Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture, 1945–1975

Rebecca Peabody, editor

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Front cover:
Barbara Hepworth, *Figure for Landscape,* 1960. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum. Gift of Fran and Ray Stark. © Bowness, Hepworth Estate

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Foreword

Antonia Boström
Penelope Curtis
Andrew Perchuk
Jon Wood

This book is part of a conversation that dates back to 2005, when the J. Paul Getty Trust and Museum accepted the Fran and Ray Stark Sculpture Collection, a gift of twenty-eight modern sculptures by American and European artists. The collection's arrival at the Getty Center was the occasion for a publication documenting the works: *The Fran and Ray Stark Collection of 20th-Century Sculpture at the J. Paul Getty Museum* (J. Paul Getty Museum, 2008). It was also the occasion for Antonia Boström, who edited the volume, and Penelope Curtis, a contributor, to begin discussing some of the larger implications of the collection.

Having written an essay about the Stark collection for the 2008 catalogue, Penelope Curtis was aware that its significance was easy to overlook in present-day America. The collection represents a set of tastes that were dominant in the 1950s and 1960s, when American collectors of sculpture still looked to Europe and especially to Britain for important work. Following the publication of the catalogue, she proposed a symposium focusing on this postwar exchange—one that would look first at Henry Moore, but also at the other ways in which English sculptors such as Anthony Caro were absorbed into an American discourse, and in which American sculptors were attracted to British subject matter.

Curtis's essay for the Stark catalogue compared this collection with others such as the Museum of Modern Art sculpture court, the Hirshorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and the Norton Simon Museum. She discussed the way in which it sought to replicate, on a smaller scale, some of the ambitious collections of primarily outdoor sculpture that were being formed in postwar America. While at the Getty Museum, Curtis was able to talk with Andrew Perchuk about the West Coast's postwar art scene, and in particular about Maurice Tuchman's major exhibition of American sculpture, which included Caro. On her return to Britain, and in conversation with her colleague Jon Wood, it was decided that the symposium should be managed collaboratively with the Henry Moore Institute, and an institutional partnership was formed between the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, and the Henry Moore Institute, with the goal of organizing an international symposium exploring transatlantic artistic exchange through sculpture.

The symposium was intended to serve as an extension of a previous conference that the Henry Moore Institute had organized at Tate Britain. This earlier conference had focused on British sculpture abroad, and while presenters looked, for example, at the currency of British sculpture in various European venues, including Venice and Kassel, they also inevitably touched on transatlantic exchange. Inspired by this earlier conference, very successfully convened by Martina Droth, the more recent Getty Center/Henry Moore Institute symposium focused on a specifically American dimension within the international circulation of British sculpture. The Henry Moore Institute put out a call for papers and contacted scholars in the field; the response, primarily British, is largely represented in this volume.

The two-day symposium, *Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture, 1945–1975,* was held at the Getty Center in Los Angeles in 2008. The papers were of an excellent quality, but the audience was sparse, reflecting perhaps the lack of current interest in postwar British sculpture in the American academy. Despite the initial hope that the symposium would spur scholarly interest in the Stark collection and its wider context, the apparent limitations of the gift's ability to alter the contemporary landscape were perhaps still too much in evidence. It is thus our hope that the very real quality of the papers will now reach the wider audience they deserve and stimulate more far-reaching discussion.

This collaboration would not have been possible without the help of many people. First of all, we would like to thank the symposium's participants; the program can be viewed here:

http://www.getty.edu/museum/pdfs/postwar_sculpture_schedule.pdf.

We are also grateful to the late William Brice for his invaluable insight into the history of the Stark sculpture collection; John Welchman, for agreeing to deliver the symposium's keynote lecture; Rebecca Peabody, who co-organized the symposium and guided the publication; Christopher Bedford, Peter Tokofsky, David Morritt, and Ellen South, who contributed to the symposium's organization; Raquel Zamora and Rebecca Zamora for assistance with the publication; Pam Moffat for securing photo permissions; Whitney Braun for systematizing the captions; Nomi Kleinmuntz for editing the manuscript; Rebecca Beatty for its careful proofreading; Katharine Eustace, editor of *Sculpture Journal,* and Liverpool University Press for allowing this publication to include three essays that first appeared in the *Sculpture Journal;* and Adam Lehner, managing editor of *October,* and MIT Press for allowing this publication to include an essay that first appeared in *October.*

Introduction: Trajectories in Sculpture

Rebecca Peabody

Though occasioned by the J. Paul Getty Trust and Museum's acquisition of the Fran and Ray Stark Sculpture Collection, the symposium that led to this publication dealt with a much wider range of artists and sculptures than are reflected in the collection. The goal was to gather a number of scholarly inquiries that were inspired by British or American artists, artworks, or art markets, while also attending to the ways in which art and ideas circulated between the two countries—through physical travel across the Atlantic, or less directly, on the currents of postwar cultural exchange. The symposium and publication address an art historical oversight—namely, that British and American histories of sculpture are often recounted separately, with artists and artworks contextualized nationally. This artificial division results in fragmented narratives, as the years between 1945 and 1975 saw a particularly vibrant transatlantic exchange of ideas, individuals, and aesthetic influences. Artists, artworks, curators, exhibitions, publications, and movements all traveled between the two cultures—in physical form, or in representations—transferring ideas and inspiration, and sometimes anxiety and antagonism. Troubling the national boundaries of postwar sculptural history requires a conception of place that is at once local and cosmopolitan, rooted and well traveled.

Conceiving of place in this way—as constituted through movement and transference as well as through fixity—is a challenge that the contributors to this volume took up in different, yet thematically related, ways. John C. Welchman provides an important historical framework; his overview of Anglo-American relations between 1945 and 1975 focuses on economic, political, and cultural cooperation and how it has influenced sculptural practice. Underscoring the importance of cultural internationalism, he traces debates and developments concerning sculpture's relationship to realism, abstraction, pop, and formalism, as well as the push-and-pull that brought about an international reconsideration of sculpture's basic materials and properties. He concludes with a look back at this period from the present through the work of a contemporary artist who creates post-minimalist sculpture that is reimagined through such twenty-first-century tools as digital, virtual, and electronic technologies.

Essays by Pauline Rose, Jennifer Wulffson Bedford, Robert Slifkin, and Jo Applin focus on the influence of English sculptor Henry Moore—in both

Great Britain and America, across multiple generations of artists, and as both an artist and a highly marketable persona. Rose reveals how Moore was exported, via journalistic and photographic representations, to American audiences. Analysis of these representations reveals that Moore had achieved international celebrity years before such was the norm for artists, and that his persona was used in specific, strategic ways during the Cold War era. Wulffson Bedford considers Moore's American reception by way of the criticism of Los Angeles–based journalist and critic Henry Seldis. Unlike some critics of avant-garde art, such as Clement Greenberg and Rosalind Krauss, Seldis supported Moore's work; Wulffson Bedford's analysis of his criticism sheds new light both on Seldis's career and on Moore's reception. Slifkin takes up Bruce Nauman's sculptural tribute to Moore and his implicit critique of a younger generation of artists who were dismissive of Moore's work. He argues for a reconsideration of Nauman's engagement with the historical past, and an expanded understanding of figuration in Nauman's work—one that moves beyond the visual to include the rhetorical. Applin also reflects on the ways in which younger artists responded to aesthetic heritage—in particular, by comparing Bruce McLean's engagement with Henry Moore's legacy to McLean's response to the more contemporaneous practices of his American counterparts Walter De Maria and Robert Morris.

If Moore's influence was formidable, so too was the impact of what became the canonical modernism of the postwar era—particularly associated, on the American side, with the critic Clement Greenberg, and on the British side, with the sculptor and teacher Anthony Caro. Their thinking about modernist sculpture is taken up by Sarah Hamill, David J. Getsy, and Courtney J. Martin. Hamill explores how David Smith and Anthony Caro, both of whom were championed by Greenberg, nevertheless defied his aesthetic preferences by painting their sculptures. While Greenberg thought paint nonessential to the medium of sculpture, Hamill argues that Smith's and Caro's experiments with color revealed its importance. Getsy directs attention to the antagonistic exchanges between Greenberg and English critic Herbert Read, each of whom stridently championed different artists, and supported different ways of encountering sculpture. At stake, Getsy argues, was more than critical disagreement; it was which version of modernism would be memorialized. Courtney Martin investigates Pakistan-born, London-based artist Rasheed Araeen's initial embrace, then rejection, of Greenberg and Caro—on both aesthetic and political grounds. Martin argues that Araeen conflated Britain's past and America's mid-twentieth-century present into an imaginary "West," a construction he opposed in his conceptual art and minimalist sculpture in order to express radicalism, political awareness, and solidarity among those oppressed by colonialism.

The importance of distance—whether historical, national, or interplanetary—to the formulation of sculptural practices and the land art movement is taken up by Alistair Rider, Joy Sleeman, and Timothy D. Martin. Rider compares American minimalist sculptor Carl Andre with English land artist Richard Long to show how both use prehistory in their sculpture. Rider also investigates how these two artists used ancient English sites in ways that differed from an earlier generation of British artists. Sleeman posits that the development of land art in Europe, Britain, and the United States was the result of a transatlantic network of travels, encounters, exchanges, and exhibitions. She argues that the Apollo moon landings had a significant impact—in 1969 and into the

present—on the ways in which artists engaged with the surface of the earth. Tim Martin proposes a reconsideration of the relationship between American land art and the British picturesque park by way of Robert Smithson. Martin's reading of Smithson suggests that the artist invoked seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British garden philosophy in order to propose that twentieth-century land art, and the land artist, should play essential roles in working out some of the conflicts inherent to a democratic society.

From artists to critics to journalists, and from stone and welded steel to conceptual and performance art, these essays consider postwar sculptural practices broadly, yet with sustained attention to the importance of an international perspective. Together they offer an intriguing corrective to the problem of nationally oriented histories of sculpture, and an opening onto a rich field of study.

Object Relations: Transatlantic Exchanges on Sculpture and Culture, 1945–1975

John C. Welchman

Contexts for Universalism

Fueled in large part by wartime contingencies—first during World War I and again during World War II—United States–British cooperation reached perhaps its apogee in December 1941, with the signing of the Anglo-American Alliance and the creation of the Combined Chiefs of Staff—a joint British and American military command with authority over all Anglo-American operations. The alliance would continue for the next four years and lead to the invasion of Normandy and the eventual defeat of German Nazism and Japanese militarism, as well as to the development of the atomic bomb and the founding of the United Nations (1945) and of NATO (1949). Several credible historians of the period describe the US–UK alliance (known since Churchill's famous Iron Curtain speech in Fulton, Missouri, in 1946 as the "special relationship") as perhaps the most successful case of military, cultural, and economic bilateralism in modern history.

These events, and the international politics that drove them, were not without their artistic, especially sculptural, correlates—although for the most part the aesthetic orders on which they depended were in arrears of avant-garde taste by a couple of decades or so. The sculptural augmentation of the United Nations headquarters in New York emblematizes this conjunction. Evgenj Vuchetich's *Let Us Beat Our Swords into Ploughshares* (fig. 1), presented to the UN on December 4, 1959, by the government of the USSR and located in the North Garden, represents a man holding a hammer aloft in one hand and a sword—which he is beating into a ploughshare—in the other. The sculpture is a crudely massive literalization of the biblical allegory that offers to convert the means of destruction into creative tools for the benefit of mankind. Built on the formal foundations of the Socialist Realism still mandated by the USSR after World War II, Vuchetich's allegorical internationalism is both at odds and somewhat in keeping with the other sculptural languages that have come to rest in the precincts of the United Nations—including Henry Moore's signature *Reclining Figure: Hand* (fig. 2), a bronze sculpture gifted by the Henry Moore Foundation in September 1982 (located in the same landscaped area north of the United Nations Secretariat Building), and Barbara Hepworth's *Single Form,* which was installed on a granite plinth on the site of the ornamental pool in front of the UN

Figure 1
Evgenj Vuchetich (Russian, 1908–1974), *Let Us Beat Our Swords into Ploughshares.* Bronze, dimensions unknown. New York, United Nations North Garden. Presented on 4 December 1959, by the government of the USSR. © Estate of Evgenj Viktorovich Vuchetich/RAO, Moscow/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Photo: UN Photo/Michos Tzovaras
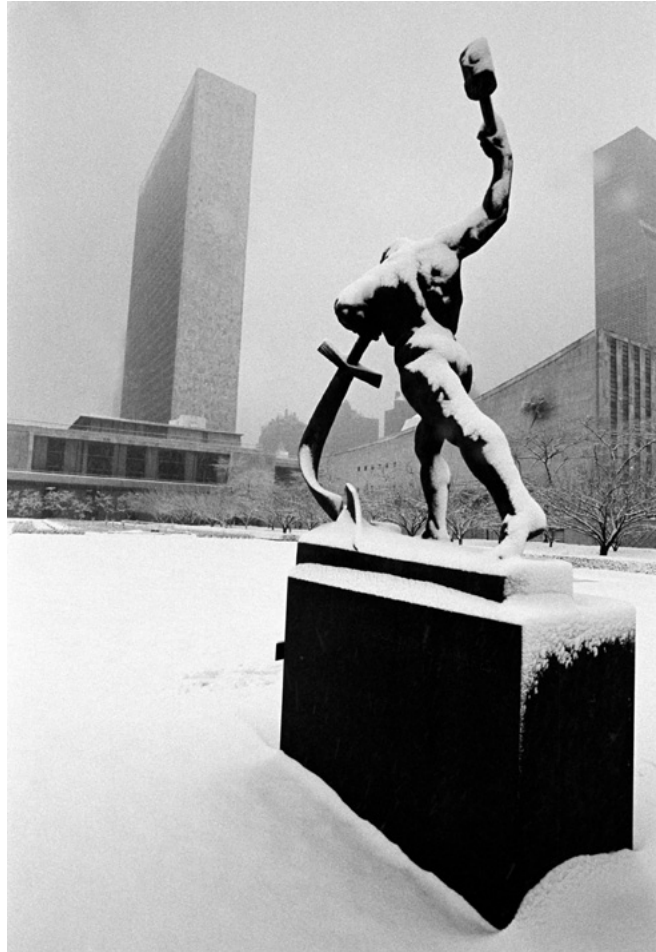

Figure 2
Henry Moore (British, 1898–1986), *Reclining Figure: Hand,* 1979. Bronze, L: 221 cm (87 in.). New York, United Nations North Garden. Gift of The Henry Moore Foundation, September 1982. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation. Photo: UN Photo/Michos Tzovaras

building in 1964. Assisted by powerful currents of implied site-specificity, these and most of the other works at the UN offer various mantras for neohumanistic nonviolence, antimilitarism, and international communitarianism.[1]

Led by the lodestars of the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine, which were developed in the 1940s and 1950s, Anglo-American relations between the close of World War II and the mid-1970s endured a sequence of crises, of both confidence and action, until the era of Reagan/Thatcher neoconservatism and the Bush/Blair rapprochement. These included the Palestine question; the emergence of the Cold War in Europe in the late 1940s, and in Asia between 1945 and 1954; the Suez Crisis of 1956; and the Skybolt and Cuban Missile crises of 1962. The special relationship was further taxed by the often debilitating media and parliamentary debates on European integration and Britain's relationship to the common market and the European Union, as well as by its long nights of industrial action in the 1970s and by Britain's rapid decolonization, one of the most precipitous eclipses of territorial and economic power in history—a case, as David Reynolds put it in a powerful study, of *Britannia Overruled*.[2] There was considerable impact, too, from a succession of military conflicts, including the wars in Cambodia, Vietnam, and, later, the Falklands and the two Gulf Wars.[3]

Few sculptural works on either side of the Atlantic addressed these conflicts directly, although exceptions in the United States include Tony Smith's *We Lost* (fig. 3), an antimonumental arch, or Arc de Triomphe manqué, acquired by the University of Pennsylvania in 1967, but not dedicated until 1976; Mark di Suvero's painted steel *Mother Peace* (1970), with its perforated peace sign, at the Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, New York;[4] and Duane Hanson's *Vietnam Scene* (1969). In the United Kingdom there was, perhaps, even less work using sculptural forms or materials that directly engaged with the international conflicts of the era. But we should point to Colin Self's witty indictments

Figure 3
Tony Smith (American, 1912–1980), *We Lost,* 1962. Painted steel, 312 × 312 × 312 cm (123 × 123 × 123 in.). © 2010 Estate of Tony Smith/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania Art Collection, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

of the Cold War arms race—such as *Leopardskin Nuclear Bomber No. 2* (1963) or his darker *Beach Girl: Nuclear Victim* (1966)—and especially to Michael Sandle's *Twentieth Century Memorial* (1971–78). Exhibited at the *1978 Hayward Annual, Twentieth Century Memorial* was directly predicated on the artist's response to the Vietnam War and is described in one account of radical art in 1970s Britain as "the most substantial sculpture by a British artist produced in the 1970s."[5]

It is evident, however, that economic and political relationships between the United States and the UK in the postwar years turned on the eclipse of the latter's maritime and mercantile power and the precipitous growth of US economic might. The contrarian and polemicist Christopher Hitchens notes in *Blood, Class and Empire: The Enduring Anglo-American Relationship* that while the closeness between the US and the UK is usually accounted for as a matter of tradition, manners, and common culture sanctified by wartime alliance, the special ingredient that really binds this relationship is empire. Transmitted from an ancien régime that tried to preserve and renew itself through empire, England, in Hitchens's view, has played the role of Greece to the American Rome.[6] Sculpture, as ever, provides an exception that proves the rule in Tony Berlant's *The Marriage of New York and Athens* (1966), which, while switching the partners of the alliance, underlines the classicizing aspirations argued for by Hitchens.

In the cultural and ideological spheres, similar arguments were made, sometimes bluntly. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote to Edmund Wilson from London in 1921, for example: "God damn the continent of Europe. . . . It is of merely antiquarian interest." He asserted that "in the next quarter of a century at most . . . New York will be the global capital of culture" because "culture follows money . . . *we will be the Romans of the next generations as the English are now.*"[7] While the language and critical assumptions had changed enormously, this fundamental insight remained intact sixty-five years later when Stuart Hall, at the Birmingham Center for Cultural Studies, defined postmodernism itself in 1986 as "the way the world has dreamed itself American."[8]

But the refrain of US cultural relations with Europe was resoundingly oriented to the New York–Paris axis. These were the key artistic centers about which Thomas Hess spun his "Tale of Two Cities" in 1964 and with which Serge Guilbaut reckoned so energetically in his landmark study *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art* in 1983.[9] One could argue that the residually figurative impulse of the Parisian avant-garde—long fueled by a thoroughgoing suspicion about what Joan Miró referred to as the "deserted house" of abstraction[10]— gave way to two regimes of visual signification in the US neo-avant-garde that were antithetical to Franco-centric practice: works not predicated on relations of identity or bodily presence, on the one hand, and practices grounded in vernacular or mass culture on the other. One by-product of the infamous theft of modern art was, however, a kickback for some of the imperialist continuities in the Anglophone alliance; it was in the provision of a sculptural model of radical abstraction (by Anthony Caro), on the one hand, and in the codevelopment of pop art in London and New York, on the other, that—so far as the visual arts are concerned—the two cultures were, we could argue, most mutually indebted between the mid-1940s and mid-1970s.

Before moving to some specific remarks about movements and individual artists, I want to underline what lies on the other side of the nationalist

debate, necessarily mitigating against the logic and assumptions of prioritizing schools and time frames organized around nations and cities—Britain, the United States, France, London, New York, Paris. I'm referring, of course, to the discourse of cultural internationalism, which we have encountered in the provision of sculptural supplements to the United Nations Secretariat in New York. The institutionally sited sculptures of Moore and Hepworth (her Dag Hammarskjold monument installed in 1964 was the first large-scale abstract public sculpture in the United States) are founded on a transnationalist agenda supported by notions of humanist and abstract universalism. These and related ideas—in many, sometimes antithetical, guises—constitute one of the key contexts for the development of painting and sculpture in the postwar years.

The very language of abstraction itself—fully developed in New York by around 1948 and predicated on what Guilbaut refers to as "the art of obliteration"[11]—is underwritten, of course, by its own shifting discourse of universalist assumptions. Worked out in downtown New York in parallel with the rise of virulent anticommunism, this abstraction was soon put to work as a cipher for freedom of expression, creative individualism, and political liberty. Internationalism clearly catches up with its own tail in this dispensation, and fuses into a spiral of reterritorializations. For, as expressive abstraction was wielded as an instrument of propaganda, it was proportionally cross-correlated with its privileged point of origin in the United States, thus reverting to a nationalist advertisement redolent of export-ready American values.

It is surely also the case that the pictorialist bias of the new American School (formed in a triangulation between Jackson Pollock's drip paintings, the more planar dispensations of the other abstract expressionists, and the later color field paintings of Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, and others) granted an implicit permission for British sculpture—spearheaded by Caro and the first group of modernist sculptors from the St. Martin's School of Art—to administer the high modernist rites to three-dimensional noniconic representation presided over by the logic of structural relations. Time and again Caro was held to do this *as if he were* really an American—which, to cite just one example, accounted for his inclusion among some eighty US artists in Maurice Tuchman's gargantuan exhibition *American Sculpture of the Sixties* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1967.

While cultural internationalism took many forms in the postwar period, Henry Moore's position on the question, as expressed most cogently in his lecture at a UNESCO conference during the Venice Biennale in September 1952, sounds out some of the central propositions. First, there is a nostalgia for the organic interrelation of artist and society in the preindustrial world, fueled by what Moore terms "universal faith"—the "unified structures" of which offer definition and purpose to the artist.[12] Second, modernity is defined by a fragmentation and specialization that alienates artists from this universalism. Third, there are two responses to these contingencies: either artists will be forced to rely on their individuality and uniqueness, or, at the other extreme, the state will intervene through its generation of a singular cultural template imposed by virtue of its monopoly on patronage, commissions, themes, and materials, as in the USSR. Once more, however, a certain measure of equivocation is built into these seemingly polarized possibilities, for the orientation of the individual artist, in Moore's view, is toward a universalizing liberal humanism itemized through figures of the family and the couple, emblems of motherhood, and various

surrogates for Everyman. Soviet cultural policy often promoted a superficially similar agenda of figurative types—struck in the poses of leadership, happy leisure, or heroic labor—so that the proselytizing zeal of the Communist international functioned at the same time as a form of crypto-nationalism in the polarized politics of the Cold War.

These "interactive" antitheses also inform the thinking of artists working in sculptural languages far removed from Moore's. Donald Judd's essay "Imperialism, Nationalism and Regionalism" (written in October 1975), for example, forms a bookend to the internationalist question, just as it does to his *Collected Writings* published by the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. It also marks the chronological end brackets of our conference and publication. Judd allies his internationalism with Pollock's, whom he quotes approvingly: "The basic problems of contemporary painting are independent of any one country." "I hope," Judd contends, "my work is international and not European."[13] For him the concept of "European" was governed by the compositional address to art making and countermanded by the production of "specific objects" whose particularity was embedded in the generalized coefficients of postwar industrial production—plastics, metals, paints—allied with symmetry, "seriality," and so on. As befitting Caro's offshore, quasi-European identity, Judd's review of his 1964 show at the Emmerich Gallery, New York, asserts that while he is clearly the best British sculptor since Moore, and his work is imbued with a certain quotient of counter-compositionality, as well as a lack of high art pomposity, it falls, finally, somewhere between the United States and continental Europe, and occupies a space in between traditional sculpture and the uncomposed, countersculptural objectness defended by Judd.[14]

Somewhat different from, though clearly related to, the universalist assumptions of neohumanism and its quasi-existential correlates, a key filament of the internationalist discourse that I am sketching here has fed into the new globalism underwriting the profusion of art fairs and biennials that blossomed between the art booms of the late 1980s and the early twenty-first century. Once again these conditions preserve the dialectic between national specificity (here in metropolitan and regional sites and funding structures—Istanbul and Shanghai, Sydney and Kwonju) and the internationalist, now globalizing, homogeneity of the sanctioned quorum of artists and curators that shuttles between these diverse locations, usually deploying an internationally recognized thematic orientation.

Corporal Punishment

Nowhere was the other side of the abstractionist question better represented during these years in relation to sculpture than in the debate between realism and abstraction, played out in exhibitions such as *New Images of Man,* curated by Peter Selz for the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1959. Paul Tillich's preface to the exhibition catalogue for the MoMA show sets the tone by posing to contemporary artists a set of stirring questions about the redemption of their humanity: "Where are the organic forms of man's body, the human character of his face, the uniqueness of his individual person? And finally, when in abstract or non-objective painting and sculpture the figure disappears completely, one is tempted to ask, what has happened to man?"[15] *New Images of Man* was conceived against the double "dehumanizations" of totalitarianism and "technical

mass civilization," and its artists held to protest "against the fate to become a thing."[16] The neohumanism negotiated here offers the body as a site of struggle, shock, and threat, in the contexts of which "man" is effectively miniaturized, revealing not just his literal "smallness" but his deep implication "in the vast masses of inorganic matter out of which he tries to emerge with toil and pain." Subject to the relentless "controlling power of technical forms" which "dissect" and "reconstruct" the body, the new image of man reveals "the hidden presence of animal trends in the unconscious and the primitive mass-man from which man comes and to which civilized mass-man may return."[17]

Despite the emphasis here on anxiety, despair, primitivism, and possession by demonic forces, there is a quasi-religious insistence on redemption through suffering, the insistent passage of "anguish and dread" through the tradition of Friedrich Nietzsche, Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, and Albert Camus, and on the cosmologically calibrated smallness of personhood that results. Thus, even when Selz specifically objects to the cultivation by academics and social realists of the new humanism (which the exhibition seems elsewhere to advocate), counterposed by what he terms "effigies of the disquiet man" governed by special powers that make them over as "icon[s], poppet[s], fetish[es],"[18] his emphasis is on the unending struggle of consciousness and its metaphorization in materials and techniques.

The language used to discuss the effects of individual artists underlines this. Francis Bacon's figures are seen as "howling with torture and guilt";[19] Leonard Baskin's work, like Alberto Giacometti's, exemplifies a maximal manipulation of imaginative scale, so that "between eye and eye stretches an interminable landscape" and the body's "wandering . . . magnitudes" reach for a semblance of "divinity."[20] Theodor Roszak's *Iron Throat* (1959) is a mighty "canine-human head"—"the portrait bust of a scream—agony, terror, warning."[21]

The MoMA show included four British artists (out of a total of twenty-three)—in addition to Bacon, the sculptors Kenneth Armitage, Reg Butler, and Eduardo Paolozzi. All vigorously defended the correlation of their sculptures or paintings with the presence and implications of the human body. For Butler, sculpture was "naturally" oriented toward "the personage, the creature, the human animal"—to what he terms, finally, the *magic object* (fig. 4). Butler also offers an existential predicate for the self-referentiality that was being established concurrently in the emergent discourse of formalism. For him this lies in the very actuality of the body held in common between "the sculptor and his work," which both "share the same actual space and enjoy the same physical dimensions."[22]

Armitage, who was introduced to the United States in 1954, dedicated himself to economy and pattern, and to the sculptural achievement of "area without actual bulk."[23] He also defended sculpture based on the human image (fig. 5) and attacked the whole enterprise of abstraction, while working out his signature clumping of bodies in groups and small crowds. Paolozzi offers a slightly different orientation, as his mythologically inflected "necromantic fetishes of the technological world, automatons born of fragmentation"[24] are scavenged composites textured by molded impressions from mass-produced cast-offs.

Many of the issues and much of the language present in *New Images of Man* had been anticipated by the acclaimed exhibition *New Aspects of British*

Figure 4
Reg Butler (British, 1913–1981), *Woman, 1949.*
Forged steel, 221 × 76.2 × 48.3 cm (87 × 30 ×
19 in.). London, Tate, T03708. © Estate of Reg
Butler. Photo: Tate, London/Art Resource, NY

Figure 5
Kenneth Armitage (British, 1916–2002), *Seated
Woman with Square Head (version B),* 1955.
Bronze, 60 × 25.1 × 31.1 cm (23⅝ × 9⅞ ×
12¼ in.). London, Tate, N05942. © Kenneth
Armitage Foundation. Photo: Tate, London/Art
Resource, NY

Sculpture presented at the Venice Biennale in 1952, which included work by Paolozzi, Armitage, Lynn Chadwick, Geoffrey Clarke, Bernard Meadows, Butler, William Turnbull, and Robert Adams. It was in relation to this exhibition that Herbert Read penned his famous lines, the last phrase of which became the sobriquet for what Lawrence Alloway's review in *Artnews* headlined as "Britain's New Iron Age."[25] "Here," wrote Read, "are images of flight, of ragged claws 'scuttling across the floors of silent seas,' of excoriated flesh, frustrated sex, the geometry of fear."[26]

The battle for realism and figurative art in Britain during the Cold War, 1945–1960, to borrow the title of a recent book by James Hyman,[27] was more often than not an occasion to indulge in the locative pieties of nationalist cultural identity, laced with explicit strains of xenophobia. Nikolaus Pevsner delivered his Reith Lectures in 1955, which were published the following year as the best-selling book *The Englishness of English Art;*[28] in the same year W. G. Hoskins brought out *The Making of the English Landscape,* which delivered a paean to preindustrial nature. For him the national identity of Britain was nowhere more explicitly corrupted than by the American air bases "flayed" into the flatlands of Norfolk and Lincolnshire, whose "atom-bombers" lay "trails like a filthy slug upon Constable's and Gainsborough's sky."[29]

Hyman charts the neonationalism that underwrote the criticism of two key figures who emerged in this era: David Sylvester, whose support for Bacon and the School of London offered an enduring alternative—and corrective—to the international export of Greenbergian formalism and, later, to conceptual antipictoriality; and John Berger, whose advocacy in the pages of the *New Statesman* in the mid-1950s for an adequate, socially inflected realism (he supported the work of Betty Rea, George Fullard, Ralph Brown, and others) brought compromise at the level of specificity to the generalized critique of the conditions of viewing that he later developed. The Little Englandism that surfaced from time to time in Sylvester and Berger—but which was endemic in some of the circles in which their writings were popularized—continued unabated into the 1980s, as witnessed for example by Peter Fuller who, in a review of the Royal Academy blockbuster *British Art in the 20th Century* (1987), gave vent to a jeremiad against modernism, Americanism, and abstraction in the name of neo-romanticism, landscape painting, and what he termed "conservationism."[30] In the writings of all three men, sculpture gets short shrift, although Fuller lands his polemic most caustically not just on pop art and disembodied abstraction but on Caro before he returned to the figure in the later 1970s, while Sylvester's evaluation of the School of London seems underwritten in large measure by his almost obsessive reflections on the sculpture of Giacometti.

On Pop

Developed between around 1955 and 1965—at the heart of the thirty-year span under consideration in this volume—the casually satirical anti-utopianism of classic pop art, was, crucially, played out in front of a stage set of US-denominated commodity culture. In his useful 1987 article "Toward a Throw-Away Culture: Consumerism, 'Style Obsolescence' and Cultural Theory in the 1950s and 1960s," Nigel Whiteley explains that one of the social catalysts for the pop generation in the era of the credit card and Hire Purchase was a crucial new inflection in the theory and practice of design.[31] Ushered in by streamline art deco design in the 1930s, the systematic organization of planned obsolescence became

a mantra for designers and commodity manufacturers in the later 1940s. As J. Gordon Lippincott put it in *Design for Business* in 1947: "There is only one reason for hiring an industrial designer, and that is to increase the sales of the product."[32] Design placed at the service of its own expenditures created a mercantilist antithesis to the aesthetic utilitarianism of European modernist design, which proposed elegantly spare solutions to the self-reflexive functionality of the useful object. Prompted by a profusion of main street showrooms and mass suburbanization, social status was gauged through the consumption and display of commodities; the largest and most visible of these were products of an expansionist car culture in the 1950s that took upon itself the manifest destiny of metalwork in the twentieth century, offering, according to one account, an "accurate image of post-war value immortalized in chrome and steel."[33]

Reactions to Americanized popular and commodity cultures, and later to Britain's variants of them, were predictably polarized. In *The Uses of Literacy* in 1957, Richard Hoggart wrote of the "corrupt brightness," "improper appeals," "moral evasions," and "irresponsible pleasure" of American "mass-entertainments."[34] These denigrations were echoed by Raymond Williams in *Culture and Society* and *The Long Revolution,*[35] and they had political correlates both in right-wing Conservative xenophobia and cultural elitism and in left-wing critiques of bourgeois and capitalist values. As Whitely explains, one response to this situation—notably by the Independent Group in London (which included Alloway, Reyner Banham, John McHale, Richard Hamilton, and architects Alison and Peter Smithson, among others)—gave rise to the emergence in Britain of a "cultural theory of expendability" predicated on "technological progressivism."[36] This constellation of artists, architects, and critics was willing to take "mass-produced urban culture" seriously and to stand up against anti-Americanism, British elitism—with its "Montgomery and sodawater" disdain[37]—and the high-toned truth-to-materials or obeisance-to-form of institutionalized modernism. Based on intermittent bouts of pseudo-utopianism, an unstinting prochange ethos, and whimsical techno-futurism, their views—particularly those of Alloway, Banham, and Hamilton—were predicated on the separation of American design and cultural energy from the socio-political operationality that all found troubling or disturbing.

Banham's apologia pro-America was unremitting: the "gusto and professionalism of wide-screen movies or Detroit car styling," he exclaimed, "was a constant reproach to the [Henry] Moore-ish yokelry of British sculpture or the affected Piperish gloom of British painting."[38] One of the most visible and consequential products of the fascination with America was the emigration to the United States of many of the leading protagonists of these years. Alloway moved to New York in 1961 to become senior curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, where he remained until 1966; he lived in the United States for the rest of his life. McHale, David Hockney, and later Derek Boshier and others also emigrated to the States.

The place of sculpture in the pop art movements in both London and New York is once more ambiguous. For a start, with the obvious exception of Claes Oldenburg, there are very few sculptors on either side of the Atlantic who can be clearly identified as pop artists. The movement was more invested in principles of collage or montage derived from graphic, print, and screen cultures and oriented to the media delivery systems that sustained them.

Figure 6
Richard Hamilton (British, b. 1922), *Just What Is It that Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?* Poster for *This Is Tomorrow* exhibition, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956. Screenprint, 76.2 × 51.1 cm (30 × 20⅛ in.). London, Victoria & Albert Museum, E.176-1994. Gift of Professor Theo Crosby. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS London. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Furthermore, during the early phases of pop in London, its public and three-dimensional interests were more aligned with architecture, urbanism, and design than with the production of fine art objects. The clearest symptom of this is found in the relationship of the sculptors in *This Is Tomorrow* (fig. 6)—an early pop exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1956—to their colleagues in architecture, design, and painting. Originally conceived as a multipart show subcurated into twelve groups of three, each comprising an architect, a painter, and sculptor, the groups were in the end disproportionately weighted toward practitioners and critics of architecture and design—such as Theo Crosby, Germano Facetti, McHale, John Voelcker, Alison and Peter Smithson, James Stirling, Michael Pine, John Weeks, and others. In point of fact, most of the sculptors actually involved in the project were associated with the constructivist group, the subject of Alastair Grieve's recent study, *Constructed Abstract Art in England after the Second World War: A Neglected Avant Garde;*[39] these included Anthony Hill, Kenneth and Mary Martin, Stephen Gilbert, and John Ernest, the last an American-born artist who worked in England from 1951, one of the relatively few artists who moved from west to east in this era, along the jet stream. The affiliation of this group with the international language of construction produced yet more interference for any potential alliance of sculptural practice with popular culture.

Greenberg and Fried: Caro and Formalism

As several of the contributions to this publication discuss aspects of Caro's work in an Anglo-American context, I am not going to add much here. I will, however, note that Caro's career from the mid-1940s, when he served in the Royal Navy, through to 1975, the year of his retrospective of thirty-three works at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, curated by William Rubin, overlays our thirty-year period like a template.

When Michael Fried recalled the importance of Caro to the development of his critical positions in a piece for *Artforum* in 1993 that took the sculptor's *Midday* (1960) as its point of departure, he noted that "Caro was one of a number of artists—along with Morris Louis, Helen Frankenthaler, Frank Stella (one year ahead of me at Princeton), Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, and Larry Poons—whose work came to lie at the center of my own reflections about the nature and significance of high-modernist painting and sculpture during the period of my most intense activity as an art critic."[40] Fried makes clear here what Greenberg hinted: among color field and Hard Edge painters Caro's work alone perfectly emblematized the self-reflexive abstraction according to which this form of critical reckoning was organized. In simple terms, Caro's work was the best possible fit for the formalist approach to sculpture—that "long-eclipsed art," as Greenberg put it in 1949 in "The New Sculpture." He was the proof, and possibly sole guarantor, again in Greenberg's words, that sculpture "stands to gain by the modernist 'reduction' as painting does not."[41]

Beyond Sculpture

The 1950s and 1960s were characterized by a wide range of signal challenges to sculpture's traditional materials and formats, which included the blurring of boundaries between pictoriality and three-dimensional art through the expansion of collage and montage-based practices, as in the combines of Robert Rauschenberg and the décollage of Volf Vorstell. The redefinition of work made in three dimensions took many new forms, including the environments and happenings of Allan Kaprow, the tableaux and proto-installations of Ed Kienholz, the para-institutions of Marcel Broodthaers, the work of Claes Oldenburg and Paul Thek, and the structures of "open propositionality" of Hélio Oiticica, which transcend the palpability of "painting-sculpture-poem fusions" to engage with what he termed in 1967 the "suprasensorial."[42] They also include the "Social Sculpture/Social Architecture" advocated by Joseph Beuys in the name of transforming the "social organism into a work of art."[43]

Advanced sculpture was progressively untethered from its historical dependence on wood, stone, and metals; instead, practitioners worked with junk, refuse, poor quality materials, and the products of industrial manufacture, including bricks, new synthetic plastics, plywood, and neon lights. US artists and commentators responded to these changes in the 1960s and 1970s in several ways. In a short article written in 1965 and published as the first product of his Something Else Press the following year, Dick Higgens suggested the term *intermedia* to speak to the heterogeneous layering of forms, materials, and locations in contemporary art, theater and, more briefly, music.[44] Some of these ideas were anticipated, although in quite different critical languages and contexts, by Reyner Banham in his article "Not Quite Architecture: 'Not Quite Painting or Sculpture Either.'"[45]

A quarter of a century later, Rosalind Krauss famously summarized this shift as a move to "sculpture in the expanded field," referring to a new set of developments in the later 1960s and early 1970s, which included land art, process art, and conceptualism.[46] Sculpture, she remarked, had been "kneaded and twisted" during the 1960s and 1970s to "include just about anything." The malleability implied by Krauss's industrio-culinary metaphor makes sculpture subject to its own transformative principles. The result is a metasculptural discourse: on the one hand, artists used sculpture to reflect on the medium itself and the interstices between materials, objects, and processes; on other hand, sculpture was posed on thresholds of everything that traditional sculpture had *not* been—landscape, architecture, social space, and so on.

With few exceptions—including, crucially, the ways that sculptural practices were filtered through actions and performances—British artists, it seems to me, participated only fitfully in the first phase of the material redefinition of sculpture and its points of suspension between body, structure, and place, from the later 1950s to the early 1970s. Making good on this claim would require a dedicated separate study, but one rough guide might be found by assessing the place reserved for expanded field sculpture in Britain in Lucy Lippard's 1973 compendium, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object,*[47] which swiftly became a touchstone for the new media and approaches of the conceptual art era. Informed by what Lippard herself later referred to as the "core value" of "over-the-top accumulation," which was in turn "the result of a politically intentional anti-exclusive aesthetic,"[48] my question here turns on the nature and implications of her logic of "inclusion" both in general and as it relates to British sculptural-type activities in this crucial period. In what follows I take brief stock of six different forms in which the presence—and absence—of conceptually oriented British sculpture are demarcated—directly or by implication—in Lippard's text, although I have space only to elaborate a little on several different artists in the last three. Using Lippard's text as a point of refraction for a saliently incomplete American view onto the contributions in Britain to new genres of practice at the turn of the 70s provides a kind of coda in the form of a ghost story for the last chapter of the transatlantic relationship.

We should note, first, that before she makes mention of any specific artistic activities, Lippard takes us back to another facet of the postwar debate on the local and the regional, the international and the global, for one of her working assumptions correlates dematerialized art with a would-be new internationalism. She puts it in these terms: "One of the most important things about the new deterritorialized art is that it provides a way of getting the power structure out of New York. . . . Much art now is transported by the artist, or *in* the artist himself, rather than by watered-down, belated circulating exhibitions, or by existing information networks such as mail, books, telex, video, radio, etc."[49]

Second, we must note that *Six Years* actually contains very few entries from Britain, especially in the area of key exhibitions, which are limited to two in Lippard's purview. *Idea Structures,* curated by Charles Harrison, was shown at the Camden Arts Center and Central Library, Swiss Cottage, London, from June 24 to July 19, 1970. The catalogue contains "full works" by Keith Arnatt, Victor Burgin, Ed Herring, Joseph Kosuth, and the group Art & Language.[50] *Wall Show,* which appeared at the Lisson Gallery, London, in January 1971, included Sue Arrowsmith, Arnatt, Edmonds, Barry Flanagan, Michael Ginsborg, Gerard Hemsworth, John Hilliard, John Latham, Bob Law (included as "Lew"

by Lippard), Sol LeWitt, Roelof Louw, Ian Munro, Gerald Newman, Blinky Palermo, Klaus Rinke, Ed Sirrs, John Stezaker, David Tremlett, Lawrence Weiner, and Richard Wentworth. Although not mentioned by Lippard, we could add to this brief list the almost forgotten exhibition *The British Avant-Garde,* curated by Charles Harrison in 1971 at the New York Cultural Center, for which the May 1971 edition of *Studio International* served as a catalogue, publishing his essay "Virgin Soil and Old Land."[51]

Third, there are in fact as many or more references to arte povera and its affiliates in Turin; to Ian Baxter, Jeff Wall, and Ian Wallace in Vancouver; and to Halifax, home of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design—where Douglas Huebler and others were teaching—than there are to Britain as a whole.

A fourth form of negotiation is found in Lippard's reference to Richard Long, one of a small number of British artists who receive somewhat more than a cursory reference in *Six Years*. Lippard mentions Long as a precursor, along with Carl Andre, Richard Serra, Robert Smithson, and Robert Morris, of the distinctive parasculptural idiom of piling or accumulating material. She lists several works by Long, including: *Bicycle Sculpture* (1967); his "sculpture for Martin and Mia Visser"; "Seven Views of a Sculpture" (1969); and a project titled *Richard Long Skulptures, England, Germany, Africa, America* at the Stadtische Museum, Mönchengladbach, Germany, in the summer of 1970, which took the form of a boxed book of photos.[52] There is an implicit suggestion here that the art-orientation of Long's work had in a sense retreated from the landscape to its representation. With Hamish Fulton's *Pilgrim's Way* (April 1971),[53] the last work illustrated by Lippard, and Long's "England" pieces, the first two illustrations of work by a UK artist in the book, it seems clearly to be the case that Britain's contribution to earth art was viewed from New York as its most signal innovation.

Fifth, Lippard reserves several entries, accompanied by rather bemused annotations, for the constellation of predominantly text-based activity emanating from the English Midlands, especially from the war-damaged industrial city of Coventry. I'm referring, of course, to Art & Language (and associated groups), whose journal of the same title and related publications (such as *Statement* and *Analytic Art*) received several citations. The interventions of Art & Language, along with those by Joseph Kosuth in New York, offered the most stringent critique to date of the physical presence of the artwork, even in the dematerialized dispensation proffered by Lippard. In the mid-1970s the polemical intensity of this discussion between Art & Language–affiliated groups in New York and England reached a fever pitch that represented probably the most clamorous transatlantic debate of the postwar era, and, at the same time, the most substantial and sweeping attack on the predicates of anything that had hitherto been defined as sculptural.[54] This debate about the most radical possibilities of "dematerialization" is reinforced—and complicated—by the presentation in *Six Years* of a then-unpublished letter by John Latham to the editor and John Chandler about Lippard's earlier article "The Dematerialization of Art,"[55] which, among other things, debates the nature of solid-state matter and what Latham termed "radiant energy."[56] The very existence of sculpture in any material form was clearly under threat from the twin agencies of amateur particle physics and philosophical conceptualization.

Sixth, the only British artist who receives as many mentions by Lippard as Long, Fulton, and Art & Language is Latham himself, beginning with his

impudent chewing piece in which he masticated the pages of a copy of Clement Greenberg's *Art and Culture,* borrowed from the St. Martin's library in August 1966, dissolved what remained in acid, and then sent the solution back along with his year-late recall notice. This gesture of Anglo-American Oedipal cannibalism, is not, however, the most significant measure of Latham's contribution to transatlantic avant-garde exchange, which arrives, instead, in two forms. The first is his reflection on the relationship between materiality, language, and sculpture as outlined in another letter sent to Lippard on March 24, 1969, which he titled "Initial Premise: That 'material' is steadystate Idea, i.e. 'habit.'"[57] The letter is presented in double columns with one side captioned "In the given material" (e.g., "Preconceptions about words") and the other, "The Sculpture" (e.g., "Review a dictionary without using words").

The second contribution concerns Latham's work with the Artist Placement Group (APG). Founded by Barbara Steveni and Latham in 1966, the APG facilitated the invitation of artists into companies and businesses in the UK. Lippard makes at least four references to the APG[58] that clearly attest to her preference for art that "jolted" social relations, as she states in the introduction.[59] What interests me here is that Latham negotiates a third position—which he explicitly labels as an intervention into "social sculpture"—between Joseph Beuys's shamanic *gestamptkunstwerk* and the sometimes paternalist neocorporatism of the Art and Technology program, set in motion by Maurice Tuchman and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in 1967. In this third position sculpture is made over as an adjunct of work, and its points of origin, at least, are resituated in the workplace.

If Latham opened up the operationality of a concept of sculpture animated by its relation to the social, and Art & Language sought to eradicate its materiality, I want to suggest, finally, that the other British artists curated by Lippard into *Six Years* were caught up in a mesh of commitments to traditionalism (extrapolated in part from the British land artists), on the one hand, and definitional multiplicities for sculpture, on the other. This is clearest in the early work of Gilbert and George, who performed their first version of *Singing Sculpture* (fig. 7) at St. Martin's School of Art, London (January, 20, 1969), produced an *Interview Sculpture* later that same month, served "The Meal" to "David Hockney" in May 1969,[60] and made their first *Living Sculpture* at the International Jazz festival, Plympton Race Course, Sussex, in August 1969—all of which are included by Lippard. By mounting themselves on plinths, gilding their faces, dressing conservatively in Saville Row suits, and attaching themselves fetishistically to British values, such as the Union Jack and the English countryside, Gilbert and George's neotraditionalism is abundantly clear. Like Long and Fulton, they too soon reverted to photo-based forms of self-presentation. But Gilbert and George also added an ironic reflection on the infinite plurality of sculptural forms. "We would honestly like to say how happy we are to be sculptors," they noted in 1970.[61] In the same year, in "A Message from the Sculptors" in *Art for All,* a booklet with loose photographs and "sculptor's samples," they laid our their product line: "Gilbert and George have a wide range of sculptures for you—singing sculpture, interview sculpture, dancing sculpture, nerve sculpture, cafe sculpture, and philosophy sculpture. So do contact us."[62]

For Keith Arnatt, traditionalism is trumped by ritual, and self-presence or self-reference eclipsed by self-interment. Lippard collects his *Liverpool Beach-Burial* (1968), which is reproduced with a text proposing that sculpture

Figure 7
Gilbert Proesch (Italian, b. 1943) and George
Passmore (British, b. 1942), *Singing Sculpture*,
25 September 1971, performance at the Andre
Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY. Photo:
Fred W. McDarrah/Getty Images

might be redefined in terms of "situational . . . patterns of behavior";[63] she also
includes the "Self-Burial" at Tintern, England, which was broadcast in small
increments on German television in October 1969, with the assistance of Gerry
Schum, whose pioneering Die Fernsehgalerie (Television Gallery) was founded
in 1968.[64] Barry Flanagan also crossed sculpture with television, while holding
onto the physical presence of the sculptural object[65] before he retrenched into
whimsical figuration. When Arnatt asked in a conceptual text for the idea struc-
tures show in June 1970, "Is It Possible for Me to Do Nothing as My Contribution
to This Exhibition?"[66] he responded to the infinite multiplication of sculptural
forms by imagining infinite absence. But it was Bruce McLean who delivered a
coup de grace to the multiplicity of sculptural languages and their coefficients

of place, body, time, and object in his one thousand pieces, published in the second volume of *Avalanche* in New York in the winter of 1971.

Coda

This brief survey could end in many ways, including with the final institutional triumph of Caro's abstract, relational sculpture at his MoMA exhibition in 1975. Yet this denouement would have to take into account the confounding fact that it was shortly after that moment, between the late 1970s and late 1980s, that Caro took up a new set of references to bodies and architectures that seemed wholly at odds with the stringently formal self-reference for which he had been celebrated, above all in the United States by Greenberg and Fried. Two decades elapsed between the highly nuanced formation by Caro and his critics of one of the most intense renegotiations of compositional abstraction, and the summer of 1987, when Caro and Frank Gehry came together at the Triangle Workshop at Pine Plains, New York, to collaborate on an architectural/sculptural "village."[67] An account of this meeting notes:

> There have long been elements of buildings in his [Caro's] work but it was after a summer workshop in America in 1987 with architect Frank Gehry that the idea of exploring the relationship between architecture and sculpture took off. Freed from the constraints of functionalism bar the need to make their structures stand up, Caro and Gehry knocked up over a period of two days a sprawling, quirky and extraordinary hybrid construction in wood that combined ramps, steps, towers and other architectural elements, all used creatively and intuitively as sculptural elements.[68]

The effect on Caro and his work was obvious. The extended practicum with Gehry engendered the very possibility that a direct relationship between sculpture and architecture—once termed "horrific"[69]—could not just be redeemed into some kind of new permissibility, but might actually take over as the driving force of his later career. As Caro put it: "The most ambitious area of his [Gehry's] output is only just coming to fruition, an area he calls 'sculpitecture.'"[70] It is tempting to suggest that for Gehry, always less direct and usually more cautious about the attribution of specific determinants for his work, the effect was somewhat equal and opposite. In other words, the experience of modeling, experimenting, and playing with one of the magi of high modernist, three-dimensional form allowed him to redigest aspects of the imaginative free-play of shapes and volumes that in the same year he would begin to lay down as one of the foundations of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

Such a proposition is surely conjectural, but while the momentum behind the pen that worked up Gehry's famous napkin sketches—those almost mythological blueprints consecrated to the foundation of the Bilbao museum—cannot by any means be attributed to Caro, the meeting between them, and Caro's emblematization of advanced sculptural abstraction, constitute one strand of the formative interplay between sculptural and architectural discourse, which both British artist and American architect took up at defining moments in their careers, and their disciplines.

Another possible conclusion to this survey might interrogate the transatlantic cultural psychology of the Carl Andre "Bricks" crisis, precipitated in

Figure 8
Carl Andre (American, b. 1935), *Equivalent VIII,* installation view at the Tate Gallery, London, ca. 1985. Firebricks, 12.7 × 68.6 × 229.2 cm (5 × 27 × 90¼ in.). © Carl Andre/ Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Photo: Tate, London/Art Resource, NY

February 1976 by an article in the London *Sunday Times.* Andre's *Equivalent VIII* (fig. 8), made up of 120 firebricks laid out two bricks high in a rectangular format on the floor, had been purchased by the Tate in 1972 and featured in special displays in 1974 and 1975 without attracting much publicity. But the February 1976 article in the *Sunday Times,* illustrated with a picture of *Equivalent VIII,* precipitated endless rounds of "populist" uproar and high-brow justification.[71] Taking stock of this episode would offer crucial insight into the state of Britain's relations to American avant-garde culture, as well as to the appearance, and presence, of the abstract discourses of visual modernity itself.

But the conclusion I prefer looks back on the thirty years of Anglo-American cultural relations following World War II as a living history that somehow still endures. The English-born, and Los Angeles- and Beijing-based, Matt Hope emerged as an artist in the late 1990s. His prodigious work, which as of this writing has still not yet been seen in a major solo exhibition, can offer us our conclusion, as well as another set of futures to the intercontinental dialogues addressed here. Hope moves in and through a wide range of media and genres, including sculptures using metal, stone, and plastics; performances and live events; appropriated and repurposed manufactured objects; and drawing, computer imaging, and other notational forms. He deploys an equally wide spectrum of working methodologies, many learned and redigested from the American avant-garde through its contact zones with British art in the post-Caro era. In addition to traditional fabrication procedures, such as professional-grade welding and advanced metalworking techniques (learned at the Winchester School of Art, where Caro's current assistants studied), Hope has mobilized a whole spectrum of realization processes, mostly in the form of collaborations and commissions. He draws on precision engineering, microtechnologies, acoustic and other advanced scientific research, electrical engineering, cabinetry and specialized woodwork, computer-based 3D modeling, remote satellite imaging, transport and logistics, industrial salvage, production management, and live event scoring using sonic and visual forms. The result of all

this—in art world terms—is a cascade of striking renegotiations with the spare formats of the late 1960s crosshatched with cutting-edge scientific innovation. Hope generates a kind of ultratechnological post-minimalism, in which highly calibrated logics of process and production merge with new formulas for the social distribution of sculptural objects.

Typical of Hope's renovation of the legacies of US minimalism is his creative adaptation of some of the earlier movement's key symbolic forms and its commitment to serial process. Hope's seriality, however, is not confined to modular sequencing. Instead it operates in several dimensions only the first terms of which are predicated on formal morphology—as in the artist's deployment of variants of the square or the cube, for example. Hope supplements minimalism's serial investment in the declensions of geometric shape by investigating both thematic and social serialities. Thus, his work with scaling ranges from the manufacture of ultraminiature objects (including cubes and minuscule sawhorses) to microscopic cartography and the pixilated irresolution of surrogate satellite self-portraiture. Another group of works inhabit the contact zones between different energy types and the support structures through which they are found or generated—light and sound; oil and gas; gravity and kinetic energy.

One sequence of objects made in 2006 represents a special case in the thematically complex, intermedia zoning of Hope's oeuvre. This is a series of tools and instruments, including a knife, a wrench, a hammer, a crowbar, a set square, and a vise, each hand-fabricated by the artist from a single block of stainless steel, and all fully functional as professional instruments. In a characteristic gesture of serial embellishment, Hope also presents two pieces made of the same material and hewn in the same manner as the "tools," but which are the objects (or subjects) of their instrumentality: *Nut and Bolt* (2006) (fig. 9) and *Nail* (2006).

Made at roughly—though not it seems, exactly—real-world scale, this congregation of common workshop objects offers further testimony to the virtuoso precision engineering that underwrites much of Hope's most recent activity. As often, however, a network of allegorical subtexts creatively interferes with the pristine appearance and shiny, sculptural solidity of Hope's special edition toolkit. One of these arrives with the decision to subtract the instruments from a solid block. This point of origin links the fabrication of the tools with the artist's "perfect cubes," locating them as fractional substrates of a solid mass poised somewhere between the completeness of the immaculately delineated cube and the hollowness of the excavated cube-shaped voids of another of Hope's series, the *Inverse Cubes*. The in-betweenness of the matter of the tools is thus glossed with the pseudo-Platonic formal perfection of the primary object whose outer layers were shed in order to bring a hammer or a wrench into being.

