



Janine Antoni, *Lick and Lather*, 1993. One licked chocolate self-portrait bust (left) and one washed soap self-portrait bust (right) on pedestals. Gift of Ara Arslanian, 2021.18.1 a,b.

*The Emily Hall Tremaine Lecture in Contemporary Art is an annual lecture at the Wadsworth presented by a guest artist, scholar, or critic concerning important topics in the field of contemporary art. The lecture is presented through the generous support of the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation Fund at the Wadsworth Atheneum.*

**Front Cover:** Performance photograph: *Janine Antoni / MATRIX 129*. Janine Antoni, *Loving Care*, 1993. Performance with Loving Care hair dye, Natural Black. Dimensions variable. Photographed at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, 1996. Photograph Collection, RG9\_1\_F8025, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art Archives.

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January 25, 2024 • 6pm

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art



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Artist Janine Antoni is revered for her pioneering approach to artmaking and the dialogues she creates between the body, performance, and objects. Her performances, sculptures, videos, and other visual works have been presented around the world and often explore the creative possibilities of the human form as both a tool for creation and a way of expressing meaning. Antoni's work was first shown at the Wadsworth in the exhibition, *Janine Antoni / MATRIX 129*, which ran from January 7–April 28, 1996. The exhibition was initiated with a performance of Antoni's work *Loving Care* (1993) in the museum's MATRIX gallery. In the performance, Antoni soaked her hair in a bucket filled with Loving Care brand semi-permanent hair dye, the same kind her mother used to cover her gray hairs. On her hands and knees, Antoni mopped the entirety of the gallery floor with her hair, slowly pushing the viewers out of the gallery as she claimed the remainder of the space. Her movements were recorded on the floor with the dye, leaving marks reminiscent of Abstract Expressionist painting. By mopping with her hair, Antoni examines "women's labor." At the same time, the dye brings into question standards of beauty as they relate to women and aging. What is left behind, the pictorial residue, results in a critique of the patriarchal history of painting. For the remainder of the exhibition, the evidence of Antoni's actions remained on view as the video documentation of the performance played on a monitor outside of the gallery. In the first presentation of *Loving Care* at Hunter College, Antoni prepared the gallery in private. Antoni's 1996 performance at the Wadsworth marked the first public performance of this iconic work in the United States. Tonight, Antoni reflects on her MATRIX performance and positions it within the trajectory of her influential career as a multidisciplinary artist.



**Above:** Exhibition photograph: *Janine Antoni / MATRIX 129*. Janine Antoni, *Loving Care*, 1993. Performance with Loving Care hair dye, Natural Black. Dimensions variable. Photographed at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, 1996. Photograph Collection, RG9\_1\_F8024.2, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art Archives.

## About the Artist

**Janine Antoni** was born in Freeport, Bahamas. She received her BA from Sarah Lawrence College in New York, and earned her MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1989.

Antoni is known for her unusual processes, using her body as both a tool and a source of meaning within the conceptual framework of her practice. Antoni's early methods involved transforming unique materials such as chocolate and soap through habitual, everyday processes like bathing, eating, and sleeping to create sculptural works and installations. By way of her body of work, Antoni carefully articulates her relationship to the world, giving rise to emotional states that are felt in and through the senses. In each piece, no matter the medium or image, a conveyed physicality is meant to speak directly to the viewer's body.



Antoni has exhibited at numerous major institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; The Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, PA; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; The Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland; Magazsin 3 Handelshögskolan, Stockholm, Sweden; Hayward Gallery, London, UK; and Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany. She has also been represented in several international biennials and festivals such as the Whitney Biennial, New York, NY; Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy; Johannesburg Biennale, Johannesburg, South Africa; Gwangju Biennial, Gwangju, South Korea; Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey; S.I.T.E. Santa Fe Biennial, Santa Fe, NM; Project 1 Biennial, New Orleans, LA; Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kochi, India; and documenta14, at the Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany.

In recent years, Antoni collaborated with the late choreographer and dancer Anna Halprin. In 2016, Antoni, Halprin, and the choreographer Stephen Petronio presented *Ally*, an exhibition presented by The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, with major support from the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. In 2019, Antoni collaborated again with Halprin, presenting a major solo exhibition, *Paper Dance*, at The Contemporary Austin, Texas. Most recently, in 2019, Antoni was the subject of a solo show at The Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, for which she was commissioned to present a new body of work, *I am fertile ground* in the cemetery's catacombs.

The artist's current ongoing project, *here-ing*, is a labyrinth in the shape of the anatomy of the ear, which is environmentally embedded in a prairie at Kansas University's Field Station. The project is produced in partnership with the Spencer Museum of Art and the Kansas Biological Survey and Center for Ecological Research.

**Above:** Janine Antoni in collaboration with Anna Halprin, *Paper Dance*, 2013. Performance with brown paper. Photographed by Pak Han at the Halprin Dance Deck. © Janine Antoni; Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.