Sarah Pucci



AIR DE PARIS

Sarah Pucci

1902 (Everett, Massachusets) - 1996 (Everett, Massachusets)

A zealous repetition of daily practice has produced the bejeweled objects of Sarah Pucci, mother of Dorothy Iannone. These intense, compacted works, were made throughout the second half of the 20th century and regularly sent to her daughter who was living in Europe, as tokens of devotion. They scintillate an aura of idealistic beauty on steroids that grows into a delicate grotesque. As her daughter Dorothy Iannone writes, «Sarah Pucci's work is purely an expression of love, untouched by hopes or fears. In the spirit of ideal democracy, it takes the most diverse elements and creates unity. Love was the inspiration which moved the simple balls of her earliest work to become part of more complex structures and even to give way to new forms, as the embodiment of her love, which she had created, grew and blossomed.»

Because of the interest in her work shown by several artists over the years, Sarah Pucci, who almost never left home, has had, nonetheless, exhibitions in many remarkable places in Europes. She exhibited at Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2013), Kunsthalle Wien, Austria (2006), Galerie Andy Jillian, Zurich (2001), Museum of Modern Art, Arnhem, Holland (1998), Living Art Museum, Reykjavik (1988), Neue Galerie Stadt Aachen, Germany (1980).

A Heart That Sees You, 1990s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam, locket, support
7 x 33 x 30 cm
Unique
© photo Marc Domage

AIR DE PARIS





group show **Se souvenir du présent, esprits de l'assemblage**, Le 19 CRAC - Centre régional d'art contemporain, Montbéliard, France, 2021 © photo A. Pichon



Cool Goblet, 1970s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam, metal cup
18 x 23 cm
Unique
© photo DR



My Inspiration, 1980s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam
16 x 30 cm
Unique
© photo DR



group show **Fuck You Be Nice**, Air de Paris, Romainville, 28.11.2020 - 19.12.2020
© photo Marc Domage



From the series : Sky Rockets, 1970s
mixed technique
ø 19 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



From the series : Sky Rockets, 1970s
mixed technique
17 x 14 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



group show **Coeurs - Du romantisme dans l'art contemporain**, Musée de la Vie romantique, Paris, 2020.
© photo Fabrice Gaboriau



Made with Love for Dorothy, Villa Alicius du Facteur Cheval, Hauterives, 2020
© photo Origins Studio



Untitled, 1970s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam, metal cup ; 22 x 14 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



Made with Love for Dorothy, Villa Alicius du Facteur Cheval, Hauterives, 2020
© photo Origins Studio



Crowning Glory, 1980s
mixed technique
31 x 21 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



group show **Les vitamines du bonheur**, Centre d'art La Tôlerie, Clermont-Ferrand, 2019.
© photo Matthieu Dussol



Twilight, 1970s
mixed technique
25 x 30 x 15 cm
Unique
© photo Marc Domage



Beauty Crown, 1970s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam
10 x 27 cm
Unique © photo DR



Coming, 1970s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam
15 x 34 cm
Unique
© photo Marc Domage



group show **La réalité viscérale**, Les Bains-Douches, Alençon
May 5 - July 8, 2018
© photo Melissa Boucher



A Cheerful Heart, 1990s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam
9 x 32 x 32 cm
Unique © photo DR



group show **Champs Elysées**, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2013
© photo André Morin



Shadow Box, 1970s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam
21 x 22 cm
Unique
© photo Marc Domage



group show Si l'art de la parure m'était conté..., Château du Rivau, Lémeré, France, 2013



The art of Sarah Pucci (1959 - 1993), cur. Yves Brochard, Random Gallery, Paris, 2007



Untitled, 1980s
red velvet, pearls, sequins, pins, foame ; 41 x 18 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



Mother, 1980's
pearls, sequins, pins, foam
27 x 25 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



Christmas Joy, 1980s
mixed technique
13 x 32 x 8 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



Thirty Year Rememberance, 1990s
pearls, sequins, pins, foam
31 x 21 cm
Unique © photo Marc Domage



THE ART OF SARAH PUCCI

1959 - 1993



The Art of Sarah Pucci, 1959 - 1993, 1993,
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When, not long ago, in a conversation with my mother, I happened to describe the force behind her work as the artistic drive, she said, "I didn't care about art, I made the objects for *you*". So, everyone of the more than two hundred pieces which Sarah Pucci has made in the last thirty-four years was a present for her daughter, and every piece was made with the desire that it convey the love she felt for her child. When the full meaning of her motivation dawned on me, it made me very still. The grandeur of her gift took my breath away.