The "reverse parenting" in evidence here also connects with the way this series turns certain assumptions associated with the minimalist object inside out. The tools aren't simply agents of or objects for making; they are brought into being as sculpture. Hope's inert, sculptural tools are invested with a latency (of function, use, and appearance) quite at odds with the minimalist commitment to process. Robert Morris, for example, captured the sonic register of the fabrication process in the tape loop that plays back in *Box with the Sound of its Own Making* (1963), so that the tools and associated construction materials used to fashion this roughly worked quasi-cubic structure—the hammers, saws, and nails—are instruments in a double sense; they are simultaneously

Figure 9
Matt Hope (British, b. 1976), *Nut & Bolt,* 2006. Functional nut and bolt hewn from single block of stainless steel, 12.7 × 13.18 × 13.18 cm (5 × 1¼ × 1¼ in.). Los Angeles, Ace Gallery. © Matt Hope. Photo courtesy of Ace Gallery Los Angeles

tools and sound-emitting objects. In Hope's series, the tools are sequestered from their process of becoming. They are the precipitates and remainders of complex and technically demanding offstage fabrication, known only by the uncanny products it delivers. They are shiny, reflective, and eerily silent witnesses to the capacity of artist-directed advanced engineering to create a unique class of objects whose simulation of function is eclipsed by a potential utility that is deliberately unrealized.

But they are also signature pieces given identifying hallmarks in the form of the artist's initials ("M. H.") and a date ("2006") and are displayed in specially constructed, clear Plexiglas vitrines, secured with visible machine bolts. Their contours and appearance negotiate, with almost uncanny precision, between the effects of hand and machine. Their slightly soft edges, fractionally discrepant scale, and solid, pristine mass allow them to hover in a semantic space somewhere between an Oldenburg object and the naturalism of the tool shop, so that they register, simultaneously, as outmoded, almost prehistorical artifacts and as the übertools of a postmechanical future.

These more technical and historical considerations meet two other subtexts, one caught up in the decision-making etiquettes of the artist, the other in a broader set of issues that turn on the conceptual relationality between several competing terms we have already introduced—*tool, equipment, instrument,* on the one hand, and *use, function,* and the *aesthetic* on the other. For Hope the technology-assisted move from steel block to steel tool is, first and foremost, a witty shorthand for the recalibration of sculpture, and art in general, as an instrument or tool-like product. In this view, art is not collapsed into anti-aesthetic social utility and merged with design or industry, as it was for the Soviet Productivists, and perhaps for Latham. Rather, its agencies are redistributed through a series of often complex tool-like objects such as *Hornmassive,* defined, as its subtitle (*Highpower Audio Input Station*) underlines, as an instrument or medium to be used and played in social space, rather than simply situated in and consumed by it. Sculptural qualities are not foreclosed in this reassessment, they are merely set in apposition to the socially performative or participatory dimensions of a given piece, and activated by particular technical specifications—scale, power, and volume for the horn, flatness, sharpness, and tolerance for the cubes and spikes.

One of the preoccupations of his work, in fact, is with a reformulation of the whole notion of intrinsic quality, one of the pillars of the discourse of formalist modernism as it reached between Moore's mantra of "truth to materials" and Caro's structural relations. Hope achieves this not by taking up with appropriation, duplication, or performative process in the way of much postmodern art from the previous generation (though he deploys all of these tactics in his own way); rather, he works materials to their extremes—pushing them to the edge of the geometry, flatness, or sharpness that can be won from them using state-of-the-art technologies. The tools, then, are a metareferential conundrum embedded in the outcome orientation of Hope's oeuvre. Their futuristic primitivism emblematizes an uncanny precipitation of matter and technique, for they are simultaneously pure material, engineering instruments, personal devices, and quasi-Platonic forms. Carefully built on the contemporary remainders of Anglo-American sculptural practice from the 1960s and 70s, Hope's ultrafabricated ready-mades for the virtual era offer a new future for both the transatlantic dialogue and innovative work in three—or more—dimensions.

Notes

1 Other works at the UN include *Good Defeats Evil* by the Georgian artist Zurab Tsereteli, presented by The Soviet Union on the occasion of the organization's 45th anniversary. Representing St. George slaying the dragon, the work is thirty-nine feet high and weighs forty tons; Karl Fredrik Reutersward's *Non-Violence* (1980), a gift from the Government of Luxembourg presented in 1988 and located in the Visitor's Plaza, facing First Avenue at 45th St., is a large bronze replica of a 45-calibre revolver, the barrel of which is tied into a knot. Among Moore's many commissions and gifts to international institutions—such as his *Reclining Figure* (1957) at UNESCO, Paris—and works that mark events of global significance, one of the most important is his *Nuclear Energy* (1967), unveiled at 3:36 p.m. on December 2, 1967, on the University of Chicago campus, precisely a quarter-century after scientists there achieved the first controlled self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction, initiating the atomic age. The twelve-foot bronze sculpture stands on the site of the University's old Stagg Field, where the experiment took place under the leadership of Enrico Fermi. The University of Chicago website notes that "to some, it suggests the shape of the human skull or the atomic mushroom cloud. Henry Moore told a friend, however, that he hoped those viewing it would 'go around it, looking out through the open spaces, and that they may have a feeling of being in a cathedral.'" See "Henry Moore, Sculptor" at www.physics.uchicago.edu.

2 David Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled: British Policy and World Power in the Twentieth Century* (Harlow and New York: Longman, 2000).

3 Useful discussions of Anglo-American political, military, economic, and social relations in the post-war period include: D. Cameron Watt, *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain's Place, 1900–1975,* Wiles Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Wm. Roger Louis and Hedley Bull, eds., *The "Special Relationship": Anglo-American Relations since 1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); C. J. Bartlett, *"The Special Relationship": A Political History of Anglo-American Relations since 1945* (London: Longman, 1992); Alan P. Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: Of Friendship, Conflict, and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Ritchie Ovendale, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998); and Jonathan Hollowell, *Twentieth-Century Anglo-American Relations,* Contemporary History in Context (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

4 Di Suvero left the US to protest the Vietnam War and avoid the draft.

5 John A. Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), p. 227.

6 Christopher Hitchens, *Blood, Class, and Empire: The Enduring Anglo-American Relationship* (New York: Nation Books, 2004).

7 F. Scott Fitzgerald, cited by Hitchens in *Blood, Class, and Empire,* p. 366.

8 Stuart Hall, cited by George McKay, "Introduction: Americanization and Popular Culture," in *Yankee Go Home (& Take Me with U): Americanization and Popular Culture,* ed. G. McKay (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1997), p. 32.

9 Thomas Hess, "A Tale of Two Cities," *Location* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1964), reprinted in *The New Art: A Critical Anthology,* ed. Gregory Battcock (New York: Dutton, 1966), pp. 161–78; Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

10 Joan Miró in Georges Dutuit, "Where Are You Going, Miró?" *Cahiers d'art* (Paris), nos. 8–10 (1936), reprinted in *Joan Miró: Selected Writings and Interviews,* ed. Margit Rowell (New York: Da Capo, 1992), p. 150.

11 Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art,* p. 197.

12 Henry Moore, "The Sculptor in Modern Society," in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 677.

13 Donald Judd, "Imperialism, Nationalism and Regionalism" (October 1975), in Donald Judd, *Complete Writings, 1959-1975* (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975), p. 223.

14 Judd, *Complete Writings,* p. 157.

15 Paul Tillich, "A Prefatory Note," in *New Images of Man,* exh. cat., curated by Peter Selz (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1959), p. 9.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid., p. 10.

18 Peter Selz, "Introduction," in *New Images of Man,* p. 13.

19 *New Images of Man,* p. 29.

20 Ibid., p. 35.

21 Ibid., p. 138.

22 Reg Butler in ibid., p. 39.

23 Kenneth Armitage in ibid., p. 27.

24 Eduardo Paolozzi in ibid., p. 117.

25 Lawrence Alloway, "Britain's New Iron Age," *Artnews* 52 (Summer 1953), pp. 19–20, 68–70.

26 Herbert Read, *New Aspects of British Sculpture,* XXVI Venice Biennale (London, 1952).

27 James Hyman, *The Battle for Realism and Figurative Art in Britain During the Cold War, 1945–1960* (London: Yale University Press, 2001); see also the review by Norbert Lynton in *The Art Book* 9, no. 2 (March 2002), pp. 11–13.

28 Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Englishness of English Art* (London: Architectural Press, 1956).

29 W. G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), p. 299.

30 Peter Fuller, review of *British Art in the 20th Century* (Royal Academy of Arts, London), *The Burlington Magazine* 129, no. 1009 (April 1987), pp. 261–65.

31 Nigel Whiteley, "Toward a Throw-Away Culture: Consumerism, 'Style Obsolescence' and Cultural Theory in the 1950s and 1960s," *Oxford Art Journal* 10, no. 2 (1987), pp. 3–27; I summarize some of Whiteley's arguments here.

32 J. Gordon Lippincott, *Design for Business* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1947), p. 14.

33 See *Industrial Design* 6 (January–June 1959), p. 79.

34 Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (1957; New Brunswick, N.J., and London: Transaction, 1998), p. 263.

35 Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958, 1983); Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

36 Whiteley, "Toward a Throw-Away Culture," pp. 10, 9.

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38 Reyner Banham, "The Atavism of the Short-Distance Mini-Cyclist," *Living Arts,* no. 3 (1964), p. 22, cited in Nigel Whiteley, *Pop Design: Modernism to Mod* (London: Design Council, 1987), p. 51.

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46 Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field" (1979), reprinted in *Postmodern Culture,* ed. Hal Foster (London: Pluto Press, 1985), pp. 31–42.

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48 Lucy R. Lippard, "Curating by Numbers," *Tate Papers,* no. 12 (Landmark Exhibitions Issue; Autumn 2009), http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/09autumn/lippard.shtm (accessed 20 September 2010).

49 Lippard, *Six Years,* p. 8.

50 Ibid., p. 171.

51 The New York Cultural Center operated between 1969 and 1975. Among the exhibitions it programmed was *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (with catalogue), in 1970.

52 Lippard, *Six Years,* p. 183.

53 Ibid., p. 260.

54 Lippard (ibid., p. 43) refers to *Statements* (Coventry: Analytic Art Press), no. 1 (January 1970), and *Analytic Art* (Coventry; formerly *Statements*), no. 1 (July 1971).

55 Lucy Lippard, "The Dematerialization of Art" (1968), in *Changing: Essays in Art Criticism* (New York: Dutton, 1971).

56 Lippard, *Six Years,* p. 43.

57 Ibid., p. 93.

58 Ibid., pp. 104, 200, 202, 259.

59 Ibid., pp. 6–8.

60 Ibid., p. 103. See *Studio International,* May 1970.

61 *Konzeption/Conception* (Leverkusen: Städtische Museum, 1969), quoted in Lippard, *Six Years,* p. 119.

62 Lippard, *Six Years,* p. 139; see also pp. 189–90.

63 Ibid., p. 50.

64 Ibid., p. 119. On the new forms of relation between art and media, particularly TV, that emerged in the mid- and later 1960s, see Dieter Daniels, "Television—Art or Anti-Art?: Conflict and

Cooperation between the Avant-Garde and the Mass Media in the 1960s and 1970s," http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/overview_of_media_art/massmedia/.

65 As he makes clear in the series of statements assembled in Lippard, *Six Years,* p. 94.

66 Ibid., p. 172.

67 This discussion of Caro and Gehry draws on my essay, "Architecture :: Sculpture," in *Learning from the Bilbao Guggenheim,* ed. Anna Maria Guasch and Joseba Zulaika (Reno, Nev.: Center for Basque Studies, University of Nevada, 2005), pp. 235–58.

68 Tim Marlow, "Man of Steel," *Cambridge Alumni Magazine,* Lent Term 1997; reprinted in http://www.anthonycaro.org/Interview-MoS.htm.

69 Caro: "to have realised the closeness of abstract sculpture to architecture would at that time [the 1960s] have horrified us;" "Through the Window," edited version of a lecture delivered at the Tate Gallery, March 1991, revised June 2001, http://www.anthonycaro.org/ysp1-thru-the-window.htm.

70 Ibid.

71 For details on the "Bricks" controversy see www.martinries.com/article1991CA.htm; and Richard Morphet, "Carl Andre's Bricks," *The Burlington Magazine* 118, no. 884 (November 1976), pp. 762–67.

Henry Moore in America:
The Role of Journalism and Photography

Pauline Rose

IN 1946, AFTER VIEWING HENRY MOORE'S SOLO EXHIBITION AT THE Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, an American reviewer visited the sculptor at home in Hertfordshire, England, and described the "deep pleasure of knowing the man himself—kind, sincere to a rare degree in a veiled society, alive with ideas and strength, undidactic, in short with all the seldom encountered marks of greatness."[1] This response to Moore was the norm among American journalists, photographers, businessmen, museum personnel, architects, and philanthropists, and it was among such influential individuals that Moore would find support in the decades following World War II. The reference to a "veiled society" is of interest because, in the context of the ensuing Cold War, the very persona of Henry Moore would challenge the generalized American fear of the "enemy within," as well as the perception that most contemporary artists were likely to be communists.

Varied personal encounters with Moore seem to have confirmed preconceptions of the man that were created and circulated in the United States through journalism and photography. I will focus in this essay on the significance of such means of communication, as well as on its role in shaping perceptions of Moore for American audiences. Although the cult of the celebrity artist would become commonplace in the United States beginning in the 1960s, the special treatment Moore received was unusual at the time. In newspaper and journal articles Moore was frequently quoted verbatim, and as such he was able to control the personal and artistic attributes ascribed to him. Interviewers who visited Moore in the United Kingdom were able to photograph his home and studios for their publications. As a result Moore was presented as an English artist par excellence to a broad American audience. Journalism and photography are rich resources, often more revealing of just how Moore was regarded in America than are more academic texts. The impact of such writings and photographs on perceptions of Moore in the United States should not be underestimated; indeed, these primary sources have the advantage of locating Moore in a context and thus help to avoid the pitfalls of the traditional monograph, whereby an artist may be presented in an overly autonomous manner—as

though unaffected by contemporary cultural, social, and other factors—and whereby accepted, sometimes inaccurate, accounts of his or her career tend to be repeated and thus reinforced.
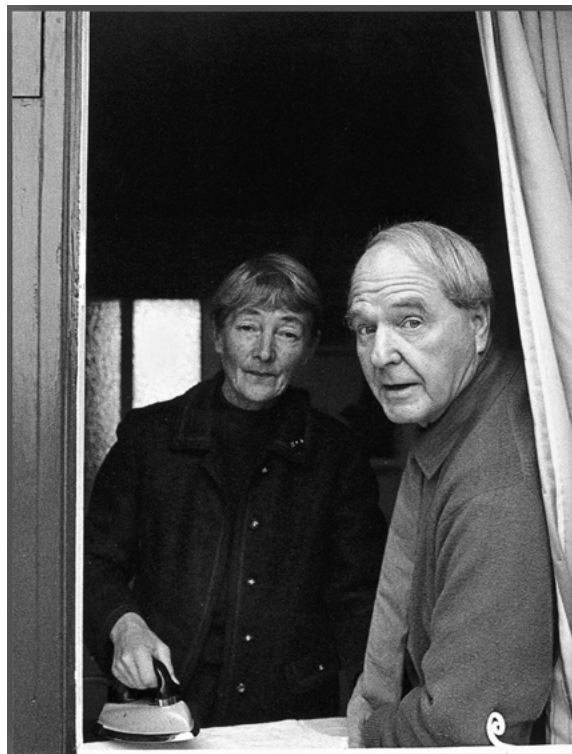
Significant American support for Moore from the 1940s onward culminated in the placement of major examples of his sculpture in city locations, expedited by architects, chief executive officers, and city mayors alike, who were keen to demonstrate and realize their civic and corporate credentials. They shared a need for reliable and dependable imagery—for endorsements from cultural icons that would contribute to "product recognition" and encourage a positive response from the general public as consumers and citizens.

Moore was a complex figure, seemingly approachable, yet clearly certain of his status—a man who appeared not to court publicity but who was repeatedly interviewed and photographed, and who used such means of communication to present himself and his work. Images of Moore, his work, and his home and studios focused on his nationality, on his personality, and on his apparently "simple" way of life, portraying this newly created celebrity as a modest, home-loving family man who did not seek the limelight. One image (fig. 1) shows Moore at home with his wife Irina (the photograph was taken by John Hedgecoe, whose 1968 publication *Henry Spencer Moore* I will discuss later), and is an example typical of photographic representations of Moore. Of course other artists have been recorded with their families, but in most cases these images depict them as part of an extended artistic social grouping. The self-sufficiency of the Moores in images such as these is, I believe, quite striking.

Interviewers and visitors were undoubtedly affected by being in the presence of one of the world's most famous living artists; the impact of Moore's presence was likely even stronger precisely because he did not fulfill

Figure 1
John Hedgecoe, Irina at work, Hoglands, ca. 1968. Black-and-white photograph. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation

Rose, "Henry Moore in America: The Role of Journalism and Photography,"
Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture, 1945–1975 (Getty, 2011)

the expected traits of either the modern artist or the modern celebrity. Instead he appears to have given every interviewer and prospective client alike the impression that he was without pretensions. It is remarkable just how many of his American contacts felt the need to publicly comment so favorably on Moore's personality and "homely" appearance, on his apparent ability to withstand the temptations of fame and financial reward, and on his peculiarly "English" living and working arrangements in the hamlet of Perry Green, near Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, England.

In the postwar period Britain used national stereotyping, through written and visual means, to present itself abroad as a country that had won a major conflict and had preserved civilization and (by association) the British "way of life." However one conceives of the relationship between America and Britain at this time, from an American perspective the public installation of Moore's monumental sculptures could be understood to signify the maintenance of an Anglo-American "civilized" way of life with the recognition of "Englishness" as a core value. At the same time, British governmental and other official bodies clearly recognized the actual and symbolic value of cultural exports to the United States.[2]

Even before World War II, controlling Britain's image overseas, including within the United States, was seen as an imperative in order to maintain the perception of civilized British values. The construction of a range of positive national stereotypes was encouraged at a governmental level in the United Kingdom. It was argued that tourism would enable visitors to "see John Bull at home" and to "discover that he is really a good natured person of simple tastes."[3] This characterization completely matches the most common description of Moore by Americans, and it is interesting that such generalizations provided a perfect template for Moore's later self-presentation, not least because they arose out of British national policy several years in advance of the sculptor's first American successes. Thus Moore's status as a major international artist and his reputation as a quintessentially English man would appear over the years to coexist as compatible readings of the man and his work, especially so in America.

James Hall has discussed the postwar placement of large amounts of modern British sculpture in American museums, plazas, parks, and private homes, noting that "one of the most interesting and pervasive factors in all this is the way that American critics have sought to define the 'Englishness,' of English . . . sculpture."[4] Routinely, such definitions were framed so as to represent democracy, honesty, and quality, and in all cases to operate in opposition to totalitarian regimes. Awareness of the power of "image" to promote a particular ideology was an important facet of British and American culture from the 1950s onward, not just "the image of products, but the image of people and of corporate concerns."[5] As Jane Beckett and Fiona Russell have noted: "After 1945 . . . 'Englishness,' with Moore as its representative, became a commodity which could . . . be marketed in an international arena."[6]

Thus Moore came to be presented as an ambassador of England and of Englishness. To refine this role he retained the persona of "ordinary Yorkshireman"—routinely locating his creativity in his working class roots—while simultaneously forming relationships with influential individuals within the British "Establishment," who in turn recognized how Moore and his work could be employed in presenting British civilization abroad. In 1958 an English reviewer suggested that "in the raw new towns of England, Stevenage and Harlow, wholly working class and downright, the people are proud to have

Moore's statues in their public squares . . . the people know that Moore is no arty exquisite from another social world. He is their own kind."[7] The American Andrew Ritchie saw a relationship between Moore's sculpture of the early 1940s and the fact that the sculptor's father had been a miner. He noted that Moore had "come from Yorkshire and from a mining community. I myself came from a very tough mining community near Glasgow, so I had a particular sympathy for his approach to the cutting of coal and stone, the digging into the figure, as it were, as you would dig into the earth."[8]

The history of relations between Britain and the United States is complex and variable, although in the face of international and political threat, invariably the two countries have presented a united front. This affiliation was fundamental in enabling Moore's American career, since Americans perceived Britain as a friendly nation with the same language and a similar political structure. Additionally, Moore was clearly aware of the opportunities open to him in America, and in 1961 it was suggested that his achievements in the United States were a product of his being "in tune with the *zeitgeist;* in a restless age of wars, when populations and ideas were on the move, Moore's massive dynamic calm was immediately appealing and inspirational. It is difficult for us in Britain to understand . . . just how much Moore is revered abroad: he is considered quite simply as the greatest living sculptor."[9]

In the United States the political tensions resulting from the Cold War frequently led to contemporary art and artists being characterized as "un-American." This was largely due to an extreme conservatism that regarded contemporary art as being a direct challenge to accepted American values. Moore, however, seemed immune to this categorization. Clearly, this was largely because he was not an American, but another contributing factor was Moore's "English" character—his homely appearance and his politeness, which manifested in a willingness to attend interminable dinners, private views, and so on. Moore was thus well regarded as a person, and his sculpture was perceived as expressing humanistic qualities. It is no coincidence that the backdrop for all of this was the period between World War II and the fall of the Berlin Wall. The sculptor was explicitly situated within a Cold War context by a broad spectrum of political, journalistic, and aesthetic commentators. For example, in 1960 American commentator John Russell described Moore's themes as "particularly welcome to humanity at a time when it is, for one reason or another, at war with itself."[10]

The role of fine art in the context of Cold War anxieties was often debated, in the United States as in Europe, as evidenced by a 1946 multidisciplinary conference held at Princeton, titled *The Humanistic Tradition in the Century Ahead*. There it was argued that the artist was probably the only person in society who could represent and continue humanistic values.[11] This was an aspect of Moore that his supporters could promote and which found a ready outlet in America, drawing together a general American understanding of Englishness and a specifically American perspective on Moore. In the United Kingdom, perceptions of Moore appear to have been more closely related to his work; thus, it was his sculpture that was under examination, rather than the man himself. Unsurprisingly, this meant that his work was open to attack. For some, his work was incomprehensibly modern, or was the butt of the cartoonist's art; for others he was an artist who in the years following World War II allowed the power of his sculptural expression to become weakened through inflated size and unsympathetic positioning.

Support from the British Council both facilitated Moore's career and reinforced the ways in which he might be perceived as a particularly "English" artist. In 1941 the Council had published *British Life and Thought: An Illustrated Survey*. Supposedly typical national personality characteristics are described and they are strikingly similar to the tone of American commentary on Moore: "The ordinary Englishman is not in the common acceptance of the word 'intellectual.' He has a great respect for men who are masters of their craft . . . he pays no attention to . . . advice which may be given to him by men, however distinguished, who talk about things of which they have comparatively little knowledge."[12]

The construction of Moore's persona was achieved through a variety of means but essentially can be divided into linguistic and visual forms, which clearly resonated for American audiences, be they dealers, civic officials, businessmen, museum curators, journalists, or indeed the general public. Moore's early American successes in New York, his relationship with MoMA, and the latter's response to the political and cultural climate in the years immediately following World War II were all of significance, and the importance of New York to Moore's career is clearly articulated by the city's journals and newspapers.

Reviews of Moore's first New York exhibition in 1943—held by his dealer, Curt Valentin—were generally favorable, if at times unnecessarily elaborate. *Art Digest* noted that Moore had not hitherto been considered in the United States alongside artists such as Picasso but that "he should have been. England has not added a leaf to the flowering tree for so long, one forgets to look for foliation from that direction."[13] Henry McBride wrote a mainly sardonic review but nonetheless utilized what would become familiar tropes concerning Moore's appeal to an American audience:

> It's a bit of a test for the Entente Cordiale, these drawings by Henry Moore . . . for Mr. Moore is British and we all, naturally, wish to love British art, but Mr. Moore is also abstract. This is not a test for me personally, I hasten to add, for I got used to abstract art long ago, but it is for you, Mr. Average Citizen. The average citizen in this country refuses to take abstract art seriously. But this time, with a war going on, we really ought to make an effort. It's all the easier because . . . Mr. Moore is not quite abstract. You can tell, partly, what some of the drawings are about. . . . All this is accomplished in admirable taste. Good taste is Mr. Moore's middle name. It is his chief asset. . . . Picasso, on the other hand, is not much noted for good taste. . . . When he is at his best, even I . . . am as much repelled as pleased by the reverberations from his thunderbolts. Mr. Moore is much more discreet.[14]

Moore's 1946 solo exhibition at MoMA was characterized as "the largest ever held in America for a living British artist."[15] *Art Digest* linked Moore's success with British stoicism in the face of war:

> It has been said that England loses every battle except the last. Could it be that Henry Moore personifies his country's El Alamein in the history of modern art expression, which was originally conceived from the brushes of Constable and Turner? . . . There is more aesthetic

vitality in a single drawing by Henry Moore at the Modern Museum than in the entire crop of post-war Picassos now exciting controversy in New York. . . . When it comes to the validity of modernism as an artistic outlet in an age faced by mechanical tyranny, the response to the Moore show can only be, "This is it!"[16]

A 1947 article in *Art in America* emphasized Moore's success and greatness as having been achieved "with a steadfastness and singleness of purpose and aim; with a minimum of compromise to public taste or demands. This contrasts with so many gifted and promising English artists, where official patronage and public acclaim led to their ruin as free and independent artists."[17] *Life* magazine featured an article on Moore's MoMA exhibition for a readership of twenty million, and in 1947 published a letter from James Thrall Soby, who had held various posts at the Museum, including that of Chairman on an interim basis during 1947. He wrote: "One of Moore's many distinctions . . . is that he is able to describe his own aims with rare clarity and eloquence. I know that a number of ordinary citizens visiting his recent exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art were particularly impressed by Moore's simple and coherent words of self-explanation."[18] MoMA's Alfred Barr singled out Moore as the greatest British sculptor, conceding that "American sculpture may possibly be somewhat inferior to that of France, Italy or (because of Henry Moore) Great Britain."[19] James Johnson Sweeney, who was Director of Painting and Sculpture at MoMA, also referred to Moore's nationality as a factor in his success: "At the time of the Moore show here, he was still some sort of avant garde figure. . . . But he was an Englishman. He was not a Frenchman. And Englishmen give an impression of conservative experimentation when they are being experimental and they never seem to stir the excitement a French explorer does."[20]

Moore's 1946 show received extensive press coverage, his personality and appearance often attracting as much attention as his work. Indeed, it was commonplace for his work not to be discussed at all; instead what was of interest was the fact that he was "a man of middle size with a ruddy complexion, regular features and flat silky hair [who] looks much too young to be a veteran of World War I, and much too young to be too old to serve in World War II."[21] *The New Yorker* described Moore as "a short, alert, friendly man of forty-eight, with . . . an easy conversational style."[22] *Life* described him as "soft-spoken but highly articulate . . . short, brown-haired, tweedy and married."[23]

Later, in the 1970s, journalist Henry J. Seldis clearly was affected by Moore's domestic arrangement, recalling his first visit to Moore's home—called Hoglands—in the summer of 1962: "An air of fertility and tranquility enveloped us as we drove from the village station of Bishop's Stortford . . . to the unpretentious . . . farmhouse which is the center of the creative and domestic life of Britain's greatest living artist."[24] Seldis wrote extensively about Moore's daily routine, noting the pattern of his domestic life and work, punctuated by regular mealtimes, photographic sessions in his studios, dealing with correspondence, and ending the day by having supper with his wife "on trays before the television."[25]

James Hall has referred to the "Renaissance ideal of the gentleman-artist" as having been "supplanted by the cult of the 'worker-artist' who performs down-to-earth tasks."[26] In many ways, Moore straddled these two extremes; he was seen as both a gentleman and a physically hardworking,

"hands-on" sculptor. Both he and his supporters consistently stressed his "ordinariness," startlingly at odds with his status as cultural hero. In *Time* magazine in 1959 an article on the sculptor included an often reproduced photograph of Moore in his maquette studio, the caption reading "Moore at Work in his Generating Room." Part of the text reads:

> Sculptor Henry Moore sits in an aged wicker chair on a crumpled cushion. He is small and compact . . . with a high-domed face that is benign yet cragged. Thinning strands of graying hair stretch errantly across his head. From beneath brows that jut at least an inch beyond pale blue eyes, he stares intensely at a small plaster shape held in his left hand. The right hand, thick-wristed and broad, with straight fingers that are surgically muscular, holds a small scalpel. In a few minutes, the chunk of thumb-shaped plaster takes on form.[27]

The rootedness of Moore the man, and the presentation of his studio as a "generating room" is both vivid and unusual. It conjures up for the reader a scene of industry, but one that is the source of individual creative objects rather than mass-produced, utilitarian goods.

In the following year Donald Hall interviewed Moore for *Horizon*. He described the "tiny village" of Perry Green and how he walked with the sculptor "in the field of bronzes," referring to Moore's face as "sculptorly and massive."[28] In 1966 Aline Saarinen interviewed Moore and recalled later for NBC Television the "charming little village called Much Hadham—I like the name—it sounds so British."[29] In 1968 *Fashion* magazine described Moore:

> Handsome, tough, gentle, beautifully mannered, articulate without being intellectually pretentious. Moore is one of the most attractive artistic personalities in the world. For many years, he has lived in a charming old house at Much Hadham . . . he is always ready to receive foreign artists and young people with whom he will discuss his work with modesty and courtesy. No living artist commands such devotion and respect.[30]

Photography played a significant role in creating and supporting Moore's persona, defining readings of his work, and advertising his sculpture to international audiences and potential clients. This is significant because photography can simultaneously romanticize the artist and suggest to the viewer that what he or she is seeing is truthful documentation. Certainly the increased circulation in the postwar years of mass-market journals and the concurrent popularity of magazine features on contemporary artists is relevant here. Moreover, as early as 1946 an article in the *Magazine of Art* noted that American businesses were not only purchasing art for their offices but were also producing in-house journals full of high-quality color reproductions of artworks. These were disseminated at no charge and in large quantities, reaching many people who never visited galleries or museums.[31] Coincidentally, an advertisement by the Container Corporation appeared in this same issue of the *Magazine of Art,* making use of one of Moore's *Shelter* drawings.

In studio images, Moore was often shown working alone, rather than with his assistants. A 1964 photograph (fig. 2) reinforces this presentation of Moore as an artist without pretension, performing all studio tasks with equal commitment. However, it has been argued that some photographs were staged:

Figure 2
Crispin Eurich, Henry Moore sweeping up after a day of work on *Reclining Figure* (1959–64), 1964. Black-and-white photograph. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation

"Photographs of Moore wielding a chisel in a marble quarry in Italy . . . were apparently arranged solely for the benefit of the photographer since most of Moore's later marble carving was carried out by assistants working from models."[32] Such images were commonplace in American mass-circulation journals. Indeed, images of Moore and/or his work appeared with great frequency in nonspecialist magazines and in advertisements, demonstrating Moore's heightened profile in the United States and an assumption that the sculptor and his sculpture would be recognized by a broad audience.

Not only are there abundant images of the sculptor himself, but Moore's sculptures have of course been extensively photographed. Over the years he collaborated on a number of books with professional photographers; in the earlier part of his career he photographed his own work as well (fig. 3). The visual positioning of the sculptor in relation to his own works was also a recurring theme; in one photograph (fig. 4), taken on his estate in 1972, Moore is literally positioned at the center of his sculptures. The conflation of sculptor and sculptures is striking. John Hedgecoe's 1968 *Henry Spencer Moore,* published in New York and London, was the first major text on the sculptor that was overwhelmingly pictorial. However, many of the illustrations depict neither the book's subject, nor his work. Instead, much of the emphasis is on visual material suggestive of Moore's birthplace in the north of England, realized through cultural and social stereotypes (as in fig. 5). The first image in the book is a grainy photograph of a slag heap, captioned by Moore: "As a small boy these slag heaps seemed much larger than the Pyramids."[33] Moore wrote the text that accompanied Hedgecoe's photographs; thus there was tight control over the tone of this publication. Robert Hughes has described it as:

Figure 3
Keystone Press, Henry Moore photographing a sculpture at Perry Green, 1953. Black-and-white photograph. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation

Figure 4
John Swope, Henry Moore at Perry Green, April 1972. Black-and-white photograph. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation
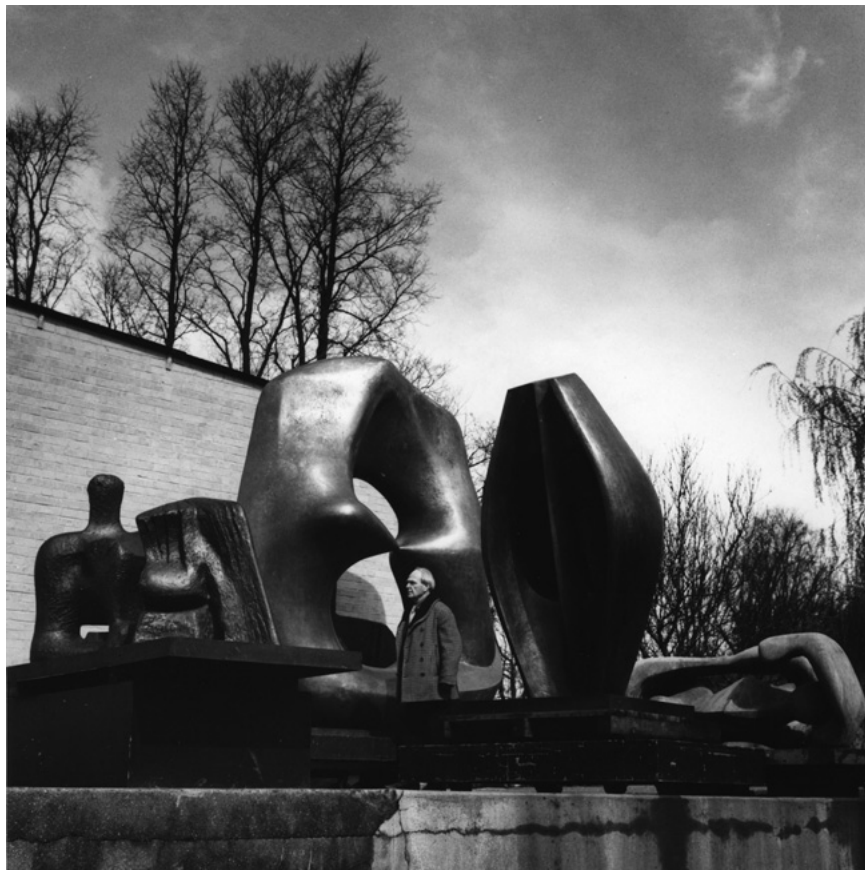
Figure 5
John Hedgecoe, black-and-white photograph.
In John Hedgecoe and Henry Moore, *Henry
Spencer Moore* (London: Nelson, 1968), 13.
Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore
Foundation

a monument . . . a seductive book . . . the images pile up: a slag-heap
at Castleford silhouetted against a hardly less black and granular sky,
a Romanesque corbel shot to look like an early Moore. . . . the aim
of this luscious treatment is to give the reader the illusion that he
"knows Moore." . . . A book on Moore without roots and flintstones
would be as precious an escape from metaphor as a film on Barbara
Hepworth without those St. Ives seagulls creaking obstreperously on
the soundtrack.[34]

Images of Moore's home were of central importance in articles about
him. In "Henry Moore at Home," published in *The New York Times Magazine*
in 1972, Moore's home is described thus: "The house itself exudes a solidity; it
is devoid of plantings around the perimeter and thus seems rooted in the enor-
mous blocks of the stone paving."[35] Photographs taken both outside and inside
Moore's home reinforced the idea of a restrained and quiet existence, exempli-
fied by an image from the mid-1950s (fig. 6).

Figure 6
Lidbrook, Henry Moore in the small sitting
room at Hoglands, ca. 1955. Black-and-white
photograph. Reproduced by permission of The
Henry Moore Foundation

The photographs of David Finn—founding partner of a major New York public relations firm, Ruder Finn, and a collector of twentieth-century sculpture, including several Moores—have been especially important. He produced a photo-essay of one of his own Moore sculptures, *Reclining Figure: Bridge Prop,* subsequently published under the title *As the Eye Moves* (1973). Finn commented that "the object was to show you could discover so many things in one piece of sculpture. Henry was quite surprised to see some of the shapes in it. I was thrilled to show through my photographs aspects which he found surprising, or at least pretended he found fresh."[36] For his ambitious publication *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Environment* (1977), Finn decided to take advantage of overseas business trips to photograph Moore's work around the world.[37] Reviews of this book were numerous, one describing Finn as "a world-traveling paparazzo, photographing Moore's sculptures . . . in diverse locations in 16 countries."[38] Another reviewer recommended that "Some enterprising travel agent should arrange a Henry Moore World Tour. . . . The photographs are awfully good, as Henry Moore says many times in the commentary, and a book which has a foreword by Lord Clark of Civilisation must be definitive."[39]

David Finn has long conflated quality in corporate matters with outstanding sculpture, using images of Moore's work within his company's publicity material, including the poster series *Conference Room Quotations,* where each photograph of a sculpture is supported by a quotation from a well-known artist, writer, philosopher, or leader (fig. 7). Finn believes, as have many other business leaders, "that these posters encourage people to think creatively while they are at work."[40]

In the mid-1970s a major Henry Moore sculpture was planned for the new City Hall in Dallas, Texas. Raymond Nasher, a local businessman and major sculpture collector, was involved in the realization of this commission. Before the installation Nasher hosted an exhibition of Moore's sculptures and of Finn's photographs, titled *Dallas Gets Moore*, at Nasher's NorthPark shop-

Figure 7
David Finn, untitled image from Ruder Finn, *Conference Room Quotations* (New York, 1967). Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation and David Finn

Sit two or three places lower than the one due your position.

It is better that people should ask you to move up, than that they suggest that you move down.

Ben Azzai

Sculpture by Henry Moore
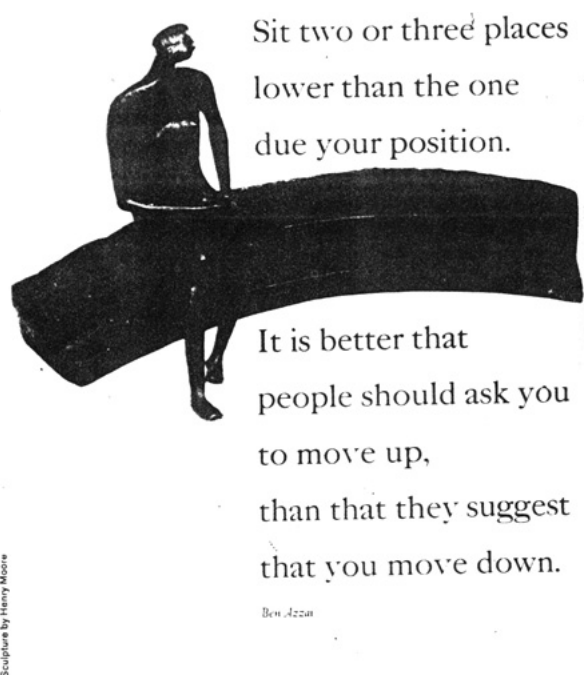
ping center in Dallas. On the first day, Finn discussed and autographed his book *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Environment;* a review noted that the book's publication had "perfect timing. . . . the book seems especially pertinent to Dallas. . . . [it] offers the type of views that will be seen when the Moore work is installed at City Hall. . . . The book is a powerful one, as powerful as the sculpture it celebrates."[41]

In the last decade of Moore's life John Russell proposed that the sculptor was:

> a great many people's favourite Englishman. . . . Moore the sculptor and Moore the man have a very large American constituency. It is now half a century since discerning Americans began to collect his work. . . . Over and over again he has been the No. 1 choice for a big new public commission in this country. Many thousands of Americans in cities and towns and on campuses big and small pass a monumental Moore every day of their lives. More than any other artist of our time, he has been brought out of the museum and into the open and offered the gift of ubiquity.[42]

Thus, by the 1970s, photographs of Moore's sculptures and carefully selected passages of text were routinely deployed alongside actual displays of his work. The significance of this type of photography and public use of the written word in mobilizing and defining Moore's career has been under-researched. Of course, other major artists have, to differing degrees, been presented in such ways; the distinction with Moore I would argue is the precision and consistency of such communication. Even the moving image was employed in this way; many films were made about Moore and were shown on American television networks. This persistent use of both still and moving images as a means to "know" an artist would now be treated with some caution, but that was unlikely to have been the case in the earlier decades of Moore's American career. It is also the case that sculpture lends itself to the medium of film in a way that painting does not. Sculpture's three-dimensionality allows for dramatic treatment, for distortions of scale, for the moving view as the camera pans around it. Overlay this with Moore's voice and the effect is powerful. From this perspective, the promotion of English painters in the United States was bound to be less compelling. As one of the most interviewed and photographed artists of the twentieth century, Moore was one of the first modern artists to collaborate with mass media in developing himself into a household name—in constructing what might, in later years, be known as a "brand." The nature of his personality, his appearance, his living situation, and his steady and continuous creative output could vividly be conveyed through words and images, and the effect on his reception in America was profound.

Notes

1 Alfred Frankfurter, "Henry Moore: America's First View of England's First Sculptor," *Art News,* December 1946, pp. 26–29.
2 The phrase "the special relationship" was coined by Sir Winston Churchill on March 5, 1946, when speaking to a group of businessmen in Fulton, Missouri. Churchill saw the alliance as one of equals. Robert Reich has noted that "any shortfall in Britain's economic power would be compensated by her political skills and historic wisdom." Robert Reich, Review of "Decline and Divergence: The Special Relationship," ed. W. R. Louis and H. Bull, *Times Literary Supplement,* March 6, 1987, pp. 231–32.

3 Speech by the Earl of Derby at The Mansion House, London, December 20, 1928, National Archives, Kew, London, FO 395/435, P215/178/150.

4 James Hall, "Clement Greenberg on English Sculpture and Englishness," *Sculpture Journal* 4 (2000), pp. 172–77.

5 Roy Shaw and Gwen Shaw, "The Cultural and Social Setting," in *Modern Britain,* vol. 9 of *The Cambridge Cultural History of Britain,* ed. Boris Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 17–18.

6 Jane Beckett and Fiona Russell, eds., *Henry Moore: Critical Essays* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 13.

7 Simon Kavanaugh, "Timeless Simplicity of the Primitive Is His Goal," *Coventry Evening Telegraph,* November 7, 1958, Henry Moore Foundation Archives, Much Hadham (hereafter HMF) 0007256.

8 Andrew Ritchie, quoted in Henry J. Seldis, *Henry Moore in America* (London: Phaidon, in association with Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1973), p. 102. No date given for interview.

9 A. Gordon, "The British Council—International Impresario of British Art," *Connoisseur,* June 1961, p. 16.

10 John Russell, "Ten Years of Majestic Expansion," *The Sunday Times,* November 27, 1960, HMF 0006948.

11 "The Humanistic Tradition in the Century Ahead: A Bicentennial Conference Review," *Princeton Alumni Weekly,* December 20, 1946, pp. 4–7.

12 The British Council, *British Life and Thought: An Illustrated Survey* (London, 1941), p. 447.

13 Maude Riley, "Henry Moore from War Torn London," *Art Digest* 17, no. 16 (May 15, 1943), p. 14.

14 Henry McBride, "The Henry Moore Drawings," *New York Sun*, May 14, 1943, HMF 0008966.

15 Untitled interview between Henry Moore and James Johnson Sweeney, *Partisan Review* 14, no. 2 (March–April 1947), pp. 180–85.

16 Peyton Boswell, "Moore, Vital Briton," *Art Digest* 21, no. 7 (February 15, 1947), HMF 0008640.

17 Gigi Richter, "Introduction to Henry Moore," *Art in America* 35, no. 1 (January 1947), pp. 5 and 16.

18 Letter from James Thrall Soby to *Life* magazine (January 17, 1947), published February 10, 1947, Archives of Museum of Modern Art, New York, Henry Moore: Correspondence: R–Z, Exhibition File 339.

19 Irving Sandler and Amy Newman, eds., *Defining Modern Art: Selected Writings of Alfred H. Barr, Jr.* (New York: Abrams, 1986), p. 212.

20 See Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* p. 68.

21 W. G. Rogers, "Sculptor Henry Moore Opening Show Tuesday," *Norfolk Virginian Pilot,* December 15, 1946, HMF 0008753.

22 "The Talk of the Town," *The New Yorker*, December 21, 1946, pp. 18–19.

23 "British Sculptor: Henry Moore Shocks and Pleases in His First Big Exhibit in U.S.," *Life* 22, no. 3 (January 20, 1947), pp. 77–80.

24 See Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* p. 12.

25 Ibid., p. 21.

26 James Hall, *The World as Sculpture: The Changing Status of Sculpture from the Renaissance to the Present Day* (London: Pimlico, 2000), p. 5.

27 "Maker of Images," *Time* 74, no. 12 (September 21, 1959), pp. 78–88.

28 "Henry Moore: An Interview by Donald Hall," *Horizon* 3, no. 2 (November 1960), pp. 102–15.

29 Aline Saarinen, "Today: Henry Moore Report" (New York, N.B.C. Television 1970), HMF A6.B.

30 Charles Spencer, "Moore at Seventy," *Fashion,* August 1968, p. 86.

31 Walter Abell, "Industry and Painting," *Magazine of Art* 39, no. 3 (March 1946), pp. 82–93, 114–18.

32 Geraldine Johnson, ed., *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 12.

33 John Hedgecoe, *Henry Spencer Moore* (London and New York: T. Nelson, 1968), pp. 10–11.

34 Robert Hughes, "Moore Is Less," *Spectator,* 25 October 25, 1968, HMF 0005299.

35 Norma Skurka, "Henry Moore at Home," *The New York Times Magazine,* July 23, 1972, pp. 32–33.

36 Roger Berthoud, interview with David Finn, New York, November 29, 1983, HMF.

37 Author's interview with David Finn, New York (2 August 2003).

38 Review of David Finn's *Sculpture and Environment, Publisher's Weekly* 211, no. 15 (April 11, 1977), p. 67.

39 William Packer, "Henry Moore Photographed," *The Financial Times,* May 31, 1977, HMF 0003162.

40 David Finn and Judith Jedlicka, *The Art of Leadership: Building Business-Arts Alliances* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1998), p. 172.

41 Lorraine Haacke, "Henry Moore: New Book Ready at a Perfect Time for Dallas," *The Dallas Times Herald,* May 29, 1977, HMF 0003160.

42 John Russell, "The Met Will Present the Private Henry Moore," *The New York Times,* May 8, 1983, HMF 0001183.

"More Light and Less Heat":
The Intersection of Henry Seldis's Art Criticism and the Career of Henry Moore in America

Jennifer Wulffson Bedford

IN CONSIDERING THE RECEPTION OF HENRY MOORE IN AMERICA, ONE quickly realizes that it is a story of professional relationships, fortuitous meetings, and deeply held personal commitments nurtured over time. In the context of this story, many curators, collectors, and critics come easily to mind: Curt Valentin, Herbert Read, Joseph Hirshhorn, for example. A personality rarely if ever considered, however, is Henry Seldis (fig. 1), critic for the *Los Angeles Times* from 1958 to 1978 and a consistent champion of Moore the artist and of Moore the man.

Seldis was a critic who might well be considered conservative and perhaps provincial. Indeed, he was reviled by some area artists and curators. The dealer Irving Blum recently dubbed Seldis a "deadly critic," in a lament on the state of art criticism in Los Angeles in the 1960s.[1] Seldis sometimes completely missed the mark in his pronouncements; for instance, he declared in 1962 that pop art would "probably be as short-lived as the Neo-Dada fad of a year ago."[2] He was also one of Moore's many vocal proponents, an aspect of his

Figure 1
Henry Seldis at the LACMA exhibition *Henry Moore in Southern California*, October 1973. In William Wilson, *A Tribute to Henry Seldis (1925–1978)* (Laguna Beach Museum of Art, 1978), 2. Photo courtesy of the Seldis Estate

taste that contributed to Seldis's isolation from certain powerful critics, and which may very well have helped to isolate Moore as well.[3] None of this should lead to dismissal; Seldis's voice is an interesting one and he sometimes managed to surprise in his opinions while always maintaining consistent criteria for judgment. In a 1984 piece for *Artforum,* Thomas Lawson famously was asked a question about Hilton Kramer, a more familiar contemporary of Seldis who is sometimes mentioned in the same breath since their taste often overlapped. The question was "Does Kramer's criticism have any merit?" And Lawson's scathing answer was, in short, "not much—certainly not much of a lasting kind."[4] The same question is now asked here of Seldis, and part of answering this question entails understanding how Moore and his work functioned for Seldis both professionally and personally.

To start, we can consider how Moore's work functioned for Seldis in a very personal, autobiographical way, since this is also how his affinity for the artist began. In 1973 Seldis organized an exhibition of Henry Moore's sculpture, drawing, and prints for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and wrote a book, entitled *Henry Moore in America,* to accompany the exhibition.[5] The text was based largely on a series of lengthy interviews with Moore and curators, collectors, and dealers such as James Johnson Sweeney, Joseph H. Hirshhorn, Taft Schreiber, Mrs. Sam Zacks, Harry Brooks, and Harry Fischer.[6] Seldis, of course, wrote on thousands of artists over the course of his career and contributed essays for other exhibition catalogues, but the LACMA exhibition and book were unique in their scale and preparation and represent a pinnacle in his career, realized five years before his death at the age of 53.[7] The exhibition, it should be noted, was entitled "Henry Moore in Southern California," and was drawn from area collections with a few outside loans, primarily from Moore himself. Seldis was invested in this focus for the exhibition, knowing the strength of the local collections, notably the Sheinbaums, the Weismans, the Schreibers, and the Starks, to name just a few (fig. 2).

Seldis's stated aim was to shed light on Moore's "long and fruitful" relationships with people in the United States and Canada in order to reach a better understanding of both "the man and his work."[8] Seldis made the case for Moore's "American-ness" while also maintaining, even glamorizing, Moore's

Figure 2
Henry Moore (British, 1898–1986), *Reclining Mother and Child,* 1960–61. Bronze, 228.6 × 90.2 × 132 cm (90 × 35 ½ × 52 in.). In Henry J. Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* 207. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation

Englishness. Seldis, who was German by birth, began and ended the first chapter of the book by relating Moore to the quintessential American author Henry David Thoreau, thus casting this most English of artists in the most American of lights:

> Only four years after my narrow escape from Nazi Germany, I had been reading Thoreau's *Walden* in an effort to come to grips with some spiritual values of my adopted country when I happened upon an exhibition of Moore's drawings held at the Curt Valentin Gallery in 1943. His *Shelter Drawings,* especially, struck me as such convincing demonstrations of man's essential indomitability that for the very first time I gained a modicum of hope that Hitler would not rule the world, after all.[9]

Just as the drawings proved pivotal for Seldis, both personally and professionally, so they were for Moore himself (fig. 3). Julian Stallabrass has pointed out that the noteworthy change in Moore's status after the war is generally connected to the success of the Shelter drawings.[10] Herbert Read also felt that the drawings proved the "inherent humanism" of Moore's *earlier* work, thus validating the early, less appreciated work, and setting the stage for the work that followed the Shelter drawings.[11]

This early and striking experience in 1943 carried forward into Seldis's later thoughts on Moore's work. Through Seldis's friend, David Thompson, art critic for *The Times* in London, Seldis and his wife were first invited to Much Hadham in the summer of 1962 (fig. 4). Seldis returned many times over the

Figure 3
Henry Moore (British, 1898–1986), *Tube Shelter Perspective,* 1941. Pencil, wax crayon, colored crayons, watercolor wash, gouache, 19.1 × 23.8 cm. (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation

Figure 4
Moore in his studio with Henry Seldis in 1962. From H. Seldis, "Henry Moore," *Art in America* 51 (October 1963), 56. Photo courtesy of the Seldis Estate

years, sometimes for extended periods, and also traveled with Moore in Italy. It is clear from his writing how intensely he admired the work and, it seems equally, the man himself—his personality, his ethics, and his lifestyle. His propensity to write about Moore in grand terms never abated, and indeed increased during Seldis's career. A photograph in the LACMA publication is dramatically captioned, presumably by Seldis: "In Carrara mountains Moore searches for marble near quarries used by Michelangelo" (fig. 5). In William Wilson's published reflection on Seldis upon his death, the accompanying picture was of Seldis with Moore.[12]

Figure 5
In Carrara mountains Moore searches for marble near quarries used by Michelangelo. In Henry J. Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* 25. Photo: Fotografico I. Dessi. Photo courtesy of the Seldis Estate
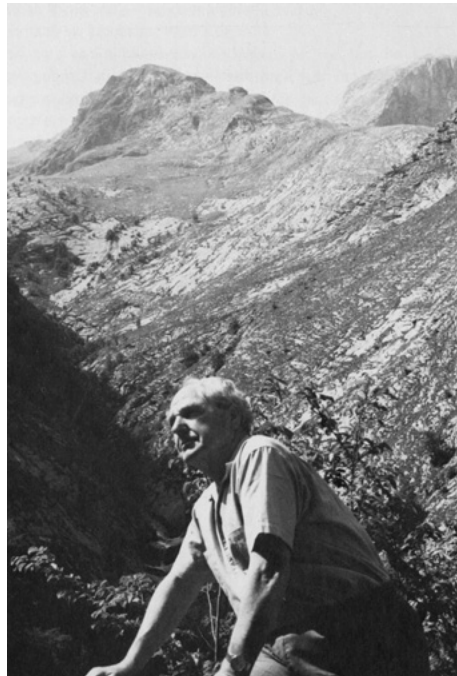
The years during and immediately after the Second World War were an especially charged period of alliances, fascinations, and distinctions between Britain and the United States, and in this political context Moore's work served as a potent symbol of common values to some people, appealing to popular universalist and nationalist cultural constructions. Moore's sculpture, and the artist himself, embodied a modernist, humanist ideal understood on both sides of the Atlantic as wholesome, redemptive, and appropriate in the aftermath of the Second World War. This, in conjunction with his "cultured country life"[13] and "peculiarly English"[14] persona, made Moore the cornerstone of many American collections of the period, and critics such as Seldis both understood why this was so and helped to make it a reality. Seldis had an ally in the British critic and early Moore biographer John Russell. Russell wrote, in 1972, that "It is, in fact, not the least of Henry Moore's achievements that he has left behind him in so many parts of the world a new notion of what it means to be an Englishman."[15] And only a year later Russell wrote, in a plainer idiom, about the Moore exhibition at LACMA, "Americans have seen the point of Henry Moore since the mid-1930s . . . American enthusiasts think big, in a traditional American way."[16] Seldis begins the second chapter of the LACMA publication by matter-of-factly stating that "More than three quarters of Henry Moore's work is in America." In the next sentence he points to Moore's own assertion that it was the 1946–47 Museum of Modern Art retrospective that secured his international reputation. In a somewhat odd statement in the third person Moore offered this opinion:

> I doubt that one would have won the Biennale sculpture prize that year without the real groundwork and the real impetus that The Museum of Modern Art retrospective provided. Really the foundation where the international side of one's career is concerned—that international thing happened through the Museum of Modern Art exhibition.[17]

The United States and Canada were not the only countries to adopt Moore as their own. New Zealand, it has been claimed, also appropriated Moore as "New Zealand's greatest sculptor."[18]

Seldis and others were not only interested in forging an Anglo-American current, but a European-American current. For a small tribute exhibition organized in honour of Seldis at the Laguna Beach Museum of Art in 1978, William Wilson commented in his catalogue introduction that part of Seldis's spirit remained European, and that it showed in the art he had around him, mentioning work by Beckmann, Picasso, Moore, and Lipchitz. As a "conscientious critic," in Wilson's opinion, Seldis had ideas about "what form the extension of history ought to take, particularly in present day California."[19] Seldis saw the identity of California, and specifically that of Los Angeles, as distinct from and equal to that of New York, and he objected to what he saw as New York's purposeful divorce from European traditions and a general dependence on what he called "New York's art fashion co-ordinators" for judgment.[20] Seldis forthrightly objected to Moore's treatment by some people, writing that while

> dubbed an anachronism by art's fashion mongers, Moore continues to surprise less narrow-minded observers of the contemporary art scene by the astonishingly fresh and dynamic creations that spring from his mind and hand in advanced years. An indomitable optimism and tenaciousness can be readily recognized in this man.[21]

Seldis, of course, did not object outright to all art and opinions coming out of New York—quite the contrary—but he was clearly resistant to its self-appointed role as arbiter of art and was wary of certain forces at play within the art market. Seldis also felt that an important aspect of his job as an art critic and journalist was to speak in favour of West Coast artistic production, and, if necessary, to be a voice for the autonomy of its artists, collectors, and institutions.

