

Henry Moore Bibliography - Detailed Report

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The sculptor speaks.

Author/Editor

MOORE Henry.

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Description

First in a series of articles in which artists discuss their own work. This is a concentrated and important text, presenting many points inherent to an understanding of Moore's work. **It is a mistake for a sculptor or a painter to speak or write very often about his job. It releases tension needed for his work.** Three dimensions. **Appreciation of sculpture depends upon the ability to respond to form in three dimensions. 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.**

Brancusi. *Since the Gothic European sculpture had become overgrown with moss weeds all sorts of surface excrescences which completely concealed shape. It has been Brancusi's special mission to get rid of this overgrowth and to make us once more shape-conscious.* **Shells and pebbles** Although it is the human figure which interests me most deeply I have always paid great attention to natural forms such as bones shells pebbles etc... There are universal shapes to which everybody is subconsciously conditioned and to which they can respond if their conscious control does not shut them off.

Holes in sculpture. *Pebbles show Nature's way of working stone. Some of the pebbles I pick up have holes right through them... A piece of stone can have a hole through it and not be weakened if the hole is of a studied size shape and direction... The first hole made through a piece of stone is a revelation. The hole connects one side to the other making it immediately more three-dimensional. A hole can itself have as much shape-meaning as solid mass.*

Size and scale. There is a right physical size for every idea... There is a size to scale not to do with its actual physical size...but connected with vision. A carving might be several times over life size and yet be petty and small in feeling and a small carving only a few inches in height can give the feeling of huge size and monumental grandeur because the vision behind it is big.

Drawing and sculpture. *My drawings are done mainly as a help towards making sculpture...and as a way of sorting out ideas and developing them... And I sometimes just draw for its own enjoyment.*

Abstraction and Surrealism. *The violent quarrel between the abstractionists and the surrealists seems to me quite unnecessary. All good art has contained both abstract and surrealist elements... I am very much aware that associational psychological factors play a large part in sculpture.*

Letters to the Listener about this article appeared in the issues for 25 August (Stanley Casson) 1 September (Gordon W. Brake) 8 September (Douglas Lord John Piper) 15 September (Kenneth W. Weston Bernard Reynolds) 22 September (Stanley Casson) 29 September (Alec Miller Thoreau MacDonald).

Stanley Casson refers to Moore as the leading sculptural representative of the Romantic movement because of the statements on nature with which he is not entirely in agreement. John Piper defends Moore's aesthetic position in relation to natural objects. Kenneth Weston sees the text as a good exposition of the creative process. Bernard Reynolds also defends Moore's comments on nature "Moore puts life into stone; his forms are biomorphic".

Reprinted in Henry Moore on Sculpture (See 0005627); The Painter's Object under the title Notes on Sculpture (See 0009169); and many other publications including foreign language translations (See Index).