

Mâkhi Xenakis comes to see me every time she travels to the United States. She always asks to see a little bronze sculpture that I made thirty years ago. "The Fragile Goddess," seated, inspects her territory, attentive or anxious. She communicates with Mâkhi, who has drawn 240 different interpretations of her. The first time we met, my visitor was speechless, as mute as a well. So I tossed in some little pebbles and I discovered the echo of a springing stream. Her drawings replaced words. Since then, a ritual silence has sealed our bond.

Louise Bourgeois. 1991.

I discovered Louise Bourgeois' work in New York. Her drawings covered the walls of the Robert Miller Gallery. At that time I was in a state of panic that led me to systematically destroy my paintings and drawings. I wanted to meet her: her work and her writing moved me deeply.

During my visit, I could feel the tension mounting; I was transfixed with fear, and I grew more and more silent. I had brought a little sketchbook with me, filled with miniscule drawings. She started looking at them, and she began to ask me unexpected, incredible questions; it was like a terrible storm.

Little by little, thanks to her vision, her words and later her confidence, I was able to work again. Another day, I told her about my fear that I would go mad if I penetrated any deeper into painting. Louise was reduced to silence; she took a piece of paper and wrote

*"Art is a guarantee of sanity
Art will keep you sane
Art is true because it is eternal".*

Mâkhi Xenakis. 1991.