

PART & PARCEL

The Deconstruction of the Female Form in Contemporary Art

Curated by Bonnie Gloris



The Artists

Fanny Allié
Tom Bartel
Laara Cassells
Niina Cochran
Bill Durgin
Irene Gennaro
Jo Hamilton
Frances Heinrich
Gina Lucia
Vincent Minervini
Judy Moonelis
Lindsey Muscato
Deborah Pohl
Carol Schwartz
Etta Winigrad
Jane Zweibel

part and parcel *noun*

Definition of PART AND PARCEL: an essential or integral component.

First Known Use of PART AND PARCEL 15th century
(www.merriam-webster.com)

www.partandparcelexhibition.wordpress.com

Cover image: **Bill Durgin**. *Tacca Chantrieri*, edition 1 of 6, 2010.
C-print mounted on museum board, 30 x 23.5 inches.

PART & PARCEL: *The Deconstruction of the Female Form in Contemporary Art*

Ever heard the expression 'gone to pieces'? This is usually in reference to a woman who has lost her composure, gotten emotional, and (God-forbid) cried. In *Part & Parcel* the unifying motif is a more literal portrayal of this phrase. The exhibition includes artworks that depict physically fragmented women with a variety of implications and interpretations.

The practice of making art that isolates individual body parts is paramount to the artistic identity of such Feminist art heroes as Kiki Smith, Louise Bourgeois, and Frida Kahlo, who oppose the traditional representation of the human body in Western art history in its longing for ideals of perfection. The tendency towards deconstruction is not a rejection or criticism of the form in its entirety, but an attempt at better understanding it. Fragmentation of the body was first explored by Cubist, Dada and Surrealist artists in the early twentieth century. Contemporary artists have continued to explore and build upon fragmentation as a metaphor for humankind's "fragile potentiality crushed by commercial, popular, scientific and aesthetic pressures" (Kunst).

Some artists use fragmentation to explore issues of self-image. This may manifest itself as a veneration for certain parts of the body, and an acknowledgment that although women have flaws and weaknesses, these 'imperfections' should be embraced, and women's ability to confront and transcend them should be celebrated.

In contrast, exploration of personal identity can express the tendency for women to fixate on areas of their body that they are dissatisfied with, culminating in a distorted self-image that fosters self-consciousness and contempt.

Rather than embracing their distinct identities, women become defensive and guarded. This is the result of how the woman sees herself, how others see her, and perhaps most of all, how she perceives others see her.

Fragmentation is at times a vehicle for symbolizing critical issues of disempowerment, sexual exploitation, and domestic abuse. Seeing solitary limbs, organs, and decapitated bodies often conjures notions of powerlessness, vulnerability and violence. Our patriarchal culture breeds women to seek male approval, and this quest is subsequently capitalized on by men.

Other artists may deconstruct the body simply as a way of analyzing it objectively, as a structure rather than a defined being. An unusual presentation of the body causes us to examine it from an unbiased perspective – as a composition, rather than a recognizable form.

The artists represented in this exhibition are united in their use of bodily fragmentation to investigate the role of women in modern society. Fragmentation is a versatile tool in visual art, as it allows us to simultaneously see the human body in a more focused manner, and to step back from it and view the body as an abstract form – it can lead to reactions ranging from analytical to emotional. While interpretations are individual to both artist and viewer, *Part & Parcel* undoubtedly inspires us to think about the body in novel ways.

-Bonnie Gloris, Curator

Works Cited:

