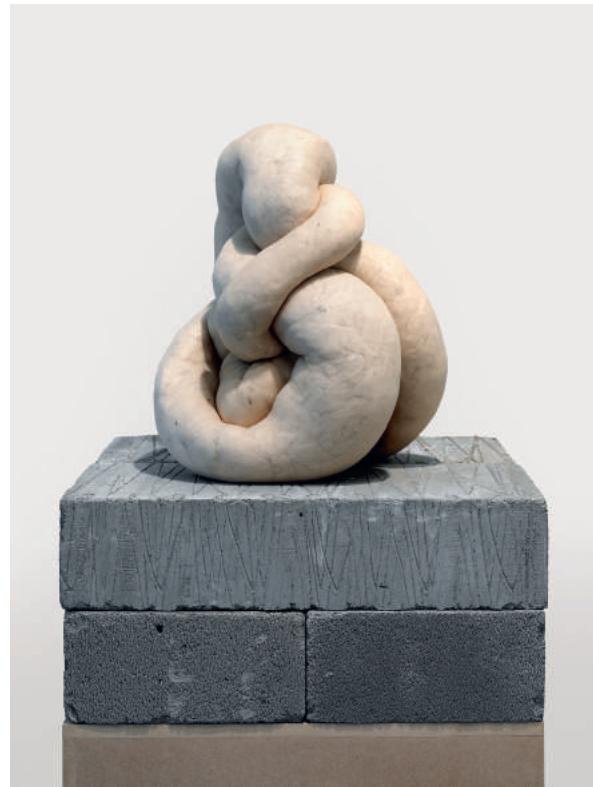
Opposite page:  
*NUD 6*, 2009  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
13 x 16¾ x 16¾ in (33 x 41 x 43 cm)



Top left:  
*NUD 18*, 2009  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 14 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$  in  
(30 x 36 x 32 cm)



Top right:  
*NUD 9*, 2009  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
12 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 13 in  
(32 x 29 x 33 cm)



Bottom left:  
*NUD 22*, 2010  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
11 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 13 x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$  in  
(29 x 33 x 34.5 cm)



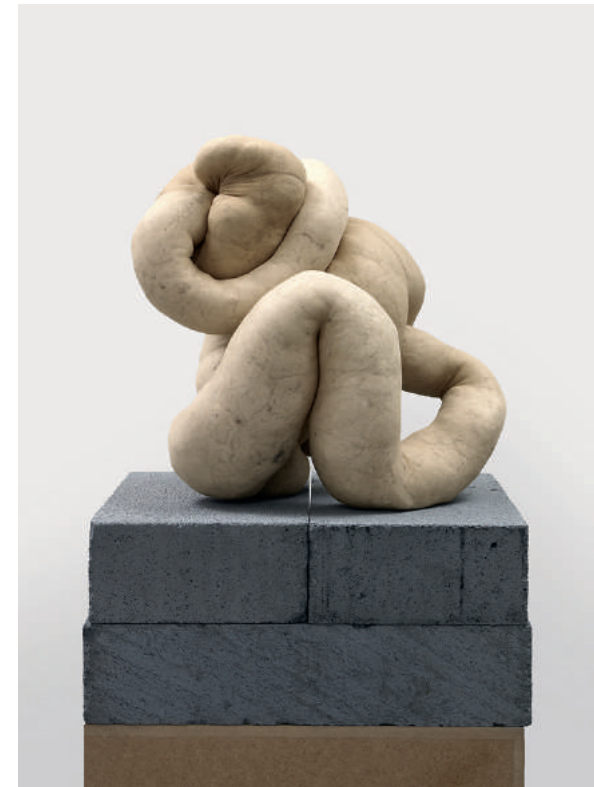
Bottom right:  
*NUD 8*, 2009  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
12 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$  in  
(32 x 30 x 30 cm)



Top left:  
*NUD 27*, 2012  
Tights, kapok, wire, and  
linen string  
13 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$  in  
(35 x 30 x 31 cm)



Top right:  
*NUD 30*, 2013  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
13 x 15 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$  in  
(33 x 39 x 40 cm)



Bottom left:  
*NUD 25*, 2010  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
15 x 14 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 16 $\frac{3}{8}$  in  
(38 x 36 x 43 cm)



Bottom right:  
*NUD 26*, 2010  
Tights, fluff, and wire  
11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 15 x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$  in  
(30 x 38 x 40 cm)



Opposite page:  
*HARD NUD*, 2012  
Cast iron with four bricks  
8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 7<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (21.2 x 20 x 13 cm)

This page:  
*Lupe*, 2014  
Cast bronze  
20<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 19<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 18<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (53 x 50 x 48 cm)



Top:  
*Dacre*, 2013  
Cast bronze  
24¼ x 19¾ x 25¾ in (61.5 x 49 x 65.5 cm)

Bottom:  
*Realidad*, 2013  
Cast bronze  
17¼ x 16¾ x 22¼ in (44 x 43 x 57 cm)



*Patrick More*, 2013  
Cast bronze  
29 x 20¾ x 31½ in (73.5 x 53 x 80 cm)



*Nabuiolin*, 2013  
Cast bronze  
18½ x 16½ x 23¼ in (47 x 42 x 59 cm)



*Hoolian*, 2013  
Cast bronze  
18½ x 21¼ x 21¼ in (47 x 55 x 55 cm)



*Nduda*, 2013  
Cast bronze  
14¼ x 14¼ x 13 in (36 x 36 x 33 cm)



I'd made the transition from living mostly in London to living mostly in Suffolk. I wanted to make a body of work that would reflect this. I suppose I was thinking, "Can I do anything with this place?"

Previously, in my city life, my work had often incorporated chance finds—a beaten-up old bucket or mattress found on the street, that sort of thing. As it happens, Suffolk is quite ruthlessly agricultural. Hedgerows and forests are reduced to a minimum to maximize crops, mostly wheat and barley, also rapeseed and sugar beet. These big fields are farmed using industrial methods. In the spring and summer, when the fields are full of ripening plants, it looks deceptively charming (although even then the crops look something like the army doing drill when compared with the natural flowers and grasses struggling in what's left of the hedgerow).

After harvest and in the wintertime it can be very bleak. The earth plowed up in deep furrows, entirely brown. During the plowing many flint stones are turned up, mostly broken into bits by the tractors. Apart from old items of farm machinery from yesteryear, this is all there is to find. So Julian and I took an interest in these flints and collected the ones we liked. A lot of them have a Barbara Hepworth / Henry Moore quality about them. I started combining them into new forms and casting them in plaster, partly to spice them up a bit and partly to connect them to previous work of mine. And because Julian likes having his nob cast, I introduced the penis into the procedure.

**PENETRALIA**



*The King*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
48 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 47 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (123 x 120 x 30 cm)



Top:  
*Imp*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
8¼ x 12¼ x 8½ in (21 x 31 x 20.5 cm)



Top:  
*Penetralia*, 2008  
Plaster and wood  
8⅞ x 17⅜ x 17⅜ in (22.5 x 44 x 44 cm)



Bottom:  
*Satyr*, 2008  
Plaster and rusted steel bucket  
13¾ x 32¼ x 15 in (35 x 82 x 38 cm)



Bottom:  
*Ax*, 2008  
Plaster and wood  
11¾ x 16⅞ x 16⅞ in (30 x 43 x 43 cm)



*Owl*, 2008  
Plaster and wood  
11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  in (30 x 24 x 19 cm)



*Wband*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
9 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 23 x 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (24 x 58.5 x 9.5 cm)

*Martyr*, 2008  
Plaster and wood  
40<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (102.5 x 34.5 x 34 cm)





Opposite page:  
*Dayo*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
16½ x 7½ x 6⅞ in  
(42 x 19 x 17.5 cm)

Left:  
*Druid*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
17¾ x 7¾ x 7¾ in  
(45 x 19.5 x 19.5 cm)

Right:  
*Eros*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
16½ x 7½ x 6⅞ in  
(42 x 19 x 17.5 cm)



*Toe Wand*, 2010  
Plaster and flint  
24 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 4 x 3 $\frac{1}{8}$  in (61.5 x 10 x 8 cm)



Top:  
*Druid Wand*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
11 x 24 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 4 in (28 x 63 x 10 cm)



Bottom:  
*Skull Wand*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
9 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 29 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 4 in (25 x 75 x 10 cm)



*Swan*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
15 x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 3<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (38 x 40 x 10 cm)

