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Amy Bessone: In The Century of Women
by Catherine Wagley



Amy Bessone's Number 1: Silvana (2015)
Copyright Amy Bessone, Courtesy GAVLAK

For the most part, the women pictured in L.A.-based Amy Bessone's new exhibition at Gavlak Gallery, "The Century of Women," appear well behaved; they're smartly dressed and carefully posed. Bessone took these images, which she blew up and printed large, from newspaper stories about divorce cases. All of the women pictured separated from their husbands between the 1930s and '70s. One smaller photograph near the back tells part of a pretty blond woman's story: she said her husband hit her; her husband said she complained constantly about the weather. Bessone has paired these archival images with unruly ceramic sculptures of women's torsos, each placed on a wooden pedestal. Some sculpted bodies have black fingerprints on them, beadlike growths along their skin, ropes holding their front and back together, or holes through their abdomens. They appear vulnerable but also tough, like they've weathered a brutal storm yet managed to stay intact. 1034 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; through March 5. (323) 467-5700, gavlagallery.com.