

# FORCES OF NATURE

BEN-HAIM — CURTIS GLESTA — MICHAEL — MINERVINI — UNGER



# FORCES OF NATURE

ZIGI BEN-HAIM

CREIGHTON MICHAEL

ANITA CURTIS GLESTA

LUCIA MINERVINI

MARY ANN UNGER

April 25 — August 24, 1990

Yolande Trincere

CURATOR

**SALENA GALLERY**

Long Island University  
Brooklyn Campus  
Brooklyn, New York 11201



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Forces of Nature is the inaugural outdoor sculpture exhibition at Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus and has been very fortunate to have the work of the five prominent sculptors in our premier effort. Over the past year, there have been many people who have contributed to the exhibition and to establish the campus as a sculpture site in downtown Brooklyn. I would like to thank the following people for their assistance and support of this project:

Dr. Walter Jones, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Chancellor Eugene Luntey, Dean David Cohen, Dean Conolly College, Dr. Robert Spector and Provost Gale Stevens-Haynes.

Special thanks to Mr. Joseph Goffredo, Mr. Angelo Marcello and the entire Buildings & Grounds staff for their endless hours of technical assistance.

To the staff of the Salena Gallery: Mare Dougherty, Russell Grossman, Kevin Jimenez and Graduate Assistant Junaid Rahman for their help with the installation and design of the gallery. To Mary LiVoti, for her support in the realization of this catalogue.

And finally the students and university community of the Brooklyn Campus who have been enthusiastic and supportive of this inaugural exhibition.

YOLANDE TRINCERE  
Curator of Exhibitions

## FORCES OF NATURE

### ORGANIC ABSTRACTION

**A**mong the most important nineteenth century art movements, the Hudson River School has come to be associated with artists reacting to and exploring their changing environment. Painters like Frederick Church and Thomas Cole expounded still important theories on man verses his environment — the *Forces of Nature*. The exploration of the theory of the sublime is inherent in the work of these five sculptors. Edmund Burke's volume, **A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757)** is the foundation of this theory. Burke posits:

The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment. And astonishment is that state of the soul in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror. In this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it. Hence, arises the great power of the sublime, that, far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistable force. Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferior effects are admiration, reverence and respect.<sup>1</sup>

*Forces of Nature* presents five urban artists and asks them to respond to the irresistable forces of the ever-changing urban environment of steel, noise, and decay.

Zigi Ben-Haim was born in the Middle East and is concerned with the adaptation of man. *Urban Peasant* is primarily abstract in the sense that one is not familiar with its form but familiar with its posture. Ben-Haim gives this quasi-human form a life of its own. For

the last twelve to thirteen years, Ben-Haim has used the theme of man's adaptation to the environment as an element of survival, a theme that has now reached the forefront of society's concerns. Ben-Haim leaves the sculpture almost unfinished so it can be added to, a process of the continuum that stems from making both drawings and prints, which he sees as wider perspectives to his work. *Urban Peasant* uses industrial materials such as water tubing, ceramic tiles, and concrete. Here, the concrete is modeled in curvilinear, organically modeled shapes, an ironic use of the material in reference to its use for most industrial purposes. Adaptation is also seen in the formulation of these diverse materials. This abstracted quasi-human figure has a counter-balanced stance that is partially transparent with its use of wire mesh from the feet through the midsection with blue-green polychromed object. This proves to be much more colorful than the rest of the piece. Its small form is of utmost importance to Ben-Haim, a theme that appears in many of his sculptures and stands as an adaptation of all living forms. The color, which has a special meaning in the Middle East, is representative of the evil eye. Ben-Haim grew up within a family structure that virtually ignored the color, and he grew up hating it. When he came to the West, he found that many of our bronze domes on government buildings, memorial sculptures, and architectural ornamentation had this same blue-green as a patina. The color is used not only as an exorcism of sorts but a testimony to man's unyielding presence in the universe. Ben-Haim posits that his sculpture is not special — you must relate to it like your neighbor, *either you love it or hate it, but you must respect its right to exist.*

Anita Curtis Glesta uses a variety of materials to evoke personal



metaphors about being. In *Chant*, Curtis Glesta uses the slick, smooth texture of oxidized rubber and juxtaposes this with the rawness of plaster. The large monolithic rubber form rises above numerous plaster pods to form a primitive evocation to the spiritual. For the artist, these forms present the viewer with *a dialectic of the viseral, sensual world with a metaphysical one*. Curtis Glesta has used these materials in many of her recent works and reveals that the thick textural built-up plaster and polychromed surfaces of them can be seen in relation to the metaphor of the swamp. The swamp is an ominous, ugly place, but, when approached more closely, it reveals the sensual, intriguing, mysterious layers that lie beneath. *Chant* evokes this presence and speaks to the relation of man and his personal reality.

