

# Modern British Sculpture



Willoughby Gerrish Ltd



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Willoughby Gerrish is an independent art dealer and consultant specialising in artworks from the Impressionist, Modern, and Post-War periods. The company also deals in a select group of established contemporary artists.

With two decades of experience in the London art world, Willoughby Gerrish started his career at The Fine Art Society on Bond Street, rising to the position of Specialist. During this time he also ran The Crate Gallery in Notting Hill, exhibiting a program of emerging contemporary artists. In 2015 he joined Bowman Gallery as Director, where he was Head of Modern and Contemporary Sculpture. Willoughby formed his eponymous company in 2019, with a focus on museum-quality artists, backed up by a discreet, professional, and knowledgeable approach.

Over his career, Willoughby has curated multiple important exhibitions, including presentations of Henry Moore and Auguste Rodin, and several other 20th century painters and sculptors. He has sold works to many leading museums including: St Louis Museum of Art, USA; The Walters, Baltimore, USA; Toledo Art Gallery, USA; and The Whitworth, Manchester, UK.

The company holds a regular stock of paintings, sculptures, drawings, and editioned works, available to view by appointment at our Jermyn Street premises, positioned in the heart of London's art world.





## I N T R O D U C T I O N

I have been captivated by 20th Century British sculpture for my entire adult life. In Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore, this country has produced two of the greatest figures in global sculpture, certainly in the last century. The impact these two titans had on the next generations of artists around the world, cannot be underestimated.

Against many preconceptions, my firm belief is this journey commences in the Victorian era and principally with the work of Alfred Gilbert. If anyone doubts Gilbert's modernist credentials, I urge them to visit the *Clarence Tomb* as St George's Chapel in Windsor. Without doubt this astounding work, and others by Gilbert, should be recognised as the beginning of modern sculpture in Britain.

Two major exhibitions of 20th Century British sculpture stand out in my mind: *Wild Thing: Epstein, Gaudier-Brzeska, Gill* curated by Richard Cork and *Modern British Sculpture* curated by Penelope Curtis and Keith Wilson, both at the Royal Academy of Arts in London. The early carvers in Cork's exhibition were my first true fascination. I'm continually astonished by the raw power and passion - and at such a young age - of Gaudier-Brzeska. Equally Epstein's work - anyone who has stood beneath his unequalled *Rock Drill* (exhibited in full form at the *Modern British Sculpture* exhibition at the RA) could not help but be amazed. No wonder Epstein's work was so barracked and feared by the establishment and general public alike.

My interest in early Modern British carving would then lead me to become absorbed by Hepworth and Moore's sculptures in stone and wood, followed by others working in a similar vein: Robert Adams, Frank Dobson, and F. E. McWilliam in particular.

As a new era emerged from the wreckage of WW2, sculptors looked to new ideas and techniques to express their feelings. The mass commissioning for the 1951 Festival of Britain, and in 1952 the introduction of a group of innovative artists whose work Herbert Read stylised as the 'Geometry of Fear', heralded a new dawn in British sculpture. These youthful sculptors, including Adams, Reg Butler, Geoffrey Clarke, and Bernard Meadows, would soon become the vanguard of sculpture in this country. They were pathfinders for artists such as Anthony Caro who is represented here in this catalogue by an important steel piece (previously in the collection of Clement Greenberg). Caro is rightly lauded as the greatest British sculptor of that next generation, and as a teacher he influenced a whole spectrum of younger British sculptors.

I'm proud to have been asked recently to represent the estates of three significant sculptors: Austin Wright, Michael Lyons, and Gerald Laing. I look forward to exhibiting their work in greater depth in the near future. Lyons is currently the subject of a major display of his monumental sculptures at York Art Museum, and in 2021 we look forward to welcoming his work to Thirsk Hall Sculpture Park, our inaugural project here in North Yorkshire.

Finally, to return to my first interest in carving and to bring us up to the present day, I'm delighted to be showing a major full size torso by Emily Young, an artist with whom my career has been intertwined for over a decade.

I hope you share my enjoyment and appreciation for the artists in this catalogue of Modern British sculpture.

All works are available to view by appointment at Jermyn Street or at Thirsk Hall.

Willoughby Gerrish, 2020

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**ROBERT ADAMS**

(1917–1984)



Born in 1917, **Robert Adams** was raised in Hardingstone, Northamptonshire, where he lived until 1951. Leaving school at age 14, he worked in various manual jobs including for the agricultural engineering company, Cooch & Sons, where he gained experience in crafting metals that would be of use during his later artistic career. Although he was a conscientious objector, he joined the Civil Defence as a fire warden during World War Two.

From 1933 to 1944, Adams studied part-time at Northampton School of Art; during the 1940s, some of his works were exhibited in London as part of shows by artists working for the Civil Defence. His first solo exhibition was in 1947 at Gimpel Fils Gallery in London. During this early period, Adams' sculpture consisted of abstracted natural forms made from wood, plaster and stone, and displayed influences of Henry Moore's 'truth to material' belief: a sensitivity to grain of the wood, and later an exploitation of the natural properties of metal.

Adams began working with metal in 1949 whilst teaching industrial design at the Central School of Art and Design in London. During a ten-year stint there, he met Victor Pasmore, a pioneer of British abstract art during the 1950s, and Kenneth and Mary Martin, who were then developing their Constructivist ideas. Whilst such figures were influential for Adams, he did not use the Constructivist mathematical formulae and instead showed interest in the link between art and architecture; one such example is a wall relief he created for the Municipal Theatre at Gelsenkirchen in Germany.

Over the next decades, Adams would be regarded as one of Britain's foremost abstract sculptors. In 1950, he won a Rockefeller award from the Institute of International Education to visit the USA, and in 1952 his inclusion in the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale would lead to further acclaim and touring with the British Council. Often grouped with the British sculptors associated with the 'Geometry of Fear' movement at this time, Adams' work can be distinguished from his peers due to his superior display of control. Less concerned with post-war anxieties and more intrigued by the interplay of forms, his work had evolved to pure abstract forms by the 1950s, showing asymmetric balance and an awareness of space. Adams once again represented Britain in Venice in 1962, when a retrospective of his work occupied two entire galleries.

From the 1970s until his death, Adams generally worked in bronze or stainless steel; his forms remained abstract but became less geometrical and more fluid. He consistently maintained an innate sense of proportion and balance, with a clear sense of purpose visible in everything he created. Adams' dedication to the visual appeal of form and structure, with a continual meditation upon the smoothness of a curved line, solidified his status as a pioneer of British sculpture.

Examples of Adams' work can be seen at The Customs House, Heathrow Airport, the Shell Mex House in London and are held in the public collections of the Arts Council, the British Museum and the Tate.

**Robert Adams** (1917–1984)

***Cloaked Figure***

c.1946–7

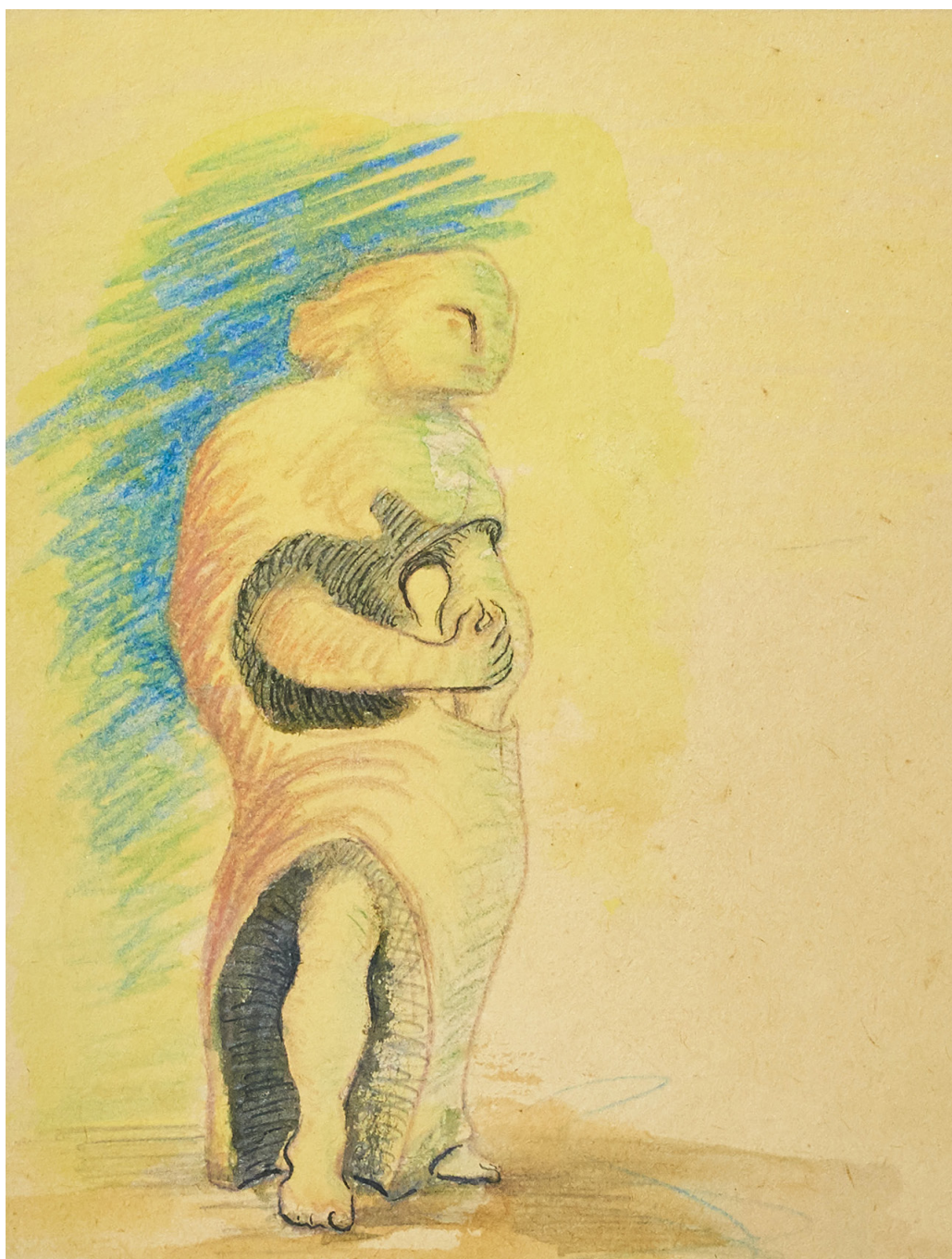
Colour wash, crayon, ink and pencil

Signed in ink 'Adams'

7 x 5 ¼" (17.8 x 13.3 cm)

Provenance: Estate of Bertram Eaton, fellow sculptor & friend of Robert Adams

This early sketch by Adams mirrors his sculpture at the time, which largely consisted of smooth wooden figures abstracted into intertwining curved forms. More naturalistic than many of his preparatory sketches, the figure in this particular work retains clear human form and stands on ascertainable ground, yet there is a definite sense of Adams' interest in the interplay of natural shapes and curves. There is no doubt about the influence of Henry Moore in many of Adam's earlier sculptures and related drawings.