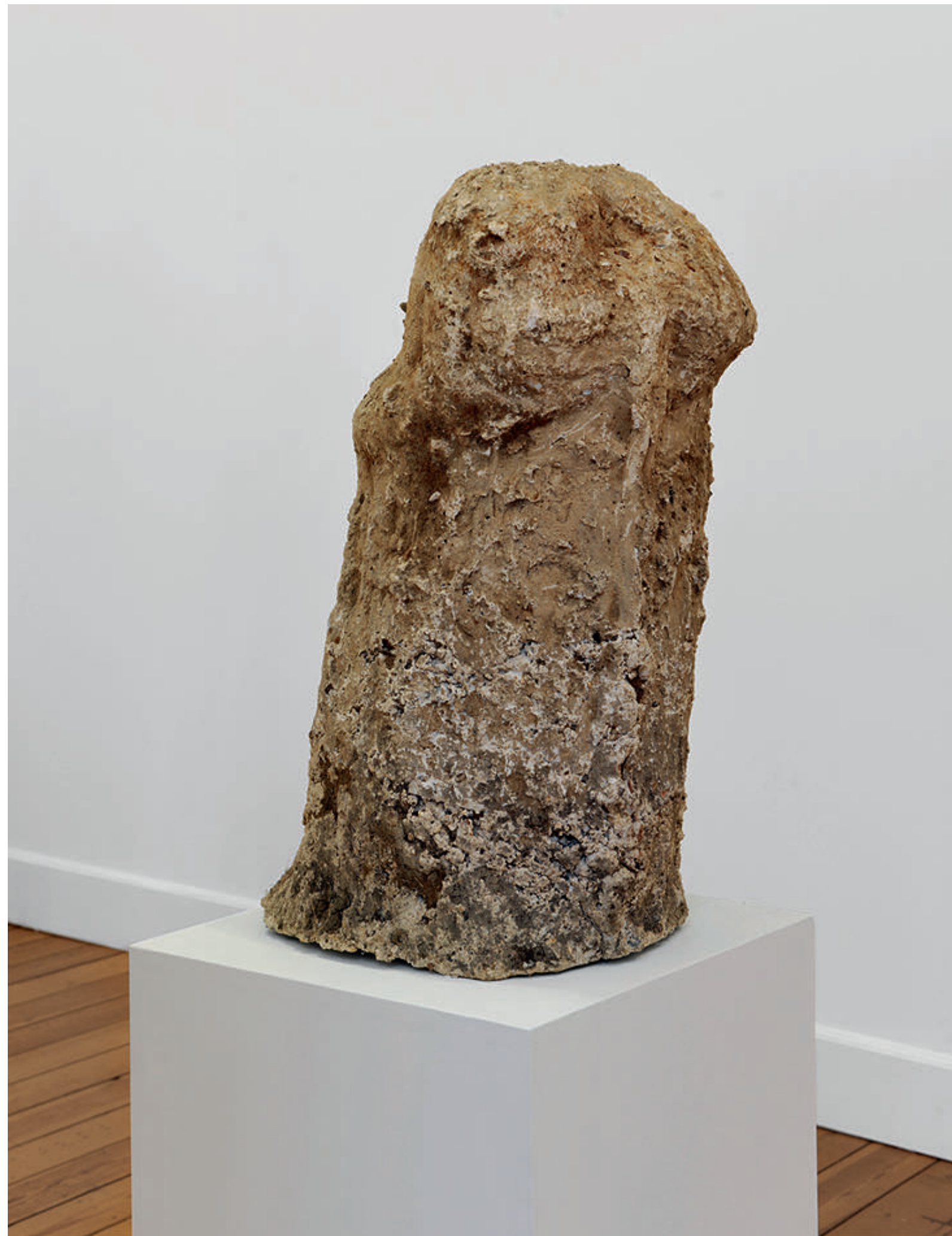


*Luvah*, 2008  
Plaster, steel wire, and wood  
13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 7<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (34 x 20.5 x 20 cm)





This page:  
*Raptor*, 2008  
Plaster and wood  
53 x 19 x 23 in (134.6 x 48.3 x 58.4 cm)



Opposite page:  
*Penetralius*, 2010  
Concrete  
26<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 13 x 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in (68 x 33 x 38.5 cm)



*White Nob*, 2013  
Plaster  
44 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 13 x 15 $\frac{7}{8}$  in (112.5 x 33 x 40 cm)



*Tree Nob 2*, 2010  
Plaster, plaster bandage, and wood  
11 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 5 $\frac{1}{8}$  in (28.5 x 22 x 13 cm)



*Eros*, 2013  
Cast concrete and crushed car  
108 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 53 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 41 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (275 x 135 x 106 cm)



*Priapus*, 2013  
Cast concrete and crushed car  
131 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 35 x 37 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (335 x 89 x 96 cm)

When embarking on making some objects for exhibition, I generally have to consider what I actually can do with limited space. I have a small studio in the garden but it's not suitable for everything, and I often resort to borrowing a bit of room elsewhere temporarily. I have to be able to do it with my own bare hands or sometimes with the help of friends' bare hands. Naturally, in those circumstances, there are time constraints. I try to keep any processes as straightforward as possible too, for my own sanity and that of the group. The making of the *Muses* was a case in point. I borrowed spaces in London from Sadie Coles, Fatima Maleki, and Roddy and Tim and company at London Art Workshop. The models were all close girlfriends of mine, three of whom also did the job with me.

The method of casting onto the body with plaster bandage is very direct, more or less a physical snapshot of a moment—although it takes an hour or two. It's also a one-hit wonder. The mold can't be used twice. So it's a precarious business and that adds to the immediacy of the finished work. It's a bit of an endurance test for all concerned, belied, I think, by the poetic nature of the poses struck. Literally, Power in Woman. Also grace.

## MUSES

*Patricia*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, and table  
37<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 30<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 73<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in (95 x 78 x 186 cm)





*Edith*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, toilet, and table  
54 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 73 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 38 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (139 x 187 x 98.5 cm)



*Me (Bar Stool)*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, and stool  
39 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 23 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 22 in (100 x 60 x 56 cm)



*Michele*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, and desk  
49<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 60 x 30<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in (126 x 152.5 x 77.5 cm)



Opposite page:  
*Pauline*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, and chair  
33 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 38 x 26 $\frac{3}{4}$  in (84 x 96.5 x 68 cm)

This page:  
*Tit-Cat Up*, 2015  
Bronze  
47 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 29 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 19 $\frac{1}{8}$  in (120.5 x 76 x 48.5 cm)





*Yoko*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, and chair  
33 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 22 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 35 in (84 x 57 x 89 cm)



This page:  
*Margot*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, and freezer  
45 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 79 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 34 $\frac{1}{4}$  in (116 x 202 x 87 cm)



Opposite page:  
*Sadie*, 2015  
Plaster, cigarette, and toilet  
33 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 42 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 42 $\frac{1}{8}$  in (86 x 107 x 107 cm)



*Jubilee*, 2013  
Concrete and concrete paving slabs  
33½ x 17½ x 17½ in (85 x 44.5 x 44.5 cm)

