

**Office of the First Lady
Press Office
Files of Lissa Muscatine**

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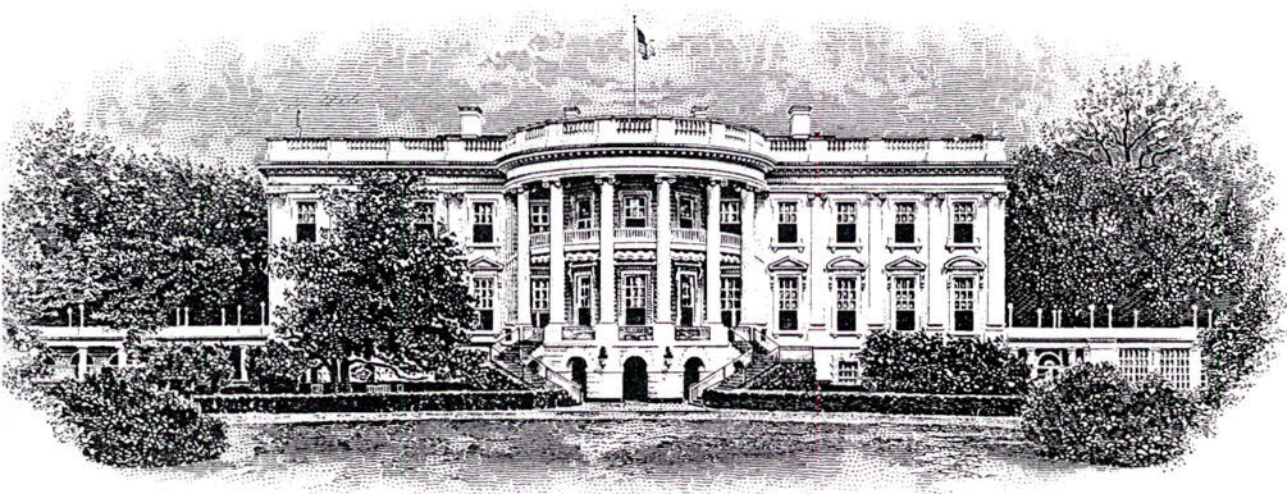
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The White House



10/12/99 Hirshhorn Museum 25th Anniversary (Sculpture Gard.)

Sculpture

July/August 1998 Vol. 17 No. 6

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Catherine Widgery

Alexander Calder

**The White House
Sculpture Garden**

Nancy Grossman

At the
White
House:

The *First Lady's*
Sculpture Garden

by Mary Lynn Kotz

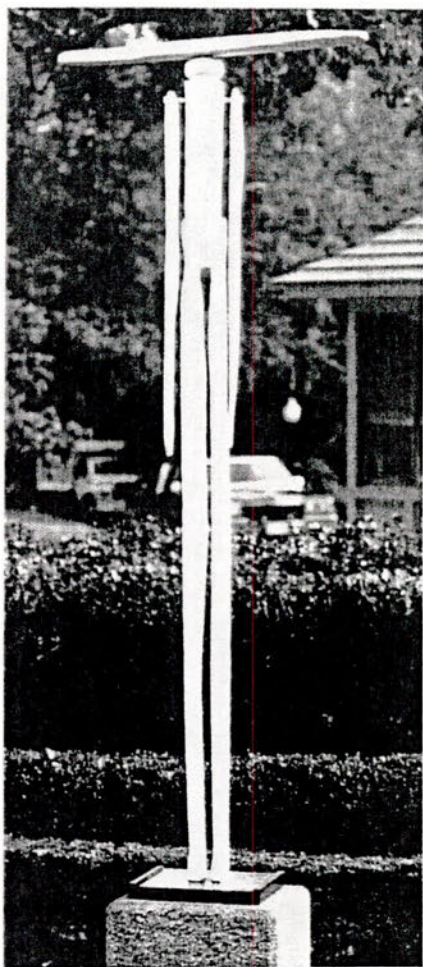


First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, an avid fan of contemporary art, has quietly introduced 20th-century American sculpture to approximately six million visitors to the White House over the past four years. Since 1994, six sculpture exhibitions from museums across the United States have been prominently on view in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden, which is directly across from the glass-walled corridor through which visitors enter the Executive Mansion. The first four exhibitions presented work on loan from art museums in four regions of the country; a fifth featured sculpture from the nation's capital. Currently on exhibition are works by contemporary sculptors of Native American heritage. At least two additional exhibitions are planned: one yet to be announced and a special exhibition commemorating the millennium.

At the first exhibition's opening, Mrs. Clinton expressed her hopes that "this celebration of America's creative spirit will enable each of us to gain a greater appreciation of the rich cultural traditions we share as a nation and as a people."

"I have always loved sculpture," she explains. In her own life, it was Henry Moore who first brought Hillary Rodham and William Jefferson Clinton together as they stood in line to register at Yale Law School. "We started talking and went for a long walk," she recalls, "and we ended up in front of the Yale Art Gallery. They had a Mark Rothko exhibition inside and a Henry Moore exhibition in the sculpture yard. Bill wanted to show me both of them, but we found the doors closed because of a labor dispute." So the innovative Clinton offered to pick up the trash, which he and his young companion did—and enjoyed a private tour of the Henry Moore works.

The idea for the White House sculpture exhibition began with the First Lady's desire to focus official attention on America's artists. "I was trying to make several statements," says Mrs. Clinton. "The first was just how important the arts are as part of our public life, but also as an integral part and contribution to our private lives. And I wanted to celebrate living artists."



Above: Louise Bourgeois, *Observer*, 1947–49. Bronze and white paint, 76.25 x 29 x 10 in. Opposite, above: Robert Therrien, *No Title*, 1985. Bronze, 90 x 32 in. Opposite, below: Hillary Clinton addresses the audience during opening ceremonies.

The State rooms of the White House itself are off limits to the work of living artists, according to a policy set in 1964 by the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. The idea of contemporary art *outside* the White House was born the day after the inauguration, as Mrs. Clinton and her friend, designer Kaki Hockersmith from Little Rock, talked about bringing art into the living quarters and the Oval Office. "It was very clear we were both fans of contemporary art," recalls Hockersmith. "We went for a walk in the snow to check out the grounds—18 acres of lawn and trees. Hillary said, 'I can't believe there's no sculpture on the grounds.'" Mrs. Clinton's attention soon focused

on the "First Ladies" Garden, conceived by Jacqueline Kennedy and designed for her by Mrs. Paul Mellon with Perry Wheeler, near the East entrance to the mansion. The 120-by-60-foot garden was a sculptural space in itself, with eight niches, like keyholes, in the shrubbery bordering a rectangular grassy lawn. "When I moved in here, and started wandering around the various parts of the house and yards and gardens, I kept coming back to that garden, which I found restful and private," says Mrs. Clinton. "I spent a lot of time there, sitting in the little trellised area, or out on one of the stone benches, and it just looked to me like a garden that should have some sculpture in it. It looked as though at some point someone had landscaped it with that in mind."

She asked Hockersmith to investigate. Working with former White House curator Rex Scouten and current curator Betty Monkman, Hockersmith went first to Arts and Communications Counselors in New York, then helped Mrs. Clinton prepare a presentation for the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. This committee was formed by the executive order of President Lyndon Johnson in 1964, to continue the historic restoration of the mansion begun by Mrs. Kennedy. Committee member J. Carter Brown, director emeritus of the National Gallery of Art, brought his considerable institutional memory to bear. The niches could hold sculpture beautifully, Brown remembers, just as they had for a White House Festival of the Arts, which brought abstract contemporary art to the White House East colonnade and South lawn for the first time in 1965, during the Johnson Administration.

Mrs. Clinton appointed Brown to facilitate the new White House sculpture exhibitions, and he suggested that only outdoor sculpture from public collections be shown in the garden. Brown brought the project to a meeting of the Association of Art Museum Directors in Seattle, and together with the association's then president, Evan Maurer, director and CEO of the Minneapolis Institute of Art, decided that there should be four shows, one from each region of the country. The series of exhibitions, Brown explained,

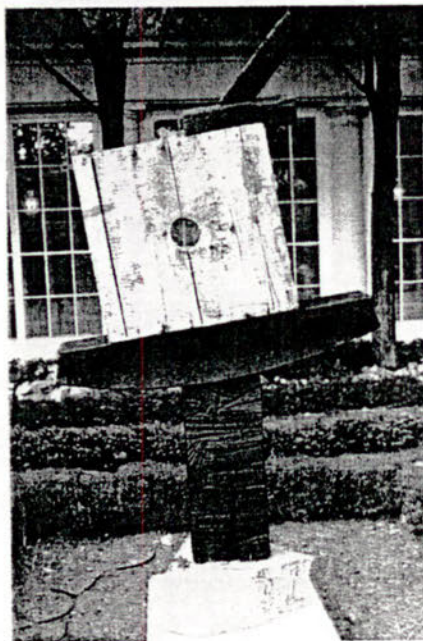


Above: George Rickey, *Two Lines Oblique*, Atlanta, 1969. Stainless steel, 35 ft. high. Right: Lonnie Holley, *Leverage*, 1993. Concrete, found wood, paint, and straw, 79.5 x 45.5 x 17 in.

would showcase the museums of America, in addition to its sculptors. "To initiate the program, we went to George Neubert, the director of the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, who is a modern sculpture specialist—and a sculptor himself."

The Midwest was chosen to be first, to represent sculpture collected in the heart of the country and also, Mrs. Clinton surmises, smiling, "because I am from Chicago." In addition to representing the Midwest collections, Neubert also chose to present in the initial exhibition an overview of sculpture in the 20th century. "We looked for the best in American sculpture," he says, "from the early representationalists to contemporary artists such as Ellsworth Kelly...The first consideration was scale—what would fit harmoniously in those spaces and with other pieces?"