**Robert Adams** (1917–1984)

***Triangular Forms & Curves***

c.1960

Bronzed steel

13 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 9 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" (29.8 x 24 cm)

Unique

Provenance: Gimpel Fils Gallery, London

Literature: Alastair Grieve, *The Sculpture of Robert Adams*, The Henry Moore Foundation/Lund Humphries, London, 1992

In the 1950s Robert Adams began to move away from carving of wood, stone and plaster (influenced by Henry Moore), and began welding; a skill he learned whilst studying as an agricultural engineer in his teenage years. The series of unique sculptures in bronzed steel, in this case created to hang from a wall as a relief, allowed him to explore interlocking forms, and more importantly the space and interplay between those forms. These works in two dimensions align him to the group of post war abstract artists: Mary and Kenneth Martin, Victor Pasmore, and Adrian Heath.





**Robert Adams** (1917–1984)

***Ovoid Variation No. 1***

1980, cast during the artist's lifetime

Polished bronze

Stamped with signature 'ADAMS', dated '1980' and numbered '5/6'

18 x 19 1/2" (45.5 x 49.5 cm)

Edition 5 of 6

Provenance: Gimpel Fils Gallery, London

Literature: Alastair Grieve, *The Sculpture of Robert Adams*, The Henry Moore Foundation/Lund Humphries, London, 1992, cat. no. 666, p.239, another cast illustrated

In the late 1960s, Adams turned away from welding, and instead produced a series of biomorphic forms in highly polished bronze, which would remain his preferred style until the end of his life. These bright – often gold coloured – abstracted forms aligned him towards the St Ives School; Barbara Hepworth and her studio assistant Denis Mitchell, and away from his rough textured sculptures of the 50s and 60s, synonymous with the Geometry of Fear group.



WG

**MICHAEL AYRTON**

(1921–1975)



**Michael Ayrton**, originally called Michael Ayrton Gould, was born to notable parents; his father, Gerald Gould, was an essayist and poet, whilst his mother, Barbara Ayrton, was a Labour politician and suffragist. After a liberal childhood, Ayrton's teenage years were tumultuous, and he began studying art after being expelled from school at age 14; his father's disapproval led him to adopt his mother's name. During the 1930s, he studied at Heatherly School of Fine Art and at St John's Wood Art School, then in Paris, where he and John Minton shared a studio and were taught by Eugène Berman. Ayrton also travelled to Spain and attempted to fight for the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War, though he was rejected for being too young.

Ayrton partook in a broad and eclectic range of projects during his career. In 1938, he was tasked with designing the stage scenery and costumes for John Gielgud's *Macbeth*. In the 1940s, he took up a position teaching drawing and stage design at the Camberwell School of Art, and also took part in the BBC's popular radio programme *The Brains Trust*. There were solo exhibitions of his drawings and paintings at Wakefield Art Gallery in 1949 and at Whitechapel Art Gallery in London in 1955.

It was Greece where Ayrton found a source of inspiration which would occupy him for the rest of his career. He became transfixed by the myth of the Minotaur and Daedalus' labyrinth and embarked on a long-term exploration of this theme. Ayrton described this shift in his focus:

"Since 1964, most of my work has been concerned with the image of a man in a labyrinth... Thus the maze has come to serve for me as an image of my own life and indeed of any individual's life. Every man, it seems to me, makes his maze out of his experiences, his circumstances, his hopes and fears, and in it he lives, so that the shape of it identifies him.

Every maze is therefore different, for each is personal and yet various. Each is a prison and a sanctuary, a journey and a destination...it contains him wholly and he extends it all his life."

With growing interest in sculpture, Ayrton looked to Rodin and Giacometti for inspiration and found the proto-Renaissance sculpture of Giovanni Pisano to be particularly influential. His desire to interpret mythological ideas in figurative form manifested primarily in the medium of bronze sculpture – with which he received technical advice from Henry Moore – though he also produced a variety of literature on the subject, including a pseudo-autobiographical novel entitled *The Maze Maker*. Upon reading this book, the eccentric American millionaire Armand Erpf commissioned the artist to design him a maze of his own; based upon Ayrton's numerous sketches and paintings, the Arkville Maze on Erpf's estate in Delaware, New York, consists of 1,680 feet of stone pathways with a large bronze Minotaur at the centre.

Though he is best known for his sculpture, Ayrton preferred to refer to himself merely as an 'image-maker'; his diverse ventures across the arts have led to his description as a 20th century renaissance man.

A major retrospective exhibition of his work took place at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in 1977, and his works are today held by important collections including the Tate Gallery and National Portrait Gallery in London and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

**Michael Ayrton** (1921–1975)

***Seated Minotaur***

1962, cast within the artist's lifetime

Bronze, on a marble base

10 ½ x 4 ½ x 8" (27 x 11 x 20.5 cm)

Edition of 9

Literature: Jacob E. Nyenhuis, *Myth and the Creative Process: Michael Ayrton and the Myth of Daedalus, the Maze Maker*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 2003, p.117, another cast illustrated

According to Greek mythology, the Minotaur was a terrible, mythical beast with the head of a bull and the body of a man. Due to its monstrous form, King Minos of Crete ordered Daedalus, an inventive craftsman, to build an impossible maze in which to house the beast. The story of the Minotaur was a subject to which Ayrton dedicated an extensive portion of his career; alongside drawings, paintings, literature and even theatre, the artist created numerous bronze sculptures depicting this creature. In a similar vein to Picasso, whose many depictions of bulls aimed to dissect the animal to its essential qualities, Ayrton's Minotaurs – though strong and imposing – humanise this beast by depicting him in surprisingly vulnerable poses. This particular bronze shows a seated Minotaur with his head lowered, perhaps deep in thought or engaged in lonely reflection. Ayrton's sculpture empathetically presents us with a creature far less terrible than the myth would suggest.



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**REG BUTLER**

(1913–1981)

Born in Hertfordshire to parents who ran the Buntingford Union Workhouse, **Reg Butler** studied and taught at the Architectural Association School in London during the 1930s. A conscientious objector during World War Two, he set up a small blacksmith business in order that he be exempted from military service. Butler worked repairing and making farm tools and agricultural machinery, and his iron-forging skills are visible in his early wrought iron sculptures.

In 1948, Butler worked as an assistant to Henry Moore, his neighbour at the time, and began to develop his own talent and style as a sculptor. He abandoned his architectural training and worked as an artist, first exhibiting in 1949 at the Hanover Gallery in London, and at the South Bank exhibition of the Festival of Britain in London in 1951.

Butler's sculptures were included in the British pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 1952 alongside works by Robert Adams, Geoffrey Clarke, Lynn Chadwick and Bernard Meadows; as part of the new movement in British sculpture – termed by the critic Herbert Read as the 'Geometry of Fear' – his work had a contorted and brutalised quality, reflective of the mood of post-war Britain.

Throughout his career, Butler's prime focus was the human form. Earlier figurative work used metal frameworks to suspend a contrastingly naturalistic and modelled figure in space. From the 1950s, Butler's bronze works show an increasing concern with more tangible volume and texture, though his continued preoccupation with line is visible in the tense and contorted poses of his nude figures. His female nudes are often headless or with incomplete limbs which taper off to a point; their poses explore the stress and strain undergone by the female form: tying of hair, dressing and undressing, bending forward and twisting sideways. Solely preoccupied with the female nude in his later career, Butler's figures became more realistic, though he also produced numerous African-inspired nudes akin to fetish figures which he considered as descendants of the Venuses of Willendorf and Lespugue.

Butler was one of the most revered British sculptures of his generation, and taught at the Slade School of Art for three decades. His work is found in major public collections worldwide, with several of his works held by the Tate Gallery in London, who held an extensive retrospective exhibition following his death, and by the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

**Reg Butler** (1913–1981)

***Girl (Striding Girl)***

1954

Bronze with a dark brown patina, on a hardwood base  
Stamped with monogram, numbered '4/8' and stamped with 'Susse  
*Fondeur, Paris*' foundry mark  
20 ½ x 11 ¾ x 8 ½" (52 x 30 x 22 cm)  
Edition 4 of 8

Literature: Exhibition catalogue, *Reg Butler*, London, Hanover Gallery, 1957, no. 10, as *Girl*, another cast illustrated; Exhibition catalogue, *Reg Butler*, London, Tate Gallery, 1983, p. 64, no. 50, as *Girl*, another cast illustrated; M. Garlake, *The Sculpture of Reg Butler*, Much Hadham, 2006, p. 142, no. 147, another cast illustrated

This bronze features a nude female figure, stretching upwards in an athletic pose, balancing precariously atop a beam on a wooden base. The juxtaposition between the naturalistically modelled figure and the narrow supporting structure is characteristic of Butler's work at the time, imbued with a sense of both eroticism and discomfort. An alternative cast of *Girl* has been featured in major exhibitions of Butler's work including the retrospective exhibition at Tate Gallery in 1983.



**Reg Butler** (1913–1981)

***Girl Tying Her Hair, No. 4***

1959, cast in the artist's lifetime

Bronze, with a green and grey patina

Numbered '6/8' and stamped with 'Susse Fondeur, Paris' foundry mark

13 ½ x 8 ¼ x 4 ½" (34.5 x 21 x 11.5 cm)

Edition 6 of 8

Provenance: Hanover Gallery, London; Private collection, USA

Literature: Margaret Garlake, *The Sculpture of Reg Butler*, The Henry Moore Foundation/Lund Humphries, Aldershot, 2006, p.134

One of numerous sculptures depicting a girl in this position – arms bent in angles behind the head tying her hair – this bronze is cropped before the legs and tapers down, giving it a more abstracted form than its naturalistic counterparts. The expressionistic texture to its surface is testimony to Butler's background in forging and welding.