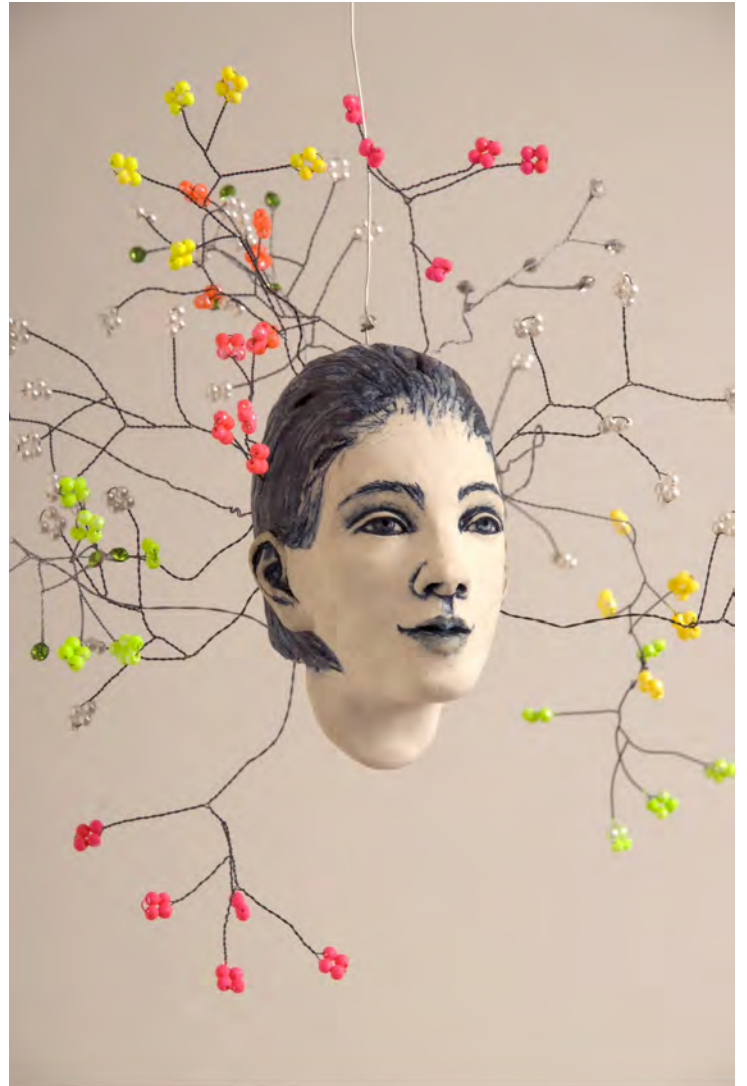
Kunst, Bojana. The Fragmented Body and the Question of Normativity
Lecture, Colloquium New Normativity in Aesthetics, Slovenian Association of Aesthetics, 9 - 10. 9. 1999, Ljubljana, Slovenia



Judy Moonelis

www.judymoonelis.com

Whether single works or multi-part installations, the intricate and extraordinary human body provides the conceptual focus for my artistic practice. Historic and contemporary anatomical studies often supply a visual groundwork including the structures and processes of the brain, respiratory, circulatory, nervous and sensory systems. Content ranges from current issues such as the teaching of evolution (“Evolutionary Wall”), to environmental concerns (“Hudson Blood Lines”) and brain research (“Brain Cell”, “Memory Vault” and “Mirror Neuron Strands”); recent historic site projects relate the human body with architectural features of the site and include the abandoned Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia (“Blood Cell” and “Brain Cell”), and the Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue in NYC (“Celestial Structures”).



Above, left: *Sweet Element*, 1998-2010. Mixed media (clay, cast iron, copper, glass), 6 x 15.5 x 15.5 inches. Right: *Head with Chroma Neurons*, 2011. Mixed media (porcelain, wire, glass, paint), 10 x 8 x 8 inches.



Niina Cochran

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Niina Cochran is currently living in Porto, Portugal, working on her master's thesis within visual culture. This piece is the second part of a four-piece work, entitled *Where Pleasure Goes to Die*. "When working with the human figure, the ways in which we can abstract, mutate or distort the form are intuitively of most interest to me. Through this exploration we are able to confront our own vulnerabilities and allow ourselves to connect and emote on a basic humanistic level," says the artist.

Where Pleasure Goes to Die, Part II, 2005. Mixed media, 10 x 18 x 2 inches.



Fanny Allié

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In my mixed media, sculpture and installation work, the recurrent subject matter has been the body, especially fragmented body parts, acting as receptacles for storytelling. I am using the memory of observed and experienced events, especially those from my childhood and from the news, for creating installations.

