



**Innovative Exhibition Exploring the Body, Nature, and Knowledge Across Time and Media
To Premiere at The Israel Museum, Jerusalem in February 2020**

Bodyscapes brings together modern and contemporary works by Jenny Saville, Bill Viola, Joan Jonas, Wangechi Mutu, Jean Arp, Tracey Emin, Anthony Gormley, and Pipilotti Rist, among many others, contextualized through a diverse range of historical sources

Jerusalem, Israel, January 7, 2020 – A new exhibition debuting at The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, explores the human form and the relationship between the body, nature, landscape, and the cosmos in ways that have informed major advances across science, Eastern medicine, mysticism, choreography, and philosophy. Opening February 20 and on view through October 11, 2020, *Bodyscapes* brings together over 150 works from the Museum's collection as well as major loans of paintings, sculpture, photography, video, and installation, dating from the seventh millennium BCE to the present day—juxtaposing ancient female figurines with feminist earth-body performances of the 1970s and contemporary anti-colonial works by Kenyan artist Wangechi Mutu; anthropomorphic landscapes of eighteenth-century Germany with women-mountain landscapes of 1950s Israeli art; and biomorphic forms by surrealist Jean Arp with psycho-sexual pieces by Louise Bourgeois, among many other stimulating dialogues. Integrating a variety of media and historical sources, *Bodyscapes* creates a multi-sensory and immersive experience that engages viewers with their own physicality and develops a space for reflecting on the continuities present in visual history.

“*Bodyscapes* develops a new context for works in the Museum's collection to challenge viewers' notions of the body in art history and reveal a fresh view of cross-generational connections in art from prehistory to the contemporary moment,” said Ido Bruno, Anne and Jerome Fisher Director of the Israel Museum. “I am delighted that *Bodyscapes* will give our visitors the opportunity to witness the breadth—both culturally and temporally—of the Museum's holdings, while challenging our conceptions of the human body and expanding our understanding of its position within the art historical register.”

Organized by Dr. Adina Kamien-Kazhdan, the Israel Museum's David Rockefeller Senior Curator of Modern Art, the exhibition guides the viewer through four sections that branch out into the exhibition space and underline the dialectical relationship between the intellectual and the sensual. Beginning with the cerebral encyclopedic section, **Bodies of Knowledge**, the visitor is then led to Bill Viola's video and audio installation, *An Instrument of Simple Sensation*, as it loudly reverberates a heartbeat in the gallery space. **Canon of Proportions** to the right features Greyson Perry's *Map of Nowhere*, and dialogues with da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*, such as Anthony Gormley's lead, larger-than-life prone figure. Next, **Human Landscape** features biomorphic sculptures by Jean Arp and Henry Moore with Liu Wei's landscape of bodies as a monumental backdrop. Finally, one reaches the section **Body of Work**, where several video works—many by performance artists—envelop the viewer, offering an immersive experience and identification with the performing body. Details on each chapter and notable highlights follow:

- **Bodies of Knowledge** presents maps and diagrams from a variety of fields—including cartography, anatomy, mysticism, astrology, cosmography, Eastern medicine, and psychology—ranging from the sixteenth century to present day that use the image of the body to chart diverse systems. Anthropomorphic representations of knowledge from various cultures and time periods are brought into dialogue with works by artists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, such as Jenny Saville, Bill Viola, Elisabeth Lecourt, Sharon Glazberg, Michael Druks, and Matthew Day Jackson, in an exploration of historical and modern means of mapping the body.

- **Canon of Proportions** demonstrates how the human body and its dimensions serve as a measuring unit in art, architecture, and choreography, presenting the relationship between the body and geometry in systems of proportion that served as scientific-aesthetic mediators between man and the world, from the Roman period to the present. Works by twelfth-century German Benedictine abbess Hildegard de Bingen and seventeenth-century physician Robert Fludd are brought into conversation with modern pieces by artists like Grayson Perry, Robert Mapplethorpe, Sir Antony Gormley, ORLAN, and Le Corbusier to analyze the intersection of science and humanism.
- **Human Landscape** traces analogies between nature, landscape, and the evocative contours and textures of the body. Artistic actions in nature—such as Ana Mendieta’s video work *Burial Pyramid, Yagul, Mexico*, in which the celebrated performance artist places her body in the interstices of rubble—put forward critical feminist and environmental statements contextualized by prehistoric fertility figurines from the Levant and Pipilotti Rist’s immersive video *Pickelporno*. Further highlights include corporeal works by Georgia O’Keeffe and Louise Bourgeois, biomorphic sculptures by Jean Arp and Henry Moore, anthropomorphic landscapes by Matthaeus Merian the Elder from ca. 1650 and Ori Reisman from the 1960s, and work by contemporary video artist Ben Hagari.
- **Body of Work** explores artists’ use of the body as a means of marking and delineating physical and symbolic territories and boundaries. Constantly negotiating the limits of the human figure within the overwhelming forces of the universe, artists leave traces of themselves in nature, creating landscape through gesture. Here, videos of the performance art of Geta Bratescu, Rebecca Horn, and Janine Antoni figure largely, among works by Cang Xin and Spencer Tunick, presenting viewers with an immersive experience to challenge notions of their own physicality and reveal the dynamism of the body in motion.

As viewers circulate throughout the exhibition, they are not only witnessing a history of the body in visual culture, but a decades-long history of The Israel Museum’s collecting, one in which ostensibly unrelated pieces from separate eras are provided new context and relevancy when shown in the same gallery space.

“My inspiration for *Bodyscapes* originates from Jenny Saville’s *Plan* (1993) in which she transformed her body into a topographical map to promote feminist ideas, transforming the canvas itself into a kind of surrogate skin,” said Adina Kamien-Kazhdan. “It was from this work that I wanted to explore the meaning of our bodies in visual culture, and how the body has served as a structure to organize knowledge and measure the world. In this way, *Bodyscapes* provides a unique opportunity to mine the Museum’s expansive collection through the lens of the exhibition, enrich the display with major international loans, and stage stimulating dialogues between historical artifacts and art of diverse media through the centuries.”

Bodyscapes is organized by The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, and is accompanied by fully-illustrated English and Hebrew catalogues, in which each of the four sections of the exhibition are explored in depth with scholarly articles by specialist contributors: Prof. Raz Chen-Morris, Architect Iddo Ginat, Curator Dr. Kamien-Kazhdan, and Prof. Andrew Renton.

About The Israel Museum, Jerusalem

The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, is Israel's foremost cultural institution and one of the world's leading encyclopedic museums. Founded in 1965, the Museum's terraced 20-acre campus houses a wide-ranging collection of art and archaeology of world-class status. Its holdings include the world's most comprehensive collections of the archaeology of the Holy Land, and Jewish Art and Life, as well as significant and extensive holdings in the Fine Arts, the latter encompassing ten separate departments: Israeli Art; European Art; Modern Art; Contemporary Art; Prints and Drawings; Photography; Design and Architecture; Asian Art; the Arts of Africa and Oceania; and the Arts of the Americas. The campus also includes the Shrine of the Book, which houses the 2,000-year-old Dead Sea Scrolls, the world's oldest biblical manuscripts; an extensive model of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period; the Billy Rose Art Garden; and a dynamic Youth Wing for Art Education whose educational programs attract over 100,000 children every year. In just over fifty years, the Museum has built a far-ranging collection of nearly 500,000 objects through an unparalleled legacy of gifts and support from a wide circle of friends and patrons throughout the world. The Museum also embraces a dynamic program of some 20–25 new exhibitions a year, and a rich annual program of publications, educational activities, and special cultural events that reach out to every sector of the population.

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