**Reg Butler** (1913–1981)

***Great Tower / Tcheekle (the Tower that grows in the night)***

1960-62

Bronze, with a brown patina  
 Monogrammed and numbered 'RB 1/8'  
 14 x 12 x 15 ¾" (35.5 x 30.5 x 37.75 cm)  
 Edition 1 of 8

Provenance: Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York

Literature: Margaret Garlake, *The Sculpture of Reg Butler*, The Henry Moore Foundation/Lund Humphries, Aldershot, 2006

In 1950, Reg Butler became the first Gregory Fellow in Sculpture at The University of Leeds. His reputation was then solidified in 1953 when he beat artists such as Anthony Caro and Barbara Hepworth to win a competition held by the Institute of Contemporary Art to design a *Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner*. Although never realised in its full scale, Butler's preparatory sculptures for the monument were again shown at the 1954 Venice Biennale, displaying spindly yet violent metal forms reminiscent of cages and towers.

In the 1960's, Butler would branch out to abstract these tower forms, perhaps recalling his training as an architect, and his work included the design for the clock tower at Slough Town Hall. He explained the significance of these structures himself:

"The boxes that preoccupy me so much – the tcheekles, the towers – have gone on for a very large part of my life. I've always been interested in boxes – camera boxes, radio boxes, magic boxes, containers with things happening in them and so on – and in this particular phase, this sort of 1960–63 period, I seem to have turned the boxes into towers, as it were...I think of them as great structures as much as the English follies of the eighteenth century."

These architectural forms point towards the influence of European counterparts: Eduardo Chillida and Alberto Giacometti, but also fellow 'Geometry of Fear' sculptor William Turnbull, and indeed Austin Wright.



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**ANTHONY CARO**

(1924–2013)

**Anthony Caro** had a conservative training from 1947 to 1952 at the Royal Academy Schools, London, which was greatly enriched by the two years he spent as assistant to Henry Moore (1951–53). Caro's work has been in a constant state of evolution through his career. During a visit to the USA in 1959 he was influenced by the critic Clement Greenberg and by the work of such artists as Kenneth Noland and David Smith. On his return Caro began welding standardized metal units into abstract configurations, which were then further unified by being painted in a single primary colour. His first solo show at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London in 1963 brought him considerable critical attention and he soon became regarded as a major figure for his role, both through his work and his teaching at St Martin's School of Art, in re-orientating the mainstream of modernist British sculpture into an abstract constructed mode. In the 1970s, Caro worked in large steel factories in Europe and America, exploring possibilities with the material, which he left raw and polished, protected only by a coat of varnish.

Caro had both national and international recognition for his work throughout his career; he was knighted in 1987, received the Praemium Imperiale for Sculpture in 1992 and the Lifetime Achievement Award for Sculpture in 1997. Along with Norman Foster and Chris Wise, he designed the London Millennium Footbridge. Caro's work has been collected and exhibited worldwide, with recent solo exhibitions at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Tate Britain, The National Gallery in London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

**Sir Anthony Caro** (1924–2013)

***Stainless Piece J***

1974–1975

Stainless steel

6 ½ x 18 x 19" (16.5 x 45.7 x 48.3 cm)

Unique

Provenance: Acquired from the artist by Jenny and Clement Greenberg, New York

Literature: D. Blume, *Anthony Caro, Catalogue Raisonné, Vol. II*, Cologne, 1981, p. 139, n. 588, illustrated; D. Waldman, *Anthony Caro*, New York, 1982, p. 151, n. 203, illustrated; K. Wilkin, *Anthony Caro: Stainless Steel*, London, 2019, p. 82, illustrated

The Stainless Pieces to which the present sculpture belongs to, were created from 1974 and are mostly horizontal structures made of thin or thick sheets of metal, cut tubes and bent planes. Their lateral shape, as well as the character of the metal, give these sculptures a particular effect; they seem cool, static, and because of the shining steel, have an almost immaterial presence.

During the same years, and following his major exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art New York in 1975 which subsequently toured the USA, Caro's reputation in that country was high, notably in circles influenced by Greenberg's formalist aesthetic.

Clement Greenberg was an influential American writer and critic. Championing abstract art, and in particular Jackson Pollock, he became a central figure in the American art world between the 1940s and the 1970s. Greenberg and his wife Jenny Van Horne collected works by artists including Caro, Dzubas, Noland, Smith and Olitski - individuals the couple cherished for their talent and friendship. When Greenberg died in 1994, Van Horne became the guardian of her husband's legacy, handling the acquisition of his papers by the Getty Research Center and the presentation of a selection of the couple's private collection to the Portland Art Museum.





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**GEOFFRY CLARKE**

(1924–2014)



**Geoffrey Clarke** came to prominence in Britain in the early 1950s, and rapidly rose to become one of the brightest stars of the new sculptural movement 'The Geometry of Fear'. This pivotal moment would go on to define British sculpture in the 20th century, and Clarke was very much at the epicentre.

As early as his diploma year, Geoffrey Clarke was chosen to represent The Royal College of Arts at the 1951 Festival of Britain, with his sculpture titled *Icarus* in iron and glass for the Transport Pavilion.

In 1952, his fame was cemented when he was selected by the Arts Council for the inclusion in the landmark exhibition of British sculpture at the Venice Biennale, alongside Henry Moore, Robert Adams, Kenneth Armitage, Reg Butler, Lynn Chadwick, Bernard Meadows, Eduardo Paolozzi, and William Turnbull. It was at this exhibition that the movement, a style described as the 'Geometry of Fear' by the great critic of the period Herbert Read, was born.

In 1952, Clarke held his first solo show at Gimpel Fils gallery (who also represented Chadwick and Adams at the time), and of equal importance was commissioned to make a major welded iron sculpture for the Time Life Building, London, designed by Hugh Casson. Other artists who were commissioned for the project include Henry Moore, Ben Nicholson and Maurice Lambert. Originally made for the foyer, Clarke's piece can now be viewed in the ground floor reception area.

The following year in 1953, aged only 23, Clarke was to work on perhaps the most important new building of the modern era in Britain, when he completed the stained glass and iron works on the high altar at the new Coventry Cathedral, designed by Basil Spence. This commission represented perhaps the ultimate moment of Clarke's entire career.

During his early career, especially at the RCA, Geoffrey Clarke was known for experimenting with iron, wire and plaster works. A major development by the Geometry of Fear group was this specific interest in new materials – often building up an initial skeleton, that they constructed and then built on. This method perhaps fits in with a post-war optimism to try new approaches, and develop a more meaningful sculptural language. Clarke branched out even further, working in multiple media such as stained glass and printmaking, as well as sculpture.

Geoffrey Clarke's works are held in multiple public collections including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Victoria & Albert Museum and Tate Gallery in London. He was part of the important survey British Sculpture in the 20th Century held at the Whitechapel Gallery in 1981. Clarke was elected a Royal Academician in 1970.

**Geoffrey Clarke** (1924–2014)

***Plane & 2 Slabs I***

1964

Aluminium

Incised with monogram and numbered '64/4415'

15 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 39 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 20 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" (40 x 101 x 52 cm)

Unique

Provenance: Strand Gallery, Suffolk

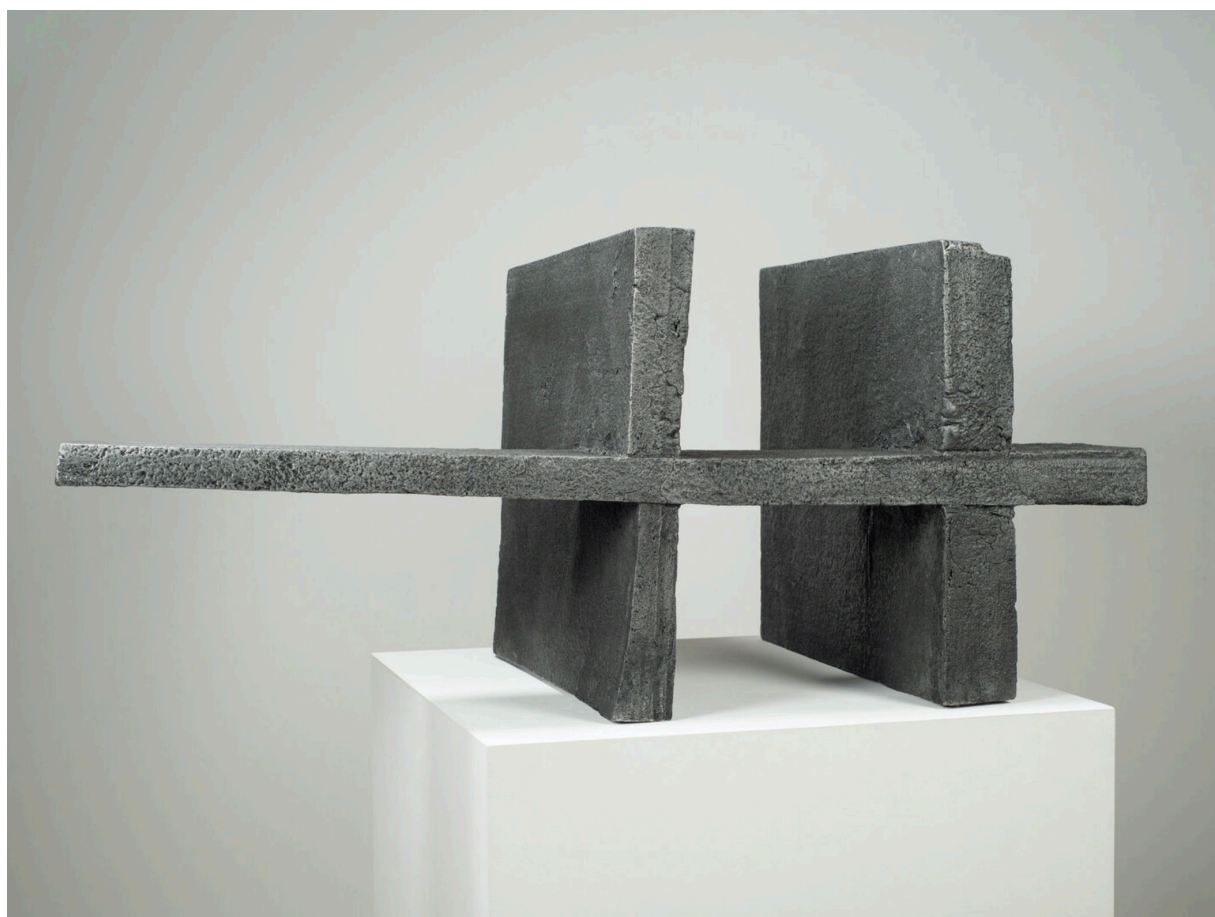
Literature: Judith LeGrove, *Geoffrey Clarke Sculptor: A Catalogue Raisonne*, Lund Humphries & Pangolin, London, 2018

In the 1960s Geoffrey Clarke, as with many other artists from the period, was keen to experiment with new technologies and materials. It was the use of polystyrene and casting in aluminium that Clarke would embrace – allowing him to work quickly, and importantly cost effectively. In March 1965 Clarke was interviewed by Sturt Penrose for *The Arts Review*, and discussed his innovative new approach:

"Polystyrene, as you know, is a solid but light aerated packing material which costs about 6s. per cubic foot. Expanded polystyrene is, incidentally, about 98.5% air. For the most part I use a hot electric wire to cut into the polystyrene. To some extent the material dictates the shapes although I have found there is a natural affinity between my designs and the way polystyrene can be cut. After I have finished the shapes I want, the work is then embedded in casting sand and molten aluminium is poured through a funnel into the sand mould filled by the polystyrene. The polystyrene evaporates simultaneously as the aluminium fills the mould. Later the set aluminium is ready to be dug out of the sand and thus you have your piece of sculpture in much less time than traditional methods could possibly allow. The advantages of polystyrene are therefore twofold, for me at least. Firstly, it allows me the chance to work directly in a manageable material and, secondly, there is the important factor of speed."

