

# MoMA PS1

## MoMA PS1 TO PRESENT FIRST NEW YORK EXHIBITION OF NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE IN SPRING 2020

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, September 18, 2019— MoMA PS1 will present the first New York museum exhibition of the work of visionary feminist and activist artist Niki de Saint Phalle (American and French, 1930–2002). On view from April 5 to September 7, 2020, the exhibition will feature over 100 works created from the 1970s until the artist's death, including sculptures, prints, drawings, jewelry, and archival material. Highlighting Saint Phalle's interdisciplinary approach and engagement with key social and political issues, the exhibition will focus on works that she created to transform environments, individuals, and society.

Early in her career, Saint Phalle pushed against accepted artistic practices, creating work that used assemblage and performative modes of production. Collaboration was always central to her work, including several co-authored sculptures made with the artist Jean Tinguely. Beginning in the late 1960s, Saint Phalle started making large-scale sculptures, which led to an expansion of her practice into architectural projects, sculpture gardens, books, prints, films, theater sets, clothing, jewelry, and, famously, her own perfume.

From this period forward, Saint Phalle also created a series of innovative works that reflect an ethos of collaboration and engagement with the politics of social space. Addressing subjects that ranged from women's rights to climate change and HIV/AIDS awareness, Saint Phalle was often at the vanguard in addressing the social and political issues of her time. Her illustrated book, *AIDS: You Can't Catch It Holding Hands* (1986), written in collaboration with Dr. Silvio Barandun, worked to destigmatize the disease and was translated into six languages.

Central to the exhibition is an examination of Saint Phalle's large-scale outdoor sculptures and architectural projects, including three houses built for Rainer von Diez between 1969 and 1971; *Queen Califia's Magical Circle*, a sculpture park in Escondido, CA; the monumental sculpture *Le Cyclop* in Milly-la-Forêt, France; *Golem*, a playground in Jerusalem; *Noah's Ark* sculpture park in Jerusalem; and *Le Dragon de Knokke*, a children's playhouse in Belgium.

Many of these ideas culminated in Saint Phalle's central life project, *Tarot Garden*, a massive architectural park outside Rome, Italy, which she began constructing in the late 1970s and continued to develop alongside key collaborators until her death. Opened to the public in 1998, the garden and its structures, which are based on the Major Arcana of the tarot deck, allow for moments of interaction and reflection that

underscore Saint Phalle's use of art to alter perception. The exhibition will include photographs and drawings of *Tarot Garden* as well as models that Saint Phalle created for its various structures.

The exhibition is organized by Ruba Katrib, Curator, MoMA PS1.

Niki de Saint Phalle was born in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France and raised in New York City. In 1948, at age 18, she married the writer Harry Matthews. They moved to Paris in 1952, and shortly thereafter Saint Phalle was hospitalized for a nervous breakdown and began painting as a therapeutic activity. In the late 1950s, Saint Phalle met artist Jean Tinguely, an important collaborator whom she married in 1971. She was the only female member of the Nouveau Réalisme group with Tinguely, Arman, Christo, and Yves Klein, among others. In 1961, the first solo exhibition of Saint Phalle's work was held at Galerie J, Paris. That same year, her work was included in the exhibition *The Art of Assemblage* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Saint Phalle was the subject of a retrospective at the Ulm Museum, Germany, and Centre Pompidou, Paris in 1980, and at the Kunsthalle Bonn in 1992. In 1994, she moved to California, where she lived until her death in 2002. Posthumously, her work has been the subject of major exhibitions at Tate Liverpool (2008); Grand Palais, Paris (2014); and the Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2018). Saint Phalle is represented in public collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; and Tate Gallery, London.

### **ABOUT MoMA PS1**

MoMA PS1 is devoted to today's most experimental, thought-provoking contemporary art. Founded in 1976 as the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, it was the first nonprofit arts center in the United States devoted solely to contemporary art and is recognized as a defining force in the alternative space movement. In 2000 The Museum of Modern Art and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center merged, creating the largest platform for contemporary art in the country and one of the largest in the world. Functioning as a living, active meeting place for the general public, MoMA PS1 is a catalyst for ideas, discourses, and new trends in contemporary art.

**Hours:** MoMA PS1 is open from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Thursday through Monday. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

**Admission:** \$10 suggested donation; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York City residents, MoMA members, and MoMA admission ticket holders within 14 days of visit. Free admission as a Gift to New Yorkers made possible by the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation.

**Directions:** MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan.

Traveling by subway, take the E, M, or 7 to Court Sq; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St-Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

**Information:** For general inquiries, call (718) 784-2084 or visit [momaps1.org](http://momaps1.org).

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