

LUXEMBOURG & DAYAN

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Double act: Daniel Libeskind takes on modern masters of abstract sculpture

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Architect Daniel Libeskind has created an installation at New York gallery Luxembourg & Dayan to complement 20th-century abstract sculptures. *Photography: Andrew Romer. Courtesy of Luxembourg & Dayan*

If there's one thing abstract art is not, it's straightforward. Packed with meaning, often beguilingly simple in design, the style has the power to simultaneously inspire and bewilder.

Some may think a series of seemingly arbitrary curves and lines are empty or over-simplified. But Daniella Luxembourg, art dealer and one half of New York gallery Luxembourg & Dayan, would argue the devil doesn't always lie in the

details — but sometimes in the lack thereof. ‘Abstract art was once one of the most radical and thought-provoking movements,’ says Luxembourg.

This month, she joined forces with friend and famed architect [Daniel Libeskind](#) (of Manchester’s Imperial War Museum) to release ‘Figures Toward Abstraction: Sculpture 1910 – 1940’ at Luxembourg’s gallery.



Nu assis bras autour de la ambe droite, by Henri Matisse, conceived 1918, cast 1930. Photography: Andrew Romer. Courtesy of Luxembourg & Dayan

Inspired by a letter artist Alberto Giacometti wrote to Henri Matisse in 1947, which explained his unintentional decision to create abstract sculptures, the exhibition breathes life into an ongoing conversation between Luxembourg and Libeskind about abstraction in art, architecture, history, and life.

‘I think abstraction at the beginning of the century has to do with the pure essence of sculpture,’ Luxembourg explains. ‘You didn’t need the image to create the movement. You could make an abstract movement without putting details into where are the legs, or where is the head.’

Though Luxembourg credits Giacometti and Matisse as pillars of the exhibition, ‘Figures Toward Abstraction’ features an array of artists like Julio González, Henri Laurens, Jacques Lipchitz, and Jean Tinguely. Additionally, Rudolf Belling’s groundbreaking *Dreiklang* (1919) is on display for the first time in the US.

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The show's levels of abstraction range from Lauren's tangible *Femme accouchée* (1927) to Lauren's hard-to-decipher cubism and Gonzalez's interpretable bronze works. In total, the exhibition features 13 sculptures surrounded by an installation designed by Libeskind, who's clean, minimalist aesthetic lets the sculptures do all the talking.