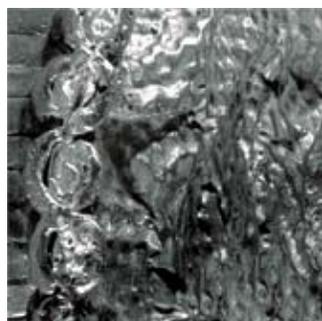


LEAH POLLER

Sculptor





... intellectually honest without breach -
proposing a creation elaborated
with passion and patience,
clear and legible to all, hailing the viewer
by the intensity of its expression
of a savage yet not brutal poetry,
suave without weakness.

MAURICE CALKA
Prix de Rome



Biography

The work of award-winning sculptor Leah Poller appears in museums, galleries, institutions, public spaces and private collections around the world.

Places › Arnot Museum · Museo Regional Michoacano · Edward Dean Museum · Casa Diego Rivera · Grounds for Sculpture · Kismet Gallery · Mexican Cultural Institute of New York · Ofivalmo · Washington Square Windows at NYU · Capitol One Bank · National Building Museum · Portals Gallery · Centro Cultural Sefaradi · Mercedes Benz Gallery of New York · Fleet Bank · Galleria Dante · Centro Cultural San Angel · Galerie Treger · Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia · North Fork Bank · Duveen Gallery · Greater Reston Arts Center · Fordham University · Stamford Connecticut Art Walk · South Bend Indiana Art Museum · Yin Yang Social Laboratory of New York · Washington DC Project for the Arts · National Museum of American Art · Claypool Young Museum · SOFA · Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy

Cities › Paris · Phoenix · Soho · Naples · Guadalajara · New York · Mexico City · Miami Beach · Morelia · Harrison · Los Angeles · Stamford · Palm Springs · Akron · Bethesda · Washington · Seattle · Cherry Hill · Boca Raton · Tribeca · South Bend · Chicago · Boulder · Tucson

Awards › Artists' Equity · Pen and Brush · C. Lorrillard Wolfe Institute · South Bend Indiana Museum · Washington Project for the Arts · National Galleries of the Smithsonian Institute

Commissions › Lionel Vielot, dancer · Thami Al Kaisi, French artist · Michelle Kornbluh, portrait of a young girl · Laura Alexis, French cinema actress · Serge Ber, art specialist · Dany Meadows, French author · Enrique Guzman de Acevedo, Latin American correspondent to the White House · Ever Gordon, Jamaican poet and jazz musician

Collections › Soaring Words, international children's charity · David Ramsey, Bell Laboratories · John Demaio, Esq., attorney · Alain Baudry, French editor · Dr. Maurice Tran Dinh Cahn · Mr. Serge Ber, antique dealer · Laura McCann, CEO - Zweave, Inc. · John Hechinger, CEO - Hechinger Corp · Edilberto Reyes, CPA · Dr. Alan and Mrs. Beverly Wise · Madeline McConnell, art consultant · Marite



Bonnal, author · Jayson and Tassi Amster, attorneys · Kenneth Kornbluh, CEO - Marketing Pilot, Inc. · D. Doane, CEO - Custom Foods · Olivier Dieudonne, investment banker · Amal Warren, jeweler to the Royal Family of Abu Dhabi · Dr. Francois Elmai, DDS · Mr. and Mrs. David Cohen · Jerome Bonnouvrier, CEO - DNA Model Agency

Affiliations › National Museum of Women · Association for International Artists · National Artists' Equity · Women's Caucus for the Arts · Washington Sculpture Guild · Association des Sculpteurs (France) · Friends of the Museum of the Americas · Pen and Brush (New York) · Who's Who of American Women

Bibliography › "Fabrica de Suenos," El Informador · "Leah's Beds" by Cate McLare, Boca Sentinel · "Global Frontrunners," Profile

Magazine · "Appreciation of Leah Poller and her Beds" by Cliff Johns, The Potomac · "De Manhattan a Mexico" by Argelia Castello, La Voz de Michoacan · "De la cama al museo," Acento · "Bed Puns" by Fred Camper, Chicago Reader · "A Question of Culture" by Mitchell Snow, Eyewash · "Exhibit celebrates surrealists' fascination with Bedfellows", Spotlight Chicago · "Casting Your Bed in Bronze," The Artist's Magazine · "The Symbolic Bed," Eyewash



The 101 Beds a study in bronze

Following an accident in my studio, I was relegated to bed - and so began my recovery and personal odyssey in the study of our relationship with the bed in all its visual, literary and narrative forms. More than a third of our life is spent in bed, yet rarely has it been examined through a work of art. Exploring this in three dimensions has given full scope to my sense of humor, pathos, whimsy, sarcasm, tragedy and passion. Meeting the challenge of creating 101 inter - related sculptures has been mind-expanding far beyond my initial inspiration. Working in the traditional lost wax method of bronze casting, and being personally involved in all the finishing (chasing, polishing and patina) of each piece had added dimension to the hands - on process of craftsmanship. It is with great pleasure that I invite my audience into this very unique theater of personal experience.

Leah, I am standing
in front of your beds
and they blow my mind...

KURT VONNEGUT
Author





By proposing the bed as a given topic of artistic invention, the sculptor subverts our visual conception about day-to-dayness. The metamorphosis of that commonplace domestic object into an aesthetic object modifies its concrete function and turns it into a powerful abstract metaphor. The bed is not only a piece of furniture to sleep or rest on, but in a more profound sense “to die, to sleep, per chance to dream”.