Creighton Michael has reached to the edge with the sculpture *Notes on the Sisterhood*. For the past 20 years, Michael, a painter turned sculptor has been interested in the theme of exploration, time, mystery and the occult. His vocabulary includes surrealist automatic writing, literature and aspects of medieval and primitive art. But it is the overwhelming presence of enigma and the occult that pervades this work. His sculpture is comprised of numerous materials including wood, steel, graphite, marine plywood and steel in addition to found objects procured from the city streets and worksites. According to the artist, some of the objects stay for two to three years in his studio until they are wedded into a sculpture. The most complex element of *Notes on the Sisterhood* is made from a former police barracade and has a surface of glistening graphite. This three-part *sentinel*, is reminiscent of the three witches, who fortell the future in MacBeth, acts as a *Beacon* for the viewer who comes upon it. The smaller wooden ovoid-like pieces are smoother



and almost boat-like, and the only linear form is made of wood with a red steel skeletal piece peering from beneath it. Its obvious sexual predominance is juxtaposed to the more organic forms and presents to the viewer a complicated but engaging installation whose essence is based on the sexual forces of nature. *Notes on the Sisterhood* is situated in a domineering and oppressive space on campus whose engaging presence reverses the negativity of its site.

Lucia Minervini has explored another avenue of the forces of nature in her sculpture, *Chemical Change*. Minervini sees it within the natural forces of physics. The sculpture is constructed of smooth white limestone *seats* bound together by hard-edge steel armatures polychromed in colors of the spectrum, all of which suggest a molecular structure. The circular design is seen as energy producing, and the sculpture engages the viewer to react to it. The ancient and sacred circular arrangement for dialogue refers to Stonehenge, the Roman Forum, and Native Peoples tribal meetings. The use of the circle as a vehicle for interaction is also seen in common forms of children's games, such as Ring around the Rosy. According to Minervini, this configuration and its historic invitation for dialogue touch a responsive human cord. The theme of dialogue is foremost to Minervini in that the university is seen as the center for all dialogues. This site specific sculpture is seen as a coming together of both the university and the surrounding community in order to engage in a relationship of human understanding.

Mary Ann Unger is known nationally for her public commissions, and, over the last ten years, her sculptures have undergone a transformation from severe hard-edge to soft organic abstraction. *Hands of the Tellum* stands ten feet high and is

derivative of African Tellum totemic sculptures that were spirit figures considered conduits between heaven and earth. The spirituality of Unger's sculpture reflects the history of the Tellum as these enormous hands rise to the heavens for guidance, understanding, and ultimately finding a balance with the universe. This sculpture becomes all the more powerful because of its autobiographical element, which reflects Unger's struggle with a series of personal losses and illness. Unger's *Tellum* has a heavy textural surface made from designcast that parallels the heavy encrustation of the Tellum figures from the pouring of libations in the form of beer, blood, and urine during certain ceremonies. Unger has polychromed these hands in the same graphite hue as the dark slate which stands before them in a tree-lined atrium. The monumentality of this sculpture, both literally and spiritually, attests to man's place in the universe. Unger's use of hands to portray the concept of spirituality is not a new one, however. She evokes a strong image to the viewer on not only our strength but on our vulnerabilities.

The sculptures that comprise the *Forces of Nature* are a response to man's relationship to his universe. These sculptors sought to discover this essence and apply them using their personal philosophies.

YOLANDE TRINCERE  
Curator

<sup>1</sup>A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas and of the Sublime and Beautiful. (1757)

# ZIGI BEN-HAIM



*Urban Peasant*

Steel, copper, concrete tiles, steel mesh, acrylold, 132" x 64" x 46", 1987.