Despite the occasional reference to one of his more fiery pronouncements, Seldis's critical criteria have never been carefully parsed. By reading hundreds of the thousands of reviews and other articles he wrote for periodicals this can be done. Within this body of writing, his thoughts about Moore's work seem to have functioned as a touchstone for how he approached disparate types of art throughout his career. Seldis wrote that "If Moore frequently does not hesitate to introduce elements of brutality into his work, its total meaning remains one of affirmation, of hope or at least survival,"[22] a statement that maps onto his opinions—positive or negative—of such various artists as Leon Golub, Edward Keinholz, and Roy Lichtenstein. The quotation in the title of this article comes from an early article he wrote for the *Los Angeles Times* in 1959 entitled "Art reaches a crossroad." He wrote: "The basic division in contemporary art is not stylistic but philosophic. It reflects the growing gap between the adherents to humanism and those who believe that this approach to life is not applicable in our time"; and he concludes: "what is needed is more light and less heat."[23]

When Seldis wrote this, I would suggest, he was talking about both art and its criticism. Seldis understood his role as a critic as someone who considers intentions and performance, taking into account contemporary context and the history of art. He wrote in a straightforward manner, and although he did not shy away from biting commentary at times, it is also clear that he firmly believed in the "benefit of the doubt."[24] And he did not blindly advocate local art and taste, though he certainly saw the monitoring of local institutions as an important aspect of his work, as well as encouraging the city's exposure to art from all over the world.[25] Unusually, and with great honesty, he reminded readers that critics are subjective and encouraged his own readers to seek out the views of multiple critics.[26] He also had this to say about the role of the critic:

> Presumably it is the function of the critic to illuminate the stage on which an artist performs, rather than to cast a shadow on it with his own verbal acrobatics . . . the peculiar verbal gyrations found in many art magazines seem designed to allow some critics to perform without committing themselves.[27]

Seldis was aware that his opinions diverged from that of most popular and influential art critics in the United States and he did not avoid pointing this out: "It may be old hat to some of the rash spokesmen for the 'novelty for novelty's sake' art movement, but the human situation still provides some of the best subject matter of contemporary art."[28] It must also be remembered that he was a journalist—a newspaperman—before, and in addition to, being an art critic. His readership was larger and more diverse than, for instance, that of the fledgling *Artforum* in the 1960s, and the management of the *Los Angeles Times* had more complicated priorities.

Seldis was not a sculpture specialist but it is evident that, in his opinion, sculpture has a particular edifying capability. The 1960 exhibition *Sculpture of*

Our Time, a selection of the Hirshhorn collection, inspired him to write that "the greatest sculptors of our time were concerned with the image of man and the theme of humanity and their infinite variations."[29] He also felt that the strengths and diversity of the medium were often "overshadowed by the more active and doctrinaire world of contemporary American painting" and that painting of the time relied too often on "a search for novelty."[30] He spoke plainly when he wrote:

> in frantically warding off tradition, America's action painters have colonized Europe and established an academy at home the like of which has not been seen since Bougereau's time. Significant aesthetic advances were made by the original abstract expressionists in the 40s, but the 50s have seen too one-sided an emphasis on non-objective painting coupled with an unprecedented boom in the contemporary art market.[31]

He felt he was sometimes "charged with having joined the habitual anti-modern-art sophists by not giving my wholehearted endorsement to an internationally touted art movement," but claimed that "nothing could be further from the truth."[32] What he objected to was a complete equating of "creative imagination with the unconscious," and he asserted that "both intellect and intuition must be joined in every meaningful work of art."[33]

This mantra carried over into his commentary on assemblage and pop art of the 60s, the latter a supposed "fad" about which Seldis was especially vocal, and a sensibility far removed from the work of Moore. He objected to its fashionableness, in that it was "so cool . . . that the essential poetic element of transformation is missing."[34] Pop and assemblage are perhaps the subjects on which Seldis is most quoted, with reviews bearing titles like "Another tired try by smashed-toy school," "'Art of assemblage'—the power of negative thinking" and "Dial $1-0-0-0 for plastic pay phone"; it was in such reviews that he most often displayed his penchant for using quotation marks around the word "artist" when discussing work he disliked and mistrusted.[35] In Seldis's mind, pop and assemblage were anti-art and generally functioned as negative cultural forces. Thomas Crow, in a recent essay on art markets and how they function as cultural forces in artistic change, notes that "the old avant-gardists, wedded to the struggle and sacrifice as the price of artistic integrity, naturally bridled at the surrender to the vulgarity they perceived in the pop vision: art that looked like products being sold like products."[36] This corresponds to Seldis's view that the worst of pop art possessed a "blatant slickness and idiotic blandness."[37]

Although he saw a cultural rationale behind the work of assemblage sculptors in the threat of nuclear war, Seldis nevertheless felt that "in their impatience with the line that separates art from life most of the adherents to junk and accident have descended to a vernacular as bland as it is sterile." He notes, however, that Duchamp and Schwitters, the predecessors of the new assemblage work, were different in that their work possessed "great aesthetic subtlety" and "prove that not all the assemblers wish the destructive to take over in their deliberate juxtaposition of construction and destruction."[38] In looking for a "positive note" in the group of exhibitions he was considering in this particular review, including a show of Robert Rauschenberg's work at the Dwan Gallery, and Ed Kienholz at the Ferus Gallery, Seldis concluded that "in their chosen state of negativism, only a sense of social criticism offers a positive element in some

of their expressions."[39] Although obviously no particular fan of Kienholz, later, in 1967, when the Kienholz retrospective at LACMA engendered so much controversy and the Board of Supervisors urged its cancellation, Seldis came out in support of both Kienholz and the museum, declaring that although the work may reject traditional concepts of fine art and thus "lacks aesthetic worth," it can offer "incisive social and even philosophical commentary" with astonishing inventiveness, and that it was incumbent on LACMA to offer him a retrospective regardless of potential controversy.[40] He also gave special consideration to Kienholz's *The State Hospital* of 1966 in his review of the *American Sculpture of the 60s* exhibition at LACMA. He wrote that the tableau was "his most moving work to date . . . and perhaps the ultimate statement that can be made by any artist of his generation on the subject of man's inhumanity to man."[41] These little-known quotations dispel the stereotype of Seldis as rigid and "party line" in his opinions of particular artists and art movements.

In 1962 Seldis offered the opinion that the basic question facing contemporary art, in what he saw as a time of transition, was concerned with artists' own attitudes towards the human condition "in a day where the incredible new horizons of human achievement and its further potential are clouded by the prospect of nuclear genocide made possible by some of those achievements."[42] In the review, which was of the *Recent Painting USA: The Figure* exhibition at MoMA, Seldis described Golub's *Seated Boxer* as "an affirmation of the magnificence of man," a painting of a colossal, sculptural figure which seemed to symbolize, in Seldis's opinion, "man's survival of all holocausts, past and future."[43] He continued, "in no way relying on the hackneyed traditional, Golub nevertheless is one of the few of the more gifted artists . . . who does not equate anxiety with annihilation."[44] It was also in 1962 that Seldis wrote positively about the British sculptor Elisabeth Frink, noting that she tackles "the self-destructive force of hate and power" in her "moving sculptures."[45] Unsurprisingly, Seldis wrote in gushing terms over many years about the "soul-searching" life and work of Jacques Lipchitz.[46] And although Seldis had mentioned his hope for a monumental Moore to be commissioned for a public plaza in Los Angeles after seeing the *Reclining Figure* for the Lincoln Center in New York, he called Lipchitz's *Peace on Earth,* commissioned for Los Angeles's Music Center and installed in May 1969, a "diadem in [the] Music Center crown" that "speaks of man's highest aspirations."[47]

Given Seldis's background, he was positioned as a critic to be sensitive to and an advocate of a kind of "crisis humanism" in the arts, from the period of the Second World War and on into the Cold War.[48] Seldis's reference in the review mentioned previously is only one of a number of invocations of the spectre of atomic war in his art criticism. The need to address "the hopes and destructive dangers of atomic experimentation" are found, to Seldis's mind, in such work as Moore's *Atom Piece* of the early 1960s, later retitled *Nuclear Energy* for its larger incarnation in Chicago. For Seldis, this work "[speaks] of the human protection and advancement that can be made possible through atomic science once it is turned from war-like uses" (fig. 6).[49]

Seldis's value system for art put him decisively at odds with such critics as Michael Fried, who called for art to be "untheatrical" and self-reflexive at all times.[50] How Seldis differed from such critics as Fried, Clement Greenberg, Thomas Hess, and Rosalind Krauss can be understood, in part, by looking at how they reacted to Moore's work. As Dorothy Kosinski aptly pointed out,

Figure 6
Henry Moore (British, 1898–1986), *Maquette for Atom Piece,* 1964. Plaster, H: 15 cm (6 in.). Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation
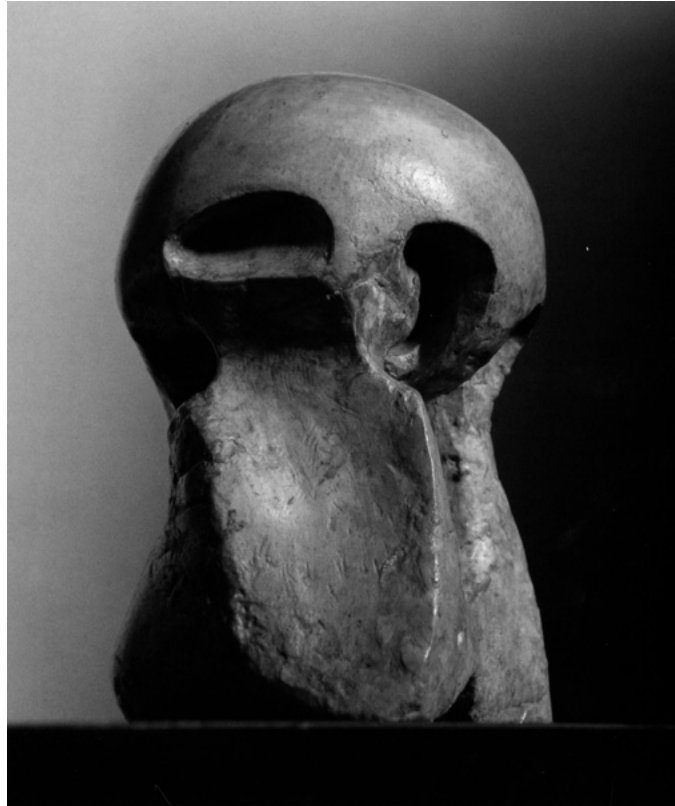
"from early on in his career, Moore's popularity was written outside the context of avant-garde criticism."[51] In 1947 Greenberg was matter-of-fact in stating that he was bored by Moore's work because "it answers too perfectly the current notion of how modern sophisticated and inventive sculpture should look" and, thus, there was no possibility for "difficulty or surprise."[52] This "subservience to taste" and to the past—Greenberg also described Moore's work as "a helpless fingering of archaeological reminiscences"—was academic and European in an old-fashioned sense and the opposite of the types of American sculpture that Greenberg and Krauss championed.[53] At this point, Greenberg seems to take exception first and foremost to the critical reception of Moore, more so than to the work itself:

> Moore possesses no mean talent, and some of his later work, from the two reclining figures of 1938 . . . and *The Helmet* of 1940 . . . to the two bronze family groups of 1945 and 1946, will surely outlast the transient ardors of that informed contemporary taste upon which Moore's art is now making what I feel is an exaggerated impression.[54]

In making this claim, Greenberg certainly had in mind Herbert Read, Moore's long-time champion and a critic with whom Greenberg directly sparred, particularly in the 1950s and specifically over the subject of sculpture. This bout of sparring contained some of the most pronounced instances of anti-British sentiment to be found in Greenberg's writing of the period.[55]

Krauss's objections to Moore were of a different nature: she disliked the "camp-meeting religiosity"[56] of those who promoted direct carving and the "monolithic idealism of modern sculpture."[57] In her book *Mother Stone,* Anne

Wagner has convincingly made the case that Greenberg's and Krauss's dismissal of Moore from their accounts of twentieth-century art can be attributed to the fact that the bodily concerns of British modernism in sculpture, particularly of the female body, had no place in their ontologies nor in their prescriptions for what sculpture should be.[58] Fried did not directly write about Moore but he did write an early piece on Epstein which is instructive. Here he claims that "in his efforts to communicate, to make human statements and assert human values, Epstein created sculptural paradigms of wholly abstract and dangerously stupid emotions."[59] In brief, he argues that Epstein's monumental sculptures brutalize the humanistic sensibility because the emotion is inflated and thus debased, leading to a work of art that is decadent.

And for Hess, there was also a political aspect to his criticism of Moore, in that he objected to what he called the "cul-de-sac of Official Modernity" of a nationalistic Britain, and the ways in which art was co-opted for the purposes of foreign policy in the postwar landscape.[60] The work and the circumstances become somewhat muddled, however; that is, the objection is to the publicness and official-ness of large commissions and the fact that it was Moore who was "chivvied with honor and flattery into attempting architectural commissions far beyond the capacities of his dainty, eclectic style and his neat but limiting concepts."[61] These comments from the purported radical side of the fence—or, more rightly, "sides" of the "fences"—can be read as equally emotional in tone to the comments of Moore's defenders. Specific objections aside, it is clear from the number of times Greenberg addressed his work that he felt Moore was an international force to be reckoned with.[62]

In 1970 Hilton Kramer responded directly to Moore's critics, writing that the mystery of Moore's sculpture is "precisely the sort of mystery that is anathema to the positivist mind, with its sectarian taste for the literal" and concludes that it is Moore's revitalization of an aspect of the English Romantic pastoral tradition that is both his strength and the basis for the "strong current" that ran against him.[63] In the hands of the supposedly radical critics of the period, Moore's work is rendered neutral in a negative sense: bland and empty such that it could be used for various social and diplomatic purposes; and yet for his advocates, his work is anything but neutral.

Interestingly, however, Seldis's critical agenda intersected with that of Kramer, as well as Greenberg and Krauss, on the subject of David Smith's sculpture, although all had differing perspectives. Seldis interviewed him at length on the occasion of his first West Coast exhibition in 1960 and quoted Kramer (from about nine months earlier) when he wrote that "he has rightly been called 'one of the few artists anywhere today whose work upholds the promise and vision of the modern movement at the same level on which it was conceived.'"[64] And Seldis later wrote that Smith's posthumous exhibition of 1965 was the "first truly exciting exhibition of contemporary art staged at the [Los Angeles] County Museum of Art" and urged the museum to make purchasing some of the *Cubi* a top priority, which it did two years later.[65]

To summarize Seldis's criteria: he abhorred "an overt search for novelty and faddism" and any resultant trend-driven conformity and its attendant sense of "infallibility";[66] and he identified a "lack of conformity to any one predominant direction" as a strength of Los Angeles.[67] But he also rejected "deliberate pluralism" in the curating of exhibitions.[68] He generally favored figurative or representational art, but not in any way exclusively, just as he often favored sculp-

ture. He was mistrustful of an inclination to merge art and technology completely; for instance, he criticized John Coplans for welcoming such a merging and called him "that intrepid Lawrence Alloway satellite."[69] He was likewise mistrustful of the inclination to "erase all concern for the difference between art and nonart."[70] Seldis cautioned his readers that, "although we cheer many young artists' insistence that no convention is inviolable, we must remember those . . . who remain unwilling to drop the question of timelessness and universality," and further, Seldis rightly urged people to ask why artists and observers would take such a position at that particular moment in time.[71] He hoped for a new "venturesome generation" of artists "not adverse to thinking," and he valued artists who worked in a manner "peculiar to [their] own time and place."[72] Of course, he valued a humanistic and poetic mindset in an artist, and eschewed a nihilistic, overly cynical, or solely introspective one. He was convinced that external values had a place and a purpose in contemporary art. Some of the artists he wrote positively about—figures such as Larry Bell, Llyn Foulkes, John McLaughlin, John Altoon, Vija Celmins, Lee Bontecou, Ron Davis, and Francis Bacon—might seem surprising if one only knows Seldis's writing superficially, but he was, in fact, adhering to his artistic and ideological criteria. For instance, Seldis raved about works by Light and Space artist Ron Davis for being poetic, conceptual, and challenging perceptually.

Just as Lawson's "appreciation" of Kramer was a piece of its time and political context, that is, the "topography of power under the Ronald Reagan administration," so was Seldis's art criticism and ideology.[73] What may be deemed conservative taste in art does not necessarily equate to political conservatism, as Lawson rightly implies in his treatment of Kramer. Seldis, on the other hand, was in fact liberal in his political beliefs and actively supported liberal causes.[74] He took pride in being on one of Nixon's "lists" and, according to his son Mark, used to say in the 1970s that if Ronald Reagan ever became president, he'd leave the country, a promise he missed having to make good by two years, due to his unfortunate early death in February 1978.

In an early piece for the *Los Angeles Times,* Seldis wrote: "We tend to forget that there is a deep and inescapable connection between the man and the mark he makes."[75] If we defer to Seldis's logic here, then the answer, I think, to the question of "does Seldis's criticism have any merit" is in the affirmative. He didn't play it "clever and cool," to borrow his own expression, but he was rigorous, considered, altruistic, and willing to look, and to look again, if unconvinced. In 2005 Anne Wagner suggested that the time had come to open the "storage capsule" that Bruce Nauman drew in 1966 for Henry Moore's safekeeping.[76] Similarly, the time may have arrived for a reexamination of Henry Seldis and the mark he made, and how that mark was informed by his interest in Henry Moore and his work.

In closing, it is worthwhile for us to play devil's advocate and to ask whether or not the radical art of today bears closer resemblance to the work favoured by critics such as Seldis and Kramer, or to the production of those artists supported by Greenberg and Fried. Increasingly, critical voices can be heard that call for art to return to being a "crucial, ethically charged activity" and it is these voices that are often deemed radical today.[77] From critics such as Holland Cotter of the *New York Times*, Mark Nash in *Frieze,* and Hal Foster writing for *Artforum* have come statements on the need for socio-political content in contemporary art, the dire state of art criticism, and the intense influence of the

art market, all concerns that seem remarkably kindred in spirit to Seldis's call for "more light and less heat."[78]

This essay first appeared in the *Sculpture Journal*, volume 17.2 (2008).

Notes

1 Quoted from *The Cool School,* 2007, a documentary film directed by Morgan Neville.
2 H. Seldis, "'New Realism' Comes in Humor, Cynicism," *Los Angeles Times,* December 2, 1962, p. Q2.
3 See D. Kosinski's essay, "Some Reasons for a Reputation," in *Henry Moore: Sculpting the 20th Century* (New Haven: Dallas Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 21–31.
4 T. Lawson, "Hilton Kramer: An Appreciation," *Artforum* 23, no. 3 (November 1984), pp. 90–91. Kramer was born in 1928 and Seldis in 1925.
5 The LACMA curatorial files are apparently, and unfortunately, lost; only registrar files remain. Book chapters cover Seldis's own recollections, Moore's first transatlantic contacts, the 1946–47 Museum of Modern Art exhibition, dealers and curators, exhibitions and their reception, Moore and architecture in America, Moore's work in Southern California, and the Toronto Moore Centre.
6 The author wishes to thank the Seldis family for allowing access to the extant recordings of the interviews.
7 Catalogues for such artists as Rico LeBrun, Jack Zajac, and Frederick Eversley.
8 H. Seldis, *Henry Moore in America* (New York: Praeger Publishers, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1973), p. 28.
9 Ibid., p. 9. The other reference to Thoreau is to be found on p. 28. Seldis and his parents fled Nazi persecution in Berlin. His father Edward was Jewish, though his mother was not. His father had been the co-owner of the largest umbrella factory in Berlin, but was put in a work camp until he signed away his half of the factory for enough money to bring his wife and son to New York. E-mail correspondence with Mark Seldis, 2008. Curt Valentin himself emigrated to the United States in 1937 "because of his revulsion with Nazism" (Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* p. 56).
10 J. Stallabrass, "The Mother and Child Theme in the Work of Henry Moore," in *Henry Moore: Mutter und Kind/Mother and Child* (Much Hadham: The Henry Moore Foundation, 1992), pp. 13–39.
11 Herbert Read, introduction to *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings,* vol. 1, *1921–1948* (London: Lund Humphries, 1994), p. xxvii.
12 N. B. Williams and W. Wilson, "Henry J. Seldis: Colleagues Remember," *Los Angeles Times,* March 5, 1978, p. N84.
13 J. Wood, "A Household Name: Henry Moore's Studio-Homes and Their Bearings, 1926–1946," in *Henry Moore: Critical Essays,* ed. J. Beckett and F. Russell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 18.
14 J. Russell, "Henry Moore: Englishman," in *Mostra di Henry Moore,* exh. cat. (Florence: Il Bisonte Editore/Nuovedizioni Enrico Vallecchi, 1972), p. 28.
15 Ibid., p. 26.
16 J. Russell, in *Los Angeles Times*, September 30, 1973, p. 58. Russell had been a staff journalist for the *Sunday Times* in London for many years, and from 1950 its art critic. Later in his career, in 1974, Russell was hired to write for *The New York Times,* again as a staff journalist, at the suggestion of Kramer; Russell had previously contributed to the newspaper.
17 Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* p. 67.
18 M. Stocker, "'The best thing ever seen in New Zealand': The Henry Moore Exhibition of 1956–57," *Sculpture Journal* 16, no. 1 (2007), p. 74.
19 W. Wilson, *A Tribute to Henry Seldis (1925–1978),* exh. cat. (Laguna Beach: Laguna Beach Museum of Art, 1978), p. 2.
20 H. Seldis, "Myopic Selections versus Balanced Taste," *Los Angeles Times,* May 20, 1962, p. A14. Interestingly, in 1962, 1,800 people attended a lecture by Kenneth Clark at UCLA (*Los Angeles Times,* March 20, 1962, p. B13).
21 Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* p. 11. Kramer agreed: "He belongs to the great line of modern artists who stole back the concept of 'tradition' from the genteel academies and gave it a new purchase on contemporary experience. It is precisely this sense of creative continuity . . . that one feels is disappearing day by day, in Europe no less than in America, in the heartless new movements that are constantly emerging on the art scene." "Henry Moore: Twilight of an Era?" *The New York Times,* June 25, 1972, p. D19.
22 Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* p. 10.
23 H. Seldis, "Art Reaches a Crossroad," *Los Angeles Times,* March 15, 1959, p. E12.
24 F. S. Wight, "Gentle with Artists, Firm with Their Institutions," *Los Angeles Times,* March 5, 1978, p. N84.

25 Seldis encouraged his superiors at the *Los Angeles Times* to send their art critic abroad to report on art events of international importance in London, Paris, São Paulo, and Venice. K. Ross, "Celebrant of Los Angeles' cultural metamorphosis," *Los Angeles Times*, March 5, 1978, p. N84.
26 H. Seldis, "The Biggest Threat Facing Modern Art," *Los Angeles Times,* February 10, 1963, p. B13.
27 H. Seldis, "Words Obscure Much Criticism," *Los Angeles Times,* December 28, 1958, p. D6.
28 H. Seldis, "Humanity's Guerreschi's Forte," *Los Angeles Times,* May 12, 1961, p. A4.
29 H. Seldis, "Great Names in Sculpture Here," *Los Angeles Times,* April 24, 1960, p. D13.
30 H. Seldis, "Power Found in Sculptures," *Los Angeles Times,* February 28, 1960 p. G6.
31 H. Seldis, "Visitor Airs Art Attitudes," *Los Angeles Times,* December 27, 1959, p. D6.
32 H. Seldis, "Art Needs Touch of Intellect, Even Now," *Los Angeles Times,* February 19, 1961, p. L20.
33 Ibid.
34 H. Seldis, "The 'Pop' Art Trend: This, Too, Will Pass," *Los Angeles Times,* August 4, 1963, p. D3.
35 *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1961, and March 18, 1962, respectively. Another example of Seldis referring to artists with quotation marks is found in "'New Realism' Comes in Humor, Cynicism," *Los Angeles Times*, December 2, 1962, p. Q2, referring to artists in the Dwan Gallery's *My Country Tis of Thee* exhibition of late 1962 that featured Robert Indiana, Claes Oldenberg, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, and James Rosenquist. Seldis exempts from his criticism, in this particular review, John Chamberlain, Charles Frazier, Larry Rivers, Robert Rauschenberg, Tom Wesselman, Jasper Johns, and "even" Ed Kienholz, who "are saved from the complete banality and cheap sensationalism of their co-exhibitors by a modicum of invention and by their endeavor to project their own feelings, as well as their thoughts." Seldis also made use of such dismissive punctuation when he referred to "that British ex-patriot 'avant guardsman' Lawrence Alloway" in a scathing review of the *America '63* exhibition at MoMA in 1963. "Art Pendulum Swings away from Abstracts," *Los Angeles Times,* June 2, 1963, p. B13.
36 T. Crow, "Historical Returns," *Artforum,* April 2008, p. 289.
37 H. Seldis, "The 'Pop' Art Trend: This, Too, Will Pass," *Los Angeles Times,* August 4, 1963, p. D3.
38 H. Seldis, "'Art of Assemblage'—the Power of Negative Thinking," *Los Angeles Times,* March 18, 1962, p. A26.
39 Ibid.
40 H. Seldis, "Kienholz Art: Anything Goes," *Los Angeles Times,* March 27, 1967, p. B1.
41 H. Seldis, "U.S. Sculpture Exhibit Looks beyond the 60s," *Los Angeles Times,* May 7, 1967, p. C38. Seldis continues: "If some of his earlier works were melodramatic (though never, as was charged, pornographic), this recent creation plunges into the heart of tragedy." From this group show Seldis also wrote positively about Tony Berlant, Lucas Samaras, Mark di Suvero, Ellsworth Kelly, Fletcher Benton, Peter Voulkos, etc. The exhibition was curated by Maurice Tuchman.
42 H. Seldis, "In N.Y., Torsos in Torment," *Los Angeles Times,* August 12, 1962, p. A12.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 H. Seldis, "Sculptures Echo Hate and Power," *Los Angeles Times*, November 10, 1961, p. A5.
46 H. Seldis, "An Unforgettable Experience—the Mystique of Jacques Lipchitz," *Los Angeles Times,* March 10, 1963, p. C3.
47 H. Seldis, "Henry Moore—Man's Hopes and Fears Put on a Pedestal," *Los Angeles Times,* September 19, 1965, p. B2; and H. Seldis, "'Peace on Earth' a Diadem in Music Center Crown," *Los Angeles Times,* May 11, 1969, p. O48.
48 The term crisis humanism was suggested to me by Stephen Bann, who has been most helpful and supportive.
49 H. Seldis, "Henry Moore—Man's Hopes and Fears Put on a Pedestal," *Los Angeles Times,* September 19, 1965, p. B2.
50 M. Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Artforum,* June 5, 1967, pp. 12–23. Fried was, of course, responding to a tendency he saw developing in minimalism. Fried championed Anthony Caro's work and had this to say in 1968: "It is as though with Caro sculpture itself has become committed to a new kind of cognitive enterprise: not because its generating impulse has become philosophical, but because the newly explicit need to defeat theater in all its manifestations has meant that the ambition to make sculpture out of a primordial involvement with modes of being in the world can now be realized *only* if antiliteral—that is, radically abstract"; M. Fried, "An Introduction to My Art Criticism," in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 30.
51 Kosinski, "Some Reasons for a Reputation," in *Henry Moore: Sculpting the 20th Century,* p. 21. Kosinski also speculates that Moore's appearance on the cover of *Time* magazine in September 1959 was an impetus for an onslaught of negative criticism (ibid., p. 26).
52 C. Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of Gaston Lachaise and Henry Moore," *Nation,* February 8, 1947, reprinted in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism,* 4 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986–93), vol. 2, p. 127.
53 Ibid., pp. 127–28.

54 Ibid., p. 127.

55 See D. Getsy's article on Clement Greenberg and Herbert Read in this volume.

56 R. Krauss, *Terminal Iron Works: The Sculpture of David Smith* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), p. 62.

57 Ibid., p. 3.

58 A. M. Wagner, *Mother Stone: The Vitality of Modern British Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 12.

59 M. Fried, "Epstein amid the Moderns," *Arts Magazine,* January 1962, p. 51.

60 Thomas Hess review of an exhibition at the Curt Valentin Gallery, published in *Art News,* December 1954, in H. Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* pp. 135–36.

61 Ibid.

62 Although emotion is not typically addressed in discussions of such critics, it could figure in their negative responses to some art. There were also emotional components to Greenberg's relationship with Jackson Pollock and Krauss's response to David Smith, even if overt sentimentality was avoided in the writing. On the other hand, the pitfalls of such sentimentalization were clearly not avoided by Seldis and other proponents of Moore; he most likely did not identify it as something to be kept in check in his writing.

63 H. Kramer, "Henry Moore: A Very English Romantic" (April 26, 1970), in *The Age of the Avant-Garde* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973), pp. 170–71. The inability of Moore's defenders to resist commenting on Moore's personality, life, work ethic, etc., may also have helped to set up a certain impenetrable critical distance for both parties.

64 H. Seldis, "Rights of Wrongs in Art? Conviction 'all that counts,'" *Los Angeles Times,* November 20, 1960, p. O16. The exhibition was at the Everett Ellin Gallery.

65 H. Seldis, "David Smith, Sculptor in Steel, Proves His Mettle," *Los Angeles Times,* November 14, 1965, p. B18. LACMA purchased *Cubi XIII* in 1967, through the Modern and Contemporary Art Council Fund.

66 H. Seldis, "'New Realism' Comes in Humor, Cynicism," *Los Angeles Times,* December 2, 1962, p. Q2; and H. Seldis, "Words Obscure Much Criticism," *Los Angeles Times,* December 28, 1958, p. D6.

67 H. Seldis, "A Trio of Vanguard Types," *Los Angeles Times,* December 6, 1965, p. D12.

68 H. Seldis, "U.S. Sculpture Exhibit Looks beyond the 60s," *Los Angeles Times,* May 7, 1967, p. C38.

69 H. Seldis, "Artist as Computer Doesn't Add Up," *Los Angeles Times,* January 17, 1966, p. C9.

70 H. Seldis, "U.S. Sculpture Exhibit Looks beyond the 60s," *Los Angeles Times,* May 7, 1967, p. C38.

71 Ibid.

72 H. Seldis, "'New Realism' Comes in Humor, Cynicism," *Los Angeles Times,* December 2, 1962, p. Q2.

73 Lawson, "Hilton Kramer: An Appreciation," *Artforum* 23, no. 3 (November 1984), p. 91.

74 He worked, for instance, for the Helen Gahagan Douglas gubernatorial campaign against Richard Nixon in the 1950s.

75 H. Seldis, "Terms Source of Confusion," *Los Angeles Times,* January 4, 1959, p. E5.

76 Wagner, *Mother Stone*, p. 13. Nauman explained the title as a response to Moore's rejection by younger British sculptors in the 1960s: "Moore had been the dominant presence in British art for years; he was pretty powerful. I figured the younger sculptors would need him some day, so I came up with the idea for a storage capsule." Quoted by Coosje van Bruggen, *Bruce Nauman* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), p. 110.

77 "Dialogue in *Stone*," *Time*, August 14, 1972.

78 For instance, Cotter wrote: "Near the end of a decade crammed with junk-art collectibles geared to junk-bond budgets, and a museum season of ragbag sculptures and wallpapered words, we get bare walls and open space in the Olafur Eliasson survey at the Museum of Modern Art and P.S.1," *The New York Times,* April 18, 2008. And in April 2008, Nash opined: "The fact that many artists working today continue to question this notion of the disinterestedness of contemporary art is encouraging. To my mind one of the most important achievements of 'documenta 11' was to bind critics of so-called 'political' art into the debate." M. Nash, "Reality in the Age of Aesthetics," *Frieze* 118 (April 2008). Foster begins his review by saying that the exhibition (at Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands) is one not likely to be found in a major institution in the US "given how politically restrained and financially driven our big museums are today" and concludes with "the exhibition compels the question, Why the apparent poverty of 'forms of resistance,' the apparent paucity of 'desire for social change,' today? On the one hand, the show demonstrates that these forms do indeed exist; on the other, it conveys how fragile, how precarious, they are." H. Foster, "Forms of Resistance," *Artforum,* January 2008, pp. 272–73.

Now Man's *Bound to Fail,* More

Robert Slifkin

THE TRUE ARTIST HELPS THE WORLD BY REVEALING MYSTIC TRUTHS. Produced at a moment when the "put-on" (occupying "a fuzzy territory between simple leg pulling and elaborate practical joke") was a fashionable mode of expression, it isn't hard to imagine why Bruce Nauman's neon sign, combining beer-light connotations of commercialism with earnest sentiment, might have engendered a skeptical—if not outright cynical—response.[1] As with many of Nauman's works from the 1960s, *The True Artist* relies on a semantic confusion produced by the artist's apparently ironical intent, with the statement being both "true and not true at the same time."[2] (This can be seen even more clearly in a related work that states that "the true artist is an amazing luminous fountain.") Just as the textual message invites both an embarrassingly romantic and a coolly ironic reading, the sign's potential mounting on a window offers two modes of viewing the work: one in which the spiraling script is seen frontally, and thus legibly, and one in which the text is viewed from behind, reversed and illegible, thereby suggesting a corresponding visual tension between figuration and abstraction in the work. Nauman's extensive engagement with the issue of figuration—both in its rhetorical and its morphological manifestations—was not simply an exercise in semiotic analysis or postmodern indeterminacy. Acknowledging that the statement conveyed in *The True Artist* is "a totally silly idea," Nauman evidently found it not completely lacking in plausibility, explaining that his intention in making the work was to "find out if [he] believe[d] in it . . . which doesn't make a fake or anything."[3] In such pieces Nauman tested the possible valence of an imaginary proposition by bringing it into contact with the real world via a public utterance. Rather than an ironic deconstruction of the romantic conception of the artist, *The True Artist* can be seen as an assessment of the survival of romanticism and the Western humanist tradition responsible for engendering such sentiments in postmodernists in the first place. In his work from the 1960s Nauman repeatedly employed figuration as a way to test the waters, to see if such apparently outdated and problematically humanist concepts as "commitment," "expression," and "metaphor" still had a place in a world where referential certitude, subjective sentiment, and immediate and universal communication were deemed increasingly problematic if not impossible.

The World Figured

Figuration is fundamental to the modern conception of the work of art. To recognize something as art, as something that is understood outside the boundaries of everyday experience—as a "thing" that is also "something else"—is to engage in a figurative act. In fact, within the realm of the visual arts, this transformative power of figuration (which is repeatedly actualized each time a viewer encounters an art object) provides a possible means for uniting modern notions of the autonomous and "open" work with "the image before the era of art."[4] In both cases—whether it be a Vera icon whose mimetic power imbues the image with an almost corporeal presence or a nineteenth-century portrait that wears its representational function on its sleeve—the object in question provides access to something beyond itself (a Christian eschatology, for example, or an absent individual).[5] As even this most condensed historical trajectory demonstrates, the figurative potential of any object is to a certain degree determined by the historical and social conditions in which a "symbolic exchange" between viewer and work takes place.[6] How the viewer chooses to actualize this connection is to a large extent determined by the institutional criteria and conceptual horizons delimiting this exchange, as was famously demonstrated by Marcel Duchamp's figurative proposition that a urinal is a fountain, or more generally, that a urinal is a work of art. All of this is to say that different historical and social conditions have generated different figurative operations, some emphasizing morphological resemblance and others finding their most potent expression in temporal, institutional, or conceptual relationships.

The discourse encompassing the history of art has suppressed the temporal axis of the figurative act from its very inception, focusing instead on the morphological axis of figuration and the related immediacy of the visual image. This paradigm, in which the single static image is analyzed as a unique and autonomous utterance, utilizes what Paul de Man would call a "pseudo-synchronic structure," one predicated on a degree of critical blindness to the temporal logic underpinning such analyses.[7] In its long tradition of endeavoring to produce a mimetic correspondence with the external world, the rhetoric surrounding visual art, and painting, in particular, typically placed its fate in a conception of the real defined by its immediacy and presence.

Yet if art's ability to reproduce or even produce reality depended on its effecting a sense of immediacy, beginning in the 1960s a variety of factors such as the growth of information technology and the rising sensitivity to previously marginalized populations led to a fundamental reconsideration of the relationship between artistic representations and the world they ostensibly referred to. As Pamela Lee has recently argued, the capacity of information technology to transcend longstanding barriers of time and space created a situation in which many aspects of the world appeared temporally compressed and systematically interrelated.[8] Immediate communication across the globe, and even into outer space, was not merely a physical reality; it was brought home to millions of living rooms through television sets. Ironically, as the world appeared more interrelated and compressed, the space between things became more noticeable. Cybernetic and structural theory made these spaces the focus of attention, analyzing how the network of interrelated systems kept various material and cognitive procedures operating. Meaning was seen to reside not within any particular thing itself but rather in its relation to a constellation of other concepts.

Consequently, many aspects of life were understood as increasingly mediated and, because of the inevitable gaps that occur within a mediated life, increasingly *figured*. Such a figurative conception of existence was proclaimed in the first pages of Marshall McLuhan's 1962 book *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. Arguing for the prosthetic nature of all human technology—a theme the author would expand upon in his subsequent book *Understanding Media* (1964)—McLuhan describes all aspects of human experience in terms of an "outering or uttering of sense" in which the space between an individual's sensory perception and external stimuli can only be bridged through a figurative act:

> Language is metaphor in the sense that it not only stores but translates experience from one mode into another. Money is metaphor in the sense that it stores skill and labor and also translates one skill into another. But the principle of exchange and translation, or metaphor, is in our rational power to translate all our senses into one another. This we do every instant of our lives.[9]

This sense of a figured life would bring unprecedented attention to the prefix beginning the word "representation." Cybernetics showed how each repetition or *re*-presentation of a message produced feedback and noise, which altered the content of the original message, thus demonstrating the impossibility of an immediate translation from an external source. At a moment when the various technical means of communication were foregrounded on a daily basis through contact with new technology, the cognitive space between stimuli and perception—and, for those willing to think through the consequences of such a phenomenological gap, the conceptual space between words and things—became more and more discernible and undeniable. As everyday life appeared increasingly divorced from immediacy, the relationship between art and the world appeared more difficult to reconcile. In a world seemingly filled with gaps, not only between words and things but generations and missiles, the question of figuration, with its overt connotations of representation and reification and its less commonly articulated suggestion of temporal contingency, was disparaged by a growing number of critics and artists who regarded such practices as at best inauthentic, degraded by their association with political and commercial manipulation, and at worst a form of ideological mystification. In his 1969 essay "The Rhetoric of Temporality," de Man revealed the latent mediation underpinning the sort of Romantic aesthetic ideals that proposed a direct and instantaneous relationship between figurative language such as symbolism or metaphor and experience, and, more to the heart of his argument, sustained an individualist, humanist subjectivity in which people could see themselves as naturally accommodated to the perceptual world around them. In other words, one's faith in one's relationship to nature is nothing but an extension of one's faith in the correspondence between words and things. When the latter relationship is shown to be not only arbitrary but often constructed on hierarchies based on power relations, the seemingly natural sense of perceptual and cognitive immediacy becomes nothing more than a form of "mystification."[10] By deconstructing the various temporal and conceptual associations and transmissions that produce the effects of immediacy in such figurative language, de Man argued for the inevitability of such contingencies and semantic slippages in any form of meaning making. This essential relationship between figuration and temporality outlined by de Man would play a central (albeit usually unacknowledged) role in the

ardent aesthetic debates of the 1960s in which art's ability to defy figuration was seen to allow a degree of autonomy and sensuous immediacy in a world of commercial and technological manipulation and mediation.

Figuring Failure

As a body of work that repeatedly draws upon various modes of figurative image making (such as casting, photography, and traditional forms of pictorial illustration) and engages deeply with figurative language (primarily through the invocation of puns), Nauman's artistic output during the 1960s offers a highly nuanced and complex meditation on the prospects of figuration in the emerging discourse of postmodernism. In particular, the drawings, photographs, and sculptures Nauman produced between 1966 and 1967 dedicated to the British sculptor Henry Moore represent arguably the artist's most sustained and fully accomplished investigation of this theme. Produced in response to what Nauman felt to be the unfairly malicious criticism of Moore by a group of young sculptors, the "series" (never categorized by Nauman as such) consists of five finished works: *Seated Storage Capsule for H.M. Made of Metallic Plastic* (1966), a pastel and acrylic preparatory drawing for a never-produced object; another drawing, *Seated Storage Capsule (For Henry Moore)* (1966) (fig. 1), in which a similar capsule-shaped form is rendered in vibrant pink pastel and covered by a wash of thin ochre acrylic; two large-scale black-and-white photographs, *Light Trap for Henry Moore,* numbers one and two (both 1967) (fig. 2), in which the artist recreated a similar capsule-like form in light by mov-

Figure 1
Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941), *Seated Storage Capsule (For Henry Moore)*, 1966. Pastel and acrylic on paper, 107 × 92 cm (41¾ × 35½ in.). Switzerland, Daros Collection. © 2010 Bruce Nauman/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo courtesy of the Daros Collection, Switzerland

Figure 2
Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941), *Light Trap for Henry Moore, No. 1*, 1967. Black-and-white photograph, 162.6 × 101.6 cm (64 × 40 in.). Private collection. © 2010 Bruce Nauman/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo courtesy of Sperone Westwater, New York

ing a flashlight side to side in a time lapse exposure; and what is probably the most well known of the series, *Henry Moore Bound to Fail (Back View)* (1967) (fig. 3), a modeled plaster sculpture coated in wax depicting the backside of a headless torso restrained by a rope. Nauman would go on to make a series of nine cast-iron versions of this piece.

Repeatedly in the Moore series, the conventional art-historical understanding of figuration is expanded and complicated. For instance, in *Henry Moore Bound to Fail,* a semantic contradiction is produced between the title, in which the word "bound" means "destined" or "likely," and the sculptural object itself, which depicts a torso "bound," which is to say "restrained," by rope. By splitting the word "bound" into a synonymous pair, the work produces a semantic situation in which the title becomes a pun, or, more categorically, a *figure* of speech, one whose figurative capability is dependent on a literal meaning manifested in the sculptural depiction of a bound torso.

To state that the semantic tension in the title of *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* makes the sculpture itself appear literal is to enter discursively into the impassioned aesthetic debates of the mid-1960s surrounding the status of the art object. The same year that Nauman produced *Henry Moore Bound to Fail,* Michael Fried, in his essay "Art and Objecthood," famously derided minimalist art as being "literalist" for its tendency to offer the viewer an experience of

Figure 3
Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941), *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* (back view), 1967. Wax over plaster, 66 × 61 × 8.9 cm (26 × 24 × 3½ in.). © 2010 Bruce Nauman/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo courtesy of Sperone Westwater, New York

Figure 4
Gjon Mili, *Picasso "Drawing" with Flashlight, Vallauris,* 1949. Silver print photograph. Photo: Gjon Mili/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

obdurate materiality in which, as he put it, the work's inherent objecthood was not "defeat[ed] or suspend[ed]" through an act of self-reflexive acknowledgment of the material and aesthetic preconditions of its production.[11] While Nauman's work is certainly not an illustration or even a response to this oft-cited essay, the fundamental literalism (and related figurativeness) of *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* reveals how the sculpture operates within a conceptual paradigm alluded to but never explicitly articulated in Fried's text, one that posits the motivating tension in modern art as being between figuration and literalism rather than the more conventional antithesis of figuration and abstraction. In fact, in an earlier essay celebrating the achievement of Jackson Pollock's drip paintings, Fried argues that Pollock's wholly optical skeins of paint were able to, as he put it, "defy" figuration, no matter the degree of visual resemblance or referentiality in the paintings themselves: "Pollock has managed to free line . . . from its task of describing or bounding shapes or figures, whether abstract or representational." Repeatedly in the essay, Fried invokes line's traditional task of "bounding shapes or figures," writing, "line . . . has been freed at last from the job of describing contours and bounding shapes. It has been purged of its figurative character. . . . Pollock's line bounds and delimits nothing—except, in a sense, eyesight."[12]

If these statements by Fried do not locate a specific textual reference for Nauman's title, they do offer a discursive framework for understanding some of the fundamental formal and conceptual aspects of the Moore series. Certainly, the bounding function of line plays a central role in the two light-trap photographs, in which a humanoid shape is produced by a line that is figuratively nonbounding insofar as it does not cohere into a closed form (and consequently invokes the drip paintings of Pollock as much as it does Gjon Mili's famous photographs of Picasso drawing a bull in light from 1949 [fig. 4]). Yet in terms of

Slifkin, "Now Man's *Bound to Fail,* More,"
Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture, 1945–1975 (Getty, 2011)

the actual events that produced the photographic images, the depicted line produced by the moving flashlight literally bounds the space within the spirals of light, however briefly and ephemerally. Asked about these works in a 1980 interview, Nauman stated that he "tried to make . . . drawing three-dimensional" suggesting a certain correspondence between his enterprise and a modernist reading of Pollock's line freed from the task of bounding forms and able to "body forth," as Clement Greenberg would famously write, into the viewer's physical space in front of the painting.[13] In these photographs, Nauman presents line as something that exists as a real, albeit transient, thing in the world, both representing a humanoid figure through an unbounded line and literally bounding—which is to say, "enclosing"—an (unseen) human figure. If they explore line as a means of delimiting recognizable forms, they also exhibit the artist's fondness for puns: after all, the light traps concerned are not literal light traps, of the kind used to catch insects or, somewhat more related to their manifest subject matter, seal off cameras or darkrooms, but rather figurative traps of light through photographic fixing. Thus, these images, as with *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* (Back View), hold two types of figuration in suspension: what can be called the traditional morphological understanding of figuration as the evocation of recognizable imagery—or, even more explicitly, the use of the human figure in visual imagery—and a much broader and decidedly rhetorical conception of the term, in which figuration is understood as an act of meaning-making through a semantic analogy or inconsistency, as in a figure of speech.

Figuration in both its morphological and rhetorical manifestations creates a structure of meaning through reference and analogy by forging associative chains, or what de Man calls a "hidden system of relays," in which a series of semiotic associations relating words to concepts are used to create a powerful and often memorable message, one that because of its associative logic is in some ways less "real" than a more literal mode of communication.[14] For instance, in *Henry Moore Bound to Fail,* a human torso is morphologically figured by the mimetic sculpture, just as the linguistic relationship between being destined to fail and a sense of restraint is figured in a sort of mongrel rhetorical/visual pun. Both instances of figuration—morphological and rhetorical—rely on associative logic based upon a fundamental fiction (i.e., the sculpture is not a torso and the binding rope has nothing to do with Moore's likely failure or vice versa). It was precisely this persuasive power of association and its underlying artifice that was at the root of the various critiques of figuration that emerged in the 1960s. Such a position was perhaps most clearly articulated in certain minimalist objects or color-field paintings that ostensibly offered the beholder an immediate, antifigurative experience, whether through literal materiality or optical presentness. Yet it was equally operative in the reception of the so-called "new generation" of British sculptors, such as Anthony Caro and William Tucker, the artists whose vitriolic critiques of Moore incited Nauman's interest in the subject. For instance, in a sentence that seems to draw upon Fried's description of Pollock's achievement, Alan Solomon claimed that [Caro's] forms "flow along the ground or rise on diagonals in a manner which line might say has freed him from the figuration implicit in abstract floor sculpture up to this point."[15] Writing of Caro's *Prairie,* Fried would claim that the work "compels us to believe what we see rather than what we know, to accept the witness of the sense against the constructions of the mind."[16] In other words, nonfigurative works like Caro's would present the beholder with a perceptual experience devoid of

external associations and consequently demand a degree of attentiveness and independence of judgment (what Fried would call "presentness") typically unavailable or rarely utilized in everyday experience.

According to its detractors, figuration, understood in terms of its broadest cognitive ramifications, was an inherently humanist endeavor, requiring a human agent to forge meaningful associations that could universalize the particular through the naturalizing powers of analogy.[17] It was precisely this verdict on figuration that prompted the criticism of Moore, which in turn inspired Nauman's artistic response. For instance, when Roland Piché, a young British sculptor whose work was included in the important 1965 exhibition *The New Generation* at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, stated his position as being "against nature" while "Moore is on its side," he was evoking the humanist connotations of figuration in which art was seen to mediate and somehow universalize natural forms.[18] Such a conception of art's relationship to nature was repeatedly reiterated in a long two-part *The New Yorker* profile of Moore by the poet Donald Hall that appeared in November 1965, an article that was the likely source for Nauman's knowledge of the current disparagement of Moore.[19] In the article's final paragraph, Hall describes the experience of walking around a Moore sculpture that had recently been installed in the courtyard of Lincoln Center:

> one recognizes the protean nature of the shapes—here a thigh, there a horizon. The eye flows from association to association, from a claw to a root to a face. Strange disparities grow from these associations: the reclining figure is a whole body in the grave; her torso is the single bone of a huge body. She is an immovable cliff and she is a running figure. She is a piece of nature, as inclusive as nature.[20]

De Man's "hidden system of relays" is fully operative in this passage, as Moore's allusive forms are seen to generate a series of associations in the viewer's mind, associations governed as much by the viewer's imagination as by the work itself. Moreover, the last sentence of the quotation, in which the reclining figure becomes a piece of nature, exemplifies what critics such as de Man recognized as the trope's "tenacious" ability to naturalize what is in fact culturally conditioned.[21] This universalizing tendency of figuration is evident in a passage from an essay by Moore quoted in *The New Yorker* profile in which the artist promotes the use of "universal shapes to which everybody is subconsciously conditioned and to which they can respond if their conscious control does not shut them off."[22]

In making a relationship between two things, the figurative capacity of the work invests the associative relationship with possible significance: to say that a woman is like a bone, or more generally, like nature, is to endow the object with a whole system of cultural (and possibly oppressive) connotations. As artists increasingly came to reject this associative model of art-making in the 1960s, they sought to produce works that confronted the viewer with objects of unmediated intensity devoid of prior preconceptions. Such literal works could in turn question the sort of humanistic readings that produced universalizing associations that were deemed not only conventional but, because of their basis on power relations, malevolent.

It is certainly possible to read the willful hermeticism of Nauman's work in terms of a similar critique of figuration. In fact, his art is often cele-

brated for its apparent semantic undecidability, its refusal to provide the viewer with an explicit meaning.[23] For many recent critics, Nauman's avowed attempt in his early works to, as he put it, "giv[e] two kinds of information that don't line up"—as when he offers a figurative and literal representation of a statement in *Henry Moore Bound to Fail*—is seen to be an exemplary instance of postmodernist indeterminacy, often considered an integral strategy for the critique of universalizing humanism.[24] The apparent indications of refusal in *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* seem to align with the broader humanist critique of the period. Hung directly against the wall so that only the "back view" is visible, the work literally turns its back on the viewer, preventing not only the sort of multiperspectival observation traditionally associated with sculpture, but also concealing the conventional loci of gesture and expression for the human figure: the hands and face.[25] Headless and bound (and thus unable to form the celebrated negative spaces and humanoid heads of so many of Moore's more conventionally figurative sculptures), *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* is in many regards a meditation on the negation of Moore if not the broader humanistic tradition in which the British sculptor aligned himself and his work.[26]

With its creased and uneven application of wax and its ungainly shaped torso (note the extended or perhaps flattened right shoulder), *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* imaginatively portrays how Moore's sculpture might have appeared to the ardent antifiguralists of the 1960s. One could say that the work figures the inevitable failure to represent (or figure) an entity or idea with certainty (just as Nauman's 1966 photograph *Failing to Levitate in the Studio* can be seen to figure the failure of metaphysical transcendence). Yet acknowledging the inevitable failure of figuration and championing decidedly nonfigural practices, as artists such as Caro and his followers were doing, are two quite different things. In its literal portrayal of restraint, the sculpture suggests how the predominant antifigurative aesthetics that rejected the previous generation's seemingly overt emotionalism and expressiveness for a decidedly *restrained* mode of art was itself inherently restrictive. If it was in part Moore's lack of restraint—the expansive way his art sought to express multivalent connotations far beyond the literal material of his sculptures—that led to his being derided by Caro and other younger artists, Nauman's sculpture *restrains* (and retains) this aspect of Moore's art. It is a demonstration, perhaps, of the absurdity of considering Moore within the narrowly bound aesthetic criteria of '60s modernism, or a means of preserving the central vestiges of Moore's art during this critical period by tying them up in a secure if markedly unwieldy bundle, a storage capsule of sorts.

Residual Monumentalism

When asked about the Moore series in interviews, Nauman has consistently offered the same account and rationale for their creation, describing them as responses to the widespread dismissal of Moore's art by a younger generation of artists and critics. In an interview from 1970, speaking about *Henry Moore Bound to Fail*, Nauman stated, "When I made the piece a lot of young English sculptors who were getting publicity were putting down Henry Moore, and I thought they shouldn't be so hard on him, because they're going to need him."[27] Two years later, Nauman would expand on this explanation, claiming that the series of works

had to do with the emergence of the new English sculptors, Anthony Caro and [William] Tucker and several other people. There was a lot written about them and . . . some of them sort of bad-mouthed Henry Moore—[saying] that the way Moore made work was old-fashioned and oppressive and all the people were really held down by his importance. He kept other people from being able to do work that anyone would pay attention to. So he was being put down, shoved aside, and the idea I had at the time was that while it was probably true to a certain extent, they should really hang on to Henry Moore, because he really did some good work and they might need him again sometime.[28]

Nauman's account finds a degree of corroboration in a 1970 essay by the critic Patrick McCaughey, in which the author describes how it was precisely Moore's prior preeminence that led to the apparent ignorance of his work by younger artists: "once his influence was paramount, it also proved asphyxiating. . . . We see now that the best sculpture of the sixties has been not so much in reaction to his work but as though it had never been."[29] By the end of the decade, with the apotheosis of the minimalist aesthetic of "less is more" and its corresponding mistrust of expressivity and reference, the overt expressive pathos and figural allusiveness of Moore's sculpture (not to mention its seemingly inescapable pervasiveness in public spaces) placed his oeuvre decidedly outside the boundaries of current artistic practice. Or, put another way, by the end of the sixties, many practicing artists did not want this apparent excess of Moore.

