

PRESSBOOK

Genesis BELANGER

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These 20 Female Artists Are Pushing Sculpture Forward

Sculpture was once considered the domain of ambitious male artists, a medium as challenging in its physicality as it was limitless in scope. But for several decades, artists from [Eva Hesse](#) and [Senga Nengudi](#) to [Phyllida Barlow](#) and [Ursula von Rydingsvard](#) have carved a place for women working in contemporary sculpture. And in 2018, it's arguably female artists who are creating some of the most interesting, challenging, and ambitious forms—freely taking the body apart, prodding taboos, and embracing the grotesque.

The eclectic group of 20 international sculptors highlighted here ranges from emerging to mid-career talents. What connections can we draw between them? There's the extraordinary influence of [Louise Bourgeois](#), for one—nearly half of these artists cited the late artist as one of their icons. [Doris Salcedo](#) looms large, too. Meanwhile, many of these practices underscore the fact that clay has comfortably reentered the artist's toolbox, moving well beyond the realm of vessels to become a cutting-edge material—as capable as steel, wood, resin, and other materials in pushing boundaries and helping us to see the world anew.

Together, these artists are helping to define, question, and evolve the future of their medium.

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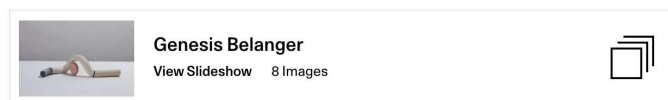
Genesis Belanger [Follow](#)

B. 1978, United States. Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.



Genesis Belanger, *Acquiescence (bent hand)*, 2018. Courtesy of the artist.

“I’ve never met a tool or material I didn’t like,” said Genesis Belanger. Indeed, the sheer pleasure that the sculptor takes in her medium was evidenced in her 2017 solo show at [Mrs. Gallery](#) in Queens, New York, which she filled with her humorous, surrealistic ceramics that needle affectionately at human foibles and appetites. Burnt matches and muzzled cigarettes composed of stoneware and porcelain lay artfully discarded on the floor; droopy straws emerged from generic cartons of milk; salt-and-pepper shakers resembled breasts with Day-Glo nipples.



The artist’s objects are something like human surrogates, reflecting personalities and flaws—“our desire, gluttony, obsession with power,” as Belanger said. “My objects reflect all the base and instinctual parts of our psychology. The parts that make us fantastic, and a bit fucked up.”

Belanger, who will show more of her work alongside that of [Emily Mae Smith](#) in a forthcoming exhibition at [Perrotin](#) in New York, begins her process with sketches, making numerous loose drawings until she arrives at a few that she can’t leave alone. These images then become the basis for objects that she carefully hand-builds; they often mimic the alluring tone of human skin, as in her female torsos that double as statuesque lamps.