

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 4, 1999

MEMORANDUM

TO: HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

FROM: BETTY C. MONKMAN *BM*

RE: 8th Sculpture Garden Exhibition

Last fall, George Neubert agreed to curate the next sculpture exhibition but he moved to a new museum this summer and it was not possible for him to organize an exhibition. I spoke with Rusty Powell about other people mentioned at the last meeting of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House and he thought that Lewis Sharp, director of the Denver Art Museum, would be an excellent choice. Mr. Sharp agreed to work with institutions in the Denver area to organize the exhibition and his suggestions are enclosed for your review and comment.

This exhibition would focus on the White House millennium theme "Honor the Past, Imagine the Future". We had hoped to include a few works by early 20th century American sculptors, but most of those works are in public parks or of a scale too large for the garden. The Denver Art Museum's proposal is for an exhibition of 20th century sculpture by a diverse group of sculptors in a variety of mediums and forms from the figurative to the abstract. Many of the pieces have painted surfaces so the exhibition could be visually colorful. Artists such as Claes Oldenberg have not been represented in previous exhibitions; others, such as Isamu Noguchi and Deborah Butterfield, are repeat artists but with different works. (We are waiting for photographs of the proposed Ellsworth Kelly and Louise Bourgeois pieces.)

The Brooklyn Museum of Art requested that the current exhibition be extended until mid October so it will remain on view during fall garden tours. We plan to install the eighth exhibition in late October.

WHITE HOUSE SCULPTURE GARDEN EXHIBITION, FALL 1999

Proposed by the Denver Art Museum, The Museum of Outdoor Arts, Denver, and the Ginny Williams Family Foundation, Denver

(Height x width x length – typical throughout)

Small indoor works

1. Isamu Noguchi
American, 1904-88
Remembrance, 1981
Bronze, ed. 3/6 (Original in mahogany, 1944)
50 ¼ x 24 x 9 inches
Denver Art Museum: Funds from Alliance for Contemporary Art, the Marion G. Hendrie Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, and anonymous donor, 1982.54A-E

Isamu Noguchi's art is notable for two qualities: an astonishing versatility and a pervasive tension between Asian and European sensibilities, the figurative and the abstract, the personal and the universal. Noguchi created the first *Remembrance* early in his mature career. Made of mahogany, it was part of a theater set, one of fifteen works he made in 1944 for the staging of a dance by Martha Graham, the pioneering dancer/choreographer with whom the young artist shared a belief in the potent, mythic power of forms.

2. Claes Oldenburg
American, b. Sweden, 1929
Clothespin, 1972
Bronze and stainless steel
48 x 17 ½ x 20 ½ inches
Denver Art Museum: Funds from the Alliance for Contemporary Art, Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber & Madden, Kenneth M. Good, 1981.11

Oldenburg and van Bruggen are a husband-and-wife team whose monumental sculptures celebrate the significance and beauty of everyday things—often making subjects much bigger than life. This work is a one-twelfth size scale model of the 48 ½ foot high sculpture in Centre Square, Philadelphia, installed on the bicentennial year, 1976. It's spring forms the numbers '7' and '6'. The form of the two halves of the clothespin also alludes to Brancusi's famous sculpture, *The Kiss*.

For the central lawn area

- 3, 4, 5. Deborah Butterfield, American, b. 1949

Willy, Argus, and Lucky, 1996-97

Painted and patinated bronze

85 x 86 x 51; 85 x 100 x 37; 56 x 85 x 33 inches

Denver Art Museum: Funds from the Enid and Crosby Kemper Foundation,
UMB Bank Trustees, 1996.198.1-3

"I've been a horse girl all my life," says Deborah Butterfield, who has sculpted nothing but horses since 1973. For *Willy, Argus, and Lucky*, the artist gathered twigs and branches which she formed into the essence of equine forms and eventually cast in bronze. Then the sculptures were welded together and patinated to look exactly like the wood destroyed in the casting process.

6. Ellsworth Kelly, American, b. 1923

Untitled (EK 680), 1982

Weathered steel

6 feet 3 inches x 14 feet 6 inches x 13 feet 8 inches

Ginny Williams Family Foundation

Kelly is better known as one of the most important post-war abstract painters. Like his paintings, his sculptures are simple in form, often employing some portion of a circle. This piece is like a folded disk that could rock on it's arched edges. The power of Kelly's work comes from its nuance of shape and material (or color), exquisitely matched in scale, so that the artwork feels like it breathes easily but forcefully.

