

Nancy Spero

In a groundbreaking career surpassing 50 years of practice and encompassing many significant visual and cultural movements including Conceptual Art, Post-Modernism, and Feminism, Nancy Spero made the female experience central to her art and challenged aesthetic and political conventions. Spero's lexicon was derived from an immersion in the history of images, notably from Egypt, classical antiquity, pre-history, and contemporary news media. She combined, fractured, and repurposed found imagery and adopted text to comment on contemporary and historical events such as the monstrosities of the Vietnam War, extermination of Jews during the Holocaust, and torture of women in Chile. With raw intensity, Spero executed works on paper and installations that persist as unapologetic statements against the pervasive abuse of power, Western privilege, and male dominance.

Spero's work is held in over 50 prominent public collections worldwide including the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; Centre Pompidou, France; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Spain; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Tate Gallery, England; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Massachusetts; and Dallas Museum of Art, Texas. Major monographic exhibitions of Spero's work have been shown at renowned museums including the Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico; Centre Pompidou, France; Serpentine Galleries, England; Museo d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, and Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Spain. In 2007, Spero presented the installation *Maypole: Take No Prisoners* at the 52nd Venice Biennale.

Spero was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1926. She died in New York City in 2009.

Solo shows (selection)

2023

Woman as Protagonist, Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, United States

2020

Nancy Spero, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark

Acts of Rebellion, Musée d'Art de Lillehammer, Lillehammer, Norway

2019

The Warriors, Galerie Lelong & Co., Paris, France

Nancy Spero, Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

Nancy Spero, Nordiska Akvarellmuseet, Skarhamn, Sweden

Paper Mirror, PS1, MoMa, New York City, United States

2018

Sky Goddess, Kaufmann Repetto, Milan, Italy

Paper Mirror, Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico

Nancy Spero : Unbound, Colby Museum, Waterville, United States

2017

Maypole: Take No Prisoners, Galerie Lelong, New York City, United States

2014

The Body, International Centre of Graphic Arts (MGLC), Ljubljana, Slovenia

2013

Cri du Cœur, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, United States

From Victimhood to Liberation: Works from the 1980s & 1990s, Galerie Lelong, New York City, United States

2011

Nancy Spero, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Works Of The 1980s, Barbara Gross Galerie, Munich, Germany

Nancy Spero, Serpentine Gallery, London, United Kingdom

2010

Woman in Motion, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

2009

Woman as Protagonist, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, Austria

Blue, Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome, Italy

Disidanzas, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo (CAAC), Sevilla, Spain

Dissidances, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain

Un Coup de Dent, Galerie Lelong, New York City, United States

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

2008

The Magic of the State, castillo/corrales, Paris, France

Disidanzas, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Barcelona, Spain

2007

Artaud Paintings and Codex Artaud, FRAC - Haute-Normandie, Sotteville-lès-Rouen, France

The Paris Black Paintings, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

2005

Weighing the Heart Against a Feather of Truth, Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea (CGAC), Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Cri du Cœur, Galerie Lelong, New York City, United States

2004

The War Series 1966 - 1970, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

2003

Nancy Spero, Galerie Lelong, New York City, United States

2002

Nancy Spero, Galerie Lelong, New York City, United States

1998

Nancy Spero, Museo Jacobo Borges, Caracas, Venezuela

1994

Nancy Spero, Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden

1991

Works on Paper 1981-1991, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, Germany

Sky Goddess, Egyptian Acrobat, Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome, Italy

1990

Bilder 1958 - 1990, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, Germany

Nancy Spero, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

To soar II, Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, United States

1989

Works Since 1950, Dominique Nahas, Toronto, Canada

Works Since 1950, New Museum, New York City, United States

1988

Works Since 1950, List Visual Arts Center (LVAC), Cambridge, United States

Works Since 1950, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (MCA), Chicago, United States

1987

Retrospective, Institute of Contemporary Art, London, United Kingdom

Nancy Spero, Lawrence Oliver Gallery, Philadelphia, United States

Works Since 1950, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, United States

Works Since 1950, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, United States

1986

Continuum, Museum Villa Stuck, Munich, Germany

Nancy Spero, Center Gallery, Carrboro, United States

Nancy Spero, Greenville County Museum of Art, Greenville, United States

1985

Nancy Spero, University of Iowa Museum of Art, Iowa City, United States

1984

MATRIX 72, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA), Berkeley, United States

1983

Matrix 74, The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, United States

1982

Nancy Spero and Leon Golub: Vietnam War, Tweed Art Gallery, Plainfield, United States

1958

Nancy Spero/Leon Golub, Indiana University, Bloomington, United States

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

Group shows (selection)

