



Left: Henry Moore, *Reclining Figure*, 1945; Right: Henry Moore, *Detail of Draped Reclining Figure*, 1953

Photographer as Sculptor

Sculptor as Photographer

OPENING RECEPTION:

APRIL 10TH, 2025 6PM - 8PM

APRIL 10TH, 2025 - JUNE 7TH, 2025

Bruce Silverstein Gallery is pleased to present *Photographer as Sculptor, Sculptor as Photographer*, the inaugural exhibition of its new gallery space. This exhibition brings together sculptures and photographs by some of the most influential sculptors and master photographers of the 19th and 20th centuries to reveal the shared conceptual approaches that unite these seemingly distinct mediums. Including works by Constantin Brâncuși, Man Ray, Henry Moore, Auguste Rodin, and David Smith, alongside photographs by Bernd and Hilla Becher, Imogen Cunningham, Karl Blossfeldt, Bill Brandt, André Kertész, Barbara Morgan, Aaron Siskind, Frederick Sommer, Edward Steichen, and Edward Weston, the exhibition challenges traditional distinctions of photography and sculpture, unveiling a convergence between these artistic practices. Viewing these sculptures and photographs side by side, the exhibition highlights how, by shifting the boundaries of materiality, space, perception, and form, photographing becomes a sculptural act, and photography becomes sculpture.

Since its inception, photography has played a crucial role in sculpture, allowing sculptors to conceptualize, refine, and reimagine their works. Auguste Rodin, the first sculptor to gain widespread recognition for his use of photography, treated the medium as an extension of his sculptural practice. With the help of skilled artisans, he shaped light and shadow with the same precision he applied to bronze and marble, even going as far as coating his prints with potassium dichromate, creating a pigmented surface of deep greens and browns that mirrored the natural patina of his sculptures. Constantin Brâncuși, on the other hand, used photography to alter how his sculptures were perceived, capturing fleeting moments of illumination, reflection, and silhouette. In doing so, he created a new form of sculpture— as the physical object's shadows and contours blur together, there is no clear separation between the material and the ephemeral.

David Smith utilized the camera to study and document his welded metal constructions within their natural environment—the open fields surrounding his Bolton Landing home. His photographs demonstrate a profound understanding of photography’s ability to convey scale, reflection, form, and texture. Set against the mountainous terrain and silhouetted against an ever-changing sky, these “portraits” enhance the anthropomorphic and linear qualities of his sculptures, transforming steel objects into seemingly animated forms that tower against the landscape.

Henry Moore harnessed the power of photography to manipulate the perception of his sculptures, using the medium to exaggerate their scale and emphasize elements that might otherwise go unnoticed. By shooting his maquettes from a low angle, often set against stark, minimalist backdrops or nestled in the gardens of his Hertfordshire studio, Moore transformed these works into monumental figures, commanding attention. His tightly cropped details often bordered on the abstract, whether highlighting negative-space or transforming the folds of a draped garment into a rocky landscape.



Left: Rodin/Auguste Jacques-Ernest Bulloz, *Eternal Springtime* (marble), c. 1910-1913; Right: Barbara Morgan, *Valerie Bettis: Desperate Heart*, 1943

Photographers, too, have sought to distill sculptural essence within their frames. By isolating organic forms as botanical studies, Karl Blossfeldt elevated natural structures to the realm of sculpture. Imogen Cunningham pushed this further, using light, shadow, and unconventional cropping; intricate textures of leaves, stems, and buds take on the solidity of carved or cast material. In *Amaryllis*, 1933, a single leaf curves and separates, its sharp, white edges delineating the form with precision. Its cool, rich surface evokes the sleekness of polished steel or the fluidity of plastic. Similarly, the Bechers’ typologies of industrial architecture reframe utilitarian structures as sculptural monoliths, their repetition and precise composition amplifying their sculptural presence. Bill Brandt’s stark nudes echo the undulating masses of Moore’s bronzes, while Man Ray’s surreal cropping of classical statues blurs the line between human figure and sculpted object.

The exhibition also underscores the ways photography births new sculptural realities. For Man Ray, the camera itself becomes a tool for transformation, capable of altering perception and actualizing modern sculpture. By carefully framing found objects—clothespins, an egg tray—and photographing them under sharp lighting, he plays a game

of simulation, turning household items into humanoid sculpture, reinforced by a title "*L'homme*." Aaron Siskind's textural abstractions reimagine natural elements as readymade sculptures. Edward Weston's nude, *Anita Brenner, Mexico, 1924*, embodies a Jean Arp-like form, transforming the human body into a soft sculptural surface defined by form and isolation. Abstracting curves and contours, Weston blurs the boundary between flesh and sculpture, while Barbara Morgan's kinetic compositions capture the body's motion as though it were chiseled into time.

Through these juxtapositions, *Photographer as Sculptor, Sculptor as Photographer* reaffirms that the photograph is not a surrogate for the object but a site of transformation. By challenging traditional divisions between disciplines, this exhibition signals a new direction for Bruce Silverstein Gallery—one that embraces a fluid, interdisciplinary approach across all mediums of art, united by vision and creativity.

For more information please contact milly@brucesilverstein.com or visit www.brucesilverstein.com