For the perimeter areas around the central lawn

7. Robert Mangold, American, b. 1937

Windsong III,

Steel

Approximately 15 feet high x 7 feet diameter – can be reduced to 12 feet high.

The Museum of Outdoor Arts

Denver artist Robert Mangold's sculptures deal with concepts of time and space. They reflect Mangold's love of both art and science and his serious interest in the philosophies of Asia, yet at the same time, they are playful, moving or looking as if they could.

8. George Rickey, American, b. 1907
Two Open Trapezoids Excentric V, 1980
Polished stainless steel, ed. 2/8
12 feet-10 inches x 40 inches to 13 feet 4 inches (height can be reduced to ≤ 12 feet)
The Museum of Outdoor Arts

Rickey refers to his sculptures as "drawings in space": they are complete only when in motion. *Two Open Trapezoids Excentric V* consists of two trapezoids undulating around and through each other. Weights in lower angles of the trapezoids return the shapes to their central position after moving with the wind. Sweeping, fluid line of movement contrasts with the concise geometric angles of the shapes.

9. Manuel Neri, American, b.1930
Untitled, 1991 (cast)
Bronze with oil-base enamel, ed. 1/4
65 x 18 x 15 1/4 inches
Denver Art Museum: Funds from 1985 and 1986 Alliance for Contemporary Art
Auctions by exchange, the NBT Foundation, Jennifer Doran and Jim Robischon, and Barbara Burrell, 1996.33

Manuel's Neri's figure sculptures start life as sliced and modeled plaster, later translated into boldly-painted bronze. Here metal replicates the fluidity and freedom of the plaster original, a svelte female nude with disturbingly truncated hands.

10. Richard Stankiewicz
American, 1922-83
Steel Sculpture, 1972-76
Steel
23 x 18 x 20 inches
Denver Art Museum: The Lucille and Donald Graham Collection, TL-19670

Stankiewicz was a sculptor who emerged out of the New York school in the 1950s. His work was perhaps more influenced by Hans Hoffman the painter, who he studied with, than David Smith, the preeminent sculptor of the time, even though Stankiewicz's sculptures very much resemble those of the pioneering Smith. The sculptures are assemblages of found metal junk and are figurally suggestive, but expressive in their intuitive arrangements.

11. Louise Bourgeois
American, b. France, 1911
Artwork to be determined
Ginny Williams Foundation

Louise Bourgeois is internationally recognized for her startlingly original sculpture, but widespread appreciation of her work did not come until she was seventy-one. She works in many materials, including bronze, rubber, and plaster, yet all her imagery is based on natural forms that seem alive and growing, even when made of metal or stone.

12. Jack Zajac
American, b. 1929
Big Skull and Horn in Two Parts III, 1962-63
Bronze
36 ½ x 30 x 19 inches; 30 x 51 ¼ x 22 inches
Denver Art Museum: Anonymous donor, 1978.154AB

Zajac's sculptures, while informed by abstraction, have the talismanic presence of dinosaur fossils. In fact, this sculpture refers to Zajac's prevalent motif of a ram's skull with broken horns. The forms are not merely archeological, but mythological, which he attempts to imbue with highly personal feelings.

13. Preston Duwyenie
Hopi, b. 1951
Cloud Stone, 1987
Alabaster and copper
46 x 22 ½ x 10 ½ inches
Denver Art Museum: Gift of Peter and Nanci Jacobs, 1998.12AB

Duwyenie, a Hopi Indian from Northern Arizona, re-interprets the the mythology of his tribe through contemporary design using a variety of media including stone, clay and metal. The artist describes this sculpture as depicting the union of the Hopi dieties Mother Earth and Father Sky which give birth to life on earth.

14. Gary Sweeney
American, b. 1952
Colorado Vacationland, 1992
Steel, bronze, wood and photographs
10 x 7 x 1 feet
The City of Denver, through the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film

Gary Sweeney's art is appealingly nostalgic and gently humorous, its ironic edge well concealed behind its apparently innocent, autobiographical content. *Colorado Vacationland*, 1992, looks like tourist postcards, advertising the joys of fishing on one side, and a typical tourist snapshot on the other. The artist's sister poses before the state capitol building in such a way that the dome of the building almost functions as a goofy dunce cap.