## WORKS IN EXHIBITION

<p><i>Soup</i>, 1989/2012 Wallpaper Dimensions variable Courtesy the artist</p>	<p><i>The Old Couple</i>, 1991 Two chairs, wax, and false teeth 34¼ x 15¾ x 15¾ in (87 x 40 x 40 cm) Collection Frank Gallipoli</p>	<p><i>Complete Arsebole</i>, 1993 C-print 36⅝ x 26⅞ in (92.5 x 66.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Where Does It All End?</i>, 1994 Wax and cigarette 2½ x 3¾ x 2½ in (6.4 x 9.5 x 6.4 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Black and White Bunny #1</i>, 1997 Black-and-white print on MDF 48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Down Below</i>, 1997 Enamel bath and rubber acrylic Bath: 21⅞ x 23⅞ x 65 in (55 x 60.5 x 165 cm) Spill: 76 x 70½ in (193 x 179 cm) Courtesy the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels</p>	<p><i>Concrete Boots 98–99</i>, 1999 Cast concrete 7⅞ x 5⅞ x 11 in (19.4 x 13 x 27.9 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Sex Baby Bed Base</i>, 2000 Bed base, chicken, T-shirt, lemons, and hanger 70⅞ x 52½ in (180 x 133.5 cm) Boros Collection, Berlin</p>
<p><i>Eating a Banana</i>, 1990 Black-and-white photograph 29½ x 32¼ in (74.9 x 81.9 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Penis Nailed to a Board (Early Version)</i>, 1991 Collage on board 16 x 13¼ x 4 in (40.5 x 33.5 x 10 cm) Collection the artist</p>	<p><i>Octopus</i>, 1993 Tights, newspaper, and hair on band 29⅞ x 18⅞ x 9 in (76 x 46 x 23 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait with Knickers</i>, 1994–2000 C-print 47¼ x 32⅞ in (120 x 81.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Black and White Bunny #2</i>, 1997 Black-and-white print on MDF 48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Got a Salmon On #3</i>, 1997 R-print 50 x 41⅞ in (127 x 105 cm) Collection Kenny Schachter</p>	<p><i>Hysterical Attack (Eyes)</i>, 1999 Chair, collage, and papier-mâché 29½ x 22½ x 30⅞ in (75 x 57 x 77 cm) Moore Collection</p>	<p><i>Skull</i>, 2000 Human skull with gold teeth 7⅞ x 7⅞ x 6¼ in (18 x 20 x 16 cm) Collection the artist</p>
<p><i>Fat, Forty and Flabulous</i>, 1990 Photocopy on paper 85¾ x 124¼ in (218 x 315.6 cm) D.Daskalopoulos Collection</p>	<p><i>Receptacle of Lurid Things</i>, 1991 Wax 4 x ¾ x ¾ in (10 x 2 x 2 cm) La Colección Jumex, Mexico</p>	<p><i>Rose Bush</i>, 1993 Beer bottles, wire, and cardboard 21⅞ x 15 x 12⅞ in (55 x 38 x 32 cm) Collection the artist</p>	<p><i>Lionbeart</i>, 1995 Brass and lead 1¾ x 2¾ x 2½ in (4.5 x 7 x 6.5 cm) each Private collection</p>	<p><i>Black and White Bunny #3</i>, 1997 Black-and-white print on MDF 48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>The Law</i>, 1997 Cast concrete 14 x 18 x 12½ in (35.6 x 45.7 x 31.8 cm) Collection Marc Quinn</p>	<p><i>Lionbeart (Bone)</i>, 1999 Plaster 2¾ x 2½ x 1¾ in (7 x 6.4 x 4.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Something Changed Raymond</i>, 2000 Wardrobe, hanger, lightbulbs, rabbit in jar, and mirror 104¾ x 74¾ x 36⅞ in (266 x 190 x 93 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London, and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels</p>
<p><i>Mantlepiece</i>, 1990 C-print on card, in five parts 8¼ x 5¾ in (21 x 14.8 cm) each Collection Gary Hume</p>	<p><i>Seven Up</i>, 1991 Photocopy on paper 85¾ x 124 in (218 x 315 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Sarah Lucas</i>, 1993 Wine bottle, wire, and cardboard 23⅞ x 15¾ x 9⅞ in (60 x 40 x 25 cm) Collection the artist</p>	<p><i>Tree Faerie</i>, 1995 C-print 51⅞ x 37⅞ in (130 x 95 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #1</i>, 1997 Tan tights, plastic and chrome chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 41¾ x 32¼ x 31⅞ in (106 x 82 x 81 cm) Collection James Moores</p>	<p><i>Pauline Bunny</i>, 1997 Tan tights, black stockings, wood and vinyl chair, kapok, and wire 40½ x 35 x 31⅞ in (103 x 89 x 79 cm) Tate: Presented by the Patrons of New Art (Special Purchase Fund) through the Tate Gallery Foundation 1998</p>	<p><i>Lionbeart (solid gold easy action)</i>, 1999 Nine-karat gold (250gm) 1⅞ x 2⅞ x 2½ in (4 x 6 x 6.5 cm) Collection the artist</p>	<p><i>Tits in Space</i>, 2000 Wallpaper Dimensions variable Courtesy the artist</p>
<p><i>Sausage Film</i>, 1990 Betacam SP video, sound, color; 8:20 min Courtesy the artist</p>	<p><i>Divine</i>, 1991/2018 Wallpaper Dimensions variable Courtesy the artist</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait (#1)</i>, 1993* Brown paper and color photocopies 72¾ x 63¾ in (185.1 x 161.9 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Fighting Fire with Fire</i>, 1996 Black-and-white photograph 60 x 48 in (152.4 x 121.9 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #2</i>, 1997 Tan tights, white stockings, office chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 40⅞ x 40⅞ x 37 in (102 x 102 x 94 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait with Skull</i>, 1997 C-print 68¾ x 48 in (174.6 x 121.9 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Wichser Schicksal (Wanker Destiny)</i>, 1999 Painted fiberglass, aluminum, wood, mirrored glass, motor, control unit, and cables 25½ x 25⅞ x 25⅞ in (64.8 x 65.8 x 63.8 cm) Collection Shane Akeroyd</p>	<p><i>Prière de Toucher</i>, 2000/2012 Wallpaper Dimensions variable Courtesy the artist</p>
<p><i>Sod You Gits</i>, 1990 Photocopy on paper 85¾ x 124 in (218 x 315 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Great Dates</i>, 1992 Collage and paint on board 88 x 56½ in (223.5 x 143.5 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait (#3)</i>, 1993 Brown paper and color photocopies 105⅞ x 61¾ in (269 x 157 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Future</i>, 1996 Egg carton and plaster 3½ x 5⅞ x 3⅞ in (9 x 15 x 10 cm) Collection Bruno Brunner and Nicole Hackert, Berlin</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #3</i>, 1997 Tan tights, green stockings, red office chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 46½ x 16⅞ x 35 in (118 x 43 x 89 cm) Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection, Vienna</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait with Skull</i>, 1997 C-print 68¾ x 48 in (174.6 x 121.9 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Beer Can Penis</i>, 2000 Aluminum 5⅞ x 5⅞ x 2¾ in (15 x 13 x 7 cm) Heithoff Family Collection</p>	<p><i>Dead Soldiers</i>, 2001–05 Club hammer, wire, and twenty cigarette butts 9½ x 22½ x 22 in (24 x 57 x 56 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>
<p><i>28 Percent Bent</i>, 1991 Letraset on paper 7⅞ x 9 in (18 x 22.7 cm) Collection Ben Clapp Courtesy Adam Gahlin, London</p>	<p><i>Me, Me, Me</i>, 1992 Can, wire, and photographs approx. 9⅞ x 9⅞ in (24 x 24 cm) Collection the artist</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait (#5)</i>, 1993 Brown paper and color photocopies 72⅞ x 64 in (185 x 162.5 cm) Collection Jack and Sandra Guthman, Chicago</p>	<p><i>The Human Toilet II</i>, 1996 C-print 71½ x 48 in (181.6 x 121.9 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #4</i>, 1997 Brown tights, tan stockings, plywood chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 39¾ x 38¼ x 37 in (101 x 97 x 94 cm) La Colección Jumex, Mexico</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait with Skull</i>, 1997 C-print 68¾ x 48 in (174.6 x 121.9 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Beer Can Penis / Carling</i>, 2000 Beer cans 7⅞ x 6⅞ x 4 in (18 x 15.5 x 10 cm) Collection Pauline Daly</p>	<p><i>Pie</i>, 2002 Concrete 1⅞ x 6¼ x 6¼ in (4 x 16 x 16 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>
<p><i>Fig Leaf in the Ointment</i>, 1991 Wax and hair 4 x 4¾ x 4 in (10 x 12 x 10 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab</i>, 1992 Table, fried eggs, kebab, and photo 59½ x 35¼ x 40⅞ in (151 x 89.5 x 102 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Sex and Love</i>, 1993* Cardboard, bulbs, and wire, in two parts 9 x 9½ x 9 in (23 x 24 x 23 cm) each Collection Rosana and Jacques Séguin, London</p>	<p><i>Is Suicide Genetic?</i>, 1996 C-print 21⅞ x 17⅞ in (53.5 x 43.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #8</i>, 1997 Blue tights, navy stockings, wood and vinyl chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 39 x 34 x 31⅞ in (99 x 86.5 x 79 cm) Collection Margaret and Daniel S. Loeb</p>	<p><i>Self-Portrait with Skull</i>, 1997 C-print 68¾ x 48 in (174.6 x 121.9 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Beyond the Pleasure Principle (Freud)</i>, 2000 Futon mattress, cardboard coffin, garment rail, neon tube, lightbulbs, bucket, and wire 57⅞ x 76 x 85 in (145 x 193 x 216 cm) Tate: Presented by the Patrons of New Art 2002</p>	<p><i>Christ You Know It Ain't Easy</i>, 2003 Fiberglass and cigarettes 77 x 72 x 16 in (195.6 x 182.9 x 40.6 cm) Collection the artist</p>
<p><i>Five Lists</i>, 1991 Pencil on paper, five sheets 9 x 7 in (23 x 18 cm) each Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Big Fat Anarchic Spider</i>, 1993 Tights and newspaper 41¾ in d (106 cm d) Collection Rosana and Jacques Séguin, London</p>	<p><i>Au Naturel</i>, 1994 Mattress, melons, oranges, cucumber, and bucket 33⅞ x 66⅞ x 57 in (84 x 168.8 x 144.8 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Is Suicide Genetic?</i>, 1996 C-print 59½ x 40½ in (151 x 103 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #9</i>, 1997 Tan tights, yellow stockings, office chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 41 x 18⅞ x 26 in (104 x 48 x 66 cm) Collection Stephen and Yana Peel, London</p>	<p><i>Laugh?</i>, 1998 R-print 25 x 20 in (63.5 x 50.8 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Got a Salmon on in the Garden</i>, 2000 Black-and-white photograph 69½ x 46¼ in (176.5 x 117.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>	<p><i>Unknown Soldier</i>, 2003 Concrete boots and neon tube 72 x 22⅞ x 14⅞ in (183 x 58 x 36 cm) Collection Shane Akeroyd</p>
<p><i>Laid in Japan</i>, 1991 Collage and paint on board 88 x 56½ in (223.5 x 143.5 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Cock and Spare Balls</i>, 1993 Papier-mâché collage Penis: 7⅞ x 3 x 2¾ in (18 x 7.5 x 7 cm) Balls: 2¾ x 2¾ x 2 in (7 x 7 x 5 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Au Naturel</i>, 1994 Mattress, melons, oranges, cucumber, and bucket 33⅞ x 66⅞ x 57 in (84 x 168.8 x 144.8 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Where Does It All Start?</i>, 1996 C-print 22¾ x 17½ in (57.8 x 44.5 cm) Collection the artist</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #10</i>, 1997 Tan tights, red stockings, wood and vinyl chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 41 x 28 x 35 in (104 x 71 x 89 cm) D.Daskalopoulos Collection</p>	<p><i>Nature Abhors a Vacuum</i>, 1998 Toilet and cigarettes 16⅞ x 15 x 20⅞ in (43 x 38 x 53 cm) Collection Shane Akeroyd</p>	<p><i>Inferno</i>, 2000 Toilet, lightbulb, cigar, nuts, and wire 17¾ x 20½ x 15 in (45 x 52 x 38 cm) D.Daskalopoulos Collection</p>	<p><i>Spamageddon</i>, 2004 Chair, tights, kapok, Spam cans, and helmets 32⅞ x 41⅞ x 39⅞ in (81.5 x 105 x 100.5 cm) Zabludowicz Collection</p>
<p><i>Mussolini Morning</i>, 1991 Photographs, wire, and vase 28 x 45 x 22 in (71.1 x 114.3 x 55.9 cm) The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles Purchased with funds provided by The Buddy Taub Foundation, Jill and Dennis Roach, Directors</p>	<p><i>Big Fat Anarchic Spider</i>, 1993 Tights and newspaper 41¾ in d (106 cm d) Collection Rosana and Jacques Séguin, London</p>	<p><i>Au Naturel</i>, 1994 Mattress, melons, oranges, cucumber, and bucket 33⅞ x 66⅞ x 57 in (84 x 168.8 x 144.8 cm) Private collection</p>	<p><i>Where Does It All Start?</i>, 1996 C-print 22¾ x 17½ in (57.8 x 44.5 cm) Collection the artist</p>	<p><i>Bunny Gets Snookered #10</i>, 1997 Tan tights, red stockings, wood and vinyl chair, clamp, kapok, and wire 41 x 28 x 35 in (104 x 71 x 89 cm) D.Daskalopoulos Collection</p>	<p><i>Nature Abhors a Vacuum</i>, 1998 Toilet and cigarettes 16⅞ x 15 x 20⅞ in (43 x 38 x 53 cm) Collection Shane Akeroyd</p>	<p><i>Inferno</i>, 2000 Toilet, lightbulb, cigar, nuts, and wire 17¾ x 20½ x 15 in (45 x 52 x 38 cm) D.Daskalopoulos Collection</p>	<p><i>Selfish in Bed II</i>, 2000 Digital print 48 x 48 in (121.9 x 121.9 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London</p>

