

Phenomenal Women

They're not muses, they're not models, they're not nudes – they're some of the best artists in the world. Here, in no particular order, are thirty women who should be on everyone's lips, chosen by Latest Art. These are just a few of the thousands of women artists who deserve recognition

BARBARA HEPWORTH (1903-1975)

Hepworth born in 1903, the daughter of a civil engineer, developed a passion for art and studied at the Royal College of Art. After studying sculpture in Florence, her work increased in both scale and popularity and her pieces were in high demand. She was appointed a trustee of the Tate Gallery in 1965.

Although diagnosed with cancer, she died tragically in a studio fire in 1975, which now serves as a public museum in St.Ives, Cornwall. Her work is sleek and sophisticated; curved from metal and stone into perfection. Her sculptures are big and bold but have a peaceful feel about them.

Sophie Thompson a student studying art from Dorothy Stringer High School, Brighton.

SUSAN SEDDON BOULET (1941-1997)

Susan Seddon Boulet was my artistic heroine during my teens, and largely influenced my earlier creative endeavours. Seddon Boulet grew up on a farm in Brazil, where she developed a close relationship with nature and also enjoyed a rich fantasy life. It is the fusion of these passions, which inform her distinctive images. Working primarily oil pastels, inks and pencils, she would build up layers, creating ethereal, dream-like and mesmerising work. Seddon Boulet moved to the US in 1967, where she met her husband Lawrence Boulet. He became the catalyst for her commercial success, by supporting her creativity with his sharp sense of business. Seddon Boulet sadly died of cancer at the age of fifty-five.

Pearl Bates, Artist

TAMARA DE LEMPICKA (1898-1980)

Unfortunately, the classical Italianate lines of the buildings of the Regency Period, which I adore, simply didn't find their way into the art of the period. The paintings of Turner and Constable are feebly faint, fussy and foggy. The paintings of Tamara de Lempicka, on the other hand, feature the coolest cars, colours and clothes. The Regency Period was about ceremony and royal opulence. The Art Deco Period was about independence. Tamara captured this in her paintings with moody yet bright characters and screaming cars. The moodiest character in her paintings was the Marquis d'Affitto who now stares at me eerily from my dining room wall! The world, including its architecture, was changing and Tamara captured the feel perfectly.

Robert Stuart Nemeth

Conservationist & Architectural Journalist

PRUNELLA CLOUGH (1919-1999)

English abstract London artist and teacher. She spent a winter drawing for the war office in devastated Holland in 1945. She started painting the life of Suffolk fishermen and lorry drivers and machinery's effect on people, in the spirit of Mass Observation. Here from 1980 is a textured oil of "plastic bag". As a painter she saw material in the ephemeral and the ruinous; rich potential for an observant and unpretentious look at our environment and its detail, reinterpreted as symbols of gates and thresholds on a shallow space. Kitchen sink abstraction. A slightly harrowing focus on the minutiae of man's scraping and bodging of our

built world. Also a discreet and generous person. She won the Kettles Yard prize in 1999 just before her death.

Andrew Gathercole is an artist who specialises in fresco painting and delivers lime-plaster fresco workshops and still life classes. www.gardneronline.co.uk/gathercole.html

MARTHA COOPER (b.1940's)

Since the nineteen seventies one photographer, Martha Cooper has been instrumental in photographing and documenting Hip Hop culture. Cooper's forethought succeeded in spotting the opportunity to capture a previously unnoticed movement and thrust it into the public eye. She changed the perceptions of what graffiti art and Hip Hop is all about, and opened people's eyes to the urban environment around them. Through her work with graffiti artists and her subsequent book, the legendary Subway Art published in 1984, Cooper is renowned as one of the founders of the Graffiti Art world, which is going from strength to strength thanks to people like Cooper's ingenuity.

Her work and her unbreakable determination have always been, and still remain a huge inspiration to me.

Bex Chapman, Rarekind Gallery, Brighton

www.rarekind.co.uk



LOUISE BOURGEOIS (b.1911)

I came across Louise Bourgeois when the Tate Modern opened in 2001. Three enormous towers, rendered in rough-hewn steel, dominated the vast Turbine Hall of the gallery like giant, Tolkienesque creatures. Each standing at about thirty feet tall, these amazing constructions, titled

'I Do', 'I Undo' and 'I Redo', featured spiralling stair-cases, which visitors were invited to climb. The experience stays with me as one of the most fun and exciting interactions with a piece of art I've ever had. When I discovered that the towers had been created by a woman – and a ninety year old one at that – I was blown away. Bourgeois was born in Paris in 1911, and currently resides and works in New York City.

Pearl Bates, artist