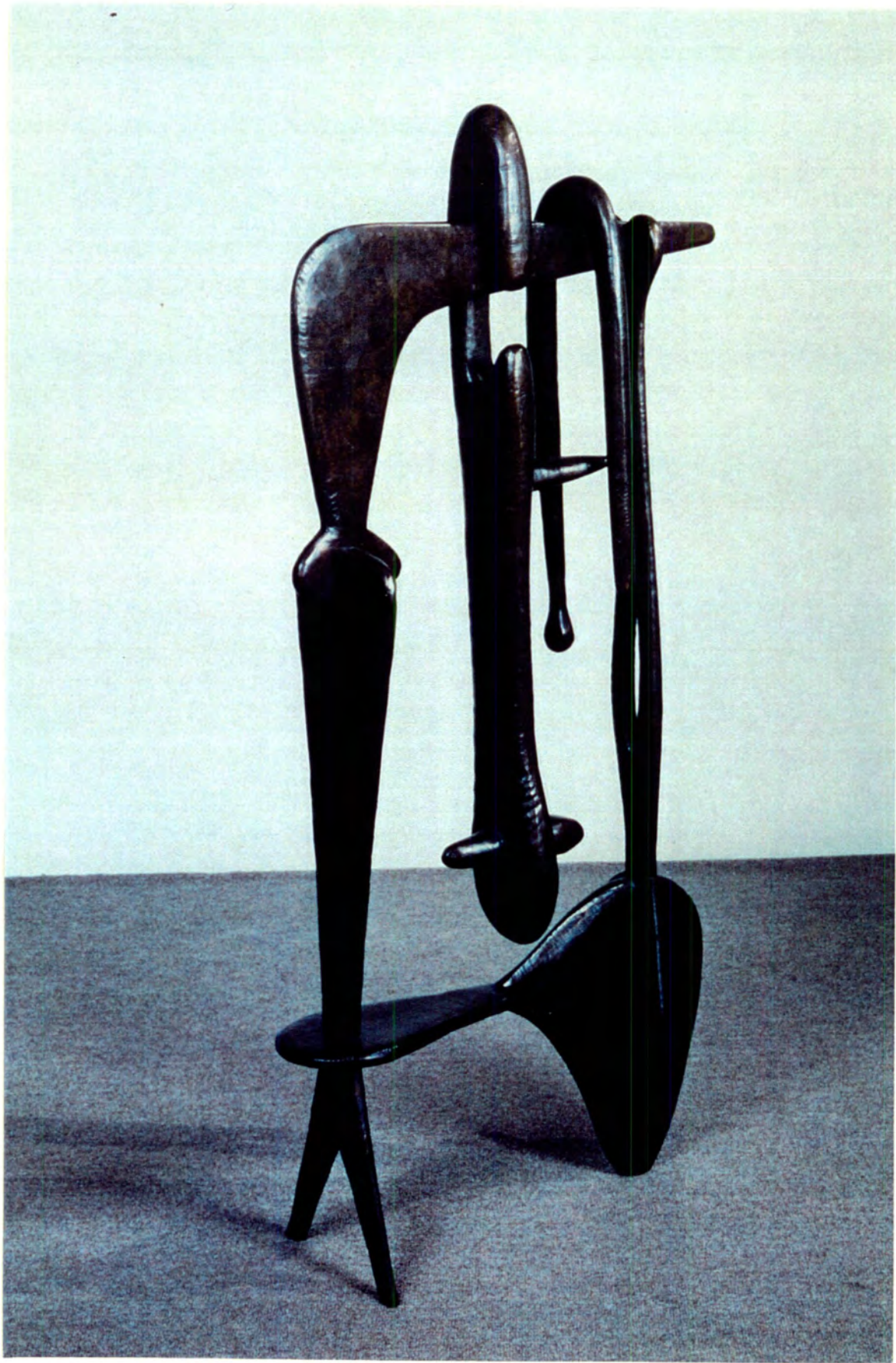
Alternative Possibilities

15. Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen
The Big Sweep (maquette), 1998
Painted metal
60 ¾ x 52 x 40 inches
Collection of the artists. (Denver Art Museum, TL-19610)
(*Pending the artists' rescheduling of it's itinerary; it is only suitable for indoor display*)