<i>Accidental Souvenir</i> , 2005 Helmet and tights 6¼ x 9⅞ x 33⅞ in (16 x 25 x 86 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Eros</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 16½ x 7½ x 6⅞ in (42 x 19 x 17.5 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Whand</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 9½ x 23 x 3¾ in (24 x 58.5 x 9.5 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #4</i> , 2009 C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>HARD NUD</i> , 2012 Cast iron with four bricks 8⅜ x 7⅞ x 5½ in (21.2 x 20 x 13 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Priapus</i> , 2013 Cast concrete and crushed car 131⅞ x 35 x 37¾ in (335 x 89 x 96 cm) Courtesy the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels	<i>Sadie</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, and toilet 33¾ x 42½ x 42½ in (86 x 107 x 107 cm) Collection Alexander V. Petalas	<i>VOX POP DORIS</i> , 2018* Concrete and concrete slabs 8¼ x 8¼ x 11¾ ft (2.5 x 2.5 x 3.6 m) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London
<i>Burger Cunt</i> , 2005 Bucket, tights, wire, and paint 20⅞ x 15¾ x 13⅞ in (53 x 40 x 34 cm) Private collection	<i>Imp</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 8¼ x 12¼ x 8½ in (21 x 31 x 20.5 cm) Collection the artist	<i>NUD 5</i> , 2009 Tights, fluff, and wire 13 x 11¾ x 12⅞ in (33 x 30 x 32 cm) Collection Paul and Anna Stolper	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #5</i> , 2009 C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Lupe</i> , 2012 Tights, fluff, wire, and adobe bricks Sculpture: 22½ x 16½ x 17⅞ in (57 x 42 x 44 cm) Plinth: 39⅞ x 17¾ x 17½ in (100 x 45 x 43.5 cm) D.Daskalopoulos Collection	<i>Realidad</i> , 2013 Cast bronze 17⅞ x 16⅞ x 22⅞ in (44 x 43 x 57 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Tit-Cat Up</i> , 2015 Bronze 47½ x 29⅞ x 19½ in (120.5 x 76 x 48.5 cm) Private collection	*An asterisk denotes works not illustrated in this catalogue.
<i>Cock</i> , 2005 Metal cockerel, cigarettes, and glue 23⅞ x 18½ x 7⅞ in (60 x 47 x 20 cm) Collection Adam Sender	<i>The King</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 48⅞ x 47¼ x 11¾ in (123 x 120 x 30 cm) Private collection	<i>NUD 6</i> , 2009 Tights, fluff, and wire 13 x 16½ x 16⅞ in (33 x 41 x 43 cm) Collection Gerald Fox	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #6</i> , 2009* C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Mumum</i> , 2012 Tights, fluff, and chair frame 57 x 32½ x 43 in (144.7 x 82.5 x 109.2 cm) Collection Marc Quinn	<i>White Nob</i> , 2013 Plaster 44¼ x 13 x 15⅞ in (112.5 x 33 x 40 cm) Courtesy the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels	<i>Yoko</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, and chair 33⅞ x 22½ x 35 in (84 x 57 x 89 cm) Private collection	
<i>Daddy</i> , 2005 Wooden plinth, piece of branch, and cigarette 63⅞ x 14⅞ x 11¼ in (161 x 37 x 28.5 cm) Collection Frank Gallipoli	<i>Luvab</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 13⅞ x 8½ x 7⅞ in (34 x 20.5 x 20 cm) Private collection	<i>NUD 8</i> , 2009 Tights, fluff, and wire 12⅞ x 11¾ x 11¼ in (32 x 30 x 30 cm) Collection Shane Akeroyd	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #7</i> , 2009 C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>NUD 27</i> , 2012 Tights, kapok, wire, and linen string 13¾ x 11¾ x 12¼ in (35 x 30 x 31 cm) Collection Elizabeth Peyton	<i>Lupe</i> , 2014 Cast bronze 20⅞ x 19¾ x 18⅞ in (53 x 50 x 48 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Floppy Toilet Dubr</i> , 2017 Cast resin and fridge Sculpture: 18 x 13¼ x 19⅞ in (46 x 35 x 50 cm) Fridge: 33 x 18¾ x 17½ in (84 x 47.5 x 44.5 cm) Private collection, London	
<i>God is Dad</i> , 2005 Nylon tights, small lightbulbs, and wire 47½ x 11½ x 5 in (120.7 x 29.2 x 12.7 cm) Private collection	<i>Martyr</i> , 2008 Plaster and wood 40⅞ x 13⅞ x 13⅞ in (102.5 x 34.5 x 34 cm) Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>NUD 9</i> , 2009 Tights, fluff, and wire 12⅞ x 11⅞ x 13 in (32 x 29 x 33 cm) ISelf Collection	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #8</i> , 2009* C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Dacre</i> , 2013 Cast bronze 24¼ x 19⅞ x 25⅞ in (61.5 x 49 x 65.5 cm) Collection the artist	<i>D.H. Lawrence Reading</i> , 2015* Video, sound, color; 3:58 min Courtesy the artist and Julian Simmons	<i>Floppy Toilet Set</i> , 2017* Cast resin and fridge Sculpture: 16½ x 13¾ x 19⅞ in (41 x 35 x 50 cm) Fridge: 18⅞ x 18¾ x 18¾ in (48 x 47.5 x 47.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels	
<i>Liberty</i> , 2005 Plaster and cigarette 19¼ x 9½ x 3⅞ in (49 x 24 x 10 cm) Collection Frank Gallipoli	<i>Owl</i> , 2008 Plaster and wood 11¾ x 9½ x 7½ in (30 x 24 x 19 cm) Collection the artist	<i>NUD 10</i> , 2009 Tights, fluff, and wire 12⅞ x 14⅞ x 14⅞ in (32 x 37 x 37 cm) Collection Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn and Nicolas Rohatyn	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #22</i> , 2010 Tights, fluff, and wire 11⅞ x 13 x 13⅞ in (29 x 33 x 34.5 cm) KUKO Collection, Belgium	<i>NUD 22</i> , 2010 Tights, fluff, and wire 11⅞ x 13 x 13⅞ in (29 x 33 x 34.5 cm) KUKO Collection, Belgium	<i>Edith</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, toilet, and table 54¾ x 73⅞ x 38¾ in (139 x 187 x 98.5 cm) Private collection	<i>Floppy Toilet Twa</i> , 2017 Cast resin and fridge Sculpture: 15¾ x 14½ x 18⅞ in (40 x 36 x 48 cm) Fridge: 33 x 18¾ x 17½ in (84 x 47.5 x 44.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	
<i>We do it with love</i> , 2005 C-print 22½ x 16⅞ in (57 x 42.8 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Penetralia</i> , 2008 Plaster and wood 8⅞ x 17⅞ x 17⅞ in (22.5 x 44 x 44 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>NUD 18</i> , 2009 Tights, fluff, and wire 11¾ x 14½ x 12⅞ in (30 x 36 x 32 cm) Collection Frank Gallipoli	<i>NUD 24</i> , 2010 Tights, fluff, and wire 17¾ x 13¾ x 17¾ in (45 x 35 x 45 cm) Private collection	<i>NUD 26</i> , 2010 Tights, fluff, and wire 11¾ x 15 x 15¾ in (30 x 38 x 40 cm) Collection Alexander V. Petalas	<i>Egg Massage</i> , 2015 Video, sound, color; 4:59 min Courtesy the artist and Julian Simmons		
<i>One's nob (viii)</i> , 2006 Beer can and cigarettes 8¼ x 6¼ x 3⅞ in (21 x 16 x 10 cm) Collection Frank Gallipoli	<i>Raptor</i> , 2008 Plaster and wood 53 x 19 x 23 in (134.6 x 48.3 x 58.4 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>NUD 19</i> , 2009 Tights, fluff, and wire 49⅞ x 16⅞ x 17⅞ in (126 x 43 x 44 cm) Courtesy the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels	<i>NUD 25</i> , 2010 Tights, fluff, and wire 17¾ x 13¾ x 17¾ in (45 x 35 x 45 cm) Private collection	<i>Hoolian</i> , 2013 Cast bronze 18½ x 21¼ x 21¼ in (47 x 55 x 55 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Margot</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, and freezer 45⅞ x 79½ x 34¼ in (116 x 202 x 87 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London		
<i>Ax</i> , 2008 Plaster and wood 11¾ x 16⅞ x 16⅞ in (30 x 43 x 43 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Satyr</i> , 2008 Plaster and rusted steel bucket 13¾ x 32¼ x 15 in (35 x 82 x 38 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #1</i> , 2009* C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Penetralius</i> , 2010 Concrete 26¾ x 13 x 15½ in (68 x 33 x 38.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Nabuiolin</i> , 2013 Cast bronze 18½ x 16½ x 23¼ in (47 x 42 x 59 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Me (Bar Stool)</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, and stool 39⅞ x 23⅞ x 22 in (100 x 60 x 56 cm) Collection Shane Akeroyd	<i>Red Sky Bba</i> , 2018 C-print 58½ x 44 in (148.6 x 111.8 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	
<i>Dayo</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 16½ x 7½ x 6⅞ in (42 x 19 x 17.5 cm) Private collection	<i>Skull Wand</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 9⅞ x 29½ x 4 in (25 x 75 x 10 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #2</i> , 2009 C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Toe Whand</i> , 2010 Plaster and flint 24¼ x 4 x 3⅞ in (61.5 x 10 x 8 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Nauda</i> , 2013 Cast bronze 14¼ x 14¼ x 13 in (36 x 36 x 33 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Michele</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, and desk 49⅞ x 60 x 30½ in (126 x 152.5 x 77.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Red Sky Ha</i> , 2018 C-print 58½ x 44 in (148.6 x 111.8 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	
<i>Druid</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 17¾ x 7⅞ x 7⅞ in (45 x 19.5 x 19.5 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Stanway John</i> , 2008 Polished bronze and concrete 15⅞ x 6⅞ x 6¾ in (39 x 15.5 x 17 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Pepsi &amp; Cockey #3</i> , 2009* C-print 41 x 30⅞ in (104 x 78.5 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>Tree Nob 2</i> , 2010 Plaster, plaster bandage, and wood 11¼ x 8⅞ x 5⅞ in (28.5 x 22 x 13 cm) Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London	<i>NUD 30</i> , 2013 Tights, fluff, and wire 13 x 15⅞ x 15¾ in (33 x 39 x 40 cm) Collection Izak and Freda Uziyel	<i>Patricia</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, and table 37⅞ x 30¾ x 73¼ in (95 x 78 x 186 cm) Collection Marc Quinn	Untitled, 2018* Mixed mediums Dimensions variable Courtesy the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels	
<i>Druid Wand</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 11 x 24¾ x 4 in (28 x 63 x 10 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Swan</i> , 2008 Plaster, steel wire, and wood 15 x 15¾ x 3⅞ in (38 x 40 x 10 cm) Private collection			<i>Patrick More</i> , 2013 Cast bronze 29 x 20⅞ x 31½ in (73.5 x 53 x 80 cm) Collection the artist	<i>Pauline</i> , 2015 Plaster, cigarette, and chair 33¼ x 38 x 26¾ in (84 x 96.5 x 68 cm) Collection Kenny Schachter		

