

JOANNA ALLEN (English, b. 1969)

Joanna Allen is an English sculptor working primarily in bronze, marble, clay, and plaster. Her artistic training combines academic and atelier approaches, having studied under several renowned figurative sculptors.



Allen began consistently drawing and working with clay in 2008, instinctively engaging with life models and cultivating a deep, intuitive connection between self and material - an element that has remained central to her practice.

Midway through her training, she pursued formal study at the Barcelona Academy of Art and later the Florence Academy of Art, where she deepened her understanding of classical techniques through intensive life drawing and sculpture. It was during this period that she began to incorporate formal principles such as contour design, proportion, gesture, and rhythm into her work.

“That period of complete immersion transformed my relationship with art into something profoundly deep and permanent,” says Allen.

As her practice evolved, Allen developed a distinctive sculptural language that merges figuration with abstraction, exploring themes of psychology, behaviour, and the interplay between conscious and unconscious states. Her experimentation with colour and light adds a multidimensional quality to her sculptures—highly polished bronzes reflect their surroundings, allowing light and shadow to animate the

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forms, while gradient and translucent patinas reveal the innate character of the bronze beneath. This material sensitivity continues in her drawings and paintings, marked by scratchy, shaky ink lines on paper, and thick, expressive gestures of oil on raw canvas.

In May 2025, Allen presented her debut solo exhibition, *Subconscious Playground*, at Bowman Sculpture in London's Mayfair, a major milestone in her career that was met with critical and commercial success. The exhibition, running from May 1 to May 30, showcased a broad range of her work from figurative to fully abstract pieces, and attracted strong interest from collectors and institutions throughout its run. According to *Forbes*, Allen's work "gives body to some of our most complex emotions, from safety to self-love," and the subject matter on view was described as "layered, psychologically complex" — praise that positioned her as one of the most exciting sculptural voices to emerge in recent years.

Her London audience responded enthusiastically, with many works selling during the show and securing her reputation on the international art stage. *Forbes* emphasised Allen's rare originality, noting her ability to articulate profound psychological terrain through beautifully crafted forms that resonate with diverse audiences.

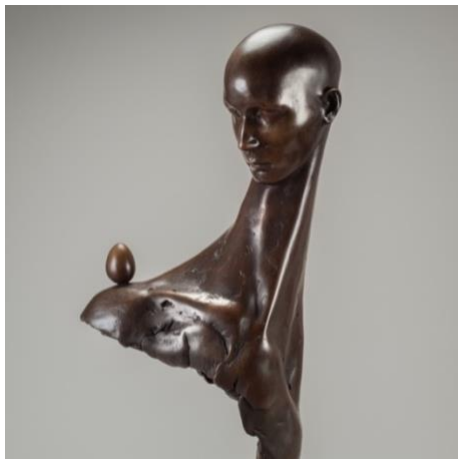


Horizon

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“When I weave subconscious exploration into material expression—whether through drawing, painting, or sculpture—it unearths something essential about the complexity of human experience beyond the rational mind.”

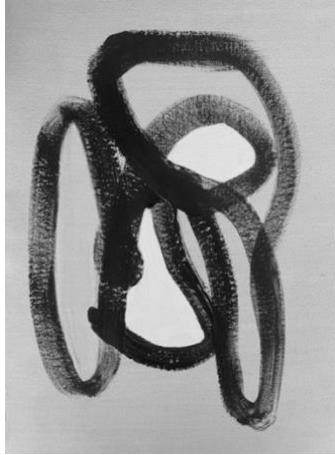
Joanna Allen’s signature sculptural language incorporates recurring motifs such as distorted forms, floating ovoid or egg-like heads, and dissecting planes. While her abstract works move beyond literal representation, they retain a figurative presence, reminding us that we are ultimately confronting the complexities of the human psyche. The play between fluid, buoyant forms and harsher, jagged elements underscores the duality within the self. The materials she employs - patinated bronze, bold ink lines, and layered strokes of paint - enhance the dreamlike and surrealist quality of her practice, evoking both ancient and futuristic aesthetics.



Confliction

A key element of Allen’s process is her use of mindful meditation to access the subconscious. Through blindfolded, one-stroke drawing sessions, she develops what she calls psychomorph-shapes that often take on personal or archetypal significance. Whether these forms function as a Rorschach-like reflection of the mind or emerge from deeper psychological imprints remains an open question. Allen’s practice engages with the legacy of Surrealism, a movement historically dedicated to uncovering the hidden depths of human thought, and questions notions of normalcy, identity, and the inner self.

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Psychomorphic Painting

Allen's work is held in private and public collections across the UK, Europe, and the USA. Her sculptures have been recognised by the Portrait Sculptors Society, the Royal Society of British Artists, and the European Museum of Modern Art, where her 2020 bronze bust *Chronic* was acquired for the permanent collection. Represented by Bowman Sculpture, Joanna Allen's debut solo exhibition in May 2025 signalled a decisive step onto the international stage, underscoring her position as a rising force in contemporary sculpture.