I also explore the notion of 'trace' that indicates the existence of others and myself, as well as the passing of time. Many of my projects suggest the course of time as they examine memories, past actions or incidents, and events that happened at a specific and recorded time.

For *Part & Parcel*, I am using the loss of sensation that my mother has been experiencing as a point of departure for creating the installation *Françoise's Numbness*.

Françoise's Numbness, 2011. Plaster & pigments, each: 2 x 1.5 x 0.5 inches (finger) & 2.5 x 1.5 x 1 inches (toe).

Jo Hamilton

www.johamiltonart.com

Jo Hamilton uses only a crochet hook and yarn to make her art. She began using her unusual crochet technique to portray the city of Portland and its people. She works from her own photographs, using no sketches, graphs or computer imaging. Each piece is instinctively composed, one knot at a time, from the inside out, and one portrait, row-by-row, can take up to a month to complete. In using this unorthodox artistic technique, Jo hopes to shift the expectations and boundaries of both fine art and craft.

On the US West coast, Jo has had several well-received shows featuring her portraits, as well as her giant Portland cityscape (2006-2009; a ten-by-five foot composite map of the city as imagined from above). In addition, she has completed several portrait commissions of local people. Jo's other main body of work in progress consists of large reclining male nudes, more than twice life-size, which she plans to exhibit later this year. Magazine articles on her work have been published in the US and the UK. Jo Hamilton relocated to Portland, OR from Scotland in the mid 1990s. She studied drawing and painting at the Glasgow School of Art, graduating in 1993.

Self Portrait, 2009. Mixed crocheted yarn, 25 x 23 inches.



Carol Schwartz

www.carolschwartzsculptor.com

Carol Schwartz is a 2007 recipient of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts fellowship in sculpture. She is a graduate of Pratt University and the Art Students League in NY. While at the League, Carol served on the Board of Directors as Vice President. For the last 9 years Carol has been a working sculptor, working in her Union City, NJ studio. Prior to becoming a sculptor, she spent 17 years working as an architect/designer.

Sculpting mostly in wood, Carol Schwartz uses hundreds of pieces of different woods laminated together to construct colorful, larger than life people who are easy to relate to. Appearing individually, or in couples, their polychrome textured surfaces give them a vibrant energy. Their compelling frontal stance is reminiscent of the Ancient Asiatic sculpture that has influenced them.

Top: *Head on Blocks*. Mixed woods, 28 x 14 x 13 inches. Bottom: *Torso*. Mixed woods, 15 x 16 x 3 inches.





Irene Gennaro

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I approach my work from the many subconscious images that unfold during a dream or a waking visual message.

A profound dream that appeared reveals more than a dozen body parts and were presented to me as though on a wall. This message (*Ex-Votive Sr.*) engaged me in a two-year effort that produced more than 20 sculptures and dozens of drawings.

I see these works as a continuation of the Ex-Voto ritual. Ex-Votos have been created as offerings for thousands of years by believers of the faith in anticipation of a healing or to give thanks for a successful outcome. Churches in Italy, Mexico, Greece and countries across the globe have been repositories for the Ex-Voto ritual. The crypt of St. Francis in Assisi houses hundreds of silver Ex-Voto offerings.

Several years following the emergence of the *Ex-Votive Sr.* I experienced another dream with numerous crucifixes. These symbols appeared on wall after wall as I walked through a succession of rooms. Subsequent dreams revealed details and specific identities (body parts) of each crucifix. I am not a practicing Catholic, therefore, this experience was stunning. I proceeded to develop the images as they appeared. It is titled *Impermanence Sr.*

The *Impermanence* and the previous *Ex-Votive Sr.* series proved to be prophetic.

These series emerged from the subconscious. The Ex-Voto ritual and the many others that are performed (meditation, prayer, vigils) bring comfort in times of angst. They have been with humanity, I believe, from the dawn of consciousness. It has been said that sentient beings, which we are, have an awareness of that which is greater than ourselves.