## SARAH LUCAS BIOGRAPHY

1962 Born in London  
Lives and works in Suffolk, UK

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2018	“Dame Zero,” kurimanzutto, Mexico City “Familias Felices,” Salón Silicón, Mexico City
2017	“God Save the Queen: Damien Hirst & Sarah Lucas,” Edward Ressle, New York “Good Muse,” Legion of Honor, San Francisco “FunQroc,” Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin “POWER IN WOMAN,” Humber Street Gallery, Hull, UK
2016	“INNAMEMORABILIAMUMBUM,” Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Albergo Diurno Venezia, Milan “Father Time,” Sadie Coles HQ, London “POWER IN WOMAN,” Sir John Soane’s Museum, London
2015	“I SCREAM DADDIO,” British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK
2014	“Florian and Kevin,” Aspen Art Museum, CO “SARAH LUCAS & JULIAN SIMMONS: TITTIPUSSIDAD,” Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin “Sarah Lucas Furniture,” Sadie Coles HQ (off-site), Milan “NUD NOB,” Gladstone Gallery, New York Tramway, Glasgow
2013	“NOB + Gelatin,” Secession, Vienna “SITUATION ABSOLUTE BEACH MAN RUBBLE,” Whitechapel Gallery, London “Sarah Lucas Furniture,” Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin “SITUATION ROMANS,” Sadie Coles HQ, London
2012	“SITUATION CLASSIC PERVERY,” Sadie Coles HQ, London “SITUATION FRANZ WEST,” Sadie Coles HQ, London Home Alone Gallery, New York “SITUATION WHITE HOLE,” Sadie Coles HQ, London (with Rohan Wealleans) “Ordinary Things,” Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK
2011	“LUCAS-BOSCH-GELATIN,” Kunsthalle Krems, Austria “NUZ: Spirit of Ewe,” Two Rooms, Auckland, New Zealand; Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand
2010	“Penetralia,” Gladstone Gallery, Brussels “NUDS CYCLADIC,” Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens “Perceval,” Snape Maltings, Snape, UK
2009	“NUDS,” Sadie Coles HQ, 13 Dover Street, London
2008	Goss-Michael Foundation, Dallas “Penetralia,” Sadie Coles HQ, London “Perceval,” Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, UK “Perceval,” Doris C. Freedman Plaza, Central Park, New York
2006	“Vanitas,” De Hallen Haarlem, Netherlands
2005	“GOD IS DAD,” Gladstone Gallery, New York Kunsthalle Zürich; Kunstverein Hamburg, Germany; Tate Liverpool, UK
2004	“In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida,” Tate Britain, London (with Angus Fairhurst and Damien Hirst)
2003	“Temple of Bacchus,” Milton Keynes Gallery, UK (with Colin Lowe and Roddy Thomson)
2002	Tate Modern, London “Charlie George,” Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin
2001	“CAKE,” Counter Editions, London

2000

“The Fag Show,” Sadie Coles HQ, London  
“Beyond the Pleasure Principle,” Freud Museum, London  
“Self Portraits and More Sex,” Tecla Sala, Barcelona  
Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo

1999

“Beautiness,” Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin

1998

“Odd-bod Photography,” Sadie Coles HQ, London; Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (with Angus Fairhurst)  
“The Old In Out,” Gladstone Gallery, New York

1997

“The Law,” St. Johns Lofts, London  
“Bunny Gets Snookered,” Sadie Coles HQ, London  
“Car Park,” Museum Ludwig, Cologne

1996

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam  
Portikus, Frankfurt  
“Is Suicide Genetic?,” Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin

1995

“Supersensible,” Gladstone Gallery, New York  
“Got a Salmon On (Prawn),” Anthony d’Offay Gallery, London  
“Where’s My Moss,” White Cube, London

1993

“Projects 44: Sarah Lucas and Steven Pippin,” Museum of Modern Art, New York  
The Shop, 103 Bethnal Green Road, London (with Tracey Emin)  
“From Army to Armani,” Galerie Analix, Geneva (with Tracey Emin)

1992

“The Whole Joke,” Kingly Street, London  
“Penis Nailed to a Board,” City Racing, London

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018

“Par amour du jeu,” Magasins généraux, Paris  
“Walking on the Fade Out Lines,” Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai  
“EuroVisions: Contemporary Art from the Goldberg Collection,” Heide Museum of Modern Art, Bulleen, Australia  
“Five Plus Five: Sculptures from China and Great Britain in Hainan,” Sun and Moon Plaza, Haikou, Hainan, China  
“In My Shoes: Art and the Self since the 1990s,” Longside Gallery at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Yorkshire, UK  
“Like Life: Sculpture, Color, and the Body (1300–Now),” Met Breuer, New York

2017

“Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity,” Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK  
“Social Photography V,” Carriage Trade, New York  
“Pélamide,” Gladstone Gallery, Brussels  
“Touchpiece,” Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Los Angeles  
“The Body Laid Bare: Masterpieces from Tate,” Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, New Zealand  
“Ark,” Chester Cathedral, Chester, UK  
“Dreamers Awake,” White Cube, London  
“EuroVisions: Contemporary Art from the Goldberg Collection,” NAS Gallery, Sydney  
“Acting Out,” Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand  
“Room,” Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, UK  
“Midtown,” Lever House, New York  
“If on a Trondheim’s Night a Traveler . . . ,” Trondheim Kunstmuseum, Norway  
“The Inner Skin: Art and Shame,” Marta Herford, Germany  
“Disobedient Bodies: J.W. Anderson at the Hepworth Wakefield,” the Hepworth Wakefield, UK  
“Versus Rodin: Bodies across Space and Time,” Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide  
“No Place Like Home,” Israel Museum, Jerusalem  
“Room,” Sadie Coles HQ, London

