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APRIL 2026

ART. PARIS

GRAND PALAIS

BABEL
ART AND LANGUAGE
IN FRANCE

REPARATION

Art Paris 2026 Elsa Sahal, wins this year's Her Art Prize, an internationally recognised prize for women artists launched at the initiative of Marie Claire in partnership with Maison Boucheron.

The winner of the Her Art Prize 2026 for women artists is French artist Elsa Sahal, who is represented by Galerie Papillon.

In this prize launched in 2025 at the initiative of Marie Claire in partnership with Maison Boucheron, a prestigious jury comprising personalities from the arts and creative industries - presided over by actor and artist Louise Bourgoin - rewards the career of a unique woman artist and a body of work that pushes back the limits. The winner is chosen from a shortlist of around 12 finalists selected from among the galleries exhibiting at Art Paris 2026.

Hélène Poulit-Duquesne, Chief Executive Officer at Maison Boucheron, will present Elsa Sahal with the Her Art Prize and 30,000 euros in prize money during a ceremony at Art Paris on Saturday 11 April, 2026. In addition, Sahal will benefit from a domestic and international promotional campaign expertly organised by Marie Claire and Art Paris.

Elsa Sahal (b. 1975) graduated from the Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2000, where she studied under Erik Dietman. She made ceramics her medium of choice from the start and, by blurring the boundaries between the plant world and organic elements, her sculptural works have continually challenged conventional representations of the female and male body ever since.



Elsa Sahal © Courtesy Galerie Papillon

marie claire
her Art
PRIZE 2026
AVEC LE SOUTIEN DE BOUCHERON

Sahal pushes the boundaries of ceramics, preferring creative freedom to technical perfection. In her hands, clay becomes flesh. Her sculpture *La Fontaine* representing a young girl urinating, which was exhibited in 2012 in the Jardin des Tuileries, brought a political and feminist dimension to her work. Breasts, clitorises, vulvas and penises adorn her sculptures, marking an intention to shift both the gaze and desire towards a feminine perspective. représentation du corps féminin et masculin, jouant sur la confusion des genres entre le végétal et l'organique.

An obsession with sensuality runs through her art, both in the choice of theme, for example *Venus*, and in the very material with which she works, as she transforms clay into an expressive, sensual surface. Her deliberately provocative creations deconstruct gender stereotypes and celebrate free women with both humour and audacity.

Her work is regularly shown in major group exhibitions both in France and around the world. Examples include: «Body & Soul: New International Ceramics» (Museum of Arts and Design, New York, 2013); «Ceramix» (Bonnenfantenmuseum, Maastricht, 2015) and the *Maison Rouge* (Paris, 2016); «Women House» (Monnaie de Paris, 2017-2018) and the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington, 2018); «Picasso, baigneuses et baigneurs» (Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, 2020); «Les flammes. L'âge de la céramique» (Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, 2021); and «Toucher Terre» (Villa Datriis) and «Contre-nature» (MO.CO, Montpellier) in 2022.

In 2025, she presented her 8th solo show at Galerie Papillon, thereby celebrating a 25-year-long collaboration with the gallery. She is also represented by Nathalie Karg in New York and The Pill in Istanbul. 2025 was also marked by two more solo shows at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes and the Piscine de Roubaix and the publication of her monograph (JBE Books).



Elsa Sahal
Gilda, 2024, courtesy Galerie Papillon
© Photo David Bordes

In the words of Guillaume Piens,
Art Paris fair director

“First and foremost, let me say how delighted I am to see the way in which, in the space of just two editions of Art Paris, the Her Art Prize has gained in importance among the other international prizes for women artists. After Zhanna Kadyrova in 2025, the jury unanimously decided to award the Her Art Prize 2026 to Elsa Sahal. In so doing, they wanted to underline the pioneering role she has played in contributing to the renaissance of contemporary ceramic art at a time when this art form had fallen out of favour. Her original approach to modelling clay shook the medium's rigid conventions to their very foundations. The Her Art Prize will undoubtedly boost the career of this French artist for whom discretion is a byword.”

Hélène Poulit-Duquesne,
Boucheron CEO

“ I am very happy that Boucheron is continuing to work alongside Marie Claire and Art Paris for the second edition of the Her Art Prize, an award that is the perfect embodiment of our attachment to creativity and artistic expression. At a time when women artists are all too often underrepresented, this prize provides them with the visibility they need. This year, we were particularly touched by the originality of Elsa Sahal’s approach to ceramics. She has greatly contributed to pushing back the limits of the medium by revisiting both its forms and subjects. Her feminist commitment and the sense of humour that pervades her art combine to convey a unique artistic vision, one that we are proud to celebrate with this prize. Supporting contemporary creation, encouraging the careers of audacious women artists and contributing to shaping a more equal future in the arts seems, in my opinion, to be more important than ever.

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According to Katell Pouliquen,
editor-in-chief, Marie Claire France

“ We were moved by the sense of mischief that runs through the powerful works of French artist Elsa Sahal, who takes working with clay to a completely different level. Thanks to her, ceramics become art. Her sculptures, whether nudes, self-portraits, or landscapes, are tinged with a feminist sensibility that caught the attention of the jury brought together by Marie Claire. Her carnal (even erotic) form of expression, which is not without humour, leaves nobody indifferent. Let’s hope the Her Art Prize will enable her to reach an even wider audience.”

The 12 finalists of the Her Art Prize:

- **Kenia Almaraz Murillo** (b. 1994, Bolivia) – Galerie Waddington-Custot
- **Alice Bidault** (b. 1994, France) – Galerie Pietro Spartà
- **Shilpa Gupta** (b. 1976, India) – Galleria Continua
- **Janet Laurence** (b. 1947, Australia) – Cassandra Bird Gallery
- **Christiane Löhr** (b. 1965, Germany) – Argo Fine Arts
- **Juanita McLauchlan** (b. 1975, Australia) – Cassandra Bird Gallery
- **Otobong Nkanga** (b. 1974, Nigeria) – In Situ – Fabienne Leclerc & Lumen Travo Gallery
- **Sarah Ouhammadou** (B. 1986, France / Morocco) – Galerie Polaris
- **Nazanin Pouyandeh** (b. 1981, Iran) – Templon
- **Elsa Sahal** (b. 1975, France) – Galerie Papillon
- **Mary Sibande** (b. 1982, South Africa) – Everard Read
- **Sandra Vásquez de la Horra** (b. 1967, Chile) – Galerie Bendana | Pinel Art Contemporain

THE HER ART PRIZE JURY:

Louise Bourgoïn, actor, artist and president of the jury
 ▪ Alice Diop, filmmaker ▪ Raphaël Haroche, author, singer, composer ▪ Erin Jeona Gilbert, curator ▪ Michèle Lamy, artist, entrepreneur, producer and performer ▪ Valentine Lecêtre, Art Paris CEO ▪ Galia Loupan, chief content officer, Marie Claire International ▪ Camille Morineau, director of AWARE and curator ▪ Hélène Poulit-Duquesne, Chief Executive Officer de Boucheron ▪ Katell Pouliquen, editor-in-chief, Marie Claire France ▪ Hélène Poulit-Duquesne, Boucheron CEO

The selection of the Her Art Prize finalists was entrusted to art consultant, curator and Marie Claire contributor Marion Vignal, in collaboration with Art Paris fair director Guillaume Piens.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Art Paris

April 9-12

2026 Grand Palais

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