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Louise
Bourgeois
Sculptress

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Portrait Artist

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Louise Bourgeois

by Barbara Mitchell

Sculptress



Blind leading the Blind



Torso: Self-Portrait

There have been no limits

to the media in which Louise Bourgeois has worked out her personal stories. One of the most imaginative creators on the contemporary scene, she incorporated feminist and psychological concepts into art before they became part of the popular culture. Her hard-to-classify sculptures and assemblages are marked by emotional and erotic intensity.

Born and raised in Paris, Bourgeois enjoyed a pampered childhood, but one that was marred by difficult family relationships:

her father's affair with the family governess was but the most visible symptom of dysfunction. As Bourgeois matured, pursued studies at the Sorbonne and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, married, and moved to the U.S., the mysteries of her childhood remained alive for her and demanded exploration in art.



photo by Annie Leibovitz, *Women*/Annie Leibovitz, Susan Sontag

“In order to express unbearable family tensions, I had to express my anxiety with forms that I could change, destroy, and rebuild.”

Bourgeois' sculptures often blur the distinctions between interior and exterior, between body and mind and explore the nature and function of memory. Still productive even in her eighties, her work continues to speak to the ways we use our bodies and minds to constructing identity—making experiences out of social interaction.