2015

“NIRVANA: wundersame Formen der Lust,” Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur, Switzerland  
“The Funnies,” MOT International, Brussels  
“NO MAN’S LAND: Women Artists from the Rubell Family Collection,” Rubell Family Collection/Contemporary Arts Foundation, Miami  
“Sculpture on the Move 1946–2016,” Kunstmuseum Basel and Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel  
“Flirting with Strangers,” 21er Haus, Vienna  
“Avatar und Atavismus: Outside der Avantgarde,” Kunsthalle Düsseldorf  
“Going Public: International Art Collectors in Sheffield,” Museum Sheffield and Sheffield Cathedral, UK  
“Colección Jumex, In Girum Imus Nocte et Consumimur Igni,” Museo Jumex, Mexico City  
“The Great Mother,” Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan

2016

“Flesh,” York Art Gallery, UK  
“Le Retour des Ténèbres: L’imaginaire gothique depuis Frankenstein,” Musée Rath, Geneva  
“New Past: Contemporary Art from Britain,” Art Gallery of Uzbekistan, Tashkent

“Nude: Art from the Tate Collection,” Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney  
“Facing the World: Self-Portraits from Rembrandt to Ai Weiwei,” Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh  
“The Public Body,” Artspace, Sydney  
“On Empathy,” Bridget Donahue, New York  
“Invisible Adversaries: Marieluise Hessel Collection,” Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY  
“The Female Gaze, Part Two: Women Look at Men,” Cheim & Read, New York  
“Sculpture in the City,” London  
“Summer Exhibition,” Royal Academy of Arts, London  
“Daydreaming with Stanley Kubrick,” Somerset House, London  
“Autoportraits: from Rembrandt to the Selfie,” Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, France  
“Double Act: Art and Comedy,” Bluecoat, Liverpool, UK  
“Me,” Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt  
“The Pagad,” Massimo De Carlo, Milan  
“Performing for the Camera,” Tate Modern, London

2014

“A History: Art, Architecture, Design from the 1980s until today,” Centre Pompidou, Paris  
“Crucible 2,” Gloucester Cathedral, Chalford, UK  
“One Torino: Shit and Die,” Palazzo Cavour, Turin  
“Disturbing Innocence,” FLAG Art Foundation, New York  
“The Bad Shepherd: The Brueghel Dynasty in Conversation with Contemporary Art,” Christie’s Mayfair, London  
“A Very Short History of Contemporary Sculpture,” Phillips, London  
“Nirvana: Strange Forms of Pleasure,” MUDAC, Lausanne, Switzerland  
“Private Utopia: Contemporary Works from the British Council Collection,” Tokyo Station Gallery; Itami City Museum of Art, Japan; the Museum of Art, Kochi, Japan; Okayama Prefectural Museum of Art, Japan  
“La Gioia,” Maison Particulière, Brussels  
“Danjuma Collection: One Man’s Trash (is Another Man’s Treasure),” 33 Fitzroy Square, London  
“Corpus,” Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw  
“Le musée d’une nuit (script for leaving traces),” Fondation Hippocrène, Paris  
“Benglis 73/74,” Neon Parc, Melbourne  
Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK  
“Today’s Specials,” Pace London  
“Urs Fischer,” Sadie Coles HQ, London  
“Stanze/Rooms: Works from the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Collection,” me Collectors Room Berlin  
“Body & Void: Echoes of Moore in Contemporary Art,” Henry

“THEM,” Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin  
“TERRAPOLIS,” École Française d’Athènes, Athens  
“Love for Three Oranges,” Gladstone Gallery, Brussels  
“Zabludowicz Collection: 20 Years,” Zabludowicz Collection, London  
“Self: Image and Identity,” Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK  
“Private Utopia: Contemporary Works from the British Council Collection,” Dunedin Public Art Gallery, New Zealand  
“The Noing Uv It,” Bergen Kunsthall, Norway  
“La Peregrina,” Royal Academy of Arts, London  
“Sense Uncertainty: A Private Collection,” Kunsthaus Zürich  
“Sleepless: The Bed in History and Contemporary Art,” 21er Haus and Belvedere Museum, Vienna

2013

“1:1 Sets for Erwin Olaf & Bekleidung,” Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam  
“do it,” Socrates Sculpture Park, New York  
“Regarding Warhol: Sixty Artists, Fifty Years,” Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
“British British Polish Polish: Art from Europe’s Edges in the Long ‘90s and Today,” Centre of Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw  
“Lightness of Being,” Public Art Fund at City Hall Park, New York  
“Somos Libres,” MATE – Asociación Mario Testino, Lima  
“Mad, Bad and Sad: Women and the Mind Doctors,” Freud Museum, London  
“Art, Club Culture, Fashion,” Old Selfridges Hotel (ICA off-site), London  
“Mostly West: Franz West and Artist Collaborations,” Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh  
“SNAP: Art at the Aldeburgh Festival,” Snape Maltings, Snape, UK  
“The Encyclopedic Palace,” Venice Biennale  
“FLESH REALITY,” Point Zero, London  
“Dreams of Reason: Highlights of the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Collection,” Centre of Contemporary Art, Torun, Poland  
Manchester International Festival, UK  
“In the Heart of the Country,” Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw  
Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh  
“The Weak Sex: How Art Pictures the New Male,” Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland  
“Looking at the View,” Tate Britain, London  
Xavier Hufkens, Brussels  
“NYC 1993: Experimental Jet Set, Trash and No Star,” New Museum, New York

2012

“Gnadenlos: Künstlerinnen und das Komische,” Kunsthalle Vogelmann, Heilbronn, Germany  
“From Death to Death and Other Small Tales,” Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh

<p>“Sex and Design,” Milan Triennial</p> <p>“Freedom Not Genius: Works from Damien Hirst’s Murderme Collection,” Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Turin</p> <p>“The Far and The Near,” Tate St Ives, UK</p> <p>“Sculptural Matter,” Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne</p> <p>“Free: Art by Offenders, Secure Patients and Detainees,” Southbank Centre, London</p> <p>“Pothole,” Salon 94, New York</p> <p>“A Disagreeable Object,” SculptureCenter, New York</p> <p>“Self-Portrait,” Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark</p> <p>“Buy My Bananas,” Kate Werble Gallery, New York</p> <p>“Portrait of the Artist As . . . ,” Courtauld Gallery, London</p> <p>“Second Skin,” VPL / Vara Art, New York</p> <p>“Print/Out,” Museum of Modern Art, New York</p> <p>“Beautiful Penis,” Palais de Tokyo, Paris</p> <p>“The Spirit Level,” Gladstone Gallery, New York</p> <p>“Art Exchange,” Museum of Modern Art, Baku, Azerbaijan</p> <p>“Selling Sex,” SHOWstudio, London</p> <p>“Made In Britain,” Benaki Museum, Athens</p> <p>“Simon Fujiwara: Since 1982,” Tate St Ives, UK</p>	<p>“Dwelling,” Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York</p> <p>“The Luxury of Dirt,” Galerie Bob van Orsouw, Zurich</p> <p>“Modern British Sculpture,” Royal Academy of Arts, London</p> <p>“The Life of the Mind,” New Art Gallery, Walsall, UK</p> <p>“Le Paris Bar à Paris,” Suzanne Tarasiève Galerie, Paris</p>	<p>“Pop Life,” Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany; National Gallery of Canada, Ontario</p> <p>“Walls Are Talking,” Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK</p>	<p>Collection as Aleph,” Kunsthau Graz, Austria</p> <p>“Films,” Sadie Coles HQ, London</p> <p>“GOD &amp; GOODS: Spirituality and Mass Confusion,” Villa Manin Centre for Contemporary Art, Codroipo, Italy</p> <p>“Blasted Allegories: Works from the Ringier Collection,” Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne, Switzerland</p>	<p>China,” China Art Gallery, Beijing; Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou; Shanghai Art Musuem; Three Gorges Museum, Chongqing, China</p>	<p>Collection,” Bergen Art Museum, Norway; Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, Netherlands</p> <p>“Narcissus: New Visions on Self Representation,” CRAC Alsace, Altkirch, France</p> <p>“Vier eeuwen roken in de kunst: Taboe en tabak – van Jan Steen tot Pablo Picasso,” Kunsthil Rotterdam, Netherlands</p> <p>“Fourth Plinth Project,” Trafalgar Square, London</p> <p>“Cruel Fat,” MOT, London</p> <p>“The Dead Bird Show,” Whitechapel Project Space, London</p> <p>“Franz West and Friends,” Austrian Cultural Institute, London</p> <p>“Plunder,” Dundee Contemporary Arts, Scotland</p> <p>“Breathing the Water,” Galerie Hauser &amp; Wirth &amp; Presenhuber, Zurich</p> <p>“Sogni e conflitti: La dittatura dello spettatore,” Venice Biennale Bernsten, Oslo</p> <p>“Sculpture,” Galerie Elisabeth &amp; Klaus Thoman, Innsbruck, Austria</p> <p>“Body: New Art from the UK,” Vancouver Art Gallery; Ottawa Art Gallery; Oakville Galleries, Canada; Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada; Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Canada</p> <p>“Critic’s Choice,” FACT, Liverpool, UK</p>	<p>British and Irish Art,” Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin</p> <p>“New: Recent Acquisitions of Contemporary British Art,” Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh</p> <p>“PoT: The Liverpool Biennial of Contemporary Art – The Independent,” Liverpool, UK; Galeria Fortes Vilaça, São Paulo</p> <p>“Arquivo Pons Artxiboa,” Koldo Mitxelena Kulturunea, San Sebastián, Spain</p> <p>“Rapture: Art’s Seduction by Fashion Since 1970,” Barbican Gallery, London</p>	<p>Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand</p> <p>“Psycho,” Faggionato Fine Arts, London</p> <p>“Human Being and Gender,” Gwangju Biennial, South Korea</p> <p>“Sex and the British,” Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg, Austria, and Paris</p> <p>“The British Art Show 5,” Hayward Touring Exhibitions, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Royal Botanic Gardens, etc., Edinburgh; Southampton Art Gallery, John Hansard Gallery, and Millais Gallery, Southampton, UK; National Museum of Wales, Centre for Visual Arts, and Chapter Arts, Cardiff, Wales; Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK</p> <p>“About Collage,” Tate Liverpool, UK</p> <p>“Puerile 69,” Living Art Museum, Reykjavik</p> <p>“Hoxton HQ,” Sadie Coles HQ at Hoxton House, London</p> <p>“Intelligence: New British Art 2000,” Tate Britain, London</p> <p>“Body Beautiful,” Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris</p> <p>“Death Race 2000,” Thread Waxing Space, New York</p> <p>“Hypermental,” Kunsthau Zürich</p> <p>“The Oldest Possible Memory,” Hauser &amp; Wirth Collection, St. Gallen, Switzerland</p>	
<p>2011</p> <p>“Diferencia y Acuerdo,” Espacio Mínimo, Madrid</p> <p>“Home Alone,” Sender Collection, Miami</p> <p>“Neon + Vinyl,” Plus Art Projects at Londonewcastle Project Space, London</p> <p>“Nothing in the World But Youth,” Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK</p> <p>“Mindful,” Imperial War Museum and the Old Vic Tunnels, London</p> <p>“Camulodunum,” Firstsite, Colchester, UK</p> <p>“SNAP: Art at the Aldeburgh Festival,” Snape Maltings, Snape, UK</p> <p>“Forcemeat,” Wallspace Gallery, New York</p> <p>“Women Make Sculpture,” Pangolin London</p> <p>“The Luminous Interval: The D.Daskalopoulos Collection,” Museo Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain</p> <p>“Destello,” Fundación/Colectión Jumex, Mexico City</p> <p>“The Last First Decade,” Ellipse Foundation, Cascais, Portugal</p> <p>“X,” Gió Marconi, Milan</p> <p>“Lart del Menjar / Eating Art,” Fundació Caixa Catalunya La Pedrera, Barcelona</p>	<p>2010</p> <p>“How Soon Now,” Rubell Family Collection, Miami</p> <p>“Plus Ultra: Works from the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Collection,” Museo d’Arte Contemporanea, Rome</p> <p>“Cosa fa la mia anima mentre sto lavorando?,” Museo Arte Gallarate, Italy</p> <p>“Covering the wall: Contemporary wall-papers,” MUDAC – Musée de design et d’arts appliqués contemporains, Lausanne, Switzerland</p> <p>“Highlights from the Collection,” Goss-Michael Foundation, Dallas</p> <p>“CREAM: Damien Hirst &amp; Contemporaries,” Kiasma, Helsinki</p> <p>“The Last Newspaper,” New Museum, New York</p> <p>“Happy End,” Kunsthalle Göppingen, Germany</p> <p>“Young British Art,” Johyun Gallery, Busan, South Korea</p> <p>“British Art Show 7: In the Days of the Comet,” Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham Castle, and New Art Exchange, UK</p> <p>“Fresh Hell: Carte Blanche à Adam McEwen,” Palais de Tokyo, Paris</p> <p>“Crucible,” Gloucester Cathedral, UK</p> <p>“The Concrete Show,” Galleria Franco Noero, Turin</p> <p>“The New Décor,” Hayward Gallery, London; Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow</p> <p>“Super Farmers’ Market,” Handel Street Projects, London</p> <p>“Summer Exhibition,” Royal Academy of Arts, London</p> <p>“The Surreal House,” Barbican Art Gallery, London</p> <p>“Rude Britannia: British Comic Art,” Tate Britain, London</p> <p>“Keeping it Real: Works from the D.Daskalopoulos Collection,” Whitechapel Gallery, London</p> <p>“Sexuality and Transcendence,” Pinchuk Art Centre, Kiev, Ukraine</p> <p>“Art,” Galerie Haas &amp; Fuchs, Berlin</p> <p>“Knock Knock: Who’s There? That Joke Isn’t Funny Anymore,” Armand Bartos Fine Art, New York</p>	<p>2009</p> <p>“Pop Life: Art in a Material World,” Tate Modern, London</p> <p>“Past Present: Where the modern and the historic meet,” Nunnington Hall, York, UK</p> <p>“British Subjects: Identity and Self-Fashioning 1967–2009,” Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY</p> <p>“Precarious Form,” Galerie Meyer Kainer, Vienna</p> <p>“Boule to Braid,” Lisson Gallery, London</p> <p>Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York</p> <p>“Passports: In viaggio con l’arte,” Padiglione d’Arte Contemporanea, Milan</p> <p>“The Female Gaze: Women Look at Women,” Cheim &amp; Read, New York</p> <p>“Gone to Earth,” Isis Gallery, London</p> <p>“V22 Presents The Sculpture Show: Oysters Ain’t,” Almond Building, the Biscuit Factory, London</p> <p>“Contemporary Eye: Material Matters,” Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, UK</p> <p>“Yes or No and/or Yes and No,” Western Bridge, Seattle</p> <p>“The Kaleidoscopic Eye: Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary,” Mori Art Museum, Tokyo</p> <p>“Subversive Spaces: Surrealism and Contemporary Art,” Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester, UK; Compton Verney, Warwickshire, UK; Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich, UK</p>	<p>2007</p> <p>“Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century,” New Museum, New York</p> <p>“Soufflé: Eine Massenausstellung,” Kunstraum Innsbruck, Austria</p> <p>“The Third Mind: Carte Blanche to Ugo Rondinone,” Palais de Tokyo, Paris</p> <p>“The Naked Portrait, 1900–2007,” Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh</p> <p>“The Hamsterwheel,” Venice Biennale; Le Printemps de septembre, Toulouse, France; Centre d’Art Santa Mònica, Barcelona</p> <p>“Held Together with Water: Art from the Sammlung Verbund,” MAK, Vienna</p> <p>“Aftershock: Contemporary British Art 1990–2006,” Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China; Capital Museum, Beijing</p> <p>“Back to Hackney,” Hackney Arts Club, London</p> <p>“Global Feminisms,” Brooklyn Museum, New York; Davis Museum, Wellesley, MA</p>	<p>2005</p> <p>“Empreinte moi,” Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris</p> <p>“BritPrint,” National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne</p> <p>“The Prop Makers,” MOT, London</p> <p>“The Wonderful Fund Collection,” Arts in Marrakech Festival, Morocco</p> <p>“God is bored of us II,” FMCG, London</p> <p>“Rundlederwelten,” Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin</p> <p>“Light Art from Artificial Light,” ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany</p> <p>“Drunk vs. Stoned 2,” Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York</p> <p>“Y[oung] B[ritish] A[rtists] Criss-Crossed,” Galleri Kaare Thoman, Innsbruck, Austria</p> <p>“Body: New Art from the UK,” Vancouver Art Gallery; Ottawa Art Gallery; Oakville Galleries, Canada; Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada; Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Canada</p> <p>“Critic’s Choice,” FACT, Liverpool, UK</p>	<p>2004</p> <p>“Works from the Boros collection,” Museum für Neue Kunst and ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany</p> <p>“Part I – LAT – Living: The Emptiness,” Odapark, Venray, Netherlands</p> <p>“Gifted,” the Arts Gallery, University of the Arts London</p> <p>“Drunk vs. Stoned,” General Store in association with Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York</p> <p>“Spirit,” Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris</p> <p>“Atomkrieg,” Kunsthau Dresden, Germany</p> <p>“Man,” Rubble, London</p> <p>“57th Aldeburgh Festival: Contemporary British Sculpture at Snape,” Snape, UK</p> <p>“Sculpture: Precarious Realism between the Melancholy and the Comical,” Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna</p> <p>“Central Station: the Harald Falckenberg collection,” la maison rouge, Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris</p> <p>“From Above,” Galerie Georg Kargl, Vienna</p>	<p>2002</p> <p>“Face Off: A Portrait of the Artist,” Kettle’s Yard, Cambridge, UK; Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, UK</p> <p>“Location: UK,” Gimpel Fils, London</p> <p>“Copy,” Roth Horowitz Gallery, New York</p> <p>“Art Crazy Nation Show,” Milton Keynes Gallery, UK</p> <p>“To Eat or Not to Eat,” Centro de Arte de Salamanca, Spain</p> <p>“Campy Vampy Tacky,” La Criée centre d’art contemporain, Rennes, France</p> <p>“Second Skin,” Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK</p> <p>“Common Days: Contemporary British Photography,” American Federation of Arts, New York</p> <p>“The Rowan Collection: Contemporary</p>	<p>2001</p> <p>“Neon,” Neon Gallery, London</p> <p>“The Colony Room Club: 2001 – A Space Oddity,” A22 Projects, London</p> <p>“Close Encounters of the Art Kind,” Victoria and Albert Museum, London</p> <p>“The Surreal Woman: Femaleness and the Uncanny in Surrealism,” Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Germany</p> <p>“No World Without You: Reflections of Identity in New British Art,” Herzliya Museum of Art, Israel</p> <p>“Summer Exhibition,” Royal Academy of Arts, London</p> <p>“Field Day: Sculpture from Britain,” Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan</p> <p>“Without Hesitation: Views of the Olbricht Collection,” Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen, Germany</p> <p>“Freestyle: Werke aus der Sammlung Boros,” Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen, Germany</p> <p>“Breaking the Mould: 20th Century British Sculpture from Tate,” Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Norwich, UK</p> <p>“Public Offerings,” Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles</p> <p>“Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis,” Tate Modern, London</p> <p>“City Racing 1988–1998: A Partial Account,” Institute of Contemporary Arts, London</p> <p>“Uniform: Order and Disorder,” Stazione Leopolda, Florence</p> <p>“Chairs,” Castello di Udine, Italy</p> <p>“Femme Fatale: Die unheimliche Frau, Weiblichkeit im Surrealismus,” Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Germany</p>	<p>1999</p> <p>“Gallery Swap,” Sadie Coles HQ at Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin</p> <p>“This Is Modern Art,” billboard commissioned by Channel 4, London</p> <p>“Art Lovers,” Liverpool Biennial, UK</p> <p>“Me Myself I: Contemporary Self Images,” Haags Historisch Museum, The Hague</p> <p>“The Anagrammatical Body,” Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Austria; ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany</p> <p>“Sensation: Young British Artists in the Saatchi Collection,” Brooklyn Museum, New York</p>
	<p>2000</p> <p>“Quotidiana: The Continuity of the Everyday in 20th Century Art,” Castello di Rivoli, Turin</p> <p>“Zona F,” Espai d’art contemporani de Castelló, Spain</p> <p>“Drive: Power, Progress, Desire,”</p>	<p>2008</p> <p>“Listen Darling . . . The World is Yours,” Ellipse Foundation, Cascais, Portugal</p> <p>“Excerpt: Selections from the Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn Collection,” Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Poughkeepsie, NY</p> <p>“Cult of the Artist: ‘I can’t just slice off an ear every day,’” Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin</p> <p>“Held Together with Water,” Istanbul Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>“Darkside: Photographic Desire and Sexuality Photographed,” Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland</p> <p>“Female Trouble,” Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich</p> <p>“The Hamsterwheel,” Malmö Konsthall, Sweden</p> <p>“Devastation and Depreciation,” Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York</p> <p>“Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary:</p>	<p>2006</p> <p>“In the Darkest Hour There May be Light: Works from Damien Hirst’s Murderme Collection,” Serpentine Gallery, London</p> <p>“THIS IS NOT FOR YOU: Sculptural Discourses,” Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna</p> <p>“.all hawaii eNtrées / luNar reGGae,” Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin</p> <p>“The Wonderful Fund: Art for the New Millennium 2000–2005,” Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, UK</p> <p>“How to Improve the World,” Hayward Gallery, London</p> <p>Le Printemps de septembre, Toulouse, France</p> <p>“Prints,” Sadie Coles HQ, London</p> <p>“Body, Face, Soul: The Position of Women from the 16th to the 21st Century,” Leopold Museum, Vienna</p> <p>Art Car Boot Fair, Old Truman Brewery, London</p> <p>“The Devil of Hearth and Home,” Milan Triennial</p> <p>“Dada’s Boys,” Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh</p> <p>“Contemporary British Art for</p>	<p>2004</p> <p>“Works from the Boros collection,” Museum für Neue Kunst and ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany</p> <p>“Part I – LAT – Living: The Emptiness,” Odapark, Venray, Netherlands</p> <p>“Gifted,” the Arts Gallery, University of the Arts London</p> <p>“Drunk vs. Stoned,” General Store in association with Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York</p> <p>“Spirit,” Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris</p> <p>“Atomkrieg,” Kunsthau Dresden, Germany</p> <p>“Man,” Rubble, London</p> <p>“57th Aldeburgh Festival: Contemporary British Sculpture at Snape,” Snape, UK</p> <p>“Sculpture: Precarious Realism between the Melancholy and the Comical,” Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna</p> <p>“Central Station: the Harald Falckenberg collection,” la maison rouge, Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris</p> <p>“From Above,” Galerie Georg Kargl, Vienna</p>	<p>2002</p> <p>“Face Off: A Portrait of the Artist,” Kettle’s Yard, Cambridge, UK; Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, UK</p> <p>“Location: UK,” Gimpel Fils, London</p> <p>“Copy,” Roth Horowitz Gallery, New York</p> <p>“Art Crazy Nation Show,” Milton Keynes Gallery, UK</p> <p>“To Eat or Not to Eat,” Centro de Arte de Salamanca, Spain</p> <p>“Campy Vampy Tacky,” La Criée centre d’art contemporain, Rennes, France</p> <p>“Second Skin,” Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK</p> <p>“Common Days: Contemporary British Photography,” American Federation of Arts, New York</p> <p>“The Rowan Collection: Contemporary</p>	<p>2001</p> <p>“Neon,” Neon Gallery, London</p> <p>“The Colony Room Club: 2001 – A Space Oddity,” A22 Projects, London</p> <p>“Close Encounters of the Art Kind,” Victoria and Albert Museum, London</p> <p>“The Surreal Woman: Femaleness and the Uncanny in Surrealism,” Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Germany</p> <p>“No World Without You: Reflections of Identity in New British Art,” Herzliya Museum of Art, Israel</p> <p>“Summer Exhibition,” Royal Academy of Arts, London</p> <p>“Field Day: Sculpture from Britain,” Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan</p> <p>“Without Hesitation: Views of the Olbricht Collection,” Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen, Germany</p> <p>“Freestyle: Werke aus der Sammlung Boros,” Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen, Germany</p> <p>“Breaking the Mould: 20th Century British Sculpture from Tate,” Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Norwich, UK</p> <p>“Public Offerings,” Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles</p> <p>“Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis,” Tate Modern, London</p> <p>“City Racing 1988–1998: A Partial Account,” Institute of Contemporary Arts, London</p> <p>“Uniform: Order and Disorder,” Stazione Leopolda, Florence</p> <p>“Chairs,” Castello di Udine, Italy</p> <p>“Femme Fatale: Die unheimliche Frau, Weiblichkeit im Surrealismus,” Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Germany</p>	<p>1999</p> <p>“Gallery Swap,” Sadie Coles HQ at Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin</p> <p>“This Is Modern Art,” billboard commissioned by Channel 4, London</p> <p>“Art Lovers,” Liverpool Biennial, UK</p> <p>“Me Myself I: Contemporary Self Images,” Haags Historisch Museum, The Hague</p> <p>“The Anagrammatical Body,” Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Austria; ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany</p> <p>“Sensation: Young British Artists in the Saatchi Collection,” Brooklyn Museum, New York</p>	
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## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