Nauman's artistic engagement with the tarnished legacy of Moore addressed the widespread rejection and outright negation of the elder sculptor's work. As has been seen, Nauman frequently repeats the point that these younger artists might need Moore later on.[30] While such a suggestion initially seems willfully perverse, the artist's contention reveals what might be considered the underlying, if unconventional, monumentality in these works—a monumentality derived not so much from a sense of massiveness or ambition but from the term's etymological basis in ideas of memorialization and remembrance through objectification.[31] While many scholars have examined the role of temporality in Nauman's work—how his works, and especially those that utilize video and installation, often demand that the viewer perceive and bodily engage with the work in time—few if any have recognized what could be considered the longer temporality functioning in many of them, namely their engagement with historical time.[32] Indeed, Nauman articulated his conception of art's inherent yet indirect relation to history in an interview from 1980, claiming

> I would think that art is what's used in history; it's what [is] kind of left and that's how we view history, as through art and writing. . . . I think art's about those things [political and social issues], and art is a very indirect way of pursuing those kind of thoughts. So the impact has to be *indirect*, but at the same time I think it can be real.[33]

In this statement, Nauman describes art as a sort of historical residue that is possessed of an indirectness allowing it a degree of objectivity, or at least a realism, less accessible in ostensibly more impartial discourses. This

conception of art could lead one to the view that every aesthetic utterance is a (sometimes unwitting) monument of sorts, and indeed Nauman frequently employed various techniques of monumentalism throughout the 1960s, making it in some ways the fundamental characteristic of his works' conceptual rhetoric and visual appearance.[34] This is most evident in *Cast of the Space Under My Chair* (1968) and the various works that imaginatively delineate and encapsulate portions of the artist's body, including *Neon Templates of the Left Half of My Body Taken at Ten Inch Intervals* and *Storage Capsule for the Right Rear Quarter of My Body* (both 1966). In all of these examples, an absent object, typically the artist's body, or an object associated with the artist—for instance, his chair—is materially evoked (albeit negatively). This simultaneous juxtaposition of evocation and negation, coupled with an unassuming and even coarse appearance, produces a distinctively "leftover" quality to their monumentality. Within the Moore series in particular, this residual aspect is arrived at through both the ungainly resinous acrylic washes that coat the otherwise bright and animated pastels, giving the drawing an artificial patina, and the equally resinous wax that coats the surface of *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* but notably stops short of the plaster edges, suggesting either incompletion or deterioration. What might be called a residual monumentalism is most categorically employed in Nauman's Moore series, not only titularly, with a forgotten and currently derided figure being memorialized, but visually as well: with both of his drawings of storage capsules, the concept of preservation is literally represented, and with the two light trap photographs, the preservation or entrapment of an ephemeral action is documented (and through the enlarged format of the two photographs, which are made monumental in terms of size). Through the implied transience of their imagery the light trap photographs are part of and in many ways exemplify the artist's broader project of a residual monumentalism, in which an object or part of an object is preserved negatively through a representation of its absence or threatened absence.

As avowed placeholders for posterity, the works in Nauman's Moore series can be understood as an attempt to safeguard something seen to be threatened by historical oblivion circa 1965. Yet what precisely is that thing that these works seek to preserve? Moore's reputation? A specific aspect of his artistic practice, such as the crosshatched lines in his drawings? It seems safe to say these works are clearly not monuments to the artistic greatness of Moore—in fact, Nauman even admitted in a later interview that he was "not particularly fond of" Moore's work, and beyond the possible reference to Moore's Shelter Drawings, which Nauman admired for their "heavy-handed quality," there is very little visual similarity between Nauman's and Moore's art.[35] Rather than such direct associations, Nauman's Moore series evokes the elder artist in the same sort of negative manner in which he evokes his own absent body in his other works from the mid-1960s. (The fact that Nauman imagined "storage capsules" both for parts of his own body and the body of Henry Moore suggests that he conceived of an affinity between Moore and himself.) Created in response to Moore's derision and disregard by younger artists in the '60s, these works present the elder artist's apparent obsolescence as a negative conceptual space whose emptiness is significant in a particularly memorial manner. That is to say: it is Moore's absence, or better yet his impending historical oblivion, that is summoned forth in these works.

Mourning, Moore, Figuration

Nauman's non-parodic, sympathetic memorialization of Moore raises the possibility that the fundamental semantic tensions within his work might possess and produce expressive or communicative qualities. Recognizing the rhetoric of residual monumentalism in Nauman's art, and in the Moore series in particular, suggests the possible presence of figuration and even expressive content in his ostensibly literal and affectless art. Just as a traditional monument (even a wholly nonrepresentational one, such as an obelisk) is figurative in the sense that it forges a meaningful correspondence between two points in history, Nauman's Moore series produces meaning by associating the expressive figurative humanism of Moore with the discourse of antifiguration in the 1960s. Does Nauman's invocation of figuration belong to the period's widespread critique of the trope? Or is it instead something more sympathetic and engaged, an attempt to find ways to preserve aspects of figuration at a moment when it was endangered, when it seemed "bound to fail"?

Nauman's interest in expanding and not wholly discarding the tradition of artistic figuration is demonstrated in the source image for *Henry Moore Bound to Fail*. The sculpture was based on one of the eleven color photographs the artist produced in 1967 depicting puns and literalizations of statements, such as *Feet of Clay* (fig. 5) and *Self Portrait as Fountain,* images that demonstrate Nauman's abiding interest in the history of modern sculpture via their allusions to traditional sculptural material and the readymade. According to Anne Wagner, Nauman's Moore series is proof of the younger artist's commitment to the medium of sculpture and its historical legacy during a moment when such traditional medium-based classifications were under intense scrutiny.[36] As Nauman's only sculptural work produced by modeling rather than molding or casting, *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* exhibits a degree of authorial invention

Figure 5
Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941), *Feet of Clay,* from the portfolio *Eleven Color Photographs,* 1966–67/1970. Chromogenic development print, 50.2 × 59.7 cm (19¾ × 23⅝ in.). Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Gerald S. Elliott Collection. © 2010 Bruce Nauman/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo courtesy of Sperone Westwater, New York

and imagination (and traditionalism) not found in the rest of his sculptural practice. This is most evident in the already-mentioned distorted right shoulder and the deep folds in the sweater whose fleshly convolutions reiterate the problematically universalizing capacities of Moore's allusively figurative sculptures. It could be argued that this inescapable distortion between referential source and handcrafted object produces a semantic remainder that is inherently *more* than the author intends, leading to the inevitable failure in *Henry Moore Bound to Fail*.[37] In fact, the source images for *Bound to Fail* and the other eleven color photographs were initially conceived by the artist in terms of the traditional medium of painting, but because Nauman was unsure of his technical proficiency as a painter, it was, as he put it, "just easier to use photographs."[38] That they are deeply engaged in the problem of figuration can be seen in several ways: in a preliminary sketch of *Bound to Fail,* in which a reversed composition highlights the mediation and distortion inevitable in any form of figurative expression; in the photographs' translation of a pictorial project initially considered in terms of painting or drawing; and in the photographs' use of punning and literalization of idiomatic language.[39]

While a conventional postmodernist analysis of Nauman's work might interpret these invocations of figuration alongside their apparent semantic indeterminacy as a critique of humanist notions of interpretation and determinate meaning, aligning him with other literalist practitioners of the period, the artist's repeated professions of desire for his art to have communicative potential suggests an alternative approach, one in which the figurative content of the Moore series is seen as itself expressive and meaningful. Precisely by its capacity to jam conventional figuration, Nauman's dual invocation of morphological and rhetorical figural procedures in these works is itself figurative, expressing such themes as failure, frustration, and confinement. Rather than simply representing such feelings visually, or producing abstract (i.e., nonmimetic) correlates for such feelings, as in the fragmented and half-realized jagged forms found in a painting like Willem de Kooning's *Excavation* (1950) (a work Nauman greatly admired), he sought to create works that would produce such feelings in viewers.[40] That is to say, the semantic indeterminacy produced by Nauman's works is not simply illustrative of a philosophical insight concerning the inherent ambiguity of communication but, as Nauman's invocation of the avowedly humanist and figurative artist Henry Moore suggests, it was decidedly affective, communicative, and expressive.[41] If, as Fredric Jameson has famously argued, postmodernism can be defined in part by what he calls a "waning of affect," Nauman's artistic output from the 1960s and the Moore series in particular can be understood as attempts to express what such a waning of affect felt like, producing an affect of affectlessness.[42]

Nauman's works from the 1960s do not critique figuration, expression, or humanism so much as they produce situations that provide viewers with an experience of what the postmodern critique of humanist figuration *feels* like, notably presenting it not as liberatory but rather as morbid and restrictive. For instance, in his performance video *Walking with Contrapposto* (1968), Nauman portrays a humanist trope par excellence as being confining: the artist's wavering hips, speckled with what appears to be plaster dust, butt repeatedly against the narrow walls of a wooden corridor.[43] This theme of constraint and control—a central theme in Nauman's artistic production during the decade, one he not only literalized with rope and knots but also enacted in performance videos—

figured the postmodern condition of anti-interpretation as restrictive rather than propitious, as a loss as much as a gain, or perhaps a loss congruent with the expanded artistic and political possibilities of postmodernity.[44] If, as Rosalind Krauss and Hal Foster have respectively argued, the emergence of postmodernism entailed for many artists a "trauma of signification" and a "passion of the sign," Nauman's Moore series both mourns the loss of semiotic certainty and attempts to counteract it in order to salvage some remaining legitimacy from the referent.[45]

Although this elegiac pathos has been rarely addressed in most analyses of Nauman's art, its presence was recognized by some of his first critics. In one of the artist's earlier reviews, Mel Bochner discerned what he called a certain "tiredness" in Nauman's art while another early commentator described the works as having an "unfinished" and "thrown-away look."[46] In another early review, Fidel Danieli noted how the works' "poverty of visual appeal suggests a melancholy homeliness and even sadness, or at their most repulsive, a disgusting honesty."[47] A disgusting honesty seems an especially apt description for the residual monumentalism of Nauman's Moore series. In their attempt to make a meaningful statement at a moment when the possibility of meaning itself was being questioned, Nauman's Moore series offers a model of meaning-making "under erasure." These are works in which the new aesthetic terrain of postmodernity—the terrain of antifiguration, antiexpressiveness, anti-interpretation, and antihumanism that was leaving artists like Henry Moore in the dust—is figured as elegiacal, as a melancholy homeliness, as something lost; something that, as Nauman would say, might be needed again someday.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1 Jacob R. Brackman, "The Put-On," *The New Yorker,* June 24, 1967, p. 34. According to the artist, the choice of neon was inspired by a beer sign that remained in the artist's studio, which previously was a grocery store. Interview with Michele de Angelus, 1980, in *Please Pay Attention Please: Bruce Nauman's Words: Writings and Interviews,* ed. Janet Kraynak (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), p. 252.

2 Interview with Brenda Richardson, June 21, 1982, quoted in *Bruce Nauman: Neons,* exh. cat. (Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of Art, 1982), p. 20.

3 Quoted in ibid.

4 Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art,* trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

5 One could even extend this argument further back in Belting's analysis and note that the sacred relics proceeding from the tradition of icons, which were actual things rather than representations, still operated within a figural paradigm, as a metonym of the saint's body, in that a corporeal fragment figured an absent totality.

6 Michael Camille, review of Belting's *Bild und Kunst, Art Bulletin* 74 (September 1992), p. 514.

7 Paul de Man, *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism,* 2nd edn. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), pp. 132–33. For a discussion of the suppression of temporal modes of figuration within post-Renaissance art, see Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art,* trans. John Goodman (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).
8 Pamela M. Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 7–81.
9 Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), p. 5.
10 De Man, *Blindness and Insight,* p. 211.
11 Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Artforum* 5 (June 1967), reprinted in Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 153. For a recent discussion on the discourse of literalism within 1960s artistic practice, see Joshua Shannon, *The Disappearance of Objects* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
12 Michael Fried, "Jackson Pollock," *Artforum* 4 (September 1965), reprinted in Fried, *Art and Objecthood,* pp. 225, 224.
13 Nauman, quoted in *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 254. Clement Greenberg, "Our Period Style" (1949), reprinted in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism,* ed. John O'Brian, 4 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986–93), vol. 2 (1986), p. 325. Nauman's interest in the more traditional conception of linear figuration is evident in his application to the MFA program at UC Davis. He wanted to "search for another kind of ambiguity besides a painterly illusionistic one. . . . I am at present dealing with a large closed line." Artist files, Richard L. Nelson Gallery, University of California, Davis, quoted in Constance M. Lewallen, "A Rose Has No Teeth," in *A Rose Has No Teeth: Bruce Nauman in the 1960s,* exh. cat. (Berkeley: Berkeley Art Museum, University of California, 2007), p. 11.
14 Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 60.
15 Alan Solomon, "The Green Mountain Boys," *Vogue,* August 1, 1966, p. 152.
16 Michael Fried, "Two Sculptures by Anthony Caro" (1968), reprinted in Fried, *Art and Objecthood,* p. 183. In the same essay Fried writes, "The heart of Caro's genius is that he is able to make radically abstract sculptures out of concepts and experiences which seem . . . inescapably literal" (p. 180).
17 The relationship between figuration and humanism is articulated most forcefully in Alain Robbe-Grillet's essay "Nature, Humanism, Tragedy," in *For a New Novel: Essays on Fiction* (New York: Grove Press, 1965). In it the author criticizes what he sees as a "subterranean communication" inherent in the act of metaphor in its capacity to "establish a constant relation between the universe and the being who inhabits it" (p. 53).
18 Roland Piché, quoted in "Whizz Kids in Sculpture," *Daily Mail,* March 11, 1965, quoted in Roger Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1987), p. 312.
19 In her monograph, Coosje van Bruggen cites Nauman's interest in passages of this article. See van Bruggen, *Bruce Nauman* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), p. 110.
20 Donald Hall, "The Experience of Forms, Part II," *The New Yorker,* December 25, 1965, p. 151.
21 De Man, *Allegories of Reading,* p. 5.
22 Hall, "Experience of Forms," p. 60. In a statement from 1937 Moore expands on this power of association in his work: "It might seem from what I have said of shape and form that I regard them as ends in themselves. Far from it. . . . The meaning and significance of form itself probably depends on the countless associations of man's history. For example, rounded forms convey an idea of fruitfulness, maturity, probably because the earth, women's breasts, and most fruits are rounded, and these shapes are important because they have this background in our habits of perception. I think the humanist organic element will always be for me of fundamental importance in sculpture, giving sculpture its vitality." From "The Sculptor Speaks," *The Listener,* August 1937, reprinted in *Henry Moore: Carvings 1961–70, Bronzes 1961–70,* joint exh. cat. (New York: Knoedler and Co. and Marlborough Gallery, 1970), p. 72.
23 See, for instance, Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss, *Formless: A User's Guide* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), p. 216: "What Nauman's casts force us to realize is that the ultimate character of entropy is that it congeals the possibilities of meaning as well. Which is to say that this conception of entropy, as force that sucks out all the intervals between points of space . . . imagines the eradication of those distances that regulate the grid of oppositions, or differences, necessary to the production of meaning."
24 Nauman, interview with de Angelus, in *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 272.
25 The "back view" offered by *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* also suggestively aligns the work with Nauman's wall or window signs such as *The True Artist Helps the World by Revealing Mystic Truths* which, as already noted, offer antithetical models of viewing—legible and figurative or illegible and abstract—depending on which side the viewer confronts the work.

26 See, for example, the group of three-color photographs *Three Well Known Knots* (1967) that visually allude to *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* and even more closely to the photographic version of "Bound to Fail" that is part of the *Eleven Color Photographs* portfolio. (Assuming there is a knot tying the binding rope—a likely hypothesis given that Nauman produced a number of works exploring knots in the 1960s—this negation even engages with the work's broader semantic project so that the literal knot produces an aesthetic "not.")

27 Bruce Nauman, interview with Willoughby Sharp, 1970, in *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 127.

28 Bruce Nauman, interview with Lorraine Sciarra, 1972, in *Please Pay Attention Please,* pp. 159–60.

29 Patrick McCaughey, "The Monolith and Modernist Sculpture," *Art International,* November 1970, p. 19.

30 For this later invocation of his reasons for making the works see Nauman, interview with de Angelus, in *Please Pay Attention Please,* pp. 255–56: "And I also had the idea that they would need Henry sooner or later, because he wasn't bad. He was a good enough artist and they should keep him around. They shouldn't just dump him because a bunch of other stuff is going on. And so I sort of invented a whole mythology about all that, I suppose you'd call it."

31 This monumentality of Nauman's work aligns itself with the artistic and discursive production of other prominent artists engaged in "post-medium" sculptural works in the 1960s such as Robert Smithson, Dan Graham, and Claes Oldenburg. See Robert Smithson, "Entropy and the New Monuments," *Artforum* 4 (June 1966), reprinted in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings,* ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Dan Graham, "Models and Monuments," *Arts,* March 1967; and Claes Oldenburg, "Some Program Notes about Monuments, Mainly," *Chelsea,* June 1968, pp. 87–92.

32 This attention to temporality is typically framed within a phenomenological engagement with the works, so that how a viewer bodily engages with Nauman's sculptures, especially his corridors and rooms from the late '60s and early '70s, is understood as a temporal experience. See for instance, Rosalind Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981), pp. 140–42, and Marcia Tucker, "PheNAUMANology," *Artforum* 9 (December 1970), pp. 38–44.

33 Nauman, interview with de Angelus, in *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 285.

34 One could in fact argue that such a residual project has motivated Nauman's artistic production throughout his career, appearing in some of his recent works such as *Mapping the Studio (Fat Chance John Cage)*. In a 2001 interview with Michael Auping, Nauman notes that the sculptures of Daniel Spoerri in which remains of a meal where glued to a table were in his thoughts during the initial conception of his piece and that "It made me think that I have all this stuff laying around the studio, leftovers from different projects and unfinished projects and notes. And I thought to myself why not make a map of the studio and all its leftovers." Nauman, quoted in *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 398.

35 Nauman, interview with de Angelus, in *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 255; van Bruggen, *Bruce Nauman,* p 111. Nauman has claimed that he was not aware of Moore's drawing *A Crowd Looking at a Tied Up Object* from the early 1940s, an image which undeniably shares both morphological and conceptual affinities with both the drawings and sculptures of the Moore series.

36 Anne Wagner, "Nauman's Body of Sculpture," in *A Rose Has No Teeth,* p. 139.

37 My thanks to David Getsy for this compelling insight.

38 "I had been trying to think about how to get those images out, and I thought about making paintings but it had been such a long time since I did any painting, so if I would have made paintings, they would have been just very realistic, and I don't know if I could have even done that at that point, but I would have retrained myself to draw or paint. And so it was just easier to use photographs." Nauman, interview with Sciarra, in *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 159.

39 And perhaps the artist's use of commercial lighting and color photography connotes the seeming vulgarity and explicitness of the concept circa 1967.

40 For Nauman's admiration of *Excavation,* see Lewallen, "A Rose Has No Teeth," p. 10.

41 In the interview with Michele de Angelus from 1980, discussing the use of "normal" experiences as artistic subject matter, Nauman stated that "it's how you structure the experience in order to communicate it" that defines the work art. "Art," he goes on to claim, "is the ability to communicate not just a bunch of information but to make an experience that's more general." In an interview with Joan Simon from 1988 Nauman states that "artists are always interested in some kind of communication. . . . It is a dangerous situation and I think that what I was doing [was using] the tension between what you tell and what you don't tell as part of the work. What is given and what is withheld becomes the work." *Please Pay Attention Please,* pp. 248, 326–27.

42 Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism; or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 10. In *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 27, Brian Massumi argues that rather than waning, affect has become increasingly important to the postmodern period. Nauman's art from the 1960s,

produced at the historical crux of postmodernism, can be seen as embodying the changing terrain from modernist emotiveness to postmodern affect.

43 In an interview of Nauman from 1970, Willoughby Sharp compares *Walking with Contrapposto* with *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* because of the occlusion of the figure's head and back view in both works. *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 115.

44 Recalling a moment from the mid-1960s, Nauman told de Angelus that he felt "just sort of tied in a knot and couldn't get anything out." *Please Pay Attention Please,* p. 236.

45 See Rosalind E. Krauss, "Notes on the Index," in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985); and Hal Foster, "The Passion of the Sign," in *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996).

46 Mel Bochner, "In the Galleries," *Arts* 41 (November 1966), p. 58; David Whitney, press release for Nauman's first one-man show at the Leo Castelli Gallery, reprinted in *Bruce Nauman, 25 Years, Leo Castelli* (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), unpaginated.

47 Fidel Danieli, "The Art of Bruce Nauman," *Artforum* 6 (December 1967), p. 15.

There's a Sculpture on My Shoulder:
Bruce McLean and the Anxiety of Influence

Jo Applin

Art is the only serious thing in the world and the only person who is not serious is the artist.

Oscar Wilde

PEOPLE WHO MAKE ART IN GLASS HOUSES IS THE TITLE OF A photographic work made by Bruce McLean in 1969, in which the young artist stands in the proverbial glasshouse (fig. 1). The panes are broken not by stones, but by the protruding remnants of one of McLean's early abstract sculptures made in 1964 while he was a student at St. Martin's School of Art in London. There McLean was taught by a number of "New Generation" sculptors including Anthony Caro, William Tucker, and Phillip King. This photograph spells out the terms in which McLean's generation perceived their relationship to their modernist predecessors. The photograph was published in *Studio International* alongside a review McLean wrote in 1970 of the exhibition *British Sculpture Out of the Sixties,* in which he lambasted the contemporary scene for remaining subservient to a modernist vocabulary that had become tired and out of date.[1] In his polemical attack on the current state of sculpture McLean declared that the legacy offered by the New Generation sculptors would no longer do. What had seemed a "major breakthrough" in 1960, he wrote, now seemed anything but. "Why don't they take a few chances," McLean suggested, "smash up the little scenes they've carefully built up like a military operation for themselves over the last five years and have a go at setting towards making or doing something worthwhile?"[2] Retreading old ground, for McLean, was no longer an option. Anthony Caro, he grudgingly admitted, was the only person making anything that was remotely interesting—the rest, he claimed, should be "slung out."[3]

In a similarly provocative performance work *There's a Sculpture on My Shoulder,* which took place in 1971 at Situations in London, a series of well-known large-scale New Generation works were projected onto the wall behind McLean, as he knelt on his hands and knees. With each change of image, McLean crumpled and staggered, as if under the weight of the sculpture, wittily illustrating the extent to which his predecessors' works were an oppressive weight to bear. The antimonumental impulse of the current genera-

tion of young artists such as Barry Flanagan, Gilbert and George, and McLean was a million miles from the grandiose solidity of, for example, Anthony Caro's *Early One Morning* from 1962 (fig. 2). It was, in McLean's opinion, "time for a re-think. Or a think."[4]

These two works by McLean bracket neatly the issues I want to raise regarding a small number of photographs and films that he made between 1969 and 1971, in which McLean engaged with, and challenged, an Oedipal scenario of artistic inheritance and rejection that literary critic Harold Bloom has famously dubbed the "anxiety of influence."[5] I want to pursue the idea of an artist's complex and self-conscious engagement with the idea of influence, and to ask what the exchange, incorporation, and rejection of another artist's work might entail, specifically, in McLean's case, the work of the British sculptor Henry Moore. Interestingly, McLean was not the only artist then carving out his artistic identity by referring to the work of Moore. Between 1966 and 1967, the young American artist Bruce Nauman had also produced a number of works that paid homage to Moore's work, and that highlighted the difficulty of working after Moore, suggesting through a number of sketches, sculptures, drawings, and photographs that the figure of Henry Moore should be "bound up" and stored for the future when he might once again become useful to younger artists—the implicit suggestion being that he served no current purpose.[6]

Figure 2
Anthony Caro (British, b. 1924), *Early One Morning,* 1962. Painted steel and aluminum, 289.6 × 619.8 × 335.3 cm (114 × 244 × 132 in.). London, Tate, T00805. © Barford Sculptures/ Anthony Caro. Photo © Tate, London, 2010

McLean's series of homages to Moore were, like Nauman's, marked by ambivalence and humour. In one series of photographic works from 1969, McLean presents his own take on Moore's *Fallen Warrior* motif, for which he hurled himself at a concrete "plinth" on the banks of the Thames, wearing a tin helmet and Doc Marten boots (fig. 3). In another photographically recorded performance, *Poses for Plinth,* in 1971 at Situations, McLean once again recon-

Figure 3
Bruce McLean (Scottish, b. 1944), *Fallen Warrior,* 1969. Black-and-white photograph, 93 × 62.5 cm (36³⁄₅ × 24³⁄₅ in.). Barnes Riverside. © Bruce McLean. Photo: Dick Buwalda. Photo courtesy of the artist

ceived Moore's humanist rendering of the body atop a plinth, this time destabilized and subject to inevitable failure, as McLean tumbled and wobbled on the plinth, yielding to gravity and falling to the floor, the preferred base for abstract sculpture in the hands of the postwar generation of sculptors, including of course Caro, a one-time assistant to Moore.[7] For McLean's generation, Caro functioned as mediator between the old and the new, for just as Caro had rejected the lessons learnt from Moore, so his students in turn attempted to break away from Caro's own large-scale welded metal sculpture.

Alongside the more obvious engagement with the work of Moore, what follows outlines another kind of generational dialogue that took place between McLean and the American artists Robert Morris and Walter De Maria in 1970. The year before, all three had been included in Harald Szeemann's international conceptual art show "When Attitudes Become Form." While McLean's early relationship to Moore and, to an extent, Caro could be broadly described in terms of patrilineal revolt, the nature of his relationship to Morris and de Maria operates along a different axis, coming closer to psychoanalyst Juliet Mitchell's description of the various "peer-group alliances" that are identifiable if, as Mitchell puts it, we "look sideways" to the more oblique, lateral relations and exchanges that occur between peers and siblings rather than fathers and sons.[8]

Between 1963 and 1966 McLean attended the advanced sculpture course at St. Martin's School of Art. Frank Martin, head of the sculpture department at St. Martin's, had established the course during the late fifties, as a way of bypassing the regulations for assessment imposed by the National Diploma in Design, which examined students only on figurative work. As the course was not officially recognized, it remained "vocational" and independent to a degree from the strictures governing the rest of the school's departments. Students signing up for the course were explicitly encouraged to "break new ground" and to work in an abstract idiom with unconventional materials.[9] McLean and his classmates were encouraged to work in an abstract visual language by tutors such as King, Tucker, and particularly Caro, whose own large-scale modernist sculpture was directly influenced by the American abstraction that was then being heralded by Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried, with Fried in particular championing the work of Caro in America.

During his second year at art school McLean had worked as a fabricator for Tucker, although his own early experiments with the strict formal vocabulary of sculpture being taught at St. Martin's were marked by disillusionment and a desire to break away from its rules. Although McLean was initially unsure what direction his work should take, that it would differ radically from the American model of abstract formalism quickly became evident to him: at the end of his first term King and Tucker kindly asked him whether art school was the best choice for him, suggesting that he should "go home and consider the situation."[10] McLean did not leave, but returned for his second term, and throughout the next year he produced a number of large coloured works that engaged in an explicit dialogue with the work of the New Generation.

McLean's earliest sculptures make clear the extent to which he was working through the formal precepts of Phillip King in particular, although he was soon to abandon such works, since for McLean and his fellow classmates (who included Richard Long, Barry Flanagan, Roelof Louw, Braco Dimitrijević, Jan Dibbets, and Gilbert and George), the radical reconception of sculpture that Caro's generation had engineered was already by the mid-sixties an outdated

orthodoxy—it had gone from what Joy Sleeman has called a "productive conversation" to a "frozen bit of dialogue."[11] McLean later complained how the St. Martin's sculpture forum would "avoid every broader issue, discussing for hours the position of one piece of metal in relation to another: twelve adult men with pipes would walk for hours around sculpture and mumble."[12] He later admitted that his rejection of that model of formalism was hard-won, saying "at St. Martin's I was stumbling, I was struggling hard: all you could do was to emulate things that you liked. I knew I hadn't got a direction."[13]

In his review of "British Sculpture out of the Sixties," McLean railed against the tired, false posturing of the New Generation and, worse, the work of the generation of young artists who continued to thoughtlessly rehash the formal tenets of the New Generation. McLean mockingly refers to the familiar formats of the "Put-a-sculpture-on-the-floor-piece," or the "Paint-a-sculpture-piece," and also the "take-that-sculpture-off-that-base-and-don't-ask-questions-piece."[14] Although he rejected the modernist model offered by his tutor Caro, in his review McLean did not group Caro in with the others, but recognized the inventive aspect of his work, claiming that Caro's work demonstrated elements of original thinking. Caro, McLean complained, was the only person in the show who had "a touch of the crimble crumbles," his term for the "sort of ease, style that some people have, cultivate a bit because they know they've got it, work on it; it has something to do with 'craft tricks,' then perpetuating the tricks, never quite letting them become completely boring."[15]

McLean's "re-thinking" of precisely what a sculpture could be began in earnest between 1965 and 1967, during which time he made a series of ephemeral, cheap sculptural interventions that seemed to be the exact opposite of all that he had been taught at art school. While at first glance it seems that the "direction" he felt he was lacking during these formative years is very much in evidence, his diverse works at this time, which ranged from photography and film to sculpture, performance and land art, are in fact united in their attempt to explore and challenge the material status of the object. Stacking, piling, propping, and placing replaced the formal stringencies of the large-scale welded metal object. McLean's street sculptures were made from pieces of linoleum, hardboard, wood, and concrete that he would precariously prop and balance against each other, the pavement, and the wall. Writing about McLean's work from this period in 1969, Charles Harrison described McLean's shift toward working with provisional and cheap materials in economic terms, pointing out that he lacked the funds to purchase the "permanent materials of his choice," although he quickly points out that his works are "nonetheless valid for that."[16] By now all evidence of the studio had been removed from McLean's work: that it is an art work at all is only evident through knowing the work latterly, through photographs, for example, *Installation with Street and Fence,* in which a roll of lino and sections of steel pipe have been leant against the fence and pavement. By 1967 McLean was working in an even more expanded environment, making a series of interventions into nature with works that, like the street sculpture, cease to exist almost immediately after the fact of their reproduction as photographs.

Works such as *Vertical Ice Sculpture,* in which a frozen lake is cracked and a pane of ice flipped up into a vertical sheet, and the self-explanatory *Grass on Grass Sculpture* seem at first to belong to a different category of outdoor sculpture, to "nature," the monumental and elegiac. However, McLean pulls back from the brink of the spectacular and grandiose, with works such as *Splash*

Sculpture, Mud Sculpture, and *Floataway Sculpture* resisting the lure of either. These works are casual, ephemeral, and witty in spirit. They comprise a small pile of mud, an object thrown into a brook, a piece of lino and wood placed on top of a sheet of hardboard floating away, all of which resist the monumentalizing scale we might expect from the emergent land art being produced at that time, mostly in America but also by a number of McLean's peers, including Richard Long. The use of found, crushed, squashed tangles of steel scrap found in the streets and photographed against a variety of urban outdoor backdrops in works such as *Found Steel Girder and Scrap Metal Sculpture* (fig. 4) replace the permanence and solidity promoted by the sculptural programme McLean had recently graduated from. It is hard not to read Caro's *Early One Morning* (1962) in miniaturized and ruinous form at the rear of the pile of girders and scraps, as if the sculpture had been chewed up and spat back out (fig. 5).

A few years later, McLean moved away from his earlier modernist interventions, and, although the idea of sculpture remained integral to his practice, he began to be associated more closely with conceptualism. He was included in most of the major conceptual art shows of the late sixties and seventies, including "Op Losse Schroeven" and "Information," and, in 1969, Harald Szeeman's international traveling group exhibition *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form: Works—Processes—Situations—Information.*[17] The show opened in Switzerland, and then traveled to Germany before ending up, in a reduced format, at the Institute of Contemporary Art, London (ICA), where Charles Harrison took over as organizer. When planning the show, Szeeman

Figure 4
Bruce McLean (Scottish, b. 1944), *Found Steel Girder and Scrap Metal Sculpture,* 1968. Steel scrap. © Bruce McLean. Photo courtesy of the artist
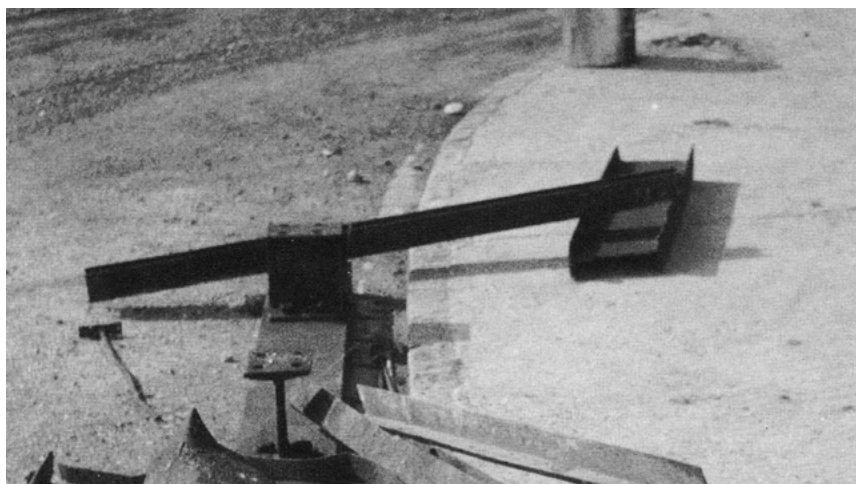
approached McLean and asked him to send along some documentation of his work for inclusion in the catalogue that was to accompany the show. The catalogue was conceived as a separate project to the actual exhibition, with some artists included in the show who were not in the catalogue and vice versa. Although McLean was included in the catalogue from the outset, he only showed work in the London hang of the exhibition. The catalogue was organized like a telephone directory, with an alphabetical thumb index running down the right-hand edge. It opens with the minimalist Carl Andre, and closes with the arte povera artist Gilberto Zorio. In its final incarnation, only the letters "U," "X," and "Y" remained empty.

Let us focus on "M." Although obviously an accident of the alphabet, McLean's placement at the beginning of the "M" section was fortuitous, for it unwittingly placed his work into a relationship with that of Walter De Maria and Robert Morris, his more established American counterparts. While McLean was familiar with Morris's minimalist work at that time, the "Attitudes" show was McLean's first introduction to the work of de Maria, who by 1969 had established himself as a land artist who created colossal works in the desert such as *Two Parallel Lines* (1968), which consisted of two parallel mile-long lines drawn in chalk twelve feet apart on a dry desert lake bed. The photograph was reproduced in the catalogue with de Maria lying face down between the two lines (fig. 6). Adjacent in the loose-leaf catalogue are the last page of McLean's entry and the first page of De Maria's entry, with photographs of one of McLean's own "earth works," which comprised a series of iron poles placed around the base of a hill on Hampstead Heath, London. In the photograph of De Maria on the opposite page, the artist occupies the foreground of the frame, hand held up to run parallel with the mile-long line; serious, unsmiling, and demonstrating his mastery of the vast terrain (fig. 7). In each instance the photographs in De Maria's entry are organized by the logic and scale of his body, pitched against the spectacular grandiosity of nature. The rest of De Maria's entry included a reproduction of a letter he wrote to Szeeman that included the typed instructions for his *Art by Telephone,* which was included in the show in lieu of one of his outdoor earth works. The gallery was to install a "STANDARD BLACK MODEL TELEPHONE AT THE END OF A 25 TO 50 FT. BLACK INSTALLATION CORD," which the artist could call at any point during the run of the exhibition.

Figure 6
Walter De Maria (American, b. 1935), *Mile Long Drawing*, 1968. In *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form: Works—Processes—Situations—Information,* exh. cat. (Bern: Kunsthalle Bern; London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1969). © Walter De Maria. Photo: Getty Research Institute
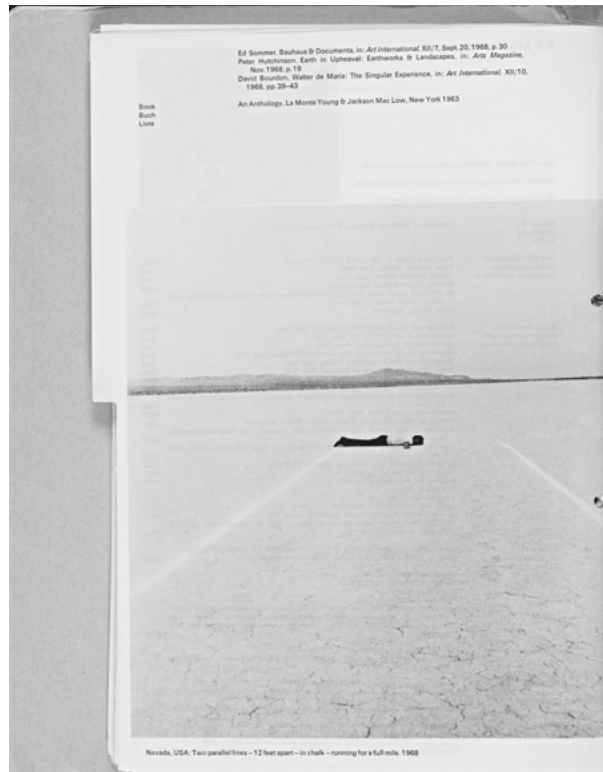
Figure 7
Walter De Maria (American, b. 1935). In *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form: Works—Processes—Situations—Information,* exh. cat. (Bern: Kunsthalle Bern; London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1969). © Walter De Maria. Photo: Getty Research Institute
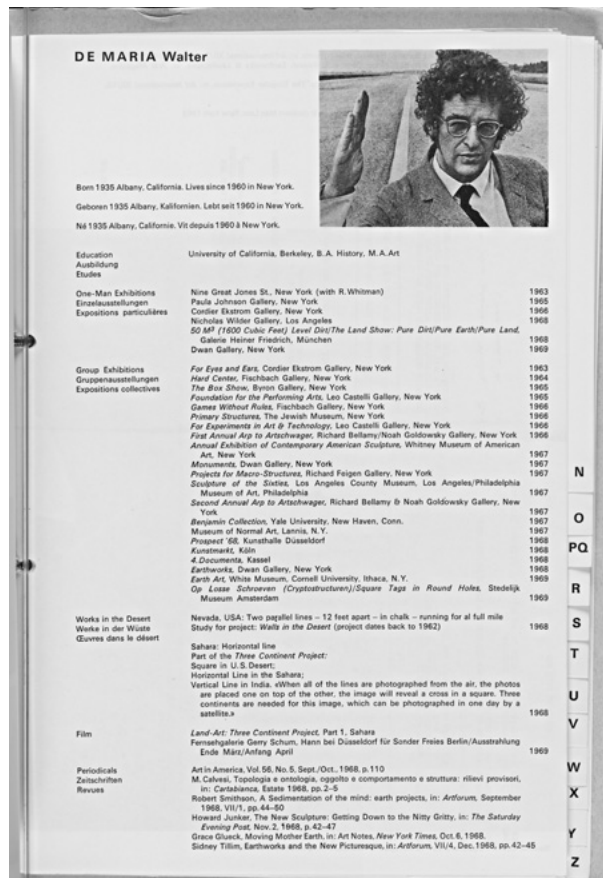
McLean and his friends spent much of the opening night at the ICA hanging around De Maria's telephone, to see if he would call. He didn't.

Robert Morris's entry, like all other contributors to the catalogue, also included a black-and-white artist photograph, as well as photographs of his recent felt sculpture, a biography, and exhibition history (fig. 8). Interestingly, Nauman was the only artist included who used a colour photograph—McLean in fact phoned Nauman up to ask how come he had been allowed to use colour, to which Nauman responded that it was because he had asked. It seems that the other contributors were so entrenched within the monochrome aesthetic of conceptual photography that it simply had not occurred to them that they could use color. On the other hand, Morris's choice of black-and-white is clearly deliberate, as the harsh shadow and stark lighting of his photograph casts deep shadow across the unsmiling artist who poses in front of the heavy metal girders that provide his austere backdrop.

McLean's entry includes no biographical information or exhibition history, apart from simply listing year and place of birth: 1944, Glasgow (fig. 9). His entry also included reproductions of his *Landscape Paintings,* one of which was included in the ICA installation of the show, where it was laid out along the floor (it was destroyed afterwards), and a hanging work, entitled *Rope Piece.* He half smiles in his photograph—it is closer to a smirk, really—underneath which he reproduced a series of four banal postcards of Barnes, London, which he had sent to Szeemann in lieu of any actual documentation of his work, which he says he simply did not have.[18] Although McLean's entry conforms entirely with the other artists' entries in the catalogue, it also functions as a dialogic conversation with the work of his two American bedfellows, the most established artists in the "M" category, whom McLean usurps through his alphabetical placement at the beginning of the section.

The "Attitudes" show provided the starting point for the series of photographic and film works making reference to the work of Morris and De Maria that McLean embarked upon the following year. Of De Maria, McLean recalls being deeply impressed: he remembers thinking that De Maria's outdoor land art works, and his photograph in the "Attitudes" catalogue, were "cool."[19] McLean's interest in Morris, at first triggered by the black-and-white photograph, was supplemented by his discovery of a short text by Morris called "On drawing" that was published in John Russell and Suzi Gablik's anthology *Pop Art Redefined* in 1969, the year "Attitudes" opened. McLean found Morris's text both witty and engaging, and a far cry from the serious, monumental posturing of the photograph with which Morris chose to represent himself in Szeemann's show. In the short text, Morris, his tongue firmly in cheek, advocates that the artist combine the "skill and malice" of W. C. Fields with "a certain awkwardness and blunt, left-handed effort like that needed to open a stuck closet door."[20] Morris's unexpected use of humour in his writing struck McLean, as did his description of the artist as someone who employs humour and skill, which chimed with McLean's own description of the "craft tricks" that kept the best new work from becoming "completely boring,"[21] and he began to mull over the idea of making two films in homage to "Bob" and "Walter."[22]

McLean was intrigued by the seeming mismatch between Morris's self-presentation and the sense of humour his text revealed. The film he made about Morris was called *In the Shadow of Your Smile, Bob.* He was inspired by Andy Warhol's real-time and split-screen films such as *Empire State Building* and

Figure 8
Robert Morris (American, b. 1931). In *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form: Works—Processes—Situations—Information*, exh. cat. (Bern: Kunsthalle Bern; London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1969). © Robert Morris. Photo: Getty Research Institute
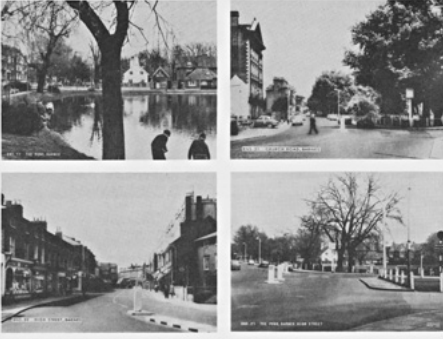

Figure 9
Bruce McLean (Scottish, b. 1944). In *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form: Works—Processes—Situations—Information*, exh. cat. (Bern: Kunsthalle Bern; London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1969). © Bruce McLean. Photo: Getty Research Institute

Chelsea Girls, and by Brancusi's claims that he could not work in the shadow of Rodin.[23] McLean made a thirty-minute split-screen film in which one side of the screen was occupied by a huge blown-up reproduction of Morris's "Attitudes" photograph. On the other side ran a film of McLean, cast in shadow to mimic Morris, while talking to camera the whole time, describing what he was doing, in a contemporary restaging of Brancusi's anxiety of being in the shadow of another artist's achievements.

McLean's 1970 film about De Maria similarly stemmed from De Maria's "Attitudes" photograph and, as with the Morris film, he made a number of photographic works to accompany the film. Called *A Million Smiles for One of Your Miles, Walter,* it featured McLean outstretched not between two mile-long lines in the desert, but between the rather more prosaic white painted lines of a British football pitch in a local London park (fig. 10).[24] This film was also 30 minutes long, and shot in real time. A young woman in hotpants leans against a shed just out of McLean's sight, looking bored and fidgeting, while the artist lies prone on the ground. As with his Morris film, McLean recorded a soundtrack afterwards in which he provided a funny, unscripted dialogue describing what was going on around him as he lay stretched out on the ground, for example children playing nearby, or a man passing by walking his dog. In another photographic work made to accompany the film, McLean conflates De Maria's *Two Parallel Lines* and *Art by Telephone,* aping De Maria's serious hand-raised posture while ostensibly answering the phone that De Maria included in the "Attitudes" show, which De Maria may, or may not, deign to call (fig. 11). With each of these works McLean inserts himself into both Morris's and De Maria's projects, appropriating formal themes from their work and insinuating himself within them, a kind of pastiche or parody that functions also as an acknowledgment of homage to their work. The teasing humour of his earlier Oedipal wrangling with Moore and Caro takes on a rather different tenor in the case of De Maria and Morris. They function as a bridge between McLean's earlier and later work, offering something much closer to a critical engagement or conversation with his peers and two very different responses to the question of how one artist engages with the work of another.

The idea of posturing continued to figure in the work McLean produced in the immediate aftermath of his films to "Bob" and "Walter." In 1971, while teaching at Maidstone College of Art, McLean founded Nice Style, the World's First Pose Band, with his students Paul Richards and Ron Carr. The perfor-

Figure 10
Bruce McLean (Scottish, b. 1944). Production still from *A Million Smiles for One of Your Miles, Walter,* 1971. © Bruce McLean. Photo courtesy of the artist

Figure 11
Bruce McLean (Scottish, b. 1944). Photographic
work after the film *A Million Smiles for One
of Your Miles, Walter,* 1971. © Bruce McLean.
Photo courtesy of the artist
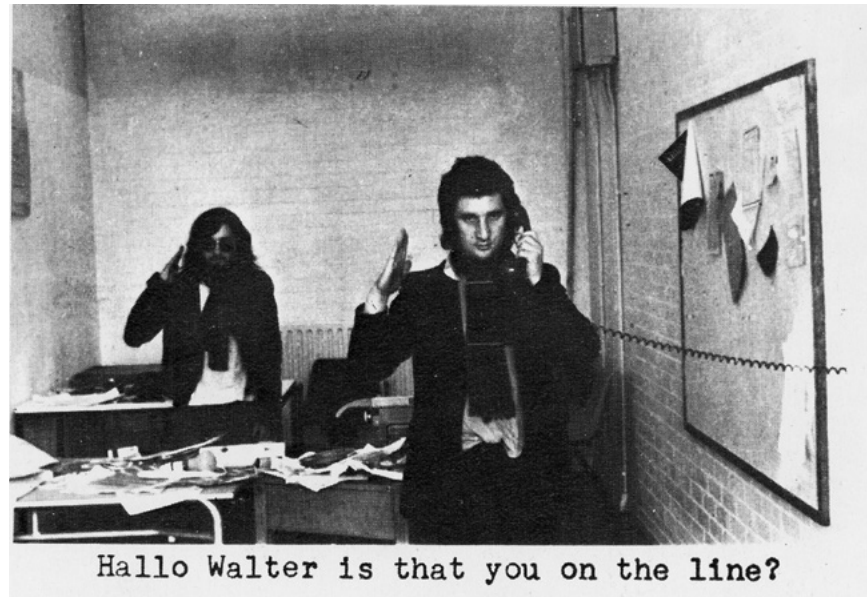
mances by Nice Style were marked by a witty, ironic, and critical investigation
into social hypocrisy, posing, and mimicry. Part absurdist performance, part
social critique, Nice Style drew upon a wide range of oblique references, from
minimalist dance to other more familiar and popular clichés: their first public
appearance was as a support band for The Kinks in 1971. In another work from
1969, in what could also be read as a deflationary response to the magisterial
pretensions of De Maria's mile-long lines in the desert, McLean reduced the line
to a spare and barely registered length of string dragged along the street that he
then had photographed. *Taking a Line for a Walk* he called it, calling to mind
Paul Klee's desire to let the unconscious guide the artist's hand as well as Richard
Long's outdoor works. McLean in fact made a ten-minute black-and-white film
about Long at the same time that he made the Morris and De Maria works. In
The Elusive Sculptor, Richard Long, McLean approached members of the pub-
lic, asking if they had seen a man out walking.[25]

  In 1970 McLean staged his most radical rejection of artistic posturing.
In his conceptual one-day retrospective entitled *King for a Day,* he produced a
typed list of proposals for a number of works realized and not realized, which
provided the basis of his "one-day retrospective," initially held at the Nova
Scotia College of Art and Design, and again in 1972 at the Tate Gallery. In his
late twenties and only at the beginning of his professional life as an artist,
McLean wryly acknowledges the notion that an artist's career is over the
moment they are offered a retrospective, although unlike the usual format of
the large retrospective exhibition in which all one's significant works are gath-
ered together, McLean's twenty-four-hour retrospective was remarkable in that
no physical works of art were included. The show took place in one room at the
Tate Gallery, containing only McLean's exhibition catalogues, arranged on
the floor to mimic the floor-bound structure of the minimalist grid. Like the
catalogue for Szeemann's *Attitudes* show, the booklet McLean produced to
accompany *King for a Day* was a conceptual exhibition itself. It consisted of one
thousand typed proposals for works previously made, imagined, impossible,
and not yet realized. As the catalogues were removed, the show—and McLean's

retrospective—ended, leaving behind only a textual residue of imagined projects. The proposals in the catalogue, which McLean typed in one sitting, gradually running out of ideas and steam as he neared the end, demonstrated among other things McLean's ongoing dialogue with other artists:

> 104 Tony Caro reflected in his "early one morning" work
> 403 Earthworks piece, mixed media
> 455 homage to baby blue piece
> 872 a recent crimble, crimble crumble work, parody
> 978 Henry Moore revisited for the 10th time piece

McLean's use of humour provides a powerful weapon against what we might think of as the perceived pomposity of De Maria's and Morris's posed photographic conceits, although it is a project notable primarily for the fondness McLean displays for their work, amounting to something closer to fandom or comradely acknowledgment than an antagonistic attack or joke made at their expense. McLean cites Oscar Wilde as a formative influence on his work, particularly Wilde's insistence on the seriousness of humour, and recalls with pride the rumour that the first time Richard Serra was seen to smile at an opening was during the screening of *In the Shadow of Your Smile, Bob.*[26] McLean was, in fact, a founding member of "The Society for Putting Humour Back into Art." "Humour," he said, "is the nearest to truth that you can get."[27] The subversive humour that McLean employs in these two films is complex—they do not simply set out to ridicule their subjects, but they stem in part from a deeply entrenched belief in questioning what sculpture could be. This process of interrogation was "ingrained" in McLean's generation under Caro, Tucker, Annesley, King, and Bolus, who insisted that their students constantly question the status of the object, even though these students came up with a rather different set of responses to their teachers.[28] Rather, what McLean did with these works was enter into a performative and dialectical relationship with his American peers. McLean vehemently rejects claims that his work from this period was primarily about making fun of the work of others, pointing out on the contrary that "you can only have fun with things you actually admire," a point made clear by reading through the list of proposals for *King for a Day.*[29]

McLean's brief flirtation with, on the one hand, Henry Moore and Anthony Caro, and, on the other, Morris and De Maria, was tactical, in the sense described by Michel de Certeau's writing on the difference between "strategy" and "tactics." In a passage that could just as easily describe what McLean set out to do with his films, de Certeau describes how the tactic "insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance."[30] Tactics work through random or surprising juxtapositions, in a way similar, de Certeau writes, to how Freud defines "wit" in *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious.* In another context, psychoanalyst Adam Phillips has suggested that flirtation functions as a "transitional performance" that is an "early version of the experimental life, of irreverence as curiosity."[31] Far from standing as the opposite to a correct and serious way of establishing relationships, Phillips writes, flirtation "might simply describe a different kind of relation, another way of going about things."[32] Flirting describes McLean's "way of going about things" here. These works are not oppositional or hostile—they don't place attack at their centre, whether Oedipally charged or not. Instead McLean's tactical engagement with the work

of Moore, Morris, and De Maria is playful. For Phillips, flirting works as a non-committal and playful way of imagining alternatives. It "makes room" for "other stories" by "unsettling preferences and priorities."[33]

In an essay on flirtation of 1909, Georg Simmel wrote "every decisive conclusion brings flirtation to an end."[34] Phillips, too, insists upon the productivity of keeping closure at bay, for "flirtation keeps the consequences going."[35] The open-ended, tactical aspect of flirtation and its two-way process of play and exchange provides the most useful model for reconsidering the "anxiety of influence" as it was transformed in McLean's hands, satisfying McLean's own call in 1969 for a "re-think. Or even a think."[36]

A version of this article was presented at the conference "Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture 1945–1975" at the Getty Institute, Los Angeles, April 2008. I would like to thank the convenors and my fellow participants at this event for their thoughtful comments and discussion. Thank you to Joy Sleeman, Richard Taws, and Jon Wood for their conversations about McLean's work, and to Bruce McLean for taking the time to talk to me, and for allowing me to reproduce images of his works.

This essay first appeared in the *Sculpture Journal,* volume 17.2 (2008).

Notes

1 Interview with the artist, April 15, 2008, London. See also Jon Wood's interview with McLean, "Fallen Warriors and a Sculpture in My Soup: Bruce McLean on Henry Moore," *Sculpture Journal* 17, no. 2 (2008), pp. 116–24.

2 B. McLean, "Not Even Crimble Crumble," reprinted in N. Dimitrijevic, *Bruce McLean,* exh. cat., Kunsthalle Basel; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; and Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (London, 1981), pp. 22–23.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 H. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry,* 2nd edn. (New York and Oxford, 1997).

6 I have written about Nauman's series of works that he made referencing the work of Henry Moore and the American sculptor H. C. Westermann in my forthcoming *Eccentric Objects: Rethinking Sculpture in 1960s America* (New Haven and London, 2013). See also A. M. Wagner, "Henry Moore's Mother," *Representations* 65 (1999), pp. 93–120; A. M. Wagner, *Mother Stone: The Vitality of Modern British Sculpture* (New Haven and London, 2005). There is a discussion of Nauman's Henry Moore related works in D. Kosinski, *Henry Moore: Sculpting the Twentieth Century* (New Haven and London, 2001). Joan Simon mentions Nauman's references to Westermann and Moore in "Nauman Variations: Back to the Future," in *Bruce Nauman,* exh. cat., Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (London, 1986), pp. 11–18, as does Coosje van Bruggen in *Bruce Nauman* (New York, 1988).

7 *Poses for Plinth* was one of several performances McLean staged at Situations in 1971, along with *There's a Sculpture on My Shoulder.* McLean and Nauman in fact met several years later when they were introduced by Nicholas Serota, who recognized the similarities between their works. Interview with the author, April 15, 2008, London.

8 J. Mitchell, *Siblings: Sex and Violence* (Oxford, 2003), p. 110.

9 Course description 1962–65, as quoted in R. Tant, "Sculpture at St. Martin's," in *Art and the 60s: This Was Tomorrow,* eds. C. Stephens and K. Stout, exh. cat., Tate Britain, London (London, 2004), p. 88.

10 M. Gooding, *Bruce McLean* (London, 1990), p. 16.

11 J. Sleeman, *The Sculpture of William Tucker* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 26.

12 McLean, quoted in Dimitrijevic, *Bruce McLean,* p. 7.

13 McLean, quoted in Gooding, *Bruce McLean,* p. 14.

14 McLean, "Not Even Crimble Crumble," quoted in Dimitrijevic, *Bruce McLean,* p. 22.

15 Ibid.

16 C. Harrison, "Some Recent Sculpture in Britain," *Studio International* 177, no. 907 (1969), p. 32.

17 For an excellent account of this exhibition see Alison Green, "*When Attitudes Become Form* and the Contest over Conceptual Art's History," in *Conceptual Art: Theory, Myth, and Practice,* ed. M. Corris (Cambridge, 2004).

18 Interview with the artist, April 15, 2008, London.

19 Ibid.

20 R. Morris, "On Drawing," in *Pop Art Redefined,* eds. J. Russell and S. Gablik (London and New York, 1969), p. 94.

21 McLean, "Not Even Crimble Crumble," quoted in Dimitrijevic, *Bruce McLean,* p. 22.

22 Interview with the artist, April 15, 2008, London.

23 "Nothing grows well in the shadow of a tree," Brancusi famously remarked on declining an offer from Rodin to work in his studio.

24 *A Million Smiles for One of Your Miles, Walter* no longer exists. *In the Shadow of Your Smile, Bob* is currently missing.

25 *The Elusive Sculptor, Richard Long* (1970) exists as a reel-to-reel film that is now disintegrating. Interview with the artist, April 15, 2008, London.

26 Interview with the artist, April 15, 2008, London.

27 McLean, quoted in Dimitrijevic, *Bruce McLean,* p. 24.

28 Interview with the artist, April 5, 2008, London.

29 Ibid.

30 M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* trans. S. F. Rendall (Berkeley, 1984), p. xix.

31 A. Phillips, *On Flirtation* (London, 1994), p. xxv.

32 Ibid., p. xxii.

33 Ibid., p. xxv.

34 G. Simmel, "Flirtation," in *On Women, Sexuality, and Love,* trans. and intro. Guy Oakes (New Haven and London, 1984), p. 136.

