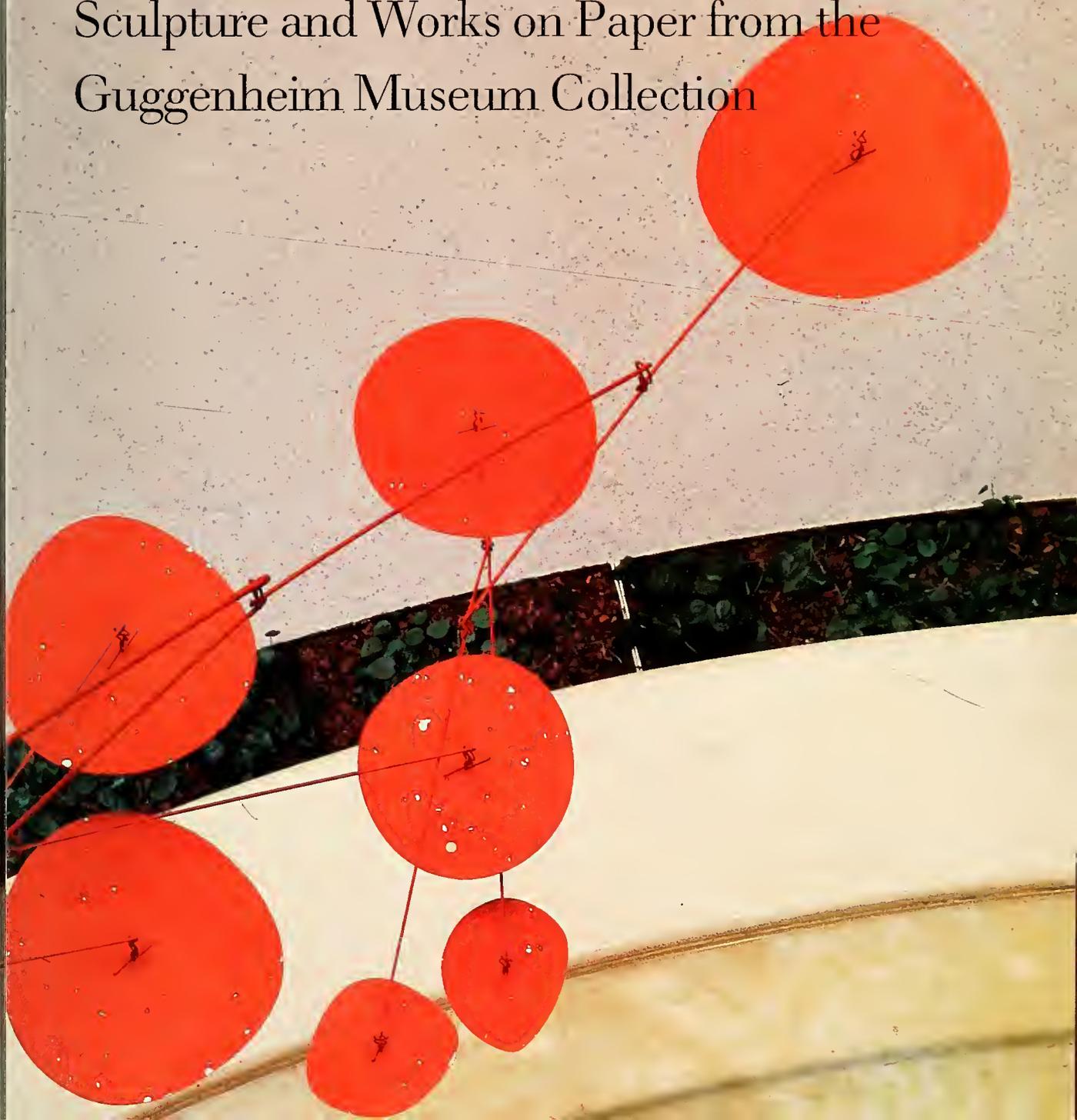


From Degas to Calder:
Sculpture and Works on Paper from the
Guggenheim Museum Collection



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New York, 1984

Front Cover:
Alexander Calder
Red Lily Pads, 1956

Photos by:
Carmelo Guadagno, David Heald and
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Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Introduction

Although fine works on paper were in evidence at an early stage of the evolution of our collection, sculpture was almost entirely excluded from the holdings of the Museum of Non-Objective Painting, as the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum was called during the years 1957 through 1951. The medium seemed too tangible and too concrete to fall within the realm of the spiritual and non-objective art that prevailed at the Museum at that time. It was, therefore, only in 1952, when the museum operated by the Guggenheim Foundation changed its name and abandoned its original aesthetic guidelines in favor of greater stylistic inclusiveness, that distinguished sculptures began to augment an already outstanding collection of paintings and works on paper. This expansion of the range of media acquired, which for the most part includes painting, sculpture and other non-duplicative categories, has continued to enhance the Guggenheim's collecting efforts to the present day.

