

Andrea Scott, "Spotlight: Maria Lassnig," *The New Yorker*, July 10, 2020.



ART

Spotlight: Maria Lassnig



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📍 Petzel Gallery Online

[Website](#)



When the Austrian painter **Maria Lassnig** was forty-nine, she was living in Paris, successful enough but feeling stifled by her mansplaining peers. It was 1968, and the art world's epicenter had long since shifted from Europe to the U.S.—“the country of strong women,” in Lassnig's words. For the next twelve years, she lived in New York City, thriving in obscurity. It's not that the artist had renounced her career but, rather, that American dealers had little interest in the daring approach to figuration she called “body awareness,” which relied on senses other than sight. Major acclaim came late to Lassnig, as it too often does for women artists of her generation; she died shortly after the opening of her first U.S. museum retrospective, in 2014, at the age of ninety-four, and her reputation has only grown since. The Petzel gallery's charming online-only presentation “Maria Lassnig: Ode to New York” (at [petzel.com](#)) feels less like an exhibition and more like a scrapbook, a peek into the artist's private reveries (a detail of a breezy watercolor, from 1979, is pictured here) in a city in which anonymity can be freedom.

— Andrea K. Scott

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