Neither is it an inanimate nor a mute rectangular shaped thing, but the meaningful spatio-temporal frame of existence (the place of birth and death), interwoven by pleasure (the place of lovemaking) and pain (the place of illness), and cast by impulses, motivations and desires which lead to actions, passions and creations. So, inside the prolific three-dimensional universe set up by Poller, the bed arises as a biographical image or, rather, as a singular portrait: the clock that melts over the mattress represents Dali (Bed Time); the painter’s palette and the skeleton on the canopy portray Frida Kahlo (Death Bed); the crown that enthrones the imperial style bed depicts Princess Diana (Queen’s Bed).

Also, by force of memories and whims, the bed comes into being as a sort of self-portrait. This way, the bed is sometimes landscape: a field covered with flowers in the Bed of Roses, or reticular frame with shell headboard and anchor legs in the Ocean Bed. Other times, the bed is a layer or portion of things extended

horizontally, from food (Bed of Lettuce) to money (Bed Check). Or the bed is the occasion of playing upon words, just as in the Bed of Nails, a bedstead of fingernails ornamented with hammers.

Through a skillful shaping of volumes and a sensual beauty derived from the insinuating undulations of modeling, these sculptural variations made in small and even intimate size by the artist, skilfully trained at the Ecole Nationale Superieure de Beaux Arts of Paris, are poetic constructions, not exempted from a fine sense of humor, which become symbols full of significance.





The Portrait

My figurative work follows my own search for a higher state of consciousness. Our physical form can partly represent an external manifestation of our internal dialogue including how we see ourselves. What if I could capture the consciousness of my subject

by entering the mind through its only portal beyond the cranium: the eyes? If I could see my subject as my subject sees herself/himself, in her/his secret thoughts, most intimate thoughts, what would be seen? As my subject poses, a conversation begins not unlike

one that would occur between a patient and the analyst. The revelations, the "nakedness," is then symbolized through forms and objects, through stances and poses, until the portrait makes a statement that is much more than representational. The "sur-realization" is, in fact, the reality of a complex being, revealed beyond the classic portrait.



At a time when the artistic domaine of imposters is legionary and maintains the power, where discourse has replaced the work of art, where intellectual thieves, art critics, dealers and curators of contemporary museums impose a pseudo-cultural terrorism to comfort their void and that of their prodigies, a terrorism which paralyzes even sensitive people and annihilates their critical sense; in an epoch when manipulators fill the walls with white canvases baptised "monochromatic," and animate their verbs with collective hallucinations, leading people to find a subtle and fundamental message where, in fact, there is nothing but a zero degree of mental initiative...

At a time when just about anybody can believe himself an artist, where anybody can proclaim himself an art critic, when some smear paint on larger and larger canvases inversely proportional to the dimension of their talent, while others find in this desert the makings of verbal diarrhea, a delirious literature whose pretention, whose grossness can only excite snobs and the culturally illiterate...

In such a context, it strikes me as almost miraculous that a true artist such as Leah Poller emerges - solid, inspired, morally and intellectually honest without breach - proposing a creation

elaborated with passion and patience, clear and legible to all, hailing the viewer by the intensity of its expression of a savage yet unbrutal poetry, suave without weakness. To express the current of a wild temperament and a refined sensitivity, Leah Poller has chosen to sculpt. She knew that it would mean a rigorous discipline which escapes all facility. She has met the challenge. She has worked hard and learned very early that the essence of sculpture resides in the harmonious assembling of structured forms and meaningful compositions. She has understood that this severe art suits the deployment of her energy, her taste for kneading the elements with vigor, tenderness and sensitivity. Intuitively she felt that to reach the poetic dimension of her work, to delve deeply without reprieve into the mysteries of creation, to share the astonishing discovery of our physical and mental universe in communion with the men and woman who, like herself, have sought the sacred and the transcendent, she would strive to merit that which Professor Debre has called "The honor to live."



The Honor to live Maurice Calka, Prix de Rome



IMAGES

- p. 3 › Leah Poller
- p. 5 › Soaring Bed
35 x 24 x 22"
- p. 7 › Cast Iron Bed
60 x 24 x 47"
- p. 8 › Bed of Twigs
12 x 7 x 12"
- Cast Iron Bed
14 x 8 x 10"
- Bed Palette
14.5 x 11 x 5"
- Bed Time
10 x 10 x 10.5"
- Bed Time Story
13 x 9 x 10.5"
- Bed of Nails
10 x 10.5 x 10"
- Brass Bed
10 x 7 x 9"
- Flagrant de Lit
8 x 5.5 x 14"
- Lobster Bed
10.5 x 8 x 8"
- Hollywood Bed
12.5 diam x 8.5"
- Sick Bed
11 x 8 x 9"
- Bed of Lettuce
10 x 7 x 9.5"
- Bed Bath and Beyond
9.5 x 6 x 9.5"
- Bed Rock
9 x 8 x 7"
- Death Bed
10.5 x 7.5 x 15.5"
- Murphy Bed
8.5 x 9 x 13"
- p. 10 › On her Mind
24.5 x 15 x 10"
- Glasnost
10 x 18 x 12"
- The Gas Mask
20 x 14 x 14"
- p. 11 › Dany
17 x 22 x 16"

I think the “beds”
are the most
brilliant, intriguing
and sophisticated thing
in American art since...
before we cared.

CLIFF JOHNS
novelist and critic

*All work is in bronze

Leah Poller

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