Sturt Penrose, *The Arts Review*, March, 1965. Vol xviii no. 4.

A similar work is held in the Arts Council Collection, *Plane and 2 Slabs II*, 1964, purchased from the artist in 1965.



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**FRANK DOBSON**

(1886–1963)

One of the pioneers of modern British sculpture, **Frank Dobson** started his artistic career as a painter, and like other progressive artists such as Picasso and Matisse, developed an interest for radical sculpture. From the mid-1920s, Dobson was to concentrate on the naked female figure treated in a calm, simplified monumental fashion, showing affinity with the work of Aristide Maillol. After World War Two, Dobson was appointed a professor of Sculpture at the Royal College of Art and was named a Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Following Dobson's death, the Arts Council held a memorial exhibition in 1966, and more recently, the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds held a major retrospective in 1994. His work is represented in many public galleries including the Tate Gallery, London.

**Frank Dobson** (1886-1963)

***Levée***

1945

Terracotta

4 ¼ x 6 ¾ "(10.75 x 17.25 cm)

Unique

Provenance: Sir Charles Reilly, The Straits, Kingsley Bordon, Hampshire,  
1945

Literature: Earp, T.W., *Frank Dobson, Sculptor*, 1945, p.16, pl. 33b; Neville  
Jason, *The Sculpture of Frank Dobson*, 1994, p. 154, cat. 187

Dobson's small late terracottas share the monumentality of his larger sculptures, with pure, sensuous forms based on his interest in classicism and primitive art.

In a letter to Sir Charles Herbert Reilly (1874-1948) dated 15 September 1945, Dobson wrote:

"Now about your terra cotta. I am so glad you like it. A photograph of it will be reproduced in a book which is to be published on my work & it is listed as being in your collection. It is the original clay model made by me, baked, & it is unique. That is, there can be no other copies.

It is a good thing to keep these delicate little works dusted if you live in the London area. Don't rub them with a cloth. Blow the dust off with a pair of bellows or put the vacuum cleaner over it occasionally. The carbon in the London atmosphere tends to make a dirty skin. Anyway you know this quite well. You know what it does to buildings."





WG

**JACOB EPSTEIN**

(1880–1959)

Born in New York to Polish Jewish parents, **Jacob Epstein** began his artistic career working in a bronze foundry by day and studying drawing and sculpture by night. Using money from early commissions, Epstein moved to Paris in 1902 and studied at the Académie Julian and the École des Beaux-Arts. In 1905, Epstein settled in London, marrying Margaret Dunlop in 1906 and becoming a British subject in 1911.

Epstein surrounded himself with a bohemian crowd in London, and was a founding member of the London Group, an association of artists and writers promoting modernist art in England. Contrary to a tendency for European sculptors to favour the style of their classical Greek forefathers, Epstein looked instead to the artistic traditions of Asia, West Africa and the Pacific Islands. The artist had long been fascinated by the variety of the human form, and it was a visit to the British Museum's global collections which initially motivated his relocation to the city. After the group dissolved, Epstein generally worked alone, but he spent a brief period before World War One conversing with other young sculptors who shared his interest in non-European art. Working alongside Eric Gill and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, he worked to perceive and correct the weaknesses in British sculpture. This small group of artists engaged in the direct carving of stone rather than working from a clay model, responding to the material's natural form and texture. Rather than aspiring to make ornate or beautiful art, Epstein's religious and allegorical carvings sculptures showed a distinct roughness and brutality, and his avant-garde concepts and style shocked his audience.

The majority of Epstein's work, however, consists of bronze sculptures cast from modelled clay. His bronze busts include numerous high-profile sitters such as the Welsh poet W. H. Davies and the celebrated singer and film star Paul Robeson. During World War Two, he was commissioned to produce a series of six busts for the War Artists' Advisory Committee including a bust of then prime minister Winston Churchill, casts of which have been displayed in the Oval Office of the White House, Washington D.C., the Imperial War Museum in London and the Centre Pompidou in Paris. After a chance meeting with Albert Einstein in Norfolk, Epstein was struck by the scientist's charismatic features and produced a bust portrait, which is held today in the Tate's collection.

Epstein's work was highly innovative for his time, and his influence on the younger generation of sculptors – notably Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth – is significant. Moore even visited Epstein's studio during the older artist's lifetime, and the two shared a fascination with the non-Western art they had encountered at the British Museum.

Today, Epstein's work is in public collections including those of Yale University Art Gallery, The National Portrait Gallery in London, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Leeds Art Gallery and The Welsh National Museum of Art. Monumental works by Epstein can be seen in Hyde Park in London and at Coventry Cathedral.

**Sir Jacob Epstein** (1880–1959)

***First Portrait of Enver***

c.1925, and cast by 1926

Bronze, on original Leicester Gallery black marble base  
11 x 9 x 9 ½" (28 x 23 x 24 cm)

One of two casts sold at the Leicester Galleries in 1926

Provenance: Leicester Galleries, UK, 1926

Literature: Richard Buckle, *Jacob Epstein, Sculptor*, Faber and Faber, London, 1963, p.141, pl.214, another cast illustrated; Evelyn Silber, *The Sculpture of Epstein*, Phaidon, Oxford, 1986, cat. no. 157, p.157, another cast illustrated

The present head is a portrait of a young boy called Enver, the son of Epstein's friend Sunita Devi. Under the name Sunita, Amina Peerbhoy was Epstein's most famous model. The two had met in 1924 at the Wembley International Exhibition, where Sunita and her sister – who had left India and their husbands – had a stall of exotic artefacts. The two sisters and Enver moved in with the Epsteins so that he could always have models at hand; between 1925 and 1933 Epstein sculpted them many times and made countless drawings of Sunita. She and Enver were also the models for his first *Madonna and Child*, 1927. The present head was included in the 1926 exhibition at Leicester Galleries (fig. 2, cat. no. 8) and a plaster version is in the collection of Harvard's Fogg Museum (inv. 1966.14).

Often called the most brilliant modeller since Rodin, Epstein's forte lay in his ability to portray the subject's strong psychological and expressive character. The artist found particular joy in depicting the magical essence of childhood. In the present work, the boy's state of youthful wonder is deftly expressed by his treatment of the eye sockets as large, deep, dark voids that absorb all the incoming light, and almost consume the viewer in the most remarkable way. Through this sculptural device, Epstein seems to express the way in which the child 'confronts time and his destiny...boldly and trustingly (looking out) upon a world newly born to his vision' (Silber, Epstein 1942, pp. 177-8). Epstein's iconic, undulating surface, created by loose and expressive applications of clay in the modelling process, allows the young sitter's face to almost quiver with life.



WG

# **HENRI GAUDIER-BRZESKA**

(1891–1915)



**Henri Gaudier-Brzeska** gained notoriety at a young age when he moved to Britain in 1908 and entered into the group of artists, poets and writers including Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis and T. E. Hulme, who were leading figures of the Vorticist group (Gaudier contributed to the two issues of their magazine *Blast*). He was also a proponent of direct carving following the example of Jacob Epstein. Gaudier was killed in action during the First World War in Belgium.

Though his career was cut short at a young age, Gaudier-Brzeska's influence on both British and French modernist sculpture was surprisingly strong. His work can be seen at the Tate Gallery in London, Kettle's Yard in Cambridge, the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris and the Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Orléans.