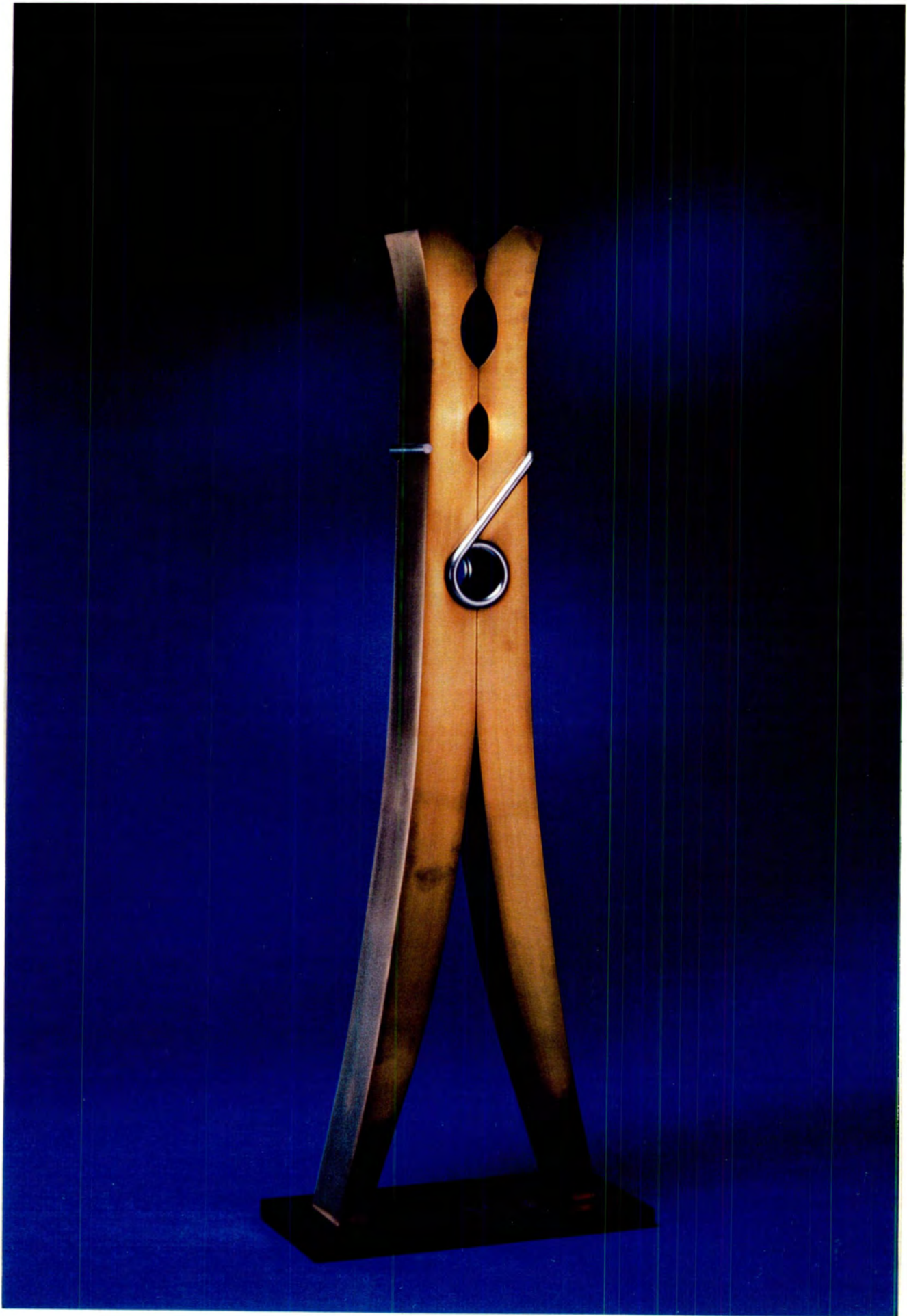
Inspired by the vast prairies and mountains of Colorado, the bright light and scouring winds, the artists devised this graceful broom and dustpan that seem to dance in the dazzling western sun. The Denver Art Museum is in the process of commissioning the artists to fabricate the full scale sculpture, which will stand about 35 feet tall.

15. Lauren Ewing
American, b. 1946
Intruder, 1984
Painted steel
16 x 6 x 6 feet
Denver Art Museum: Gift of Lauren Ewing and Dianne Brown Gallery, 1987.65

A whimsical critique of the chaos of modern day life, Ewing's sculpture shows the tenuousness of trying to 'keep it all under control'. Everyday consumer objects, in their relentless energy and demanding-ness, burst out of the flimsy shell of an office building. The old tranquil architectural form is not up to the speed of the electronic age.