In addition to scale, Neubert's aesthetic goals "were to work with the verticality of the formal, French-cut topiary holly trees, and to portray the



human form—in abstraction as well as in representation." He looked for historical development as well as a variety of materials. "There was some anxiety at first," he recalls, "on just how some of these avant-garde pieces would be received—by the press, by the public, and especially by the anti-art forces in Congress."

Some members of the committee and the White House staff worried especially about Gaston Lachaise's *Standing*

Woman, a monumental 1932 bronze nude. "Some on the committee were skittish politically," recalls Brown. The First Lady stood up for the sculpture: "It's obviously very important: a landmark piece in art history and representative of a whole style."

Politically, it was important that no taxpayer money go into the exhibitions. "Traditionally, if one museum borrows from another, the borrower pays," Brown explains. However, few of the museums had funds to ship large pieces of sculpture to Washington and back. A private donor was the answer. The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation of Los Angeles (art collector and patron Iris Cantor had initially arranged for the loan of a Willem de Kooning painting to the Clintons for the upstairs White House living quarters), came forward to pay all the expenses of the exhibitions—including the little four-by-four-inch souvenir catalogues prepared for visitors to the Mansion. Fine arts photographer David Finn donated his photographs of the sculptures. Then Rex Scouten and Betty Monkman supervised the logistics. Along with the National Park Service, which oversees the White House, the curators ordered cranes to remove the heaviest sculptures from their trucks and set them in place on the lawn.

Exhibition 1: The Midwest,

October 1994 through February 1995

The first of the series of exhibitions (collectively titled, "Twentieth-Century American Sculpture at The White House") opened on the Clinton's 19th wedding anniversary, with 10 works in the garden by sculptors Louise Nevelson, Alexander Calder, David Smith, George Segal, Bryan Hunt, Louise Bourgeois, Manuel Neri, Judith Shea, Ellsworth Kelly, and Gaston Lachaise, and, inside the corridor, Paul Manship.

The only logistical problem with the show was the wind caused by the presidential helicopter landing on the South lawn of the White House, which set Calder's *Five Rudders* (1964), a red and black painted standing mobile spinning like an electric blender. "It was a rugged test," recalls Hocker-smith. "It usually turns slowly in the wind, but now it was really whirling. We were startled—and almost panicked." But the Calder held up to the turbulence.

The organizers of the show and the White House staff were moved by the reactions of the artists who attended the opening. Even the most acclaimed

of them responded with awe to being in the great house. Ellsworth Kelly, whose work had been in the 1965 White House Arts Festival, nevertheless was touched by the experience of seeing *Curve VIII*, his thin 1974 aluminum sheath standing tall, sleek, and serene between Nevelson's *Tropical Tree III* (1972) and Bourgeois's linear humanoid *Observer* (1974). Kelly, 71 at the time, told Mrs. Clinton, "I wish my mother and father could be here. My mother never really understood what I was doing, and my father died at the age of 36." Kelly added that "A government should recognize the art of the time."

George Segal had not been to the White House since Lyndon Johnson's inauguration. At the Sculpture Garden opening he said he was surprised and impressed by Mrs. Clinton, who he described as "articulate and well informed about the art being shown." "As an artist and a person," Segal said, "I find myself in enormous sympathy with the way they [the Clintons] are interpreting their job. The federal government is to be praised for expressing interest in the needs of ordi-

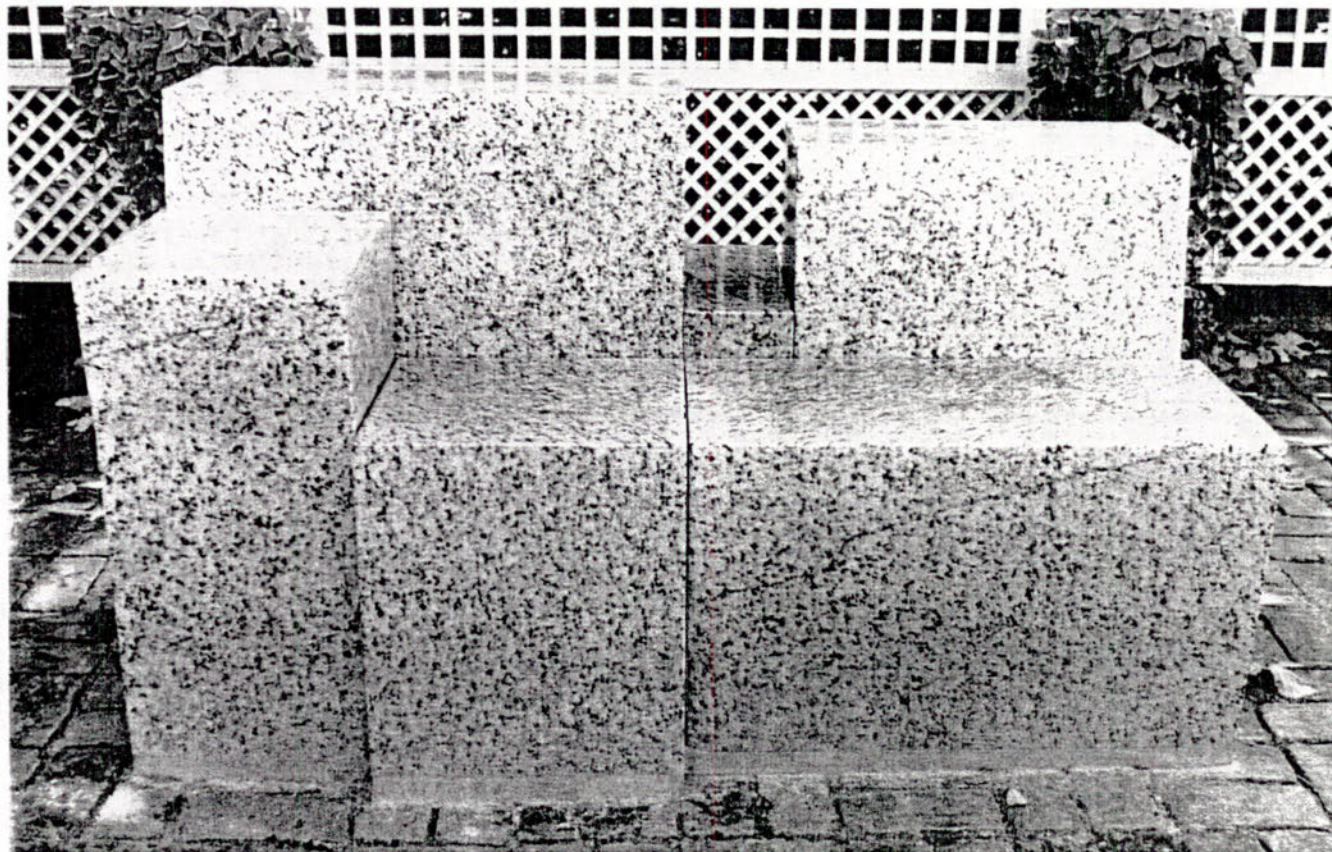
nary people." Segal and many of the artists viewed the exhibitions as meaningful to them personally as artists and citizens, and also stated that the First Lady has established an important precedent for both government and the private sector.

Exhibition 2: The Southeast,

April 1995 through September 1995

The regional vane turned South for the second exhibition, again recognizing the first family's history. Townsend Wolfe, director and chief curator of the Arkansas Art Center, was chosen by Brown and Maurer to select sculpture from museums throughout the South. "Since the overview had been presented, my concept was to show works made since 1965," says Wolfe. His criteria were hard to fulfill: works by living artists that exemplify racial, ethnic, and gender diversity, as well as diversity in geography and materials—all in outdoor sculpture within a scale that lends a human dimension to the collection.

Below: Scott Burton, *Granite Settee*, 1982–83. Granite, 36 x 65 x 35 in.



Logistics then became the biggest challenge. New Orleans artist John Scott's brightly colored *Target I* (1993), with polychromed steel humanesque figures standing behind a circle of welded steel, almost did not make it in time for the opening on April 3. "The large piece was so long (116 by 75 by 5 feet) it had to be loaded on a flatbed truck," says Wolfe, "and of such a size that the truck could only travel through certain states and on certain days!" That colorful, arresting sculpture was placed to face the walkway where tourists first enter the mansion, showing its black-and-white "checkerboard" side, described by Wolfe as a "humane comment on racial equality."

At the opposite end of the garden stood George Rickey's *Two Lines Oblique, Atlanta* (1969). The 35-foot stainless steel sculpture, a kinetic parallelogram that Mrs. Clinton described as "not unlike a television antenna," was built to explore the essence of nature—the "waving of branches, trembling of stems," explained Rickey. It moved

slowly in the wind, and quivered mightily with the helicopters' propeller wash. The sculpture mesmerized its hosts. "We would sit there and watch it," recalls Mrs. Clinton. "Bill and I sometimes had meals out there—or we'd just sit there and we'd watch it, those arms just swinging in the wind. I loved it. I love that whole idea of moving sculpture." Rickey's sculpture, adds the First Lady, was among her favorites in the series of exhibitions—along with another work in the same show, *Vertical Void* (1994), by Carol Hepper, among the younger sculptors shown. Hepper's undulating sculpture, made of copper tubing and steel wound in a spiral, recalls the twisting, bound strands of willow branches—one of the organic materials used by Hepper in her native South Dakota. "I first stood in front of it for four or five minutes at a time," said the President's wife. "I loved the way it looked."

