

Works in the Exhibition

Published by Proconiar Workshop, NY
All works by Louise Bourgeois are
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Fugue, (pages 1-19), 2003
Suite of 19 screenprints with lithography in
portfolio
Edition 8 of 9
Each print: 12 x 16 in.; 30.4 x 40.6 cm.
Linen covered portfolio: 1 ¼ x 13 x 17 ¾ in.;
3.1 x 33 x 45 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
11 ¾ x 9 in.; 29.8 x 22.8 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
12 x 9 ¾ in.; 30.4 x 24.7 cm.



Untitled, 2002 (above)
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
12 ¼ x 9 ½ in.; 31.1 x 24.1 cm.



Untitled, 2002 (above)
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
10 ⅝ x 8 ¼ in.; 26.9 x 20.9 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
8 ½ x 11 in.; 21.5 x 27.9 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
10 ½ x 13 in.; 26.6 x 33 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
10 ¼ x 11 ¾ in.; 26 x 29.8 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
13 ¾ x 11 ¼ in.; 34.9 x 28.5 cm.

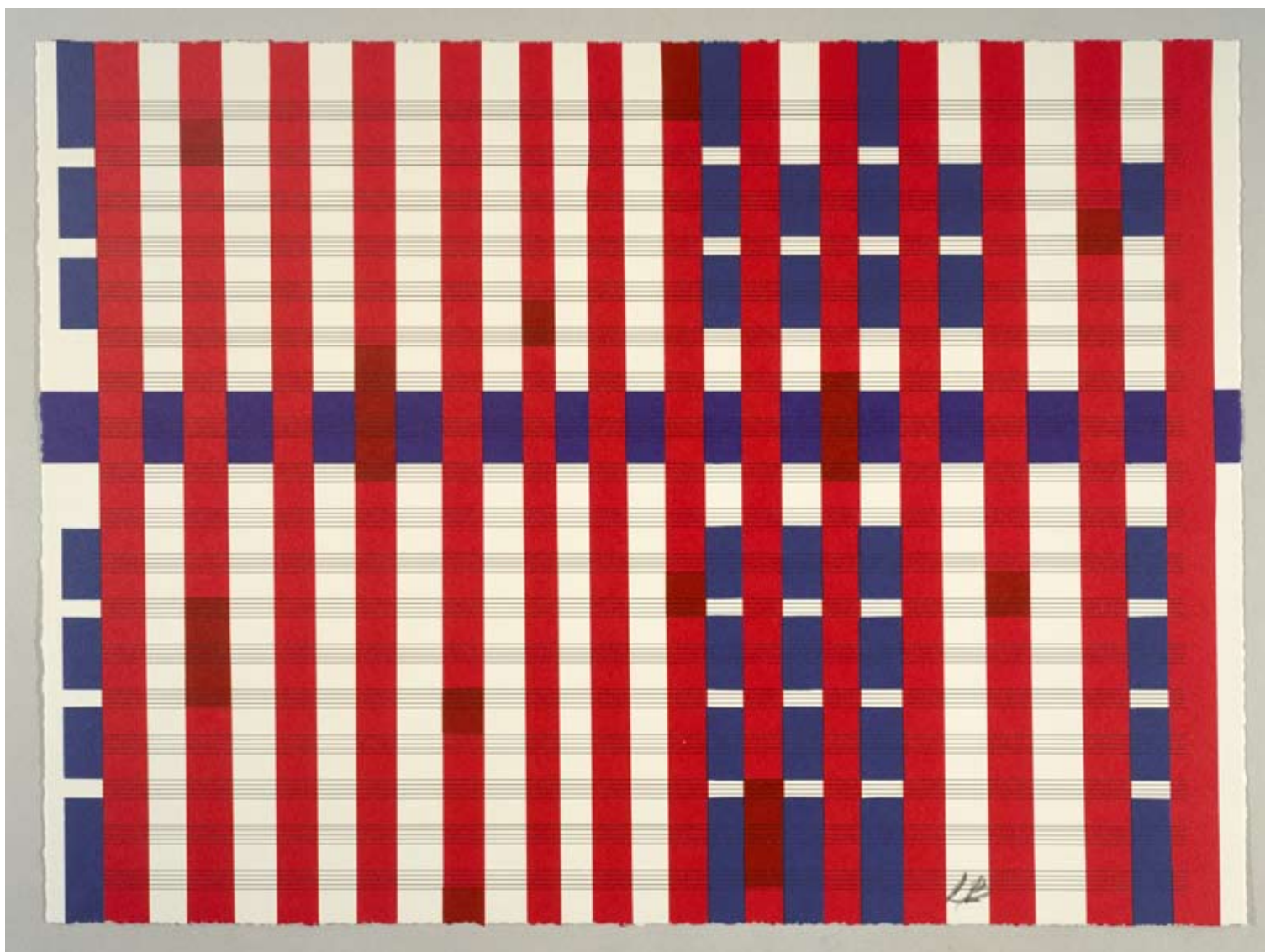
Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
11 x 8 ¾ in.; 27.9 x 22.2 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
8 ¾ x 11 in.; 22.2 x 27.9 cm.