## ZIGI BEN-HAIM

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### Education:

- 1971-74 M.F.A., San Francisco State University, San Francisco, California  
1971 California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, California  
1966-70 The Avni Institute of Fine Arts, Tel-Aviv, Israel

### Grants and Awards:

- 1990 MacDowell colony residency  
1984 National Endowment for the Arts  
1983 New York State Council for the Arts, A.R.E.A. Project

### Selected One-Person Exhibitions:

- 1989 *The Dance*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.  
1987 Jewish Museum Sculpture Court, New York, N.Y.  
1986 P.S. 1, *Walking Field*, Project Room, Queens, N.Y.  
1986 Facade Gallery, Paris, France  
1985 Baumgartner Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
1984 Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel (catalogue)

### Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 1989 Neuberger Museum, *From the Frederick Weiseman Collection*, N.Y.  
1989 Muse Le Technique Art Aluminum, Montreal, Canada.  
1988 The candor of form, 1 World Trade Center, N.Y., N.Y.  
1988 Nina Freudenheim Gallery, Drawings, Buffalo, New York.  
1987 Anita Shapolsky Gallery, *Contracts*, New York, N.Y.  
1986 Snug Harbor, Outdoor Sculpture, Staten Island, N.Y.  
1986 Brooklyn Museum, *Monumental Drawings: Works by 22 Contemporary American Artists*, Brooklyn, N.Y.  
1985 Jamie Szoke Gallery, New York City, *Public Art in the Eighties*, New York City (catalogue)  
1983 Sculpture Center, New York City, *Ornament as Sculptor*  
TEL-HAI 83 Contemporary Art Meeting. Israel  
Max Hutchinson Gallery, New York City *Varieties of Sculptural Ideas, Drawings and Maquettes*  
1982 Jersey City Museum, Jersey City, New Jersey, *Pair Group* Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel  
1981 Gallery Mors Moessa, Gothenburg, Sweden  
Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Massachusetts, *The Work of Twenty Contemporary Artists*

### Selected Public Collections:

- Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY  
New School, New York, NY  
University of Maryland, College Park Campus, College Park, MD  
Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY  
Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel  
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY  
Tel-Aviv Museum, Tel-Aviv, Israel

# ANITA CURTIS GLESTA



*Chant*  
Rubber, structolite, marble chips, wood. 9' x 9' x 8'. 1990.

## Anita Curtis Glesta

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### Education:

- 1980-82 Boston Museum of Fine Arts School
- 1976-79 Seminar College at the New School for Social Research
- 1977 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture
- 1974-75 Kirkland/Hamilton College, Clinton, NY

### Selected One-Person Exhibitions:

- 1989 Hudson River Museum
- 1985 White Columns Gallery: The White Room  
Johansson Gallery, Uppsala, Sweden

