

# LOUISE NEVELSON MRS. N'S PALACE

FROM 24.01.26 TO 31.08.26  
GALLERY 2



## PRESS RELEASE

November 4rd, 2025

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OPENING HOURS  
Every day except Tuesday and May 1st

01.11 > 31.03  
MON. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. | 10:00 – 18:00

01.04 > 31.10  
MON. | WED. | THU. | 10:00 – 18:00 / FRI. | SAT. | SUN. | 10:00 – 19:00



## LOUISE NEVELSON. MRS. N'S PALACE

From January 24 to August 31, 2026 – Gallery 2

Curator: Anne Horvath, Head of the Exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou-Metz

Fifty years after her last exhibition in France (1974) and thirty years after her death, the Centre Pompidou-Metz presents Louise Nevelson. Mrs. N's Palace, the first retrospective of this magnitude in Europe devoted to the artist Louise Nevelson (Kiev, 1899 – New York, 1988). This exhibition celebrates an artist whose legacy continues to resonate within the contemporary art scene as well as the world of fashion. Nevelson transformed twentieth-century sculpture into a total and immersive experience.

Sometimes linked to Cubism, Constructivism, or the Dadaist and Surrealist practices of collage, her work extends far beyond these affiliations. If Jean Arp referred to Schwitters as his "imaginary grandfather," Nevelson's own artistic world encompasses a history of the arts where dance and performance – central to this exhibition – play a decisive role.

This dimension took shape in exhibitions conceived as true "atmospheres" or "environments", radically expanding the field of sculpture, echoing Allan Kaprow's theories on happenings and Rosalind Krauss's notion of the "expanded field".

In 1958, at Grand Central Moderns in New York, Nevelson staged her first large-scale environment, *Moon Garden + One*, which included her first “wall”, *Sky Cathedral* – a vertical homage to her adopted city. Every detail was deliberate; anything that disrupted the installation was excluded. She paid particular attention to lighting, for the first time enveloping some of her works in blue light, heightening shadows and disorienting the viewer in the darkness. The viewer’s entire body was invited to engage in the scene, experiencing a reimagined theatricality.

This early experiment – when the very term “installation” was still in its infancy – was followed by *Dawn’s Wedding Feast*, created for the *Sixteen Americans* exhibition at the MoMA in 1959, and *The Royal Tides* at Martha Jackson Gallery in 1961. These installations are being reactivated in unprecedented form for this exhibition, highlighting how profoundly Nevelson’s environmental thinking embodied the culmination of her interdisciplinary explorations.

For twenty years, Nevelson studied eurythmy with Ellen Kearn, a form of bodily expression aimed at discovering vital energy and creative force. Combined with her fascination for Martha Graham in the 1930s, this study transformed her life and work, starting with her early terracotta sculptures depicting articulated dancing bodies in motion. Her discovery of Mexico and Guatemala in 1950 infused her work with a monumental dimension, blending geometry and mysticism. Under these dual influences, her environments became increasingly colossal, enveloping, totemic, and sacred. Nevelson created spaces to explore rather than sculptures to confront, carving out a singular path within the American artistic landscape of the 1960s.



Louise Nevelson, *An American Tribute to the British People*, 1960- 1964

Gilded wood, 311 × 442.4 × 92 cm

London, Tate, T00796

Donated by the artist, 1965

© Estate of Louise Nevelson. Licensed by Artist Rights Society (ARS), NY/ADAGP, Paris

Photo: © Tate, Londres, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Tate Photography

In the “walls” that brought her renown, Nevelson elevated the discarded debris of New York into vertical sculptures, unified under monochrome veils – most often black, but sometimes white or gold. A world of forms emerged, shaped by an artist who described herself as an “architect of shadow and light.” These recycled fragments, transformed into abstract columns, can also be seen as reconstructed dwellings – alternative refuges or palaces – later evolving into the « Dream Houses » series in the early 1970s, echoing the rise of feminist thought.

The fascination her “walls” inspire likely arises from the aura of mystery they radiate. Each environment is charged with a narrative Nevelson composed around mythic figures and landscapes – motifs already present in her early prints – opening a world that exists only in moments of suspended perception, where time folds between dusk and dawn, between the ruins of the old and the promise of the new.