35 Phillips, *On Flirtation,* p. xxiii.

36 McLean, "Not Even Crimble Crumble," quoted in Dimitrijevic, *Bruce McLean,* p. 22.

Polychrome in the Sixties: David Smith and Anthony Caro

Sarah Hamill

IN THE WINTER OF 1960–61, DAVID SMITH MADE A SERIES OF COLOR slide transparencies in the snow-filled landscape surrounding his upstate New York studio. The setup was casual; sculptures were situated directly on the gravel and snow just outside the sculptor's workshop. However informal their composition—however indifferent to the conventions of sculptural display—Smith's photographs stage an interchange between sculpture and landscape in which paint acts as the deciding term. A photograph of *Doorway on Wheels* (1960) (fig. 1), for instance, juxtaposes the sculpture's interplay of black lines against the white snow, presenting it in stark relief. Other colors appear in parcels: the burst of red in the sculpture's wheel, the lone green pine to the right, and the subdued brown corner of barren deciduous trees. Smith's photograph of *Doorway on Wheels* forges equivalences and connections. Tone and hue structure a process of differentiation, a process that, in turn, offers a complex picture of what the sculptor imagined color's role to be. Using photography, a medium that Smith had made central to his sculptural project since the 1940s, the artist structured a specifically pictorial encounter with his painted objects.[1] The photograph organizes the shifting effects of color into a pictorial plane. In so doing, it stages a collision between the media of sculpture, painting, and photography, and offers a rejoinder to Greenbergian modernism.

In his winter photograph, Smith construes an alternate response to the age-old question of color's role in sculpture—a question that took on new urgency in the early 1960s for Smith and a group of painters and sculptors working in and around Bennington, Vermont; the group included Kenneth Noland, Helen Frankenthaler, Jules Olitski, and Anthony Caro. Historically, polychrome sculpture had inhabited the aesthetic sidelines of sculpture, a situation Smith himself described in a 1940 essay, noting a legacy of "the dead dark [of bronzes], and marble, dead white."[2] Rather than the traditions of art, Smith drew from the technological fabric of modern life, finding a model for color sculpture in the vitreous enamels of "gasoline stations, hamburger stands, and stew pans."[3] In the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, the sculptor had explored paint as a visual element of a sculptural encounter in different ways. In the early 1960s, he returned to color with a newfound urgency and produced an expansive and studied body of painted sculpture. He also photographed them in relationship

to the landscape, capturing the contingent effects of viewing color in film. His return to color coincided with a series of paintings by his friend Kenneth Noland, titled *Circles* (1956–63). Smith's sculpture *Noland's Blues* (1961) was a debt to the painter; other sculptures directly cited Noland's canvases. Anthony Caro, whose turn to welding was influenced by Smith, visited Bennington in the early 1960s and later taught at Bennington College, a women's college in the Vermont town. During these years, Caro was similarly invested in merging color and steel sculpture, in conversation with Noland, Olitski, and others.

Smith's and Caro's separate investigations of painted sculpture did not sit well with Clement Greenberg, whose essays critiqued the role of color in their sculptures. Greenberg remained an advocate of both Smith's and Caro's work, and, as he reminded Smith in a 1961 letter, he had promoted the sculptor from the start, having "discover[ed]" him.[4] However much the critic championed their modernist steel sculpture, he was nevertheless critical of color; painted sculpture challenged his dictum of medium purity. "It seems to be a law of modernism," Greenberg wrote in 1958, "that the conventions not essential to the viability of a medium be discarded as soon as they are recognized."[5] Paint was a nonessential aspect of the medium of sculpture; it interrupted the "raw, discolored surfaces"[6] of welded steel.

Greenberg's judgments were not limited to the written page. A letter that he sent Smith in 1951 requested permission to paint over the multicolored surface of a sculpture given to him by the artist. "It should be black," Greenberg emphasized, adding, "We can always scrape it off again."[7] The critic's 1951 letter foreshadowed actions he would take after the sculptor's accidental death in 1965, when Greenberg served as one of three executors of Smith's estate. In that capacity, he stripped the paint from five of Smith's sculptures, which had been painted white. He had them rusted and sealed, giving them the appearance of having been painted brown.[8] Other sculptures the critic let deteriorate or fade as a result of weather.[9] In 1974, Rosalind Krauss published an essay that documented these changes with the aid of photographs taken by Dan Budnik. She concluded that Greenberg had committed "an aggressive act against the sprawling, contradictory vitality of his work as Smith himself conceived it—and left it."[10]

Krauss's essay provoked an outpouring of letters that raised questions about Smith's intentions and the ethics of Greenberg's intervention. Critics, scholars, dealers, and artists sided with or against Greenberg. The subsequent debate hinged on the question of primer. According to those involved, white paint—the color of the works subsequently stripped—was taken to be a sign of incompletion, even though, as Krauss herself noted elsewhere, Smith had explored white as an end color in sculptures such as *Untitled* (1955) or in the *Menands* series.[11] The debates also did not linger on Smith's process as he himself described it, in which white was not a primer coat, but a vital step toward polychrome.[12] Applied over a yellow-green zinc primer, white acted as an exploratory canvas that, as Smith emphasized, might be in place for several years while he worked toward a final color.[13]

In the discussions surrounding Greenberg's actions, which took place in the pages of *Art in America* and *The New York Times,* white was mobilized to different ends. For some, it was a mistaken endpoint, and Greenberg was simply carrying out Smith's wishes by removing a temporary coat of paint. For others, however, incompleteness mattered in itself; the white color of the sculptures was part of Smith's working process. It was an intermediary step toward polychrome. In light of all this, Greenberg's "restoration" was a bombastic statement that occluded Smith's working process. As Beverly Pepper framed the question, "Should we not value phases of the artist's research as much as the conclusions he came to?"[14] For Greenberg, the answer was no.

Forty years later, however, the question of what Smith aimed for in his painted sculpture remains unanswered. Comprehending the sculptor's ambitions for color means deciphering a particular historical moment in which Smith and other artists were each exploring color as shaping a uniquely visual encounter. The dialogue surrounding their efforts sheds new light on the issue of polychrome sculpture and offers a glimpse at how two modernist artists were challenging commands for medium purity by moving between media. Seen in Smith's photographs, moreover, sculpture is tied not only to painting but also to the medium of photography. Employing a pictorial framework to analyze and display his painted objects, Smith insisted on color's vitality for his sculptural optic. His images structure a visual, nonlinguistic retort to Greenberg's narrow delimitation of medium.

The sculptor's death in 1965 would abruptly conclude his robust experiments with paint. By the end of the decade, Caro would term his use of color

something of a failure. Still, in spite of these endpoints, color became significant for sculpture in the late 1960s. Donald Judd, John Chamberlain, and Anne Truitt would each make applied color a key component of their projects for sculpture. Richard Serra and Bruce Nauman would explore the bodily and spatial aspects of color in videos. These investigations stressed the industrial and fabricated elements of color, as well as color's role in a phenomenological encounter. Returning to Smith's and Caro's painted surfaces, this essay offers a prehistory to such explorations—which took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s—by showing how color operated as a spatial element of sculpture. Their experiments with color emphasize how the medium of welded sculpture was tied to, and reliant upon, the media of painting and photography.

The Problem of Color

In the discussions surrounding the controversy of Greenberg's paint stripping, few have paused to consider just what was wrong with color, according to the critic. One need not look far to find Greenberg's judgments of color's failure when declarations such as these abound: "The question of color in Smith's art (as in all recent sculpture along the same lines), remains a vexed one. I don't think he has ever used applied color with real success."[15] But what was, more precisely, wrong with color? What led the critic to judge it a failure? Greenberg's writings provide few clues to answer this important question. He does not elaborate on his claim for color's incompatibility with sculpture, or on how paint offended his conviction for medium purity. Instead, its successful use is discussed as a possibility rarely achieved. In the rare instance when, according to Greenberg, color was applied successfully, it was because paint did not detract from sculptural form. In *Helmholtzian Landscape* (1946), for instance, the one Smith sculpture in which color "worked,"[16] color was "as much pictorial as it is sculptural. [It] emphasizes at the same time that it controls the in and out movement of these elements in relation to the plane of the frame."[17]

When applied correctly, color would act as a means to control and transcend the effects of matter, to transform metal into plane and frame. Color, then, was aligned with other sculptural matter in the space of Greenberg's argument—with tactility, impermeability, weight, or bodily associations. For Greenberg, the qualities associated with matter would be transcended by an aesthetic of "sheer visibility" or opticality.[18] "The human body is no longer postulated as the agent of space," he wrote in 1958, "now it is eyesight alone."[19] This emphasis on opticality, Greenberg adds, "allows sculpture to be as pictorial as it pleases."[20] "Sculpture," he writes, "can confine itself to virtually two dimensions (as some of David Smith's pieces do) without being felt to violate the limitations of its medium, because the eye recognizes that what offers itself in two dimensions is actually (not palpably) fashioned in three."[21] Sculpture's weight and material—its literal aspects—would be translated into two dimensions. And if color was to work in this modernist aesthetic, it would need to be pictorial, not tactile—optical, not material.

Color's problems did not end there. Writing of the (unsatisfactory) role of color in Caro's sculpture, such as the "superb" *Sculpture Two* (1962) (fig. 2), Greenberg complains of its provisional status:

> Applied color is another of the means to weightlessness in Caro's art, as Michael Fried, again, points out. It acts—especially in the high-

Figure 2
Anthony Caro (British, b. 1924), *Sculpture Two,*
1962. Steel painted green, 208.5 × 361 × 259 cm
(82 × 142 × 102 in.). London, Tate. Lent by
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Gomme, 1992. © Barford
Sculptures/Anthony Caro. Photo: Tate, London/
Art Resource, NY

keyed off-shades that Caro favors—to deprive metal surfaces of their tactile connotations and render them more "optical." I grant the essential importance to Caro's art of color in this role, but this is not to say that I, for one, find his color satisfactory. I know of no piece of his, not even an unsuccessful one, that does not transcend its color, or whose *specific* color or combination of colors does not detract from the quality of the whole (especially when there is more than one color). In every case I have the impression that the color is aesthetically (as well as literally) provisional—that it can be changed at will without decisively affecting quality. Here, as almost everywhere else in Western sculpture, color remains truly the "secondary" property that philosophers used to think color in general was.[22]

For Greenberg, however close color came to achieving weightlessness, its role was always minor. It was not an end in itself. Rather, it was a changing, provisional effect that, in most instances, was unconnected to the work itself. Worse, it would distract the eye from a direct visual encounter—an experience that the critic had found in the "raw, discolored surfaces"[23] of Smith's *Voltri-Bolton Landing* series. Comparing these sculptures to the "polished or painted surfaces" of other works, he noted differences in their attendant visual processes. Painted surfaces, he wrote, might "attract the eye too much, and the attracted eye lingers, while the unattracted eye hastens towards the essential."[24] Rawness meant directness or immediacy.

When painted sculpture "failed," we might suspect it was because the colored surfaces invoked the "substantial" and "textured," characteristics that stood in the way of purity, immateriality, essence, and, thus, the very effacement of texture and substance.[25] Inessential and superfluous, changing and unreliable, color was a mere distraction to a greater visual encounter. It would link sculpture to decoration, or the "matter-of-fact ornamental object," Greenberg's phrase for an ineffectual sculpture.[26] With these phrases, we are not far from

the critic's 1939 writings on kitsch. With its "faked sensations" and "vicarious experience," kitsch was unreliable and spurious; it "changes according to style," he wrote, "but remains always the same."[27] Excessive, textured, secondary—the language of Greenberg's 1960s critique of color alludes to kitsch as its unspoken term. Paint was an unnecessary detour on the road to opticality.

The restorative paint has long since dried on the sculptures that Greenberg stripped. Biographies have accounted for the wider issues at stake in this controversy—and we might note here the break between Greenberg and Krauss or call up his late-in-life remorse.[28] Using x-rays, conservators' studies have sought to resolve some of the details of Smith's painting process.[29] And exhibitions have attended to color in his 1960s works.[30] Yet this recent emphasis on the primacy of color ignores one central question: how was color explored as relating to a wider visual encounter? What did Smith and Caro each expect color to achieve? These questions seem necessary—even urgent—if we are to comprehend how color was a key term for modernist sculpture, apart from Greenberg's closely inscribed vision.

The Materiality of Color

For both Caro and Smith, color operated as a material for sculpture. Not subsumed into an optical experience, it was a key component of the physical aspects of the work. Their separate emphases on painted sculpture were tied in part to discussions surrounding color that took place among a group of color field artists and modernist sculptors living near Bennington College, in the early 1960s. Noland lived nearby. Smith, who gave lectures and advised students, lived and worked not far away, in Bolton Landing, New York. Greenberg visited regularly, and artists Jules Olitski and Paul Feeley both taught at the college. In 1963, Noland had secured a short-term teaching position for Caro at Bennington. Caro would return to Bennington in 1965; he was there when Smith died in a car accident, not far from Noland's home.

In 1960, Caro had met Greenberg in London, where the critic had persuaded him to "change his habits" and learn to weld. Caro was prompted in part by a 1960 issue of *Arts Magazine,* illustrated with Smith's own photographs, that Greenberg had shown him.[31] Soon thereafter Caro traveled to the United States, where he was introduced to artists Smith, Noland, Robert Motherwell, Frankenthaler, and others. In New York, the young sculptor saw Noland's recent *Circles* show "three times," he later recounted.[32] In Caro's conversations with Greenberg, the critic had imparted his advice about habits. The results were dramatic. On his return to England, the sculptor set to work. His processes shifted from modeling to welding, moving from a bodily and figural sculpture to a constructed and abstracted one. He destroyed *Woman's Body,* made that previous year—a teeming, substantive body, in which plaster has been molded and scraped away in a laborious process. The resulting form was composed of protrusions and hollows, scratches and indentations, to say nothing of its amputated limbs. With *Twenty Four Hours,* however—the first work in his new idiom—scraps and planes of metal were conjoined in an arrangement of shapes. The sculptural base was jettisoned as a framework for sculpture, and the work was positioned directly on the ground.

With Caro's new method came a shift in "father figures,"[33] as the sculptor termed them. That year he published an article attacking Moore, in whose

studio he had worked in 1951 and 1952, and attempted to align himself with Smith, though he was cautious of seeming too much of a follower. He cited his sculptures' horizontal alignments as evidence of the two sculptors' differences, yet the similarities in material and practice are hard to miss. At Bennington, Caro's work intensified and expanded. He learned new welding techniques from Smith. In conversation with Noland, he adopted the method of working in a series and of "not standing back."[34] And color—or "the color problem," as Noland termed it—was also under intense review.[35] The questions structuring letters and informing discussions were numerous: How would paint be applied? Would it juxtapose sculptural planes or emphasize a unified whole? How would it frame a visual response? Looking back, these artists engaged the problem of a painted sculpture with a newfound urgency, asking how color might be made to structure a uniquely visual encounter. While the questions were shared, however, their responses diverged.

For Caro, color worked to designate shape. In sculptures such as *Shaftsbury* (1965), allover color highlights the form as an integral, spatial whole. In *Smoulder* (1965) (fig. 3), form is economical, a purple line drawn against gravel. Its color is bold and abstract, nonnatural. In these two works from 1965, applied color does not invoke tactility—paint strokes are not visible. Nor are we asked to consider color's everyday associations, as in the early 1960s sculptures of John Chamberlain. Taking their colors from the faded hues of crushed cars and appliances, these works invoked, in Donald Judd's words, the pastels "of Detroit's imitation elegance for the poor—coupled, Rooseveltianly, with reds

Figure 3
Anthony Caro (British, b. 1924), *Smoulder*, 1965. Steel painted purple, 106.5 × 465 × 84 cm (42 × 183 × 33 in.). UK, private collection.
© Barford Sculptures/Anthony Caro

and blues."[36] Referencing color's messy class associations—its larger social and industrial landscape—was not part of Caro's interest. Rather, paint would structure an optical encounter, denoting shape and form, as if a sculpture's lines constituted a figure set on a canvas. With this model for color, Caro seems to owe everything to Noland's circle paintings of these years, with their planar orientation and flattened shapes. For Caro, ground and shape are entwined. Together, they amount to a larger abstracted plane. As artist William Tucker described these Bennington sculptures, they "seem to be much more like painting—in that the ground is like a canvas, and these are like elements in a canvas."[37] If the sculptures form a figure—seen against a ground—color is vital to that total pictorial structure.

Smith, however, was at work on another model for color, and Noland was a key influence, just as he was for Caro. Smith experimented with concentric rings of color in *Circles Intercepted* (1961), a work that explores how the flattened planes of color reminiscent of Noland's canvases might be made three-dimensional. Smith also used circle shapes in his *Primo Piano, Zig,* and *Circle* series, working them into the larger sculptural form. In the *Circles,* paint designates the sculpture's separate parts, but the surfaces are also complex and tactile in their own right. Like many of Smith's *Zig* sculptures, including *Zig IV* and *Zig V,* color is nonprimary and nonnatural; it is black shot through with brown; yellow, with orange; or blue, with black. Each surface in these early 1960s sculptures is composed of layers of interweaving brushstrokes so that the effect is of a translucent, vibrating plane. *Circle I* (1962), for instance, is composed of a large apricot-red circle and a lavender rectangle. These colors are interwoven with others. Patches of green appear in parts of the apricot circle, operating as subtle highlights to the overall color of the shape. As the sculptor described his use of color, it is nonprimary and raw, or what does "not have a previous acceptance."[38] His painted surfaces do not use ready-made colors, but rather materialize and individualize color into complex, dynamic layers. Smith's sculptures particularize paint, stressing the visual response that paint would create.

However, for Smith color was not only a material property. It was also defined through his photographs, which tested out a definition of color as contingent and unstable. Seen in the sculptor's photographs, color was part of a series of shifting connections and associations; it framed a particularly material response—one that did not fit comfortably within Greenberg's restricted definition of color's opticality. Smith's winter photographs also offer an alternate response to the colored shapes that Caro envisioned. Unlike Caro, who did not make a practice of photographing his work,[39] and whose use of color was to emphasize the overall shape or plane, Smith used the camera to explore color's contingent associations.

This tactic was hardly new for Smith. Since 1946, the sculptor's own images had been published in countless magazines, journals, and books, influencing readings of his sculpture. After purchasing photographic equipment with funding from his Guggenheim Fellowship in 1950, the sculptor put to use a photographic style for documenting his sculptures, which he would continue to use until his death. He situated his camera at a low vantage point, beneath the sculpture, and cropped the contact print at the object's base. Such tactics had the effect of projecting the object against the sky, so that it appeared to be a flat, two-dimensional plane. His works also appeared weightless, as if suspended above—and dissociated from—a mountainous setting, which served as a foil for

the modernist object. In a photograph of *Voltron XIII,* for instance—published alongside Greenberg's 1964 essay, "David Smith's New Sculpture"—the sculptural object, flattened to a plane, looms above the landscape. The image asserts his sculpture's self-sufficiency and independence. In a photograph of *Hudson River Landscape,* frequently published in Smith's lifetime, the sculptor has flattened his work into a linear form that hovers, immaterially, over the distant landscape. Sculpture is envisioned as a two-dimensional plane that is abstracted from its surroundings.

Smith's photographs structure a visual response not unlike the one Frank O'Hara described in 1961, on seeing the artist's sculptures in the fields outside his upstate New York studio. In a passage published in *Art News* in 1961 the poet-critic recounts a trip made to Bolton Landing, New York, emphasizing the contrast between steel sculpture and landscape setting:

> Outside the studio, huge piles of steel lay waiting to be used, and along the road up to the house a procession of new works, in various stages of painting, stood in the attitudes of some of Smith's characteristic titles: they stood there like a *Sentinel* or *Totem* or *Ziggurat,* not all menacing, but very aware. The contrast between the sculptures and this rural scene is striking: to see a cow or pony in the same perspective as one of the *Ziggurats,* with the trees and mountains behind, is to find nature soft and art harsh; nature looks intimate and vulnerable, the sculptures powerful, indomitable.[40]

Not a documentary report, O'Hara's passage sketches a modernist fantasy of viewing in which sculpture is both within and apart from its mountainous surroundings. Seen in the landscape, Smith's sculpture emerges as some sovereign, authoritative power, separate from tree, mountain, pony, or cow. For O'Hara, Smith's display relayed an image of his works as insistent things, self-enclosed and self-referential.

In his photographs, the sculptor repeatedly devised the kind of visual encounter O'Hara describes, one in which sculpture and landscape are at odds. His photographs mark a departure from other photographs by modern sculptors, including those by Caro's former mentor, Henry Moore. Frequently, Moore dramatized his sculptures by deploying the camera's abilities to shift scale. His photographs capitalize on photography's misinformation about size, to monumentalize his sculpture, and imagine them to be part of or innate to the landscape setting. While Moore used photography to envisage the encounter between sculpture and landscape as one of community, for Smith the relationship had to be one of difference and alienation. Smith's disjunctive views summon notions of sculpture's belonging and nonbelonging, qualities that are present in Smith's color photographs.

While the sculptor's black-and-white photographs were made from low vantage points in order to create contrasts between dark sculpture and light sky, Smith's color slides structure their differences through color. Abandoning the low points of view, the sculptor instead organized a process of differentiation that was based on tone and ambient light. We have already seen how Smith's photograph of *Doorway on Wheels* (1960) uses color differences to structure the work's abstraction, to denote the work's situatedness within a landscape and simultaneous separation from it. A photograph of *Tanktotem X* (1960) analogously uses color as a means of differentiation. Smith also photographed

this sculpture just outside his studio. The work was placed directly on the snow-covered gravel, without an intermediary pedestal. Smith's pale-colored truck and carryall are viewed in the distance, as is *Tanktotem IX,* also completed that year. Against the muted tones of the scene—variations of white and light brown—the sculpture appears as an interruption. Its constructed colors—bright red, blue, orange, and black—are juxtaposed against the ambient and serene colors of snow-filled space.

Other images construe a more dynamic approach. In a slide of *Tanktotem IX* (1960) (fig. 4), Smith pursues color as a complex set of tonal variations. There is no confusing this sculpture—its gold-tinged totem head, crisp linear torso, or dark tripodlike legs—with its surroundings. Yet the photograph structures a comparison of a range of differences. Even the work itself tabulates white as a set of shifting signs. Look, for instance, at the white plane, the sculpture's central rectangular shape; its lower edge is mixed with grey, the purity of flat-white mixed with vertical streaks. Or consider the sculpture's head, itself a meditation on color variation. Here, white is interspersed with a gold-toned yellow, the tactility of its application clearly visible. These versions of white are compared with others: the gray white of snow mixed with gravel; the bright, yellow white of snow reflecting sun; the blue white of snow seen in shadow; the pale, blue-tinged white hovering just above the horizon; the creamy

Figure 4
David Smith (American, 1906–1965), *Tanktotem IX,* 1960, in Snow, Bolton Landing, New York. Color transparency, 5.7 × 5.7 cm (2¼ × 2¼ in.). © Estate of David Smith/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Photo: David Smith

white of birch bark. Each of these versions of a single color is made to appear in the image's frame, showing white to be multiple and dispersed. Here, color is not posed as a stable and absolute term. Instead, it is fragmented and unknown, subject to a range of shifting and contingent factors. We cannot point to one object or surface and name it *white*. Whiteness is instead composed from localized reflections and illuminated surfaces.

In the photograph of *Tanktotem IX,* Smith stages a phenomenology of color that he had pursued in writing. In 1953, he analogized what it meant to visually encounter his sculpture in a description of perceiving the color black. Both experiences provoke a process of abstract association:

> Let me pose a question to black. Is it white? Is it day or night? Good or evil? Positive or negative? Is it life or death? Is it the superficial scientific explanation about the absence of light? Is it a solid wall or is it space? Is it pain, a man, a father? Or does black mean nothing? Did it come out blank having been censored out by some unknown or unrecognizable association? There is no one answer. Black is no one thing. It is many things. The answer depends upon individual reaction. The importance of black depends upon the conviction and the artistic projection of black, the mythopoetic view, the myth of black, not the scientific theory or dictionary explanation or the philosopher's account of black. Black, as a word, or as an image recall, flashed in the mind as a dream, too fast for any rational word record.[41]

Smith enlists the concept of black only to break it down into a set of unstable, conflicting associations. As a color and a term, it cannot be pinned down to any single linguistic, scientific, or philosophical identity. Rather, it subsists through cultural imagery—what Smith termed the "mythopoetic view" of black—and through individual projection, through conscious and unconscious meanings. Color here is not universal or absolute. It is not the prefabricated color of a chart or grid. Instead, it is constituted locally and phenomenally, through Smith's individual handmade act of painting and through specific acts of viewing.

In the *Tanktotem IX* photograph, Smith pictorializes color, which is to say he envisions it as part of a contingent field of relative associations. In his 1961 account, O'Hara described a similar process of viewing color in Smith's sculptures, involving an aesthetic of culmination and not examination: "The eye travel[s] over the complicated surface exhaustively, rather than . . . settl[ing] on the whole first and then explor[ing] details."[42] O'Hara's account seeks to differentiate Smith's painted sculptures from their constructivist predecessors, but his terms also apply to the sculptor's photographs. In them, Smith staged a slow, exhaustive comparison between hues resulting in color's destabilization. The process involves a thorough layering of terms, not allowing any single, relative color to stand in for the whole.

In a view of *Tanktotem X* (fig. 5), taken during the summer, Smith positioned the sculpture in a garden patch. His photograph did not use a low vantage point, but framed the sculpture from a frontal vantage point, so that it appears nestled within its setting. The sculpture, however, seems oddly located, and the contrast between the sculpture and its surroundings is striking. As the eye moves between registers of space, color works to connect and juxtapose the sculpture and its garden scene. Compare, for instance, the textured, red crescent shape of *Tanktotem X* with the red and pink gladiolas in the background, or the dark blue

Figure 5
David Smith (American, 1906–1965),
Tanktotem X, 1960, Bolton Landing, New
York. Color transparency, 5.7 × 5.7 cm (2¼ ×
2¼ in.). © Estate of David Smith/Licensed by
VAGA, New York, NY. Photo: David Smith

and white central shape with the green swell of vegetables. The image envisioned
here is one of connection and disconnection, belonging and nonbelonging.
Sculpture is proposed as an organic extension of the garden, but that connection
is ultimately refused. These painted abstract shapes—with their rough and tactile
surfaces—cannot be made to comply with sprawling vines and arching gladiolas.
In the photograph, such fantasies of sculpture's abstraction from landscape
depend upon the search for, and comparison of, colors.

* * * * *

In 1967 Caro wrote to Greenberg to relay his turn away from polychrome: "I
have not quite got the color thing right and I'm leaving a lot of them in polished
steel uncolored."[43] In the subsequent years, Greenberg would alter five of Smith's
sculptures, returning them to the raw, uncolored state the critic preferred. But
Smith's photographs offer an alternative story for color's supposed failure.
Color, in Smith's pictorial model, was not transcendent of matter, but deeply
tied to it. It does not render form weightless, but rather mobilizes it as contin-
gent and changing, shifting and unstable. To invoke Smith's phrase, it is "no one
thing." Seen in a photograph, color is reflective of light and space. It connects
sculpture to and distances it from the phenomenal world, sparking an unset-
tling, searching response.

Notes

1 For an assessment of Smith's photography as it relates to his sculpture, see my *David Smith in Two Dimensions: Sculpture, Photography and Space* (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming). This essay is excerpted from the book's third chapter.

2 David Smith, "Sculpture; Art Forms in Architecture," in *David Smith,* ed. Garnett McCoy (New York: Praeger, 1973), p. 46.

3 Ibid., pp. 46–47.

4 Clement Greenberg, "Letter to David Smith" (May 17, 1961), David Smith Papers, Estate of David Smith, New York.

5 Greenberg, "'American-Type' Painting" (1955 and 1958), in *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 208.

6 Greenberg, "David Smith's New Sculpture" (1964), in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism,* ed. J. O'Brian, 4 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986–93), vol. 4, p. 191.

7 Greenberg, "Letter to David Smith" (November 4, 1951), in Sketchbook 40, David Smith Papers, Estate of David Smith, New York.

8 All five have been restored to Smith's original brushed-white enamel surface.

9 According to Rosalind Krauss's "Changing the Work of David Smith," these sculptures were altered as follows: *Circle and Box* (1963), *Untitled* (1963), *Oval Node I* (1963), *Lunar Arc* (1961), and *Primo Piano III* (1962) had been sandblasted or ground and their newly rust-colored steel surfaces then varnished glossily; *Rebecca Circle* (1961) had been allowed to weather so that its paint deteriorated and uneven streaks of rust took over; and *Wagon II* (1962) and *Voltri 18* (1962) had been stripped and repainted rust brown. See Rosalind Krauss, "Changing the Work of David Smith," *Art in America* 62, no. 5 (September–October 1974), pp. 30–33.

10 Ibid., p. 32.

11 In a 1978 reply to Clement Greenberg, Krauss wrote, "At the time of Smith's death, eight of his large-scale sculptures were left in a condition that is assumed to be unfinished, since they were covered with a solid coat of white paint. Had the artist lived, this condition might have been modified in some way now impossible to determine. Judging, however, from finished examples of Smith's sculpture, the options range from one solid color, to black planes contrasted with white ones, to a more elaborate kind of polychromy." See Rosalind Krauss, "Rosalind Krauss Replies," *Art in America* 66, no. 2 (March–April 1978), p. 5. According to Peter Stevens, Director, Estate of David Smith, Smith painted several works white with the intention of leaving them white. These include *Untitled,* 1955, where the final coat of white was an oxide primer. Interview with Peter Stevens by the author, November 27, 2007. Irving Sandler also remembered Smith finishing his works in white paint. In 1999, Sandler wrote, "[Smith] pointed to an all-white piece and remarked that he had put seventeen coats of white on it before he got the color right." Irving Sandler, "David Smith, A Memoir," in Candida Smith, *The Fields of David Smith* (Mountainville, N.Y., 1999), p. 50.

12 In a 1965 description of his painting process, Smith said, "First the iron is ground down so that it is raw, and it is primed with about fifteen coats of epoxy primer, and then a few coats of zinc . . . and then a few coats of white—and then the color is put on—after that; so it runs about twenty-five or thirty coats. . . ." Smith, in Gene Baro, "Some Late Words from David Smith," *Art International* 9, no. 7 (October 1965), p. 49.

13 Smith himself addressed the role of white in his *Primo Piano* series in a May 12, 1965, Bennington College lecture: "Here is a sculpture—this group is called Primo Piano, only because on the first floor nothing happens—whatever takes place is on the second floor—and this has been primed and is painted white, and I put it out three years ago, and I should have painted it with colors before this, but I have been doing other things, and I hope to finish it this summer." Smith, in Baro, "Some Late Words from David Smith," p. 49. For further discussion of the role of white as a blank slate for color in the *Primo Piano* series, see Rosalind Krauss, *The Sculpture of David Smith: A Catalogue Raisonné* (New York: Garland, 1977), p. 100. For a report on the layers of primer and top coats used in Smith's *Zig V* (1961) see Albert Marshall, "A Study of the Surfaces of David Smith's Sculpture," *Conservation Research 1995* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery, 1995), pp. 97–99. According to Peter Stevens, Director, Estate of David Smith, Smith also used red primer (interview with Peter Stevens by the author, November 27, 2007).

14 Beverly Pepper, "Letter," *Art in America* 63, no. 2 (March–April, 1975), p. 136.

15 Greenberg, "David Smith's New Sculpture" (1964), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, p. 192.

16 Greenberg wrote of *Helmholtzian Landscape,* "This is one sculpture of Smith's in which applied color is completely successful." Greenberg, "Draft of David Smith Comments 1966," Clement Greenberg Papers, Getty Research Institute [unpaginated]. In an unpublished 1991 interview with Rubenfeld, Greenberg repeated this claim, "Smith did one good color piece, the Helmholtz one. It was always provisional, his color." See Florence Rubenfeld, *Clement Greenberg: A Life* (New York: Scribner, 1997), p. 30.

17 Greenberg, "Draft of David Smith Comments 1966," Clement Greenberg Papers, Getty Research Institute [unpaginated].

18 Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time" (1958), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, p. 60.

19 Ibid, p. 59.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Greenberg, "Contemporary Sculpture: Anthony Caro" (1965), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, p. 207.

23 Greenberg, "David Smith's New Sculpture" (1964), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, p. 191.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Greenberg, "The New Sculpture" (1949), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 2, p. 319.

27 Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 1, p. 12.

28 See Florence Rubenfeld, "Icarus in the Art World," in *Clement Greenberg: A Life,* pp. 19–30.

29 See Albert Marshall, "A Study of the Surfaces of David Smith's Sculpture" in *Conservation Research 1995.*

30 A 1998 Gagosian Gallery exhibition foregrounded Smith's painted sculpture in *Painted Steel: The Late Work of David Smith* (New York: Gagosian Gallery, 1998). The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's 2006 retrospective of Smith's sculpture presented a large percentage of works from the 1940s, many of which were painted. However, the show did not display Smith's 1960s painted sculptures.

31 According to Caro, Greenberg told him, "If you want to change your art, change your habits." See Ian Barker, *Anthony Caro: Quest for the New Sculpture* (Aldershot, Hampshire, U.K.: Lund Humphries, 2004), p. 84.

32 Ibid., p. 88.

33 This is Caro's phrase. See "Manuscript of Caro's tribute to Smith," reproduced in Barker, *Anthony Caro,* p. 145.

34 Barker, *Anthony Caro,* p. 97.

35 Kenneth Noland, "Letter to Anthony Caro July 1964" in Barker, *Anthony Caro,* p. 132.

36 "Chamberlain is the only sculptor really using color, the full range, not just metallic shades; his color is as particular, complex and structural as any good painter's." Donald Judd, "In the Galleries," in Donald Judd, *Complete Writings, 1959-1975* (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975), p. 46.

37 "Anthony Caro's Work: A Symposium by Four Sculptors," *Studio International* 177, no. 4 (January 1969), p. 14.

38 Smith, "Interview with Marian Horosko" (October 25, 1964), unpaginated transcript, Archives of American Art, Washington, D.C.

39 According to Michael Fried, Caro did not photograph his own work, but relied on other photographers. Conversation with the author, October 10, 2010.

40 Frank O'Hara, "David Smith: The Color of Steel," *Art News* 60 (December 1961), pp. 32–34.

41 Smith, "Lecture, Fayetteville, Arkansas" (April 1953), Manuscript Archives, The Estate of David Smith, New York.

42 O'Hara, "David Smith: The Color of Steel," p. 69.

43 Anthony Caro, "Letter to Clement Greenberg," (January 10, 1967), in Barker, *Anthony Caro,* p. 167.

Tactility or Opticality, Henry Moore or David Smith:
Herbert Read and Clement Greenberg on *The Art of Sculpture,* 1956

David J. Getsy

Writing for an American audience in *The New York Times Book Review* just before Thanksgiving in November 1956, the prominent critic Clement Greenberg lashed out at Herbert Read. The occasion for this attack was Read's 1956 book *The Art of Sculpture* (fig. 1).[1] Greenberg quipped: "Sir Herbert has already betrayed his discomfort with painting; now he betrays it with sculpture."[2]

Late in 1953, Read had traveled to the United States to teach for seven months at Harvard University, and to give the Mellon lectures at the National Gallery of Art in the Spring of 1954.[3] These lectures were published two years later as *The Art of Sculpture.* In them, Read put forth a wide-ranging history and theory of sculpture that spanned the gamut of human culture from the prehistoric era to contemporary art. Read had often concerned himself with sculpture,[4] but in this book he set out to establish a systematic and prescriptive theory of the medium. That is, he argued for a core set of evaluative aesthetic criteria that would apply equally to world sculpture.

It was, perhaps, this ambition that incited the wrath of Greenberg. His review was biting and at times petty, but its bile was a direct response to Read's own aspirations with the book. Read did not let Greenberg's review pass unremarked, and the two luminaries would continue to slight each other throughout the next decade. What follows examines the central art-theoretical issue at stake in the Read–Greenberg scuffle, that is, Read's emphasis on tactility versus Greenberg's on opticality. The discussion will focus on Henry Moore and David Smith, the favoured sculptors exemplifying Read and Greenberg's respective views. It becomes clear that the exchange between Read and Greenberg was more than a clash of egos or a specialists' debate. It was a contest in the battle for a public image of the emerging post-war internationalist modernism.

Read's *Art of Sculpture* argued for an aesthetics rooted in the medium's physicality. Sculpture was not just an artform to be looked at; it was meant to be *felt,* with and through one's own experience of embodiment. This was especially the case for modern sculpture, which should be understood as "a three-dimensional mass occupying space and only to be apprehended by senses that are alive to its volume and ponderability, as well as to its visual appearance."[5] Sculpture's volume and bulk, its weight and mass, and its
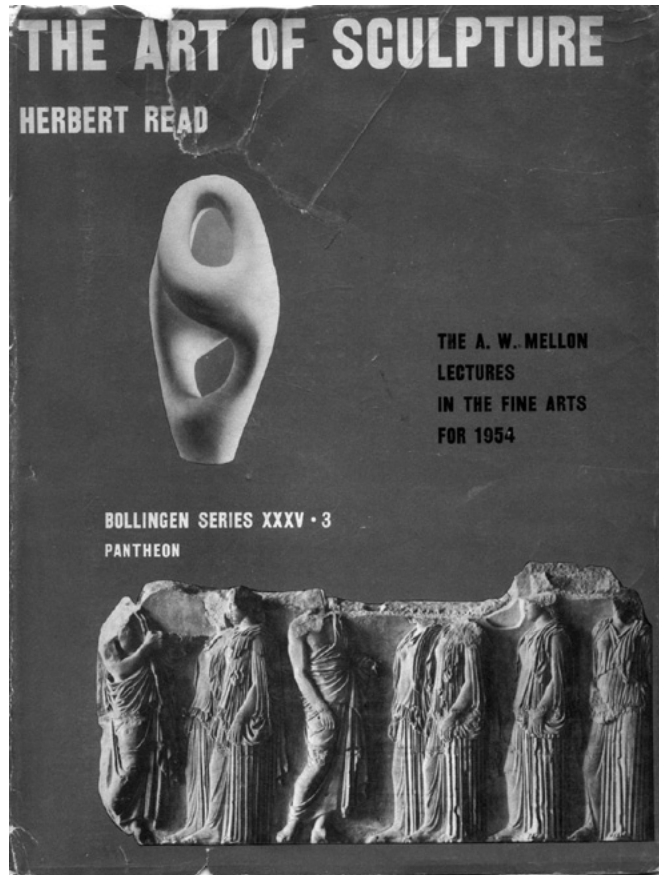
occupation of space were all taken by Read to be the essential characteristics of the medium. In so privileging these physical traits, Read attempted to counterbalance the "visual prejudice," as he called it, that corrupted post-Renaissance sculpture. While one apprehends the sculptural object primarily through vision, Read further argued that the viewer needed a sensitivity specific to physicality and weight. He wrote:

> The specifically plastic sensibility is, I believe, more complex than the specifically visual sensibility. It involves three factors: a sensation of the tactile qualities of surfaces; a sensation of volume as denoted by plane surfaces; and a synthetic realization of the mass and ponderability of the object.[6]

The term "ponderability" is crucial in this account. In thinking about a sculpture, we assess its weight and mass rather than merely treating it as a three-dimensional image. Even if we merely contemplate the object, we must take its physicality into account.[7] Illusionistic sculpture in the post-Renaissance tradition, Read implied, sought to efface or to overcome materiality and physicality, and throughout the *Art of Sculpture* the figurative traditions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in particular, are subject to his frequent scorn for this reason.

In his account Read displaced the visual with the tactile and offered a new history of sculpture that brought together Western and non-Western examples under one umbrella. Drawn from, among others, prehistoric, Archaic, pre-

Columbian, medieval, and modern sculpture, all of Read's defining examples manifested his central criterion: that sculpture should be considered "art of *palpation*—an art that gives satisfaction in the touching and handling of objects."[8]

By definition, Read's book tackled the specificity of the medium. From the Renaissance *paragone* to Lessing's *Laokoon* to modernist art criticism, the distinct provinces of the arts have been a source of debate. No one in the twentieth century has been so identified with medium specificity as has Greenberg. His seminal essay of 1940, "Towards a Newer Laocoon," put this concept at the foundation of modernist art and criticism.[9] This commitment continued throughout his writings and served as the basis for his defence of abstract painting. Just a few months before Read's lectures, Greenberg had reiterated this position once again as the very basis for aesthetic value in art, saying that the "extension of the possibilities of the medium is an integral factor of the exaltation to be gotten from art, in the past as now."[10]

For Read to say, as he did in the passage cited above, that the plastic sensibility, and by extension the medium of sculpture, was "*more complex*" than visual sensibility was tantamount to an attack on those axioms Greenberg held dear. For him, it was above all visuality that was the most compelling issue for contemporary art. No doubt, Greenberg understood Read's book as the challenge it was, on his own terms, to his aesthetics, his view of contemporary art, and his position in art criticism in the 1950s.

Greenberg did not care for Read's version of modern art and was particularly suspicious of the psychological and social agency the latter gave to artistic production.[11] Beyond their differing methods and theoretical frames, Greenberg especially took offence at what he saw as Read's misreading and dismissal of abstract expressionism, which Greenberg championed as both quintessentially modern and American. In 1955, just a year before the publication of *The Art of Sculpture* and Greenberg's review, Read had written a critical appraisal of the international trend toward gestural abstraction he saw emanating from Pollock's example. The "blotchers," as he called Pollock and his followers, created painting that was "a reflex activity, completely devoid of mental effort, of intellection."[12] He continued:

> Some people see ghosts, or receive telepathic messages: others do not. Some people, in the same way, respond to a vaguely suggestive mass of paint. We may envy them, but at the same time suspect that the experience has nothing to do with art.[13]

This negative characterization of abstract expressionism festered and coloured Greenberg's opinion of Read and of British criticism and art. In 1962 Greenberg had still not forgotten Read's 1955 essay and cited it in a polemical piece entitled "How Art Writing Earns Its Bad Name," that, in turn, spurred another mêlée between the two critics.[14] When Greenberg said that Read "betrayed his discomfort with painting" in his review of *The Art of Sculpture,* he undoubtedly had that 1955 critique of abstract expressionism in mind.

Surveying Greenberg's writings in the 1940s and 50s, it becomes clear that he reserved a special disdain for things British, especially sculpture.[15] He often voiced his suspicion of British art criticism as a whole and, at various times, attacked others such as David Sylvester, Douglas Cooper, and Lawrence Alloway.[16] As part and parcel of his defence of the vigour of American art, he denigrated those critics and their competing voices, always remembering to remind his

readers of their nationality. His unflinching use of "Sir Herbert" to refer to Read was a means of signaling his target's Britishness for an American readership and casting a shadow of dilettantism and preciosity. The most internationally visible and successful postwar British art was sculpture, and Greenberg increasingly targeted it in the 1950s. In reaction to Henry Moore's burgeoning international popularity and the ascendancy of the so-called Geometry of Fear sculptors, both of which were closely identified with Read, Greenberg's writings of these years were riddled with attacks major and minor on British sculpture.[17]

It should be recognized that it was sculpture that was of increasing concern to Greenberg, beginning in the late 1940s when he had begun supporting David Smith as the counterpart to the abstract expressionist painters. He equated Smith's importance with Jackson Pollock's, saying that Smith was "the only other American artist of our time who produces an art capable of withstanding the test of international scrutiny and which . . . might justify the term major."[18] Greenberg's view of the history of sculpture was simple, and it culminated in Smith. In short, Auguste Rodin had revived the medium while simultaneously infecting it with pictorial effects. The subsequent generation reacted with an ever-greater simplification of sculptural form toward the unitary and monolithic—the "roundness" of his review entitled "Roundness Isn't All." Greenberg argued that Constantin Brancusi provided the quietus of this trajectory with his ovoids. Concurrently, Cubism, collage, and the constructions of Pablo Picasso initiated new parameters for sculpture in which solidity was fragmented. This led to an increasingly vibrant incorporation of space into sculpture as it became open, linear and ultimately more optical. Smith's welded work was heir to this new tradition.[19] In contrast to Read's preference for sculpture that was carved and biomorphic, Greenberg advocated the combined and the linear. He saw sculpture of the kind produced by Smith, and later Anthony Caro, as paradigmatically modernist. In 1958 he nominated it as exemplary even as he admitted the paucity of examples: "the new construction-sculpture begins to make itself felt as most *representative,* even if not the most fertile, visual art of our time."[20]

Such construction-sculpture, as we will see, had second-class status in Read's 1956 analysis, which forthrightly placed Moore at its centre (fig. 2).[21] This attitude was readily apparent to any reader of *The Art of Sculpture,* and to counter this prejudice Greenberg ridiculed Read's emphasis on touching and tactility. He reduced Read's theoretical model to a simple question of handling works of art, ignoring the larger aims of the book almost entirely. Greenberg wrote:

> I doubt whether he realizes what he is saying. Of all the works of sculpture that have moved us, there are very, very few that have not provided their decisive satisfaction through the eyes. I have heard of no one who let his pleasure in a piece of sculpture wait upon his handling of it, and of very few who have succeeded in actually touching most of the pieces they admire.[22]

Granted, there are moments in Read's book that open themselves up to such reductivist critiques. There is, in particular, one unfortunate point in *The Art of Sculpture* where Read states: "Ideally each reader of this volume should be provided, at this stage, with a piece of sculpture to hug, cuddle, fondle—primitive verbs that indicate a desire to treat an object with plastic sensibility."[23] Even in this quote, however, one gets a sense of the way that touch and tactility
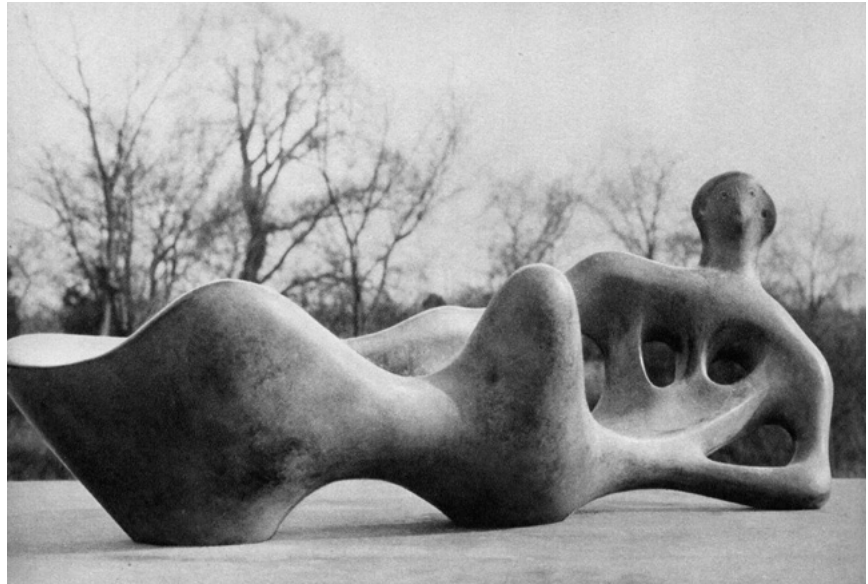
have a metaphoric level that Read stressed throughout his analysis, and it is this level that Greenberg chose to ignore.

Tactility is the central concern of Read's view of sculpture, and it is a theme that is inextricable from his understanding of the medium.[24] This view of sculpture he undoubtedly developed out of his close relationship with Henry Moore. Moore's concern with such concepts as direct carving and the integrity of materials privileged a view of sculptural activity and aesthetics rooted in the tactile. Nowhere is this more clearly stated than in his widely quoted statement "The Sculptor Speaks" of 1937, in which Moore said:

> This is what the sculptor must do. He must strive continually to think of, and use, form in its full spatial completeness. He gets the solid shape, as it were, inside his head – he thinks of it, whatever its size, as if he were holding it completely enclosed in the hollow of his hand. He mentally visualizes a complex form from all round itself; he knows while he looks at one side what the other side is like; he identifies himself with its centre of gravity, its mass, its weight; he realises its volume, as the space that the shape displaces in the air.[25]

This quote makes clear the extent to which a tactile response—even if imagined or virtual—overlapped and interlaced with the predominantly visual aspects of aesthetic appreciation and comprehension for Moore. Read took up this imbrication of embodied tactile response and visuality in his own aesthetics of sculpture, and it is no coincidence that he quoted this very statement from Moore on the first page of *The Art of Sculpture.* With this quote, Read positioned Moore unabashedly as the apotheosis of sculpture, a message that was clear to any who read the book. Greenberg sneered that "[Read] seems to believe in the sculptor Henry Moore as he believes in no painter living or dead."[26]

The concept of tactility borrowed from Moore was not, as Greenberg hoped to imply, merely limited to actual touching and fondling of works of art. It was, for Read, a complex perceptual affair in which the visual aspects of form were coordinated with a relative sense of the object's physical traits such as

weight, volume, and mass. He traced a dialectical history in which the tradition of the large-scale public monument and the small, hand-held amulet were the two archetypal origins for freestanding sculpture. The amulet's portability and manipulability provided the catalyst for sculpture's independence from architecture and initiated the realization of sculptural form as truly three-dimensional. Modern sculpture in the form of Moore found a synthesis between the grandeur and civic function of the monument and the intimacy of the touchable amulet. In this schema, a sense of scale and physical relationship was crucial, and the concept of tactile values provided Read with the synthesis of these fundamentals.

Both the making and viewing of sculpture, Read argued, could not be divorced from the sense and experience of physicality and embodiment. He illustrated this concept by reproducing a sculpture made by a congenitally blind teenager (fig. 3). Having never had the ability to see another person, the young artist's image of the human form was built up entirely of bodily experiences. Read explained:

Figure 3
Herbert Read, *The Art of Sculpture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956), plate 36a, Figure, Belgian Congo (Waregga tribe). Wood, H: 23.5 cm (9¼ in.). Plate 36b, Youth Imploring. Clay. Reproduced by permission from Princeton University Press

36a. Figure. Belgian Congo (Waregga tribe). Wood. H. 9¼ in.

36b. Youth Imploring. Modeled in clay by a congenitally blind youth of 17. XX century
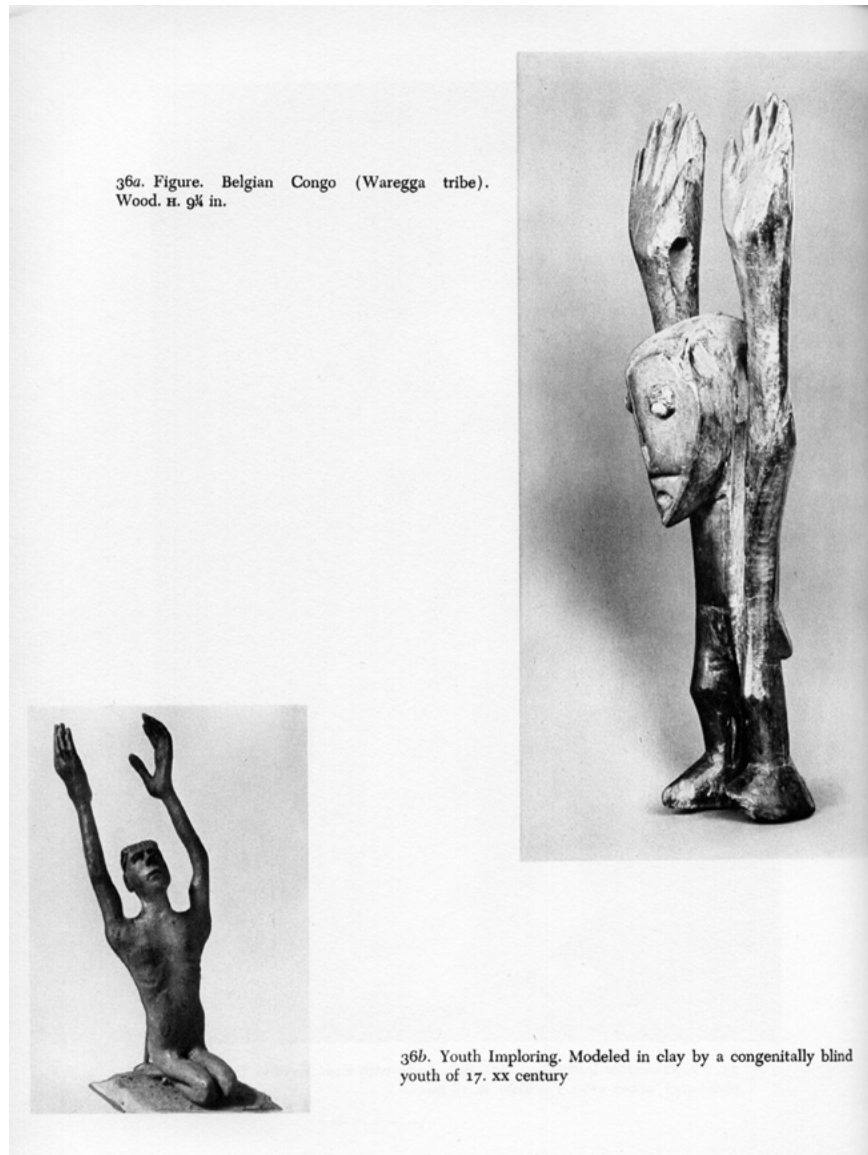
> The general form of the sculpture is built up from a multitude of tactile impressions; the features that seem to our normal vision to be exaggerated or distorted proceed from inner bodily sensations, an awareness of muscular tensions and reflexive movements. This kind of sensibility has been called *haptic*.[27]

In this small sculpture of an imploring youth, the upper extremities are exaggerated and expanded, and we can imagine the figure's mental focus on the act of reaching to the heavens to be literalized in the hands. The blind teenager visualized what it feels like to make this imploring gesture, not what it looks like to others. The feet, by contrast, are ridiculously understated, Read concluded, because the pose and subject matter require relatively little of the bodily attention which is, instead, concentrated in the reaching hands.

