



# The Shape of Us

OPERA GALLERY



## FOREWORD

Opera Gallery Geneva presents *The Shape of Us*, an exhibition dedicated to the enduring fascination with the human figure. Bringing together over 20 works by modern, post-war, contemporary, and emerging artists, it offers a range of perspectives that reflect its depth and complexity.

The depiction of the human figure has been central to art history, serving as a means of storytelling, identity, and expression. From prehistoric figurines to Renaissance realism and modern abstraction, artists have used the human form to explore beauty, power, spirituality, and emotion. This enduring focus reflects humanity's quest to understand itself and its place in the world. In prehistoric and ancient art, figures symbolized fertility, power, or divine order, as seen in the *Venus of Willendorf* or Egyptian frescoes. The Renaissance revived anatomical accuracy and humanism, with artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo celebrating physical beauty and intellect. From Baroque to Modern art, human depiction evolved from the intense emotional realism of Caravaggio to the bold abstraction of Picasso. In contemporary art, it explores identity, social issues, and digital transformations. Across time, the human form remains a powerful lens through which societies express themselves.

This exhibition continues that tradition, highlighting artists' enduring fascination with depicting people. Drawn from across artistic periods, it reveals the infinite possibilities



*Venus of Willendorf*, circa 25,000 BP, oolitic limestone, 4.4 in, Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria © NHMWien



Nebamun Hunting Fowl in the Mars, circa 1350 BC, tempera on plaster, British Museum, London

for reimagining the figure through abstraction, distortion, simplification, or idealization. These representations reflect not only evolving artistic expressions but also shifting cultural and philosophical perspectives.

Representations of the human form carry an intrinsic complexity. They may celebrate their subjects, reflect the truths of their existence, or capture fleeting moments that evoke introspection on the passage of time. By freezing expressions, emotions, or stages of life, these depictions encourage viewers to reflect on both the constancy and evolution of the human experience. Each invites a deeper exploration of layered meanings, blending harmony, boldness, and the nuances of human expression.

*The Shape of Us* assembles works by renowned artists, including Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Jean Dubuffet, Andy Warhol, Georg Baselitz, A.R. Penck, George Condo,

Fernando Botero, Alex Katz, Manolo Valdés, Julian Opie, and others, alongside pieces by up-and-coming talents such as Andy Denzler and Gustavo Nazareno. Each artist contributes a singular interpretation of the human figure and face, revealing the subject's adaptability and its ability to provoke thought across eras and styles.

Henri Matisse's nude drawing epitomizes simplicity and elegance. Pablo Picasso's portrait explores identity and emotion through dynamic transformation. Jean Dubuffet merges organic and abstract elements, while Andy Warhol's *Reversal Marilyn* reinterprets fame and identity with bold contrasts.

Georg Baselitz's inverted portrait exudes raw energy, challenging traditional views. A.R. Penck's stick figures symbolize communication, and George Condo's cubist nude dissects identity through fragmentation. Fernando Botero's voluminous forms embrace physicality and presence.

Alex Katz distills the figure to timeless elegance, while Julian Opie's streamlined silhouettes evoke modernity. Manolo Valdés reinterprets classical portraiture with rich texture and dimensionality. Andy Denzler's blurred portraits capture memory's ephemeral nature, and Gustavo Nazareno infuses contemporary vision with cultural and spiritual depth.

*The Shape of Us* celebrates the infinite possibilities of interpreting the human figure, showcasing its role as a timeless muse for artists. This collection invites viewers to reflect on the universal themes it conveys—identity, emotion, and humanity—while connecting us across cultures, eras, and artistic visions.