**Henri Gaudier-Brzeska** (1891–1915)

***Old Man Kneeling to the Left of Prometheus***

1910

Charcoal drawing

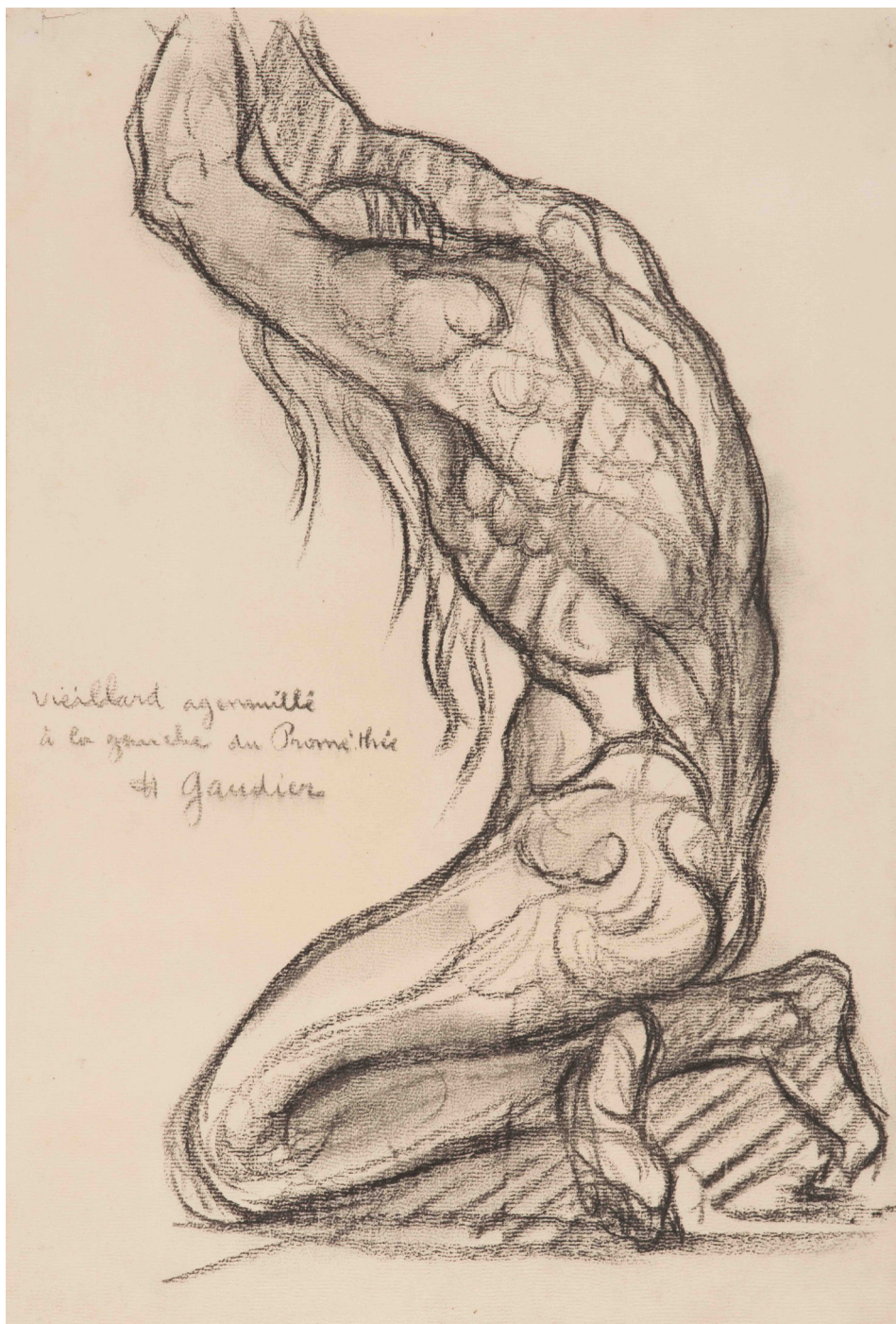
Signed and inscribed in charcoal '*vieillard agenouillé à la gauche du Prométhée*' (*Old Man Kneeling to the Left of Prometheus*) on watermarked '*Ingres/Viladon*' laid paper

30 ½ x 12" (77.5 x 31.5 cm)

Provenance: H. S. (Jim) Ede

Literature: Silber & Finn, *Gaudier-Brzeska*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1996, pp. 74-75; Klinka-Ballesteros & Brullé, *Henri Gaudier-Brzeska Dessins*, Centre Pompidou, Paris & Musée des Beaux-Arts Orléans, 2009, Fage Editions, Lyon, 2010, pp. 96-98

While in Paris in 1910 Gaudier-Brzeska produced a series of drawings for an ambitious sculptural project based on the ancient Greek tragedy of Prometheus. The theme of Prometheus had proven popular among sculptors since the 17th century. Gaudier sketched several designs for his imagined sculpture, both for a Prometheus surrounded by Oceanides as well as a Prometheus surrounded by a group of figures representing humanity, of which this is one. All the drawings are in charcoal and red chalk on the same Ingres/ Viladon paper, and are held in the Musée des Beaux-Arts Orléans, France – Gaudier's birthplace.



**Henri Gaudier-Brzeska** (1891–1915)

***Standing Male Nude***

c. 1913

Blue ink drawing  
15 x 10" (38.5 x 25.5 cm)

Provenance: H. S. (Jim) Ede

Jim Ede (then a curator at Tate Gallery) bought a sizeable portion of Gaudier-Brzeska's work from Sophie Brzeska's estate after she died. Her estate included numerous letters sent between Henri and Sophie, which Ede would use as the basis for his book *Savage Messiah* on the life and work of Gaudier-Brzeska. The majority of Ede's collection, housed in a series of cottages in Cambridge known as Kettle's Yard, would be gifted to as a whole to the University on Ede's death, and remains one of the largest collections of sculptures and drawings by Gaudier.



WG

**ALFRED GILBERT**

(1854–1934)



**Alfred Gilbert** was probably the greatest and best known sculptor in pre-20th century British art. Monuments such as *The Shaftsbury Memorial (Eros)* on Piccadilly Circus, *The Alexandra Memorial* opposite St James Palace, and *The Clarence Tomb* at St George's Chapel, Windsor are just a few of his public monuments.

Gilbert (1854-1934) joined the Royal Academy of Arts at the age of 19, where he was exposed to the influence of Frederic, Lord Leighton, and Aimés Jules Dalou (at that time exiled in London and teaching at the South Kensington School of Art). In 1875 Gilbert moved to Paris, and three years later to Rome. This contact with European arts was hugely influential, and the impact of Italian Renaissance, especially Florentine (Donatello's David and Cellini's Perseus with the Head of Medusa come to mind in Gilbert's work) would continue as a thread throughout his career.

Upon returning from Rome, Gilbert started to exhibit in London; at the Grosvenor Galleries and The Royal Academy, where models including *Perseus Arming* (1882) and *Icarus* (1882-84), and *Comedy and Tragedy* (1890) established the artist's reputation at centre of the New Sculpture movement. Numerous private commissions, and royal patronage followed.

Gilbert's interest in new techniques and materials placed him as an entirely forward thinking, modern artist. His casting in aluminium for the *Shaftsbury Memorial* was the first example of the metal used in English sculpture. Equally his use of polychrome, gilding, and exotic stones in many of his models mark him as a true innovator. His investigations into the lost-wax process of casting; a technique he learnt in Italy, was entirely new to sculpture in Britain.

The turn of the century saw mounting financial issues, and the loss of his royal clientele, bankruptcy and self-exile to the continent followed. It was over 25 years before Gilbert's triumphant return to England, marked by his final great commission: *The Alexandra Memorial* (1926 -1932). He was knighted in 1932 and died two years later, in 1934.

Alfred Gilbert's work is held in major public collections around the world including in the Tate Gallery, London; The Victorian & Albert Museum, London; The Metropolitan Museum, New York; Detroit Institute of Arts and The Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

**Alfred Gilbert** (1854-1934)

***An Offering to Hymen***

Conceived 1884, cast c. 1886

Bronze, on an ebonised base  
11 ¼ x 2 ¾ x 3" (28.5 x 7 x 7.5 cm)

Provenance: Private Collection, North Yorkshire

Literature: Richard Dorment, *New Sculpture*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1985; Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1983, illustrated p.143; The Fine Art Society, *Gibson to Gilbert – British Sculpture 1840–1914*, London, 1992, pp.53–55, no.61; Isabel McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, A & C Black Ltd, London, 1929

According to Richard Dorment, whose detailed catalogue entry in *Alfred Gilbert* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1985) also relates the complex issues involving the dating, multiple versions, and exhibition history of this work, it presents ‘a pubescent girl [who] presents two gifts to the god of Marriage: a tiny, winged statuette representing Anteros, and a silver goblet (in some casts a sprig of hawthorn). The circular base on which she stands, intrinsic to the statue and decorated with classical grotesques, suggests an altar or the approach to one’.

The objects she holds were cast separately and are sometimes in silver or gilt bronze, there are also examples of the figure carrying a putto holding a torch. This specific example is of Anteros (the god of reciprocal love) and a flower. The young girl is pictured offering gifts to Hymen, the god of marriage.

*Offering to Hymen* was one of Gilbert's earliest bronzes modelled when he was in Rome in 1894 and can be seen as an accompanying piece to the artist's *Icarus*, *Comedy and Tragedy*, and *Perseus Arming*.

Other casts of *An Offering to Hymen* are in public collections including Manchester City Art Gallery; The Victoria and Albert Museum, London; The Ashmolean, Oxford; and The National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.



WG

**GERALD LAING**

(1936–2011)

Growing up in Newcastle upon Tyne during World War Two, **Gerald Laing**'s fascination with national myths and the heroes of wartime Britain would later be transferred to the heroism of mid-century America, where he drew similarities between the idealised bodies of Hollywood starlets and the smooth perfection of cars and planes. After five years serving in the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, Laing began at Saint Martin's School of Art in London in 1960.

A visit to New York in 1963 connected him with his American counterparts – namely Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and James Rosenquist – and he moved there more permanently the following year at the invitation of the art dealer Richard Feigen. He quickly garnered attention and success, his work exhibited in the Whitney Museum of American Art and even representing the US at the 1967 Bienal de São Paulo. A pivotal moment for Laing was his inclusion in Kynaston McShine's *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors* exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York in 1966, where three of his sculptures were exhibited alongside the Minimalist work of Anthony Caro, Carl Andre, Donald Judd and Dan Flavin. Further success that decade included group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern and at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Though lauded as a pioneer of the British Pop Art movement and as a member of the New York avant-garde, in 1969 Laing traded New York's art scene for the remote Scottish Highlands, relocating to Kinkell Castle. This move resulted in an unusual artistic shift from the abstract to the figurative. Leaving behind the sterile white cube spaces of New York's galleries, Laing increased the volume and weight of his sculptures to embrace the vast ruggedness of the local landscape. Inspired by an epiphanic early-morning encounter with Charles Sargeant Jagger's *Royal Artillery Memorial* during a visit to London in 1973, Laing, who already felt that he had exhausted the possibility of injecting his pre-existing abstract forms with natural and anthropomorphic elements, turned to working from life and recruited his wife as his model. The *Galina* series of figurative bronzes, produced during this decade, remain some of Laing's most iconic sculptures.

Laing's work has been internationally exhibited and is held in collections worldwide, including at The National Gallery and the Tate in London, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh, the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of Modern Art in New York and The Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC.

Willoughby Gerrish Ltd represents the estate of Gerald Laing for sculpture.

**Gerald Laing** (1936–2011)

***Grenadier***

1968

Lacquered aluminium and chrome on brass

61 ¼ x 24 x 25 ½" (156 x 61 x 62 cm)

Unique

Provenance: Richard Feigen Gallery, NYC; Sothebys, London, 1973

Literature: David Knight, with essays by Michael Findlay, Lyndsey Ingram, and Marco Livingstone; *Gerald Laing: A Catalogue Raisonné*, Lund Humphries, London, 2017, Cat No. 242, p.150, another cast illustrated

*Grenadier* epitomises a defining moment for Laing's minimalist sculpture, an exploration of the boundaries between flatness and three-dimensionality, between painting and sculpture. Its curved aluminium structure derives from Laing's desire for a more intricate, flexible surface on which to paint, the application of colour mimicking the spray-painting of vehicles. In fact, following a disagreement with a local custom car workshop who he had employed to perform spray painting jobs, Laing took matters into his own hands and built a spray booth in his loft. *Grenadier* was first exhibited at the eponymous Richard Feigen Gallery, New York, and is a characteristic example of the clean minimalist lines that Laing became so well known for during the period, directly echoing the work of abstract artists Frank Stella and Ellsworth Kelly. Like much of Laing's work, *Grenadier* is paradoxical: hand-crafted but with the appearance of being mass-produced.