Untitled, 2002 (above)
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
12 x 9 in.; 30.4 x 22.8 cm.

Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of
25, no. 3/3
12 ½ x 10 in.; 31.7 x 25.4 cm.

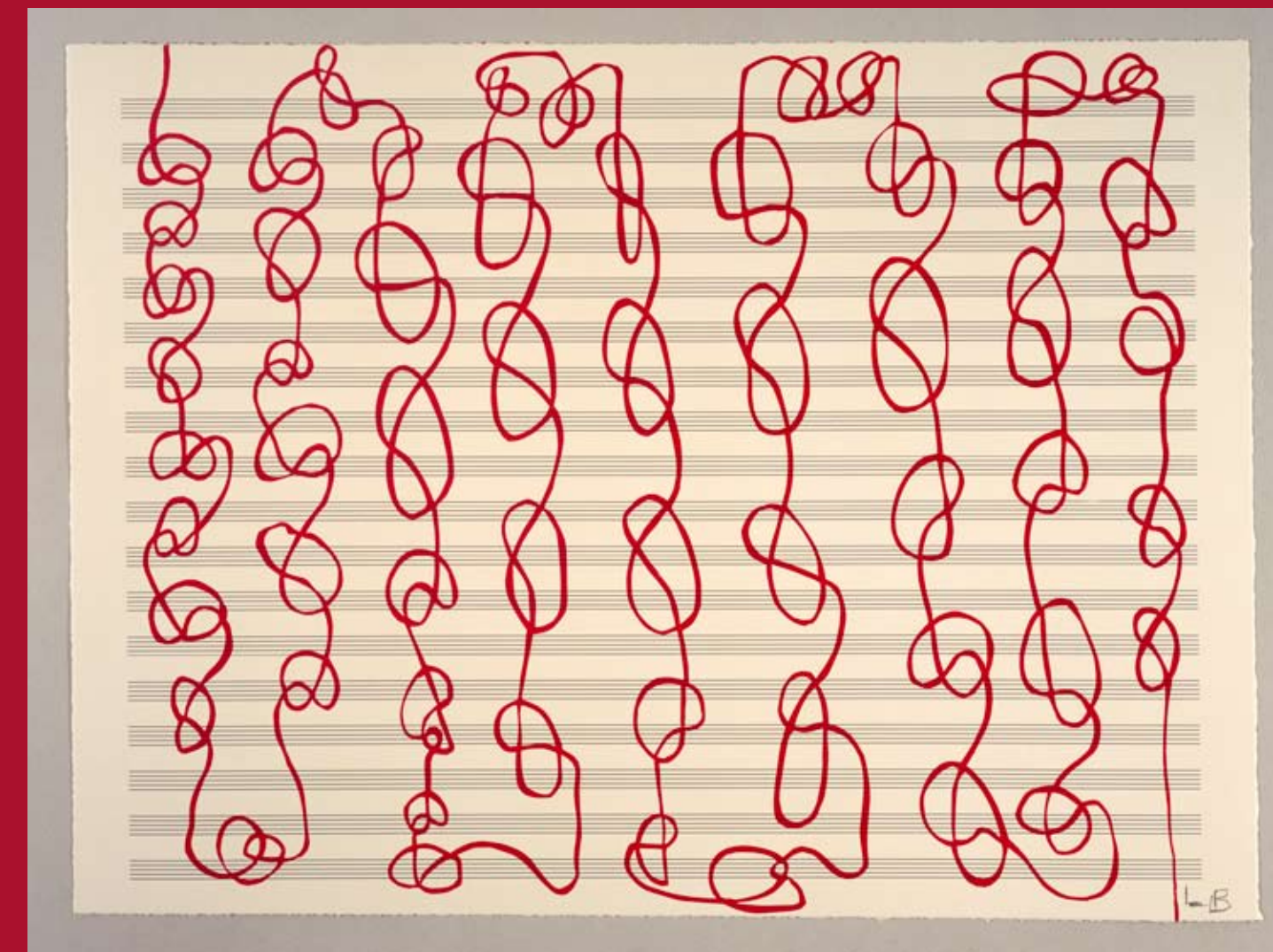


Fugue, (no. 18), 2003
Suite of 19 screenprints with lithography in portfolio
Edition 8 of 9, each print: 12 x 16 in.; 30.4 x 40.6 cm.

All works and words of Louise Bourgeois are © Louise Bourgeois

LOUISE BOURGEOIS: Recent Projects

July 26 – September 30, 2007



Fugue, (no. 18), 2003, suite of 19 screenprints with lithography in portfolio, edition 8 of 9, each print: 12 x 16 in.; 30.4 x 40.6 cm
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Haggerty Museum of Art



Marquette University

Louise Bourgeois: Recent Projects

“All my work . . . all my subjects, have found their inspiration in my childhood. My childhood has never lost its magic, it has never lost its mystery, and it has never lost its drama.”
– Louise Bourgeois

Louise Bourgeois was born in France in 1911. She has been creating art for over eight decades and continues to produce new series and sculpture in a variety of media. Her talent for drawing was recognized early by those around her. Her mother, Joséphine Valerie Fauriaux, owned a gallery known as Maison Fauriaux, then Maison Louis Bourgeois, which repaired and sold historic tapestries. As a young child, Bourgeois was employed to help reconstruct the missing portions of the Beauvais, Gobelins and Aubusson tapestries being refurbished as part of the family business. This early experience has had a profound impact on her. As noted by Frances Morris, senior curator of the Tate Modern, “This business of “retrayage”, remaking or reweaving, was a skill at the centre of her mother’s industry and one that underpins much of Bourgeois’ own art, both in her insistent revisiting of themes and her recycling of materials.”¹