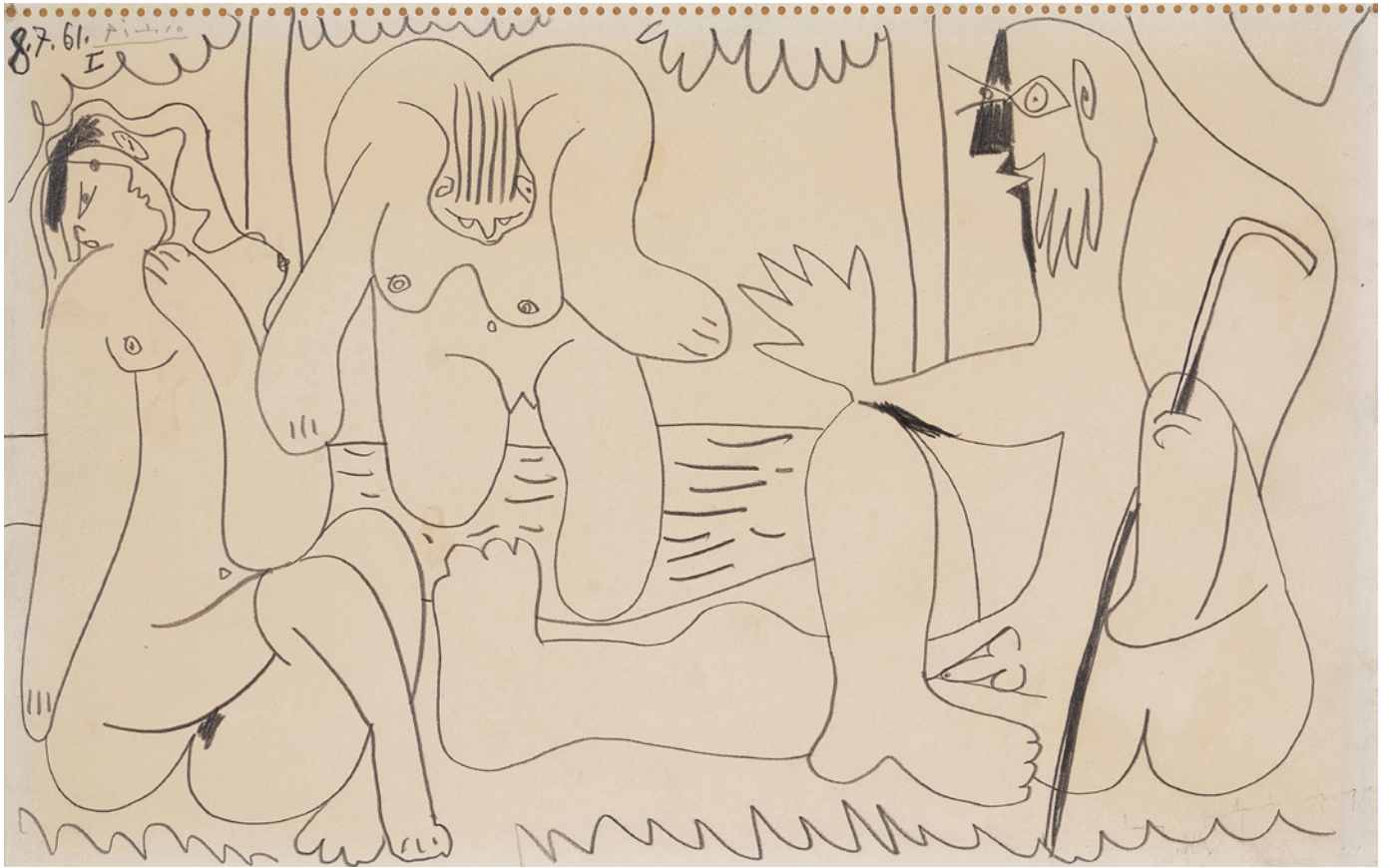


Studies for the Libyan Sibyl, Michelangelo Buonarroti, circa 1510-1511, red chalk with small accents of white chalk on the left shoulder of the figure in the main study on paper, The Metropolitan Museum, New York

Gilles DYAN  
Founder & Chairman  
Opera Gallery Group

Jordan LAHMI  
Director  
Opera Gallery Geneva





Pablo Picasso  
(1881 – 1973)

*Les Déjeuners*  
1961

Pencil on paper

Dated and signed '8.7.61. I Picasso' on the upper left

27 x 37 cm | 10.6 x 14.6 in





Pablo Picasso

(1881 – 1973)

