The dynamic between viewer and art object is central to Eva Hesse’s oeuvre. In writing about Hesse’s sculpture through the viewer’s experience of the work, I demonstrate the experiential and embodied nature of viewership. Through Hélène Cixous’ definition of écriture féminine and a performative understanding of art viewership, I argue that Hesse’s sculpture puts the viewer’s physical presence at the forefront of the experience and meaning of the work. The viewer’s body thus infringes on the independent objecthood of the artwork. Furthermore, as phenomenology and Minimalist art theory help elucidate, Hesse’s work wavers between art object and mere thing, further destabilizing the state of objecthood in her art. Hence, the physical and conceptual experience of the viewer must be considered as part of the sculpture itself. If we acknowledge that the art of Hesse’s work is located not in the physical work but in the relationship between art and viewer, then Hesse’s sculpture is never closed or finished.

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