

FRANCESCA WOODMAN ON BEING AN ANGEL

MAY 11 - JULY 31, 2016



Francesca Woodman, *Self-deceit #1*, Rome, Italy, 1978 © George and Betty Woodman

- > Press opening
May 10, 10 am - 12 am
- > Public opening
May 10, 6 pm - 9 pm



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CURATOR

The exhibition has been curated and organized by Anna Tellgren, photography curator at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Sweden.

EXHIBITION TOUR

Francesca Woodman exhibition was first presented at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm (Sept - Dec 2015), at the FOAM in Amsterdam (Dec - March 2016). The european tour of the exhibition will end at the Moderna Museet in Malmö from November 5, 2016 to March 19, 2017.

PARTNERS

The exhibition is created in association with The Estate of Francesca Woodman in New York and Anna Tellgren, curator. The work of the artist is represented by Marian Woodman Gallery (New York, Paris, London).

MEDIA PARTNERS

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ON BEING AN ANGEL #1

Francesca Woodman, *On Being an Angel #1*, Providence, Rhode Island, 1977 © George and Betty Woodman

THE EXHIBITION

MAY 11 - JULY 31, 2016

The Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson is pleased to be presenting the dazzling work of American photographer Francesca Woodman (1958–1981). Rooted in constant exploration of herself and the medium, Woodman's insightful, deeply intimate approach turned her photography into a second skin. In her images she made almost exclusive use of her own body: It's a matter of convenience, she explained, I'm always available. Despite her premature passing at the age of twenty-two, Woodman left an impressive body of work. And while the pictures betray a host of influences ranging from Symbolism to Surrealism, her own talent was as prodigious as it was precocious.

Francesca Woodman has grown up in an artist family in Colorado and starts photographing at the age of thirteen, when she receives a camera from her father. From 1969, the family travels a lot in Italy and her parents acquire a house near Florence. The country, its culture and the language will be a true inspiration for the artist who will later travel back to Rome for a student exchange program. In 1975 and after attending a photography class at public school, she enters Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in Providence. At the end of her studies, Francesca Woodman moves to New York where she briefly photographed in color borrowing codes and preps from fashion photography. In 1980, the artist spent two months at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Later, during a stay in Rome, she purchases old Italian exercise books at the Maldoror bookshop. One of them, dedicated to geometry and specifically Euclid's theorem became the foundation of her first publication of which the hand-written title says a lot about her clear-sightedness: *Some Disordered Interior Geometries*. This pamphlet was released a few days before she commits suicide in January 19, 1981.

Francesca Woodman explores her own image although her inspiration drives her to navigate into the photographic technic and the act of writing. Her staging in desolated rooms, the ghostly body presence in the middle of spaces in decay, of houses on the threshold of demolition outreached the pure self-portrait genre. Preps and setups disclose assumed surrealist influences, glasses, mirrors, peeling paint, ripped wallpaper. The body is to be fiddled with, fragmented until mingling with its environment and raises issues about metamorphosis and genre. These insolent and disconcerting images of a rare intensity arouse the ephemeral, the elusiveness of time.

The artist photographs are part of international museum collections such as the Tate Modern in London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The first travelling exhibition of her works has been organized in 1986 and her main European exhibitions in the 90's. La Fondation Cartier and Les Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles have been the first and last institutions to present a retrospective of her work in France, in 1998.

The exhibition including a hundred prints, video and documents has been organized in collaboration with the Estate of Francesca Woodman in New York and Anna Tellgren, the curator. After the Moderna Museet in Stockholm and FOAM in Amsterdam, the European tour of the exhibition will end up at the Moderna Museet in Malmö.

The book *Francesca Woodman – Devenir un ange* is published in France by the Éditions Xavier Barral in conjunction with the exhibition. After a foreword by Agnès Sire, the Fondation HCB director, the publication proposes three essays written by Anna-Karin Palm, a Swedish novelist, Anna Tellgren curator and George Woodman, the artist father.