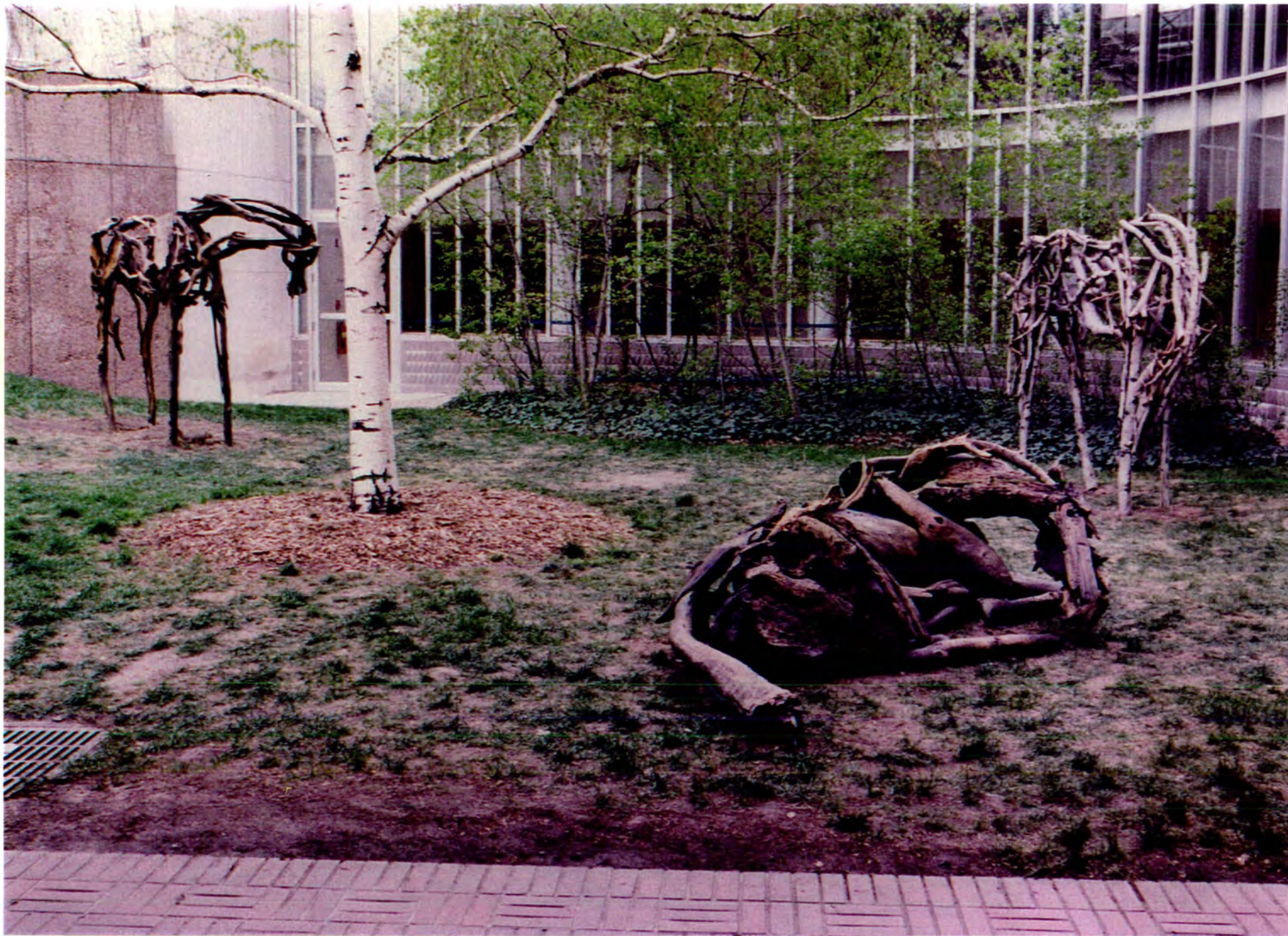
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Deborah Butterfield, American, b. 1949 *Argus*, 1996 Painted and patinated bronze
Denver Art Museum. Funds from the Enid and Crosby Kemper Foundation, UMB Bank Trustees, 1996.198.2