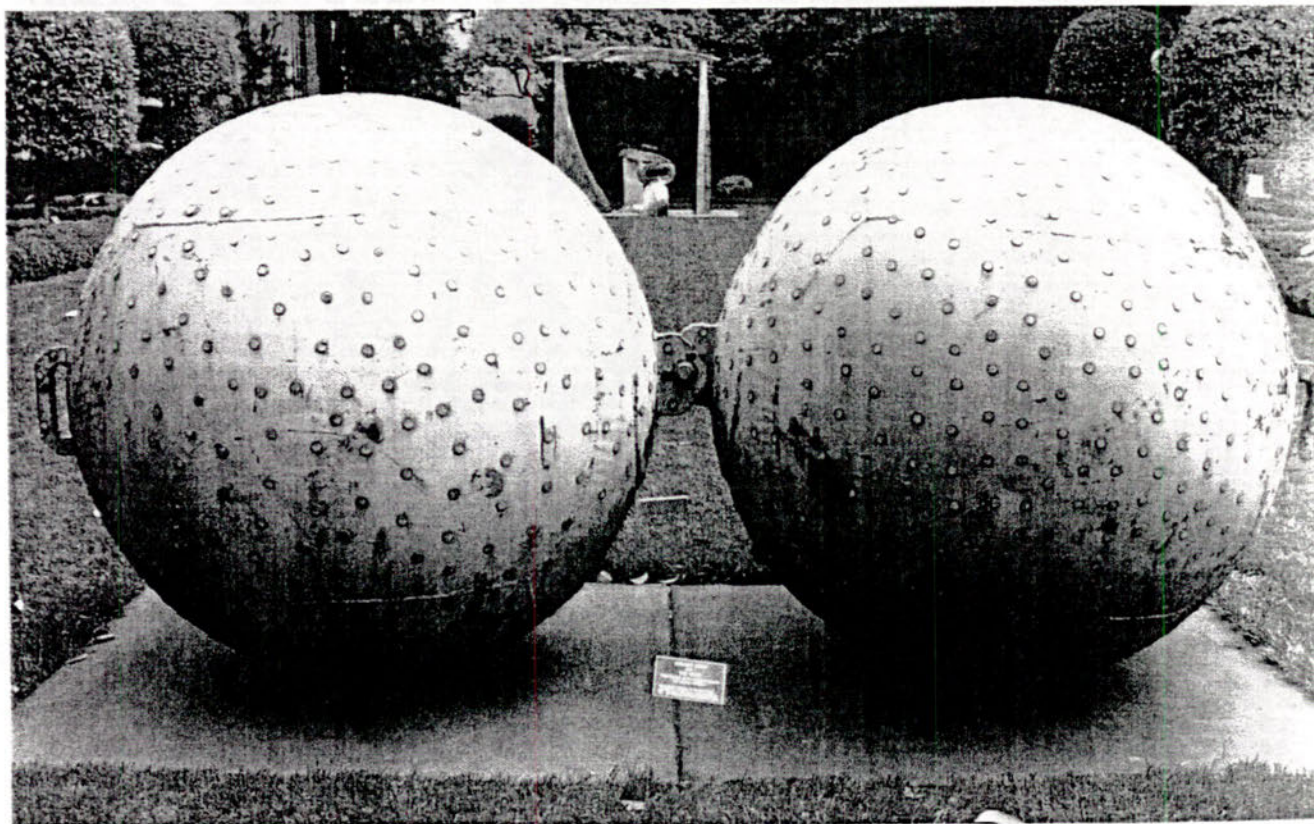
Exhibition 3: The West,

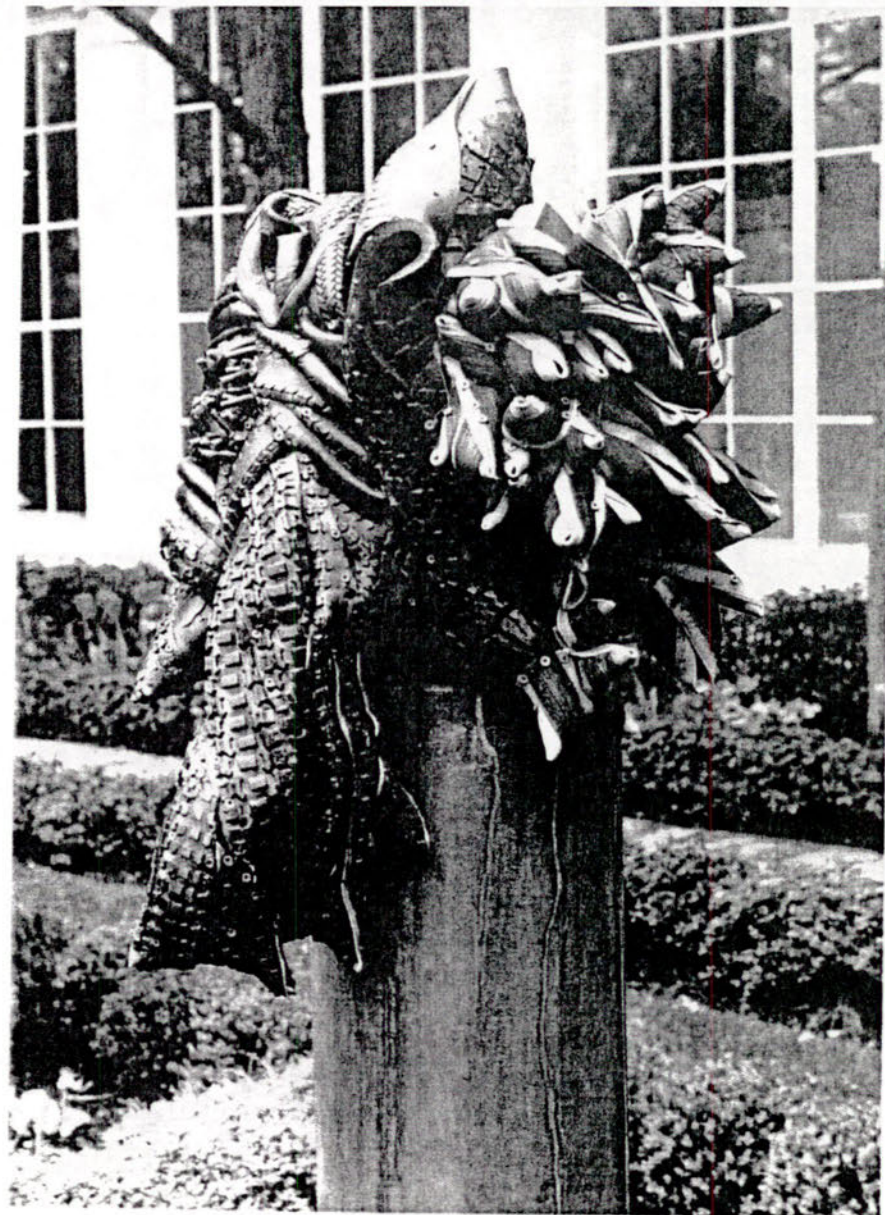
October 1995 through March 1996
Peter C. Marzio, director of Houston's Museum of Fine Arts and organizer of the third exhibition, said that the White House Garden "is quite wonder-

ful for mid-size sculpture—if it were any smaller, it wouldn't be worth it; and bigger, it would be too big." He adds that "The fact that the White House took it seriously elevated the project." Marzio and curator Alison de Lima Greene tracked down sculpture that had Western reference—as well as work in museums from Texas to California that "has transcended regional designation."

Their selections were on view in the garden and adjacent foyer. The works included Joseph Havel's *Exhaling Pearls* (1993), Jesús Bautista Morales' *Moon Ring 3* (1982), Scott Burton's *Granite Settee* (1982–83), and William Tucker's *Track* (1981). The exhibition's opening had to be postponed from its scheduled November 1995 date; the federal government was shut down by an appropriations impasse. When the celebration finally took place on January 5, 1996, Mrs. Clinton pointed to the "difficult and challenging time in Washington and in our country," adding that contemplating sculpture can "make our spirits soar, reminding us of life's possibilities...and gives viewers a chance to think about what their own lives mean."

Below: Donald Lipski, *The West*, 1987.
Painted steel, corroded pennies, and silicone adhesive, two elements, each 60 in. dia.





Left: Chakaia Booker, *Repugnant Rapunzel (Let Down Your Hair)*, 1995. Rubber tire, wood, and metal, 35 x 25 x 22 in.

Deborah Butterfield's bronze equine *Hina* (1990–91) perhaps most strongly signified the West for White House visitors. Butterfield says that being in the show gave her a greater understanding of the past and her connection to her Western forebears. "Being from Montana, I was moved by how much of a presence the West has in the White House...My sculpture was right outside the window from works by Frederic Remington and Charles Marion Russell," she says. "They seemed to be looking out at my horse. I felt connected to Remington and Russell in a way I'd never felt before." Butterfield says that *Hina* has its sources as far west as the country gets, being made from mountain driftwood gathered and assembled in Hawaii. The artist welded a bronze armature around the sticks, which were burned away in the casting—but the open-work effect leaves their

history, so that the work combines the earth's flora, fauna, and metal.

Joel Shapiro's bronze *Untitled* (1982), an abstract, geometric rendition of a human figure with limbs akimbo, stood in precarious balance in the garden across from Martin Puryear's *Decoy* (1990), which aimed its arched neck or snout at its neighbor, Robert Therrien's *No Title* (1985), a bold, sleek minimalist dunce cap.