FRANCESCA WOODMAN

CHRONOLOGY

- 1958** Born in Denver, Colorado on April 3. Her mother Betty is a sculptor, her father George a painter and photographer, and her brother Charlie a video artist.
- 1959** The family spends a year in Florence, Italy.
- 1964** Attends public school in Boulder, Colorado.
- 1965** Her family returns to Florence and she attends second grade at public school in Florence.
- 1966** Back in Boulder, she attends public school.
- 1968** Her family spends the summer in Fiesole and her parents buy a farmhouse in Antella, outside Florence.
- 1969** Her family spends the first of many summers in Antella.
- 1972** Attends Abbot Academy in Andover, Massachusetts.
- 1973-74** Attends Phillips Academy in Andover.
- 1975** Francesca Woodman completes and graduates from high school in Boulder, Colorado.
- 1975** Attends Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island.
- 1976** March : first solo exhibition at the Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts.
- 1977** April : group exhibition, *Photographs and Portraiture*, Womanspace, Boulder, Colorado.
- 1977-78** Studies in Rome with Rhode Island School of Design Rome Honors Program.
- 1978** March : solo exhibition, Libreria Maldoror, Rome.
- June - July : group exhibition, Cinque Giovani Artisti, Galleria Ugo Ferranti, Rome.
- November : BFA exhibition, Swan Song, Woods-Gerry Gallery, Rhode Island School of Design.
- 1979** Moves to New York in January, then spends summer in Stanwood, Washington.
- 1980** April : group exhibition, *Pictorialism*, Daniel Wolf, Inc., New York.
- April-May, group exhibition, *Beyond Photography '80*, The Alternative Museum, New York.

FRANCESCA WOODMAN

CHRONOLOGIE

- 1980** Spends summer as a fellow at the MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire.
- 1981** In January the artist's book *Some Disordered Interior Geometries* is published.
Francesca Woodman commits suicide in New York on January 19.
- 1986 - 88** *Francesca Woodman, Photographic Work* at the Hunter College Art Gallery (New York), Wellesley College Museum (Wellesley), University of Colorado Fine Arts Gallery (Boulder) UCI Fine Arts Gallery, University of California (Irvine), Krannet Art Museum (Champaign, Illinois).
- 1992** Travelling exhibition in Europe *Francesca Woodman, Photographische Arbeiten* at Shedhalle, Zurich, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster; Kulturhuset, Stockholm; DAAD Galerie, Berlin; Galleri F15 Alby, Moss (Norvège).
- 1994** Solo exhibition at PaceWildensteinMacGill, New York.
- 1998** Solo exhibition at Guenzani Studio, Milan.

The Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain in Paris conceives an retrospective exhibition that travels to: Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles; Kunsthall, Rotterdam; Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbonne; The Photographers' Gallery, Londres; Centre Cultural Tecla Sala, L'Hospitalet, Barcelone; Galleria Carla Sozzani, Milan; Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin; PhotoEspana, Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid.
- 2000** Exhibition *Francesca Woodman: Providence, Roma, New York*, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome.
- 2004** Exhibition *Francesca Woodman: Photographs 1975-1980*, Marian Goodman Gallery, New York.
- 2007** *Poetry and Dream Collection Display: Francesca Woodman*, Tate Modern, Londres.
- 2011** Retrospective exhibition at SFMoMA, San Francisco, Californie and at the Guggenheim Museum, New York.
- 2015** Exhibition *I'm Trying My Hand at Fashion Photography*, Marian Goodman Gallery, New York.



Francesca Woodman, *From Space²*, Providence, Rhode Island, 1976 © George and Betty Woodman

What happened is that I played the piano for a long time. The pieces I played most were themes on variations, Scarlatti, etc. This occurs in my imagery.
F.W.

THE BOOK

ÉDITIONS XAVIER BARRAL



Francesca Woodman
Devenir un ange

Francesca Woodman: Devenir un ange

Éditions Xavier Barral

Foreword by Agnès Sire, essays by Anna Tellgren, curator, Anna-Karin Palm, Swedish novelist and George Woodman, the artist father.

232 pages

17 x 23.5 cm

105 illustrations

35 euros

ISBN: 978-2-36511-096-9

English version co-published by Moderna Museet and Koenig Books

EXTRACTS

« Throughout her career, the young American photographer Francesca Woodman revisited the theme of angels. In *On Being an Angel* (1976) she is seen bending backward as light falls on her white body. A black umbrella is perched in the distance. The following year she made a new version – an image with a darker mood in which she shows her face. Woodman developed the angel motif during a visit to Rome where she photographed herself in a large, abandoned building. In these images, she is wearing a white petticoat, but her chest is bare. White pieces of cloth in the background are like wings. She called these photographs *From Angel Series* (1977) and *From a Series on Angels* (1977). There are also a number of pictures simply called *Angels* (1977–78), and among them is one where again she is bending backward, but this time in front of a graffitied wall. These angels are but a few examples of Francesca Woodman's practice of staging her body and her face. »

Anna Tellgren

« That which is striking and inspiring in Woodman's work is rather its power and richness of expression. It elates me, that power – raging, cheeky, playful, tender, dreamy, melancholic, defiant, humorous, aching, investigative and lively. Woodman stages and narrates, she takes up space in a room. (Her pictures take place.) Also in time, her pictures are like shards of stories, they extend beyond the print, deep into the viewer. She aligns herself with the greater story that we call our cultural history through countless references to famous works, myths and motifs, which she presents in her own way. (Lilies, the swan, snakes/eels, slender birch trunks, angel's wings – motifs that are connected to this matter of being a woman, of wearing a female body, and that in Woodman's interpretations become something entirely new and surprising.) It's not simple; there is great pain in this examination. Being honest with yourself often hurts, but it's the only way if you take your task seriously. »

Anna-Karin Palm

EXHIBITION EVENTS

LES CONVERSATIONS

The Fondation HCB hosts a cycle of Conversations - conferences on photography - led by art critic Natacha Wolinski, with different figures in the photography world.