Now, at sixty, I am not unaware of the seasons which have already passed. Yet, when I think that at the age of fifty-seven my mother embarked on a new direction in which she would persevere for more than three decades building up a solid body of work, I am very impressed and elated and inspired.

Sarah Pucci is a true artist. She works intensely, forgetting herself, even fulfilled, as her hands follow the knowledge of her eyes, and her eyes follow the wisdom of her heart. Her integrity is absolute. She will not hesitate to undo the work of weeks if she is unsatisfied with the look of her piece. The flow of her gift is unimpeded by concept.

She begins with a form which she cuts out from styrofoam and then with the help of common pins and cement she adorns her object with jewels and jewelry, sequins and pearls, and even, in the last ten years, with photographs of herself and the women in her family. She is not attached to her works. As soon as an object is completed, she mails it off to her daughter and never sees it again. Only now, when, in preparation for selecting the works to be reproduced in this book, each piece was individually photographed by the publisher, did she finally, after thirty years, see the whole body of her work. She responded with a regal serenity, pleased, but quietly and delicately, with her accomplishment.

Sarah Pucci's work is purely an expression of love, untouched by hopes or fears. In the spirit of ideal democracy, it takes the most diverse elements and creates unity. Love was the inspiration which moved the simple balls of her earliest work to become part of more complex structures and even to give way to new forms, as the embodiment of her love, which she had created, grew and blossomed. For the last years now her work has been devoted entirely to hearts.[1]

Because of the interest in her work shown by many wonderful artists over the years, Sarah Pucci, who has almost never left home, has had, nonetheless, exhibitions in many remarkable places in Europe.[2]

And because the expression of her love for Dorothy happened to transcend the purely personal and find its home in the empire of art, it has become a public treasure delighting the senses and lifting the heart of nearly everyone who sees it.

I'm Sarah Pucci, the mother of a famous artist, Dorothy Iannone, who lives in Berlin, Germany and has travelled the world over. I'm ninety years old. I was born in Everett, Massachusetts on October 7, 1902. My father died when I was fourteen months old. Then we lived with my grandparents in Boston until my mother remarried.

I went to school at the Ulysses Simpson Grant and graduated from the eighth grade. I got a diploma and a certificate for handwriting. I have them still. I didn't want to go to high school because I wanted to learn to sew at the Industrial School. Later I went to work at Leopold Morse Men's Clothing Factory for a year. Then I got a job at Schrafft's Chocolate Factory doing fancy designs on chocolates. I worked there for ten years until I left to get married to a wonderful fellow by the name of William Iannone.

He was born in Boston. Later his parents went back to Italy and he finished school and even went to college there. We got married with a High Mass at the Mount Carmel Church in East Boston on November 30, 1929. We went to New York and Canada for the honeymoon and came back after one month to our beautiful apartment in Orient Heights, East Boston.

The most important thing that ever happened to me was when after four years of marriage God gave me a beautiful baby girl and that is Dorothy Iannone. My husband and I both wanted a baby girl. Beautiful year, August 9, 1933. Another important thing that happened to me was that when my baby was four months old and I was breast feeding her, lying on the bed because she was so chubby and looking up to the ceiling light, I saw the Blessed Virgin with her hand open, facing me, coming toward me. She had on a very light blue long dress. She stayed about three or four minutes and then disappeared. And another important thing that happened to me was when my husband taught me to drive a car. I learned on a Maxwell and then drove a Nash.

Dorothy's father was the first man I fell in love with. When I was seventeen or eighteen there was an acquaintance of the family who was twelve years older than me. It was a match between his people and mine. I never liked him, never went out alone with him. My stepfather used to say, he can give you a living but I was not in love with him.

My husband William lived only six years with me and God took him. He had a very bad cold, and then he got pneumonia. I took him to the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston. After eleven days he passed away. My daughter was two years old and, of course, she doesn't remember her father, but she has a lot of pictures from when we got married.