*Trois hommes et femme nus*

1967

Coloured crayon and wash on paper

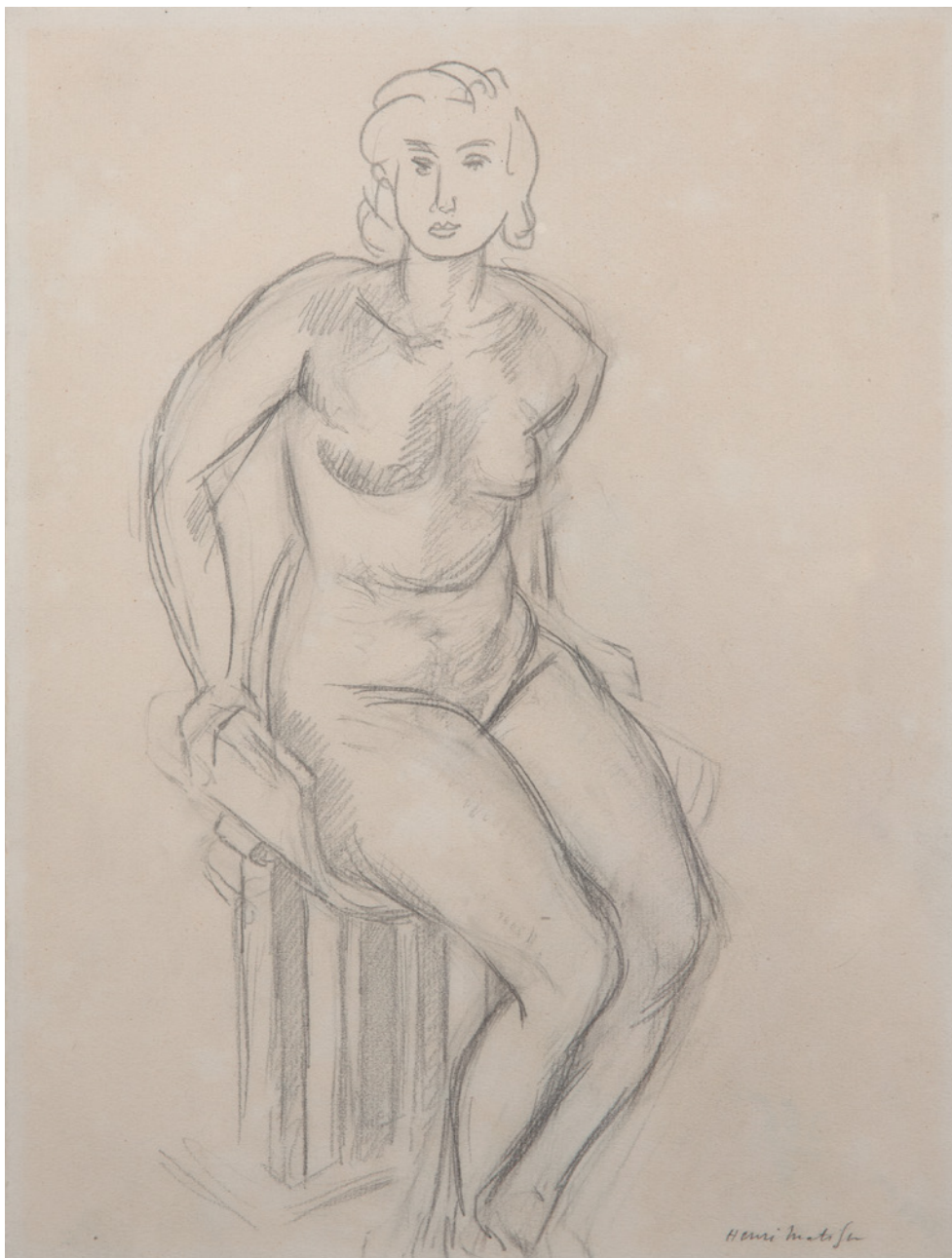
Signed, dated and numbered 'Picasso / 1.9.67. V'  
on the lower right

56.5 x 75 cm | 22.2 x 29.5 in









Henri Matisse  
(1869 – 1954)

*Nu de plein pied assis sur une colonne*  
1940

Pencil on paper

Signed 'Henri Matisse' on the lower right

31.6 x 23.8 cm | 12.4 x 9.4 in





Fernand Léger  
(1881 – 1955)