Exhibition 1: The Northeast,

April 1996 through September 1997

For the final regional exhibition, representing art in the Northeast, curator Marcia Tucker, founding director of the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York City, chose more avant-garde, adventurous work. Her aim was to focus on the way artists use physical material and conceptual boundaries in sculpture—and to find

sculptors whose work had not been shown in the previous exhibitions.

From nine museums from New York to Maine, Tucker selected works made from 1971 to 1995 by internationally recognized artists as well as younger artists. Visitors entering the mansion were first greeted by the late Nancy Graves's 1984 *Dallaleve*. Maren Hassinger's *In a Quiet Place* (1985) is an excerpt from an installation in the Studio Museum in Harlem—a garden of wire, rope, and concrete, which refers to grass, weeds, limbs, and other natural elements.

"Landscape, myth, body, and spirit" were the subjects of the works, according to Tucker. Ed Shay drew from nature in his bronze *Acadian Gyro* (1987). The skeleton of a boat, with a fish head where the head of a maiden might be, was cast from latex and plaster molds found in Shay's own back yard. Shay says: "The work can be read as a sort of ancestral gyroscope; we are in part determined by who our ancestors were."

Also rooted in nature were Joel Fisher's *Seed (Egg Man)* (1986–87) and Chakaia Booker's *Repugnant Rapunzel (Let Down Your Hair)* (1995), a fairy tale character whose automobile tire tresses cascade down from the statue's sleek metal head. Robert Lobe, who worked in construction jobs to support his early sculpture work, created *Harmony Ridge #26* (1990) with anodized, hammered aluminum molded like clay to become a fictional rock. Melvin Edwards shaped his *Gate of Ogun* (1983) in silvery stainless steel. Like a shrine or altar, the piece is spiritually evocative.

Progress in the exhibition almost came to a halt when *The West* (1987), Donald Lipski's massive bronze globes studded with pennies, was stopped at the White House gates. "The Secret Service thought it looked too much like two land mines," said Carter Brown. "They said they had to be sure there were no explosives inside." Amused, Lipski said, "They wanted to bore holes to look. I didn't mind." But the Metropolitan Museum of Art, owner of the piece, would not hear of it. The

sculpture was trucked out to the X-ray facility at a government ordnance plant in Maryland. "It passed inspection, and was allowed to enter the show...where it didn't bomb," laughs Brown.

Exhibition 5: The Nation's Capital, October 1996 through October 1997

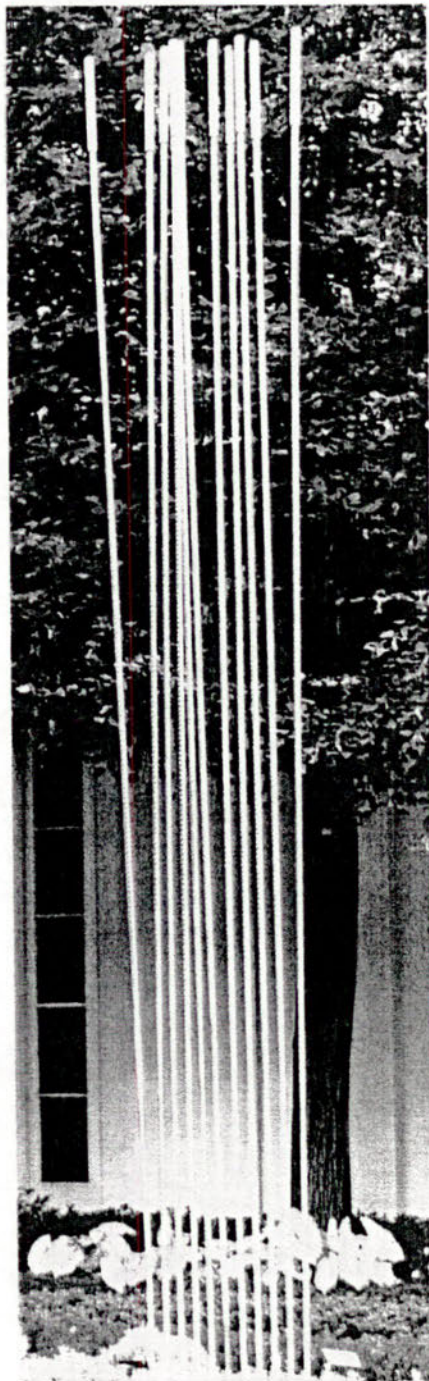
The Committee for the Preservation of the White House had planned for only the four regional exhibitions during the first term of the Clinton administration. After the Clinton victory in 1996, however, Mrs. Clinton stated emphatically that she wanted to continue the series. Knowing that every tourist would not have a chance to see every museum in Washington, she had asked Earl "Rusty" Powell, director of the National Gallery of Art, to select the dozen best examples of outdoor sculpture in town. The exhibition included Willem de Kooning's *Seated Woman on a Bench* (1972), a heavy bronze figure gnarled as if in anguish, which was centered in the row of art between the trees. Mrs. Clinton says that she could not resist touching Harry Bertoia's 1977 *Tonal Sculpture*, which would set the work into motion and cause its tall, reed-like beryllium copper rods to produce sound.

Several of the garden sculptures represented the old guard of 20th-century sculpture, including Calder's *Nenuphar* (1968), David Smith's *Agricola I* (1951-52) and *Voltri XV* (1962), Alexander Archipenko's sleek *Le Gondolier* (1914), and Isamu Noguchi's *Great Rock of Inner Seeking* (1974). More recent works included Joel Shapiro's *Untitled* (1989) and, inside, Immi Storrs's *Five Horses* (1988) and Roy Lichtenstein's solid brass *Untitled Head I* (1969-70).

Mrs. Clinton invited the artists to a closing celebration in September, though Roy Lichtenstein and de Kooning had died during the exhibition's time. Judith Shea, whose *Shield* (1990) had been in the first show, came to the White House for the first time to see her *Post-Balzac* (1991) in this exhibition. That piece, a stately bronze coat, empty and austere, is normally on view at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, also home to Rodin's famous *Monument to Balzac* (1898). "I wanted to address

how, at the end of the last century, there was both romance and optimism for the next century," says Shea. "I wanted to ask, 'Where are we a century later?' This century's technical innovations have brought horrors, with the level of destruction we are able to do. The coat is hollow—a metaphor for

Below: Harry Bertoia, *Tonal Sculpture*, 1977. Beryllium copper and bronze weights, 212 in. high, 48.33 x 48.33 in. base.



the condition of the spirit, for emptiness." Shea adds that "to present American art in the context of the White House—to show visitors, heads of state—is a great contribution."

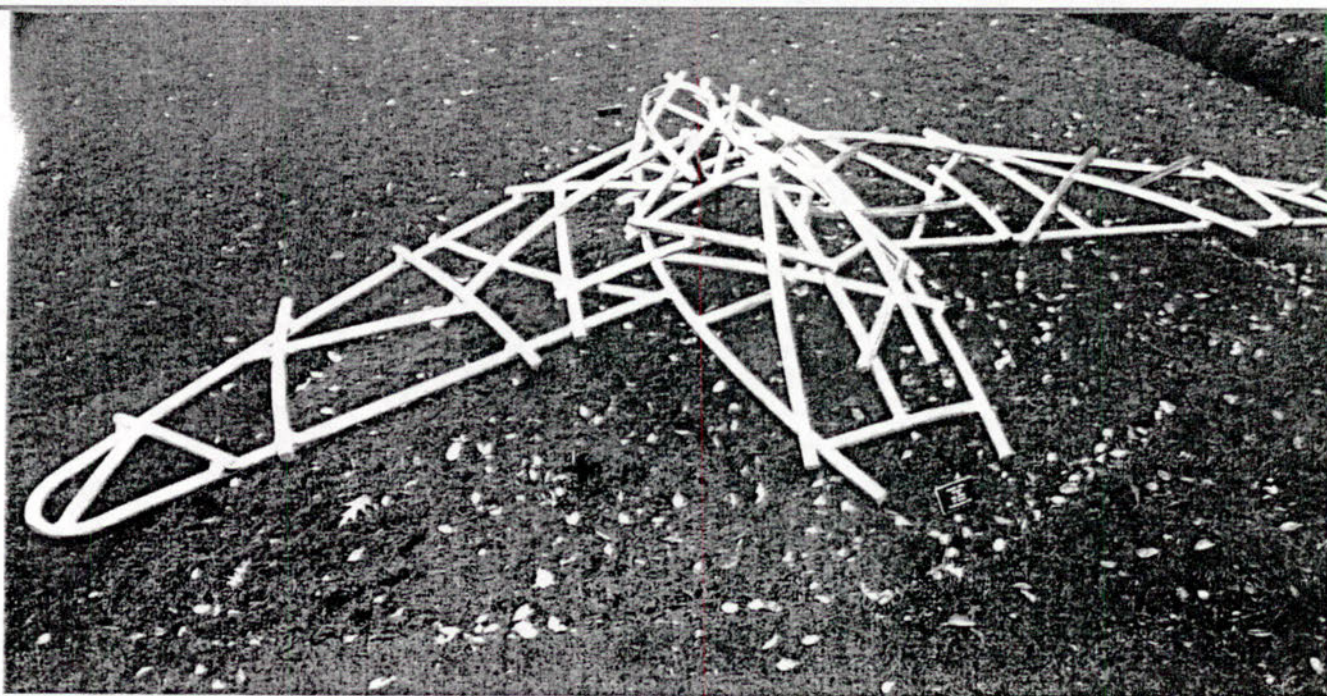
Exhibition 6: Honoring Native America, October 1997 through October 1998

In the five previous exhibitions, Mrs. Clinton had praised the diversity among the sculptors, by race, ethnic origin, and gender. But she had noticed there were no Native American sculptors represented. Were there, she wondered, Native American sculptors working in contemporary fine arts, who would comprise an excellent exhibition?

