

PRESSBOOK

Germaine RICHIER

ArtNews

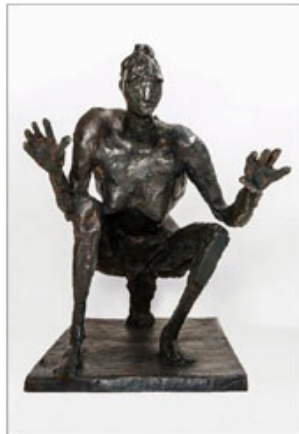
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Germaine Richier

Dominique Lévy and Galerie Perrotin

Treating sculpture not so much as weighty, impenetrable form but rather as something attenuated, fluid, and pierced by space (blithely disregarding



Germaine Richier, *La Sauterelle, Grande*, 1955–56, dark patinated bronze, 54" x 39" x 89". Dominique Lévy.

the nature of the bronze of which it is made). French artist Germaine Richier (1902–59) succeeded in creating a distinctive body of work. Well known in her day (she was included in two early Documenta exhibitions, one of only a handful of women shown), Richier has been largely forgotten in the years since her death—her kind of modernist surrealism no longer in vogue.

Yet there were many intriguing works among the more than 40 in this survey, despite their often unavoidable comparison with Alberto Giacometti.

The work here ranged from Richier's early, rather classic figures influenced by Antoine Bourdelle, her teacher, to increasingly fanciful hybrids made in the decade after World War II. Striking examples included *L'Homme de la Nuit, Grand* (1954), *La Tauromachie* (1953), *La Mante, Moyenne* (1946), and *La Mandoline ou la Cigale* (1954–55)—human or part human or part transmogrified figures with bloated bellies and sticklike legs, their surfaces gouged, rippled, and filigreed.

Her creatures are often ravaged, their poses ungainly, anguished, as if they had been deformed by decades of war and its aftermath. Yet two of the strongest works present were *La Sauterelle, Grande* (1955–56), a crouching nude with vestiges of Rodin, its head traceable to Picasso; and *La Spirale* (1957), a towering golden, abstract column that suggests a triumphantly flowering plant or stacked vertebrae, neither particularly tormented.

The installation here re-created the ambience of Richier's studio, a traditional European atelier of the period, inspired by a series of contemporaneous photographs of Richier in her workspace taken by Brassai and offering viewers an informative glimpse into the artist's domain, with the installation reinforcing the inherent theatricality of Richier's production.

—Lilly Wei

Dove Bradshaw

Danese/Corey

For this refined, cerebral show, spanning four decades, Dove Bradshaw focused on time and its traces, a theme that has long preoccupied her. The works in various mediums combined esthetics, metaphysics, and the physical sciences, with time as a collaborator.

One notable highlight was *Negative Ions II* (1996/2014), a signature installation. Functioning as a clock of sorts, the work consists of a suspended,

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transparent funnel filled with water and adjusted to release five drops per minute onto a large cone of salt, very slowly. The process inexorably reshapes the pristine mound below at the rate of two inches a month. In *Waterstone* (begun in 1996 and ongoing), drops of water erode a limestone block, a less soluble substance, at an even more leisurely pace, with the economy of means and visual simplicity of both projects a great part of their beauty.

Bradshaw's "Contingency" series (begun in 1984) are AbEx-like canvases, recalling bad-boy piss paintings without the body fluids or the bravado. The imagery, however, is similarly based on a chemical reaction. Bradshaw strokes a mixture called liver of sulfur onto a silver-leaved surface to create a branching, abstract composition—the rivulets biting into it, changing colors from copper to bright turquoise to deep green and lustrous black, the shifts unpredictable and ongoing.

Other objects in the show acted as memento mori, such as the two exquisite halves of a goose egg shell cast in bronze and gilded in pure gold, called *Nothing III* (2004), and in the humorously titled *They Were and Went* (2004), an image of empty egg shells plus a human skull on Duraclear film. Rather than repeating the cliché of *ars longa, vita brevis*, Bradshaw's work shows us that both art and life are inherently unstable, in thrall to time.

—Lilly Wei



Dove Bradshaw, *Nothing III*, 2004, 24-carat gold over bronze cast of a goose egg shell, 2 1/2" x 5" x 2 1/2". Danese/Corey.