Discussion on Francesca Woodman, Discussion on oneself : with H  lene Giannecchini, photography historian and writer, and Yannick Haenel, writer.

Thursday, June 9, 6:30 pm

- > Free entrance subject to availability
- > Mandatory registration : contact@henricartierbresson.org

LES GRANDS ENTRETIENS

Les Grands Entretiens, led by Centre Pompidou photography curator Clément Chéroux, are part of the Foundation's longtime history. They propose an insight into the dynamics of modern and contemporary photography by interviewing artists, photographers, critics, historians, curators and publishers.

Susan Meiselas (in english)

Tuesday, June 21, 6:30 pm

- > Free entrance subject to availability
- > Mandatory registration : contact@henricartierbresson.org

FREE ADMISSION ON WEDNESDAYS!

Every Wednesday, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, free admission to exhibitions for everybody.

- > Free admission
- > On Wednesdays, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

SATURDAY GUIDED VISIT

Last Saturdays of every month, the Foundation offers a guided visit of the exhibition in French led by a art historian at 11:30 am.

- > Last saturday of every month, 11:30 am
- > Free admission with entrance ticket
- > Mandatory registration : anaelle.rod@henricartierbresson.org

AT MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

Marian Goodman Gallery Paris presents a selection of Francesca Woodman works from May 11 to June 4.
79 Rue du Temple - 75003 Paris

The cultural activities of the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson are supported by:

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but lately i find a sliver
 of mirror is simply to slice
 AN eye lid.

Francesca Woodman, *But lately I find a sliver of mirror is simply to slice an eyelid*, New York, 1979-80 © George and Betty Woodman

These things arrived from my grandmother's, they make
 me think about where I fit in this odd geometry of time.
 F.W.

PRESS IMAGES

REPRODUCTION CONDITIONS

Use of press visuals is authorized and exempted of rights during the exhibition at the Fondation HCB.
Visuals must not be cropped.

001

Francesca Woodman
Self-deceit #1, Rome, Italy
1978
© George and Betty Woodman



002

Francesca Woodman
Untitled, Rome, Italy
1977-1978
© George and Betty Woodman



003

Francesca Woodman
Untitled, Providence, Rhode Island
1975-76
© George and Betty Woodman



004

Francesca Woodman
Untitled, New York
1979
© George and Betty Woodman



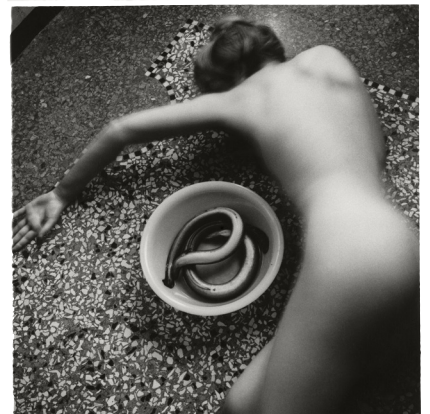
005

Francesca Woodman
From Space², Providence, Rhode Island
1976
© George and Betty Woodman



006

Francesca Woodman
From Eel series, Venice, Italy
1978
© George and Betty Woodman



007

Francesca Woodman
On Being an Angel #1, Providence, Rhode Island,
1977
© George and Betty Woodman



PRACTICAL INFOS

PRESS OPENING

We are pleased to invite you to a press coffee & croissants opening on Tuesday, May 10, 2016, from 10am to 12am. RSVP : Emilie Hanmer / T +33 1 56 80 27 03 / emilie.hanmer@henricartierbresson.org

ADDRESS

2, impasse Lebouis, 75014 Paris
01 56 80 27 00
www.henricartierbresson.org

Metro :
Ligne 13 : Gaîté
Ligne 6 : Edgar Quinet

OPENING TIMES

Tuesday to Sunday 1:00 pm - 6:30 pm
Wednesday (late-night opening) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Saturday 11:00 am - 6:45 pm

ADMISSION

Full-price 8 € / Reduced price 4 €
Free admission for members of the Fondation HCB
Free admission during late-night openings on Wednesdays (6:30 pm - 8:30 pm)

MEMBERS

Les Amis of the Foundation enjoy an illimited access to exhibitions for a year, invitations for exhibitions openings, a discount of 10% at the bookshop, priority to attend conferences at the Fondation HCB, private visits of exhibitions in attendance of curators.

Member : 100 euros
Student / Reduced price : 60 euros

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