"Several years ago I met Allan Houser," says Mrs. Clinton, "And I adored him. He was a sunbeam—just this wonderful, joyous, open look on his face. He had a really magnificent, very large sculpture of a warrior that he wanted to give to the White House. This was before I'd gotten permission to do the sculpture garden. He eventually wanted it to go to the Museum of the American Indian, which we were supposed to be building on the Mall. I wanted to take the sculpture because he very much wanted to give it to the government. He was quite sick at the time. And so I called the Vice President and said, 'How would you like to just temporarily have on your grounds this rather large Indian warrior sculpture?' Allan Houser has since died. It was so important to me that he be represented in this exhibition."

Houser's sculpture, *Earth Song* (1978), a figurative Apache carved from Alabama marble, sits like a tribal elder at the east side of the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden, an honored position for the "Grandfather of Contemporary Native American Sculpture." The artwork, on loan from the Heard Museum in Phoenix, was selected by the Heard's curator of fine art, Margaret Archuleta, who "would have chosen Houser's work to open the show even if Mrs. Clinton hadn't requested it," because of Houser's influence in bringing Native American culture into 20th-century art.

"My personal and professional goal is to include Native American art in the mainstream art world," says



Above: Truman Lowe, *Bird Effigy*, 1997.
Aluminum, 42 x 240 x 132 in.

Archuleta, herself of Hispanic and San Juan Pueblo heritage. "Contemporary sculpture is a very new medium for Native American artists," she continues. "Only a handful work in sculpture, and even fewer are working on large-scale pieces that can be placed outside. Also, to be eligible, all the sculpture must be in a public collection. The challenge was quality in a field that was narrower than most."

In this exhibition, Allan Houser's student, Doug Hyde (Nez Perce/Assiniboine/Chippewa), echoes Houser's curvilinear traditional style with his Tennessee pink marble *Flag Song* (1983) made to commemorate tribal veterans on Veterans Day. Houser's son, Bob Haozous (Haozous is the family's original Apache name) departed from his father's style by working in stainless steel, employing a sleek, European-based rendering of line for *Woman In Love* (1983).

Sculpture by the youngest artist in the exhibitions, Roxanne Swentzell, 35, of the Santa Clara Pueblo, was shown in the foyer. Her figurative sculpture, *The Emergence of the Clowns* (1988), in mixed-media clay, is derived from ancient effigy figures and shaped in the coil and scrape method of pot building. The sacred clowns, or *Koshares*, are shown in partial human form, as if emerging from the earth.

Also reflecting the Native American heritage as well as contempo-

rary sculpture influences is another work in aluminum, *Bird Effigy* (1997), by Truman Lowe (Winnebago), an art professor at the University of Wisconsin. The sculpture was inspired by the ceremonial mounds in the shape of birds found along the Ohio, Wisconsin, and Mississippi rivers. Lowe was commissioned by the Heard Museum to make the piece in time for the White House exhibition. "On the University of Wisconsin campus, there's a bird-mound with a wingspan of 50 feet and a length of 30 feet, head-to-tail," he said. "I wanted to create something out of respect for that particular culture, from 2,000 to 3,000 years ago." But Lowe's White House sculpture is also rooted in the 20th century. Fabricated of curved two-inch solid aluminum rods, the open metal frame of his bird effigy, hovering above the ground, suggests the 20th-century re-interpretation of the bird as airplane, flying low like a stealth bomber. "I wanted it to be visible from the Presidential helicopter," said Lowe. "We're in the present," he added, "and peering into the future. The new technologies allow us to re-interpret our past. We don't create new forms; it's just using the information we have—and how we think about ourselves."

The purpose of the Sculpture Garden (as it is now informally called) is, in Mrs. Clinton's words, "to make a statement about the importance of art." Through all the exhibitions, Mrs. Clinton reports, the

public reaction has been positive. "We have been deluged with comments, reviews, and anecdotal evidence about how much it has meant." For the million-and-a-half people who walk by every year, she says, "It has provided a conversation piece. It's given people a chance to talk about art while they wait in line to see the rooms in the White House."

Of her opportunity to highlight American sculpture, the First Lady is even more hopeful of an impact: "The pieces themselves were so well showcased that a lot of museum curators and art patrons would come to our various exhibitions—and come away more positive about outdoor sculpture," she says, noting that many museums have little space outdoors.

With two more exhibitions ahead, Mrs. Clinton would like to see the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden continue to feature sculpture, even into the future—and is dreaming about an endowment that might make it possible. "Obviously, whoever is here next will make whatever decisions they want to make about the sculpture garden. I hope they'll really pay attention to what it has meant and how it has finished off the look of that garden, and what it has meant to the people walking through the East Colonnade," she says. "And what it has meant to the artists, the museums, and the patrons of art—to art lovers around the country."

Mary Lynn Kotz is a writer based in Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 6, 1998

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NEW SCULPTURE EXHIBITION IN THE JACQUELINE KENNEDY GARDEN UNVEILED

WASHINGTON, DC -- Today First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton opened the exhibition, "Twentieth Century American Sculpture at the White House: Inspired by Rodin." The sculpture will be on display in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden through September 1999.

The exhibit explores the influences of the French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) on twentieth century American sculpture. At the height of his career, Rodin was regarded as the greatest sculptor since Michelangelo. The exhibit includes three works by Rodin, including The Thinker, the sculpture for which he is most well-known.

Each sculpture portrays the human figure which has been a widely studied and popular theme for American artists throughout the twentieth century. The roots of modernism and much of the exploration of the figure in the sculpture of American artists of this century can be traced to the influence of Rodin. From his early works of the late 1870s until his death, Rodin challenged the public with sculpture that was unprecedented in its personal expression and historic relevance. At the turn of the century, he enabled the world to perceive sculpture in a new way, paving the way for artists who followed.

Twelve works by ten artists (see attached list) were lent for the exhibition by the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation; the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; the Town of Greenwich, Connecticut; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York; The Isamu Noguchi Foundation, Inc., Long Island City, New York; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

The Brooklyn Museum of Art organized and curated this exhibition. Arnold L. Lehman, Director of the Brooklyn Museum of Art, with his staff selected the works with input of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, chaired by the First Lady. This exhibition was made possible by the generosity of the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation.

This is the seventh sculpture exhibition in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden since 1994. The first six exhibitions focused on works by contemporary artists from museums in various geographical regions of the United States.

Attachment: List of Sculptures and Artists in the Exhibition

Auguste Rodin (French, 1840-1917)

The Thinker, 1880

Bronze

Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation, Promised Gift to the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University

Auguste Rodin (French, 1840-1917)

The Three Shades, 1881-86

Bronze

Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation

Auguste Rodin (French, 1840-1917)

Memorial Relief (Hand of a Child), c. 1905

Marble

National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Gift of Elizabeth Merrill Furness

Louise Bourgeois (American, b. France 1911)

Decontractee, 1990

Pink Marble and Steel Base

Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York. Purchased with funds given by Mary Smith Dorward Fund, the Contemporary Art Council, the David H. Cogan Foundation, Inc., Harry Kahn, Mrs. Carl Selden; and gift of Edward A. Bragaline by exchange

Willem de Kooning (American, b. Holland, 1904-1997)

Clamdigger, 1972

Bronze, edition 2/7

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Gift of Mrs. H. Gates Lloyd

Stephen De Staebler (American, b. 1933)

Standing Figure with Blue Shoulder, 1983

Bronze, edition 3/3

Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. David Guss on the occasion of Roy. R. Neuberger's 85th birthday

Malvina Hoffman (American, 1887-1966)

Ivan Mestrovic, c. 1925

Bronze

Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Felix Warburg and Mrs. Edward C. Blum

Bryan Hunt (American, b. 1947)

Big Twist, 1978

Bronze with cement base

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Carl D. Lobell

Isamu Noguchi (American, 1904-1988)

Woman, 1983-85

Basalt with Granite Vase

The Isamu Noguchi Foundation, Inc., Long Island City, New York

Andrew O'Connor (American, 1874-1941)

Tristram and Iseult, 1928

Limestone

Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, Dick S. Ramsey Fund

George Segal (American, b. 1924)

Girl Standing in Nature, 1976

Bronze

Presented to the town of Greenwich, Connecticut, by the Greenwich Arts Council in commemoration of the Bicentennial Year, 1776-1976

William Zorach (American, b. Lithuania 1887-1966)