After my husband died I didn't want to be alone, so I moved into my mother's house. My mother was so glad to have me and baby Dorothy, and my stepfather was, too. My two brothers were not yet married, so we were all together. My mother didn't want me to go to work but I had no money, so I went to work at Foss Chocolate Factory doing the same job I did at Schrafft's.

While I was living with my parents there was a fellow who wanted marry me. His parents were very friendly with my parents, but I didn't want to marry him because he was ten years older than me. My mother told me that he said, if I can't marry your daughter, I will remain an old bachelor the rest of my life. After a few years passed, I decided to marry him. He didn't look his age and was good-looking, too.

After five years of marriage to Dominic Pucci, I made up my mind to go to work and I got a job at the Boston Navy Yard where my husband was also working. He didn't want me to work, but I wanted to save some money. If my daughter wanted to go to college, I was ready to pay. After all, Dom was a stepfather, but she was mine. He fought with me to stay at home. If I didn't quit my job he said he was going to quit his. I worked only three weeks and had to give up.

Still, I wanted to work, so I got a job in the General Electric Company from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. We had an apartment in my mother's house which was across the street from my daughter's school. I had no worry about my Dorothy, because my mother watched over her. I didn't care if my husband argued with me, I kept working. After a month I told the office to take $18.75 out of my pay check every week for a Savings Bond. After two months, I had $37.50 for a Bond taken out along with my taxes and union dues, so that my take home pay was 52 cents. I stayed at the General Electric for twenty years.

I bought land in 1952 and had a six room ranch house built in a residential area in Medford, Mass. Now I had money also for my daughter's college, but I didn't have to pay because she won scholarships on her marks. She was always on the Honor Roll. I still have all her papers. She graduated in 1957 from Boston University and she also attended Brandeis University. There were so many important things when she went to school. I can never forget.

She got married to a very nice fellow by the name of James Upham and lived in New York for eight years. I was so happy to see my daughter get married in church. My husband Dom and I were there. Afterward, there was a reception in their penthouse. Then they went on a honeymoon to Europe for six months. I got postcards from every different country and letters, too. In 1985 I gave Dorothy back about 65 or 75 cards which she had sent me.

I lived in my ranch home for twenty-four years. When I was sixty, I retired from the General Electric. I got my Social Security payments at sixty-two. My husband Dom was already retired. He never was sick in all his life, but one day in 1976 he went to the doctor who found an inflamed gall bladder. Two weeks later he passed away at the age of eighty-four. Now I was alone in a big ranch house and my daughter was living in Europe, so I decided to sell my home and go to live in an apartment. I sold my house in two days and went to live in the Sacro Plaza in Everett in 1977. I've been here now for sixteen years. I have a very big apartment with five rooms. There are two bedrooms so when Dorothy comes to see me, she has her own bedroom. I hope to be here when my God will take me.

My daughter Dorothy comes to see me once or twice a year. But in the last years she comes more frequently and has stayed as long as four months while I was in the Mount Auburn Hospital in Cambridge. In fact I had four major operations. The doctors didn't expect me to live. But God doesn't want me yet. A few years ago, I fell from my couch and I now have a steel hip which weights three pounds. It's about nine inches long, narrow with a steel ball. I'm not bent. I can walk very straight with my walker. I count my blessings that I'm living. I do my own cooking and I also bake cakes and cookies. I decorate my objects and cut them myself into the shapes I like. My friends give me the jewelry they don't want. I sterilize and use what I like. That's why I bake - to give them cookies in return.

I made dolls when I was very young and men's ties which I sold. I crocheted hats and dresses for my daughter when she was small and made beautiful parlor pillows in velvet when she got married. I started making the balls in 1959 when she was first married to James. I really think that if she had not been born, I had nothing that was important in my life. It was all work and no play.

These beautiful objects I make, and give them to my daughter Dorothy, with lots of love.

Mother of a famous artist, Dorothy Iannone
Sarah Pucci 1992

Postscript:
Soon I will be ninety-one on October 7, 1993. I'm still doing my objects for my beautiful daughter Dorothy. She has had many shows in Europe and is still having more. Hope to God that He will make me live to see my book. If God doesn't want me now that means to me that I have a lot to do for my daughter Dorothy. It's only her I want to live for. We talk on the phone twice a week and that makes me feel young again.