**Gerald Laing** (1936–2011)

***Galina I***

1973

Bronze with a green patina

Marked 'GALINA I.CR290.1973.GERALD LAING.AP1'

18 ¾ x 14 x 10 ½" (48 x 36 x 27 cm)

Edition of 10 plus 2 artist's proofs

Provenance: The artist's estate

Literature: David Knight, with essays by Michael Findlay, Lyndsey Ingram, and Marco Livingstone; *Gerald Laing: A Catalogue Raisonné*, Lund Humphries, London, 2016, Cat No. 310, p194, another cast illustrated

In 1973, Laing abandoned pure abstraction and began modelling in clay and casting in bronze, becoming one of the country's leading figurative sculptors. The *Galina* series and associated sculptures were his first works from this period. The series shows the route by which Laing returned to the figure, though the geometry of his abstract sculpture was influential and is still present, and can be seen as the zenith of Laing's career. Describing this first sculpture, Laing said the following:

"...the breast is a perfect demi-pyramid; one shoulder is organic and tender; one is geometric. The true vertical line up the centre of the work which ends in a depressed oval which refers to the soft indentation of the temple, is at the same time a conscious homage to Picasso's *Femme-Fleur*. The heads, however, beginning with *Galina I*, are derived from comic heroes such as the Silver Surfer (who rode the stratosphere looking down and murmuring to himself, 'Alas what fools these mortals be'). And these comic images have, of course, roots in Japanese art and applied art, and probably run much deeper than that into the elemental human psyche."

In the four years following *Galina I*, a further eight sculptures were made for the series at Kinkell, in Amagansett, Long Island, and in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where Laing spent a year at the University as Visiting Professor of Painting and Sculpture.



**Gerald Laing** (1936–2011)

***An American Girl***

1977

Bronze

Marked 'AN AMERICAN GIRL, CR 375, AP1, GERALD LAING'

25 ½ x 26 x 31" (64.7 x 66 x 74.7 cm)

Edition of 10 plus 2 artist's proofs

Provenance: The artist's estate

Literature: David Knight, with essays by Michael Findlay, Lyndsey Ingram, and Marco Livingstone; *Gerald Laing: A Catalogue Raisonné*, Lund Humphries, London, 2017, Cat No. 399, pp.232-233, another cast illustrated

Between 1973 and 1978, using his wife as a model, Laing worked steadily towards figurative sculpture which both fulfilled his own aesthetic ideas and had some symbolic connotation. *An American Girl* can be seen as the culmination of the *Galina* series, showing how Laing had approached the figure with both abstraction and naturalism, absorbing a variety of influences in order to find a figurative language for the human form. Laing described *An American Girl* at length:

"The headscarf is intended to be reminiscent of a US World War II helmet; it has always seemed to me that the large cranial size of these helmets gave US soldiers of the period a disturbing and paradoxical juvenile appearance. [...] The contrast between the US helmet and the German one of the same period, which looks efficient and brutal, and the British one, which looks plain silly, like an upturned basin, is worth noting and the possible reasons for the difference is a fertile area for speculative conjecture. The pose of *An American Girl* is Romantic, driven by the expression of aggressive consumerism. She is disruptive to the viewer: confident, seductive and relaxed. The figure seems conscious of this, but at the same time it is self-contained, introspective, and completely independent. The geometric articulation of the spine and the almost landscape-like quality of the parts of the sculpture reinforce this enigmatic certitude, while other parts are extremely realistic, human and therefore vulnerable."



**Gerald Laing** (1936–2011)

***Dreaming***

1978

Bronze with a green patina

Marked 'DREAMING 1978 A/PB CR379' with the artist's initials 'GL'

12 x 8 x 12" (30 x 20 x 30 cm)

Edition of 10 plus 2 artist's proofs

Provenance: The artist's estate

Literature: David Knight, with essays by Michael Findlay, Lyndsey Ingram, and Marco Livingstone; *Gerald Laing: A Catalogue Raisonné*, Lund Humphries, London, 2016, Cat No. 403, p.235, another cast illustrated

*Dreaming* is a bust version of *An American Girl*, featuring the same helmet-like headscarf and facial features. Along with *Galina X*, *An American Girl* and *Dreaming* are the only sculptures from this group of works which have a discernible human face. In a critique of the state of contemporary art at the time – which he deemed as having become too self-involved and simplified through extensive abstraction, and thus lacking relation to human experience – Alistair Dunlop praised Laing's work for its humanism:

"It is almost as if his sculptural development can be seen as an art historical journey in reverse. This does not, however, mean that the current work belongs to the 16th, 17th or 19th centuries; it is inevitably rooted in the late 20th century experience of the sculptor himself. Often it is possible to make visual comparisons with the sculpture of the past: the cowed figures of *An American Girl* and *Ecce Domino* seem reminiscent of Claus Sluter's *Lacrimae* figures for the tomb of Philip the Good at Dijon but in fact the artist was quite unaware of them at the time. One can also see echoes of Rodin and Michaelangelo, Benini and Gian Bologna but these come about because Laing is interested in these artists, in their own times, who were trying to solve similar philosophical and artistic problems. What interests Laing in these artists and also those of classical Greece and Rome is not so much the forms of the sculpture itself but the way it interprets the society through the philosophies of classicism, humanism and idealism."

Alistair Dunlop, Unpublished manuscript, 1980.





WG

**MICHAEL LYONS**

(1943–2019)

**Michael Lyons** was born in Bilston, Staffordshire. As a youth, he trained for Roman Catholic priesthood, then attended Wolverhampton College of Art and Hornsey College of art before studying at the University of Newcastle. Lyons gained recognition in the 1960s with his inclusion in exhibitions such as the Institute of Contemporary Art's *Young Contemporaries* and the Whitworth Gallery's *Northern Young Contemporaries*, and by the 1970s, he had solidified his reputation as one of the finest steel sculptors of his generation.

In contrast to the tendency for artists to relocate to more popular cities like London, Lyons continued to live and work in Yorkshire and forged a successful career from his non-metropolitan base, consistently maintaining a connection with the land. Growing up in the West Midlands, the post-industrial landscape of the Black Country, along with his strong Catholic upbringing and his later interest in mythology and cosmology, had an undeniable influence on his life's work. His sculptures command attention in relation to their landscape, and, whilst rigid in medium, recognise the powers of nature and ritual. For the painter and writer John Clark, Lyons' dedication to his landscape distinguished him from the more architectural sculpture of Anthony Caro's students at Saint Martin's School of Art in London, declaring it to be a 'romantic and expressionist reaction to nature'.

Lyons' work ranges from steel constructions to organic bronzes and from small and medium pieces to monumental public works. Steel was arguably his master medium, cut, bent and folded in a direct and almost organic manner and exploitative of the way in which light brings its metallic surface to life; lines are created by the cut edge of the metal or by folds in its planes. The formal strength of Lyons's sculptures is supplemented by references to many sources including landscape, natural forces, art history and mythology, showing a sensitivity to place and time.

Lyons' fundamental belief in man's connection with the landscape in which he lives led him to have an instrumental role in the founding of Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The ability to produce sculpture in the outdoors provided Lyons with, in his own words, 'the freedom to cut metal and smoke cigars'. Lyons spent much of his career teaching at numerous art colleges, both in the UK and internationally, and took up the position of Head of Sculpture at Manchester Metropolitan University's Fine Art department in 1989. Teaching stints in China, Canada and the USA – places where he once again found a deep affinity for the landscape – greatly influenced his practice. Similarly, residencies in Mexico, Germany, Turkey and Cyprus resulted in Lyons producing large-scale works which speak to the cultural and sculptural traditions of their respective countries.

From 1994 to 1997, Lyons served as the Vice-President of the Royal British Society of Sculptors. The long-standing rapports which Lyons built with the countries he visited is evidenced by his various accolades, including first prize at the 2003 Guilin Yuzi Paradise International Sculpture Awards in China and the Premio Fondo Nacional del las Artes at the 2006 Chaco Biennial of Sculpture in Argentina, and commissions, notably his *Voice of the Mountain: Sudden Storm* for the Shanghai Sculpture Park. Today, Lyons' work is held in both private and public collections, including those of the Arts Council, the Hepworth Wakefield, the Henry Moore Institute and the Yale Centre for British Art.

Willoughby Gerrish Ltd represents the estate of Michael Lyons.

**Michael Lyons** (1943–2019)

***Drogheda***

1970

Steel with a brown patina

15 x 31 ½ x 30" (39 x 80 x 77 cm)

Unique

Provenance: The artist's estate

Literature: Judith LeGrove, *The Sculpture of Michael Lyons*, Samson & Company, Bristol, 2013, cat. No. 49, p.22, illustrated p.123

The title of this work refers to Drogheda, one of the oldest towns in Ireland dating back to the ninth century. Though abstract, *Drogheda's* steel forms with brown patina call to mind wrought iron gates and grilles found in Medieval castles and buildings around Britain.



**Michael Lyons** (1943–2019)

***Elidore***

1970

Fabricated steel, gun metal castings  
38 ¼ x 39 x 23" (97 x 100 x 60 cm)  
Unique

Provenance: The artist's estate

Literature: Judith LeGrove, *The Sculpture of Michael Lyons*, Samson & Company, Bristol, 2013, cat. No. 50, p.22, illustrated p.123

The title of this work recalls a Celtic fairy tale about a young boy who was brought up to be a cleric but who defiantly runs away and discovers a magical land full of pygmies and pleasantries. The tale also contains a reference to how Britain was named after Brito, a refugee from the ancient city of Troy. Here Lyons has created an abstract amalgamation of steel forms, suggestive of industrial machinery, furnished with bronze gunmetal castings.





**Michael Lyons** (1943–2019)

***Shaman's Song (Tree of Life)***

1989, cast and painted during the artist's lifetime

Bronze, painted red

7 ¼ x 6 x 3" (18.5 x 15 x 7.5 cm)

Edition of 2

Provenance: The artist's estate

Literature: Judith LeGrove, *The Sculpture of Michael Lyons*, Samson & Company, Bristol, 2013, cat. No. SS123, p.296, illustrated p.197

The *Tree of Life* refers to an archetype found in many of the world's mythologies, religions and philosophical traditions, describing a tree which connects all forms of creation. In Christianity, this tree is presented in the Bible as the source of eternal life in the Garden of Eden; in Shamanic cosmologies, however, the tree is said to connect the Lower, Middle and Upper worlds. Lyons' sculpture is more naturalistic than his earlier steel constructions, and is more organic in construction, with visibly raw edges to the bronze forms.