The current exhibition, because it is deliberately limited to classic works, is comprised largely of acquisitions made in the 1950s by James Johnson Sweeney, the Museum's second director. While the choices he made were supplemented in subsequent years, the sequence of major sculptors represented in the collection, encompassing Maillol, Duchamp-Villon, Archipenko, Lipchitz, Brancusi, Modigliani, Arp, Gabo, Pevsner, Giacometti, Ernst, Miró and Moore, remains essentially as visualized and constituted during his tenure. The attainment of such complete representation within a particular medium and chronology enabled the Museum to collect contemporary work in later years without the need to make up for lost opportunities or to fill gaps.

The choice of sculptures and works on paper in this exhibition was restricted within chronological limits, in part, because of a wish to present a stylistically consistent sequence and to isolate the already historic masters of modern art from more recent trends and less settled values. Moreover, the Guggenheim is currently preoccupied with research relating to the media and the period featured here, as it prepares the fourth of its comprehensive collection catalogues, a volume devoted to sculpture and works on paper from 1880 to 1945.

Thomas M. Messer, *Director*

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

The artists featured in the following pages have been selected from the larger group of sculptors included in the exhibition.

Most of the texts in this brochure have been excerpted from Vivian Endicott Barnett's *Handbook: The Guggenheim Museum Collection, 1900-1980*, New York, 1980 and *100 Works by Modern Masters from the Guggenheim Museum*, New York, 1984. These publications are available at the Museum's Bookstore.

8	Alexander Archipenko
14	Jean Arp
10	Constantin Brancusi
26	Alexander Calder
6	Edgar Degas
22	Max Ernst
18	Naum Gabo
20	Alberto Giacometti
16	Julio González
9	Jacques Lipchitz
7	Aristide Maillol
24	Joan Miró
12	Amedeo Modigliani
28	Henry Moore

Edgar Degas

Degas's sculptural production originated in the 1870s: the horses belong to that decade and the dancers predominate in the eighties and nineties. These were mostly modeled in wax, and were cast in bronze only after the artist's death.

The ballet dancer is one of Degas's primary subjects: he treated it many times and in different media. Here the dancer does not wear the ballerina's costume, but rather appears as a generalized nude in motion. As such, she is a study in torsion, extension and balance, as is particularly clear by contrast to the weight and stasis of Maillol's classicizing *Pomona with Lowered Arms*. By incorporating the performers of his paintings in his waxes, Degas introduced decidedly secular subject matter in opposition to the historic, academic themes of traditional sculpture. Thus he pioneered the subjects drawn from daily life and informal approaches often seen in twentieth-century sculpture.



Dancer Moving Forward, Arms Raised.

1882-95

Bronze, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " h.

Gift, Justin K. Thannhauser

78.2514 T8

Aristide Maillol

Maillol demonstrated a distinct preference for representing the female figure. The composition and pose of *Pomona with Lowered Arms* ultimately derive from Greek art but the voluptuous figure type is that of the women of his native Banyuls. During his lifetime Maillol executed many versions of Pomona. The earliest was a plaster of *Pomona with Raised Arms* which was exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in Paris in 1910; the pose later was used in *The Seasons*. A related draped figure became a World War I memorial at Elne. By the late 1920s Maillol altered the position of the arms in a plaster from which this cast was made. A marble of Pomona with lowered arms holding apples dates from 1957 (Collection Musée du Petit Palais, Paris).

It was Maillol's practice to return to themes and compositions he had treated earlier. Thus, the sculptures from the 1950s are often new versions of works originally executed during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Pomona with Lowered Arms, Late 1920s
Bronze, 65 3/4" h.
58.1515



Alexander Archipenko

In *Carrousel Pierrot* the articulation and decoration of smooth plaster surfaces has been achieved through brightly colored, painted patterns. With the introduction of polychromy in his sculpture of the previous year, Archipenko resumed an ancient tradition which had reappeared also in the work of Gauguin and Kirchner and would become influential in the second decade of the twentieth century. However, more immediate sources for Archipenko can be found in contemporary decorative arts both in Russia and France.