For her final environment, completed in 1977 and titled *Mrs. N's Palace*, Nevelson created what was perhaps her own legend. “Mrs. N” was the nickname given to her by her Manhattan neighbours. After witnessing the dismantling of several of her immersive installations – conceived as dissociable wholes works – Nevelson devoted thirteen years to the realisation of this monumental piece, now permanently housed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, which received it as a gift from the artist. A veritable life-sized shrine, *Mrs. N's Palace* seeks to engulf the visitor completely. Through this total experience, it crystallises Nevelson’s relationship with space. By borrowing its title, the Centre Pompidou-Metz exhibition pays tribute to the artist’s majestic creative vision.

The first French-language monograph dedicated to Louise Nevelson accompanies the exhibition. It retraces her artistic journey through the lens of performance history and her pivotal role in the emergence of installation art. The publication includes an introductory essay by curator Anne Horvath and contributions from Marie Darrieussecq, Hélène Marquié, Laurie Wilson, Elyse Speaks, Maria Nevelson (the artist’s granddaughter), and Laureen Picaut.

A complementary programme will animate the exhibition, celebrating the figures who inspired Nevelson, particularly from the world of dance. This will offer opportunities to reinterpret the work of iconic modern choreographers – from Mary Wigman, Loïe Fuller, and Martha Graham to her friend and collaborator Merce Cunningham – within the context of contemporary performance.

**The Centre Pompidou-Metz invites visitors to rediscover Louise Nevelson through the largest exhibition ever organised in Europe. Visionary in scope, the exhibition immerses visitors in her monumental environments and sculptural assemblages that transform space into an experience of total immersion.**

**The key stages of her creation are highlighted: her early prints and terracotta sculptures, her major New York installations from the late 1950s (reactivated for the occasion), her iconic “walls” of recycled urban fragments painted in black, white, or gold, as well as more intimate works inspired by dance, Mexico, and spirituality.**

***Mrs. N's Palace* unfolds like the enigmatic palace of its title – conceived as a self-portrait of an artist who profoundly shaped the history of sculpture. Through this exhibition, one perceives how her work paved the way for installation art and how, through her image – her turbans, her jewellery, and her theatrical presence – she became an iconic figure whose boldness continues to inspire both the worlds of fashion and art.**

**WITH THE SUPPORT OF**

**PACE**

**The exhibition will be presented at the Soulages Museum in Rodez from October 17 2026 to March 7 2027 in an adapted version.**

**musée soulages**  
epcc **RODEZ**



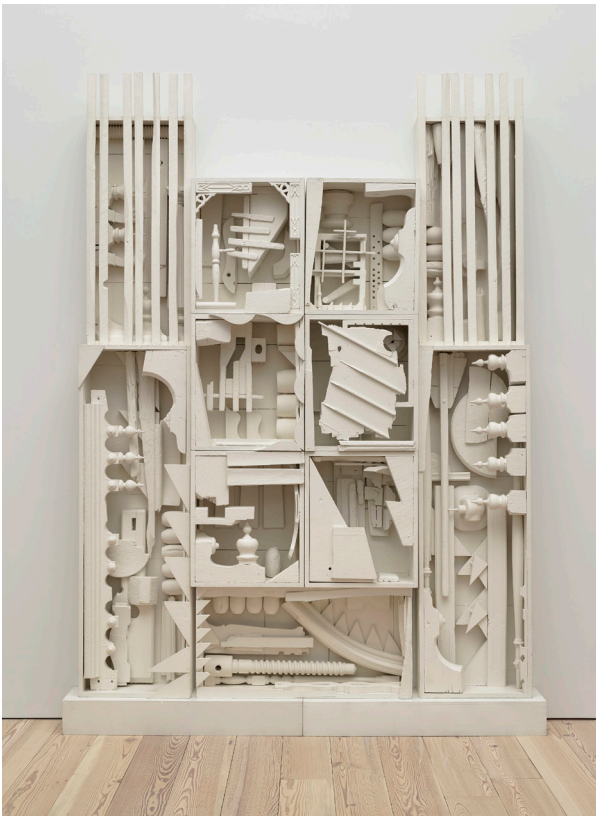
PRESS IMAGES AVAILABLE



Louise Nevelson, *Moving-Static-Moving Figure*, circa 1945  
Painted terracotta, brass tube, and steel tube, 64.6 × 38.6 × 29.2 cm  
New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, 69.159.2a-c  
Donated by the artist  
© Estate of Louise Nevelson. Licensed by Artist Rights Society (ARS), NY/ADAGP, Paris  
Photo: © Digital image Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala



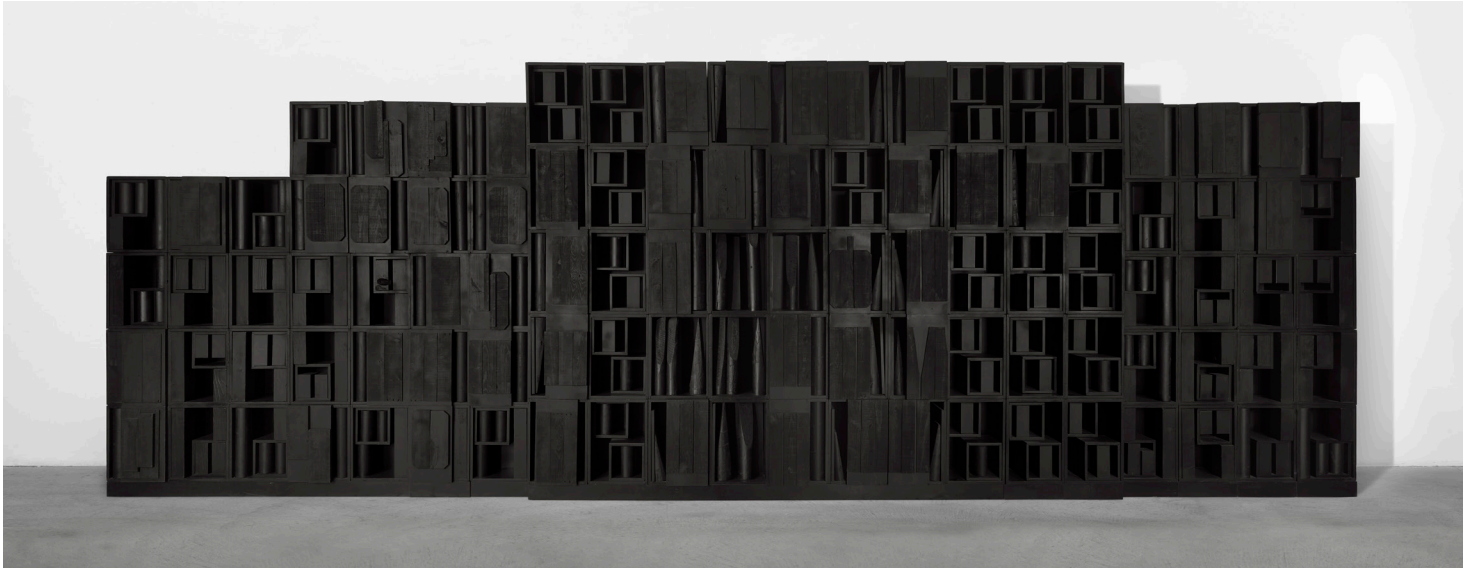
Louise Nevelson, *Black Majesty*, 1955  
Painted wood, 71.1 × 97.2 × 41 cm  
New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, 56.11  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Mildwoff, through the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors, Inc.  
© Estate of Louise Nevelson. Licensed by Artist Rights Society (ARS), NY/ADAGP, Paris  
Photo: © Digital image Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala



Louise Nevelson, *Dawn's Wedding Chapel II*, 1959  
Painted wood, 294.3 × 212.1 × 26.7 cm  
New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, 70.68a-m  
Purchased with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.  
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Marvin W. Schwartz, Louise Nevelson with a Sculpted Phone Booth  
in Her Spring Street Studio, Manhattan, New York, 1972  
New York, Whitney Museum of American Art  
© Estate of Louise Nevelson. Licensed by Artist Rights Society (ARS), NY/ADAGP, Paris  
Photo: © Digital image Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala



Louise Nevelson, *Homage to the Universe*, 1968  
 Painted wood, 284.5 × 862.5 × 30.5 cm  
 Private collection, courtesy Giò Marconi, Milan  
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Louise Nevelson, *Artillery Landscape*, circa 1985  
 Painted wood, 144.8 × 386.1 × 271.8 cm  
 Courtesy Pace Gallery, New York  
 © Estate of Louise Nevelson. Licensed by Artist Rights Society (ARS), NY/ADAGP, Paris  
 Photo: © Courtesy Pace Gallery



Louise Nevelson, *Tropical Garden II*, 1957  
 Painted wood, 229 × 291 × 31 cm  
 Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, AM 1976-1002  
 Acquired by the State, 1968  
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 Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Jacqueline Hyde