

ALTMAN SIEGEL

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For Immediate Release:

Standing and Hanging

El Anatsui, Louise Bourgeois, Carol Bove, Gianni Piacentino, and Jiro Takamatsu
Organized in collaboration with Adrian Rosenfeld

September 17 – October 31, 2015

Opening September 17, 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Altman Siegel is pleased to present *Standing and Hanging*, an exhibition of five sculptures by the artists El Anatsui, Louise Bourgeois, Carol Bove, Gianni Piacentino and Jiro Takamatsu. *Standing and Hanging* presents sculptures that are all variously contending with how an object sits in space, be it on the floor, or suspended in the air. Whether in anthropomorphic scale, or literally describing human form, the sculptures are attuned to the body in space, and to the encounter between viewer and artwork. Organized in collaboration with Adrian Rosenfeld, the exhibition brings together a disparate group of sculptors, and is conceived as a kind of meditation on the words ‘above’ and ‘below.’

El Anatsui’s *Uma*— “world” in the language of the Nigerian Igbo people—is a suspended sphere composed from bits of salvaged aluminum, trailing onto the floor and into a network of latticed bottle caps. These found scraps, with their still legible bits of beer can text, are transformed into swatches of color in a densely textured and dynamic composition.

Louise Bourgeois’ *Femme* depicts a pregnant figure hanging in an enigmatic pose, hands stretched downwards in a posture of possible fortitude, while also prostrate, and with legs partially omitted. Bourgeois said of her hanging sculptures, “Horizontal is a desire to give up, to sleep. Verticality is an attempt to escape. Hanging and floating are states of ambivalence.” The figure depicts a conflicted conception of femininity and motherhood, as both a state of dispossession and strength.

Carol Bove’s *Tears*, a fastidiously assembled metal curtain, creates a planar division of space, as the area beyond the curtain remains visible behind the shimmering links. The work functions as an interval in the room, with the space around the work, what Bove has called “the non-object in the room,” as critical to the piece as the object itself. Bove is influenced greatly by the vocabulary of public sculpture and her work often invokes such subtleties found at the intersection of design and sociology.

Gianni Piacentino’s *Matt Metal Gray-Blue Record Vehicle* is a seminal work by the Italian artist, whose early participation in the 1966 group show “Arte Abitabile” (Habitable Art) at the Sperone Gallery in Turin secured his place in Arte Povera. Abandoning the movement in 1968, he began producing non-functional vehicles, objects defined by their aerodynamic shape and refined color. Terming his work “artigianato inutile” or “useless craftwork,” Piacentino expressed interest in the vernaculars of fabrication and design, borrowing the aesthetics of 20th century racing cars and motorbikes. Like his earlier minimalist works, the vehicles are enhanced by their lines and curves, components suggesting a relationship to Art Nouveau and Art Deco.

A key figure in the development of the Mono-Ha (“School of Things”) movement, Jiro Takamatsu was best known for works that sought, through simple gestures and everyday materials, to reveal his pursuit of truth to material. In *Oneness of Cedar*, 1970, sections of cedar tree trunks have been carved into rectangular lengths, the process plainly evident, and governed by the native attributes of the wood. This sculpture is from the series *Oneness* that began in 1970, in which the artist’s subtle formal manipulations of various materials—including wood, concrete, and paper— work to emphasize inherent properties of the materials used.

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El Anatsui (b. 1944) lives and works between Ghana and Nigeria. He is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery, NY and this summer was awarded the Golden Lion for lifetime achievement at the Venice Biennale. Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010) lived and worked in New York. A special long-term installation of hers will be on view at the new Fondazione Prada, Milan. Her estate is represented by Cheim and Read, NY. Carol Bove (b. 1971) was raised in Berkeley, California and is in the collections of MoMA, the Guggenheim, the Whitney Museum and many others. She is represented by Maccarone Inc. and David Zwirner, NY. Gianni Piacentino (b. 1945) lives and works in Turin. This summer, Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève inaugurated his first retrospective exhibition. He is represented by Michael Werner Gallery, NY. Jiro Takamatsu (1936-1998) was a pivotal member of both the influential Japanese art movements Hi Red Center and Mono-Ha. His estate is represented by Fergus McCaffrey, New York / St. Barth and Yumiko Chiba, Tokyo.

For more information please contact the gallery at info@altmansiegel.com or 415-576-9300.