WG

**F. E. MCWILLIAM**

(1909–1992)

**Frederick Edward McWilliam** CBE RA was a Northern Irish surrealist sculptor. McWilliam studied painting and drawing at the Belfast College of Art in Northern Ireland (1928) and at the Slade School of Fine Art in London (1928–31) before moving to Paris for a year. In 1936 McWilliam visited the International Surrealist Exhibition in London and his work was strongly influenced by the movement. After serving in the Royal Air Force in India during World War II, McWilliam taught drawing and sculpture in Bengal (1944–46), as well as in London at the Chelsea School of Art (1946–47) and at the Slade (1947–66). His work was seldom overtly political, but in 1972–73 he made a series of powerful bronzes, *Women of Belfast*, in response to the bombing of the Abercorn restaurant in Belfast.

McWilliam was elected to the Royal Academy in 1959 and was made Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1966. He was the subject of a retrospective exhibition held at the Tate Gallery in London in 1989, and his work is held in many major public collections including that of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Celebrating his work, the F. E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio was opened in Banbridge, near Belfast, in 1992.

**Frederick Edward McWilliam** (1909-1992)

***Mother and Child***

1946

Terracotta

18 x 7 x 5 ½" (45.6 x 18 x 14 cm)

Unique

Provenance: Acquired directly from the artist in the 1950s

Published: D. Ferran and V. Holman, *The Sculpture of F.E McWilliam*, Lund Humphries, Surrey, 2012, p. 96, cat. No. 50, illustrated

McWilliam's first sculptures, which he carved using Buckinghamshire cherry wood, were biomorphic forms influenced by the abstract work of Jean Arp and Constantin Brancusi.

He was a friend and contemporary of Henry Moore whose work he especially admired. Both artists explored the theme of 'mother and child' throughout their careers. In this instance McWilliam principally follows the older artist's interest in non-European art but whilst Moore was influenced by the African figures he saw in the British Museum, McWilliam was inspired by his time in India where he taught art in New Delhi before moving to Bengal where he took a keen interest in Hindu terracotta temple sculptures.





WG

**BERNARD MEADOWS**

(1915–2005)

Born in Norwich, **Bernard Meadows** briefly trained as an accountant before attending Norwich School of Art. In 1936 after being introduced by a friend, Meadows became Henry Moore's first studio assistant at his studio in Kent. The two became close friends and Meadows would once again assist Moore in his studio in Hampstead, London the following year. During this time, Meadows also studied at the Royal College of Art and at the Courtauld Institute of Art. Meadows participated in the first Surrealist exhibition in London in 1936; the outbreak of World War Two would prevent him from exhibiting again until 1951. Having initially registered as a conscientious objector, the Nazi invasion of the USSR in 1941 led him to withdraw his objection and he was subsequently called to serve in the Royal Air Force. Stationed in the Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean, he became fascinated by the large variety of crabs he encountered. These animals would serve as long-term inspiration for the artist.

Upon returning home after the war, Meadows returned to Moore's studio and assisted with his marble sculpture *Three Standing Figures*, 1947 and his large bronze *Family Group*. In his own practice, Meadows sculpted crabs, birds and other wildlife, and for the first time in fifteen years, his work was exhibited in public. An elm sculpture exhibited in Battersea Park alongside the 1951 Festival of Britain brought him great acclaim and later entered The Tate Gallery's collection. The following year, Meadows represented Britain at the 1952 Venice Biennale as part of the new generation of British sculptors which included Robert Adams and Reg Butler amongst others. The critic Herbert Read dubbed the angular nature of this art as the 'Geometry of Fear', but it was to Meadows' work which this phrase would best apply, aligning with the 'ragged claws' about which Read spoke. More so than his peers, Meadows' sculptures of crabs and birds escaped Moore's influence and communicated the mood of post-war trauma, anxiety, and existentialism. Meadows held his first solo show at Gimpel Fils in London in 1957, with four more solo shows over the next decade. He also exhibited at the Bienal de São Paulo in 1957, at Documenta 2 in Kassel in 1959, and was invited by the British Council to exhibit again at the Venice Biennale in 1964.

During the 1960s, Meadows' work took a new direction, and his focus turned from the animal to the human, resulting in a series of armed busts. Despite this shift in subject matter, his interest in the duality of interior and exterior persisted; the influence of the crabs was ever-present in the armour worn by the figures. In 1960, Meadows became Professor of Sculpture at the Royal College of Art, where he had been teaching since 1948. He held this position for two decades, and his students included Robert Clatworth and Elisabeth Frink. In 1977, Meadows returned to assist Moore, whose health had begun to decline, in Hertfordshire. Following his former mentor's death in 1986, he continued to help with Moore's estate and became an acting director of the Henry Moore Foundation.

To mark Meadows' 80th birthday in 1995, a retrospective exhibition dedicated to the artist was held at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. His work can today be found in collections held by the Tate Gallery, the Hepworth Wakefield and the National Galleries of Scotland.

**Bernard Meadows** (1915–2005)

***Maquette for Large Standing Figure***

1962

Bronze, with a grey patina  
Signed with the artist's monogram  
22 ¼ x 12 x 7 ½" (56.5 x 30.5 x 19.1 cm)  
Edition of 6 plus 1

Provenance: James Hyman Gallery, London, 2002

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Bernard Meadows, Sculpture and Drawings*, The Henry Moore Foundation in association with Lund Humphries, London, 1995, Cat. No. BM85, another cast illustrated p.142

After making studies of Michelangelo's bust of Brutus and of portraits of Henry VIII by Holbein, Meadows produced a series of partly abstracted soldier figures. Regarding these, Meadows said:

"The figures are armoured, aggressive, protected, but inside the safety of the shell they are completely soft and vulnerable. [People] who are protected by the paraphernalia of their offices and retinues, but who are soft inside."

*Maquette for Large Standing Figure* presents a heavily armoured and blockish figure with spikes protruding from his form. The influence of Meadows' earlier work is clear: the figure combines strength and vulnerability with defensive armour akin to that of a crab and with spindly, bird-like legs. A monumental version, *Large Standing Figure*, was also cast in 1962.



WG

**HENRY MOORE**

(1898–1986)



**Henry Moore** is arguably the greatest British sculptor of the twentieth century. He was born in Yorkshire in 1898 and died, after an exceptionally productive career, in 1986. He achieved a huge level of fame and recognition in his own lifetime and as a result his sculptures are displayed in many major cities across the world.

For Moore, his maquettes were independent and complete works in their own right, not mere workings for larger projects. As Moore said:

“I don’t make my maquettes and models for that purpose of trying to show to somebody else what the big one was going to be like. No, as I make this, the size is any size that I like. I can make it any size in my imagination that I want it to be.”

Erich Steingraber, ed., *Henry Moore, Maquettes, Interview with Henry Moore*, Munich, 1978, p. 56.

Unlike many of his larger works, for which he needed help from assistants, he worked on his maquettes entirely independently. They are therefore considered to be more direct examples of the sculptor’s particular vision and imagination, almost utopian objects, free from the constraints of the size and patronage of his larger, commissioned work.

Moore’s legacy is wide-reaching, and numerous artists – including Lynn Chadwick, Eduardo Paolozzi, Bernard Meadows, Robert Adams and Geoffrey Clarke – have all given testimony to his influence on their work. The artist turned down a knighthood, fearing that it would render him inaccessible to fellow artists, though he was awarded the Companion of Honour in 1955, the Order of Merit in 1963 and the Erasmus Prize in 1968. The largest public collection of Moore’s work is housed at his former estate, now owned by the Henry Moore Foundation, an organisation which continues to promote the importance of contemporary art around the world. An equally impressive display of Moore’s sculpture forms the Henry Moore Sculpture Centre in the Art Gallery of Toronto.

**Henry Moore** (1898–1986)

***Half Figure***

Conceived in 1932, cast in 1956

Bronze with a brown patina  
5 x 2 ¼ x 1 ½" (13 x 6 x 4 cm)  
Edition of 7

Literature: David Sylvester (ed.), *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings 1921-48, Volume 1*, Lund Humphries Publishers, London, UK, 1988, Cat. No 116, p.8

Throughout his career Henry Moore collected a huge assortment of pebbles and bones, which he would then use as inspiration for his sculptures. *Half Figure*, conceived in 1932, was part of a series of sculptures from this period that took this idea of copying natural forms to create an organic language that Moore would continually develop.

Anthony Caro, who was Moore's assistant for two years from 1951, recounted the story of how each day the two artists would habitually walk in the countryside where Moore would regularly stop to pick up interesting pieces of wood or pebbles to take back to the studio to use for stimulus. The mischievous Caro would rush ahead to position such objects in obvious places alongside the path and trick his master into believing he himself had found them – much to the amusement to Caro and the other assistants from the studio.



**Henry Moore** (1898–1986)

***Seated Figure: Cross Hatch***

1961

Bronze, with green and brown highlights

Signed 'Moore' and numbered '3/9', inscribed 'H. NOACK BERLIN'

6 x 4 ½ x 2 ½" (15.4 x 11.9 x 6.2 cm)

Edition 3 of 9

Provenance: Marlborough Fine Art, London, 1963; Private Collection, Yorkshire, 1963-2014

Moore explains the creation of this work as a moment of inspired serendipity. He had cut and scratched the surface of the preparatory plaster model so that he could attach more plaster to it and allow the new plaster to have some purchase on the existing model. However, Moore got temporarily distracted by another work and when he returned, decided he actually preferred the hatching effect that had been created. This is a prime example of Moore's working methods, and particularly his integration of chance and the 'hand of nature' into his work. For example, the inspiration for the precise forms of his maquettes often came directly from objects found in nature, hand-sized things that Moore could inspect thoroughly from every point of view.