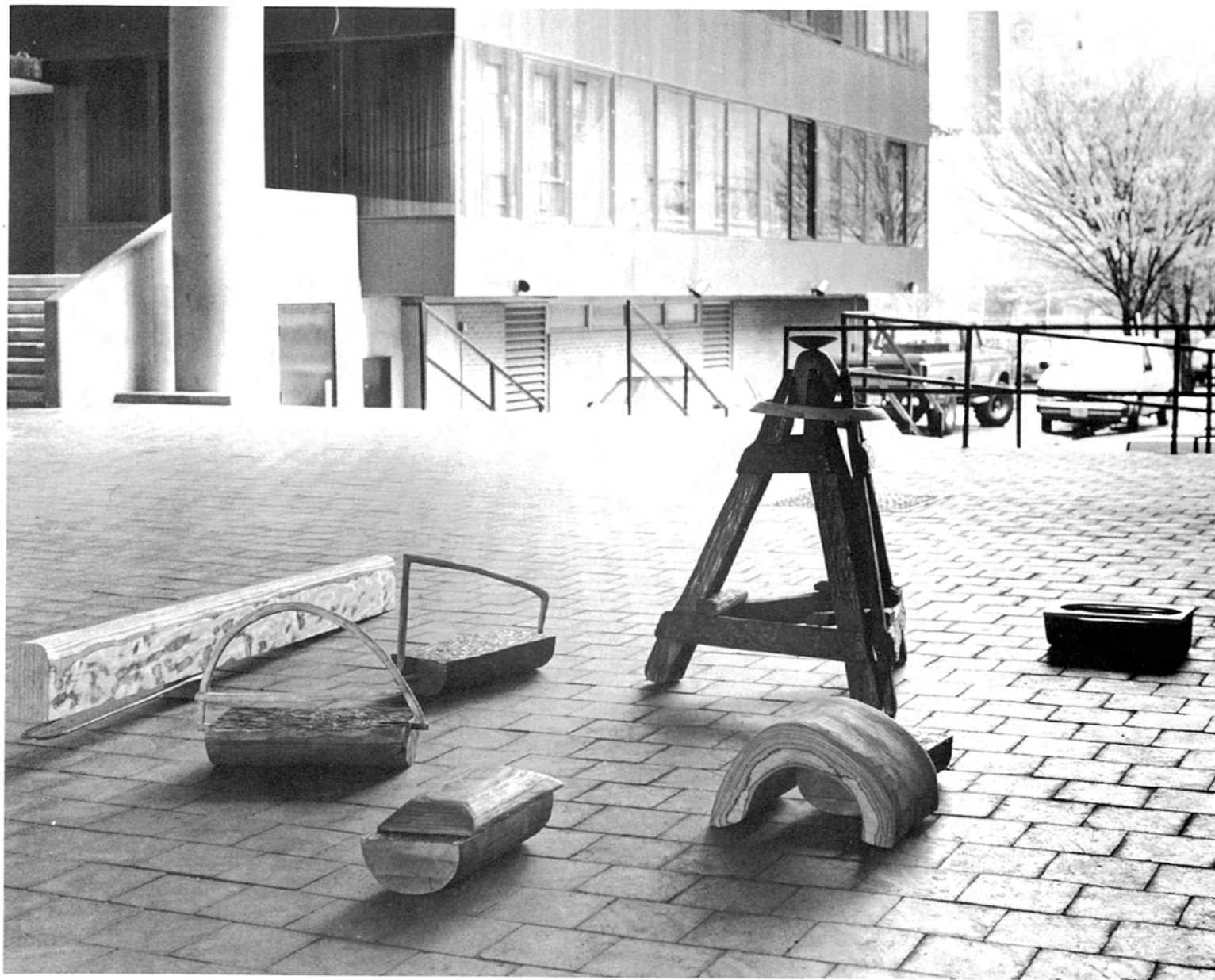
### Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 1990 *Artists Working in Plaster*, Queens Museum.
- 1987 *Consonance*, Installation at ISD  
*Painting into Sculpture*, Rotunda Gallery  
*Neo-Alchemy: Works by Visionary Artists*, Cavin-Morris Gallery
- 1986 *Painting in the Third Dimension*, City Without Walls Gallery, Newark, NJ  
*Six Painters*, 124 Ridge Gallery
- 1985 *Gallery Artists*, White Columns Gallery  
*Shifting Views*, BACA Gallery, Brooklyn  
*The Constructed Image*, Allen/Wincor  
Gallery

### Public Collections:

- Bennington College

# CREIGHTON MICHAEL



COURTESY OF RUTH SIEGEL GALLERY

*Notes on the Sisterhood*

Wood, graphite, acrylic, shellac, oil paint, marine plywood, brick, lumbercore. Variable dimensions, 1990.



## Creighton Michael

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### Education:

- 1978 Washington University, M.F.A.
- 1976 Vanderbilt University, M.A.
- 1971 University of Tennessee, B.F.A., Honors

