

18+

AUGUST 15 –  
DECEMBER 15, 2019

NATURALLY

ЕСТЕСТВЕННО

ОБНАЖЕННЫЕ

NAKED



GEORGE CONDO  
JOHN CURRIN  
CARROLL DUNHAM  
TONY MATELLI  
BJARNE MELGAARD  
YASUMASA MORIMURA  
PETER SAUL

«There is no man on Earth who can give a final judgment on what the most beautiful shape of man might be.» – Albrecht Dürer

The study and artistic depiction of the human body has served throughout the history of art as a way of exploring human nature—both its physical and metaphysical dimensions. From the primitive forms of the Venus of Willendorf to the erotic ornamental paintings of Gustav Klimt, the nude has been central to how artists understand and express the human condition. Francisco Goya was among the first to reconsider the traditional distinction between nudity and nakedness as a form of artistic expression, as seen in *The Clothed Maja* and *The Nude Maja*. This tension was further developed by the Impressionists—Édouard Manet, Edgar Degas, and Gustave Courbet—whose works opened the door to new experiments with the depiction of the nude across the centuries.

Paul Cézanne, regarded as a founder of Post-Impressionism, used the term *couillard* to describe the provocative nature of his work, which infused classical subjects with subtle eroticism. By presenting the human body as a legitimate subject of art, Cézanne challenged convention and the widespread taboo surrounding nudity, asserting its raw and unidealized beauty. Soon, «nude art» moved beyond staged symbolism to evolve rapidly through the major movements of Symbolism, Expressionism, Cubism, and Surrealism.

“There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion.» – Francis Bacon

The depiction of the nude with erotic undertones has consistently faced the constraints of its time, often surpassing social conventions and artistic norms. The pinnacle of such realism remains Gustave Courbet's *L'Origine du monde* (1866), a painting that remains provocative more than a century later. Despite the ongoing liberalization of visual art, many twentieth-century works were still perceived as overly sentimental, overly descriptive, or overly idealized in their approach to sensuality.

Contemporary art, no longer bound by strict academic frameworks, places the human body at the center of conceptual inquiry. Today's artists frequently reject idealized images, choosing instead to emphasize distortion, exaggeration, and the imperfections inherent to real life. Amid rapid developments in technology, media, and social networks, the body has shifted from being a passive subject to an active tool of artistic expression. Through techniques ranging from ironic allusion to grotesque exaggeration, across painting, hyperrealism, and photography, artists engage with questions of beauty, identity, vulnerability, and corporeal presence in the contemporary cultural landscape.

The artists featured in this exhibition—**Carroll Dunham, John Currin, George Condo, Tony Matelli, Bjarne Melgaard, Yasumasa Morimura, and Peter Saul**—offer timely reinterpretations of the naked body through diverse genres and visual strategies. In dialogue with artistic heritage and the radical experiments of the past, they reveal the expressive richness and complexity of the human form within today's cultural context.

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