Among her recent work are two series: *Fugue*, a portfolio of nineteen screenprints with lithography based on pen and ink drawings created in 2003, and a suite of screenprints on vintage fabric from 2002. Proconiar Workshop, a New York-based studio specializing in the production of contemporary prints and works on paper, was the publisher of both. The printmaking process, in each case, involved using a silk screen as a stencil, then inking it to leave a positive impression. Recognizable motifs can be seen in both of these recent projects, yet they have never been shown together. The Haggerty Museum of Art’s exhibition *Louise Bourgeois, Recent Projects* provides that opportunity.

Fugue was produced, with a colophon signed by the artist, in an edition of only nine with one artist’s proof.² Edition number 8 of 9 is the version presented in this exhibition. The original drawings behind *Fugue* were first done in a music composition book. The artist has been drawing in notebooks and on a variety



Fugue (nos. 2 and 14), 2003
Suite of 19 screenprints with lithography in portfolio
Edition 8 of 9
Each print: 12 x 16 in.; 30.4 x 40.6 cm.
Linen covered portfolio: 1 ¼ x 13 x 17 ¼ in.; 3.1 x 33 x 45 cm.
Published by Proconiar Workshop, NY © Louise Bourgeois

of surfaces throughout her career. She has used graph, grid, lined and even burnt paper, as well as linen. For *Fugue*, Bourgeois started with sheets of music paper. These lithographed sheets of paper were printed by Chris Robinson at the Proconiar Workshop. The stave paper also relates to the title of the boxed portfolio, which was first suggested by the artist’s son Jean-Louis after seeing the final prints.

