

# NEON

## PRESS RELEASE

9 October 2019

### NEON Presents

**Lynda Benglis: *In the Realm of the Senses***

**Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens**

**22 November 2019 – 15 March 2020**

**Opening 21 November 2019 at 7pm**

**Curated by Dr. David Anfam**

NEON is pleased to present Lynda Benglis: *In the Realm of the Senses* at the Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens. The exhibition is guest-curated by the writer, critic and art historian, Dr. David Anfam.

Devoted to Lynda Benglis's highly original and prolific output in diverse media, this is the artist's first solo show in a country that has played a major role in her life and vision: Greece. Spanning half a century – from 1969 to the present, the concise survey of more than 30 pieces will occupy the intimate spaces of the Stathatos Mansion, displaying a wide spectrum of Benglis's materials and imagery.

Among the former are wax, bronze, aluminium, marble, latex, ceramics and glass. The latter include "fallen paintings" (the iconic *Baby Contraband*), "knots", "lagniappes", "torsos", "pleats", "fountains" amongst others. Conversations are formed between textures (liquid to waxy and metallic), colours (*Storm Pattern's* monochrome brazen sheen versus the multi-hued papers made over wire) and orientation (horizontal flow opposing the totemic vertical beeswax icons). Given the Mediterranean setting, radiance and a lapidary sensuousness will pervade the whole, which also foregrounds Benglis's many Grecian allusions, especially to its ancient/archaic statuary – epitomized by *Fanfarinade's* echo of the *Winged Victory of Samothrace* (c.220-190 BC). Indeed, Greece has been a recurrent muse for Benglis's expansive gestural imagination.

*In the Realm of the Senses* celebrates an artist who began as a pioneer of Post-Modernism in the late 1960s and still creates with a joyous fecundity in the twenty-first century. Describing Benglis's first wax paintings as early as 1968, the New York gallerist and critic Klaus Kertess noted that "skin, pull, sensuousness" ranked among her primary concerns. Such intense corporeal sensations continue to the present – as Benglis's sculpture constantly shifts between gravitas and movement, nature and flesh, with exquisite delicacy and inventiveness.

### Notes to Editors

Since the 1960s, **Lynda Benglis** (b. 1941, Lake Charles, Louisiana) has been celebrated for her free, ecstatic forms that are simultaneously playful and visceral, organic and abstract. Benglis began her career in the midst of Postminimal art, pushing the traditions of painting and sculpture into new territories. Her work—comprised of a variety of materials, from beeswax, latex, and polyurethane foam to later innovations with plaster, gold, vaporized metals, glass, ceramics, and paper—demonstrates a continued fascination with process. The embrace of flowing forms, color, and sensual surfaces plays a large part in her continuous investigation of the proprioceptive, sensory experiences of making and viewing sculpture.

Selected institutional solo shows include: *Lynda Benglis: Face Off*, Kistefos-Museet, Jevnaker, Norway (2018); *Lynda Benglis: Secrets*, Bergen Assembly, KODE Art Museums of Bergen, Norway (2016); *Lynda Benglis*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen CO (2016); *Lynda Benglis: Water Sources*, Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, New York NY (2015); *Lynda Benglis*, The Hepworth Wakefield, West Yorkshire (2015); and *Lynda Benglis: Figures*, The SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah GA (2012), among many others. Selected public collections include: Tate, London; Dallas Museum of Art TX; Museum of

Contemporary Art Chicago IL; Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles CA; The Museum of Modern Art, New York NY; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York NY, among many others.

Benglis is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and two National Endowment for the Arts grants, among other commendations.

**David Anfam** (based in London, UK) is the Managing Director of Art Exploration Consultancy Ltd as well as Senior Consulting Curator at the Clyfford Still Museum, Denver, and Director of its Research Center. Dr. Anfam's prime scholarly focus is modern and contemporary American art, although he has ranged widely across other areas. His diverse books include *Abstract Expressionism* (Thames & Hudson, 1990/2015); *Mark Rothko: The Works on Canvas—A Catalogue Raisonné* (Yale University Press, 1998/2019), which received the 2000 Mitchell Prize for the History of Art and *Anish Kapoor* (Phaidon Press, 2009). Since 1990 Anfam has contributed essays to more than 70 exhibition catalogues, including *Edward Hopper* (Tate Modern, 2004), *David Smith: A Centennial* (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2006), *Robert Motherwell's Elegies to the Spanish Republic* (Dominique Lévy, New York, 2015) and *Pier Paolo Calzolari* (White Cube, London, 2018). He received his PhD (1984) from the Courtauld Institute of Art. Anfam has lectured at institutions around the world – among them, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg; and the Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Most recently, Anfam's exhibition *Abstract Expressionism* – the largest survey of its kind ever held in Europe – opened at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, in 2016 and toured to Guggenheim Bilbao.

**NEON** is a nonprofit organization that works to bring contemporary culture closer to everyone. It is committed to broadening the appreciation, understanding, and creation of contemporary art in Greece and to the firm belief that this is a key tool for growth and development. NEON, founded in 2013 by collector and entrepreneur Dimitris Daskalopoulos, breaks with the convention that limits the contemporary art foundation of a collector to a single place.

NEON's space is the city. It acts on a multitude of initiatives, spaces, and civic and social contexts. It seeks to expose the ability contemporary culture has to stimulate, inspire, and affect the individual and society at large. NEON collaborates with cultural institutions and supports the programs of public and private institutions to enhance increased access and inventive interaction with contemporary art. Every year, NEON presents an important international artist's exhibition at the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens for which they invite a guest curator. NEON's previous exhibition guest curators include Sam Thorne (Paul Chan 2018), Douglas Fogle (Mike Kelley 2017–2018) and Paolo Colombo (Mario Merz, 2015–2016).  
[www.neon.org.gr](http://www.neon.org.gr)

#### Museum of Cycladic Art

Stathatos Mansion

Vasilissis Sofias ave. & 1, Irodotou str., Athens 10674

#### Exhibition Opening

21 November 2019, 19:00

#### Exhibition Duration

22 November 2019 – 15 March 2020

#### Opening hours

Monday - Wednesday - Friday - Saturday: 10:00 – 17:00

Thursday: 10:00 – 20:00

Sunday: 11:00 – 17:00

Tuesday: closed

#### Free Guided tours

Wednesday 12:00 – 13:00

Thursday 18:30 – 19:30

(registration required)

#### International Press Enquiries

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