Wisdom of Solomon, 1966

Casota limestone

Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Lester Avnet

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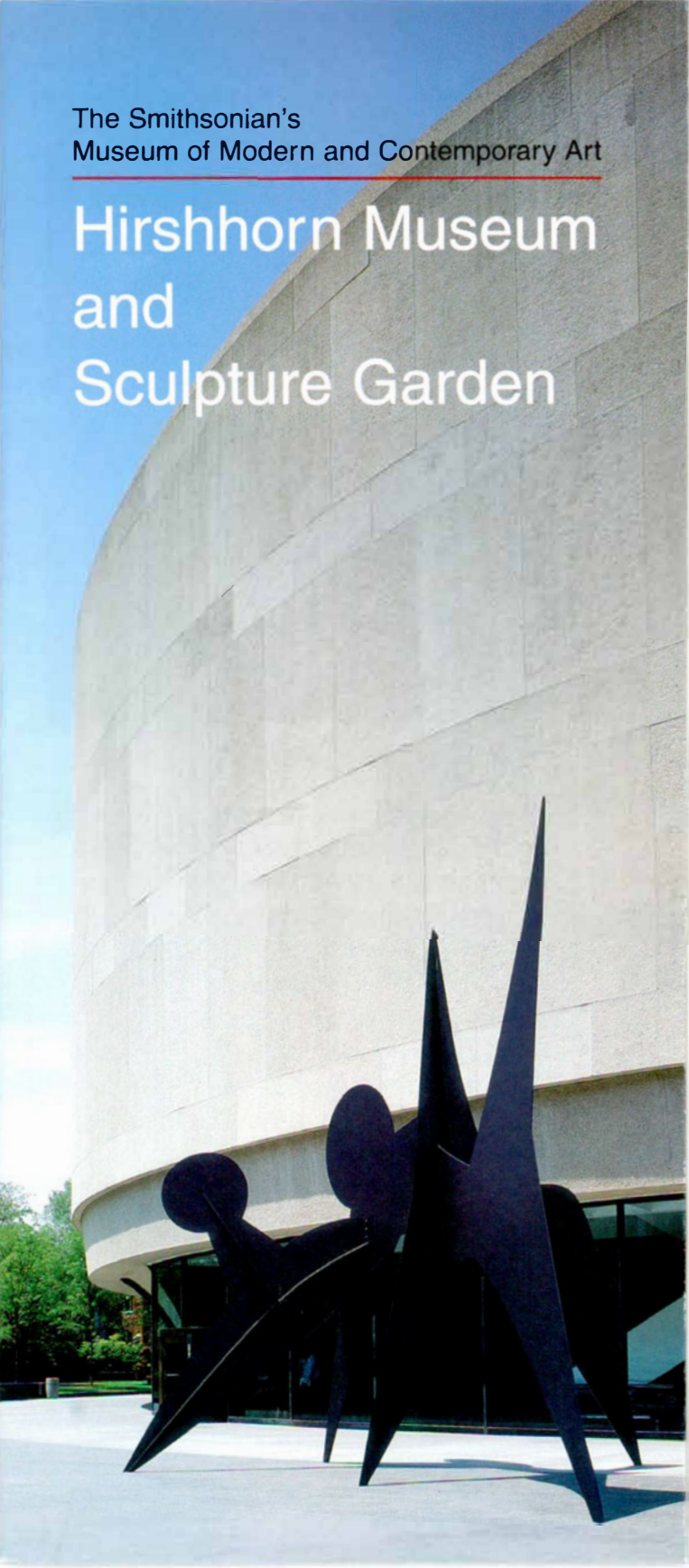
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The Smithsonian's
Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden





Modern and Contemporary Art

September 16, 1999

Media Only: Sidney Lawrence or Michèle Colburn, 202-357-1618
Public only: 202-357-2700 weekdays
Press preview: Wednesday, Oct. 6, 9:30 a.m. until 12 noon.
Presentation by the curators in second-floor galleries at 10:30 a.m. sharp.
Several artists will be present. R.s.v.p. 202-357-1618

HIRSHHORN OPENS 25th ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION, "REGARDING BEAUTY"

"Regarding Beauty: A View of the Late 20th Century," an exhibition of nearly 90 works by 36 international artists seeking to bring contemporary meaning to the age-old concept of beauty, will open on Thursday, Oct. 7, at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Independence Avenue at Seventh Street S.W., and continue through Jan 17, 2000.

The exhibition then appears Feb. 11 - April 30 at the Haus der Kunst in Munich, Germany.

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Hirshhorn Museum, which opened in October 1974, the exhibition underscores how beauty, once questioned by progressive artists, has reasserted itself as a topic and issue for making art. Included will be paintings, sculptures, photographs, drawings, mixed-media pieces and installations drawn from some 25 collections in the United States and abroad as well as the Hirshhorn's own holdings, plus a media-arts gallery presenting video art and performances documented on camera.

"Established by classical Greek philosophers as a tangible, definable characteristic of art, beauty has . . . come to be seen as a changing ideal that must reflect its own time," reads a statement (exhibition entrance) by Hirshhorn co-organizers Neal Benezra (assistant director for art and public programs) and Olga M. Viso (associate curator). The statement notes that works on view date from the early 1960s to the present, and cross generations, styles and media to suggest common threads and themes, not a chronology of movements. "Rather than proposing a new definition of beauty, our hope is to open a dialog on this vast and complex topic."

The exhibition, filling the ring-shaped museum's entire second-floor gallery space, begins at an entry lobby lined with quotations by such diverse observers on beauty as Charles Baudelaire and Sophia Loren. The first of the exhibition's two broad sections, "Beauty Objectified," follows.

Allusions to Classical art begin the show. Michelangelo Pistoletto's "Venus of the Rags," 1967, is a full-scale reproduction of a Roman goddess pondering a mound of fabric discards. Works by Giulio
SI-281-99

- more -

Paolini and Jannis Kounellis also comment on classical beauty. Self-posed photographs from the 1980s by Cindy Sherman pay homage to Old Master paintings by Caravaggio and others, while Yasumasa Morimura, in his photo work, poses as Manet's "Olympia." Janine Antoni's installation, titled "Lick and Lather," 1993-1994, wryly uses the aristocratic bust format to create a visually arresting, fragrant environment of 16 self-portrait sculptures—half made of chocolate, half of soap.

Contemporary interpretations of the nude, a traditional locus for beauty, appear next. From the 1960s are distorted women by Pablo Picasso and Willem de Kooning and body imprints by Yves Klein. From the 1990s are paintings by Lucian Freud of heavyset male and female models—uncompromising but sympathetic—and Marlene Dumas' depictions of newborns in monumental scale. Sculptures by Louise Bourgeois and Kiki Smith further probe the seductive yet repellent nature of human anatomy. Matthew Barney's theatrical color photographs reveal imaginary mythological creatures that appear to be evolving toward a new, genderless beauty.

The influence of mass culture on contemporary notions of beauty is introduced with 1960s images of Pop icons Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley by Andy Warhol, and of Playboy bunnies by Sigmar Polke. Advertising, film, music, television and other popular media also resonate in such works of the 1990s as Charles Ray's 8-foot-tall clothed mannequin, Lorna Simpson's prints showing variations on African-American wigs, Beverly Semmes' fabric installation evoking a monumental party dress, and a photo work, poster series and video installation by Mariko Mori, Rosemarie Trockel and Pipilotti Rist, respectively, revealing high-tech heroines. Abstract images by Imi Knoebel evoke the porcelain facial tones of actress Grace Kelly.

The halfway point of the exhibition is highlighted by a media-arts gallery with five programs—"The Body as Palette," "Body Conscious," "Icons of Beauty," "The Intimate Gaze" and "Natural Beauty"—screening video works and documentation of performances by several artists represented in the galleries, along with Vanessa Beecroft, Mona Hatoum, Marina Abramović and others. A schedule of the rotating programs, developed by curator Viso, will be distributed in the galleries.

The exhibition's second section, "Intangible Beauty," explores the subjective, elusive realm of beauty as sensation. It begins with subtle geometric abstract paintings from the 1970s by Agnes Martin, a recent sculptural form suffused with pure pigment by Anish Kapoor, and a walk-in environment of ethereal, projected light by James Turrell. John Baldessari's canvas with the words "Pure Beauty," a cartoonlike

Roy Lichtenstein sunset and Edward Ruscha's sunset vista use irony to illustrate the futility of grasping beauty. Gerhard Richter's "scraped" abstractions and silvery views of mountains, clouds and streams propose further levels of rumination on art and aesthetic response.

Nature's power is the starting point for crystalline water studies by Vija Celmins from the 1960s, recent photographs of sky and ocean by Hiroshi Sugimoto and of inverted trees by Rodney Graham, and a new installation by Jim Hodges consisting of hundreds of silk flowers lining a passageway. The exhibition ends with Felix Gonzalez-Torres' works--one consisting of dangling, softly illuminated lights and another of a stack of paper bearing an image of clouds--and nearby, Douglas Gordon's wall text about the nature of perception.

"Beauty remains a potent mystery, rich with possibility, and a powerful tool for engaging art's audiences," Benezra and Viso together have observed.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Among several free public programs will be a panel discussion with artists on opening day (Thursday, Oct. 7, 12:30 p.m.), and a series of four lectures, Wednesdays at 7 p.m., with Dave Hickey (Oct. 20), Arthur C. Danto (Oct. 27), Camille Paglia (Nov. 10) and Robert Farris Thompson (Dec. 8). Family programs, workshops, gallery talks, tours and related film showings also will be presented. Consult the museum's calendar, website (www.si.edu/hirshhorn) or call 202-357-2700 for details.

CATALOG

English and German editions of a fully illustrated 232-page exhibition catalog (\$36.95) will be co-published with Hatje Cantz Verlag in Germany. Essays include "The Misadventures of Beauty" (Neal Benezra), "Beauty and Its Dilemmas" (Olga Viso), and "Beauty for Ashes" (Arthur Danto, guest essayist). Artists' biographies and bibliographies are included.

SPONSORS

Major support for the exhibition was provided by the Holenia Exhibition Fund in memory of Joseph H. Hirshhorn; by Robert Lehrman; and by The Hill Family Foundation Inc. Additional funding was provided by Aaron and Barbara Levine and the Phoebe W. Haas Charitable Foundation. The catalog was made possible in part by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Inc. The media-arts gallery was funded by the Peter Norton Family Foundation, and education programs were supported in part by a grant from Carlos and Rosa de la Cruz. Additional assistance was provided by the Canadian Embassy; Pro Helvetia, the Arts Council of Switzerland; the Mondriaan Foundation; and the Institute for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week except Dec. 25 from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Admission is free.