*Partie de campagne*  
Circa 1952-1953

Brush and ink and gouache on paper  
Signed with the initials 'F.L.' on the lower right  
64.1 x 48.3 cm | 25.2 x 19 in





Jean Dubuffet  
(1901 – 1985)

*Paysage avec villa et personnage*  
1974

Vinyl on canvas

Signed with the initials and dated 'J.D. 74' on the lower center; signed again,  
titled and dated "'Paysage avec villa et personnage' J. Dubuffet 74' on the reverse

195 x 130 cm | 76.8 x 51.2 in









Karel Appel  
(1921 – 2006)

*Untitled*  
1957

Oil on canvas

Signed 'C K. appel' on the lower left

79.6 x 149.6 cm | 31.3 x 58.9 in



Antonio Saura  
(1930 – 1998)

*Dame 11/2*  
1994

Gouache, Indian ink and graphite on paper  
Signed 'SAURA' on the lower right, dated '11/2' on the lower center  
41 x 31 cm | 16.1 x 12.2 in





A.R. Penck  
(1939 – 2017)

*Spielen und bauen*  
2002

Acrylic on canvas

Signed 'ar. penck' on the lower left; titled 'SPIELEN UND  
BAUEN' on the stretcher

140 x 179 cm | 55.1 x 70.5 in









Georg Baselitz  
(b.1938)

*Clyfford Still*  
2018

Oil on canvas

Signed, titled and dated '23, V 2018' on the reverse

165 x 100 cm | 65 x 39.4 in





George Condo  
(b. 1957)

*Large Reclining Nude*  
2013

Ink and gesso on paper, in two parts

Signed and dated '2013' on the upper left; signed again, dated and titled '2013 / Large Reclining / Nude' on a paper sheet stuck on the reverse

153 x 194.3 cm | 60.2 x 76.5 in









Andy Warhol  
(1928 – 1987)

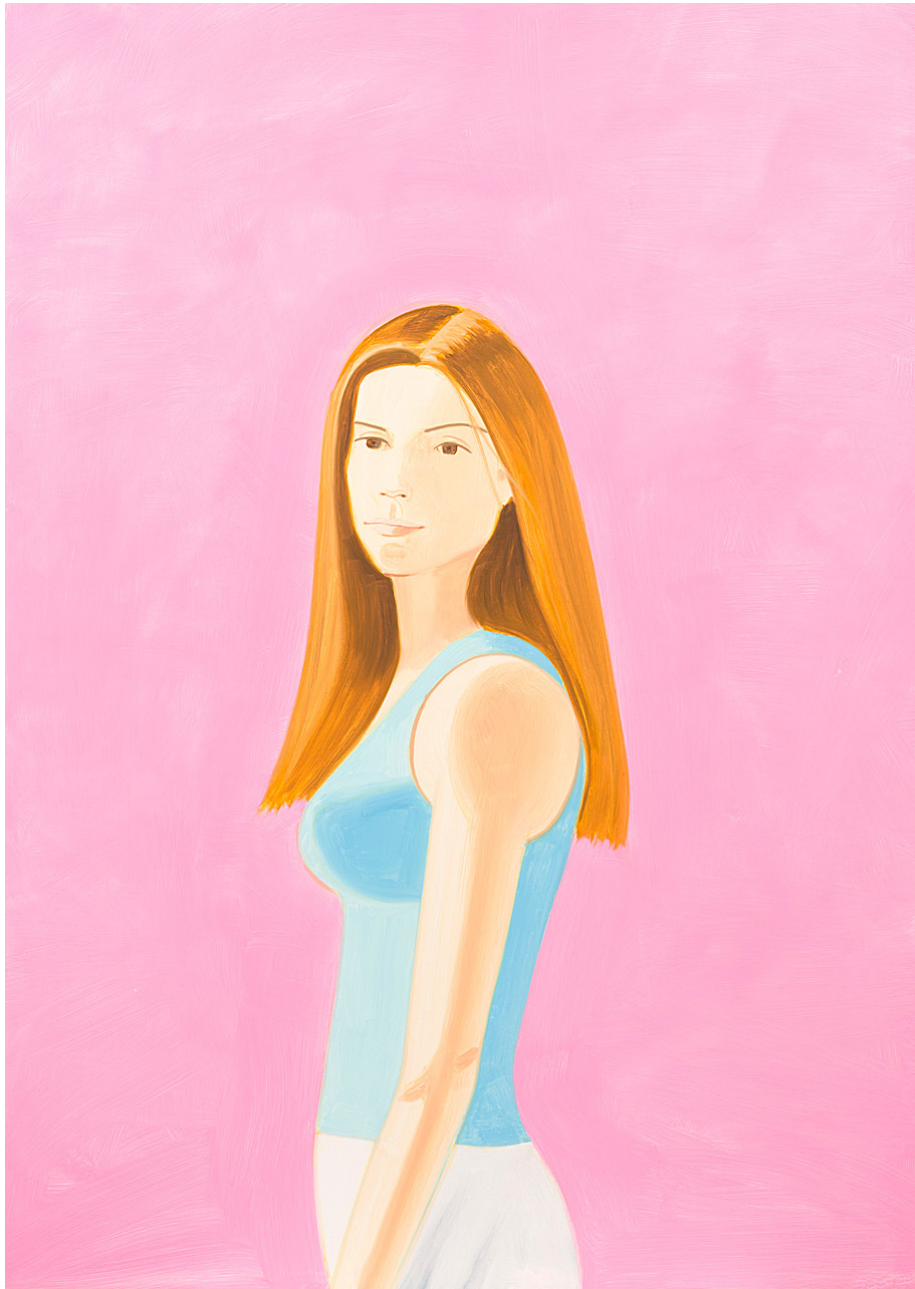
*Four Multicolored Marylins (Reversal Series)*  
1979-1986

Acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas  
Stamped twice with the artist's signature 'Andy Warhol' on the overlap  
101.6 x 101.6 cm | 40 x 40 in









Alex Katz  
(b. 1927)

*Kristen*  
2005

Oil on linen  
Signed and dated 'Alex Katz 05' on the overlap  
213.4 x 152.4 cm | 84 x 60 in





Niki de Saint Phalle  
(1930 – 2002)

*Nana Dawn (jaune)*  
1995

Painted resin

Edition: AP III/III (Edition of 5)

Signed and dated 'Niki de Saint Phalle 95' on the back of the left leg; signed again 'Niki', foundry stamp and numbered 'E.A III/III' on the right foot

144 x 114 x 57.5 cm | 56.7 x 44.9 x 22.6 in





Keith Haring  
(1958 – 1990)

*Totem (Concrete)*  
1989

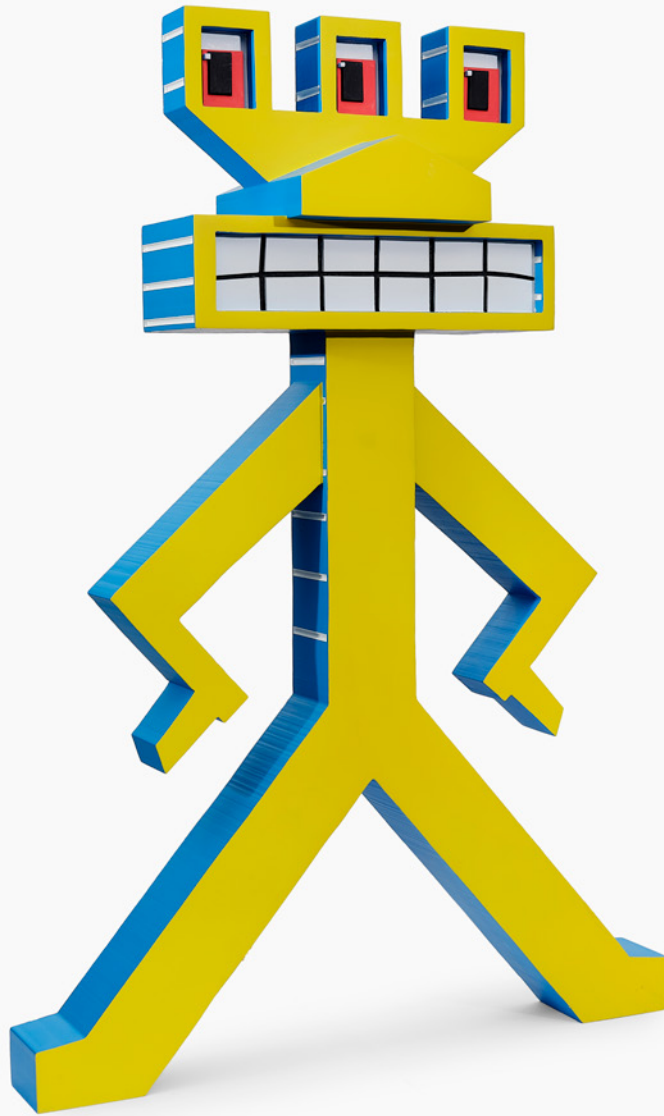
Wall relief cast in cement with various binders and reinforced