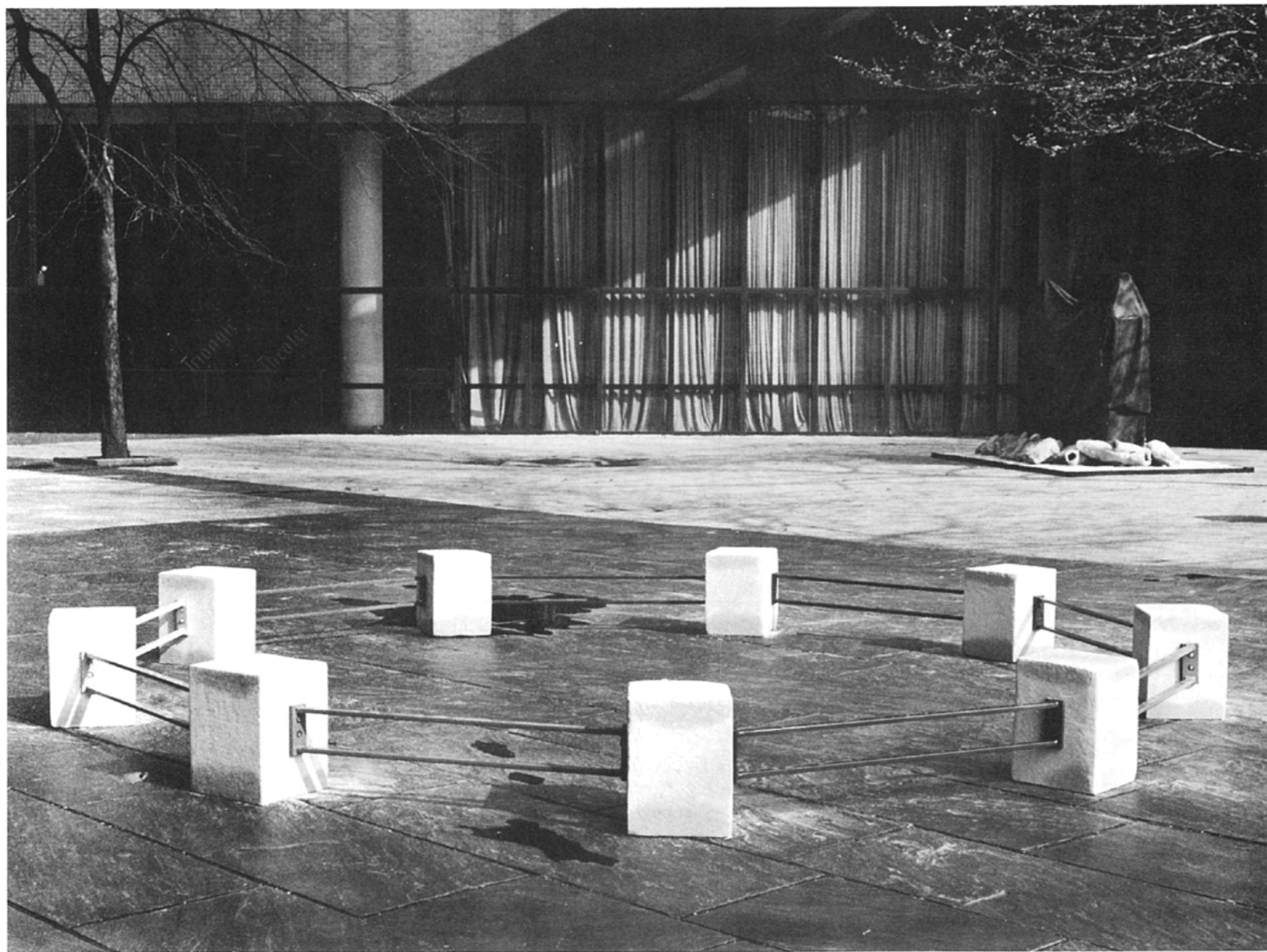
### Selected One-Person Exhibitions:

- 1990 Haines Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
Robischon Gallery, Denver, CO  
Pence Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 1989 Ledis-Flam Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 1988 Nina Freudenheim Gallery, Buffalo, NY  
David Beitzel Gallery, New York, NY  
Pence Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 1987 *Art At the Edge: Creighton Michael*, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA  
Craig Cornelius Gallery, New York, NY
- 1985 Craig Cornelius Gallery, New York, NY

### Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 1990 New Work, Ruth Siegel Gallery, N.Y.C.  
*Seven Sculptors*, Mandeville Art Gallery, UCSD, La Jolla, CA
- 1989 *PO Works on Lead*, Nohra Haime Gallery, New York, NY
- 1988 *In the Making: Drawings by Sculptors*, The Sculpture Center  
*Innovations in Sculpture*, Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art  
*Highlights of the Edward F. Albee Foundation*, Rosa Esman Gallery  
*Nomadic Visions: Recent work by six New York sculptors*, S.M.U. Art Gallery, Southeastern Massachusetts University
- 1987 *Sculpture: Material Transformations*, Rosa Esman Gallery  
*Primitive Elegance*, Cheekwood Fine Arts Center
- 1986 *The Sculptural Membrane*, The Sculpture Center, New York, NY  
*Sculpture Dialogue: Anchorage and New York*, Visual Arts Center of Alaska  
*Drawings by Sculptors*, Norha Haime Gallery, New York, NY  
*Two Sculptors*, East Hampton Center for Contemporary Art
- 1985 *Sculpture: The Language of Scale*, the Bruce Museum

# LUCIA MINERVINI



*Chemical Change*  
Limestone & steel. 10' circumference. 13" high. 1990.