The blind teenager in Read's account served as confirmation that the haptic sensibility—one's accumulated experience of embodiment and bodiliness—proceeds independently of vision. It illustrated, for him, the fundamental sense that we bring to the sculptural encounter. When a sighted person came to view a sculpture, he argued, the comprehension of the object's physicality was no less directly related to one's experiences of one's own body. In this manner, Read attempted to counter what he saw as the visual prejudice infecting many conceptions of sculptural aesthetics. Sculpture was most effective and true when it activated this haptic sensibility. It did so through a stimulation of touching and tactility, even if this remained an imaginary or virtual potential (fig. 4). That is, touching and tactility provided the most direct interface between the exterior world and one's own embodiment. The activation of this interface is what differentiated sculpture from the pictorial arts. He stated:

> sculpture is primarily an art of "touch-space"—is always and should have been—whereas painting is primarily an art of "sight-space"; and that in both arts most of the confusion between theory and practice is due to the neglect of this distinction.[28]

He then proceeded to distance his own theory from Bernard Berenson's concept of the "tactile imagination," which Read characterized as solely the representation of three dimensions in painting. He contended:

> For the sculptor, tactile values are not an illusion to be created on a two-dimensional plane: they constitute a reality to be conveyed directly, an existent mass. Sculpture is an art of *palpation*—an art that gives satisfaction in the touching and handling of objects. That, indeed, is the only way in which we can have direct sensation of the three-dimensional shape of an object. It is only as our hands move over an object and trace lines of direction that we get any physical sensation of the difference between a sphere and a square; touch is essential to the perception of subtler contrasts of shape and texture.[29]

In this manifesto for sculpture, it is important to note that Read did not necessarily argue that the viewer must touch the sculpture in order to appreciate it, as Greenberg would have us believe. Rather, it was the aggregate experience of tactility that provides us with an ability to assess ponderability and the nonvisual traits of any object. Our haptic sensibility and our sense of the physical

Figure 4
Herbert Read, *The Art of Sculpture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956), plate 224a, rock sculpture, Chinese, date uncertain. L: 61 cm (24 in.). Plate 224b, Henry Moore, detail from a reclining figure, 1951. Bronze. Time-Life Building, London. Reproduced by permission from Princeton University Press and The Henry Moore Foundation
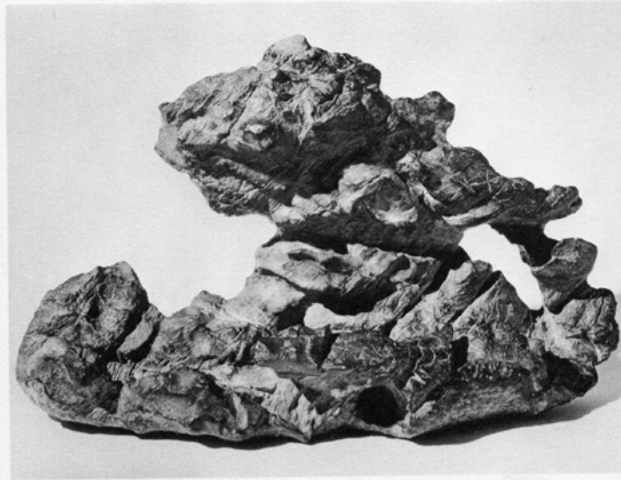
224a. Rock sculpture. Chinese, date uncertain. L. 24 in.
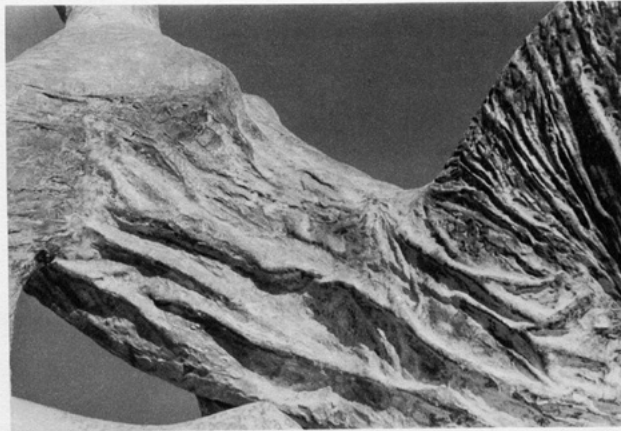
224b. HENRY MOORE. Detail from a reclining figure. 1951. Bronze.

environment are both closely tied to our own ever-developing repertoire of tactile and physical experiences. This was the basis for an appreciation of sculpture for Read, and it was decidedly un-optical.

Opticality, by contrast, occupied a central and defining position at the heart of Greenberg's aesthetics.[30] Just as he argued that artistic media should strive to isolate what is essential and proper to them, so too did he contend that the viewer's encounter with the object was primarily and properly a visual engagement. He had little sympathy for the bodily sensations and sensibilities that Read discussed. In his review of Read's book, he wrote, "Sculpture does invoke the sense of touch—as well as our sense of space in general—but it does so primarily through the sense of sight and the tactile associations of which that sense is capable."[31] Greenberg reacted strongly against Read's attack on visuality, and he made certain to reassert the primacy of the optical throughout his review.

The Greenbergian concept of opticality is most often identified with his essay "Modernist Painting" but it is first put forcefully into play in his discus-

sions of sculpture of the preceding years.[32] Greenberg believed that sculpture must strive to overcome its obdurate objecthood in order to offer a compelling visual experience. In direct contrast to Read, Greenberg argued that the most important modernist sculpture transcended its materiality to offer a purely visual experience. It had the potential to provide, in this regard, an optical encounter superior to that of painting and its inherent illusionism. A painting—because of its flat surface and conventionally rectangular shape—always carried with it the potential for the depiction of depth, figure–ground relationships, and spatial illusionism. As he famously said:

> The flatness towards which Modernist painting orients itself can never be an absolute flatness . . . The first mark made on a canvas destroys its literal and utter flatness, and the result of the marks made on it . . . is still a kind of illusion that suggests a kind of third dimension.[33]

By contrast, sculpture did not necessarily struggle with the pull of pictorial illusion. The figure–ground relationship that immediately suggests depth in a pictorial field does not concern the freestanding statue, the background of which is the space shared by the viewer.

This potential of sculpture to create a complex visual experience of form worked best for Greenberg when actual space was incorporated into the work. He was not, however, thinking about the sculpture of an artist like Moore or Hepworth, despite the latter's reputation for piercing the monolith. In Greenberg's view, true modernist sculpture left behind the solidity and roundness that Brancusi perfected. For him, Moore was an anachronism. The new way had been opened by Picasso with collage and construction, and culminated in Julio González "drawing in space" and, ultimately, David Smith (fig. 5).[34] In effect, Greenberg's polemical history of modernist sculpture assumed an evolutionary leap comparable to a change of species. From this perspective, he could never see Moore's carvings and figures as anything more than Neanderthal.

Welded and constructed sculpture was superior, for Greenberg, because it had the potential to be linear and graphic, to repudiate solidity, and consequently to incorporate actual space. Not all that was welded or iron would necessary take advantage of these potential traits, and Greenberg wrote against sculptors, such as the Geometry of Fear sculptors, who did not explore opticality as the primary aim of constructed sculpture.[35] In the work of which he approved and of which Smith was the central practitioner, "space is there to be shaped, divided, enclosed, but not to be filled or sealed in. The new sculpture tends to abandon stone, bronze, and clay for industrial materials."[36] Already in 1948, he had argued: "What is of the essence is that the construction is no longer a statue, but rather a *picture* in three-dimensional space, and that the sculptor in the round is liberated from the necessity of observing the habits of gravity and mass."[37] With this privileging of sculpture's immateriality in mind, it is easy to see from where his utter disdain for Read's antithetical beliefs derived. Opticality and constructed sculpture were defined in relation to each other, and together became a determining theme in Greenberg's aesthetics. Despite his overriding enthusiasm for painting, it was again sculpture that provided the test case in his system.

Writing a decade later in 1958, Greenberg summed up this interconnection between modernist sculpture and opticality:

Figure 5
David Smith (American, 1906–1965), *Baron's Moon,* 1958. Steel and paint, 85.1 × 52.1 × 16.5 cm (33½ × 20½ × 6½ in.). Gift of Mrs. Morton G. Schamberg, 1992.99. The Art Institute of Chicago. © Estate of David Smith/ Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Photo © The Art Institute of Chicago

Under the modernist "reduction" sculpture has turned out to be almost as exclusively visual in its essence as painting itself. It has been "liberated" from the monolithic as much because of the latter's excessive tactile associations, which partake of illusion, as because of the hampering conventions that cling to it. But sculpture is still permitted a greater latitude of figurative allusiveness than painting because it remains tied, inexorably, to the third dimension and is therefore inherently less illusionistic. The literalness that was once its handicap has now become its advantage.[38]

Notably, Greenberg remembered to include a brief dismissal of the tactile in this praise of construction-sculpture as the fulfilment of modernist aesthetics. It is highly unlikely he would have included this mention of the tactile without at least a partial reference to Read in mind. Any doubt is dispelled by the subsequent pages in which he repeatedly attacked the haptic and enshrined the optical. He continued: "The human body is no longer postulated as the agent of space in either pictorial or sculptural art; now it is eyesight alone, and eyesight has more freedom of movement and invention within three dimensions than within two."[39] For Greenberg, the eye was paramount, and construction-sculpture presented the paradigmatic experience of opticality.

The contrast could not be more striking when Read wrote about the visual:

It is a false simplification to base the various arts on any one sensation, for what actually takes place, in any given experience, is a

chain reaction or *Gestaltkreis* in which one sensation touches off and involves other sensations, either by memory association or by actual sensory motor connections. An art owes its particularity to the emphasis or preference given to any one organ of sensation. If sculpture has any such particularity, it is to be distinguished from painting as the plastic art that gives preference to tactile sensations as *against visual sensations,* and it is precisely when this preference is clearly stated that sculpture attains its highest and its unique aesthetic values.[40]

Herein lies the source of Greenberg's objection. There is no "tactile sensation" not mediated through the optical. In his review, he wrote of "sculpture's dependence upon the association of virtual tactility with actual visibility,"[41] clearly seeing tactility as superfluous to sculpture's aesthetic potential. He was correct to note Read's somewhat indefensible denigration of the visual in preference for the haptic, but Greenberg pursues this point to the extreme opposite position, arguing that matter and touch are of little importance. Read published his *A Concise History of Modern Sculpture* in 1964, in which he made an implicit reply to Greenberg's critique. He wrote: "The inner truth of growth and form is revealed to touch rather than to sight; touch at least has the sensational priority, and if it is objected that the spectator does not normally apprehend sculpture by this means, it is the spectator's loss."[42]

There is little to be gained by adjudicating this match. Both Read and Greenberg took their judgments about the primacy of the tactile or the optical as axiomatic, and both entrenched themselves in partisan and teleological accounts of sculpture. The underlying concern for both was to write a history of sculpture that justified their favoured artists—Moore or Smith—making them appear as if they were the necessary and logical conclusion to the evolution of modern art. The debate about sculptural aesthetics was, in other words, also a debate about who was the exemplary modernist sculptor.

Read's advocacy for Moore was clear. By transforming Moore's emphasis on tactile imagination into the core value for sculpture, Read implied that the sculptor's technique and works could be nothing less than the fulfilment of sculpture's essence. In the concluding pages of *The Art of Sculpture,* Read offered a list of exemplary works from the great epochs of sculpture; Moore's work is the only post-Renaissance sculpture in his pantheon.[43] Read's book did more than merely praise Moore, however. It also took aim at the linear construction-sculpture that was so dear to Greenberg. For Read, this work was, simply put, not sculpture, even though he admitted that it could still be viable as art. He wrote of the tendency toward the constructed, assembled, and graphic:

> The temptation is to go further than this and to create . . . objects with linear outlines that define space but do not occupy it. At this point, as I suggested, a new art is born: a negative sculpture, a sculpture that denies the basic elements of the art of sculpture as we have hitherto conceived it, a sculpture that rejects all the attributes of palpable mass. I do not deny that an art of great possibilities is conceivable in this direction, but technically it would be classified in any museum not as sculpture but as wrought ironwork. It is an art that in the past was not despised.[44]

This passage is polite and cool but nevertheless damning. One imagines when reading this page of Read's book that he had the galleries of the Victoria and Albert Museum in mind. In the future, Moore would be centre stage in the sculpture court, and Smith would be exiled to the upstairs mezzanine among the gates and grilles. Smith and his ilk, Read had no hesitation saying, not only did not produce sculpture but furthermore represented an evolutionary regression in his modernist teleology. If Greenberg saw Moore as outdated in what he once called his "archaic artiness,"[45] then Read understood the optical focus of a sculptor such as Smith as no less backward and anachronistic. Rather than modern, Read wrote, "I am inclined to see in linear sculpture a return to the visual prejudices of the Renaissance or perhaps to the surface dynamism of the Middle Ages."[46] He later characterized this heritage of visual prejudice as mere "mannerism in modern sculpture."[47]

Read's arguments about construction-sculpture were fraught with contradictions and complexities. He had earlier been an advocate of the Geometry of Fear sculptors, many of whom he had, at that time, classed among those working in constructive techniques.[48] Read's commitments to this group were strategic in relation to his aspirations for British culture abroad. He did support these artists earlier in the 1950s, but the 1956 *Art of Sculpture* represents a reassertion of Moore's primacy as the paradigmatic modern sculptor *and* as the proper model for future developments. Read's 1964 *Concise History of Modern Sculpture* later returned to this point, subordinating again those younger sculptors he had originally supported and revising his own phrase "geometry of fear" as a useful label.[49] Beyond this shift in the mid-1950s, one can also understand Read's contradictory critique of construction-sculpture in the *Art of Sculpture* and after as a deliberate attempt to differentiate among artists who pushed welded and constructed sculpture into the linear, optical "drawing in space" that Greenberg held dear, and those who did not. None of the British practitioners of welded sculpture embraced its optical and, in Read's equation, antitactile possibilities as did Smith. In fact, many of them turned back to casting their assemblages soon thereafter.

Throughout *The Art of Sculpture,* Read positions his argument against the antithesis of true sculpture which, for him, was the denial of ponderability and tactility that construction-sculpture facilitated. A struggle for the medium of sculpture, he argued, had erupted in the course of modernism, and Moore was the paladin in his crusade with his carvings. Smith, by contrast, is largely ignored by Read throughout his writings. Smith is entirely omitted from *The Art of Sculpture* and is only mentioned twice, briefly, in his later *A Concise History of Modern Sculpture*. Moore, by contrast, has over 30 different references in the index to the latter and 16 illustrations to Smith's one. In Read's writings, Smith was most likely a casualty of the conflict with Greenberg, who was the sculptor's most vociferous supporter and who pushed an interpretation of Smith based almost solely on opticality. More fundamentally, however, Read made a concerted effort to subordinate constructed sculpture, whether Smith's linear and optical constructions or the welded or cast assemblages of British artists such as Reg Butler, Lynn Chadwick, or Geoffrey Clarke, as an ancillary avenue in contrast to the ponderability exemplified by Moore.[50] He argued "Without a doubt a crisis now exists; it will have to be resolved by a return to the tactile compactness that by definition is the distinctive attribute of sculpture."[51] In turn, the other work must be relegated to a

different category, implicitly lower in the hierarchy of media. At the close of the book he wrote:

> What I have asserted—and nothing in my aesthetic experience has ever weakened my conviction on this point – is that the art of sculpture achieves its maximum and most distinct effect when the sculptor proceeds *almost blindly* to the statement of tactile values, values of the palpable, the ponderable, the assessable mass.[52]

Read's anti-optical and pro-tactile agenda is perhaps nowhere as succinctly put as in those words "almost blindly."

Greenberg understood the challenge of Read's book, and his review of it coincided with a major article he was writing on David Smith, also published in the winter of 1956. In that article, he contrasted Smith to the current state of sculpture and the "inflated reputations" of the likes of Moore, Marino Marini, and Alberto Giacometti. More directly, he set Smith in opposition to what he ironically called the "awakening" of the Geometry of Fear sculptors with their "Cubist artiness" and "anaemic elegance." He nominated Smith without hesitation as "the best sculptor of his generation."[53] This was by no means a new position, and he had made similar laudatory claims over the past decade.[54] Read's *Art of Sculpture* presented the challenge it did not just because of the two critics' difference of opinion about sculptural aesthetics, but because it openly praised a sculptor Greenberg deplored as well as implicitly dismissed the artist Greenberg had chosen to champion.

Greenberg wanted for Smith an international reputation such as that achieved by Moore. By the mid-1950s, Moore had emerged as the quintessential public sculptor for the postwar era. His archetypal figures seemed to embody the aspirations of a generic and embracing internationalism rooted in universal humanist values. Moore was a household name. He had been supported and popularized internationally through British Council exhibitions, and he had a particularly strong presence in North America.[55] Greenberg must have been aware that in 1955 Moore had been given a major commission for the main sculpture for the new headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), effectively placing him at the centre of the United Nation's aspirations to cultural internationalism and modernism.[56] Greenberg jealously looked at Moore's international position and desired it for Smith. In the closing paragraph of his 1956 article on Smith he wrote:

> What is desirable is that [Smith's] works be more widely and publicly distributed, here and abroad, so that they can present their claims in person. And perhaps to be hoped for most of all is that he receive the kind of commission that will permit him to display that capacity for large scale, heroic, and monumental sculpture which is his more than any other artist's now alive.[57]

It was this question of public sculpture that fueled Greenberg and Read's analyses. Simply put, both understood that sculpture, more so than the other arts, has an important cultural function as the public embodiment of ideals. Sculpture's exemplarity has never been unassailable, but the medium labours under the presumption of its civic role and importance. It is significant that both Read and Greenberg allude to this unique position of sculpture, and for both public sculpture remains the ultimate guarantor of international

success and future viability. It is sculpture's very obdurate physical nature that contributes to its longevity, and the monuments of the past determine how that past is remembered. Read said as much when he argued in his book, "From time to time a civilization falls from grace, and art is destroyed by fanaticism, taxation, and war. But the monuments remain—monoliths along a path that for four hundred centuries is otherwise unmarked."[58] Read's teleological narrative positioned Moore, as the creator of archetypal images in enduring stone and bronze, as the fulfilment and ultimate manifestation of this belief.

Read later reiterated this position in a 1962 essay that reflected back on his book. Redoubling his effort to argue for a public ideal for the medium, he wrote that sculptors such as Moore:

> aim to create objects which focus and crystallize emotions that are
> not so much personal as public, and stand in relation to society, not
> as representations of the external world, much less as expressions of
> the artist's personal consciousness or feeling, but rather as catalysts
> of a collective consciousness.[59]

As both Read's and Greenberg's comments demonstrate, they argued so fervently about sculpture precisely because of its potential place in society at large. They both could not but have had in mind when writing in 1956 recent events such as the 1951–53 competition for the Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner, at the time the largest international competition for a public sculpture, or Moore's 1955 commission for the UNESCO sculpture. Greenberg knew that Smith had submitted to the American preliminary competition for the Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner but was not chosen to be among the eleven finalists exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in 1953.[60] The results of the international competition were dominated by British artists that Read, who was a member of the selection committee, had supported—one of whom, Reg Butler, was given the ultimately unrealized commission.[61]

Just a decade after the close of the Second World War, the global distribution of cultural activity was still in flux, and both Read and Greenberg had nationalist agendas they pursued with their art criticism. As the most ardent proponent of a modernism defined through American art, Greenberg saw Read's universalist account of the medium of sculpture as a challenge to his vision, to his understanding of modernist art, and most importantly to his aspirations for American cultural ascendancy on the global stage. Moore and Read represented the competition—both being the more established and accepted representatives of internationalist modernism. In this regard, the scuffle over the *Art of Sculpture* played out on a microcosmic level the larger, global battle between the two primary victor nations for the public face of modernism in the decade after the close of the Second World War.

Both Read and Greenberg understood these stakes, and the implications and motivations for the debate about tactility and opticality extended beyond a quarrel about the proper aesthetics of sculpture. Both writers were deeply committed to their own definitions of modernism, and both hoped that it was in public sculpture that their favoured artists would provide an enduring monument to their own view of modernism for the newly reconstituted postwar international community and for history.

This essay first appeared in the *Sculpture Journal,* volume 17.2 (2008).

Notes

1 H. Read, *The Art of Sculpture,* A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956).

2 C. Greenberg, "Roundness Isn't All: Review of *The Art of Sculpture* by Herbert Read," *New York Times,* November 25, 1956, pp. 62–63, reprinted in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism,* ed. J. O'Brian, 4 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986–93), vol. 3, p. 270. This was not his first dismissal of Read; see also ibid., vol. 1, p. 122, vol. 2, pp. 146–47, 287, and vol. 3, pp. 254–55.

3 Read's lectures began in March 1954. Aldous Huxley was initially scheduled to give the lectures that year but canceled due to illness. See J. King, *The Last Modern: A Life of Herbert Read* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), pp. 274–77.

4 For an overview, see T. Friedman, "Herbert Read on Sculpture," in *Herbert Read: A British Vision of World Art,* eds. B. Read and D. Thistlewood, exh. cat. (Leeds: Leeds City Art Galleries, 1993), pp. 103–18. A valuable discussion of Read's position in relation to sculpture in the 1950s can be found in R. Burstow, "The Geometry of Fear: Herbert Read and British Modern Sculpture after the Second World War," in ibid., pp. 119–32.

5 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* p. ix.

6 Ibid., p. 71.

7 Read's emphasis on the physicality of the sculptural object drew upon a central theme for the history of sculpture and, in particular, for modern sculpture in Britain since the late nineteenth century. For discussion of the renewed emphasis on sculptural physicality and its contribution to the emergence of modern sculpture in Britain see D. Getsy, *Body Doubles: Sculpture in Britain, 1877–1905* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004). For a related argument, see D. Getsy, "Privileging the Object of Sculpture: Actuality and Harry Bates's *Pandora* of 1890," *Art History* 28, no. 1 (2005), pp. 74–95. On these issues' transmission to and development by Read's contemporaries, see A. Wagner, *Mother Stone: The Vitality of Modern British Sculpture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005).

8 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* p. 49.

9 Greenberg, "Towards a Newer Laocoon" (1940), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 1, pp. 23–38.

10 Greenberg, "Symposium: Is the French Avant-Garde Overrated?" (1953), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 156.

11 See Greenberg, "Roundness Isn't All," for examples.

12 Read, "A Blot on the Scutcheon," *Encounter* 5, no. 22 (1955), p. 56. The occasion for this piece was an exhibition organized by the Congress for Cultural Freedom at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna in Rome. There were eight countries represented and a total of 44 artists and 165 paintings, but Read's critique clearly singles out Pollock, and by extension abstract expressionism.

13 Ibid., p. 57.

14 Greenberg, "How Art Writing Earns Its Bad Name" (1962), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, pp. 135–44; and Greenberg and Read, "A Critical Exchange with Herbert Read on 'How Art Writing Earns Its Bad Name'" (1963), in ibid., vol. 4, pp. 145–49.

15 See J. Hall, "Clement Greenberg on English Sculpture and Englishness," *Sculpture Journal* 4 (2000), pp. 173–77. As Hall notes, in the 1960s, the exception was his advocacy of Anthony Caro. See further R. Krauss, "How Paradigmatic Is Anthony Caro?" *Art in America* 63, no. 5 (1975), pp. 80–83.

16 In addition to those references cited above, see Greenberg, "The European View of American Art" (1950), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, pp. 59–62.

17 A clear example is Greenberg, "David Smith" (1956–57), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, pp. 275–79.

18 Greenberg, "The Present Prospects of American Painting and Sculpture" (1947), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 2, pp. 166–67.

19 This history is repeated throughout Greenberg's writings. The most direct manifestations of it can be found in his essays "Cross-Breeding of Modern Sculpture" (1952), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, pp. 107–13; "David Smith," in ibid., vol. 3, pp. 275–79;

"Sculpture in Our Time" (1958), in ibid., vol. 4, pp. 55–61; and "Intermedia," *Arts Magazine* 56, no. 2 (1981), pp. 92–93.

20 Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, p. 60. A similar claim was made in an earlier manifestation of this argument: "[T]his new 'genre' [of sculpture-construction] is perhaps the most important manifestation of the visual arts since cubist painting, and is at this moment pregnant with more excitement than any other art except music." Greenberg, "The New Sculpture" (1949), in ibid., vol. 2, p. 319.

21 There are two main exceptions: first, the younger Geometry of Fear sculptors whom Read had supported earlier in the fifties, and, second, Naum Gabo, with whom Read had a close friendship and to whom (with Moore and Hepworth) *The Art of Sculpture* is dedicated. Read himself returned to this inconsistency in a later essay: H. Read, "The Ambiguity of Modern Sculpture," in *A Letter to a Young Painter* (New York: Horizon Press, 1962), pp. 211–32. Also, in his later survey of modern sculpture, Read attempted to accommodate in one analysis the trajectories represented in his mind by Moore on the one hand and Gabo on the other, but he continued to hesitate to call the work of Gabo, Pevsner, and others "sculpture." H. Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1964), pp. 14–15, 106–8. This latter contradiction was apparent to many in Read's circle. Eileen Agar remarked, "Even [Read's] great friend Henry Moore told me that he had sleepless nights at first when he heard that Read was prepared to support Naum Gabo, whose work was so completely different that it seemed to cut at the base of what Henry stood for—solidity and form." E. Agar in collaboration with A. Lambirth, *A Look at My Life* (London: Methuen, 1998), p. 130.

22 Greenberg, "Roundness Isn't All," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 272.

23 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* p. 72.

24 I disagree with James Hall when he says that this focus is a "one-off" in "Herbert Read (1893–1968): *The Art of Sculpture,* 1954," in *The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts: Fifty Years* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, 2002), p. 38. Read continued to apply and adapt such concepts as the importance of touch and the sensation of ponderability in later works including Read, *Lynn Chadwick* (Amriswil: Bodensee-Verlag, 1958); Read, "Ambiguity of Modern Sculpture," in *Letter to a Young Painter,* and Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History.*

25 Henry Moore, "The Sculptor Speaks" (1937), in *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations,* ed. A. Wilkinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 194.

26 Greenberg, "Roundness Isn't All," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 270.

27 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* p. 30.

28 Ibid., p. 48.

29 Ibid., pp. 49–50.

30 The identification of Greenberg with the primacy of opticality is so widespread that it has led to frequent mischaracterizations of his project. For a brief assessment of this problem, see M. Fried, "An Introduction to My Art Criticism," in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 19–23. As Fried notes (p. 58 n. 5), one of the most important critiques of modernist opticality and of Greenberg is R. Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993). A thorough analysis of Greenberg and the implications of his account of opticality can be found in C. Jones, *Eyesight Alone: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the Bureaucratization of the Senses* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

31 Greenberg, "Roundness Isn't All," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 272.

32 Greenberg, "Modernist Painting" (1960), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, pp. 85–91; Greenberg, "The New Sculpture," in ibid., vol. 2, pp. 313–19; and Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time," in ibid., vol. 4, pp. 55–61.

33 Greenberg, "Modernist Painting" (1960), in ibid., vol. 4, p. 90.

34 For an account of this general trajectory, see C. Giménez, *Picasso and the Age of Iron,* exh. cat. (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1993).

35 For instance, Greenberg, "David Smith," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 276.

36 Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, p. 58.

37 Greenberg, "Review of a Joint Exhibition of Antoine Pevsner and Naum Gabo" (1948), in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 2, p. 226. Emphasis added.

38 Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 4, p. 59.

39 Ibid.

40 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* p. 70. Emphasis added.

41 Greenberg, "Roundness Isn't All," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 272.

42 Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History,* pp. 15–16.

43 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* pp. 117–19.

44 Ibid., p. 114.

45 Greenberg, "David Smith," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 276.

46 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* pp. 115–16.

47 Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History,* p. 25.

48 On the Geometry of Fear, see Burstow, "The Geometry of Fear," in *Herbert Read: A British Vision of World Art,* pp. 103–18; M. Garlake, "Identifying the Geometry of Fear," in *Henry Moore and the Geometry of Fear,* ed. J. Hyman (London: James Hyman Fine Art, 2002), pp. 4–5; and J. Hyman, "Henry Moore and the Geometry of Fear," in ibid., pp. 6–11. See also above, note 21.

49 Read, *Modern Sculpture: A Concise History,* pp. 218–22 and 245–56.

50 For instance, Read would reiterate the centrality of ponderability and the values of *The Art of Sculpture* in the slightly later Read, *Lynn Chadwick,* p. 8.

51 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* p. 103.

52 Ibid., pp. 116–17. Emphasis added.

53 Greenberg, "David Smith," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, pp. 276–77, 79.

54 See for instance Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of David Smith, David Hare, and Mirko," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 2, p. 140.

55 M. Garlake, *New Art New World: British Art in Postwar Society* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 232–39; and H. Seldis, *Henry Moore in America,* exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1973).

56 See C. Pearson, "Hepworth, Moore and the United Nations: Modern Art and the Ideology of Post-War Internationalism," *Sculpture Journal* 6 (2001), pp. 89–99.

57 Greenberg, "David Smith," in *Clement Greenberg: Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 3, p. 279.

58 Read, *Art of Sculpture,* pp. 122–23.

59 Read, "Ambiguity of Modern Sculpture," in *Letter to a Young Painter,* p. 226.

60 See J. Marter, "The Ascendancy of Abstraction for Public Art: The Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner Competition," *Art Journal* 53, no. 4 (1994), pp. 30–31.

61 See further R. Burstow, "Butler's Competition Project for a Monument to 'The Unknown Political Prisoner': Abstraction and Cold War Politics," *Art History* 12, no. 4 (1989), pp. 472–96; R. Burstow, "The Limits of Modernist Art as a 'Weapon of the Cold War': Reassessing the Unknown Patron of the Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner," *Oxford Art Journal* 20, no. 1 (1997), pp. 68–80; and A. Lapp, "The Freedom of Sculpture—The Sculpture of Freedom: The International Sculpture Competition for a Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner, London, 1951–3," *Sculpture Journal* 2 (1998), pp. 113–22.

"Non-compositional and Non-hierarchical": Rasheed Araeen's Search for the Conceptual and the Political in British Sculpture

Courtney J. Martin

Rasheed Araeen is best known for his 1977 performance *Paki Bastard (Portrait of the Artist as a Black Person),* a call to arms against British racism and violence.[1] In it, he used props, such as the grid structure placed behind him, as well as reflected on his body, to convey concerns with modernity, confinement, and torture. Araeen had built these props as sculptures originally, in the 1960s, and had exhibited them individually. Although these sculptures have long since been repurposed as political art objects, it is their original use as sculpture that I would like to consider.

In 1964, Araeen moved to London from Karachi, Pakistan, leaving his family and derailing his civil engineering career to pursue art. Shortly after arriving in London he made the first of several objects that he called *structures.* These were modular, geometric, freestanding sculptures and wall-mounted reliefs, which reflected his engineering training. The cube structures were an aesthetic improvement on the latticelike bracing struts common to engineers.[2] For Araeen, the cube and, with it, grids and diagonals, were dialectical, which meant they embodied a logic of forms where "the notion of change or transformation is the expression of the movement of the spectator."[3] The cube *First Structure,* made between 1966 and 1967 (fig. 1), became the primary unit of his construction vocabulary.[4] It is a four-sided, industrially spray-painted, steel cube open at both ends and placed directly onto the floor. Each of the cube's faces, or sides, is bisected by a diagonal. Descending from right to left, the diagonals simultaneously right triangulate each of the cube's faces and its interior space. When viewed straight on from each of the cube's corners, the opposing diagonals align, cross each other, and form an X. The single diagonal casts a shadow that forms an X.

Second Structure, also from 1966/67 (fig. 2), is a painted steel cube elongated to the proportions of a column, and open at both ends. Instead of a single diagonal on each side, identically sized lengths of steel are placed end to end from the bottom to the top, forming a rhythmic zig zag, or a chain of isosceles triangles. When the column's edge is viewed straight on, the smaller, inner steel sections cross each other and join, doubling their length to compose a series of X's from the work's top to its bottom. Araeen's best known work from the 1960s, *Boo* (1969) (fig. 3), is an extension of *Second Structure.* Each of

Figure 1
Rasheed Araeen (Pakistani/British, b. 1935),
First Structure, 1966–67. Steel with sprayed
paint, 139.7 × 139.7 × 139.7 cm (55 × 55 ×
55 in.). John Hansard Gallery, Southampton,
UK, 1988. © Rasheed Araeen. Photo courtesy
of the artist
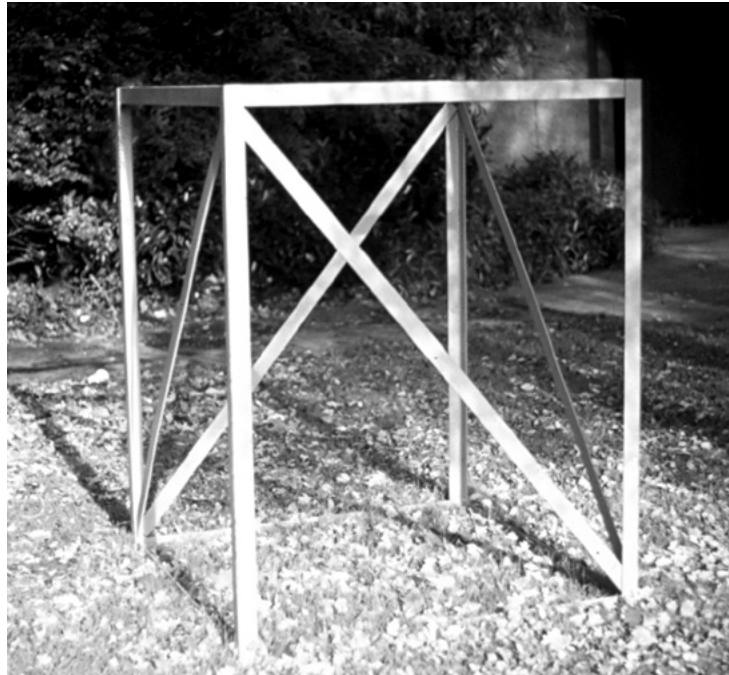
Figure 2
Rasheed Araeen (Pakistani/British, b. 1935),
Second Structure, 1966–67. Steel with sprayed
paint, 182.9 × 81.3 × 81.3 cm (72 × 32 × 32 in.).
John Hansard Gallery, Southampton, UK, 1988.
© Rasheed Araeen. Photo courtesy of the artist
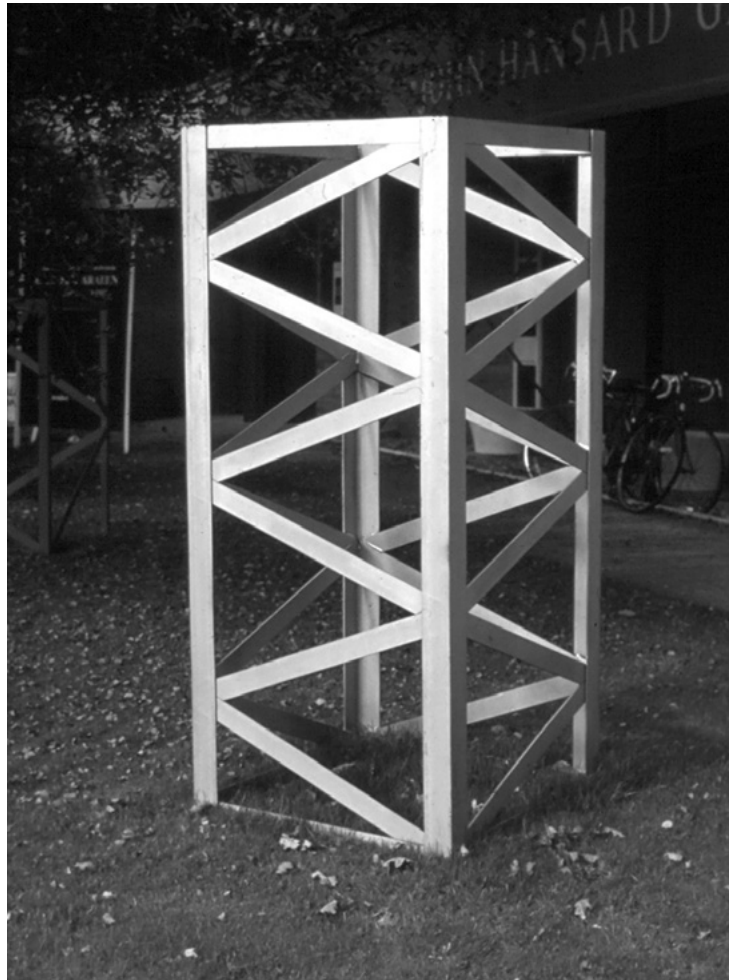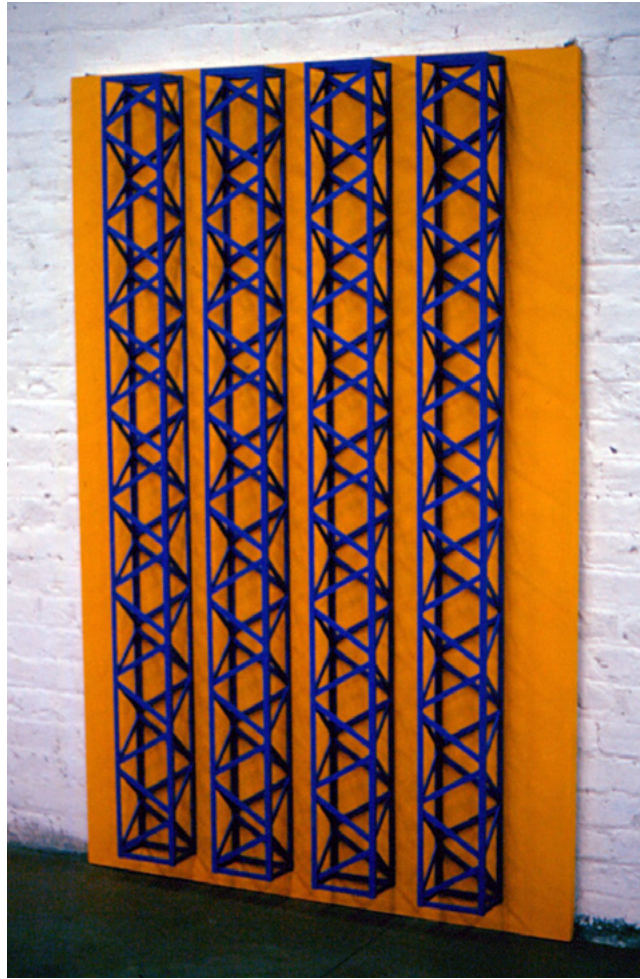
its four-part, wall-mounted sections has a distinct interior and exterior, as well as a vertical boundary between units. In *Boo,* as in *Second Structure,* Araeen makes use of the diagonal sections to produce recognizable geometric forms, as well as a repeating pattern in the alignment of the sections and in their negative spaces. The dialogue between the two (geometric shape and pattern) expands on Araeen's concept of the dialectical relationship between object and viewer, which encompasses not simply the viewer and the object but also the viewer's physical engagement with a three-dimensional object.[5]

After arriving in London, Araeen found himself "particularly fascinated by Anthony Caro's work."[6] Araeen's appreciation of Caro's sculpture was not unique. Caro was then a leading figure in British art, who enjoyed attention from the art and popular press and had a loyal following among students and younger sculptors across the country. By the 1960s Caro's sculpture had shifted away from that of his mentor, Henry Moore, and from more traditional sculptural practices that were executed through modeling and required a plinth. Caro was drawn, instead, toward the ideas of American critic Clement Greenberg, whom he met in 1959.[7] In work such as *Sculpture Seven* (1961) (fig. 4), he abandoned figuration, began to weld, and treated color as form. These changes signaled Caro's alliance with American abstraction, via Greenberg, specifically abstraction as practiced by the color-field painters, and by the sculptor David Smith.

Figure 4
Anthony Caro (British, b. 1924), *Sculpture Seven,* 1961. Painted steel, 178 × 537 × 105.5 cm (70 × 211²/₅ × 41½ in.). © Barford Sculptures/ Anthony Caro. Photo courtesy of Barford Sculptures

Araeen's fascination with Caro led him to believe they shared the same concerns, specifically the use of industrial materials, the relevance of color to steel, and the placement of sculpture on the ground. Because Araeen was an engineer, his concern with materials was necessarily practical, knowledgeable, and logical, or, as he defined it, dialectical. Accordingly, *First Structure* and *Second Structure* functioned as experiments; Araeen could expand each of them into larger sculptures or combine them to create multiformed installations. These experiments reflect the influence of Caro and his practical building training. It was not long after Araeen's arrival in London that he attended the opening of the *New Generation* exhibition (in March 1965 at the Whitechapel Art Gallery), which included many of Caro's students from what was then St. Martin's School of Art. Araeen noted that the all-sculpture exhibition showcased new options for object making, none of them carved or modeled.[8] Instead, the works were constructed, often welded, out of new materials such as plastic or aluminum, and employed color. Most did not use bases and were, instead, placed directly on the floor. The material and the placement of the objects reflected their industrial, technologically inquisitive, and unrefined spirit—one that the exhibition's curator Bryan Robertson described as "weightlessness," a material attribute that implied a removal from the overburdened history of twentieth-century British sculpture and its reliance on carving; heavy, natural material; and lineage.[9] This last attribute may have been particularly acute for Araeen, who, in addition to being an immigrant to Britain, had neither Caro's sculptural legacy (imparted by Moore), nor his placement at an established art school with a legion of students who could follow and further his mission.

As his studio practice in London evolved in the late 1960s, Araeen's fascination with Caro ran its course: "I soon became fed up with this juggling of material—putting things here and there until you found something significant."[10] Araeen developed his cube and the resulting structures in the mid-1960s, working against what he saw as the "compositional" nature of Caro's

practice. He described the shift as moving from "hierarchy to an egalitarianism," the latter being a description of his own built forms.[11] According to Araeen, Caro's work was compositional because its aggregate parts were visible; each was a single unit, rather than part of a whole. When viewed as a collection of aggregates, Caro's sculpture lacked symmetry, according to Araeen. Arguably, symmetry was never Caro's interest in abstraction. Since he had previously worked figuratively, paying attention to human scale and proportion, he would not have needed abstraction as an avenue to symmetry. Nevertheless, Araeen considered Caro's sculpture fallacious because it maintained the "traditional" order of built forms. There was a hierarchy of size and shape, and their arrangement was pictorial, with figurative elements in mind. Its horizontality mimicked the landscape, which lessened its spatiality. Most important, Caro's sculptures denied the "movement of the spectator," Araeen's invocation of the space where the artist and the viewer met.[12] Araeen's insistence that his works were structures, instead of sculpture, liberated them from the discourse of Caro and the St. Martin's sculptors and distinguished them from what he believed to be their static, unengaged predecessors, such as the work of Henry Moore.

Araeen's rejection of Caro's sculpture was also a politicized position. Rejecting Caro was also a rejection of American abstract expressionism's dominance in Britain.[13] American art may have seemed tainted by its nation's international agenda—as if the work's large size, brash painting style, and use of color inherently expressed capitalist expansion. Araeen was equally troubled by America's domestic civil rights injustices, which featured prominently in the British media.[14] Greenberg's prescriptive set of formal properties and support of specific artists may have seemed like a form of segregation, another peculiar American practice. From the mid-1960s, Araeen openly drew parallels between Britain's colonialism and America's imperialism, finding common ground with the peace and civil rights movements from America, such as those of Malcolm X or the Black Panther Party. Caro's position in the British art establishment and involvement with American artists and critics was proof of his tacit support of a type of formal conservatism that led Araeen to label Caro's sculpture "traditional, compositional, pictorial, and hierarchal," even if the form of the sculpture did not always merit this description.[15]

The change in diagonals from *First Structure* to *Second Structure* resonates with Araeen's own artistic and political awakening. He was involved in civic rights in Britain, due in part to his own experiences with street violence and the passive forms of hostility that he experienced as an immigrant. Coincidentally, the same year that Araeen entered the country, Malcolm X visited Britain for the first time, traveling to the West Midlands city of Smethwick—the purported site of racially motivated agitation between the Conservative and Labour parties during the previous election.[16] Malcolm X's presence was a boon to British activists, many of whom thought his evolution toward a centrist and more international view corresponded with their own concerns about immigration, decolonization, and the rights of workers. In London, Malcolm X's visit emboldened people like Michael X, a Trinidadian immigrant who became the leading figure of black resistance in Britain before his eventual arrest and deportation to Trinidad. Michael X formed the Racial Adjustment Action Society which had links to the avant-garde art circles in which Araeen exhibited and socialized.[17] This group was a part of a large international network that included American artists who denounced the Vietnam War and were generally support-

ive of other approaches to abstraction, such as destruction and minimalism, which valorized industrial materials and manufacturing as a medium.

The X's formed by the crossing diagonals in *First Structure* may refer to Malcolm X or Michael X, not so much as a literal transference of the symbol, but as a rejection of the various meanings that had been read onto Araeen's work via his person. Just as Malcolm X's invocation of the letter was a rejection of a so-called slave name and an acknowledgment of the absence of an African name, Araeen's X acknowledged the ability of abstraction to convey meaning without representation. As a secular Muslim, Araeen was shocked that his abstraction was cast as a way around Islam's ban on figuration, as if his art work would necessarily be an affirmation or negation of religion.[18] His work was also read as fragmentary, perhaps a residue of 1947's Partition that severed India from Pakistan, and Hindu from Muslim.

Araeen rejected biographical readings of his work because they staged his work as following conceptual art, rather than *being* conceptual.[19] In other words, these readings presupposed that Sol LeWitt and others had come to conceptual art and minimalism on their own, while Araeen had followed their precedent. In fact, Araeen both asserted and proved that he had developed his conceptual forms concurrent to—if not before—the others. Araeen noted that although he felt LeWitt's forms were in an alliance with his own, he did not encounter LeWitt until 1968, when a friend saw the exhibition *The Art of the Real: USA 1948–1968* in Paris and described to him the *Model for an Untitled Sculpture* (1966) after which the sculpture illustrated here (fig. 5) was made.[20] The exhibition did not reach London—and was not viewed by Araeen—until the spring of 1969.[21] By then, Araeen had worked out the ways in which his approach differed from LeWitt's, including the use of diagonals, his interest in color as a positive innovator of form, and, most important, the inherent possibility of meaning presented in any built form—particularly the idea that the cube as a primary unit could be subsumed into an entire work of art.

Figure 5
Sol LeWitt (American, 1928–2007), *Cubic-Modular Wall Structure, Black,* 1966. Painted wood, 110.3 × 110.2 × 23.7 cm (43½ × 43½ × 9⅜ in.). New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 390.1986. Gift of Alicia Legg. © 2010 The LeWitt Estate/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo © The Museum of Modern Art/ Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, New York

Araeen initially encountered LeWitt's ideas in his "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," first published in *Artforum* in June 1967.[22] Araeen read a determined intention into statements such as, "The artist would select the basic form and rules that govern the solution of the problem."[23] LeWitt's ideas confirmed Araeen's assertion that his minimalist objects could be read by the logic of their forms, as opposed to their being equated with him. The artist's ability to control his works' conception also extended to their reception, an important point of departure for Araeen, who rejected certain readings of his work and sought to advance others—specifically, that his Minimalist sculpture was able to embody and convey radicalism.

As Araeen began to claim a universal "blackness" for himself—an identity that, for him, meant producing art dedicated to radicalism and political awareness—the X's in his structures signified the solidarity of colonial oppression across ethnic and racial lines, as well as Araeen's right to be an artist regardless of religion or nation. If this seems too literal, that is precisely the point. Whether on the street or in the art world, Araeen found that he was consistently perceived and judged according to his ethnicity, the presumption that he was an immigrant. This reading of his "surface" was a flat rejection of his work and his status as an artist. Any effective response on his part had to be delivered in kind—on the surface—overplaying the obvious and insisting on its radicalism. For the same reason, he had to take a defensive stance for his work, which, due to his presence in Britain, was seen as derivative American minimalism, an irony that could not be contained by Araeen's perilous position in Britain and its art world.[24]

If dialectical, by Araeen's terms, the structures increase in compositional complexity and meaning from *First Structure* to *Second Structure* (figs. 1 and 2) as a result of the formal logic in which their materials, composition, and form were engaged. For Araeen, the resulting form must always come from his interrogation of logic, and his logic was informed by his investigation of the impact of politics on his person. In *Second Structure,* each vertical is crossed by a horizontal so that the angles are bisected, forming an asterisk or a complex saltire, a heraldic ordinary in the form of a cross or an X. Viewed from its edge, as Araeen intended, the straight lines meet the corners of the cube, forming a series of complex saltires that suggest infinity, as if the saltires extend continuously past both the base and the top of the structure.

It is in this way that *Second Structure*'s complex saltires may be understood as an abstraction of the Union Jack—the United Kingdom's flag, and a symbol of the British Empire.[25] The Union Jack combines the red saltire cross of Saint Patrick (Ireland), the white-over-blue diagonal cross of Saint Andrew (Scotland), and finally the red-on-white cross of Saint George (England). Within the flag, the composition combines the forms to create the Union, while also maintaining their distinctions. For example, the Irish saltire is arranged so that it counters the saltire of Saint Andrew, insuring that the white is clockwise to the red. This means there is a definite top and bottom to the flag, just as there is a top and bottom to Araeen's open-ended, freestanding column.

To understand Araeen's complex saltire is unlike reading Partition into the work. Araeen was born under the British Raj (1858–1947); thus the Union Jack was as familiar to him as the flag of Pakistan. Its meaning invoked Britain's history of empire, which included the events that led to India's division. Just as the Union Jack consolidated Ireland and Scotland into the flag of the United

Kingdom, its presence in its colonies linked them to Britain. Araeen's familiarity with the flag extended to Britain's geography, language, and customs. However, Araeen's adjustment to Britain was not the transition he expected. While some aspects of life in London were continuous with his childhood in colonial India, other aspects—such as the National Front, a violent, right-wing political group who adopted the Union Jack as a party symbol—were without precedent. Britain's postwar financial failure, crumbling civic infrastructure, deep class divisions, and, of course, its passive and active intolerance were not a part of his colonial citizenship training. As the imperial center to Pakistan's colonial periphery, London was a network of mayhem for new immigrants whose geographic displacement was often reinforced by underemployment and housing shortages. *Second Structure*'s interlocked saltires invoke the pace of the city, its sprawling west-to-east ramble, and its aspirational postwar building projects—such as Ernö Goldfinger's high-rise housing development, Trellick Towers, which was commissioned in 1966.

For Araeen, London—the seat of the former empire, as symbolized by the Union Jack—was confusing. The flag's duality as symbol of the past and sign of national tension served as an object of speculation and disbelief for him. He could then situate the flag, and through it the politics of the empire, as both an abstract shape and a conceptual tool. This is a process that Araeen would utilize in the 1970s as his work reached its full, agitated political peak. In *Civilisation* (1974) (fig. 6), a structured collage that is a part of a freestanding installation,

Figure 6
Rasheed Araeen (Pakistani/British, b. 1935), *Civilisation,* 1974 (detail). Collage with photos and drawing on board, 121.9 × 101.6 × 2.5 cm (48 × 40 × 1 in.). © Rasheed Araeen. Photo courtesy of the artist
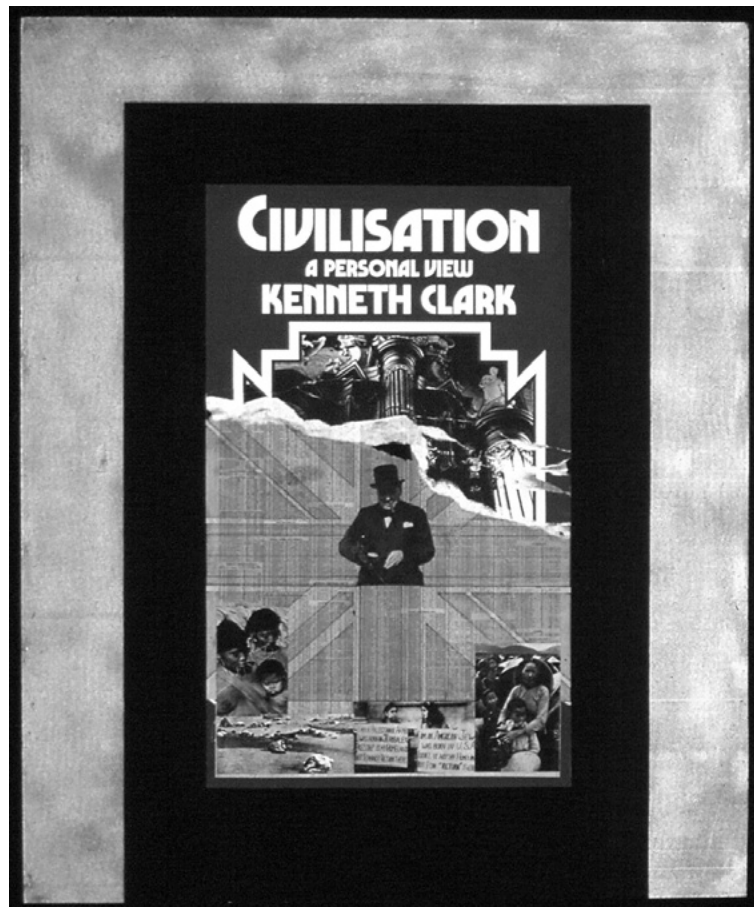
the flag physically supports or emerges from images of imperialism, providing a visual metaphor for the ways in which empire functions.[26] And, although Araeen only used the Union Jack as a signifier, he expanded its realm of signification to include the United States, invoked through images of protest by Palestinians in America and Asia that alluded to the Vietnam War.

It is possible then to see Araeen's conflation of Britain's past and America's mid-twentieth century politics as twofold. The stated problems of Western imperialism were shared by America and Britain; also, America's art market, so dominant in this period, had to be addressed, even if that address came in the form of virulent attacks on its national politics. Araeen conflates Britain's past and America's present (the 60s and 70s) into a near-fantasy construction, one that he called the West.[27] The West was a space of particularity, more so than geography. For example, although he lived in the center of London, his experiences of street brutality made him feel excluded from the West. His art was also excluded from the art market. The West was a space of longing and isolation, one where he was denied nationally and one that denied him based in part on presumed nationality. Araeen's search for a politicized state, his claim for blackness, must be seen as a part of his confrontation with the West. The fact that the West (New York's art market, London's streets, Britain's funding policies, and Pan-African literature) was a concept of his own design is irrelevant; it was the space in which he perceived his work to be conceived and received. While *blackness*—a term that had a political connation for all non-white Britons—assured him an idealized community filled with action and potential rebellion in Britain, it also allowed him an idealized affinity with a subsection of America, one that he imagined had gained extra-national status through its duality of domestic exclusion and international acceptance. It is in this way that the problems of the West could be subverted and altered, at least in his own work and person.

For immigrants to London, the possibility of rebuilding the city as something else was an achievable, if not an inherent, goal of immigration—or so was the fear of many Britons who charted every minor modification in London for proof of the negative impact of immigration. As mentioned, Araeen's structures—such as *Boo,* an expanded *Second Structure*—resemble architectural models, reflecting Araeen's training as an engineer. This contrasts with LeWitt's work, which could be likened to a city grid—specifically that of his home, New York. In 1969 Araeen won the prestigious John Moores Painting Prize for *Boo,* a prize that had never before been granted to a sculptor.[28] *Boo*'s acceptance into the formerly painting-only John Moores Prize promised to be groundbreaking for Araeen's reception into Britain's art world. It was the first time that "modern technique"[29] and works in relief were considered. The terms of the prize seemed to recognize Araeen's ideal of structure over sculpture. Descriptions of *Boo* by critics were also telling, such as this one:

> Today, many artists attempt to affect the fabric of life by dealing with real life situations through the use of objects, techniques, and locations which are palpably present and concrete rather than by making metaphors on the subjects which they embody. John Moores is about painting, even though a degree of relief is permitted. Painting may never again be in the forefront of art's newest domain; it may never be representative of the search for the extensions of creative, visual

expressions, and one day it may even be relegated to the basement of the visual arts. It will, however, always be with us. Unlike the more volatile movements which increasingly concern themselves with process rather than result, idea rather than union of form and content, and tangible realism and objectivity rather than make-believe, painting will remain, come what may, the foundation of the entire edifice. I hope that John Moores Liverpool exhibition will continue to show paintings even though other types of art may seem more exciting at a given moment.[30]

Under the guise of confronting the prize's decision to accept works in relief, *Studio International*'s reviewer, Jasia Reichardt, implicitly attacked not only Araeen's work, but also his presence in the exhibition. Her words channel painting as a national rite, one that is being upended by "art's newest domain," an allusion to the changes in Britain's postwar society, like immigration.

Boo represented structures of empire, such as the interlocking systems of interdependence shared by colonizer and colony. These are more visible in relief than in a freestanding form. Araeen's colors of blue against orange are purposefully arresting so that the forms could be disengaged from the literal and figurative skin of color. Further, the relief as a sort of in-between (painting and sculpture) allows *Boo* to do something with color that it could not have done as either a painting or a sculpture.

Araeen's inferred knowledge of the empire is enacted when his work is described as "dealing with real life situations." Reichardt's comments—hinting at the person of Araeen and the character of his work with phrases such as "fabric of life" and "volatility"—read like the jingoistic political rhetoric used by both the Conservative and the Labour parties to disparage immigrants. If *Boo* resolved anything, it was the artist's own search for a compromise between objects and action, specifically art and social justice. These works also speak to Araeen's ambivalence about Britain, which was rooted in his identification of an imaginary West, and the to-and-fro of rejection and acceptance that he offered to this imaginary place and that he desired from it. From the specificity of London's streets to the obtuseness of New York's art galleries, to the grand scale of Caro's and LeWitt's roles in the field of sculpture, the "West" was a place where Araeen was neglected. Often his actions, embodied in these structures, were subversive. Form alluded to meaning; context was denied through shape and color. These structures were, by his own logic, "noncompositional and nonhierarchal."

