Hannah Levy Receives First West Coast Museum Exhibition at BAMPFA

On View August 10, 2022 through January 8, 2023

Hannah Levy / MATRIX 279 Showcases New Work by Celebrated Sculptor

(Berkeley, CA) July 6, 2022—The UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) will mount the first West Coast museum exhibition of work by Hannah Levy, the acclaimed sculptor whose steel-and-silicone creations explore the visceral tension between flesh and metal. Hannah Levy / MATRIX 279 will showcase six recent sculptures by Levy, including a major new work that will be on view for the first time at BAMPFA. Complementing a concurrent presentation at this year’s Venice Biennale, Levy’s solo museum debut is the latest installment of the MATRIX Program at BAMPFA, a vanguard exhibition series that has highlighted distinctive and important voices in contemporary art for the past four decades.

Noted for her evocative integrations of gleaming metal with squishy facsimiles of human and non-human flesh, Levy has created a body of work that exists at the intersection of industrial production, Modernist design, and dystopian futurism. Skeletal steel frameworks are hand-welded by the artist, working intuitively without the guidance of prior renderings. Levy’s work often features thin silicone surfaces tenuously stretched across rigid metal structures, such as a claw-armed chandelier adorned with ornate corsetry that resembles skin. Levy’s MATRIX presentation encompasses a series of sculptures made in response to the Mies van der Rohe architecture of the Arts Club of Chicago, where
her work went on view in 2021. Accompanying these five works, Levy has created a new sculpture specifically for the BAMPFA presentation.

Born and based in New York City, the 31-year-old Levy has participated in group exhibitions across Europe, Asia, and the United States. In addition to her ongoing presentation at the Venice Biennale, other notable recent projects have included a commissioned installation for the High Line in New York City and a solo exhibition at Casey Kaplan gallery in 2020 that The New York Times called “compelling” and “genuinely perspective altering”. Her work will be featured in the Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art in France later this year, and is currently included in 52 Artists: A Feminist Milestone, a group exhibition on view at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, CT.

“Hannah Levy’s work evades the functionality and ostensible neutrality of industrial design to evoke the fragility, strength, and uncanniness of inhabiting a body,” said BAMPFA Curatorial Assistant Claire Frost, who coordinated the MATRIX exhibition. “The dynamic tension that emerges from the interplay between her steel and silicone materials suggests a feminist critique that exposes the way rigid structures squeeze and stretch anything that doesn’t conform to its ideals.”

In conjunction with Hannah Levy / MATRIX 279, BAMPFA will host an artist talk on the exhibition’s opening day, Wednesday, August 10 at 6 p.m. Levy will be joined in conversation by Rhonda Holberton, Assistant Professor of Digital Media at San Jose State University and a practicing artist who has exhibited at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum, among other venues. Additional programming will be announced later this summer; visit bampfa.org for the latest updates.

Sponsorship
Hannah Levy / MATRIX 279 was conceived by former BAMPFA curator Apsara DiQuinzio. It is organized by BAMPFA staff and coordinated by Claire Frost, curatorial assistant. The MATRIX program is made possible by a generous endowment gift from Phyllis C. Wattis.

Image credits
1. Hannah Levy: Untitled, 2021; nickel-plated steel, silicone; 33.5 x 8 x 15 in. each; courtesy the Arts Club of Chicago, © Hannah Levy. Photo: Michael Tropea.

Visitor Information
Subject to change based on COVID-19 protocols: visit bampfa.org/visit/plan-your-visit for current information.
Hours
Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tickets
$14 general admission
$12 non-UC Berkeley students, disabled, 65+
FREE BAMPFA members; UC Berkeley students, faculty, staff; 18 and under; one adult per child 13 and under; and artists in the BAMPFA collection/MATRIX

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About BAMPFA
An internationally recognized arts institution with deep roots in the Bay Area, the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) is a forum for cultural experiences that transform individuals and advance the local, national, and global discourse on art and film. BAMPFA is UC Berkeley’s premier visual arts venue, presenting more than 450 film screenings, scores of public programs, and more than fifteen exhibitions annually. With its vibrant and eclectic programming, BAMPFA inspires the imagination and ignites critical dialogue through art, film, and other forms of creative expression.

The institution’s collection of more than 28,000 works of art encompasses pieces dating from 3000 BCE to the present day and includes important holdings of Ming and Qing Dynasty Chinese painting, Japanese paintings and woodblock prints of the Edo period, Indian miniatures, Old Master works on paper, Italian Baroque painting, early American painting, Abstract Expressionist painting, contemporary photography, and conceptual art. BAMPFA’s collection also includes more than 18,000 films and videos, including the largest collection of Japanese cinema outside of Japan, impressive holdings of Soviet cinema, West Coast avant-garde film, and seminal video art, as well as hundreds of thousands of articles, reviews, posters, and other ephemera related to the history of film.