Fugue is a musical term. It describes a contrapuntal or polyphonic composition, but can also refer to the appearance of an idea and its reappearance in an alternate form. This is suggested by the word’s Latin root, *fuga*, which has two main derivatives: *fugere*, ‘to flee’ and *fugare*, ‘to chase’. In a fugue, a main theme is introduced followed by variations in several voices, or parts. After that the principal idea is reintroduced. In Bourgeois’ *Fugue*, certain aspects, such as the regularity of the staves – there are eighteen per sheet – and the choice of cream-colored Stonehenge paper, are consistent throughout the portfolio. Others vary, such as the imagery and the number of colors along with their density. The artist’s use of weighted lines, shapes – circles, spirals and ovals – and squares with rectangles create compositional contrasts.

French words dot the series. The word “toi,” a singular familiar form of you, appears in red lowercase letters in the center of print no. 2. In French, *toi* is used to address family, or those one knows well. Perhaps the artist’s intention is to invite the viewer to become part of the work, or simply have us recognize the importance of an audience. The uppercase masculine and feminine forms of the French word for them, “EUX” and “ELLES” are both the image and the subject of prints 4 and 6 of the portfolio. Unlike the word *toi*, which is not gender specific, *EUX* and *ELLES* introduce the idea of two groups: one composed of men, or men and women, and the other comprised solely of women. The artist’s interposing of male and female parts, or “voices,” in *Fugue* parallels the high and low range of notes in a musical score. The words in *Fugue* are thus cognitive as well as visual.

Each print of *Fugue*, like an instrumental passage or musical interlude, is unique and independent, yet is an integral part of the larger work. The combination of graphic, geometric



Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of 25, no. 3/3
11 ¼ x 9 in.; 29.8 x 22.8 cm.
Published by Proconiar Workshop, NY

and abstract imagery with words create a variety of associations in *Fugue*. The first and third prints are simple linear compositions of blue, or red with the equivalent accent color. By placing these lines vertically, and therefore perpendicular to the staves of the paper, the artist creates a rhythmic grid. This grid becomes knotted in number 7 and then dissolves into a series of small and large circles, a leitmotif within the series, in nos. 8, 9 and 10. The sense of movement becomes even more dramatic in the prints that feature spiraling lines, namely nos. 11 and 12. The bold concentric ovals of nos. 13 and 14 reverberate loudly, like the brass section of an orchestra. A new idea is introduced with the squares and rectangles found on the remaining pages.

Strong connections can also be seen between the untitled works in the Haggerty exhibition and the artist’s oeuvre. While Bourgeois has been working with textiles throughout her life, she has been reflecting on earlier experiences and working more consistently with fabric in recent decades. In 1980, Bourgeois moved her studio to a former garment factory in Brooklyn. In the process of buying the building, the artist also acquired its contents including all of the sewing machines, shelves and cutting tables that were once part of the earlier industry housed there. In 1992, a parable entitled *She Lost It*, written by the artist in 1947, was the basis for a performance piece while also used to create a limited edition scarf published by The Fabric Workshop, Philadelphia.³

The twelve untitled screenprints in this exhibition are part of a suite of twenty-five limited edition prints on vintage fabric. They are based on earlier drawings and a more recent series of works entitled *The Woven Drawings* created from the artist’s old clothes. The blood-red, silkscreened prints are both vertical and horizontal in format and hand stitched to matte board. The artist’s initials LB are embroidered in red thread in the lower right hand corner of each print. While created in 2002, and shown on a few occasions including an exhibition at Galerie Xavier Hufkens,

Brussels in 2003, they have not yet been presented at a museum. This exhibition also marks the first museum showing with the *Fugue* series.

The untitled pieces were created in editions of three with one artist’s proof. Some of the earliest ones were produced in editions of four and five. All the prints are based on the simple abstract line drawings that the artist was working on at the time. Each square of fabric was cut from an old sheet used by one of her three sons – Michel Olivier (1936-1990), Jean-Louis (b. 1940) and Alain Matthew Clement (b. 1941). The artist’s incorporation of her household linens gives the original bed sheets new significance while also evoking the past. The history of an object, its efficacy along with potential for use and reuse, and the relationships of the artist to her sons over time are all intimated in the work. As the mother of three boys, Bourgeois was the sole woman in a predominately male household. The artist’s choice to print only in red on personal bedding is especially significant, given her interest in gender and her propensity to draw from experience.

