A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce At/Against Our Will, an exhibition of welded steel sculptures by artist Helene Brandt. At/Against Our Will includes works from Brandt’s signature “Cages” series and marks the artist’s first show at A.I.R. since her debut at the gallery in 1985.

Brandt bent welded steel tubing to create her sculptures, transforming it into objects that appear both decorative and functional. In the “Body Parts” series, she formed steel around her own figure as armor or supports for various appendages. These sculptures reveal the pain and vulnerability of the artist while asserting the joyful resilience and fierce independence she felt as a woman. A combination of architectural lucidity and id-like impulse, Brandt’s work blurs the boundaries between self and surroundings, protection and entrapment, stasis and motion, animate and inanimate.

Sculptures from the “Cages” series, which were also built around the artist’s body, further extend Brandt’s concerns around mobility and protection into more explicitly architectural forms that imitate chairs, strollers, and wheelbarrows. These large, skeletal structures sit atop wheels, suggesting that one might use them for containing and transporting something. Like her “Body Parts,” the medieval-looking enclosures act as both a shelter and an exposure for what is inside, a space into which the viewer may not be able to enter physically but has access to as a voyeur.

Helene Brandt was a Philadelphia native who lived most of her life in New York. Brandt earned degrees from the City University of New York, Columbia University School of the Arts, and St. Martin’s School of Art in London. She received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts Artist-in-Residence Grant, and the Betty Brazil Memorial Award, among other honors, and saw her work exhibited and acquired in eight nations on four continents. Brandt was a dancer, writer, musician, and polyglot. She also shared her knowledge and artistic experience throughout her life, teaching students at twelve institutions in New York.

For more on the artist, visit www.helenebrandt.com.