Top: *Breasts*, from the *Ex-Votive* series. 13 x 19 x 7 inches. Middle: *Ex Votive* series. Wood/oil and aluminum leaf, 43 inches x 23 feet x 9 inches. Bottom: *Uterus*, from the *Ex-Votive* series. 13 x 19 x 7 inches.

Etta Winigrad

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From the very beginning, my sculptural work has been a continuing exploration and attempt to illustrate ideas and concerns of the human condition, both whimsical and serious.

The sculpture is partially figurative so as to allow the viewer an easily grasped element for introduction into the work. By combining realistic and fantastical elements I hope to encourage the audience to draw upon their own imagination and life experiences for interpretation.

My influences come from African, South Pacific and Pre-Columbian art. I especially like the simpler primitive shapes that speak to us so powerfully and seem to tap into those forms that we have genetically accumulated in our psyches.

Restraint. Clay, fired and smoked, 24 x 6 x 10 inches.





Frances Heinrich

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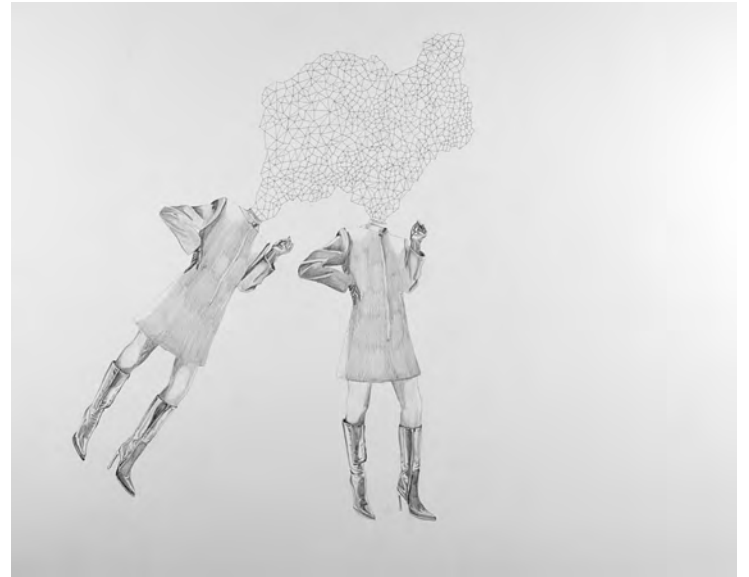
I have always used body fragments, specifics of clothing, or meaningful objects as a way of referencing the “whole.” It has naturally seemed a modern and pared down way of expressing more complete ideas (just as texting now uses letters, numbers, and parts of words to convey full meaning).

Historically, Picasso and Braque developed a system of short-hand visual signs to indicate complete objects and human forms; “synecdoche” in Cubism. A vocabulary of little shapes identified larger forms, such as a violin, table, glass, or human being.

Working with these synecdochic (parts of the whole) elements seems especially appropriate for bringing conceptual meaning to a piece. While both form and craft are valued and integral to my work, ideas are highly important to me. My work is largely conceptual and uses combined imagery designed as catalyst for thought. The use of abstracted/selected bits and pieces works both to reference the “whole” and to add inherent cultural meaning.

Top: *Headlight*, 2007. Plaster life-cast head with silver leaf, rice paper overlay, and antique auto headlight rim, 9 x 12 x 10 inches. Bottom: *Footlights*, 2006. Plaster life-cast and mirror-top light bulbs, 11 x 9 x 4 inches.





Deborah Pohl

www.deborahpohl.com

My current work is concerned with catalogs as purveyors of images of desire. I work defensively to gain control of their attack on our insecurities. I embed the clothing with abstractions as I regain individual rights for creativity and self-concept back from the advertisement.

Left: *Swirl Print Dress Imported*, 2010. Pencil on paper, 26 x 21 inches.
Above: *Wool Walker with Mandarin Collar*, 2010. Pencil on paper, 21 x 26 inches.



