

Artist Resources – Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941)



Nauman, c. 2014

Photograph: Phaidon

[Nauman at MoMA](#)

[Nauman at Gagosian Gallery](#)

[Nauman at the Guggenheim](#)

[Nauman at SFMOMA](#)

Listen to an [oral history interview](#) for Archives of American Art recorded with the artist in 1980. The next year, Nauman was the subject of a major retrospective at the [Kröller-Müller Museum](#).

In 1988, Nauman was interviewed by Joan Simon with [Art in America](#) in anticipation of the 1988 documentary *Four Artists: Robert Ryman, Eva Hesse, Bruce Nauman, Susan Rothenberg*.

Nauman had many solo exhibitions and gallery shows in the 1990s. A [New York Times article](#) by Roberta Smith details an exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art and three gallery shows. From 1993 to 1995, A retrospective organized by the Walker Art Center [traveled internationally](#). Read a [review](#) of that exhibition by Peter Schjeldahl.

[Bruce Nauman: Mapping the Studio I \(Fat Chance John Cage\)](#) was on display at Dia Chelsea in 2002. A [reviewer](#) called the exhibition “a Cagean gambit and a grueling, weirdly beautiful meditation on nothingness and artist’s block.”

In 2004, Nauman installed *Raw Materials* in the Tate Modern’s famous Turbine Hall. Read an [essay](#) about the installation and watch a [video](#) of the “sound collage.” That same year, Time named the artist one of the [100 Most Influential People](#).

The [Milwaukee Art Museum](#) exhibited *Elusive Signs: Bruce Nauman Works with Light* in 2006. In 2007, [BAMPFA](#) (the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive) installed *A Rose Has No Teeth: Bruce Nauman in the 1960s*. Read reviews in [Artforum](#) and the [East Bay Times](#).

Nauman was [selected](#) to represent the United States in the [2009 Venice Biennale](#). His work was awarded the prestigious [Golden Lion](#).

In 2010, [Hamburger Bahnhof](#) in Berlin held an exhibition entitled *Bruce Nauman: Dream Passage*. [Whitehot Magazine](#) published an article about the exhibition.

Nauman’s work returned to major museums in 2018. [Basel’s Schaulager](#) hosted a retrospective and the [Museum of Modern Art](#) installed *Disappearing Acts*. Read a review by Jonathan Hilburg in [The Architect’s Newspaper](#) and Holland Cotter’s [article](#), “Bruce Nauman Reappears: Pay Attention.” Another New York Times Article called Nauman [“The Artist’s Artist.”](#)

The Tate Modern opened a [solo exhibition](#) of Nauman’s work in 2020, the first major show in London in more than 20 years.

Learn about how LACMA conservators are approaching Nauman’s [Holograms](#) and watch a series of [Art21 videos](#) about the artist’s career.



Nauman in the studio, 2009
Photograph: Jason Schmidt



Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941)

Life, Death, Love, Hate, Pleasure, Pain, 1983

Neon tubing with clear glass tubing suspension frame

Private Collection; L2021:184.1

Bruce Nauman lives and works in New Mexico, where his practice spans sculpture, performance, video, and photography. Fascinated with language, Nauman often incorporates puns, double meanings, and idioms in his work. **Life, Death, Love, Hate, Pleasure, Pain** is one of the artist's iconic neon compositions. Nauman began working with fluorescent tubing in the mid-1960s, when he was inspired by an old neon beer sign hanging in a vacant San Francisco grocery store. In this piece, the circular ring of text lights up various combinations of words, creating an optical illusion by juxtaposing double-lined roman and italicized capital letters. These contradictory concepts – **Life, Death, Love, Hate, Pleasure, Pain** – emphasize the dualities of the human condition. In one of his rare interviews, Nauman said: "My work comes out of being frustrated about the human condition. And about how people refuse to understand other people. And about how people can be cruel to each other. It's not that I think I can change that, but it's just such a frustrating part of human history."

On view January 19 – April 24, 2022