**Henry Moore** (1898-1986)

***Maquette for Two Piece Reclining Figure: Points***

Conceived in 1969, cast before 1971

Bronze

Signed, numbered from the edition of 9 and stamped with foundry mark  
'NOACK BERLIN'

3 1/2 x 5 x 2 1/2" (9 x 13 x 6.5 cm)

Edition of 9

Provenance: Marlborough Fine Art, London; Private Collection USA, 1971

Literature: A. Bowness, ed., *Henry Moore, Sculpture and Drawings, 1964-73*, Lund Humphries Publishers, London, 1977, p.56, no. 604, another cast illustrated, p.57

In the late 1950s, Moore created his first separated two-piece compositions, relating figures to the natural landscape. *Maquette for Two Piece Reclining Figure: Points* is an instance of the artist combining the human figure, particularly the female figure, with references to organic forms such as shells, pebbles and bones; an approach that would become synonymous with the artist's sculptural style.

Monumental versions of *Two Piece Reclining Figure: Points* are in Kew Gardens, London; The Hofgarten, Dusseldorf; and Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C. The plaster model is at the Art Gallery of Ontario.





WG

**AUSTIN WRIGHT**

(1911–1997)

**Austin Wright** grew up in Cardiff and trained to be a teacher. In 1939 he produced his first surviving wood-carving. After the war, he started teaching at York Art School, where he widened his range of media to include stone, clay and lead.

In 1955 he was asked to exhibit in the touring British Council Show *Young British Sculptors* with Kenneth Armitage, Lynn Chadwick, Elizabeth Frink and Eduardo Paolozzi. A remarkable achievement for an artist who only took up sculpture fulltime at the age of 44, a year before being selected for the show.

In 1957, Austin won the purchase prize at the São Paulo Biennale, and from 1961 to 1964 he held the Gregory Fellowship in Sculpture at the University of Leeds. Here he was befriended by the Professor of Botany, Irene Manton, who stimulated his interest in plant forms and in the interior structure of plants. From this point on, Wright's sculptures were inspired by plants, botanical electron micrographs and his beloved and inspirational garden. These works explore growth, movement and lightness; features encapsulated by his choice of medium, aluminium.

His work is held at the Tate; the Arts Council; the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Leeds and York Universities. He had major retrospectives at Wakefield (1960), Newcastle upon Tyne (1974), the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (1984), Hull (1988) and York Art Gallery (2011).

Willoughby Gerrish Ltd represents the estate of Austin Wright.

**Austin Wright** (1911–1997)

**News**

Conceived and cast in 1956

3 bronze elements on wooden base  
10 x 16 x 12" (25.4 x 40.6 x 31.2 cm)  
Edition of two known casts, one in lead

Provenance: The Hart Gallery, London

Literature: James Hamilton, *The Sculpture of Austin Wright*, Henry Moore Foundation/Lund Humphries, London, 1994, p.29, illustrated, & 86 (no. S84)

Between 1950 and 1955 Austin Wright's sculptures branched into two distinct directions: Firstly, direct carvings in wood, that had been his mainstay up until this point, and secondly, a series of much smaller cast figures, usually in lead. These figures were often positioned 'in discussion' on one single base. Subjects such as *The Argument* (which would win sculpture prize at the 1957 Sao Paulo Biennale in Brazil) *The Lovers*, and in this case *News* all depict groups interacting with each other – depicting the 'electricity of human interaction' as the artist described it. Wright's wife Sue concurred, recording in her diaries in 1951:

"A. making lots of exciting groups of figures, bicycles etc. The chief idea being how we overlap and interweave with our fellows - in our relations we become part of a person for a time - part of the same whole anyway."



WG

**EMILY YOUNG**

(B. 1951)

**Emily Young** is 'Britain's greatest living stone sculptor' (Financial Times).

Young was born in London into a family of writers, artists, politicians and adventurers. Her grandmother was the sculptor Kathleen Scott, a colleague of Auguste Rodin and widow of the explorer Captain Scott of the Antarctic.

As a young woman, Emily Young worked primarily as a painter, having studied briefly at Chelsea School of Art, Central Saint Martins London, and Stonybrook University, New York. She left London in the late 60s, and spent the next years travelling through the USA, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, South America and China. It was during these travels, whilst encountering an extensive range of cultures, that she developed her broad view of art and its history.

In the early 1980s Emily Young started carving in stone, raiding quarries for materials from all around the world. The primary objective of her sculpture is to bring the natural beauty and energy of stone, including its capacity to embody human consciousness, to the fore. Her sculptures have unique characters due to each individual stone's geological history and its geographical source.

Her approach allows the viewer to comprehend a commonality across time, land and cultures. Her constant preoccupation is our troubled relationship with the planet, which underscores her studio practice. In her combination of traditional carving skills with technology, she produces work which marries the contemporary with the ancient, manifesting a unique, serious and poetic presence.

Young's work is in important public and private collections throughout the world. She has exhibited at many prestigious museums including: The Getty, California; The Imperial War Museum, London; The Whitworth, Manchester; The Meijer Sculpture Gardens, Grand Rapids, and The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

**Emily Young** (b.1951)

***Torso (May)***

2005

Marble

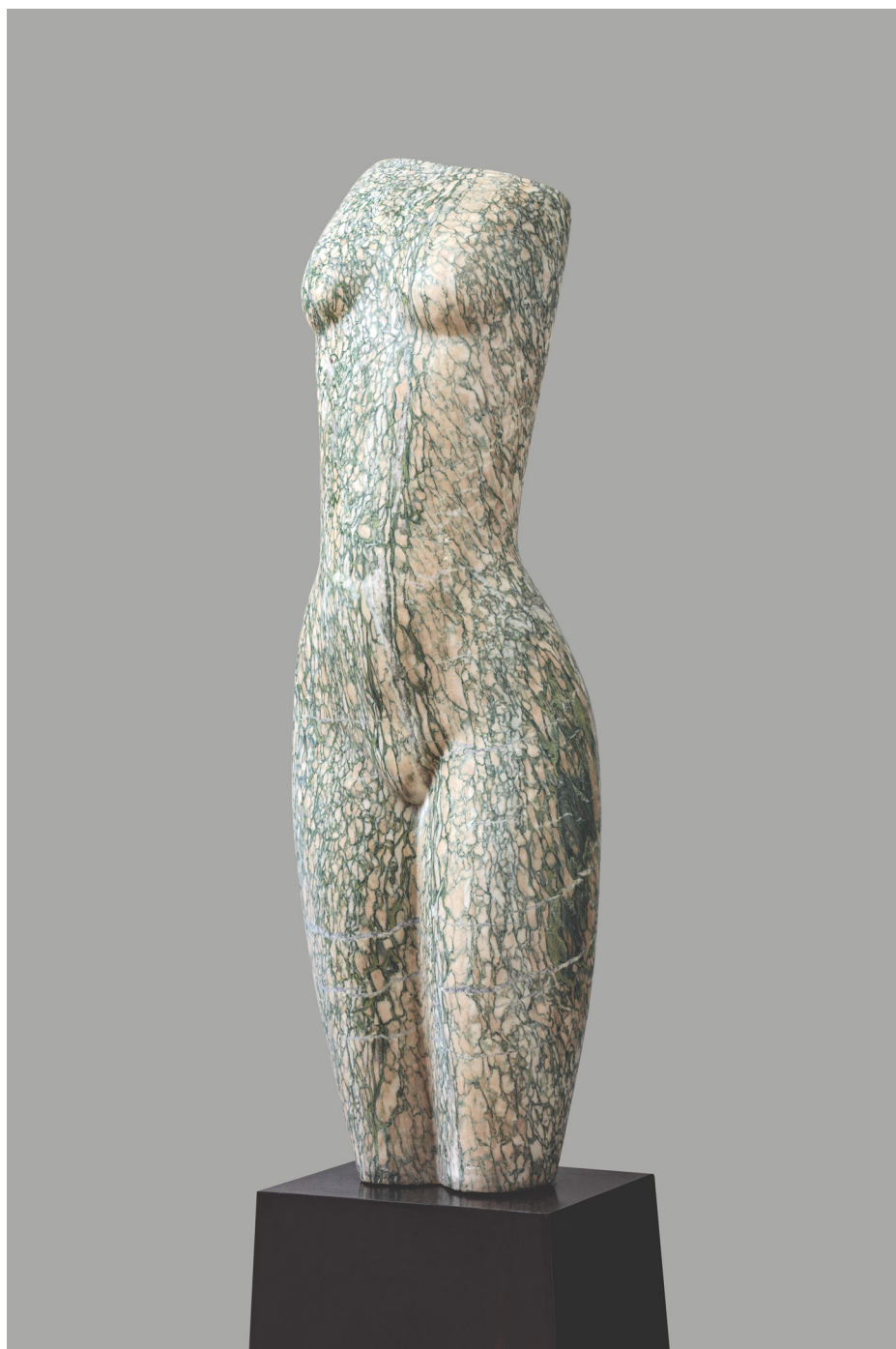
43 ¼ x 15 x 8 ¼" (110 x 38 x 21 cm)

Unique

Provenance: Purchased directly from the artist; private collection, UK

From a series of 12 sculptures made in 2005, each named after the months on the year, *Torso (May)* represents one of Emily Young's three principal subject matters; the others being the head, and discs. Of these, the torsos perhaps represent the closest influence of other artist's work; in particular Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth's abstracted figures from the 1920s and 1930s, in stone and wood. Like these two titans of British sculpture, Young's dedication to 'truth of materials' is apparent; in this case the speckled surface of the sculpture, where greens, whites, and hues of pink ripple across the surface of the figure. In all Young's work, mother nature is the real creator.





**Emily Young** (b.1951)

***Maremma Warrior III***

2011

Brecciated Quartzite

19 x 19 ½ x 23 ½" (48 x 50 x 60 cm)

Unique

Provenance: The Fine Art Society, London

*Maremma Warrior III* was first exhibited in 2011 and is one of a series of sculptures called *The Maremma Heads* that marked an important juncture in the artist's career. Earlier that year the artist has moved her studio and home from London to the Maremma region of Italy (the coastal area of western central Italy, bordering the Tyrrhenian Sea). In doing so, Young was presented with a new supply of very different stone to the ones she had previously carved in the UK, or indeed ordered from stone masons around the world. The local Maremma stone, a brecciated quartzite, consisting of large quartzite crystals embedded within an often rich terracotta coloured block of debris, is extremely hard, and therefore difficult to carve. The result was a more abstract, impasto carving style. Rather than dictating exactly how she could work – as one would with a softer stone – Young found she had to form a 50 / 50 relationship between herself and the stone, one where neither party could dictate terms. This moment was the important catalyst for Young's sculpture moving in a new and more direct direction, which we now see in the majority of her carvings today.

Other sculptures from this series were acquired by The Whitworth Museum in Manchester, and another exhibited at The Getty in California.



C R E D I T S

CATALOGUE DESIGN

GILLY THORNE

CATALOGUE RESEARCH

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