Notes

1 For a longer discussion of Araeen's performance practice, see Courtney J. Martin, "Rasheed Araeen, Live Art and Radical Politics in Britain," *Getty Research Institute Journal,* no. 2 (2010).
2 Rasheed Araeen, "How I Discovered My Oriental Soul in the Wilderness of the West," *Third Text,* Spring 1992, pp. 94–95.
3 Rasheed Araeen, "I Had No Choice but to Deal with This Gaze Which Was Making Me Invisible," an interview with Helena Pivec, *M'Ars: Casopis Moderne Galerije Ljubljana* 6, no. 1-4 (1994), p. 45.
4 Araeen, "How I Discovered My Oriental Soul," p. 95.
5 Though Araeen never equates the two, his sustained curiosity with the "Third World," suggests a link between use of the term dialectic and that of Marx's dialectical materialism.
6 Araeen, "How I Discovered My Oriental Soul," pp. 94–95.
7 After meeting Caro in London in 1959, Greenberg wrote about his sculpture and helped him secure personal and professional relationships in the United States. For one view of Greenberg's appreciation of Caro's work, see Clement Greenberg, "Contemporary Sculpture: Anthony Caro," in *Clement*

Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism, ed. J. O'Brian, 4 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986–93), vol. 4, p. 205.

8 *The New Generation: 1965* was on view at the Whitechapel Art Gallery from March–April 1965. The nine sculptors in the exhibition were David Anesley, Michael Bolus, Phillip King, Roland Piché, Christopher Sanderson, Tim Scott, William Tucker, Isaac Witkin, and Derrick Woodham. Of the nine, only four, Piché, Sanderson, Witkin, and Woodham, were not under Caro's tutelage at St. Martin's School of Art, though both Piché and Witkin had been assistants to Henry Moore just as Caro had been.

9 *The New Generation, 1965,* exh. cat. (London: Peter Stuyvesant Foundation, 1965), p. 8.

10 Araeen, "How I Discovered My Oriental Soul," p. 95.

11 Araeen, "I Had No Choice but to Deal with This Gaze," p. 45.

12 Rasheed Araeen, *Making Myself Visible* (London: Kala Press, 1984), p. 174.

13 Rasheed Araeen, *From Innovation to Deconstruction: My Own Story* (n.p, n.d.), [p. 2].

14 Interview with Rasheed Araeen, November 1, 2006.

15 Araeen, *Making Myself Visible,* p. 174.

16 For a longer discussion of Malcolm X's tie to Britain, see Joe Street, "Malcolm X, Smethwick, and the Influence of the African American Freedom Struggle on British Race Relations in the 1960s," *Journal of Black Studies* 38, no. 6 (2008), pp. 932–50.

17 For a discussion of the Racial Adjustment Action Society, see Dilip Hiro, *Black British, White British: A History of Race Relations in Britain* (London: Grafton Books, 1991), p. 45.

18 In a recent public conversation, Araeen discussed how Islam and Pakistan have been consistently cited as the source of his art practice. Rasheed Araeen and Courtney J. Martin, "In Conversation," Chelsea College of Art and Design, October 14, 2010.

19 Araeen, "How I Discovered My Oriental Soul," pp. 85–102.

20 Interview with Rasheed Araeen, November 1, 2006, and Araeen, "How I Discovered My Oriental Soul," p. 98.

21 *The Art of the Real: USA, 1948–1968* was on view at the Tate Gallery (now Tate Britain) from April 24–June 1969.

22 Interview with Rasheed Araeen, November 1, 2006.

23 Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (June 1967), p. 80.

24 Michael Corris, "Rasheed Araeen (exhibition, South London Gallery)," *Artforum* 33, no. 7 (March 1995), p. 100.

25 The Union Jack is properly known as the Union Flag, the national flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

26 *Civilisation: A Personal View by Kenneth Clark* aired in thirteen episodes on BBC2 in 1969. Though considered a landmark in the transmission of art to the popular medium of television, John Walker correctly identified Clark's "Patrician and Patriarchal History of Art," in *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), p. 67. The entire enterprise is emblematic of Araeen's critique of the imperial representation of art and culture by Britons.

27 Hou Hanru, "An Interview with Rasheed Araeen," *Art Asia Pacific* 2 (January 1995), pp. 102–7.

28 For a longer discussion of the history of the prize, see *John Moores 25: Contemporary Painting Prize* (Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2008).

29 Jasia Reichardt, "John Moores Biennial Exhibition, Liverpool, till January 26," *Studio International* 179, no. 918 (January 1970), p. 35.

30 Ibid. In an earlier review of the exhibition, *Structures/Objects/Assemblages* (Arts Council Galleries, London, 1966), Reichardt attacked the use of the term *structure* as an undeveloped art idiom. Perhaps her problem with Araeen was an extension of this argument. Jasia Reichardt, "Structures/Objects/Assemblages," *Studio International* 172, no. 884 (December 1966), pp. 278–79.

The "Curve over the Crest of the Hill":
Carl Andre and Richard Long

Alistair Rider

It might appear counterintuitive nowadays to pair the American minimalist sculptor Carl Andre with the British land artist Richard Long, since their differing nationalities have meant that they have come to be discussed within significantly distinct contexts and agendas. Yet that was not always the case, and there was a period, at least during the 1970s, when it was possible to envisage both artists as guided by shared interests and common themes. In this essay I want to make the case that there is ground to be gained by revisiting these points of continuity.

The most explicit pairing of Andre and Long is to be found in Lucy R. Lippard's 1983 publication, *Overlay,* in which she emphasizes that both are artists who remain inspired by the prehistoric landscape of southwest England.[1] The basis of her argument is very much in accordance with the themes of her book. In her introduction Lippard explains that the catalyst for *Overlay* had been a year spent "on an isolated farm in southern England" in which she had lived in proximity to numerous prehistoric sites. These places had provoked her to explore the deep associations between contemporary art and the archaic; as she puts it, it was "an overlay of my concern with new art on my fascination with these very ancient sites."[2] A layering of the contemporary with the ancient is further corroborated by the book's illustrations, which intersperse reproductions of work by current artists with evocative photographs of prehistoric monuments, the majority of which are situated within the British Isles. Thus, by the time readers approach the chapter in which she describes the work of Andre and Long, they are more than sufficiently primed to embrace the predominantly pastoral and agrarian presentation of Andre's sculpture, and to accede that this is work that is decidedly attuned to qualities of the English countryside. Andre's major artistic contribution, we learn, was to produce a kind of low-lying, segmented sculpture, often produced directly in a landscape, which provoked viewers to walk along its length, just as they might pass along a road.[3] From here, it is only a small step for Lippard to point out that unlike North America's spaces, the English countryside is eminently conducive to walking, and that it is this quality that defines the ethos of Richard Long's art. Lippard describes how Long's "breakthrough" had been to present photographic documentation of a

walk he had undertaken in 1969 across Dartmoor in Devon as a sculpture in its own right.[4] Furthermore, Lippard emphasizes the extent to which Long's work is attuned to the ancientness of landscape. "A walk is just one layer," Long is quoted as saying, "laid upon thousands of other layers of human and geographic history on the surface of the land."[5]

The tangle of cultural and national assumptions that surround the terms *walking, ancientness,* and *landscape,* invoked in this context, clearly deserve to be negotiated carefully. Moreover, we may wish to question the degree to which Lippard's pairing of Andre and Long, elegant and provocative though it is, overemphasizes the premodern orientation of their work at the expense of considering how much their outlook might be shaped by shared, late twentieth-century perspectives. Undoubtedly, both artists do share a fascination with the prehistoric, and Lippard's reading is a timely reminder of this point. In this case, how might we attend to their shared interests without ignoring the fact that their outlook is also decidedly modern and clearly attuned to the larger preoccupations of the transatlantic art world of the late 1960s and 1970s?

Posing this question will invariably raise issues relating to the ways in which national identity is figured in relation to both artists' work, but this is not the primary focus of my account here. Instead, I am interested in exploring the ways in which both artists invoke prehistory in order to define their sculpture, and how these references can help cast new light on some of the ambiguities and internal tensions within their respective practices. To examine some of these issues, I shall be contrasting Long's and Andre's investment in ancient sites in England with those of an earlier generation of British sculptors.

Andre met Long in 1968; they have remained in contact ever since, and have spoken openly of their mutual respect for one another's work. Of course, it should be emphasized that their compliments are truly complementary, in that their art has always remained sufficiently different for them to feel that their work does not encroach too fiercely on the other's territory. Long, for instance, once claimed that he admires Andre's sculpture yet would hate to work with prefabricated, industrial materials, while Andre has said that he envies Long's "genius at ordering nooks and crannies of the natural world into works of art," but also stresses that he prefers to work with materials shaped largely by humans. "You might say," he adds, "I am the Richard Long of the vacant lot and the scrap heap."[6]

What both Long and Andre might be said to recognize in one another's work is a shared investment in the principle of sculpture as "placement." Lippard is right to emphasize that Andre's major contribution to the development of sculpture in the 1960s was to appreciate that three-dimensional art could be made simply by setting units of similarly shaped materials directly on the floor.[7] This way of working releases the artist from having to be concerned with shaping or cutting, or, for that matter, even with assembling things. Instead, the selected particles simply lie where they are positioned and follow the plane of the ground.

Since Long's art is much more oriented toward a notion of landscape than is Andre's, there are of course differences in their art that need to be acknowledged. Long has created considerably more works than has Andre for sites outside museums and exhibition galleries, many of which are ephemeral and emerge, seemingly spontaneously, from his walks. These have largely taken the form of simple marks left on the land, such as a straight line generated by

walking up and down repeatedly until a narrow track forms, or an arrangement of stones that are aligned into a small circle, a row, or a cross. Records of these sculptures only exist as photographs exhibited subsequently in galleries, or as reproductions in specially designed publications. However, he has also made sculptures to be shown exclusively indoors, and, like Andre, he too positions separable units—such as stones or pieces of wood—into elementary configurations directly on the ground.

Both artists have also emphasized how important a notion of "place" is to their art. Long has often spoken, for instance, of the extent to which his art has been generated from specific places and observes that a good work "is the right thing in the right place at the right time."[8] Famously, Andre also asserted that a place "is an area within an environment which has been altered in such a way as to make the general environment more conspicuous." He understood place to be related "to both the general qualities of the environment and the particular qualities of the work," such that, to see an artwork from the perspective of place is to recognize how an artist's intervention and the artwork's context are mutually determining.[9] Phrased in these terms, Andre's description is highly abstract, as though a place could be literally anywhere. Yet even by the late 1960s he began to explain what he meant by place by invoking very particular locations, which tended to be decidedly premodern. In 1968, for instance, he told his interviewer that he associated his understanding of place with the Indian burial mounds of Ohio, and shortly afterwards he was aligning his sculpture with Japanese rock gardens.[10] Place also had a profoundly "neolithic" quality, he explained to Phyllis Tuchman in an interview from 1970, and on this occasion his principal example was Stonehenge.[11] In the case of Long, however, it seems fair to infer that place is more a resting point on a longer journey. And while Andre's notion of place embraces prehistoric sites only in a generic and holistic way, Long's references to these locations have tended to be considerably more direct, with specific locations being named in titles, and particular features and attributes becoming the focal point for individual works.

Their different approach partly reflects their nationalities and the circumstances in which both artists became familiar with southern England. For Long, born and brought up in Bristol, the neolithic and Bronze Age sites of Wiltshire, Devon, and Dorset were familiar landmarks. He would later tell critics how he would often pass Silbury Hill on the Marlborough Road, while hitchhiking to London.[12] Silbury Hill is the largest neolithic site in Europe; it is a man-made mound of blocks of chalk and turf, roughly 120 feet tall and four and a half thousand years old. For Long, places such as these were recognizable objects in a well-known landscape. In fact, Stonehenge itself seems to have felt almost too familiar and well known for him, and he has only referenced it by name in just two works.[13]

Andre, however, was born in Quincy, outside Boston, and first went to England to visit family relations in 1954, at nineteen. During his stay, his uncle and aunt took him to see a selection of their favorite places in Wales and England, including Salisbury Cathedral and Stonehenge. The scraped-clean Gothic interior of the cathedral made little impact, but Stonehenge left a lasting impression.[14] I am not certain whether Andre has ever returned, although even if he has, he has never spoken openly of any subsequent trip. So, while Long could invoke these prehistoric sites in the context of his art with a casualness born of familiarity, Andre has tended to summon the name "Stonehenge"—and

with it all the other prehistoric landscapes of southern England—with a fervor that attests mainly to the vividness of a teenager's memory.

What would Andre have seen at Stonehenge in 1954? Certainly in those days the site would have felt markedly more remote than it does today. Passing vehicles were infrequent, and there were no visitors' facilities. Sightseers were free to meander among the stones and seek out the surrounding ditches, burrows, and burial sites as much as they liked. It is also important to mention that during the mid-1950s Stonehenge was subjected to extensive excavation and restoration, so the stone circle would have been filled with substantial quantities of archaeologists' paraphernalia. In 1954, the investigation had focused on the inner circle. That year they dug up a number of stones that had become buried beneath the turf, and four years following Andre's visit, they straightened a number of the larger outer "sarsen" sandstones, and reerected one of the giant trilithons that had collapsed in 1899.[15]

Clearly this was a high-profile undertaking, and it stimulated a renewal of public interest in the monument. Yet it is revealing to contrast the general image of Stonehenge that was generated by these excavations with the memories Andre would later retain from his visit. Consider, for instance, the evocative terms used by R. J. C. Atkinson in his well-known book on the monument from 1956; Atkinson had been one of the principal archaeologists on the project, and his text was widely considered exemplary for the accessibility of its presentation of the archaeology of the site. In his introduction, he writes:

> Of the stones themselves no words of mine can properly describe the subtle varieties of texture and colour, or the uncountable effects of shifting light and shade. . . .
>
> At a nearer view, each stone takes on its own individual pattern of colour and texture. Some are almost white . . . and so hard that even thirty-five centuries of weathering has not dimmed the irregular patches of polishing executed so laboriously by the original builders. Others are a dull matt grey, streaked and lined . . . like the grain of some vast stump of a petrified tree; and others again are soft, buff or even pink in colour, and deeply eroded into hollows and overhangs in which a man may crouch, the compact curves of his limbs and the rounded thrust of shoulder and hip matching the time-smoothed protuberances of the stone around him.[16]

What is noteworthy about Atkinson's somewhat high-flown description is just how naturally his metaphors help to anthropomorphize the stones. His concern is with the give-and-take between physical weathering and human shaping; his focus glides seamlessly between the rocks' mineralogical texture and their figurative appearance.

It might also be conjectured that Atkinson's approach to the stones is much more in keeping with the terms in which an earlier generation of modernist sculptors embraced the neolithic past. The preoccupations in this passage are not entirely removed, we might feel, from Henry Moore's *Three Piece Reclining Figure* from the late 1960s, in which the human form seems to be petrified into folds of weathered rock (fig. 1). Or consider Moore's suite of fifteen lithographs of Stonehenge from 1972–73, where his depiction of the imposing twenty-two-foot-high sarsen trilithon is titled *Cyclops*, while a detail of a lintel hole is called *Arm and Body*. In a similar vein, we might also be reminded of the sculptures

Figure 1
Henry Moore (British, 1898–1986), *Three Piece Reclining Figure,* 1961–62. Bronze, 160.66 × 281.31 × 138.11 cm (63¼ × 110¾ × 54⅜ in.). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M.65.74. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bart Lytton and the Lytton Foundation, M.65.74. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation. Photo © 2009 Museum Associates/LACMA/Art Resource, NY

of Barbara Hepworth, whose works have long been affiliated with standing stones, albeit more with Cornwall than Wiltshire. Take, for instance, her *Two Figures, Menhirs* (1964) or *Rock Form (Porthcurno)* (1964), both of which adopt a decidedly anthropomorphized silhouette.[17]

For Moore and Hepworth, along with other artists of their generation, we might speculate that part of the allure of the weathered forms of these neolithic stones is that they can be approached as shapes that are already abstracted; they are forms void of explicit meanings. They have been shaped by age, yet still can be regarded as suffused with evidence of human intention. Work of this nature plays into the assumption that a stone set into the ground and standing upright is an archetypal form of mark-making. Furthermore, invoking the historicity of ancient, standing stones is also a means of relaying attention from the vicissitudes of making sculpture in contemporary times. A work such as Hepworth's bronze *Figure for Landscape* contains its own base, which means that in practical terms there is no reason for it to be site specific (fig. 2). Potentially, it could be set down anywhere—in a gallery, or in a museum's sculpture garden, or even atop a hill. Yet the form and title of the sculpture encourage viewers to recognize in the proportions the monumentality of a monolith, and thus to conjure into existence the idea of an environing and complementary landscape, and this in spite of its modern-day placelessness. In other words, the sculpture projects an impression of magnitude and location that is essentially metaphorical.

It goes without saying that not all emerging artists in the 1960s were drawn to neolithic sites for the same reasons. For one, the upright form of the human figure ceased to be the defining point of reference for sculptors, on both sides of the Atlantic. As many critics have emphasized, there is in Andre's work in particular a clear shift away from the vertical to the horizontal plane. In the case of his metal ground-based sculptures, for instance, the works may indeed possess distinct boundaries, yet because they remain at the level of the viewers' feet, they never come across as obstacles. The edges of these sculptures function more as thresholds, designed to articulate the movements of the viewer, rather than to act as barriers to confine and restrict.

Figure 2
Barbara Hepworth (British, 1903–1975), *Figure for Landscape,* 1960. Bronze, 271.8 × 132.1 × 71.1 cm (107 × 52 × 28 in.). Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005.108. Gift of Fran and Ray Stark. © Bowness, Hepworth Estate. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum

This shift in orientation is reflected in the way Andre (and Long, for that matter) approached prehistoric locations. For both of them there was a clear concern with the larger topographies, and the extent to which monuments such as Stonehenge form an integral component of a much larger series of interlocking points and vistas that incorporate an entire landscape. A small booklet by Long from 1978 explicitly illustrates this shift in focus; it is titled *A Walk past Standing Stones, Cornwall.* Long photographed the various monoliths he passed en route, but it is the journey between them that is the focus of the work, not the stones themselves. Others of their generation were similarly not interested in the monoliths themselves. In an unpublished essay from 1966 or 1967, Robert Smithson commented, for instance, that when Robert Morris had visited Stonehenge, he had not been drawn to the huge trilithons at the center of the monument, but to "the mound-like fringes."[18]

At a symposium in the United States in February 1969 Long famously articulated his interest in the wider landscape, explaining that "England is covered in huge mounds and converted hills . . . most of England has had its shape changed—practically the whole place, because it has been ploughed over the centuries—rounded off."[19] Andre made a similar statement in an interview in December 1968, when he confessed that "one of the great influences on the

course of my own development was the English countryside . . . which is one vast earthwork."[20] The ramifications of their shared willingness to regard the entire topography of southern England as a single sculpture should not be underestimated. In fact, Andre was nothing but explicit about this: "England in 1954 presented me with a countryside that was in fact a collective sculpture worked on over more than 3000 years."[21]

This reorientation of sculpture from the vertical to the horizontal, and the concomitant interest in larger topographies that we see in artists emerging in the 1960s, clearly attests to a changed sense of scale. A shape representative of an upright figure registers either as monumental or miniature, depending on the relationship of its proportions to its surroundings, and to the size of the viewer. Yet a sculpture that is horizontally oriented is not necessarily bounded by such categories. In fact, it was partly for this reason that Clement Greenberg found Andre's work unsatisfactory. He pointed out that because Andre's sculptures are made up of separable units, he could not see how they had any sense of proportion.[22] Indeed, Andre's sculptures do certainly have the potential to continue extensively, or to be extremely short, and such decisions are frequently determined by purely practical factors, such as the amount of available material or the size of the space in which he is working. Andre has always been open about this. More to the point, no sculpture of his is intended to project a scale distinct from what it is, however large or small it might be.

The same is also true of many of Long's pieces. His *Walking A Line in Peru,* a work from 1972, consists of an almost perfectly straight path formed by the artist across a flat valley floor. From the photograph, which now stands as representative of the sculpture, the trajectory produced by Long's footprints appears to extend for several miles, and were it not for the elevated perspective and the good visibility, the line could never be depicted within a single frame at all. Yet the visible evidence of Long's movements cannot be described as either monumental or minute because the line simply has no scale. It is merely a literal dimension, just as the mountains in the distance and shallow streams in the foreground have measurable lengths and specific proportions.

However, one or two of Long's very early works have a rather more complicated relationship to scale. This is partly to do with the fact that he seemed concerned with the question of how a substantial terrain, such as an entire landscape, might be apprehended and represented within a single sculpture. Interestingly, the issue comes to the fore as soon as he invokes prehistoric sites in relation to his work. This first occurs in 1969 with an outdoor sculpture that he made in conjunction with his exhibition in Manhattan at John Gibson Gallery. Long dug up a small rectangle of turf in Battery Park, scooping out the earth and heaping it up into a slight mound.[23] Later it formed a grassy hump. In terms of its dimensions, it was only a few feet long, but this small intervention was intended to invoke the memory of a site vastly more substantial. The announcement card for the exhibition featured an aerial photograph of the grassy ramparts of the Bronze Age fort of Maiden Castle in Dorset, and it is clear that the young artist wanted visitors to draw an analogy between this site and his own earthwork. But the physical size of the ancient site literally dwarfs the actual dimensions of Long's small work; with its three tiers of ditches and rings, Maiden Castle is the largest hill fortification in Europe. Here, Long invokes a prehistoric site in quite a different way from an artist such as Hepworth. He establishes his association through synecdoche; he is claiming that the

material he is using links him to this ancient site. Yet the difference between the extremely large and the disproportionately small is hard to overlook and seems to attest to a certain awkwardness regarding the matter of scale. It is almost as though there is no manageably sized, clear middle ground that Long feels his sculptures can happily occupy.

Simon Dell has pointed out recently just how many artists were openly exploring uncertainties of scale toward the end of the 1960s.[24] Robert Smithson is perhaps exemplary in this regard, and Dell notes that Smithson was never one to accede to the pre-given dimensions of an object. For him, scale was a means of undoing preconceptions about the actualities of perception, a theme he explored to great effect in his "Non-Sites" from 1968.[25] Dell reads Smithson's preoccupation with scale in relation to Jack Burnham's extensive discussion of the subject in his 1968 publication, *Beyond Modern Sculpture*.[26] Burnham's argument was that formalist approaches to works of art had come under such pressure in recent years because artists were increasingly responding to new advances in science. As a result of technical innovations in new media, communication and perception often took place below the threshold of the visible, such that visual comprehension could no longer be said to operate always in self-evident or transparent ways.[27] Burnham also felt that "continued technological exploitation of materials," both organic and inorganic, meant that ultimately "no scale is within range." In his mind, the "present fluctuations between miniaturization and giantism" exemplified by much contemporary sculpture "seems to reflect that apprehension."[28] This may well be little more than provocative speculation on Burnham's part, yet it strikes me that the subject is far from irrelevant when it comes to evaluating some of the early works by Richard Long.

My point is that when artists such as Long and Andre invoke the prehistoric in relation to their art, we need to remain vigilant to the ways in which their perspective might also be informed by other contemporary agendas. In fact, we might suggest that what remains so distinctive about their practices is the degree to which a thoroughly modernist idiom rubs up against prehistoric and premodern references. Neither Andre nor Long draws attention to the potential divergences this may cause, yet arguably both their practices are premised on conflicting orientations.

There are a number of ways in which we might theorize this disjuncture, yet I want to do so here by invoking a short prose essay by the British modernist poet J. H. Prynne. I do not want to infer that there was any particular connection between his writings and the 1960s British art world; however, Prynne's 1968 essay "A Note on Metal" could be considered a particularly helpful resource for speculating about how neolithic sites come to signify in the ways they do for both Long and Andre.[29]

Let me provide a swift, abbreviated account of Prynne's argument. In four pages, plus notes, he provides a sketch of what is at stake when a prehistoric society moves from an investment in stone to one that values and esteems metal. A culture invested in stone, Prynne suggests, attests primarily to an economy of physical power. The bluestones in the inner circle at Stonehenge, which were quarried from the Prescelli Mountains in Wales 125 miles away, along with the sarsen sandstones from the Marlborough planes twenty miles distant, had to be dragged to this spot using immeasurable quantities of physical exertion. This is why the stones invoke importance and status. Their significance is synonymous with their physical weight, and their embeddedness at this particular site.

Yet with the advent of metal, Prynne explains, weight and substance are displaced by other qualities that are more portable, such as brightness, hardness, or the sharpness of a cutting edge. Indeed, it is thanks to the discovery of metals that notions of abstract and hierarchical values can be developed. Gradually, significance becomes extractable from weight, and can be carried about in metonymic units; metallurgy, in other words, enables a notion to be advanced that value is "essential." Slowly, Prynne notes, this leads to the emergence for the first time of a metal currency. Eventually even metallic substance can be displaced entirely by the principle of mere numerical quanta, as it is in subsequent societies.

However, this is only half of the argument, because Prynne is equally insistent that this trajectory does not simply proceed uniformly. It is the seeming insubstantiality of modern, numerical economies that makes the reassuring solidity and weight of stone appear as an alternative source of value, enabling it to affirm, for instance, distinct memorializing responsibilities.

We need to appreciate, of course, that Prynne's essay is no more intended as archaeological history than "Totem and Taboo" is meant to be a piece of academically researched anthropology. Literary professionals have tended to regard Prynne's essay as a philological note on terms that remain central to political or moral critique, a text that is secreted—typically for Prynne—in an exacting and very particular diction.[30]

However, Prynne's account is particularly productive for approaching the kind of mixed economy of stone and metal invoked in the work of Carl Andre, for instance. It keeps us alert to the competing terms in which his sculptures generate significance. From around 1967 onward, Andre became increasingly preoccupied with metals, yet he uses this material in a fashion that runs counter to the value it typically assumes within the larger economy. For his exhibition at the Dwan Gallery in December 1967, for example, Andre laid out over the floor of the gallery three sculptures, each made up from 144 plates of metal, a quarter of an inch thick and a foot square (fig. 3). In their

Figure 3
Carl Andre (American, b. 1935), *144 Steel Square* (foreground), 1967, installation view at the Dwan Gallery, New York, December 1967. Hot-rolled steel, 1 × 365.8 × 365.8 cm (³⁄₈ × 144 × 144 in.). *144 Aluminum Square* (background), 1967. Aluminum, 1 × 365.8 × 365.8 cm (³⁄₈ × 144 × 144 in.). © Carl Andre/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Photo courtesy of Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

dimensions they were identical, but they were each made from one of three different metals—aluminum, steel, and zinc. The arrangement invariably encouraged viewers to compare the metals' qualities—to recognize the difference between the white sheen of the zinc and the soft, silvery qualities of the aluminum, and so on.

Yet Andre was also keen to emphasize that the distinctions between the three sculptures extended far beyond the merely perceptual. The announcement poster for the exhibition consisted of a periodic table of the elements, drawn up in the artist's neat hand, with the three metals highlighted in slightly thicker pen (fig. 4). We might suggest that the visual differences in appearance between the works are further consolidated and rendered absolute by this chart of atomic differences. As such, these metals become samples; they are ambassadors for pure, abstracted qualities that are best represented in the guise of a grid of compartmentalized numerical values. Essentially, that is why Andre was able to deploy steel plates in place of the element iron, as he does in *144 Steel Square*. By the 1960s, iron had long since become obsolete as a manufacturing material and was barely available as a commodity. It had been replaced by the alloy steel. In that sense, steel serves as a stand-in for iron, just as the silver alloy used for the minting of twenty-five cent coins in the United States was replaced in 1964 with the much cheaper metal, cupronickel.

In claiming that Andre's metals act as samples of elements, we might be encouraged to assume that one set of, say, zinc plates is as good as any other, just as two ten-cent coins are of precisely equal worth. Or, we might be led to believe

Figure 4

Announcement poster for Carl Andre's *Periodic Table,* an exhibition at the Dwan Gallery, New York, December 1967. © Carl Andre/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Photo courtesy of the author

that the sculpture would still remain the sculpture were the metal units to be arranged in a completely different order, or merely heaped in the corner. Yet that is not the case. For Andre, sculpture is never merely conceptual; it has to be arranged in the designated formation, and the materials are not replaceable. Everything about his work may well imply that the units might be exchanged, or that the sculptures might be replicated effortlessly, but Andre has never embraced such working practices. Indeed, we might suggest that one of the means by which he has emphasized the fixedness of his selected arrangements is by invoking a notion of "place," and of sculpture as "place-generating."

In 1968, Andre compared his work very provocatively to that of the artist Michael Heizer, who at the time was positioning multi-ton boulders in crisply cut rectangular trenches in desert locations in the southwest. Andre believed that what Heizer was doing was essentially extending a modernist sensibility into a non-modernist context; he, in his words, was taking a "non-modernist sensibility, the archaic, earth-working sensibility and [bringing] it into the modernist context."[31] Such a claim might appear to make little sense; after all, his squares of symmetrically cut metal, laid out on the gallery floor, are hard to envisage as having anything to do with an earth-working, archaic sensibility. Yet his statement does help reorient a viewer's attention away from the otherwise eminently modern, gridlike, and rectilinear format of the presentation. It allows us to attend instead to a phenomenology of placement, and to the way the work is attuned to its surroundings. We might suggest that placing industrially sourced metal sheets flat down on the floor is partly a means of naturalizing them, of invoking a sense that they always have been there, just as Stonehenge has stood on the Wiltshire planes for as long as there has been historical memory.

Very little attention has been given to the ways in which Andre successfully mobilizes his interest in metals, metallurgy, and the periodic table, with what we might call a more archaic, stone-age affinity for placement, such that many of his sculptures appear to equivocate between an orientation toward the present and a leaning into the far distant past. In 1975, for instance, Andre laid a sheet of aluminum on a stream bed beneath a bridge, allowing the rippling water to cake it in moss and turn its shiny surface to a furry, milk-white oxide.[32] Even better known is a work Andre made in 1969 consisting of a square arrangement of six different metals, which is intended to lie open to the elements and corrode gracefully. It is titled *Weathering Piece*.[33]

Long's early works could also be said to generate meaning in potentially conflicting ways. To indicate how, I want to return to the issue of the strange, very distinctive dimensions he adopts in his works. Take, for instance, his exhibition at the Dwan Gallery in 1970. The elongated invitation card for the exhibition featured two black-and-white photographs set adjacent to one another. On the right-hand side there is a close-up of what appears to be the gentle grassy undulations of a ditch that might easily be read as some form of archaeological remain: a trace of prehistory in a modern-day field. Certainly, this would tie in with the image on the left, which is a snapshot of Silbury Hill. Beneath this picture is a short text—a piece of local folklore, or a mythological explanation as to why the hill ended up just here, and nowhere else.

> The townsfolk of Marlborough and Devizes were always at logger-
> heads. Marlborough sought revenge by using the services of the devil,

who offered to wipe out Devizes by dropping a hill on the town. This threat was heard by St. John who in due course warned Devizes, the townsfolk of which sent the biggest liar . . . to put the devil off. With a sack filled with old clothes and shoes he met the devil near Beckhampton, and there asked him the time. Old Nick was tired of carrying the hill, and asked . . . how far to Devizes. The old man said that he would never get there that night . . . as he had left Devizes as a young man and had indeed worn out the clothes and boots he was carrying. Old Nick was incredulous, but the old man stuck to his story, and fooled the devil into believing it. Flinging the hill down from his shoulders the devil departed in a flash of lightning. Devizes is still there, the hill at Silbury is for all to see, so the tale must be true.

Long may have included this little tale for a variety of reasons, not least for the piquant local color it provides. However, we might also regard this as an account of place, distance, and scale becoming truly confounded. Moreover, this is also a narrative that contends with the seemingly superhuman exertions that brought Silbury Hill into being. The devil truly is in the details, for this ancient hill has significance for us in our present times largely because of its uniqueness. Its substantiality and placement are synonymous with what it is. Yet this is precisely what Long undoes; he brings the dimensions of Silbury Hill with him to New York's West Fifty-Seventh Street and paces out in muddy footprints over the brown carpet a work he calls *A Line the Length of a Straight Walk from the Bottom to the Top of Silbury Hill* (fig. 5). Weight and scale are not represented in the sculpture itself; in fact, there is little that is graspable and tangible here, other than the precise distance, present through the indexical trace of Long's footprints, stamping out their course, round and round in a windowless New York gallery. With the course curled up in this way, it becomes

Figure 5
Richard Long (British, b. 1945), *A Line the Length of a Straight Walk from the Bottom to the Top of Silbury Hill,* installation view, Dwan Gallery, 1970. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS London. Photo courtesy of the artist and Tate, London

increasingly difficult for a viewer to evaluate the proportions. The sculpture provokes viewers to envisage the artist, traipsing up the steep banks of an artificial hill on a different continent, counting off his steps. We might think of this work, then, as an attempt by Long to retain a hold on the nonsymbolic signifying power of materiality and place, yet he is only able to accomplish this through their displacement.

<center>* * * * *</center>

My aim has been to highlight some of the contradictory ways in which meaning is conveyed in the work of Long and Andre, as a way of indicating how the modern and prehistoric investments in both artists do not necessarily complement one another as might be assumed from reading Lippard's account in *Overlay*. That said, we might approach Lippard's own book as a publication in which the effort to draw ancient sites into present life only ultimately accentuates the disconnected, displaced nature of contemporary living. As mentioned earlier, the catalyst for *Overlay* had been a year spent on a farm in rural Devon, but as she explains on the opening page, the impetus for her thinking had been more precise than that. It had occurred one day when she was out walking the dog on the moors near the farm. She had been near the upper reaches of the River Plym, on Dartmoor, when she stumbled over the edge of a set of prehistoric stones known locally as the Trowlsworthy Group. New to the site, she had looked back, she writes, and had seen these ancient markers disappearing in "a curve over the crest of the hill."[34] For her, there was something in the trajectory of the line that had reminded her of a contemporary sculpture she had seen and reviewed just months earlier in Upstate New York. The work, we learn later in the book, was Carl Andre's *Secant* from 1977, which had been installed in the grounds of Nassau County Art Museum.[35]

Invariably, if we compare illustrations of *Secant* and the Trowlsworthy Group, then the differences look rather more substantial than their similarities. Yet Lippard, along with Andre, and arguably Long as well, partook of a mindset in which it was possible to conflate a concatenation of machine-cut lumber hugging the incline of a grassy slope with an avenue of prehistoric stones on Dartmoor. Geographic specificity melts and blurs. What replaces it, however, is not similitude, but a distinctively particular and generic sensibility—which we might describe as a "neolithic" sensitivity toward place. We might speculate that part of the allure of Andre's sculpture was that it appears to summon a sense of a distinct location, and in so doing provides a certain touchstone for a viewer. The sculpture, we might infer, renders the small grassy dell in which it was installed rather more precious and necessary than it otherwise might have seemed. Construed in these terms, "place" may well be a decidedly modern phenomenon, yet, as with all good myths, its allure largely stems from the conviction that it is as old as the hills.

Notes

1 Lucy R. Lippard, *Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983).
2 Ibid., p. 1.
3 Ibid., p. 125. Lippard quotes Andre from his interview with Phyllis Tuchman in 1970: "My idea of a piece of sculpture is a road," he explains. "That is, a road doesn't reveal itself at any particular point

or from any particular point. Roads appear and disappear. . . . We don't have a single point of view for a road at all, except a moving one, moving along it." See Phyllis Tuchman, "An Interview with Carl Andre," *Artforum* 8, no. 10 (June 1970), p. 57.

4 Lippard, *Overlay,* p. 126. Lippard is possibly referring here to the series of photographs and documents which had been included in the catalogue, *Fernsehausstellung Land Art,* eds. Gerry Schum and Ursula Schum-Wevers (Hannover: Fernsehgalerie, 1969). Initially, however, Long had conceived the documentation for the walk, which was titled *Walking a Straight 10 Mile Line Forward and Back Shooting Every Half Mile, Dartmoor England, Jan 1969* as a short television film, commissioned by Gerry Schum (16mm film, 6:03 min). For an account of this work, see *Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum,* eds. Ulrike Groos, Barbara Hess, Ursula Wevers, exh. cat. (Düsseldorf: Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 2004), pp. 74–77 and 140–41.

5 Lippard, *Overlay,* p. 129.

6 Richard Long, "Interview with Martina Giezen" (1985–86), in *Richard Long: Selected Statements & Interviews,* ed. Ben Tufnell (London: Haunch of Venison, 2007), p. 90. Carl Andre, "Interview with Tim Marlow," *Tate Magazine,* Summer 1996, p. 38.

7 Lippard, *Overlay,* p. 125.

8 Richard Long, "Five six pick up sticks, seven eight lay them straight," in R. H. Fuchs, *Richard Long,* exh. cat. (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1986), p. 236.

9 Carl Andre, "Symposium at Windham College," in Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object* (1973; Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1997), p. 47.

10 Willoughby Sharp, "Carl Andre," *Avalanche,* no. 1 (Fall 1970), p. 20. The interview took place on December 10, 1968. See also Taped Interview with Carl Andre, May 15, 1970, in Carl Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959–2004,* ed. James Meyer (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), p. 116.

11 Tuchman, "Interview with Carl Andre," p. 20.

12 See, for instance, Fuchs, *Richard Long,* p. 71.

13 Long began walks that started at Stonehenge in 1972 and 1999. The first he described in a short text: "On a Midsummer's Day / A Westward Walk / From Stonehenge at Sunrise / To Glastonbury by Sunset / Forty Five Miles Following the Day." The second he described thus: "Walking to a Solar Eclipse / Starting from Stonehenge / A Walk of 235 Miles / Ending on a Cornish Hilltop / At a Total Eclipse of the Sun."

14 See the television documentary on Carl Andre, *Upholding the Bricks,* eds. Ramond Baxter, Mark James Productions, London, Channel 4, April 2, 1991.

15 See K. E. Walker, "Previous Work and Methods," in *Stonehenge in Its Landscape: Twentieth-Century Excavations,* eds. Rosamund M. J. Cleal, K. E. Walker, and R. Montague (London: English Heritage, 1995), pp. 15-17.

16 R. J. C. Atkinson, *Stonehenge* (London: H. Hamilton, 1956), pp. 2–3.

17 For a discussion of Hepworth's interest in prehistoric sites, see Andrew Causey, "Barbara Hepworth, Prehistory and the Cornish Landscape," *Sculpture Journal* 17, no. 2 (2008), pp. 9–22.

18 Robert Morris, quoted by Robert Smithson, in "The Artist as Site-Seer; or, A Dintorphic Essay" (1966-67), in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings,* ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 340.

19 Richard Long, "Earth: Symposium at White Museum, Cornell University" (February 1969), in *Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 182.

20 Andre added that, in contrast, "in America there has been a lot of slash and burn, slash and cut, there have been a lot of scars but very little cultivation." See Sharp, "Carl Andre," *Avalanche,* no. 1 (Fall 1970), p. 20.

21 Carl Andre, interview with Tim Marlow, *Tate Magazine,* Summer 1996, p. 38.

22 Clement Greenberg, interview with James Faure Walker, *Artscribe,* no. 10 (January 1978), p. 16.

23 Long's exhibition at the John Gibson Gallery ran from February 22 to March 14, 1969.

24 Simon Dell, "The Dialectics of Place: The Non-Sites and the Limits of Modernism," in *On Location: Siting Robert Smithson and His Contemporaries* (London: Black Dog, 2008), pp. 12–69.

25 Ibid., pp. 28 and 48.

26 Jack Burnham, *Beyond Modern Sculpture: The Effects of Science and Technology on the Sculpture of this Century* (London: A. Lane, 1968).

27 Dell, "Dialectics of Place," p. 41.

28 Burnham, *Beyond Modern Sculpture,* p. 153.

29 J. H. Prynne, "A Note on Metal" (1968), in *Poems* (Edinburgh: Agneau 2, 1982), pp. 125–30.

30 See Ian Patterson, "'the medium itself, rabbit by proxy': Some Thoughts about Reading J. H. Prynne," in *Poets on Writing: Britain, 1970–1991,* ed. Denise Riley (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1992), p. 235. See also the reading of the essay in C. D. Blanton, "Nominal Devolutions: Poetic Substance and the Critique of Political Economy," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 13, no. 1 (2000), pp 129–57.

31 Sharp, "Carl Andre," *Avalanche,* no. 1 (Fall 1970), p. 23.

32 The work, called *B-Void,* was temporarily retitled *Water-Void,* and was shown at the group exhibition *Projects in Nature,* at the Merriewold West Farm, Far Hills, New Jersey. The exhibition ran from September to October 1975. For an account of this work, see Jonathan Crary's review, "Projects in Nature," *Arts Magazine* 50, no. 4 (December 1975), p. 52.

33 This particular thirty-six-unit sculpture is made up of plates of aluminium, copper, steel, magnesium, lead, and zinc, and is now housed in the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo.

34 Lippard, *Overlay,* p. 1.

35 Ibid., p. 125. Andre's *Secant* was part of a group exhibition called *Wood,* which ran at the Nassau County Museum of Fine Arts from May to July 1977. Lippard's review of this work, "Wood at the Nassau County Museum," is in *Art in America* 65, no. 6 (November–December 1977), pp. 136–37.

"Like Two Guys Discovering Neptune":
Transatlantic Dialogues in the Emergence of Land Art

Joy Sleeman

In February 1969 the *Earth* exhibition at the Andrew Dickson White Museum, Cornell University, New York, brought together European and American artists for the first time under the aegis of the term *earth art*. The quotation in my title is taken from the comments of one participant in *Earth,* Neil Jenney.

His comments were in response to an audience question about whether the experience of actually digging in the earth is better than seeing the exhibition:

> No, man, it'd be a drag! One of the really nice things about this show . . . is that . . . everybody that's in earth is in it. . . . That's like having a show compiled of everybody that was born in the spring. In other words they do have something in common in that they use a similar vehicle. I think our expressions are basically different. I think the main reason this show happened was because people in England and Holland and Germany and different parts of America were doing it at the same time. Like two guys discovering Neptune.[1]

Jenney's comments emphasize both synchronic and more cosmic aspects of earth (or land) art's emergence, and give a sense of its perceived geographic limits at that time. They give cues for the themes of this essay.

The simultaneous, independent discovery of Neptune in 1846 is often cited as an example of some kind of mystical synchronicity, and it may be that this is all Neil Jenney intended by way of analogy. But the story of the discovery of Neptune is also a narrative of intense competition and national chauvinism between England and France, the two homelands of the discoverers of Neptune. By pushing Jenney's analogy a little further one might find parallels with the art world rivalries between Europe and America, in which the emergence of land art is inextricably enmeshed. The two youthful "discoverers" of Neptune—John Couch Adams, a twenty-seven-year-old Englishman, and Urbain Jean Joseph Leverrier, a thirty-five-year-old Frenchman—are reported to have met on friendly terms, despite the intense rivalries between the nations and institutions to which they belonged. Likewise, in 1969 "two guys" met on friendly terms at the *Earth* exhibition at Cornell; their artistic exchange and individual activities

during that year were to give shape, substance, and names to the emergent phenomenon under discussion. Gerry Schum, a German filmmaker, curator, and television pioneer, and the American artist Robert Smithson play important roles in this narrative, but they are by no means the only guys in the story.

   This essay attempts to restore the following aspects to their proper centrality in an account of the emergence of land art: the network of actual journeys and artistic encounters between artists on both sides of the Atlantic, through 1969, that contributed to its definition and development; and the importance—imaginatively, collectively—of simultaneous pioneering journeys in outer space. land art was conceptualized and named in a year when artists crossed frequently between continents and humans traversed the tract of outer space between Earth and its nearest satellite for the first time. It was in 1969 that the first Apollo moon landing was made, and in that same year there was great mobility in the art world, particularly between the United States and Europe.[2]

   At the heart of the discussion are events, meetings, and journeys that took place between two landmark exhibitions: in the United States, the aforementioned *Earth,* curated by Willoughby Sharp, which opened on February 11, 1969, and in Europe, *When Attitudes Become Form,* inaugurated by Harald Szeemann in Bern and shown in a slightly different configuration in Krefeld, Germany, before reaching its final destination in Britain. This last installation was curated by Charles Harrison at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in London, where it opened on August 27, 1969. All but one of the artists included in *Earth* also participated in *When Attitudes Become Form.*

   Between these two exhibitions, a third exhibition from 1969 also plays a central role in my narrative. On April 15, 1969, Gerry Schum and Ursula Wevers' *Fernsehgalerie* broadcast the first television exhibition—and the first exhibition with the title *Land Art*—on German national television (fig. 1). All of the artists in Schum's television exhibition *Land Art* were included in *When Attitudes Become Form.* Further, *Land Art,* like the *Earth* exhibition, included German, English, Dutch, and American artists—as delineated by Jenney. Schum

Figure 1
Gerry Schum and Ursula Wevers, title frame from *Land Art,* Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum, television broadcast, 1969. © Ursula Wevers. Photo: Getty Research Institute

traveled to the *Earth* exhibition in Ithaca with the express purpose of making personal contact with artists he wanted to include in his television exhibition. The artists he met included Walter De Maria, Michael Heizer, Dennis Oppenheim, and Robert Smithson, with whom he went on to film works in March 1969. Within a month, he broadcast the films—a turnaround time that gives some indication of the frenzied speed of activities during that year. Schum shot his film for *Land Art* in the environs of the Cornell campus in March, and in late August both Schum and Smithson were present for the opening of *When Attitudes Become Form* in London, where the film was screened as an integral part of the exhibition.[3]

Schum's *Land Art* envisaged land art as a TV phenomenon in Europe, just before landing on the moon became a global TV phenomenon (fig. 2). *Land Art* was explicitly made for TV and staged for its physical format—as were the Apollo moon landings.[4] The works in *Land Art,* and Jan Dibbets's work in particular, reified the television set as an art object. In Dibbets's film a tractor ploughing a vast trapezium on the beach translates into a neat circumnavigation of the television screen.[5] In 1969 the moon became a TV object, capable of changing human consciousness and in turn capable of being shaped by it. An important German gallerist, Konrad Fischer, was able to perceive this at the time when he remarked in an interview in 1971: "The extension of consciousness can come about through any new object: the moon on television, for example."[6] As was the case with Dibbets's film for *Land Art,* in Fischer's comment the television—both image and apparatus—becomes an object. Fischer's Düsseldorf gallery was the first to give one-person shows to many of the British and European exponents of land and earth art, and to mount the first European shows of many of the Americans, including Smithson.

In the transcript of a talk, published in *Interfunktionen* magazine in 1971, Buckminster Fuller says: "Never mind that space stuff, let's get back on earth, let's be practical, let's be blasé about the moon shoot."[7] It is intriguing that Fuller's assertion—the need to get back on earth—is precisely what one might see at stake in the emergence of earth art. A return to earth was part of the common cultural environment in which land art emerged, even if reactions

Figure 2
K. J. Sleeman, *First Man on the Moon at 3:56 am,* 21 July 1969. 35 mm slide. © K. J. Sleeman. Photo courtesy of the artist

to what they returned to varied widely. Moreover, the transcript of Fuller's talk was published alongside documentation of land- and earthworks in the Cologne-based magazine *Interfunktionen,* further suggesting connections between the earth in space (Fuller's "Spaceship Earth") and the earth in land art.[8] This connection was reaffirmed more recently in a 2004 monograph about *Interfunktionen* magazine (where events in the USA-USSR space race feature prominently in a chronology that runs alongside an account of the magazine's history).[9]

Although it has lived on in popular culture and the imagination, the Apollo project's manned missions to the moon proved to be a phenomenon with a brief life. They were eschewed by the intelligentsia at the time and heavily critiqued by a growing politically engaged counterculture. Once actualized as science fact rather than science fiction, moon exploration was popularly denounced as banal, ordinary, and a waste of funds. Apollo 17 made the last manned moon landing in December 1972, with further planned missions cancelled.[10] No human has set foot on the moon since.

By the end of 1973, fewer than five years after *Land Art* emerged as a term in art discourse, two figures central to its early articulation were dead. Smithson famously died in a plane crash at the age of thirty-five while surveying the site of his last major earthwork—or first posthumously completed earthwork—on July 20, 1973, four years to the day after the moon landing. Gerry Schum died when he was thirty-four years old, by his own hand, on March 23, 1973, his body undiscovered in his mobile home for several days.

Both men played definitive and fervently proselytizing roles in relation to their creations. Both inaugurated their personal vision of the land art phenomenon in exhibition form and gave names to its early manifestations. Smithson had introduced the idea of Earthworks in his writing and curating—in articles in *Artforum* magazine and in the *Earthworks* exhibition at the Dwan gallery in New York in October 1968. At the time of his death, an obituary notes, "Gerry Schum's name was already recorded in the Neue Brockhaus, the leading German encyclopedia, under the heading 'Land-Art.'"[11] Their personal presence was a key factor in both men's strategies, whether it was Smithson holding forth in the bar or Schum requesting to travel with his film to present it in person—as he did for the showing of *When Attitudes Become Form* in London.[12]

By 1973, we see the bathetic end of Apollo, the tragic end of both Smithson's Earthworks and Schum's version of land art as represented via his TV and video galleries, and the beginning of land art's historiography. Each of these dramatically interrupted or prematurely terminated histories left a compelling ellipsis in history—one that would be taken up by new interlocutors, but with varying periods of delay in different countries. Land art's place in the art historical canon was by no means assured at the time of both men's deaths.[13]

Land art's inclusion in *When Attitudes Become Form* is typical of its position in 1969; it was a part or fragment of other categories, including arte povera, conceptual art, environments, and happenings. In these early years even the names by which land art became more widely known were subject to intense critical disagreement.

Wrangles over terminology, including those of the curators of *Earth* and *When Attitudes Become Form,* are evidenced in Harald Szeemann's essay "How does an exhibition come into being?"—a diaristic account of organizing the *Attitudes* exhibition. In his entry for December 15, 1968, Szeemann records: "4:00pm With Dennis Oppenheim I visit Willoughby Sharp, who is now

working through each of the four elements in exhibitions. This is a misunder-standing. Earth is a bunch of nonsense."[14] Sharp is hardly less dismissive of his own term than Szeemann, writing in the catalogue to the *Earth* exhibition: "There is no earth art, there are just a number of earthworks, an important body of work categorized under a catchy heading."[15] In retrospect, in 1998, Brian Wallis asserts that "The whole land art movement was, according to early accounts, a scrappy and faddish set of pranks carried out by a small group of self-described nature nuts."[16] Conversely, and more typically of recent reas-sessments of the period, Alison Green writes in a footnote in her 2004 essay on *When Attitudes Become Form:* "Lucy Lippard, who was involved in many of the early Conceptual art projects, argues in *Overlay* that land art is the umbrella concern of the period."[17]

These contrasting assessments of the internal coherence and wider importance of land art show a sharp distinction between how land art was per-ceived during the lifetimes of Schum and Smithson and how it was perceived in accounts written subsequently, particularly those published a decade or so after their untimely deaths. In accounts written in the 1980s land art was taken more seriously, art historically, but connections between land art and the space race became less prominent, relegated to brief mentions as contextual detail, as for example in John Beardsley's 1984 book, *Earthworks and Beyond.*[18] According to Beardsley the moon landing is just one of the events in the complex historical moment summarized in a few sentences as "an era of space exploration, and of social unrest caused by an unpopular war and racial antagonisms."[19] The role of individuals who forged and sustained artistic dialogues across the Atlantic—such as Schum, Smithson, or Jan Dibbets—is similarly downplayed in Beardsley's account of land art. Intimate connections across geographical distances are overlooked in favor of theoretical ones with a longer historical pedigree, and actual interpersonal connections between European and American artists are thwarted by an account that separates American and British variants of earth-works into separate chapters. Schum does not appear at all in Beardsley's account, and Dibbets merits a single-line mention. The interpersonal connec-tions and earth-moon communications that were important factors in the emer-gence of land art have only recently returned to prominence in accounts that are often informed by the reemergence of contemporary dialogues.

Assiduous readers of the first edition of the writings of Robert Smithson, published in 1979, would have found a few explicit references to space travel and the moon landing.[20] Rather more references emerged in subsequent publica-tions, namely in Eugenie Tsai's *Robert Smithson Unearthed* in 1991, and in the revised edition of Smithson's writings edited by Jack Flam in 1996. Both books included essays which were being published for the first time.[21] Many of these references by Smithson are in interviews, conversations, cowritten articles, or correspondence—in short, in dialogue. The evidence that has allowed more recent accounts to make a direct connection between Smithson's work and the Apollo moon landing has derived from Smithson's personal correspondence and private papers,[22] and from anecdotal or oral testimony, most particularly from Smithson's widow, artist Nancy Holt.[23] For example, Ann Reynolds's com-pelling account comparing Smithson's "Incidents of Mirror Travel in the Yucatan" in *Artforum* magazine with NASA's photo documentation of the moon landing in *Life* magazine[24] is only made possible with access to Smithson's archive and through Reynolds's methodological decision to give

"equal consideration" to all the material in the archive, including "a large variety of magazines, tourist pamphlets, postcards, books, and records."[25]

Calvin Tomkins wrote in the *New Yorker* in 1972: "In the light of space exploration and the ecology movement" earthworks may "strike future art scholars as historically inevitable."[26] Tomkins goes on to quote Smithson discussing the making of his "nonsites": "Smithson sees a somewhat ironic parallel between this activity and the Apollo missions to the moon. 'The moon shots are like very expensive nonsites,' he says."[27] It is much later, in the reminiscences of Smithson's widow, that this statement is linked to a call from *The New York Times* to ask Smithson "about what his thoughts were about the moon shot."[28] Smithson's response was not published at the time. Perhaps this is not surprising when one considers how oppositional Smithson's views seem to the vision of world peace presented in the editorial of that very newspaper at the time of the first Apollo lunar orbit. In an article titled "Riders on the Earth," Archibald MacLeish wrote: "To see the earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence in which it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the earth together, brothers in that bright loveliness in the eternal cold—brothers who know now that they are truly brothers."[29] Whereas this contemporary commentator saw Apollo's images of the earth heralding a new era of peace and unity, Smithson perceived only limits: a vision of future frenzy over the earth's finite space and resources. He wrote: "Perhaps the moon landing was one of the most demoralizing events in history, in that the media revealed the planet Earth to be a limited closed system, not unlike the island in *Lord of the Flies*."[30]

In his 2004 book, *Robert Smithson and the American Landscape*, Ron Graziani uses Smithson's analogy between his work and the Apollo moon landing to connect and contrast Smithson's activities beneath the earth in 1969 and the Apollo astronauts in outer space: "Although the artist was underground at the Cayuga mines, 1969 would also be the year the scientific community reached a milestone in its quest for a new future in space. NASA had planned the first US walk on the moon for the middle of that year. And on July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong indeed successfully accomplished what Smithson would describe as 'a very expensive nonsite.'"[31]

The neat synchronicity of Graziani's contrast between Smithson's chthonic and NASA's cosmic enterprises is only possible with the elision of time between February and July. It is Schum's *Land Art* film—made with Smithson in the Cayuga mines and broadcast on television in April—that mediates the distance, both temporal and geographic, between the mines in New York state and Apollo on the moon in July. In fact, as Holt affirms, Smithson watched the Apollo 11 moon landing with Holt and Joan Jonas at the studio of Charles Ross—in the company of other artists but witnessed, as for most people in 1969, live on TV.[32] In between February and July, Smithson famously traveled to the Yucatan, a journey recounted in his article for *Artforum*.[33]

Perhaps serendipitously, Smithson departed for his journey to the Yucatan on the very day Schum's *Land Art* was broadcast on German television: April 15. If Smithson's magazine article invented a past and showed the readers of *Artforum* what it looked like, it was Schum's *Land Art* exhibition that presaged how millions would see the moon landing—mediated by television.