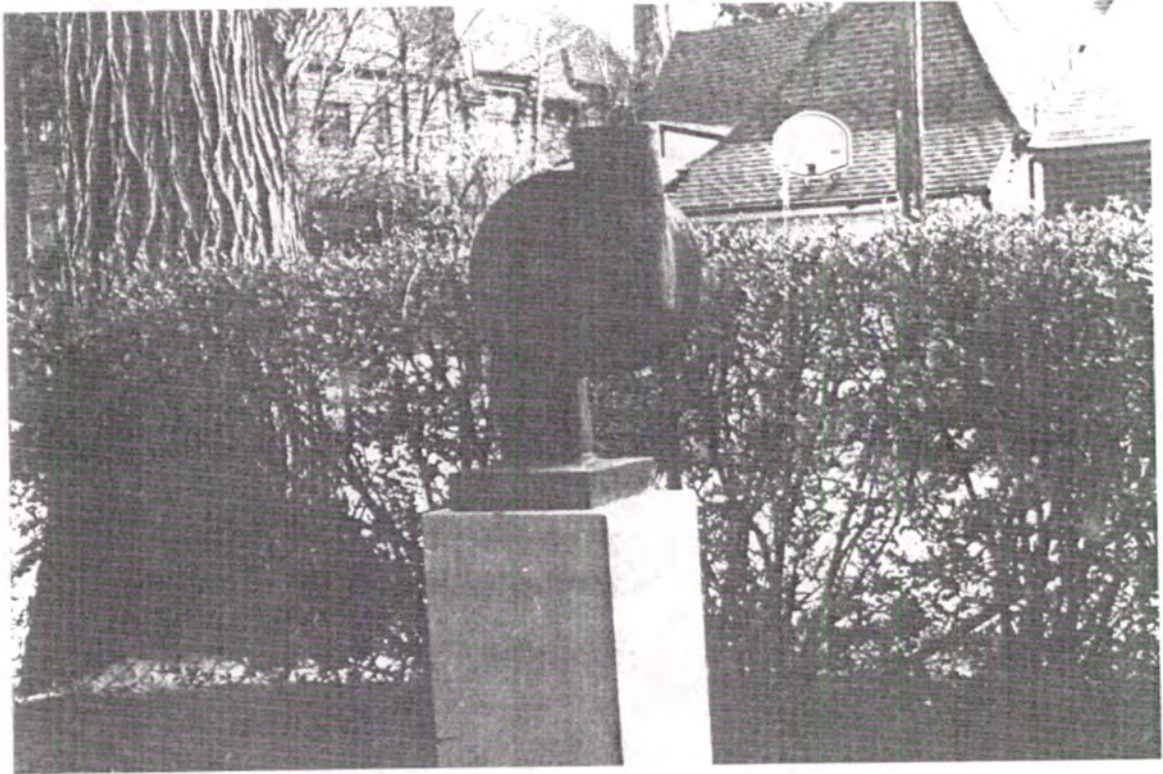
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The Museum of Outdoor Arts