## Lucia Minervini

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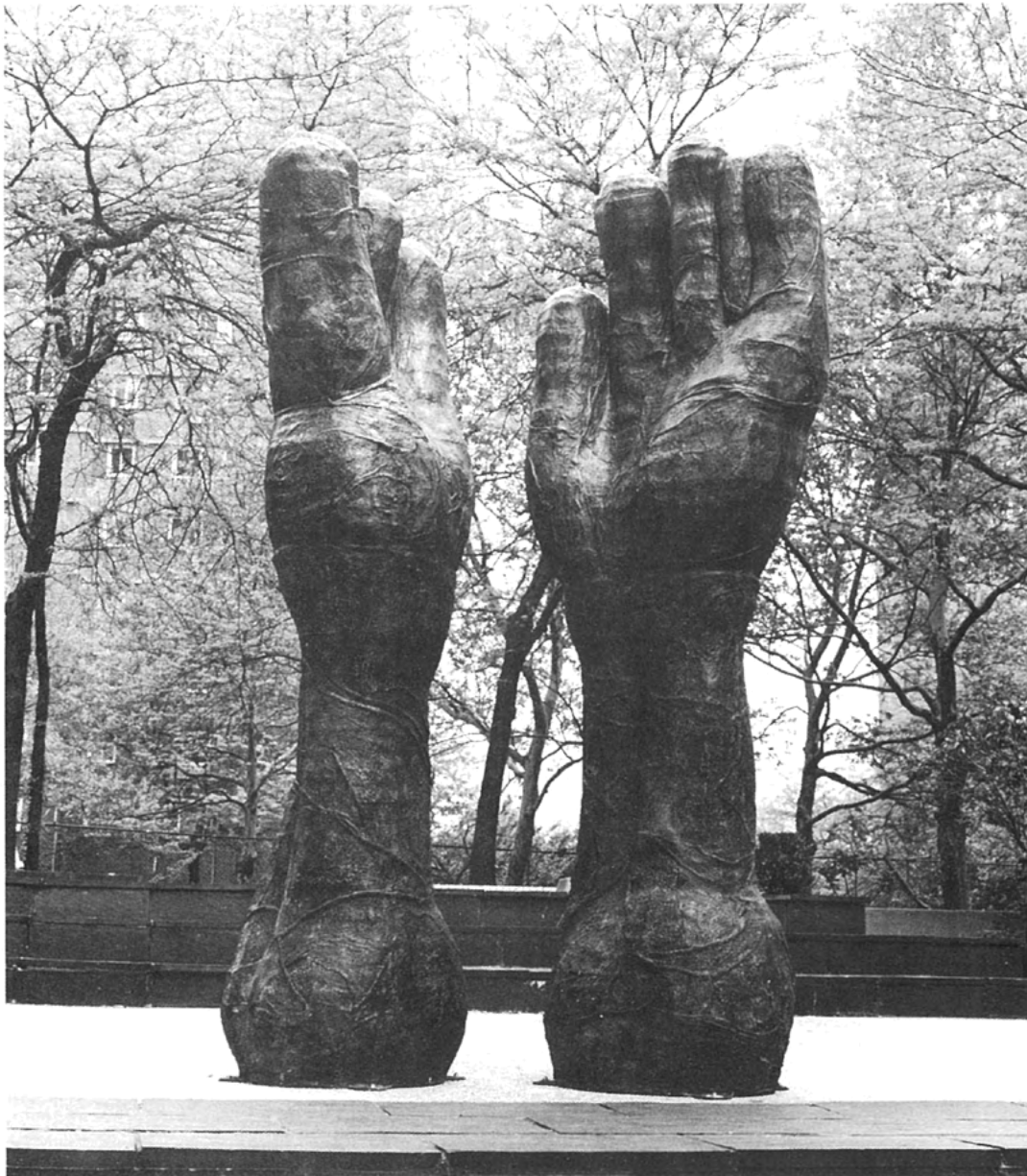
### Education:

- 1985 Master of Fine Arts/Sculpture, Hunter College, New York, NY  
1978 Bachelor of Fine Arts, California College of Arts & Crafts, Oakland, CA

### Selected Exhibitions:

- 1990 Defenders of the Union; 4 Sculptors  
The Arch at Grand Army Plaza  
Women's Paper Works; Bronx River Art Center  
1989 *Reverence*, Public Art Work Commissioned by the NYC Parks Dept.  
Outdoor Sculpture Fulton Ferry Empire State Park, *Raw Material*  
1987 Waterfront Artists Coalition  
One Main Street/Seven Sculptors  
*Field Work* Window Installation  
1986 Gallery of the City of New York  
Waterfront Artists Coalition *So Square*, Outdoor Sculpture  
Fulton Ferry Empire State Park  
*Crossover* Indoor Exhibition  
National Assoc. of Woman Artists  
Federal Bldg. Foley Square, NY  
Annual Exhibition  
1985 *Hide & Seek*, Hunter Gallery  
Waterfront Artists Coalition  
AMMO Gallery, Bklyn, NY  
1983 One Meter Show, Hunter Gallery  
1978 Target Gallery, Oakland, CA  
Women's Work  
1977 Crown-Zellerbach Building  
San Francisco, Calif.  
1976 Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

# MARY ANN UNGER



*Hands of the Tellum*  
designcast over steel, 10½' x 8' x 2', 1990.

