

# Maman louise bourgeois



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Louise, a twelve year old girl drawing missing segments on a tapestry for her parents' tapestry repair shop lives her life lacking the knowledge of what she is going to be when she grows up. She begins to study math which she loves to do, but she had no idea that her studies had a close association with her exceptional drawing skills. One day, coming home from school, she walks by a tapestry, and begins to reminisce about the times when she had to draw them, so it struck her. She wanted to focus her studies in art.

As she began to study art, she soon found out that she also excelled in painting. She started out small, but her hard work and determination got her to the well-known artist that we know today as Louise Bourgeois, the artist of Maman. Any art piece can have multiple interpretations depending on how you look at it, but knowing the artist's background will give you a complete understanding of their work of art. In addition, breaking down the artistic terms and one's interpretation on a work of art are vital and usually different compare to other spectators.

Knowing the artists' background can be quite intriguing because it shows the reason and the process of creating their art, but for Louise Bourgeois' background, it was straight forward. She was born on Christmas day, December 25, 1911, in Paris, France and now today living in New York at age 98. Her parents anticipated that she will be a boy, and name her Louis Bourgeois after her father's name. Despite being a girl, she still retained the name, Louise Bourgeois. She is the second oldest of her siblings, but she is actually the third oldest because the first baby died.

Her older sister is six year older than her, and her younger brother is one year younger. They lived above a tapestry gallery which belongs to their parents. In 1932 when Louise passed her high school exam, her mother passed away naturally. Family members were a great deal to Louise. Each member of the family has a special part of the family's role. While studying art and painting art pieces, she met an American art historian, Robert Watergold which she married in 1938. They adopted an orphan boy named Michel which made them move to New York.

She felt guilty leaving France, but she wanted to be able to care for the orphan boy. When they moved, she gave birth to two sons in the U. S. Shortly after giving birth, she began her painting career and soon started sculpting abstract sculptures. Her art work was displayed in many museums all over the United States. She regularly exhibited her art work in museums and was an active member of the American abstract artist group. Next, she transformed her paintings into sculptures.

An example of such pieces is the sculpture, The Nest in the 1990's, which is a group of spiders with the mother watching over the little ones. Later she made a giant spider called, Maman and was first displayed outside the Tate Museum of London in 2000. When you walk by Maman, the art piece just captures your attention and draws you in. Once you are in front of this breath taking sculpture. You wonder what is underneath it; how big is it? Well, Maman means mother in French. It was first put on show outside the Tate Museum of London in 2000.

The sculpture Maman is a 30 feet tall female spider constructed of stainless steel. The whole sculpture is colored black, and beneath the body, there is a sac attached to the body of the mother spider in which she carries 26 pure white marble representing eggs. In addition, there are eight long thin legs supporting the sculpture to stand up. While assembling the sculpture, Bourgeois paid careful attention to details, such as positioning the legs and detailing the legs in order to attain a well-balanced structure. The sculpture emits a strong aura with all the little details put into it.

Besides the original stainless steel version owned by the Tate Museum, London, there are other several brown bronze casts, located at: Kansas City, Canada, Tokyo, Boston, Cuba, and many more. The three main artistic terms are subject matter, content, and artistic form which I will be breaking down in this sculpture. First the subject matter. The sculpture is an image of what appears to be a giant spider with a sac of eggs and eight long thin legs. Secondly, content. The giant spider looks threatening, but the eggs that she embraces in her sac give her a sense of weakness.

Louise attached the sac of eggs underneath the spider's body demonstrating that the spider is more of a mother figure like than a predator. This spider was a tribute to her mother. Ms. Bourgeois said in a statement. " She was my best friend. Like a spider, my mother was a weaver. Like spiders, my mother was very clever. Spiders are friendly presences that eat mosquitoes. We know that mosquitoes spread diseases and are therefore unwanted. So, spiders are helpful and protective, just like my mother. " (Marie-Laure Bernadac 10) The oversize spider is also frightening which also means pain and fear to some others.

<https://assignbuster.com/mamanlouise-bourgeois/>

So when one walks by, they can reminisce about the old memories of pain or fear. Louise Bourgeois said. “ My sculpture allows me to re-experience the fear, to give it physicality so I am able to hack away at it. Fear becomes a manageable reality. Sculpture allows me to re-experience the past, to see the part in its objective, realistic proportion. ” (Marie-Laure Bernadac 8)

Finally, artistic form, where she placed the sac of eggs beneath the spider’s body, and the in depth designs on Maman’s legs; especially the size too.

From my point of view, I wondered why she made this one so tall compare to all the other spider sculpture she made.

Another spider sculpture she made is called The Nest which I have seen in person. The Nest is similar to Maman because Maman has a sac of eggs beneath her, and The Nest has smaller spiders beneath the tallest one in which it is the mother. Since The Nest is about 6 to 8 feet tall, it is saying that we are the predators because it is almost the same height as us. Why does one compare the spider to us you say? It is because we squish them when see them at home. Now she made a bigger and taller sculpture which we all know is Maman; it is saying that we are endanger now if we got too close to her eggs.

The size of Maman is saying that who is looking down on whom now? Spiders can make cob webs in the corner and aggravate you. In this case, Maman wants to live her life in peace with her kids, and if you get too close the spider will fight back. Maman is a tribute to her mother because she was not only a mother, but also a best friend. Moreover, her mother was a weaver and was very clever just like a spider. Maman is almost practically a self

portrait of Louise's mother; a protective mother and defend her kids with all her might.