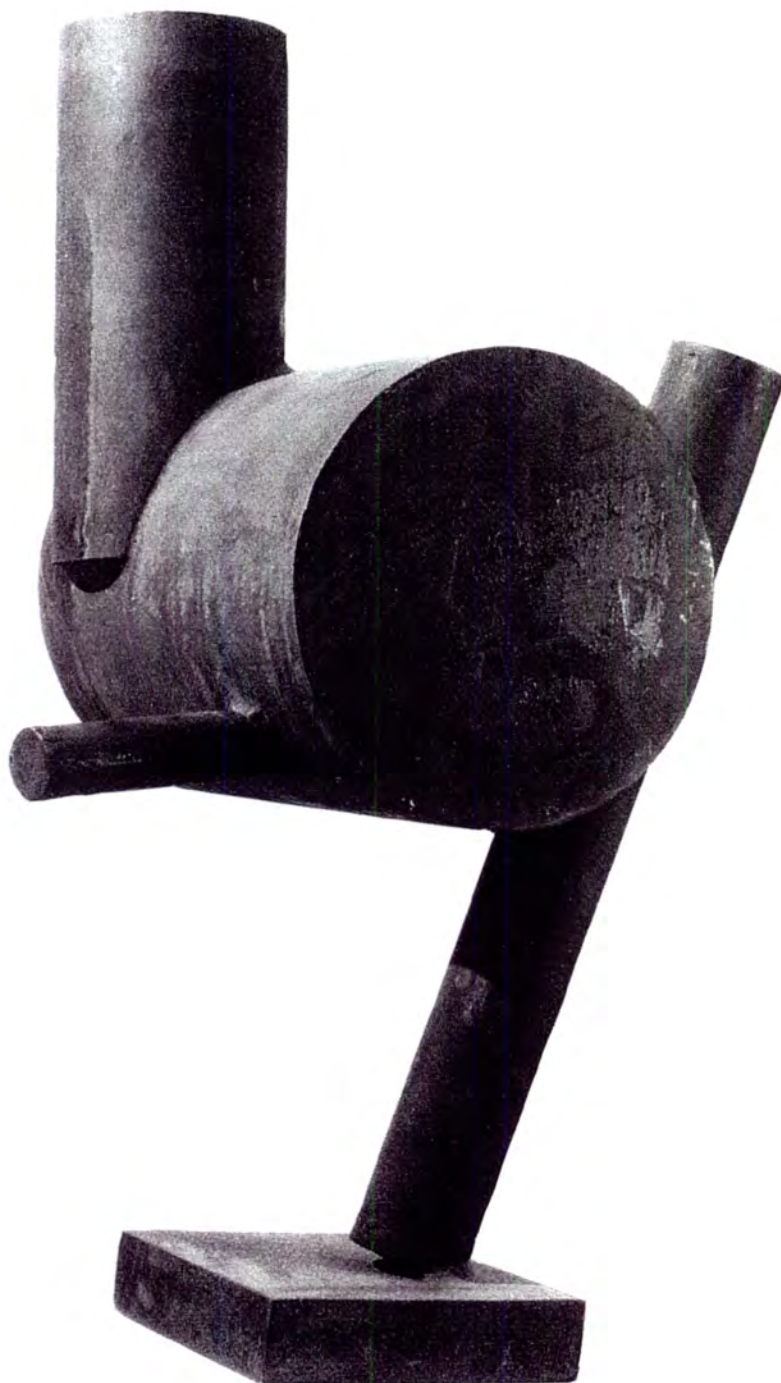
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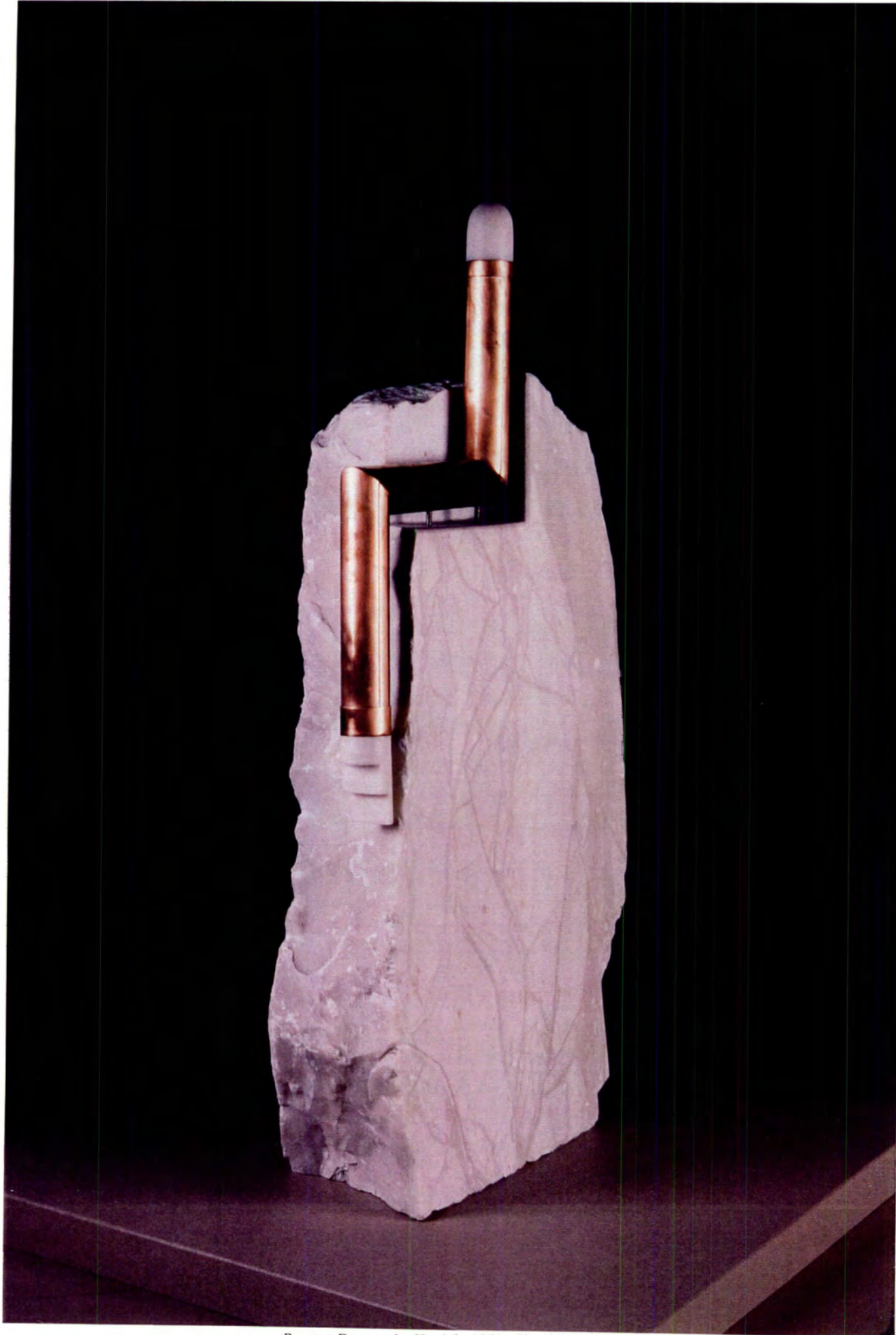