## Mary Ann Unger

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### Education:

- 1967 B.A., Mount Holyoke College
- 1968 Graduate Study, University of California at Berkeley
- 1975 M.F.A., Columbia University

### Selected One-Person Exhibitions:

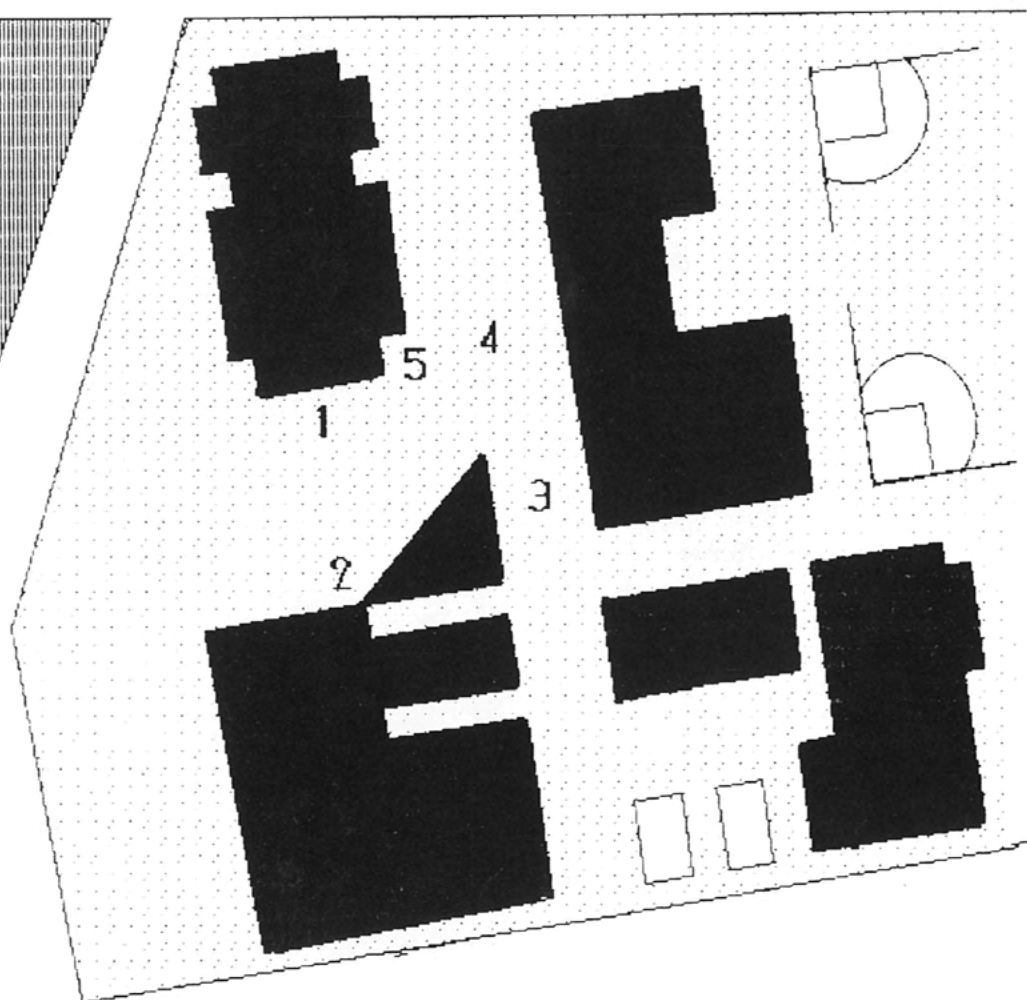
- 1990 Boulder Center for the Visual Arts, *Mary Ann Unger — 10 Years of Public Works*
- 1988 Bellevue Sculpture Gardens, *Family*  
C.U.N.Y. Graduate Center, *Tweed Garden*
- 1986 Sculpture Center, *Communion*
- 1985 Nassau County Museum of Fine Art, Roslyn, N.Y. *Gardens*
- 1983 55 Mercer, New York, NY *Waterfalls*
- 1982 C.U.N.Y. Graduate Center, New York, NY, *Paradise as a Garden*
- 1977 10 Downtown, New York, NY

### Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 1989 Sculpture Center, *In A Dark View*  
Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, Snug Harbor, *Sculpture Festival*
- 1987 Metropolitan Museum and Art Center, Coral Gables, Fla.  
Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island, NY
- 1986 Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA *A Selection of American Art*  
Bronx River Restoration Center, *Five Year Retrospective*  
Fairmont Park, Philadelphia, PA. *Sculpture/Fairmont Park*  
112 Greene Street Gallery, New York, NY
- 1985 55 Mercer, New York, NY
- 1984 Tower Gallery, New York, NY  
Kamikaze, New York, NY. Benefit for A.R.E.A.  
Queens College, *The Ways of Wood*
- 1983 O.I.A. Sculpture Garden II, South Beach Psychiatric Center
- 1982 Sculpture Center, New York, NY, *Painted Sculpture*  
Anderson Gallery, Va. Comm. U., Richmond, VA. *Nature Transformed*  
Museum of Highlands on Hudson Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY
- 1981 Grey Art Gallery, N.Y.U., New York, NY *Heresies Benefit Invitational*  
Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, NY, *People 81*  
Federal Court House, Brooklyn, NY. *Contemporary Expressions*, O.I.A.
- 1979 Sharadin Gallery, Kutztown State College, Kutztown, PA  
O.I.A. Sculpture Library, Ward's Island, New York, N.Y.
- 1978 Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield, Conn. *7th Annual Contemporary Reflections* (catalogue)  
Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass., 3 Alumnae Sculptors
- 1977 O.I.A. Battery Park, New York, NY *Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit*  
P.S.1 Long Island City, NY *10 Downtown, 10 Years* (catalogue)

- Collections:** Nassau County Museum of Fine Art, Roslyn, NY  
E.F. Hutton, Inc. Louise McCagg, Stonington, Conn.  
Sidney Lewis The Estate of John C. ...

design: kevin jimenez



## FORCES OF NATURE

1. LUCIA MINERVINI
2. ANITA CURTIS GLESTA
3. CREIGHTON MICHAEL
4. MARY ANN UNGER
5. ZIGI BEN-HAIM

## A Selection of Sculptor's Drawings

1. Zigi Ben-Haim  
*Untitled*  
graphite, pastel, pigments  
latex/p  
23¾ x 31½"  
1989
2. Zigi Ben-Haim  
*Untitled*  
graphite, pastel, pigments  
latex/p.  
41¼ x 29½"  
1989
3. Zigi Ben-Haim  
*Untitled*  
graphite, pastel, pigments  
latex/p.  
41¼ x 29½"  
1989
4. Anita Curtis Glesta  
*Untitled*  
pastel, oil stick, charcoal  
8½ x 50½"  
1989
5. Anita Curtis Glesta  
*Untitled*  
pastel, oil stick, charcoal  
25 x 20"  
1989
6. Anita Curtis Glesta  
*Untitled*  
pastel, oil stick, charcoal  
31 x 23"  
1989
7. Anita Curtis Glesta  
*Untitled*  
pastel, oil stick, charcoal  
31 x 23"  
1989
8. Creighton Michael  
*Bergen*  
p/p  
10⅞ x 13 9/16"  
1989
9. Creighton Michael  
*Mute*  
p/p  
16⅞ x 13⅞"  
1989
10. Creighton Michael  
*Harcourt (4)*  
pencil, graphite/p  
19½ x 16⅞"  
1989
11. Lucia Minervini  
*Studies For Chemical Change*  
p/p  
29½ x 41 6/16"  
1990
12. Lucia Minervini  
*Studies For Chemical Change*  
p/p  
30 x 22¼"  
1990
13. Lucia Minervini  
*Studies For Chemical Change*  
p/p  
30 x 22¼"  
1990
14. Mary Ann Unger  
*Untitled*  
Ink Wash  
34 x 46"  
1989
15. Mary Ann Unger  
*Untitled*  
Ink Wash  
34 x 46"  
1989
16. Mary Ann Unger  
*Untitled*  
Ink Wash  
34 x 46"  
1989



**Gallery Staff:**

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