Edition: AP (edition of 25)

Titled, numbered, dated and signed on a plaque 'Totem A.P.  
(Ed. 25) / 1989 / Keith Haring' on the reverse

182.9 x 54.1 x 5.1 cm | 72 x 21.3 x 2 in





Kenny Scharf  
(b. 1958)

*GRR GUY*  
1986-2023

Painted aluminium

Edition: 6/6

Signed, titled, dated and numbered 'Kenny Scharf /  
GRR GUY / 1986/2023 / ED 6/6' on the underside

60 x 40.3 x 12.2 cm | 23.6 x 15.9 x 4.8 in





Julian Opie  
(b. 1958)

*Dance 1 Synced 1.*  
2022

Vinyl on aluminum stretcher

Unique piece

Signed and numbered on a label on the reverse

230 x 381 x 3.5 cm | 90.6 x 150 x 1.4 in





Fernando Botero  
(1932 – 2023)

*Picnic*  
2009

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated 'Botero 09' on the lower right

98.4 x 129.2 cm | 38.7 x 50.9 in









Fernando Botero  
(1932 – 2023)

*Maternity*  
2005

Bronze

Edition: 5/6

Signed and numbered 'Botero 5/6' on the base

57 x 30 x 24 cm | 22.4 x 11.8 x 9.4 in





Fernando Botero  
(1932 – 2023)

*Man and Woman*  
2022

Watercolour and pencil on paper  
Signed and dated 'Botero 22' on the lower right  
30.9 x 40.6 cm | 12.2 x 16 in



Manolo Valdés  
(b. 1942)

*Reina Mariana*  
2009

Bronze

Edition: 2/8

110 x 75 x 46 cm | 43.3 x 29.5 x 18.1 in





Manolo Valdés

(b. 1942)

*Desnudo sobre fonda rosa*

2011

Oil, thread and burlap collage on linen

Signed and titled 'Valdez Desnudo sobre fonda rosa'  
on the reverse

170.5 x 230 cm | 67.1 x 90.6 in



Jean Charles Blais  
(b. 1956)

*Untitled*  
1980

Mixed media on torn poster  
Signed 'Blais' on the reverse  
198 x 174 cm | 78 x 68.5 in





Jean Charles Blais  
(b. 1956)

*Rouge sang*  
1983

Mixed media on torn poster  
Signed 'Blais', dated and titled on the reverse  
138 x 82.5 cm | 54.3 x 32.5 in



Andy Denzler  
(b. 1965)

*In the Dark Motel*  
2025

Oil on canvas  
120 x 140 cm | 47.2 x 55.1 in





Gustavo Nazareno  
(b. 1994)

*Osain*  
2024

Oil on canvas  
40 x 30 cm | 15.7 x 11.8 in



Gustavo Nazareno  
(b. 1994)

*Bará #411*  
2019-2024

Charcoal on Hahnemühle cotton paper 190 g/m<sup>2</sup>  
Signed and dated 'G-2019/2024.' on the reverse  
66 x 50 cm | 26 x 19.7 in





Xevi Solà  
(b. 1969)

*Backstage 3*  
2024

Acrylic on canvas

Titled, dated and signed "'BACKSTAGE III3 / 2024 / xevi solà' on the reverse

162 x 130 cm | 63.8 x 51.2 in

This catalogue was created for the exhibition 'The Shape of Us'  
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Andy Warhol, *Four Multicolored Marilyns (Reversal Series)*, 1979-1986

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