

ARTNEWS

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When I was starting out, Isamu Noguchi briefly visited my studio. He didn't say anything. Later someone told me that he'd asked, "Why is she so preoccupied with all that sexual imagery?" At the time I was sewing and stuffing long, long tubes of muslin, which were sewn onto the wall. The irony is that I didn't "see" the phallic imagery that he (and perhaps others) saw. I was devastated. I went numb. I didn't want to hear this, and I stopped.

Around 1975 I was frustrated with what metal could not do. How was it possible, I wondered, to make it feel sensuous? I presented my problem to the artist Michael Mulhern on a studio visit. He soon brought me some four-by-four cedar beams that pushed me in a whole new direction, and I've used them ever since. The worst and best things can result from a studio visit. Even the worst can turn out for the best.