The artist recalled that the idea for this sculpture came from a festival when "dozens of carrouseles with horses, swings, gondolas and airplanes imitate the rotation of the earth." Indeed, the thrust and counterthrust of the diagonals establish a rotating movement. The inscription "*venez rire*" quite literally invites us to "come laugh." This introduction of words is apparently related to the Cubist device of adding words and letters to their works. The application of festive colors amplifies the abstract geometry of the figure and accentuates the motion implicit in its pose.



Carrousel Pierrot. 1915
Painted plaster, 25 3/8" h.
57.1485



Jacques Lipchitz

More than fifty years after its execution, Lipchitz stated that *Standing Personage* "was completely realized in the round as a three-dimensional object existing in a three-dimensional space. Thus, when it is seen in a photograph, it is impossible to understand the work fully. The vertical architectural basis of the structure is apparent. . . . While this sculpture is in one sense an architectural construction, it is also clearly a figure or figures. The V-shaped curves rising from the sharp vertical in the upper central area reiterate the eyebrows and nose of the slightly earlier head, and the angled elements at the bottom can be either the buttresses supporting a Gothic vault or the legs of a seated figure."

In addition to our version, which was carved from a limestone block, Lipchitz made a plaster of similar dimensions around 1916 (Collection Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris) that was cast in bronze.

Standing Personage, 1916
Limestone, 42½" h.
58.1526



Constantin Brancusi

The wooden sculptures *Adam* and *Eve* were conceived separately and over a number of years evolved into their present format. *Eve* was carved as early as 1916 but was reworked in 1920-21. Originally *Adam* was part of another sculpture that was cut in half and, by the time it was referred to as "Adambase" and "Adam" in 1922, it was seen in relation to *Eve*. Although they were listed and illustrated separately in the catalogue for the Brummer Gallery's Brancusi exhibition in New York in 1926, installation shots of the same exhibition when it appeared in Chicago early in 1927 show *Eve* superimposed on *Adam*. The sculpture's meaning is determined by the way Brancusi assembled *Adam* and *Eve*.

In *Adam* the angularity and sturdiness of forms convey a sense of the physical process of hewing the block and express an essential masculinity. The rounded, more overtly erotic figure of *Eve* relies without doubt upon Brancusi's knowledge of African art. Likewise, the placement of *Eve* on top of *Adam* owes a debt to primitive art in its vertical articulation.

It is very difficult to date Brancusi's drawings. Only three examples were dated by the artist and very few can be directly related to his sculptures. In these cases he tended to make drawings after the sculptures rather than preparatory to them. Here the pose and the purity of line recall Brancusi's *Torso* sculptures from at least a decade earlier (1909, 1912 and 1918). The line, which is of extraordinary elegance, achieves a distillation of female form.



Nude. ca. 1920-24
Pencil on board, 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18"
56.1440

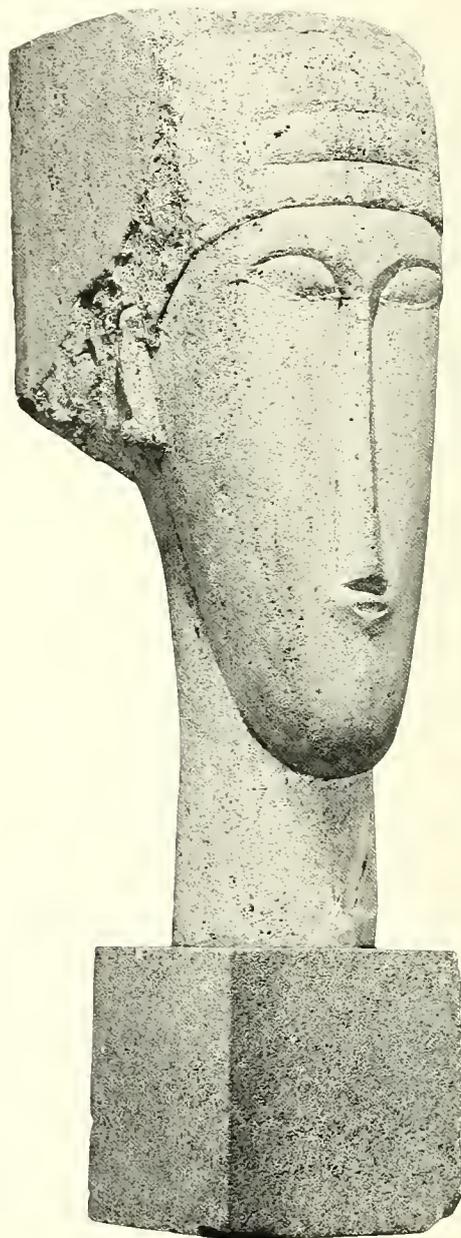
Adam and Eve. 1916-21
Oak and chestnut on limestone base,
total 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " h.; *Eve* (oak), 46 $\frac{1}{4}$ " h.;
Adam (chestnut), 54 $\frac{7}{8}$ " h.
55.1329