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Modern and Contemporary Art

25 YEARS AT THE HIRSHHORN--HIGHLIGHTS

Contact: Sidney Lawrence or Michele Colburn (202)357-1618

Oct. 12, 1999

- 1974 The Hirshhorn opens its doors on October 4 with a 6,600-piece collection donated to the Nation by collector/philanthropist Joseph H. Hirshhorn (1899--1981). Abram Lerner is the founding director; Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D--New York) chairs a ten-member Board of Trustees.
- 1976 The Hirshhorn's largest exhibition to date, "The Golden Door: Artist-Immigrants of America, 1876--1976," celebrates the U.S. Bicentennial.
- 1979 "Directions," in its first incarnation as a biennial group exhibition, is launched.
- 1981 Joseph Hirshhorn dies at age eighty-one. He leaves a bequest of an additional 5,800 objects to the museum, effectively doubling the size of the collection. The Sculpture Garden is redesigned.
- 1984 The Hirshhorn celebrates its tenth anniversary with the widely noted exhibition "Content: A Contemporary Focus, 1974--1984." James T. Demetrian, longtime head of the Des Moines Art Center, begins his tenure as the second director of the Hirshhorn. He and the curators continue to develop the permanent collection.
- 1985 Sydney Lewis of Richmond, Virginia, assumes the chairmanship of the Board of Trustees.
- 1986 Selected works from the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest are shown.
- 1987-88 The "Directions" series is recast into a one-gallery solo show format. "WORKS," a series in which artists are invited to create temporary, site-specific works at the Hirshhorn, is introduced and continues until early 1993. The museum's auditorium is renamed in honor of Marion and Gustave Ring in recognition of a generous gift of art from the Washington, D.C., couple's estate.
- 1988 Russian and Soviet paintings from 1900 to 1930 are shown at the Hirshhorn, part of a Smithsonian-generated exhibition initiative in response to Glasnost. The works, from two state museums of the Soviet Union and many unfamiliar to Western audiences, draw record crowds.
- 1991-93 Jerome L. Greene of New York City becomes chairman of the Board of Trustees in 1991. The Hirshhorn plaza is redesigned. "Young at Art" programs for children are launched.
- 1993-95 Two well-attended traveling exhibitions highlight key aspects of the Hirshhorn collection: a Willem de Kooning birthday celebration of fifty works spanning his career, shown in Barcelona and three U.S. cities after a successful opening in Washington, D.C. and a survey of twentieth-century figurative sculpture, which tours Taiwan and Japan.
- 1996 Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden: 150 Works of Art, the first book on the collection published since the comprehensive volume that accompanied the museum's opening, is released in conjunction with the Smithsonian Sesquicentennial.
- 1997 Robert Lehrman of Washington, D.C., assumes the chairmanship of the Board of Trustees.
- 1999 The Hirshhorn reaches its 25-year benchmark as the Smithsonian's museum of modern and contemporary art.

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In Praise of Modern Art

WITH A GROWING COLLECTION AND INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS,
THE HIRSHHORN MUSEUM CELEBRATES ITS FIRST 25 YEARS

THE HIRSHHORN MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE GARDEN, the Smithsonian's museum for modern and contemporary art, will soon be 25 years old. Like the nearby Freer and Sackler galleries on the Mall, the museum is the result of a single individual's deep passion for art. Joseph H. Hirshhorn (1899-1981), a Latvian-born, self-made American financier, donated his much-coveted collection to the Smithsonian in 1966.

Congress had flirted with the idea of a national museum of modern art in the late 1930s, approving a plan to complement the National Gallery of Art's focus on old masters, but World War II intervened. Two decades later, Smithsonian Secretary S. Dillon Ripley, with the aid of President and Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, persuaded Hirshhorn to donate his collection to the nation. On October 1, 1974, the Smithsonian officially added a dynamic, ring-shaped building bearing the benefactor's name, and surrounded by nearly five landscaped acres, to its growing complex of museums on the Mall.

True to its genesis as a void-filler, the Hirshhorn's overarching mission has been "to encourage and develop a greater understanding and appreciation of modern art." Its annual attendance has always ranked high among American art museums (1998's visitor count was more than 850,000). Its exhibitions over the past quarter-century have been instructive, ranging from an exploration of foreign-born artists' contributions to American modernism to a trend-spotting survey of counter-modernist art. In response to glasnost, the Hirshhorn brought Americans long-hidden examples of revolution-era Russian and Soviet paintings. It presented important retrospectives for such established figures as Alberto Giacometti and Francis Bacon, while introducing the work of countless younger artists.

From the outset, Hirshhorn curators have carefully orchestrated the permanent collection to make the story of the art of our time clear and stimulating. In renovated galleries on three floors, the collection has also grown in scope over the years. One reason for this has been the steady stream of additional donations. In response to Hirshhorn's insistence that the museum be free, dynamic, fluid and open to changing tastes, the core holdings associated with his benefactions—including his numerous gifts of art after 1966 and his 1981 bequest of some 5,500 other works—

have been expanded and updated through frequent acquisitions. For example, an early stringed figure by Henry Moore was acquired a few years back from the renowned British sculptor's family. To celebrate the acquisition, the museum mounted a small show telling the story of the work's creation and delineating its place in 20th-century art. Curators are constantly engaged in such research and interpretation for the public.

If the Hirshhorn offers the opportunity to "rediscover" established modern artists like Moore, it also serves as a kind of laboratory for contemporary visual expression. Because much of what the museum exhibits is contemporary, visitors are variously pleased, troubled, dazzled or perplexed by what they see. But the Hirshhorn tries to maintain an atmosphere that is exciting, nonthreatening—and never boring. Its docents train hard and lead stimulating, creative tours. Families make art a collective experience using the innovative *Family Guide*, a publication that encourages questions, responses, role-playing and other transgenerational interactions. In the popular "Young at Art" programs, children create their own artworks with their parents' participation. To offer fresh perspectives alongside the curatorial viewpoints, art students and artists are often invited to give gallery talks. There is a strong focus on outreach, with training for teachers to help them translate issues embodied by objects on view into useful material for classroom discussion. Culled from international festivals, films as art have also proven a successful component of the Hirshhorn's drive to foster understanding and appreciation of the art of our time.

Poised for its second quarter-century, the Hirshhorn seeks to expand its programs so that projects such as "Regarding Beauty: A View of the Late 20th Century," a 25th-anniversary survey that explores an age-old issue in art, can be presented and effectively interpreted well into the next millennium (the exhibition opens October 7). As a first step in establishing an endowment for this purpose, the Hirshhorn will present a gala fundraiser next fall. A passion for art is the only passport needed.

Michael Heyman

I. MICHAEL HEYMAN, SECRETARY



Oct. 12, 1999

FACT SHEET: 25th ANNIVERSARY IN BRIEF

Contact: Sidney Lawrence or Michele Colburn 202-357-1618

- This 25th anniversary year at the Hirshhorn began with a "new look" for the museum's permanent collection. After being closed several months for refurbishing, the third floor galleries reopened in February with a new presentation of modern and contemporary art carefully orchestrated by curators. Then came "Faces of Friendship: The Art-World Circle of Joseph and Olga Hirshhorn in Documentary Photographs" (April 7 - May 9), a small show of inscribed documentary photographs recently donated by Olga Hirshhorn, of Picasso, O'Keeffe, Moore, and others. Late Thursday hours (Art Night) and newly initiated tours of sculpture garden were offered throughout the summer. *****Regarding Beauty: a View of the Late 20th Century* Oct. 7, 1999 - Jan. 17, 2000****the official anniversary show, presents a spectrum of late 20th-century art that questions, comments on or reconsiders beauty via nearly 90 works by 38 artists, among them Matthew Barney, Louise Bourgeois, Willem de Kooning, James Turrell and Andy Warhol. This show travels to Munich.
- Some "firsts" for Washington DC regarding the Hirshhorn: there was no strictly 20th-century museum before it, no major modern sculpture collection (the museum's is considered one of the world's most comprehensive) or garden, and very few options beyond the Corcoran's or Phillips's more adventurous shows and a handful of experimental galleries for Washingtonians to acquaint themselves with the latest art trends.
- Since 1974 the Hirshhorn has led the exhibitions field nationally in presenting, for example, previously hidden revolution-era Russian art from Soviet museums (the first such show in the U.S. after Glasnost), a Lucian Freud painting retrospective eight years before the Metropolitan's, and a 90th-birthday Willem de Kooning tribute that brought the depth of Joseph Hirshhorn's holdings to light by presenting here and nationally what was, in effect, an all-media career retrospective.
- The Museum opened to the public on October 4, 1974, after considerable courting of New York collector/mining magnate Joseph H. Hirshhorn, debates on the Hill and elsewhere over the name and architecture, and the delicate, daunting task of shipping his 6,600-work collection from a Connecticut estate and Lower East Side warehouses to a ring-shaped public museum designed to be the Smithsonian's showcase for modern and contemporary art.

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Press Inquiries: Sidney Lawrence or Michèle Colburn, (202) 357-1618

HIRSHHORN MUSEUM FACT SHEET

HISTORY

1966 Through the efforts of Smithsonian Secretary S. Dillon Ripley (b. 1912), a 1938 proposal for a national museum of modern and contemporary art became reality when Joseph H. Hirshhorn (1899-1981) agreed to give his collection to the Nation to serve as the nucleus for a museum established by legislation of the United States Congress. A self-made millionaire, financier and mining magnate from the New York area, the Latvia-born Hirshhorn was an avid collector of modern art who had amassed holdings of more than 6,000 works over a 40-year period.

1969 President Lyndon Johnson presided at the groundbreaking for the new museum, to be built on the National Mall directly across from the National Archives.