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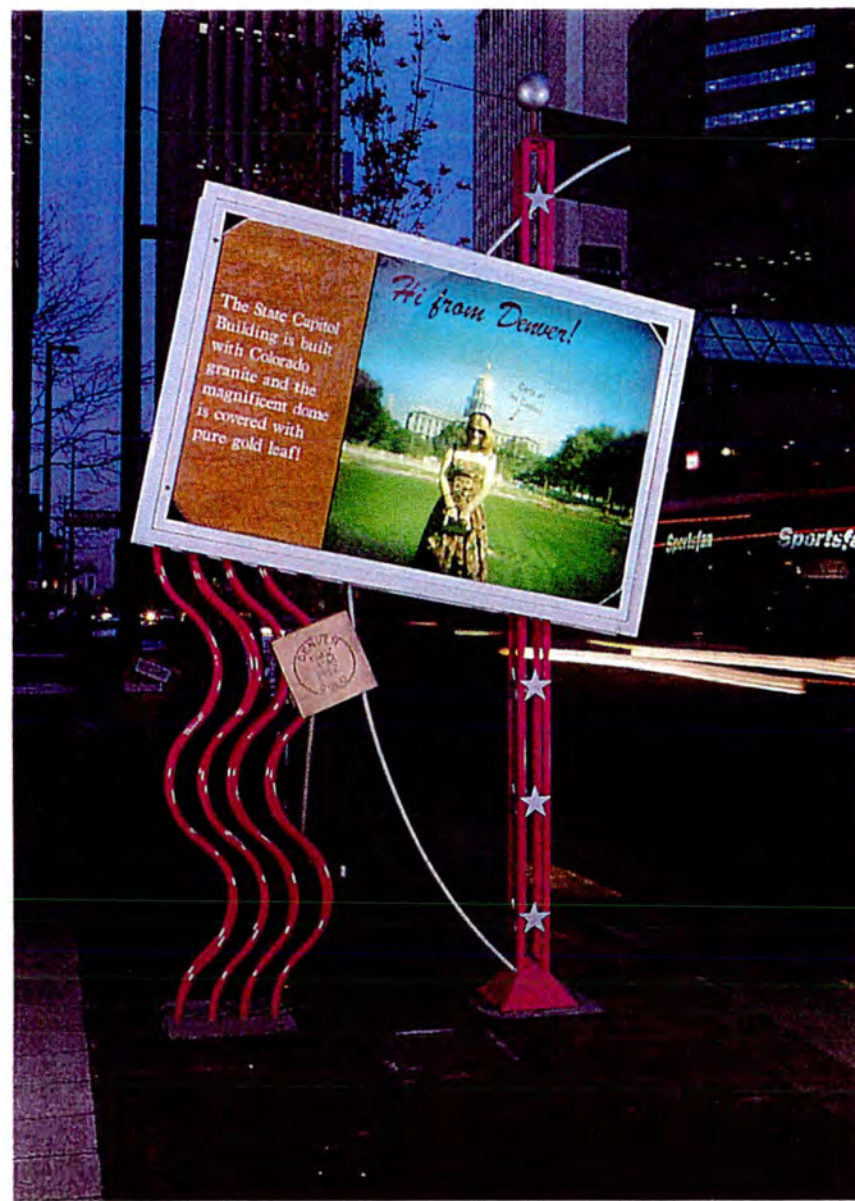
Richard Stankiewicz American, 1922-83 *Untitled*, 1971-77
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Similar to the Denver Art Museum's *Steel Sculpture*, 1972-76 (for reference only)



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