Lindsey Muscato

www.lindseymuscato.com

I use drawing as a way of making visual lists. With an interest in nostalgia, and the construction of personal narrative, I draw from family snapshots and photographs I have taken.

Using the white of the paper to isolate and distill a subject, I am interested in drawing the peripheral and examining the everyday and commonplace. I am looking at individual drawings as parts of a larger collection, like pieces of evidence, or points on a map.

Lindsey Muscato was born in Bellflower, California. She received her BFA in Painting and Drawing from the California College of the Arts in 2006. Muscato has shown in exhibitions in San Francisco, Oakland, Jersey City, New York and Nicosia, Cyprus. In 2011 Muscato completed an Artist Residency with *_gaia Studios'* Wonder Women program in Jersey City, New Jersey; she also received a grant through the program to travel to Cyprus for a residency and exhibition at The Peace Room in Nicosia. Muscato currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.



Clockwise: *Tutu*, 2009. Graphite on paper, 12 x 12 inches. *Dress*, 2009. Graphite on paper, 12 x 12 inches. *April 25, 1984*, 2006. Graphite on paper, 24 x 18 inches.



Gina Lucia

www.houseofgrfx.com

The female body is often objectified for its superficial beauty. Often overlooked is the humanistic value of the woman. As she experiences life her outer beauty fades while her inner beauty emerges. Her heart grows with compassion as her experiences with love and loss broaden. Her brain becomes a vessel of knowledge, as right and left brain work in unison to decipher life's many challenges. Her lungs expand and contract to keep the mind and body aware. These organs work together to form the essence of the woman. Her beauty goes far deeper than her skin, revealing a strong, intelligent and complex being.



Top: *Sangrado Corazón*, 2011. Clay sculpture, 8.5 x 6.5 inches.

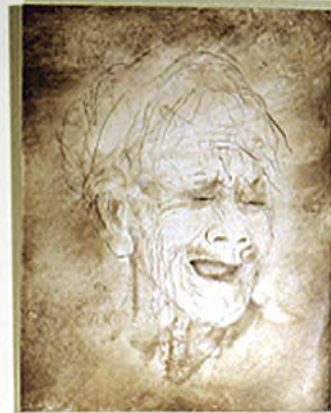
Bottom: *Respira*, 2011. Clay sculpture, 7 x 3.5 inches.

Laara Cassells

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While historically the female body has provided a perennial image of artistic beauty, in modern terms it has become an image that is often loaded, commercialized, or romanticized and many in the contemporary art world have been contemptuous of the female subject as a symbol of beauty. In my search for a way to express beauty without resorting to cliché, sentimentality or self-indulgence, I find strength and power in images of old age. Rather than reflecting defeat, these women are magnificent and show themselves to be triumphant over the daily tribulations, wounds and disappointments in their lives.

Naked and Smiling II, 2001. Paper, sinew, resin, plaster, and drypoint, 38 x 22 x 6 inches.





Jane Zweibel

www.janezweibel.com

Jane E. Zweibel has an M.F.A. in Painting, Columbia, and B.A. in Visual Art, Bennington College. She is a recipient of fellowships from Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Skowhegan School, The Banff Centre, and a Puffin Foundation grant. Her work has been featured in Tabla Rasa Gallery and the NYC Transit Museum, Brooklyn; Project Room 88, David Beitzel Gallery, and 55 Mercer Gallery, NYC; the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series, Rutgers; and The Bronx Museum. Ms. Zweibel's exhibitions have been reviewed in *Art in America* and the *NY Times*. She is represented by Baang and Burne Contemporary.

Personal Effects, 1997. Oil on canvas and linen, 8 x 10 to 18 x 16 inches.



Tom Bartel

www.tombartel.net

I am interested in both the fragmentation and simplification of human form, especially how this decision encourages, if not requires, the viewer to participate with the work. Within this context, I view that which is absent as significant as that which is present. Furthermore, I use the human condition as a point of departure where themes related to gender, rites of passage, fertility and mortality are constant “threads” within my creative practice. My work takes cues from a “shotgun blast” of influences ranging from antiquity to popular culture and is constructed to refer to both the body and also charged, stylized, surrogates for the body, such as dolls and figurines.