1974 The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden opened as the Smithsonian's public showcase for modern and contemporary art. The museum complex, designed by Gordon Bunshaft (1909-1990) of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, was built with federal funds and a supplementary gift from Hirshhorn.

1981 Hirshhorn died, leaving a sizeable bequest of additional works of art. That same year, the Sculpture Garden reopened after a renovation by landscape architect Lester Collins.

1993 The sculpture plaza surrounding the museum building reopened after a renovation by landscape architect James Urban, winning a Federal Design Achievement Award in 1995.

1996 The Smithsonian Institution celebrated its 150th Anniversary. For the occasion the Hirshhorn published *Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden: 150 Works of Art*, the first substantive new book documenting the museum's collection. The design for this publication was commended by the American Association of Museums.

1997 The museum's progress as a collecting institution was charted by the exhibition and catalogue *The Hirshhorn Collects: Recent Acquisitions, 1992-1996*.

1999 To celebrate its 25th Anniversary on the eve of the new millennium, the Hirshhorn opens the exhibition "Regarding Beauty: a View of the Late 20th Century," exploring the evolving role of beauty in recent art.

COLLECTION

Size: The collection contains some 12,000 works of art, including approximately 5,000 paintings, 3,000 sculptures and mixed-media pieces, and 4,000 works on paper. About 600 works are on view in the galleries, plaza, and garden at any one time.

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Scope: The Hirshhorn has one of the most comprehensive collections of modern sculpture in the United States or abroad. The collection's other strengths include contemporary art, European painting since World War II, and American painting since the late 19th century.

Organization: Twentieth-century modernism to the 1960s is presented in third-floor galleries (paintings with sculpture in various media) and Sculpture Garden (mostly bronzes). The contemporary period is the focus of works in the lower-level galleries (paintings, sculptures, mixed-media works) and plaza (monumental sculpture). The building's glass-enclosed ambulatories, overlooking the fountain, show the evolution of sculpture, from the 19th through early 20th centuries (second floor) and from Cubism through contemporary (third floor).

Artists: Constantin Brancusi, Alexander Calder, Edgar Degas, Alberto Giacometti, Henri Matisse, Henry Moore, Auguste Rodin and David Smith are all represented by important holdings in modern sculpture. Francis Bacon, Balthus, Willem de Kooning, Richard Diebenkorn, Jean Dubuffet, Edward Hopper, Frank Stella, and Clyfford Still are 20th-century painters with significant holdings at the Hirshhorn. The spectrum and evolution of contemporary art are reflected in diverse works by Joseph Beuys, Chuck Close, Tony Cragg, Lucian Freud, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Anish Kapoor, Anselm Kiefer, Brice Marden, Agnes Martin, Ana Mendieta, Elizabeth Murray, Bruce Nauman, Claes Oldenburg, Sigmar Polke, Gerhard Richter, Martin Puryear, Alison Saar, Wayne Thiebaud, Andy Warhol, Rachel Whiteread, and numerous others.

Movements: Movements represented include, among others, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Color-Field Painting, New Realism and Neo-Expressionism (painting); Cubism, Constructivism, Minimalism and Organic Abstraction (sculpture).

The Collection Reviewed: In the galleries most of the Hirshhorn's holdings are presented under this title, currently designating two long-term floor-wide installations ("The Collection Reviewed: Modern Art" and "The Collection Reviewed: Contemporary Art") and rotating educational shows in a second-floor gallery.

EXHIBITIONS

Frequency: Each year, the museum presents three major exhibitions and six smaller shows. These are either organized by Hirshhorn staff or travel from other museums.

Focus: Full-fledged retrospectives of living artists or significant past artists, group shows elucidating today's art, or recreations of historical movements are presented in the second-floor Special Exhibition galleries. The smaller "Directions" space on the third floor focuses on cutting-edge work by younger artists. Shows are generally composed of works lent by other museums or private collectors. "Collection in Context" shows (lasting six months) interpret objects in the permanent collection, often using documentary materials and artifacts borrowed from other Smithsonian sources.

Exhibition Highlights: Over the years the Hirshhorn curators have organized a number of major monographic exhibitions with significant tours, including: "Stanley Spencer: An English Vision" (1997), "Richard Lindner: Paintings and Watercolors, 1948-1977" (1997) "Willem de Kooning from the Hirshhorn Museum Collection" (1995), "Bruce Nauman" (1994), "Jean Dubuffet 1943-63: Paintings, Sculptures, Assemblages" (1993), "Francis Bacon" (1989), "Lucian Freud" (1988), and "Alberto Giacometti, 1901-1966" (1988). The Museum

has generated a number of important group exhibitions accessing trends in recent art, including "Distemper: Dissonant Themes in the Art of the 1990s" (1996), "Culture and Commentary: An Eighties Perspective" (1990), and "Content: A Contemporary Focus, 1974-1984" (1984).

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Membership: The Smithsonian Associates, a continuing-education organization serving the Smithsonian at large, functions, in effect, as the membership organization for the Hirshhorn.

Lectures, Symposia, Films, Concerts: Free talks are presented by exhibiting artists as well as by artists represented in the collection. Lectures by leading curators or scholars, together with symposia and panel discussions, explore subjects generated by a museum exhibition. The annual Mordes Lecture in Contemporary Art, featuring leading critics, was instituted in Fall 1993. The Hirshhorn's free Film Series, held from late September to early June in the 280-seat Marion and Gustave Ring Auditorium, showcases feature-length independent work, documentaries on artists, and children's films. Ticketed auditorium events, cosponsored by the Smithsonian Associates, include periodic art-related lectures and four to six concerts a year.

Tours: Docent-led tours of the permanent collection are both general and tailor-made according to theme, movement or medium. Tours are also offered for the Sculpture Garden (May and October only) and major exhibitions (three times weekly). A "touch tour" for visually impaired visitors (with script read by a sighted companion) uses 35 sculptures inside the museum. The content of smaller shows is frequently incorporated in general or special-request tours. Spanish and other languages are offered.

Outreach: Docents and staff travel to outlying areas to provide classroom presentations for secondary-school children and lecture services for adult groups. Ongoing workshops at the museum help elementary- and secondary-school teachers use art to teach other disciplines such as history, math and social science. In another community program, docents use art objects to help students with learning disabilities develop language skills.

Family Programs: Monthly "Young at Art" programs use storytelling, dramatic improvisation, and object making to bring exhibitions and objects in the collection alive for children ages 6 to 9 and their parents. The Hirshhorn's free "Family Guide" offers interactive activities and "artcards" for gallery use and home study.

Art Night on the Mall: During the summer months, the Hirshhorn joins other Smithsonian art museums on The National Mall in extending its hours to 8 p.m. on Thursday nights. An interrelated program of gallery talks and independent films enliven these late hours. The Hirshhorn's "Full Circle" outdoor café and museum shop remain open.

STAFF

Director: The Hirshhorn's director is James T. Demetrian (b. 1930), who has held the position since 1984. A specialist in German and Austrian expressionism and contemporary art, he was director of the Des Moines Art Center from 1969 to 1984 and the Pasadena Art Museum from 1966 to 1969.

Assistant Director for Art and Public Programs: Contemporary art specialist Neal Benezra (b. 1953), who oversees the museum's curatorial division, and thus directs exhibitions and research, also heads up the education, publications and public affairs divisions. Benezra was with the Art Institute of Chicago from 1985 to 1991 and the Des Moines Art Center from 1983 to 1985.

Staff Specialties: Five curators' specialties range from 20th-century American patronage and early modernism to European sculpture and the drawing medium. Other specialties include, among many, 20th-century African-American and Latin-American art, 20th-century sculpture parks and gardens, contemporary film, conservation of modern art, early childhood development and graphic and exhibition design.

Departments & Offices: Administration, Building Management, Conservation, Public Programs (including Curatorial, Education, Publications and Public Affairs Divisions), Director's Office, Exhibits & Design, Library, Photo Lab, with 77 employees altogether. The Hirshhorn's 55-member guard force is administered by the Smithsonian's Office of Protection Services.

Docents: The museum's approximately 80 docents, recruited from the metropolitan D.C. area, take an intensive course in art history and gallery lecturing techniques before assuming duties. Each volunteer works an average of three hours per week (100 hours a year).

OTHER FACTS

Smithsonian Connection: The Hirshhorn is one of 16 museums of the Smithsonian and one of its eight art museums, together with the Cooper-Hewitt National Museum of Design in New York, the Freer Gallery of Art (Asian and late 19th-century/early 20th-century American art), the National Museum of African Art, the National Museum of American Art, the National Portrait Gallery, the Renwick Gallery (American crafts) and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (Asian art).

Attendance: The Hirshhorn is one of the most heavily attended art museums in North America, with an annual attendance of more than 700,000 visitors.

Trustees: The Hirshhorn's 10-member board of trustees meets twice a year. Robert Lehrman, art patron from Washington, D.C., serves as chairman; ex officio members include the secretary of the Smithsonian and the chief justice of the United States.

Budget: The annual operating budget for fiscal year 1997 is \$4.2 million in federal funds, of which approximately \$150,000 is specifically for acquisitions. A separate acquisitions endowment is made up of private monies raised through various means. Exhibitions and public programs are sponsored by contributions from foundation and corporations and by grants from private individuals.

Location & Design: The elevated drum-shaped building and its grounds are located along the south side of the National Mall, halfway between the Capitol Building and the Washington Monument. Exhibition space for the collection totals 60,000 square feet inside and nearly 4 acres outside in a distinctive, two-level sunken garden and walled-in plaza.

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HIRSHHORN

Highlights 1974–1999

Exhibitions

Public Programs

Film Series

At a Glance

Fall Calendar 1999