Amedeo Modigliani

Pursuing his wish to be a sculptor, Modigliani carved at least twenty-two heads between 1910 and 1915. In 1911 several heads similar to the Guggenheim example were photographed at Cardoso's studio in Paris in rue du Colonel Combes. A group of seven heads was exhibited as an "*ensemble décoratif*" at the Salon d'Automne the next year.

Modigliani preferred carving directly into the stone, the technique used by Brancusi, his friend and neighbor in Montparnasse. Influenced by African and archaic sculpture and Brancusi's work, the heads display anonymity, hieratic simplicity and serene passivity. A strong sense of the block of stone is retained in the shape of the head with its stylized hair, elongated nose and cheeks and small mouth.

Head, 1911-15
Limestone, 25" h.
55.1421





Beatrice Hastings (1879-1945) was originally from Port Elizabeth, South Africa. After living in London, where she was a writer and friend of Katherine Mansfield, she arrived in Paris in the spring of 1914. She was the Paris correspondent for the English periodical *New Age* and wrote the column "Impressions de Paris" until August 1916. Beatrice Hastings met Modigliani in July 1914, and they lived together until 1916. Modigliani drew and painted her portrait many times during these two years.

In the Guggenheim drawing the delicacy of her features is set off by her dark hair and the adjacent background area. Modigliani relates the hair to the background to create a shape similar to that of the hair of his limestone *Head*, 1911-15, also in the Museum's collection.

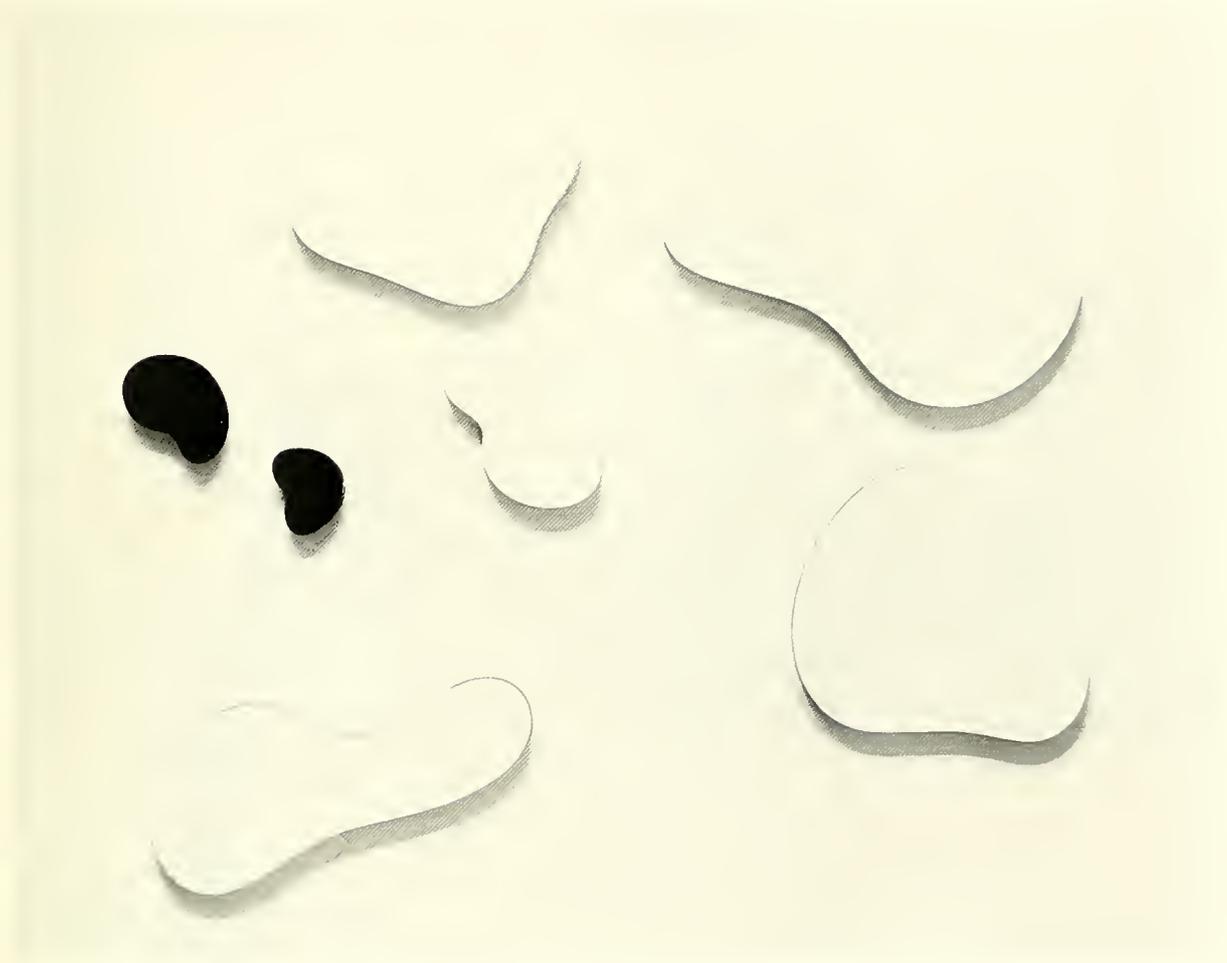
Beatrice Hastings, 1911-16
Pencil and conté crayon on paper.
12 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{16}$ "
Gift, Solomon R. Guggenheim, 1941
#1.554