Specific to this exhibition, I am exhibiting three “pelvis” forms I view as generalized, anthropomorphic objects. My intent was to edit everything else so that the viewer is confronted by this specific region of our bodies, which has many associations depending on context, for example; sexuality, procreation (birth/conception). Furthermore, this part of our bodies is sometimes seen as “dirty” or having the potential to elicit reactions related to attraction and repulsion.



Tom Bartel. *Pelvis (Fear)*, 2003. Ceramic, 12 x 16 x 10 inches. *Pelvis (Poodle)*, 2004. Ceramic, 12 x 16 x 10 inches. *Pelvis (Heart)*, 2005. Ceramic, 14 x 16 x 10 inches. Photos courtesy of Joe Imel.



Vincent Minervini

www.vincentminervini.com

Surrealist, pop-culture constructions are the terrain of Vincent Minervini's layered works. Childlike whimsy, horror, and curiosity characterize these mixed-media paintings, marrying oblique imagery with suggestive written messages. Images of popsicles, pancakes and other common household products are prevalent throughout his work. "I'm not one for creating a self-portrait. An image of myself, I believe, would seem distant and unfamiliar to the viewing public. Instead I paint common corporate symbols, and advertising images that people immediately recognize and accept. Their altered representations become signifiers for myself, my feelings, and my statement on modern life." These are nonsensical, intense, humorous works, sprinkled with mass market product iconography, the icon's faces are painted away or eliminated. Vincent uses these all too familiar elements as jump off points from which to craft his surreal universe of suggestion and veils. "I start a painting with an idea of what it is I'm trying to express within a certain piece, but sometimes, the piece starts controlling me, keeping me up at night. Until finally, the piece takes over and instead reveals what it would rather express to me...and I accept it - then I smoke a cigarette."

Hand. 2008. Latex, enamel and glitter on varnished reclaimed plywood, 78 x 24 inches.



Bill Durgin

www.billdurgin.com

My photographs reflect a fascination with the body, as form, and as vessels of sensation. The complex figurations, undulating arrangements of flesh, as the body seems to collapse onto itself, portray an almost abstracted figure lacking appendages and hair. The physical structure becomes not just a shell, but a moving sculpture of skin, muscle, fat, and bone. These impenetrable objects embody subconscious stimuli and latent desires. The gesture within each photograph is created through exploring my own physical limitations and collaborative improvisation with models, dancers and performers. Each pose transmogrifies the figure towards abstraction; exaggerating or diminishing the skeletal structure until it approaches an amorphic form. I want the bodies to be recognized as bodies, but also to be detached from common perceptions of the figure. Bound within each singular view, the uncanny figures convey the body as both abject and marvelous.

Figure with Box and Tape 2, edition 1 of 6, 2011. C-print mounted on museum board, 30 x 38 inches.



Arts Guild New Jersey is a non-profit center for the arts located at 1670 Irving St. at Seminary Avenue in the Downtown Arts District of the City of Rahway.

The Arts Guild presents a yearly program of fine art exhibitions as well as three semesters of multi-week art classes for adults, teens and children, one-day workshops for adults, summer art workshops for kids and teens, and a variety of secondary art and cultural events, such as lectures and seminars.

The art exhibitions at the Guild focus primarily on the presentation of works by notable emerging New Jersey artists. We feature a wide range of mediums (painting, prints, photography, mixed media collage, construction/assemblage, sculpture, etc.) and a broad range of styles from photo realism to complete abstractions. Our exhibits aim to present an overview of current or enduring trends and directions in the contemporary art of New Jersey's arts community.

It is the mission of Arts Guild New Jersey to present high level arts programs for the benefit of residents in Central and Northern New Jersey. We promote a broad range of the arts and the value of the arts for all people. Since 1999, the Arts Guild has provided an increasing range of art events, activities and programs for a multi-county audience.

The programs at Arts Guild New Jersey are made possible by funding from corporations, foundations, government sources, membership and individual contributions.

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