



NEW YORK
Ursula von Rydingsvard
 Galerie Lelong & Co.

Ursula von Rydingsvard is finding new ways to deepen her three-dimensional spaces: the cavities and protuberances in her recent works recall beaks, balls, mouths, and armpits—irregular human and animal body parts that nevertheless seem familiar. Niches and caverns open out or suck you in; appendages curve precipitously around the main body. These forms could be portraits of myths we're in the middle of living.

The large-scale, rough-hewn cedar forms featured in her recent exhibi-

tion "TORN" nod to her Polish-Ukrainian heritage and to histories of suffering worldwide. von Rydingsvard gives her works mostly Polish names and leaves it to viewers to decode what they have to say. The bronze *Z BOKU* memorializes her labor-intensive cedar construction process. Its back area has a kind of tail and hind legs; many sharp ridges ride up its sides; a top ridge is laced with small irregular openings that let in light. The bronze patina has hues of gold, copper, and red

that add to the depth of its faceted surface.

NESTER and *DWA*, large, top-heavy, wall-mounted cedar works, jut out from and then lean back into the wall. Seen head on, *DWA* resembles two sides of a body bending over, with an open area where the spine would be, while *NESTER* seems like the lower half of a kneeling body. From other perspectives, these abstract forms suggest other emotions or postures. The abstract openings in the rectangular wall

pieces *Oziksien* and *floating shy* could remind viewers of anything from hungry open mouths to bowls. The concave spaces decrease in size as they climb the wall; their irregular grid-like structure has its own kind of flow. *Roaming Rudia* has different profiles from each direction. *Elegantka II*, a cloud-gray urethane resin piece is lit from inside with blue light; its curving silhouette turns into a beacon of light.

Book with no words (2018) is similar to *Tome* (2017), a work featured

in von Rydingsvard's concurrent retrospective at the Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia. Flat cedar slats are pieced onto linen pages that can be turned. The idea of the wood and linen as living histories that have been sliced from a tree or woven from a plant speaks for itself and directly represents nature and environmental issues. Each linen page has a kite-like torn tail or fabric strip hanging over the handmade cedar table on which the book rests. Another tribute to von Rydingsvard's connection to cedar can be found in the monumental bronzes *Now* and *She*, which remain on view in the sculpture garden at the Philadelphia Museum of Art through April 2019.

—Jan Garden Castro