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ARTSY

These 20 Female Artists Are Pushing Sculpture Forward



Installation view of Rosha Yaghmai for "Made in L.A. 2018," at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2018. Photo by Brian Forrest. Courtesy of the artist and Kayne Griffin Corcoran.

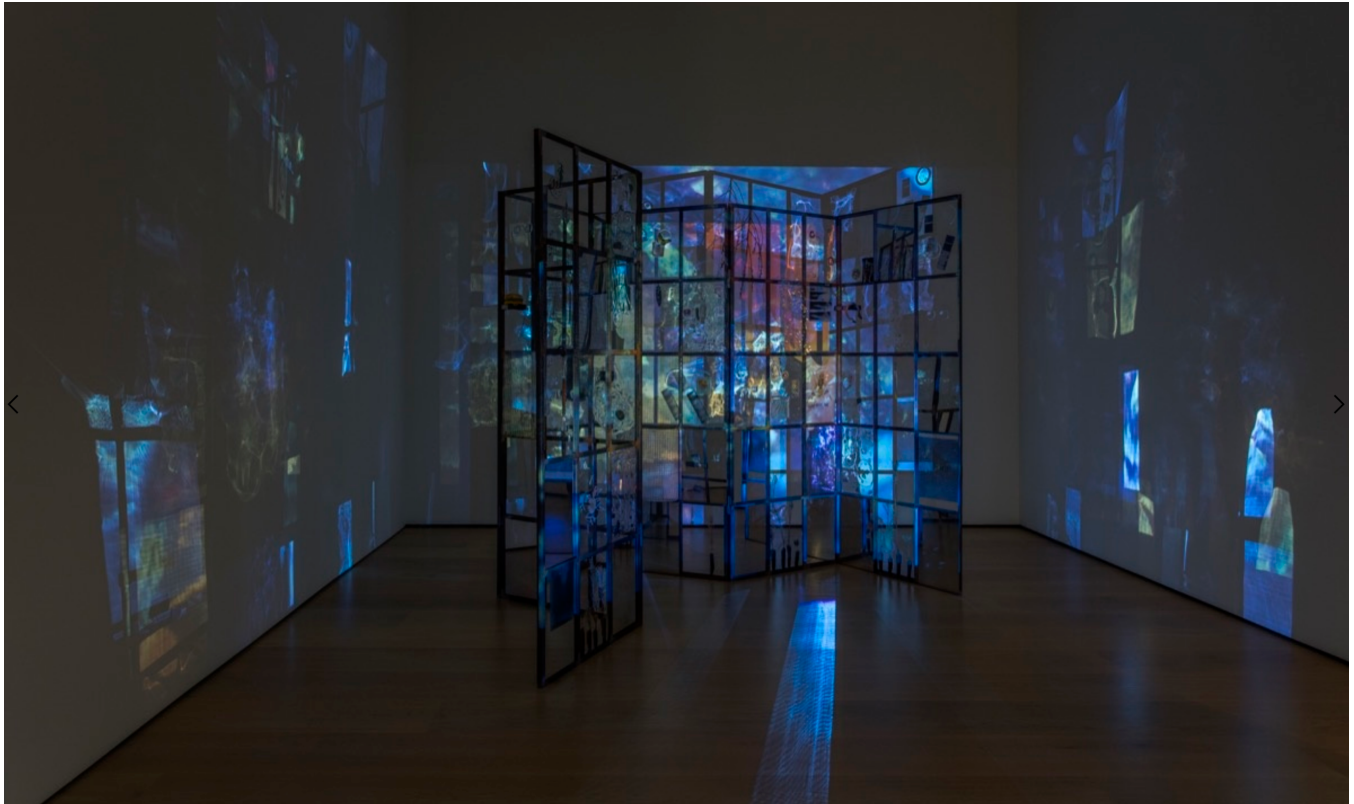
Sculpture was once considered the domain of ambitious male artists, a medium as challenging in its physicality as it was limitless in scope. But for several decades, artists from Eva Hesse and Senga Nengudi to Phyllida Barlow and Ursula von Rydingsvard have carved a place for women working in contemporary sculpture. And in 2018, it's arguably female artists who are creating some of the most interesting, challenging, and ambitious forms—freely taking the body apart, prodding taboos, and embracing the grotesque.

The eclectic group of 20 international sculptors highlighted here ranges from emerging to mid-career talents. What connections can we draw between them? There's the extraordinary influence of Louise Bourgeois, for one—nearly half of these artists cited the late artist as one of their icons. Doris Salcedo looms large, too. Meanwhile, many of these practices underscore the fact that clay has been comfortably absorbed into the artist's toolbox, moving well

Thackara, Tess. "These 20 Female Artists are Pushing Sculpture Forward." Artsy. 30 July 2018. Web.

beyond the realm of vessels to become a commonplace material—as capable as steel, wood, resin, and other materials in pushing boundaries and helping us to see the world anew.

Together, these artists are helping to define, question, and evolve the future of their medium.



Installation view of Rosha Yaghmai for "Made in L.A. 2018," at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2018. Photo by Brian Forrest. Courtesy of the artist and Kayne Griffin Corcoran.

Rosha Yaghmai

Rosha Yaghmai began her artistic career making photographs. But experiments in the darkroom soon found her eager to switch gears, incorporating other materials to create multidimensional installations. "The flatness of photography prohibited me from exploring the one-to-one relationship a viewer can have with the three-dimensional object," she said. At the Hammer Museum's "Made in L.A." biennial, Yaghmai presents her *Slide Samples (Lures, Myths)* (2018), an otherworldly glass-and-resin screen suffused with diaphanous light and overlaid with projected slides (drawn from photos that her father took after he immigrated to California from Iran).

The artist, who will have a solo exhibition at San Francisco's CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts in early 2019, is interested in capturing the possibility of metamorphosis and "feelings of transcendence and otherness." To achieve this enchanted quality, she employs an aesthetic influenced in part by West Coast psychedelia and junkyard culture—as seen in her *Optometer, Smoke* (2016), a twisting piece of gas pipe that she has decorated with colored eyeglass lenses so that it resembles a horned snake, poised to launch itself forward.

—Tess Thackara