Two of the archetypal landscapes that feature in early works of land art also served as earth equivalents for the moonscape in moon-landing rehearsals, reenactments, and filmic re-creations: the beach and the desert. Two of the

American works for Schum's *Land Art,* by de Maria and Heizer, were made in the desert. With one exception (Richard Long's sculpture, made on the inhospitable Dartmoor in England), all of the European works for Schum's *Land Art* were made on beaches. Both Flanagan's "Hole in the Sea" and Dibbets's work were made on the North Sea coast of the Netherlands.

On his way to the Yucatan and shortly after his return, Smithson made works in one of those quintessential early land art environments—the beach. Before traveling to the Yucatan, Smithson and Holt stopped off at Robert Rauschenberg's home in Florida. Smithson made an "upside down tree" work on Captiva Island. There is a photograph of him and Rauschenberg rolling the tree stump onto the beach in Robert Hobbs's book *Robert Smithson: Sculpture.*[34] Following his return to New York Smithson participated in an exhibition called *Letters* on, or perhaps at, a beach—Long Beach, New Jersey—with a work called *Urination Map of the Constellation Hydra.* Making connections to both cosmological and geological mapping, the *Urination Map* is aligned with the stars and with the geological history of the earth and involved urinating at a series of five points, predetermined by drawing an approximation of a map of the constellation Hydra onto a map of the New Jersey coastline.

Newly arrived on what was to be a momentous first journey to the United States, the British artist Hamish Fulton also participated in the *Letters* exhibition, which opened on July 5, 1969, and also included artists Keith Sonnier, Richard Serra, Philip Glass, and others.[35] These were important artists, encountered at a significant moment in Fulton's career, but of greater significance according to the artist was his encounter with the American landscape. Summer 1969 found him visiting sites important to the battles between Native Americans and European settlers. It was here that Fulton experienced an epiphany: "Instead of beginning my work gradually in England, I started almost suddenly in South Dakota, Wyoming, Utah, and Montana."[36]

Fulton's response upon his return to Britain was to reenvisage his own familiar landscape. Perhaps this was the equivalent of Fulton's return to earth? In 1970 Fulton moved permanently to Kent, England, and in 1971 began making road walks. *Hollow Lane,* an artist's book consisting mainly of photographs with accompanying text, was published in 1971. It juxtaposes images from quintessentially British landscapes—notably the titular "hollow lane," a photograph taken on a 165-mile walk in April 1971 from Winchester Cathedral to Canterbury Cathedral along the route of the Pilgrims Way, "the main prehistoric thoroughfare in South-East England"—with images from walks in Iceland, Canada, and the United States. Near the end of the book is a narrative titled "The naming of an Arapahoe," which recounts a tale of how an American Indian called Crane became known as "Six Feathers" after an encounter with the healing powers of an eagle when injured in the landscape.[37]

Fulton was perhaps the first to draw a direct connection between Long's work and the moon landing in a text published in 1991. He does so with reference to perhaps the most iconic of Long's works: "'A LINE MADE BY WALKING ENGLAND 1967.' (fig. 3) First moon walk 1969".[38] Later in the text Fulton comments: "A line (made by) walking. In time, the sculpture will have disappeared, long before the commercialization of the word 'green' . . . and those footsteps on the moon."[39]

Fulton's text takes the form of an informal exchange, part of an ongoing dialogue—perhaps in imitation of the banter exchanged between walking

Figure 3
Richard Long (British, b. 1945), *A Line Made by Walking England 1967*. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS London. Photo courtesy of Haunch of Venison, London

partners, for Long and Fulton have made a number of walks together since their student days. In Fulton's typically understated way, Long's footsteps are made to anticipate the footsteps on the moon.

Walking on the moon was a distinctive and significant aspect of the Apollo project, and of Apollo 11 in particular. By the early 1970s the walk as an integer of land art had become emphatic. That this was felt more broadly in British art at the time is evidenced in Fulton's commitment to being a "walking artist," adopting, from 1973, the mantra "no walk, no work."[40] But the idea of the walk as art in Britain is most directly linked to Long, and it was Long's work that was referenced in works made at the very beginning of the 1970s by two of Long's contemporaries from his time as a student in the sculpture department at St. Martin's School of Art in London: Bruce McLean and John Hilliard.

Long as the walking artist was institutionalized enough to be subject to a characteristic spoof or homage by Bruce McLean. In 1970 he made the film *The Elusive Sculptor, Richard Long* by stalking Long, and including a sequence asking passers-by in a London park if they'd seen this mysterious walking artist.[41] In 1971 in another London Park, unbeknownst to either artist at the time, John Hilliard made *A Walk across the Park* on Hampstead Heath in London. Hilliard places the walking figure as the central motif of a work in

which a single photograph is cropped in four different ways to create a sequence of narratives.

The sculpture department at St. Martin's was a formative location in the emergence of land art in Britain, both through the influential reputation and innovative pedagogy of its teaching staff and the dynamics of peer group interaction among the student body. Three out of the four European artists in Schum's television exhibition, *Land Art*—Dibbets, Flanagan, and Long—had a St. Martin's connection.[42] Dibbets and Long were the only Europeans to be included in all three of the related exhibitions: *Earth* at Cornell, *Land Art,* and *When Attitudes Become Form.* Indeed, Szeemann credits Dibbets with the gesture that inaugurated his exhibition concept.[43] Dibbets is a crucial figure in the development of land art as both maker of work and facilitator of connections between people. He spent only a term at St. Martin's and suggested that it was not so much the studios and atmosphere of the school that made an impact on him as the "walk through the park" to get to the school. His first encounter with Long was similarly indirect, seeing a photograph of one of Long's works made by walking and recognizing in it an artistic fellow traveler. Dibbets was one of a large number of international students who were already well-established artists before they came to study at St. Martin's during the 1960s.[44] Although he was there for a very short time, its impact on him—and his on the fellow students he met, albeit fleetingly—was crucial. Dibbets was a crucial conduit between Long and the wider European and international art scene. In foregrounding artistic dialogue in the history of land art's emergence, his work and presence assume a far more central role.

One of the many international students who came to the school, and then stayed on to teach, was the South African sculptor Roelof Louw, who studied at St. Martin's from 1961 to 1964 and taught there from 1966 until the early 1970s. Louw is an intriguing sculptor because the development of his work spans both the abstract, constructed type of object sculpture being made at St. Martin's in the early 1960s and the more conceptual and site-specific practices. Looking at the work of students in the early to mid-1960s, one sees a similar transition from the constructed object to something less formally bounded and in direct dialogue with its environment. It is evident in the student work of Barry Flanagan, Fulton, Hilliard, McLean, and even George (Passmore, of the sculptors Gilbert & George).

Louw's usefulness as a transitional figure in this way is demonstrated in Charles Harrison's essay "Some Recent Sculpture in Britain," published in *Studio International* in January 1969; the essay focuses on developments at St. Martin's in the mid- to late 1960s.[45] The year 1969 found Louw making some decidedly land art–oriented works, and although he wasn't included in the exhibitions that defined earthworks—*Earth* and *Land Art*—his works for the London showing of *When Attitudes Become Form* articulate the earth in a comparable manner (fig. 4).

Louw's work was clearly considered in the context of land art at the time, as Charles Harrison's article "Roelof Louw's sculpture" makes clear. He describes a work by Louw as "iron poles placed around a hill, Hampstead Heath 1968"; later he states that "Art manifests itself primarily through our recognition of its human origin in relationship to its lack of function. Maiden Castle is history, archaeology, picturesque; 'fairy rings' in the grass are natural, curious, picturesque; iron poles placed around the base of a hill on Hampstead

Heath are altogether different."[46] Harrison's footnote informs us at this point that "of course not all those who call themselves sculptors and operate in the landscape are in fact producing sculpture. Many of them are merely indulging a taste for the egocentric picturesque, the grandiose or even the Gothick. See Sidney Tillim's irritating but provoking article 'Earthworks and the new Picturesque' in *Artforum,* December 1968."[47] Tillim's article was a review of Smithson's *Earthworks* exhibition at the Dwan Gallery, and thus Harrison not only makes connections between contemporary works in Britain and the United States but is revealing of some British attitudes toward the American work at that crucial early moment.

In 1969 Smithson arrived in Britain in all his guises at once. In short succession, between April and August 1969, British audiences saw Smithson the minimalist sculptor in *Art of the Real* at the Tate Gallery (April 24–June 1); Smithson the writer when "Aerial Art" was published in *Studio International* in April 1969;[48] and Smithson the earth artist—in actual work and in person in the exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form* at the ICA. He received a somewhat lukewarm reception in certain quarters of the London art world. Barbara Reise, an American critic based in London, wrote: "Smithson's 'Non-Sites' of photographs and material extractions from real-life rock-quarries are consistently less interesting than rock-quarries themselves";[49] in private correspondence, she wrote: "Robert Smithson was here, hostile towards me (a British understatement) and talking up a storm."[50] Some in Britain would already have been familiar with Smithson's work from the pages of *Artforum* magazine (it was in the library at St. Martin's, for example, from 1966 on), but few had the opportunity to see his work in actuality. Smithson continued to be poorly represented in public collections in Britain.[51] Perhaps some of the most intriguing responses to his work are from sculptors working in Britain, such as Louw.

If Louw's work emerged out of a productive dialogue between the constructed and more environmentally oriented sculptural practices at St. Martin's in the 1960s, in the 1970s his work and writing engaged in a productive dialogue with the work of Smithson—albeit posthumously. And in fact the unfinished nature of Smithson's earthworks—the ellipsis they opened up in sculpture discourse—is precisely Louw's point of departure. In his essay "Sites/Non-Sites: Smithson's Influence on Recent Landscape Projects," published in 1977, Louw

entreats his readers to join him on an imagined journey to the site of an unrealized Smithson site work. Louw writes:

> Smithson's site works, it might be said, bind a style of physical action to geological circumstances. What then happens? Consider how the journey directed by Smithson's proposed project for Sprawling Mounds might operate. (While this massive labyrinth for strip mine tailings is unrealized, it might readily be re-enacted as an experience by visiting strip mine tailings and by wandering through mine dumps.) . . . The decision to travel to the site of this project is like setting out on an extraordinary pilgrimage to a wasteland. . . . Shortly the enormous white mounds come into sight. Their eroded, misshapen surfaces of whitish rubble and gravel affront one; they loom ahead like an abominable mess. [52]

Quarries might be pretty much the same wherever they are—hence Louw's suggestion that Smithson's work can be imaginatively reenacted in any similar landscape. But the reference to "whitish rubble and gravel" evokes the very particular quarry site and material chosen by Smithson for his work for the London showing of *When Attitudes Become Form*.

The geological circumstances of Smithson's work then are very specific. Smithson's work is made of chalk, a material that forms some of the most distinctive and archetypal landscapes of Britain—including that icon of Britishness, the White Cliffs of Dover. Formally, the quest for white fits with his search for particular colors in the landscape; the choice of chalk also has significance for Smithson's interest in geological time and in the concept of a dynamic earth of moving tectonic plates, explored in his work through the superimposition of different temporal mappings onto the contemporary landscape.

Smithson's work *Chalk-Mirror Displacement* (1969), made from mirrors radiating from a central axis and chalk fragments, existed simultaneously in the gallery at the ICA and in the landscape at Oxted Quarry (fig. 5). The location of the quarry is sometimes given in publications as Oxted, York, and it is possible that Smithson could have found a chalk quarry as far north in Britain as York, given that the chalk deposits in Britain extend as far northward as Flamborough Head on the North Yorkshire Coast. In the south and east of England chalk forms distinctive tracts of higher ground—the North and South Downs that meet the sea on the south coast. North of London the chalk extends through the Chilterns to the Wash, and then northward along the east coast to North Yorkshire. Given its proximity to London and other factors revealed in a site visit I made in 2008, it seems likely that the actual location was Oxted quarry in Surrey.

Geologically, the landscape around Oxted quarry was formed by earth movements around sixty million years ago that folded the chalk—formed from the sea creatures and plants of an ancient ocean—and the underlying sand and clay into a dome. The high central part later eroded, exposing the older clay and sand beneath. Oxted Quarry is located on the northern ridge of the Downs. Immediately to the south, in the exposed clay and sand area of the Weald, is Saint Leonards and Tilgate Forest, where, in the early nineteenth century, the wife of doctor and geologist Gideon Mantell discovered the remains of a dinosaur, a tooth shaped like an enormous version of an Iguana's tooth—and the fossil that gave us the name *dinosaur,* meaning literally "terrible lizard."[53] This

Figure 5
Robert Smithson (American, 1938–1973),
Chalk-Mirror Displacement (Oxted Quarry),
Yorkshire, England, 1969. © Estate of Robert
Smithson/Licensed by VAGA, New York,
NY. Photo courtesy of James Cohan Gallery,
New York

term for dinosaurs was used by Smithson in his article "A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art,"[54] and it is perhaps fortuitous, but nonetheless significant, that in late summer 1969 Smithson's travels in England led him to make art close to the site where a discovery in the British landscape inaugurated a new term in language.

As is typical in Smithson's work, this quarry is in the near environs of a large city—in this case London—and in a landscape made by dramatic geological earth shifting and with a rich fossil record. Smithson's preference for "backwater sites"[55] and "landscapes that suggest prehistory,"[56] as well as for particular geological formations, the detritus of millennia, and of more recent excavation, resonates with the choice of Oxted Quarry.

On a road map contemporary with Smithson's visit one can see that the location of the quarry site is just off a main route out of London, near Gatwick Airport and on the edge of the North Downs. It is on the route of the ancient Pilgrims Way and adjacent to the route of a Roman road; indeed quarrying in this area dates back to Roman times. Visiting the area today one could argue that the history of this site continued to mirror aspects of Smithson's work long after his actual mirror work departed. Disruption of the landscape continued with major road construction in the mid-1970s; now running parallel to the ancient pilgrims' road is the M25, London's orbital motorway, making the dialogue between human and geological time scales now even more visible and emphatic.

The Downs is also the very landscape Fulton made his own when he moved to Kent in 1970. Near the quarry site at Oxted one encounters scenes

reminiscent of Fulton's photographic work, made on this route in 1971, just a couple of years after Smithson's visit to Britain. While Smithson was working in Britain in the summer of 1969, Fulton was almost simultaneously exploring sites of profound historical significance in the development of America's identity. Both British and US sites were united in Fulton's *Hollow Lane* publication in 1971. A cultural exchange appears to be taking place. But if Fulton's encounter with the American landscape was acknowledged by the artist as an artistic epiphany, Smithson's encounter with the British landscape was very much played down in the first systematic study of his sculpture by Robert Hobbs. There is a vagueness about Smithson's trip in Hobbs's account. Hobbs records that "he [Smithson] and Holt visited Devonshire where they walked to little-known sites; they also travelled to Stonehenge, Weir's Wood, and Tintern Abbey. Smithson was as taken by ancient and medieval ruins as he was by depressed coal-mining districts and industrial sites."[57] Of the places named, some are specific, others are *types* of locations; some are famous sites, and one, "Weir's Wood," is not easy to find on a conventional road or tourist map.

The ambiguity in published accounts of the location of Smithson's *Chalk-Mirror Displacement* supports Louw's assertion—and indeed the evidence of Smithson's many unrealized projects for mine and quarry site reclamations—that Smithson's preferred sites were typical and generic types rather than specific locations. Yet in exploring Anglo-American dialogues in the emergence of land art, a reinvestigation of the particularities of Smithson's engagement with the British landscape on his visit in 1969 deserves some closer attention, and is I believe revealing, not only of the direction of Smithson's work at that juncture but of its dialogue with British landscape art generally and with the work of his British contemporaries in particular.

Rather than a neat set of cultural exchanges we have a complex array of intersecting journeys, anticipations, and real connections. Land art coalesced around a series of intense transatlantic exchanges and encounters with landscapes on earth in the year that humans first walked on the moon. Those exchanges and encounters, embedded in the deep structure of land art, continue to shape its topography. Land art is an artistic enterprise that began in the 1960s, was interrupted by tragedy among its earliest protagonists, and was reconfigured art historically in the 1980s, an era with strikingly different attitudes to landscape environments and lunar exploration than those that prevailed in the first decade of land art's emergence. An account that gives greater emphasis to transatlantic exchange, to the importance of British artists—and British landscapes—and that locates more centrally the importance of simultaneous extraterrestrial explorations, would begin to effect a realignment of the international history of land art. This is one small step in that larger project.

Notes

1 Neil Jenny in Robert Smithson, *The Writings of Robert Smithson: Essays with Illustrations,* ed. Nancy Holt (New York: New York University Press, 1979), pp. 163–64.
2 Carel Blotkamp described it as a "magical year" in the recent history of art, see "1969," in *Conceptual Art in The Netherlands and Belgium, 1965-1975,* eds. S. Heman, J. Poot, and H. Visser

(Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum and Rotterdam; NAi Uitgevers, 2002), p. 22. Dennis Oppenheim, who participated in both exhibitions, commented in retrospect: "If you read resumes you'll see that there was a lot of activity, a lot of important shows in 1969. Almost everyone was beginning to show in Europe for the first time. The *Land Art* show was one of a number of things that facilitated this exposure. Because remember, one is coming from absolute darkness into a public view. Almost all of the artists involved were unknown the year before." "Interview with Dennis Oppenheim by Barbara Hess," in *Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum, Videogalerie Schum* (Düsseldorf: Snoeck, 2003), p. 86.

3 Charles Harrison, "Grounds for Optimism: The Work of Gerry Schum," in *Ready to Shoot,* pp. 46–54.

4 "The entire project, although by no means uncontested at the time, was a highly choreographed affair in which the rhetorics of scientific exploration and human endeavor coincided as neatly with its role as spectacular public entertainment as they had in the earlier expeditions of Cook, Livingstone, Stanley, and Peary. Live television transmissions, globalized through new satellite technology, connected the astronauts directly to a mass audience; night launches increased the drama of a burning inferno from which the elegant rocket escaped into pure, ethereal space; and the dates of missions were linked to public holidays, when mass audiences were better guaranteed." Dennis Cosgrove, *Apollo's Eye: A Cartographic Genealogy of the Earth in the Western Imagination* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 256.

5 A video clip from the film can be viewed at http://www.ursula-wevers.de.

6 Konrad Fischer interviewed by Georg Jappe, *Studio International* 181, no. 930 (February 1971), p. 71.

7 *Interfunktionen,* no. 7 (September 1971), p. 62.

8 This was the second issue of this Cologne based magazine to publish extensive documentation of such works in its pages: both issues 3 (1969) and 7 (1971) contained extensive photographic and textual documentation of earth and land art, under the title "land art / earth works."

9 Gloria Moure, "Behind the Facts. *Interfunktionen, 1968–1975*," with "Chronology 1968-1975" by Dawn Leach, in *Behind the Facts: Interfunktionen, 1968–1975,* ed. G. Moure (Barcelona: Ediciones Poligrafa, 2004), pp. 24–47.

10 "After the last Apollo mission to the moon in 1972 and the Skylab missions in 1973, the American space program entered a quiet period. Except for the joint Apollo-Soyuz flight in 1975, no manned American spacecraft left Earth from late 1973 until April 1981, when the first Space Shuttle was launched." Frank White, *The Overview Effect* (Reston, Va.: American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, 1998), p. 43. The "Laser Ranging Reflector" is the one surviving element of the Apollo project, still returning data from the moon to the McDonald Observatory in Texas, studying the rate at which the moon is receding from the earth (currently 3.8 cm per year). http://www.lpi.usra.edu/lunar/missions/apollo/apollo_11/experiments/lrr/.

11 Georg Jappe, "Gerry Schum," *Studio International* 185, no. 955 (May 1973), p. 236.

12 Letter from Schum to Ann Lauterbach, July 30, 1969, Tate archive, London, 955/7/2/11 (ICA papers).

13 There is considerably uneven development in land art's historiography with differing periods of delay in taking up and reintegrating these elements of discourse, marking distinct differences between the most compelling overviews of the phenomenon as articulated today compared to those that appeared to make sense to contemporary observers. There are also marked national differences. While this paper deals primarily with Anglo-American dialogues in English, the space travel connection seems to have played a more central interpretative role in German language publications. A chapter in Anne Hoorman's (posthumously published) book from 2007, "Die Kunstlerische Erforschung der Amerikanischen Landschaft," explores the theme with reference to American land artists and refers to publications linking space exploration and land art by Thomas Kellein dating back to 1986. See Hoormann, *Medium und Material* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2007), p. 87, n. 4. The first comprehensive academic treatment of Schum's work—Christiane Fricke's (1995) Ph.D. thesis—was published by Peter Lang, in German, in 1996. There was no equivalent overview in English until the book that accompanied the exhibition *Ready to Shoot* in 2003, followed by a rapid assimilation of Schum into subsequent accounts.

14 Harald Szeemann, "How Does an Exhibition Come into Being?" trans. Gerard Goodman, in *Painting Object Film Concept: Works from the Herbig Collection* (London: Christies, 1998), p. 41.

15 Willoughby Sharp, "Notes toward an Understanding of Earth Art," in *Earth,* exh. cat. (Ithaca: Andrew Dixon White Museum of Art, Cornell University, 1970), unpaginated.

16 Brian Wallis, "Survey," in J. Kastner and B. Wallis, *Land and Environmental Art* (London: Phaidon, 1998), p. 23.

17 Alison M. Green, "*When Attitudes Become Form* and the Contest over Conceptual Art's History," in *Conceptual Art: Theory, Myth, and Practice,* ed. Michael Corris (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 140, n. 18. I can't find this stated so explicitly in Lippard's book though it is certainly implied. L. Lippard, *Overlay* (New York: Pantheon, 1983).

18 John Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond* (New York: Abbeville, 1989), p. 7 (first published 1984).

19 Ibid., p. 13.

20 For example: Mel Bochner and Robert Smithson, "The Domain of the Great Bear" (*Art Voices,* Fall 1966); "'What is a Museum?': A Dialogue between Allan Kaprow and Robert Smithson" (*Arts Yearbook,* 1967); Liza Bear and Willoughby Sharp, "Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson" (*Avalanche,* no. 1 [Fall 1970]); Smithson's comments in "The Artist and Politics: A Symposium" (*Artforum,* September 1970) and Bruce Kurtz, "Conversation with Robert Smithson" (1972; first published in *The Fox* 2 [1975]).

21 For example in Smithson's letter to Gyorgy Kepes (1969) and in "Four Conversations between Dennis Wheeler and Robert Smithson" (1969-70), edited by Eva Schmidt; first published in E. Tsai, *Robert Smithson Unearthed: Drawings, Collages, Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), and subsequently reprinted in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings,* ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1996).

22 In the Holt/Smithson archive donated by Holt to the Archives of American Art in 1987.

23 For example: from Ann Reynolds's interview with Holt (1997) about Smithson's comments in response to the moon landing to *The New York Times,* see A. Reynolds, *Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey and Elsewhere* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 2003), pp. 282–83, n. 131; and about the impact of the moon landing on earthworks more generally, in conversations with Holt published in Amy Newman, *Challenging Art: Artforum* (New York: Soho Press, 2000), p. 251: "The moon shot in '69 was important, because it was the first time that we saw the earth as a finite entity. Earth art, of course, had already begun before the moon shot but the big sculptures, Bob's *Spiral Jetty* and Michael Heizer's *Double Negative* weren't done until *after* the moon shot. The nation was *ready* for something."

24 Reynolds, *Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey,* pp. 163–72.

25 Ibid., p. XIII.

26 Calvin Tomkins, "Maybe a Quantum Leap," in *The Scene: Reports on Post-Modern Art* (New York: Viking Press, 1976), p. 129. First published in *The New Yorker,* February 5, 1972. My thanks to Lynda Morris for alerting me to this important source.

27 Ibid., p. 143.

28 Newman, *Challenging Art,* p. 251.

29 Editorial, *The New York Times,* December 25, 1968, cited in Cosgrove, *Apollo's Eye,* p. 259.

30 Smithson, "The Artist and Politics: A Symposium," *Artforum,* September 1970, reprinted in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* pp. 134–35.

31 Ron Graziani, *Robert Smithson and the American Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 90. Two sources for Smithson's "very expensive non-site" comment were published in the 1970s. It appears in Calvin Tomkins, "Maybe a Quantum Leap"; the other is in the interview with Bruce Kurtz "Conversation with Robert Smithson" (1972; first published in *The Fox* 2 [1975]). Tomkins reports a slightly more extended version of Smithson's comparison, with more detail about other aspects of the Apollo mission that interest Smithson in relation to his investigations.

32 "I remember Bob and I went to see the moon shot on television at Chuck Ross's studio and Joan Jonas was there, they were together then. And there was all this ho-hum business, there was this *attitude* like, 'Oh, it's nothing.' But there was a *thrill* to it. And I thought it was so weird that everyone was putting it down." Holt in Newman, *Challenging Art,* p. 251.

33 Smithson, "Incidents of Mirror Travel in the Yucatan," *Artforum,* September 1969, reprinted in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* pp. 119–33.

34 Photograph by Nancy Holt in Robert Hobbs, *Robert Smithson: Sculpture* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 149.

35 The full list of artists participating in this exhibition is in the entry in L. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1997), p. 106. The chronology in the catalogue for Fulton's exhibition at Tate Britain in records for 1969: "Visits New York and meets Smithson, Nancy Holt, Richard Serra, and Keith Sonnier." ("Chronology," compiled by Ben Tufnell and Louise Hayward, in Ben Tufnell and Andrew Wilson, *Hamish Fulton: Walking Journey* [London: Tate, 2002], p. 114.)

36 Hamish Fulton, "Specific Places and Particular Events," Hamish Fulton interviewed by Ben Tufnell, in Tufnell and Wilson, *Hamish Fulton: Walking Journey,* p. 106.

37 Hamish Fulton, *Hollow Lane* (London: Situation Publications, 1971).

38 These are two of four events at the beginning of Fulton's text, the other two events are: "Roll over Beethoven 1956" and "North Face Eiger Direct 1966." Hamish Fulton, "Old Muddy," in *Richard Long: Walking in Circles* (London: Hayward Gallery, 1991), p. 241.

39 Fulton, "Old Muddy," p. 245.

40 David Reason, "Tracking Fulton," in *Hamish Fulton: Selected Walks, 1969–1989* (Buffalo: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1990), p. 7.

41 The film is listed in McLean's section in the Whitechapel Art Gallery's exhibition, *Live in Your Head* (London, 2000), under "Selected Solo Exhibitions, Films and Performances": "1970 video, b/w, 10 min."

42 Had the filming with Dutch/English collective "Eventstructure Research Group" worked out as proposed in an early prospectus for the exhibition, there would have been another artist with a St. Martin's affiliation in Schum's *Land Art*—the London-based Australian-born sculptor, Jeffrey Shaw. ERG's contribution would also have been located on a beach: "Waterwood Sandquake," Mittelmeer. See the "In Preparation" section in *When Attitudes Become Form,* exh. cat. (Bern, 1969), and, for why it didn't work out, see Ursula Wevers "Love Work Television Gallery," in *Ready to Shoot* (Düsseldorf: Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 2003), pp. 24–26.

43 "In the beginning was Dibbets's gesture to water a lawn on a table. But you cannot exhibit gestures." Szeemann, visiting Lucassen, in Szeemann, "How Does an Exhibition Come into Being?" in *Painting Object Film Concept,* entry for July 22 1968, p. 37.

44 Frank Martin referred to this when interviewed in 1997 for the *National Life Stories: Artists' Lives,* collection C466/58/01-07, tape 4 (F5907), side A, and tape 7 (F5910), side B, British Library, London (this copy consulted at the Henry Moore Institute library, Leeds), and there is evidence in the material in Martin's archive, now at Tate, of the nationalities of many of the students, with their countries of origin written onto sheets of student identity photographs.

45 Charles Harrison, "Some Recent Sculpture in Britain," *Studio International* 177, no. 907 (January 1969), pp. 25–33.

46 Charles Harrison, "Roelof Louw's sculpture," *Studio International* 178, no. 915 (October 1969), pp. 126–27.

47 Ibid., p. 129, n. 4.

48 Smithson, "Aerial Art," *Studio International* 177, no. 910 (April 1969), pp. 180–81; an article that explored Smithson's project for the Dallas-Fort Worth regional airport, formative on the thinking behind his *Earthworks* exhibition in 1969.

49 Barbara Reise, "'Untitled 1969': A Footnote on Art and Minimalstylehood," *Studio International* 177, no. 910 (April 1969), p. 172.

50 Reise in a letter written to Dan Flavin, this section dated September 6, 1969, Tate archive, London, TGA 786/4/3 (Barbara Reise correspondence to and from family and friends, 1968–69).

51 For example, Tate did not acquire a work by Smithson until 2002 (*Ithaca Mirror Trail, Ithaca, New York,* 1969).

52 Roelof Louw, "'Sites/Non-Sites': Smithson's Influence on Recent Landscape Projects," *Tracks, a Journal of Artists' Writings* 3, nos. 1–2 (Spring 1977), pp. 7–8.

53 The Historic Map of Gideon Mantel is featured on the website *Geology of Great Britain,* © Ian West and Tonya West, www.soton.ac.uk/~imw/Geology-Britain.htm.

54 Robert Smithson, "A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art" (1968), in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 87.

55 Smithson in "Interview with Robert Smithson for the Archives of American Art / Smithsonian Institution" (1972), in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 295.

56 Smithson, "Conversation in Salt Lake City" (1972), in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 298.

57 Robert Hobbs, *Robert Smithson: Sculpture* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 171.

Robert Smithson and the Anglo-American Picturesque

Timothy D. Martin

To speak of an Anglo-American connection, as opposed to, say, a French or German connection, is an invitation to speak about different types of enjoyment, different cultural matrices in which to interpret, where interpretation itself is a type of enjoyment. On the subject of Anglo-American cultural exchange, it might be productive to look at American land art as it relates to the British picturesque park. This, at least, was the view of Robert Smithson, a view that is developed particularly in his last essay, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," published in the February 1973 issue of *Artforum* (figs. 1 a–c). In Smithson's view, land art was a continuation of a

Figure 1a
Robert Smithson (American, 1938–1973), "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," *Artforum* (February 1973), 62. © Estate of Robert Smithson/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY
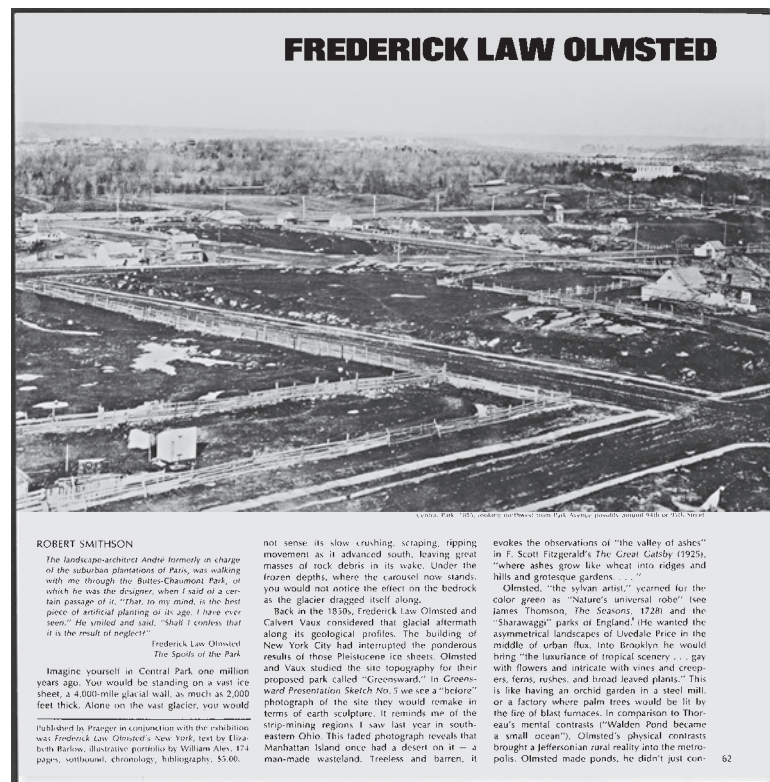
Figure 1b
Robert Smithson (American, 1938–1973),
"Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical
Landscape," *Artforum* (February 1973), 63.
© Estate of Robert Smithson/Licensed by
VAGA, New York, NY

Figure 1c
Robert Smithson (American, 1938–1973),
"Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical
Landscape," *Artforum* (February 1973), 65.
© Estate of Robert Smithson/Licensed by
VAGA, New York, NY

Martin, "Robert Smithson and the Anglo-American Picturesque,"
Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture, 1945–1975 (Getty, 2011)

discourse that dated back at least to the British garden movements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—a discourse that used the garden to create and test a new philosophy based on natural law rather than on religious law. Through his study of art history, phenomenology, anthropology, and psychoanalysis Smithson outlined a new status for land art. He suggested a philosophy, a political strategy, and a new role for the artist—that of analyst who understands and can act to resolve social conflict. If one aim of the Olmsted essay was to show how the artists of the Anglo-American picturesque were negotiators between conflicted members of a democratic society, then a further aim was to show how contemporary land artists might similarly mediate between capitalist mining companies and ecology movements.

To set out some of the wider context, "Frederick Law Olmsted" is an unusual essay for Smithson. It is scholarly, but without his deadpan dramatics of extreme materialism, and most unusually he openly seeks to combine artistic and democratic political values. And where this essay is glowingly positive about Olmsted—who designed Central Park in New York in the 1850s—it is worth mentioning that Smithson was, at the same time, also willing to criticize Marcel Duchamp and Clement Greenberg, whom he claimed were dangerously antidemocratic and idealist.[1]

Having completed *Spiral Jetty* in 1970 Smithson was, by 1973, a key figure in the land art movement, and in some respects his Olmsted essay was intended to be an ex post facto manifesto. One could be a bit naive and say that Smithson was legitimizing land art with a historical and European pedigree, but only by ignoring that the essay clearly serves a socially, politically, and economically engaged art—that, in other words, the essay is as concerned with how a legacy is used as it is with establishing the legacy in the first place. Politics was nothing new in the pages of *Artforum,* especially since the political heat of the summer of 1968, but during that summer Smithson remained silent on political issues, preferring instead to visit distant, uninhabited areas for his *Non-Site* sculptures and for *Spiral Jetty* (fig. 2). He held the view that an artist must first prove to be an adequate philosopher, must wander the furthest reaches of con-

Figure 2
Robert Smithson (American, 1938–1973),
Spiral Jetty, 1970. Mud, salt crystals, rocks,
water, 457.2 × 4.6 m (1500 × 15 ft.). New York,
DIA Center for the Arts. © Estate of Robert
Smithson/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.
Photo: Gianfranco Gorgoni, courtesy of James
Cohan Gallery, New York

sciousness, before knowing how to convert artistic judgment into political action. By 1973 he was ready to take a political turn, using the park at the very center of New York as a model of a politically engaged artistic practice. As it turned out, the surprise of Smithson turning political was exceeded some months later by the shock of his death in a plane crash.

Having briefly placed the Olmsted essay in the context of Smithson's writings, let me turn now to an examination of the essay itself and its reasons for placing land art in the context of eighteenth-century British and French discourses on the garden. First, Smithson wanted to advocate a greater temporal consciousness as a key part of the new land art movement; going back in history nicely served this end by providing the movement with antecedents. But he also wanted to remind his readers that the historical argument over the picturesque was as much about politics as it was about aesthetics. The British picturesque garden worked with real material places and with the causal laws of nature, and with them made a place where real social parties could meet to negotiate and resolve their conflicts. Where the British used the picturesque garden to naturalize parliamentary democracy and posit political debate and negotiation as analogues of natural law, the French used the formal garden to represent the hierarchical political structure of absolute monarchy as an analogue of religious law. Smithson sees here two modes of enjoyment according to a preference for either domination or cooperation. In the French garden, an ideal is imposed on nature, whereas in the British garden a design is worked out with nature. As Smithson hinted in psychoanalytic terms, the French aristocratic preference for domination indicated an underlying sadistic enjoyment that had no place in democratic politics.[2]

Smithson traces a different mode of enjoyment stemming from the British picturesque, starting with the common root of Immanuel Kant and Edmund Burke. Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* established a dialectical aesthetic for the appreciation of nature as a thing in itself. There was the beautiful, whose temporality was instantaneous, and its opposite, the sublime, whose temporality was infinite. Burke proposed that there was also a middle ground between them, the picturesque, that was capable of multiple temporal consciousnesses. The park lay at the center of British eighteenth-century civilization because it provided a place of multiple temporalities in which citizens could work out both the short-term beauties and the long-term sublime goals of a parliamentary society. The park was a real material place where conflicting ideals could appear only to the degree that they could be physically worked out with the materials of the land and the laws of nature. Thus it was only to the degree that an idea could be materialized that it could enter the picturesque garden where, according to democratic principles, it could be altered, tested, interpreted, debated, and assessed, evolving as it did a basis for social relations. Smithson was deeply sympathetic to this kind of enjoyment. He traveled to England in 1969 to visit these gardens and made a study of the work of Price and Gilpin in Britain and the extension of their ideas to Olmsted in America. What these artists of the picturesque did was to emphasize brief temporal experiences of beauty alongside a consciousness of vast time scales produced by historical allusions and the geology of the landscape itself. And they did so in order to provide the right kinds of experiences and places for democratic communal life to transpire.

How, for Smithson, did the American picturesque in the nineteenth century continue on from its British counterpart in the eighteenth century? Politically, Olmsted was more democratic than the latter. An active antislavery author in his youth, Olmsted wanted to establish a fully egalitarian park, one in which all citizens, regardless of class and race, could gather. Olmsted's park was a place of negotiation rather than domination and was intended to relieve the notable conflicts of his day, particularly evident in the contemporary American Civil War. Smithson also sees a philosophical shift, explaining it through the famous nineteenth-century mind-matter debate with its contending philosophies of idealism and materialism. Idealism flourished in British romanticism and American transcendentalism (Henry David Thoreau, for example), allowing both to regard mental life as separate from physical life, and leading both to propose garden utopias that banned industrialization and the machine. Against the idealists with their garden fantasies of a lost paradise, where man lives in absolute harmony with nature, Smithson positions Olmsted as the great alternative. Working in New York at a time of vast military-industrial expansion, Olmsted used machines, avoided romantic idealizations of nature, and resisted requests that he build a utopia. Olmsted is praised as an Anglo-American materialist (his partner in his design practice was the Englishman Calvert Vaux) who did not abandon the physical work of democratic politics and gardening, or his commitment to real material solutions to the antagonisms of both nature and society. In the American picturesque, industrialization was not a man-made evil that threatened an idyllic paradise; it could be a vehicle of the common good, it was just another fact on the ground to be integrated into the dialectical antagonisms played out in the park. The American picturesque, as carried out by Olmsted, was less influenced by Romantic idealism than was the British picturesque; it was less interested in denying the man-made in favor of the natural, and more concerned with integrating the two.

For Smithson the picturesque was the historical antecedent of land art (both were politically democratic and philosophically materialist), and like its predecessor land art would use different temporal modes to produce glimpses of a shared communal material existence. Likewise, land art would also benefit from the machine and would have to contend with a contemporary modernist romantic idealism. Smithson's history of the picturesque, limited and partial as it is, provides Smithson a political and philosophical framework with which to differentiate land art from other contemporary art movements. In his terms, modernism was a largely romantic idealistic movement—one that viewed abstract art as an escape from the natural world into a purely mental domain. For Smithson everything is material; his abstract sculptures illustrate the geometry and principles of geological crystals. Contrary to modernism, dialectics are not mental or ideational; they are physical events. Postmodern land art was materialist; it worked with matter not ideas, and it did not claim to make meaning either, but only to make good signifiers *as if* taken out of the earth. On its own, Smithson's materialism is a bit extreme but not very remarkable. What made it interesting was the way he combined it with theories of mind taken from phenomenology, anthropology, and psychoanalysis. I would like to look at each of these theories in turn before showing how they were combined in his late land reclamation proposals.

Smithson worked with phenomenological practices through the late 1960s by attending to the ways in which, during site visits, raw sense data was

transformed and organized so that it could become a mental construct. Smithson, like so many phenomenologists, proposed that the way in which sense data from a site was organized by the mind was determined partly by the way the site itself was organized. Smithson makes use of Heidegger's phenomenological concept of the groundedness of consciousness, in which the structures of the landscape suggest analogous mental structures by which to understand the landscape. Phenomenological practices such as his Site/Non-Site works did not lead to a better knowledge of the distinction between mind and matter, subject and object, but rather to an understanding of the lack of distinction between them. At this point in the process of making Site/Non-Site works, he encounters his "being-in-the-world," as Heidegger put it. And this sense of "being" was an instance of matter's awareness of itself as matter.

Smithson used Heidegger to formulate a conception of democratic participation at a time when such use was not unusual. In the 1960s Jean-Paul Sartre, for example, also used Heidegger, but the outcome was quite different. Sartre valued democratic action, as it was only by acting in the world that real being could be acquired. For Smithson democratic participation was closer to a cooperation in a shared concrete vision—shared because everyone was ultimately a being-in-the-world. Though the framework of the subject-object haunts him, it disintegrates; it is matter alone that is conscious, matter that thinks, and when the mind becomes conscious of itself as matter, it is an important fundamental experience necessary (or at least highly advantageous) to democratic moral and political judgment. So, if there is a political value to be found in phenomenology, for Smithson it lay with its ability to induce a sublime experience of total materiality. Mind *is* matter, and the politically active democratic artist ought to produce an awe in the face of matter becoming conscious, because it is in this state, where there is no clear subject, that we are best able to apprehend the common "natural rights" of all citizens.

For Smithson, Olmsted's Central Park was a product of Olmsted's phenomenological intervention on a site. He took the center of mid-Manhattan Island, an acidic patch of barren land, and dramatized its geology of glacial deposits and melt pools. He encountered and cooperated with the material ideas on the site by emphasizing the language of the site itself, its sedimentation, deposition, and erosion, as if he were an agent of nature; it was an active, material being-in-the-world. Smithson wanted to take this phenomenological method a little further, and in a series of Site/Non-Site sculptures he experimented with ways to slip into an undifferentiated state, where the differences between the site and his sight would relax until they were materially the same thing. He would then allow the structures of the material of the site to begin to structure his sense experience of sight. In this way he would begin to think like the site. These journeys to the peripheries of mind and matter did not spin off to infinity, but rather encountered impassable limits, and it was on these limits that Smithson sought to base a political morality. Shared rights were not derived "from on high" (the idealist principle of freedom), but were grounded from the bottom up, where people are agents among the laws of matter. It was after these site experiments that he made his first real park, the earthwork called Spiral Jetty.

Spiral Jetty was the first major attempt to construct a park that would help induce this state, through a paced-out experience of a collapse between subject and object consciousness. Although *Spiral Jetty* is a phenomenologically informed work, it is also a personal and visionary work, and was still part of

his prepolitical oeuvre. In the several years after *Spiral Jetty,* in the Olmsted essay, he is using psychoanalysis as a point of reflection. He seems to have concluded that his more visionary journeys into undifferentiation could cross the line into hallucination, and that this was surprisingly valuable to both art and politics. His reading of psychoanalytic texts (mostly by Carl Jung and Anton Ehrenzweig) on visionary art had allowed him a kind of hallucinatory skill that enabled him to synthesize and bond his conflicting fantasies.

But the political role of the artist demanded more than this; the artist had to be a kind of communal shaman capable of what he called *infra criticism*—a "descending" of one's own personal conflicts, as well as those of the democratic society in which he lives. Land art was an art that came from and was addressed to a collective primordial consciousness, and it was through this consciousness that the artist would understand and resolve social conflict.

Smithson's political turn, then, was surprising and different. He did not, for example, march for equal rights or to end the Vietnam War; he didn't ally himself to the growing ecology movement of the day. Rather than resist industrialization he wanted the land artist to use heavy technology well, and to only intervene after making phenomenological, anthropological, and psychoanalytic analyses of the types of consciousnesses involved in social and political conflict. Only after this could an appropriate artistic intervention be conceived, and this conception occurred best after a state of psychic undifferentiation. The solution produced by this process could have a delusional *as if* quality that was remarkably like certain shamanistic visions. Smithson's conception of the social role of the shaman came from anthropology, and it would be helpful to quickly mention how he used the work of the British structural anthropologist Mary Douglas.

Smithson's proposals for "a concrete dialectic between nature and people," land and man,[3] were thought through with help from another important source, Mary Douglas and her book *Purity and Danger.*[4] Using this book as a point of departure, he formulated a model for artistic practice in the social sphere that invoked both phenomenology and structuralism. On the one hand, as per phenomenology, the artist needed to be aware of how fundamental cognitive structures are taken from the material environment. On the other hand, as per structuralism, the artist also needed to be aware of how the mind takes its structures for thinking from the cultural environment. To this end Smithson was a keen reader of the work of Roland Barthes and Claude Lévi-Strauss.[5] For example, Lévi-Strauss described Anglo-American civilization as a "hot" culture that consumed large amounts of energy and materials, because it privileged synchronic rather than diachronic temporal consciousness, giving preference to the hot enjoyments of the here and now, over and above the cool enjoyments of a diachronic cosmological time frame. With two distinct modes of consciousness to deal with, the artist needed to create a new landscape, to envision new structures—and not just any structures, but those that are, according to Mary Douglas, good for interacting with other people and making an understanding of communal action. For Smithson land art served the long-term goals of a democracy by revealing its endeavors in the light of the laws of time and matter, rather than the romantic idealizations of freedom or the satisfaction of consumer demand. In effect Smithson was using anthropology and psychoanalysis to make a diagnosis of his culture. The preference for hot-energy–consuming enjoyment had to be pitted against a very different kind of material desire, namely man's slower, calmer erotic bond with the material world.

Smithson used structuralist anthropology to help define the social role of the artist shaman, and he used psychoanalysis to understand his own descent into the void of mind and matter and the hallucinatory phenomena he encountered there. But he also used psychoanalysis to diagnose the enjoyments of the parties involved in social conflict. As a negotiator between ecologist and industrialist he had to understand the types of enjoyment they sought, and to this end he made a fascinating distinction between the neurosis (hysteria) of the ecologist and the perversion (sadism) of the industrialist. This may be his most interesting contribution to Anglo-American cultural exchange and deserves a little more detail.

In an analysis that is spread out among several published and unpublished texts Smithson developed a fairly full diagnosis of a neurosis in the ecology movement and a perversion in capitalism. It is worth pausing over his arguments if we are to make sense of why Smithson saw himself as continuing an Anglo-American land-art tradition. Starting with the hysteria of the ecologists, he locates their position (as we have discussed above) in a lineage of Anglo-American idealist thinking dating back to Thoreau's transcendentalism in the nineteenth century. Thoreau only *thought* about his pond, when he would have been better off, like Olmsted, actually building one. Transcendentalism approaches nature through ideas and tends to project human characteristics onto nature, resulting in a humanist anthropomorphism. As such, Smithson posited that anthropomorphism was an erroneous form of self-projection and usually announced additional, more serious projections of repressed sexual fears. His point is most developed in the Olmsted essay, when he responds to critics of mining and land art who argued that both endeavors carried out militaristic and violent acts on the body of mother earth. Smithson's response was to diagnose an "Ecological Oedipus Complex."[6] In Freudian logic, invoking a taboo is tantamount to indicating a repressed desire for the same. By citing a taboo against sex with one's mother, these ecologists revealed their own repressed traumas. Like Oedipus, the ecologists can be full of hubris, announcing their intentions to persecute the perpetrators of mining and pollution, for example, only to discover that they are fully implicated in the crime. In material terms, their enjoyment of the benefits of mining incriminates them in the same act. Their easy morality is maintained because they refuse to think dialectically, refuse to see themselves as material objects in a greater material order of things. Thus, Smithson rejected idealism and anthropomorphism because they were not real encounters with nature as a split and conflicted substance; they promulgated foolish laws that ignored nature as something constituted out of its antagonisms. Similarly, Smithson regarded modernist sculpture parks as forms of fantasy defense, screens with which to hide the difficult truths of a material world that was ruled by the blind and subjectless drives of life and death as they span the vastness of time.

Less developed is Smithson's analysis of industrialists caught in a sadistic extraction of natural resources that perverted their bond with nature. According to Smithson, they subscribe to a form of shared denial: "I know very well but, nevertheless . . . all I see is the technological and economic aspect of what I do." This denial of his own materiality creates for the industrialist a blindness to the visual landscape. "When the miner loses consciousness of what he is doing through the abstractions of technology he cannot cope with his own inherent nature or external nature."[7] Smithson starts with a phenomenological

analysis, noting the industrialist's lack of ability to observe the world, to be in and part of the world, which is replaced by the abstractions of technology and economics. Industrialists are blind to the potential disasters of what they do because they are blind to the disasters of nature that produced the very minerals and fossils they excavate.

Because they lack a primordial consciousness, an awareness of a fundamental being-in-the-world (as Martin Heidegger called it), Smithson suggested that industrialists enacted a kind of unconscious sadism, that in serving capitalism and its promises of enjoyment, they were blind to the ways they were first and foremost agents of nature involved in an erotic and deathly act of union with the world. If I might flesh out his argument here, like the Marquis de Sade, they acted as if they had the natural right to extract any enjoyment out of the body of their lover, regardless of the pain it might cause. But mining does not have to be sadistic. The miner, like the land artist, can love the earth, can ponder nature as a lover might ponder the beloved. As Smithson put it, "sex isn't all a series of rapes."[8]

In the early 1970s, Smithson was edging toward endorsing proposed environmental laws that would require a reclamation plan as part of a mining license; however, it was not his preferred route. Although such laws would grant the land artist a legal status, Smithson thought it would be better if the industrialist actively sought the artist's interventions. Smithson's proposals showed industrialists how to turn their mines into gardens, into sites of temporal consciousness. Engaging industrialists in the park would prompt them to actively show their affection for nature. And, of course, they also had the means to move the millions of tons of earth required for such a garden.

Perhaps the most powerful example of Smithson's later efforts to perpetuate the lineage of Anglo-American democratic gardens was his 1973 *Bingham Copper Mining Pit—Utah, Reclamation Project* (fig. 3). One could take the cynical view that the proposal was an embarrassing capitulation to big capitalism, that Smithson was browbeaten by his gallerist, a mining heiress. I think this would be to miss the integrity of the project, its tough amorality, even if it can only be imagined based on the single photographic study he lived to produce. This was Smithson's last and perhaps most legendary vision of man in his contemporary conflict. The Bingham site was the largest man-made hole in the world, and the paradox of its reclamation was that it would require the demolition of an entire mountain to fill it in again. To this, Smithson proposed his own paradox made of jetties and lake, part Dantesque vision of infinite descent, but also an inverse glimpse of the sky—double vanishing point of infinite depth and height. Such a remote site would encourage the ecologist to actually go out into the devastated areas of nature to encounter his or her material existence. Experiencing the pleasure and pain of the material emptiness of nature might alter their consciousness and end their idealization of nature and themselves. Smithson's gardens of time were sites where the ecologist and industrialist could come to terms with their conflict by seeing how they both shared in the dynamic conflictedness of nature in its inexorable descent into static entropy. The frozen whorl at the bottom of the pit recombined synchronic and diachronic temporal consciousness; it became a signifier-picture of our shared material reality, an "earthword" that, when the sun was at the right angle, returned man's gaze of progress with the blind gaze of the void as such.[9] For Smithson the integrity of the political artist lay in an ethics based on an under-

Figure 3
Robert Smithson (American, 1938–1973), *Bingham Copper Mining Pit—Utah, Reclamation Project,* 1973. Photostat and plastic overlay with wax pencil, 47 × 34.3 cm (18½ × 13½ in.). New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001.293. Gift of Pat and John Rosenwald. © Estate of Robert Smithson/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York

standing of and an acceptance of the laws of nature—above all, the law of entropy. This law was evident in one of the great themes of the picturesque ruin, the fall of great civilizations, and Smithson wanted this law to be made even more evident in the natural and built environment.

But why should Smithson propose entropy as the primordial law of nature, and the basis of mediating the conflict between ecologists and industrialists? While he recognized that his visions of entropy owed something to his childhood circumstances, he still felt that it could be put to some good use. Democracy, Smithson argues, is the political form of entropy, wherein social conflict is worn down. Democracy is always a failure, always a struggle toward entropy, yet always open to a restructuring because of its orientation to a primordial consciousness.

What he offers to a society of Anglo-American democratic tradition is a sense of its history and its enjoyments set out against a background of time itself. The Bingham pit would have been a very good place for environmentalists and industrialists to meet, to hear first from the artist, perhaps one of Smithson's more memorable lines, "Deeper than the ruins of concentration camps, are worlds more frightening, worlds more meaningless. The hells of geology remain to be discovered. If art history is a nightmare, then what is natural history?"[10] The task of the land artist is to create a garden—a place where democracy can look back upon itself, can catch sight of the material of the site in a way that

induces a sense of prenarrative, solid time. Things, in this garden, are markers of time, and even people are subject to entropy, to the disintegration of biological life downward into the earth upon which they gaze. From the edge of the deepest hole in the world one sees a territory where democracy is democracy precisely because it is the political philosophy that includes and enjoys its own material inconsistencies and paradoxes. For Smithson, then, land art contributed to an Anglo-American discourse that included Olmsted, Price, and Gilpin by constructing places that helped resolve the material crises of a democratic people.

Notes

1 See "Robert Smithson on Duchamp: Interview with Moira Roth," *Artforum* 12 (October 1973), in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings,* ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 310–12.

2 Ibid. See also "A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects," *Artforum* 7 (September 1968), in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 107.

3 Robert Smithson, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," *Artforum* 11 (February 1973), in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 164.

4 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge Keegan and Paul, 1966).

5 As far as can be determined, Smithson read Barthes's *On Racine* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964); "The Structuralist Activity," *Partisan Review,* Winter 1964; "The Diseases of Costume," *Partisan Review,* January 1967; *Writing Degree Zero* (New York: Hill and Wang, March 1968); and *Elements of Semiology* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1968). He discussed and misquoted *Mythologies* in 1967, though there was no published translation until 1972. He also owned a copy of *Yale French Studies,* October 1966. The topic of the issue was structuralism, and featured articles in translation by Lévi-Strauss and Jacques Lacan, as well as articles on the tradition of Anglo-American structuralism, Merleau-Ponty, anthropology, art, and literature. He also had, in *Partisan Review,* Leo Bersani's, "From Bachelard to Barthes" (Spring 1967) and Peter Caws, "What Is Structuralism" (Winter 1968). David Paul Funt, "The Structuralist Debate," *Hudson Review,* Winter 1969-70, gives concise accounts of Lévi-Strauss, Foucault, Barthes, Lacan, and Althusser. Lastly, in order of publication was *The Structuralist Controversy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1972).

6 Smithson, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 163.

7 Robert Smithson, "Untitled" (1972), in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 379.

8 Smithson, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 164.

9 Craig Owens, "Earthwords," *October* 10 (Autumn 1979), pp. 120–30.

10 Robert Smithson, "Art Through the Camera's Eye," (unpublished), in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings,* p. 375.

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Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture 1945–1975 redresses an important art historical oversight. Histories of American and British sculpture are usually told separately, with artists and their work divided by nationality. Yet such boundaries obscure a vibrant exchange of ideas, individuals, and aesthetic influences. In reality, the postwar art world saw dynamic interactions between British and American sculptors, critics, curators, teachers, and institutions. Using works of art as points of departure, this book explores the international movement of people, objects, and ideas, demonstrating the importance of Anglo-American exchange to the history of postwar sculpture.

This collection of essays evolved from a symposium occasioned by the 2005 donation of the Fran and Ray Stark sculpture collection—twenty-eight modern works by some of the field's most important artists—to the Getty Museum. The volume, edited by Rebecca Peabody of the Getty Research Institute, comprises a range of papers, from broad surveys to focused investigations of single artists. Contributors explore transatlantic responses to critics such as Clement Greenberg; the impact of Henry Moore's sculpture—and its widely disseminated representations—on a younger generation of British and American artists; connections between land art, minimalist sculpture, ecology and the Anglo-American picturesque; and sculptural critiques of imperialism, colonialism, and war. The book thus offers an array of new perspectives on this crucial period of art history.

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