



The Fabric Workshop
and Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lorna Simpson: Spilling, Breaking Waves
February 14 – August 9, 2020



Philadelphia, PA, February 10, 2020 — The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) is pleased to present ***Lorna Simpson: Spilling, Breaking Waves***, on view **February 14 through August 9, 2020**. The exhibition features *Standing in the water*, a pivotal room-sized installation created during the artist's 1994 residency at FWM, as well as subsequent related works.

Already an accomplished photographer exploring the medium's ability to engender subjective experience, Simpson came to her residency seeking poetic ways to imply the presence of the body. With expertise from the FWM Studio, Simpson experimented with felt as a substrate, attracted to the tactile surface and its attendant notions of touch, comfort, and stillness. The result of those investigations, *Standing in the water*, is a multi-sensory, meditative installation comprised of three felt panels more than 14 feet long and 4 feet wide printed with pictures of waves, glass panels etched with the images of shoes, an audio track of water sounds, and two videos intermingling water in motion with footage of a glass pitcher and found texts.

To demonstrate the continued impact of Simpson's pivotal material tests while at FWM, the show presents four additional works selected from the artist's "Public Sex" series: *The Rock* (1995), *The Car* (1995), *The Fire Escape* (1995), and *The Park* (1995). These large-format

pieces feature imagery of urban landscapes and empty interiors on multiple felt panels accompanied by printed texts that read as interior monologues.

Taken together, these works mark an important turn in the artist's creative process and illustrate how the use of felt contributed to a newfound sense of interiority and introspection.

About the Artist

Lorna Simpson (b. 1960 in Brooklyn, NY) received her BFA in Photography from the School of Visual Arts, New York, and her MFA from the University of California, San Diego. She first became well-known in the mid-1980s for her large-scale photograph-and-text works that confronted and challenged conventional views of gender, identity, culture, history and memory. In the mid-1990s, she began creating large multi-panel photographs printed on felt that depict the sites of public – yet unseen – sexual encounters. Over time she turned to film and video works in which individuals engage in enigmatic conversations that seem to address the mysteries of both identity and desire. Using the camera as a catalyst, Simpson constructs work comprising text and image, parts to wholes, which comment on the documentary nature of found or staged images.

Simpson's works have been exhibited at and are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Haus der Kunst; Munich; and The Fabric Workshop and Museum, amongst others. Important international exhibitions have included the Hugo Boss Prize at the Guggenheim Museum, New York; Documenta XI in Kassel, Germany; and the 56th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy. Lorna Simpson is represented by Hauser & Wirth.

About the Fabric Workshop and Museum

Founded in 1977, FWM both makes and presents, encouraging artists to experiment with new materials and new media in a veritable living laboratory. Through its renowned Artist-in-Residence (AIR) Program, FWM collaborates with artists to expand their practices, while documenting the course of artistic production from inspiration to realization. FWM presents large scale exhibitions, installations, and performative work, utilizing innovative fiber and other media. Today, FWM is the only US institution devoted to creating work in textile and new media in collaboration with some of the most significant artists of our time.

Major support of FWM is provided by the Marion Boulton "Kippy" Stroud Foundation. FWM receives state art funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. Additional support is provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, The Philadelphia Cultural Fund, Agnes Gund, and the Board of Directors and Members of The Fabric Workshop and Museum.

IMAGE: Lorna Simpson, in collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum, *Standing in the water*, (detail), 1994. Pigment on wool felt, etched glass, video monitors, and audio track. Three panels: 1 1/2 x 172 x 52 inches (3.81 x 436.88 x 132.08 cm) each. Photo credit: Aaron Iglar.

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