2023

Somewhere Downton, UCCA Museum, Beijing, China

Louise Bourgeois: Imaginary Creations, The National Museum, Oslo, Norway

2022

Les Militantes, Maison Guerlain, Paris, France

2020

TRANSFORMACIONES - Mujeres artistas entre dos siglos, Fundación CajaCanarias, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain

2018

Antonin Artaud 1936, Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico

Loved, lost and Loose : Foreign Artists in Paris 1944-1968, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain

Delirious: Art at the Limits of Reason, 1950-1980, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, United States

Groundings, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, United States

Half The Picture : A Feminist Look at the Collection, Brooklyn Museum, New York City, United States

2017

An Incomplete History of Protest, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City, United States

2016

Louise Bourgeois, Kiki Smith, Nancy Spero, Museo de la Pasion, Valladolid, Spain

2015

Slip of the Tongue, Punta della Dogana - Francois Pinault Foundation, Venice, Italy

The Great Mother / La grande Madre, Palazzo Reale, Milan, Italy

2014

Donation Florence Et Daniel Guerlain, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

Les désastres de la guerre. 1800-2014, Musée du Louvre, Lens, France

Magiciens de la terre, retour sur une exposition légendaire, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2013

Tell It To My Heart: Collected by Julie Ault, Kunstmuseum Basel / Gegenwart, Basel, Switzerland

2011

elles@centrepompidou, artistes femmes dans les collections du Centre Pompidou, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2008

Gehen bleiben, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, Germany

2005

Celebrating the Jewish Contribution to 20th-Century American Art, The RISD Museum - University of Rhode Island, Providence, United States

Drawn to Cleveland, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland (MOCA), Cleveland, United States

2004

Das Recht des Bildes, Kunstmuseum Bochum, Bochum, Germany

Modern Means: Continuity and Change in Art from 1880 to the Present, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan

Nancy Spero and Kiki Smith, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, United Kingdom

Exquisite Corpses Today: 25 Curiosities Commissioned by the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, United States

1999

Stop the Violence, MAK - Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Austria

1996

Féminin-masculin: Le sexe de l'art, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

1989

Magiciens De La Terre, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

1988

Committed to Print, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City, United States

1985

The Black Paintings, The Renaissance Society, Chicago, United States

1982

The Monument Redefined, Gowanus Memorial Art Yard, New York City, United States

1981

Watercolors, MoMA PS1, New York City, United States

1980

Issue: Social Strategies by Women Artists, Institute of Contemporary Art London (ICA), London, United Kingdom

Biennials (selection)

2010

29° Bienal de São Paulo, Biennale de Sao Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

2007

52nd International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale / Biennale di Venezia, La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy

27th Biennial of Graphic Arts - The Unbound Eyes of Anxiousnes, Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia

2003

50th International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale / Biennale di Venezia, La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy

2001

49th International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale / Biennale di Venezia, La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy

1997

documenta X, Documenta, Kassel, Germany

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

1993

Whitney Biennial, Whitney Biennial, New York, United States

1992

5th International Drawing Triennale Wroclaw, International Drawing Triennale Wroclaw, Wroclaw, Poland

1986

6th Biennale of Sydney: Origins, Originality + Beyond, Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Public collections (selection)

Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Centre de la Gravure et de l'Image imprimée, La Louvière, Belgium

Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada

Galerie de l'UQAM, Montreal, Canada

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal, Montreal, Canada

Centre Georges Pompidou – Musée national d'art moderne, Paris, France

FRAC – Auvergne, Clermont Ferrand, France

FRAC – Nord-Pas de Calais, Dunkerque, France

FRAC – Pays de la Loire, Carquefou, France

Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf, Germany

Munich Re Art Collection, Munich, Germany

Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome, Italy

Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan

Centro Cultural, Mexico City, Mexico

International Centre of Graphic Arts (MGLC), Ljubljana, Slovenia

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Barcelona, Spain

Tate Britain, London, United Kingdom

Tate Gallery, London, United Kingdom

Apexart, New York, United States

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, United States

ASU Art Museum - Arizona State University Art Museum, Tempe, United States

Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, United States

Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, United States

Exit Art, New York, United States

Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, United States

Jersey City Museum, Jersey City, United States

List Visual Arts Center (LVAC), Cambridge, United States

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, United States

Maier Museum of Art, Lynchburg, United States

Mary & Leigh Block Museum of Art, Evanston, United States

MOCA Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, United States

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, United States

National Gallery of Art, Washington, United States

New Museum, New York, United States

Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, United States

Pérez Art Museum , Miami, United States

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, United States

The Jewish Museum of New York, New York, United States

The Linda Pace Foundation, San Antonio, United States

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, United States

Galerie Lelong & Co.

Paris – New York

Museum of Fine Arts, Hanoi, Vietnam