“Photography as Concept,” 4th  
Internationale Foto-Triennale Esslingen,  
Villa Merkel, Esslingen, Germany

“Hungry Ghosts,” Douglas Hyde Gallery,  
Dublin

“New Art from Britain,” Kunstraum  
Innsbruck, Austria

“Maximum Diversity,” Galerie Krinzinger  
in der Benger Fabrik, Bregenz, Austria;  
Atelierhaus der Akademie der bildenden  
Künste, Vienna

“Contemporary British Art,” National  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul,  
South Korea

“Sensation: Young British Artists in  
the Saatchi Collection,” Hamburger  
Bahnhof, Berlin

“Emotion: Young British and American  
Art from the Goetz Collection,”  
Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany

“No Sex Please, We’re British,” Shiseido  
Gallery, Tokyo

1995

“Minky Manky,” South London Gallery

“Corpus Delicti: London in the 1990s,”  
Kunstforeningen, Copenhagen

“ARS 95,” Museum of Contemporary  
Art, Helsinki

“Brilliant! New Art from London,”  
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis;  
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

1994

“Watt,” Witte de With and Kunsthal  
Rotterdam, Netherlands

“Football Karaoke,” Portikus, Frankfurt

“Not Self Portrait,” Karsten Schubert  
Gallery, London

1993

“Young British Artists II,” Saatchi  
Collection, London

Monika Sprüth, Cologne

1992

Karsten Schubert Gallery, London

Stein Gladstone and Barbara Gladstone  
Gallery, New York

1990

“East Country Yard Show,” Surrey Docks,  
London

1988

“Freeze,” PLA Building, London

1986

Showroom, London

1997

“Material Culture,” Hayward Gallery,  
London

“Assuming Positions,” Institute of  
Contemporary Arts, London

“Peripheral Visionary,” De Fabriek  
Eindhoven, Netherlands

“Treasure Island,” Calouste Gulbenkian  
Museum, Lisbon

“Package Holiday: Works from the  
Ophiuchus Collection,” Hydra  
Workshop, Greece

“Strange Days,” Claudia Gian Ferrari  
Arte Contemporanea, Milan

“Sensation: Young British Artists in the  
Saatchi Collection,” Royal Academy of  
Arts, London

“Work in progress and or finished,”  
Übermain, Los Angeles

1996

“Co-operators,” Southampton City  
Art Gallery, UK; Huddersfield Art  
Gallery, UK

“From Figure to Object: A Century of  
Sculptors’ Drawings,” Frith Street  
Gallery and Karsten Schubert Gallery,  
London

“Live/Life,” Musée d’Art Moderne de  
la Ville de Paris; Centro Cultural de  
Belém, Lisbon

“Full House,” Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg,  
Germany

“Féminin-Masculin: Le sexe de l’art,”  
Centre Pompidou, Paris

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Quinn Latimer, *Sarah Lucas: Describe This  
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Linda Nochlin, *Sarah Lucas: GOD IS  
DAD* (New York: Gladstone Gallery,  
2005), 5–14.

Anne M. Wagner, "Sarah Lucas: Ordinary  
Language and Bodily Magic," in *Sarah  
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2012), 47–53.