Bourgeois’ untitled screenprints from 2002 in the exhibition reveal the artist’s profound sensibility for simple color, line, shape and form. Many of the prints have central compositions that feature curving weighted lines printed in two different reds, one slightly darker than the other. Two have patterns, or lines, that extend to the edge of the fabric. While round and curvilinear forms predominate, loops, curls and zig-zags can also be found among the prints. Like the *Fugue*, they merge drawing and printmaking while referencing the aspects of the artist’s life and work. The series also spawned works such as *Ode à l’Oubli (Ode to Forgetfulness)*, 2004, a 36-page cloth book, and *Lullaby*, 2006, a suite of twenty-five silkscreen-on-fabric prints.

Throughout her career, Bourgeois has worked in all media, often translating ideas and images from one material to another. While drawing has been a constant, Bourgeois’ drawings, which she described as “ideas and little complaints,” have not been solely plans, or sketches, for larger projects. At the same time, these independent compositions have also inspired new series such as *Fugue* and the untitled screenprints from 2002 shown



Untitled, 2002
Screenprint on vintage fabric from a suite of 25, no. 3/3
11 x 8 ¼ in.; 27.9 x 22.2 cm.
Published by Proconiar Workshop, NY

here. The revisiting of themes, visual ideas and subject matter has helped to create congruency in Bourgeois’ oeuvre as reflected in this exhibition.

Annemarie Sawkins, Ph.D.
Associate Curator

Acknowledgments

The Haggerty Museum is pleased to offer the exhibition *Louise Bourgeois, Recent Projects*. The exhibition features recent prints made by Bourgeois in collaboration with the Proconiar Workshop in New York. The Haggerty permanent collection includes a number of prints by modern American and European artists of note, many of which were made in the middle stage of the artists’ work. Bourgeois’s exhibition provides the viewer the opportunity to encounter the vibrant and engaging work of an artist who continues to explore artistic expression through printmaking late in her career.

The exhibition at the Haggerty Museum was made possible thanks to several individuals. Annemarie Sawkins, associate curator, introduced the works to the Haggerty after viewing it at the Bridge Art Fair in Chicago this past April and curated the exhibition. We are grateful to David Proconiar of Proconiar Workshop, New York, who showed Louise Bourgeois’ work in Chicago and then generously agreed to make it available to the Haggerty Museum. We thank the artist Louise Bourgeois for fully endorsing this project. She along with Wendy Williams, managing director of the Louise Bourgeois Studio, played an invaluable role in providing both information and images for the exhibition. Thanks also goes to Suzy Weisman, Research and Outreach Librarian, Kristina Starkus, Acquisitions Librarian and Jon Lamb of the Instructional Media Center at Marquette University for their assistance.

The exhibition and this gallery guide were made possible, in part, with funding provided by the Martha and Ray Smith, Jr. Endowment Fund and the Wisconsin Arts Board.

Lee Coppennoll
Acting Director

¹ Frances Morris, “Louise Bourgeois: Stitches in Time at the Irish Museum of Modern Art” *NY Arts Magazine*, January/February 2004. The exhibition, *Louise Bourgeois: Stitches in Time* ran from November 26, 2003 to February 22, 2004 at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), Dublin and was co-curated by Frances Morris and Brenda McParland, senior curator and head of exhibitions at IMMA.

² For the first article to appear on Bourgeois *Fugue* series see Peter Nesdett, ed. “Louise Bourgeois, *Fugue*” *Art on Paper*, (New York, NY), vol. 8, no. 1 (Sept.-Oct. 2003): 40-42.

³ The parable and two photographs of the May 12, 1992 performance at the Fabric Workshop appear in Marie –Laure Bernadac and Hans-Ulrich Obrist eds. *Louise Bourgeois: Destruction of the Father: Reconstruction of the Father: Writings and Interviews 1923-1997*, MIT Press, 1998, p. 50.