Jean Arp

Arp first made a painted wood relief in 1914; he designed an abstract relief two years later. The wit, vitality and bright contrasting color of his Surrealist work have been replaced here by formal purity, restraint and precision of natural forms. Reduction of color to white and black emphasizes the flat wood shapes superimposed on the wood background.

Arp's three *Constellation* sculptures, of which the Guggenheim's is the third variation, contain identical elements in different positions. Each *Constellation* is a cluster of disparate objects that form a system yet are held apart from one another by the interaction of natural forces.

*Constellation with Five White Forms
and Two Black, Variation III.* 1952
Oil on wood, 25⁷/₈ x 29⁷/₈"
55.1457



Julio González

The subject of a Catalan peasant woman carrying an agricultural implement is an important one in González's art. In the González retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in 1985, the woman holding a child and a sickle was represented in drawings as early as 1929, as well as in the relatively naturalistic life-size iron sculpture *The Montserrat*, 1956-57. *The Montserrat* was first shown at the Spanish Republican pavilion of the 1957 *Exposition internationale*, along with Miró's mural *The Reaper*, which depicts a Catalan man with a more aggressively upraised sickle. It is noteworthy that this Spanish-inflected theme recurs in the abstract vocabulary of forms more typical of González's mature work in the forged bronzes *Large Sickle* and *Small Sickle*, both ca. 1957.

In *Small Sickle* the woman is more clearly evoked than in the larger variant. The swelling central bar is her torso and the elements that branch off from this upright stalk suggest arms, with one hand raised and the other lowered. The raised armature curves like a sickle blade, while simultaneously suggesting the contour of a stylized face. Thus significant negative spaces are created by the shapes cantilevered into space. The result is an openform sculpture, remarkable for its dispersal of traditional sculptural mass. González's technique of direct metal forging and welding to effect this "marriage of material and space" inspired later sculptors such as Eduardo Chillida and David Smith.



González drew and painted extensively in the early years of this century, apart from his decorative metalwork. As he gave up painting for sculpture in the late 1920s, he usually used drawings as direct studies for his forms in metal. By the early 1950s, however, draughtsmanship assumed a more independent role. González drew imaginary constructions or sketched from completed sculptures as much as he produced studies for them. He began to do more colored, highly finished drawings from the mid-thirties, when he executed *Figure with Sickle*, dated March 1957. This sheet is clearly related to one view of the Guggenheim's bronze *Small Sickle*, yet its pronounced spatial flatness makes it less "sculptural" than other, more perspectival drawings such as *Vibrating Figure*, 1956.

In *Figure with Sickle*, pasted papers alluding to the body are colored yellow, distinguishing them from the straighter, white ones signifying arm and hand. Here the schematic facial contour and the sickle are drawn separately in ink at the top, whereas they are conflated in the sculpture *Small Sickle*.



Small Sickle (Figure of a Woman).
ca. 1957
Forged bronze, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
Gift, Mr. and Mrs. Irving Moskovitz
85.5079

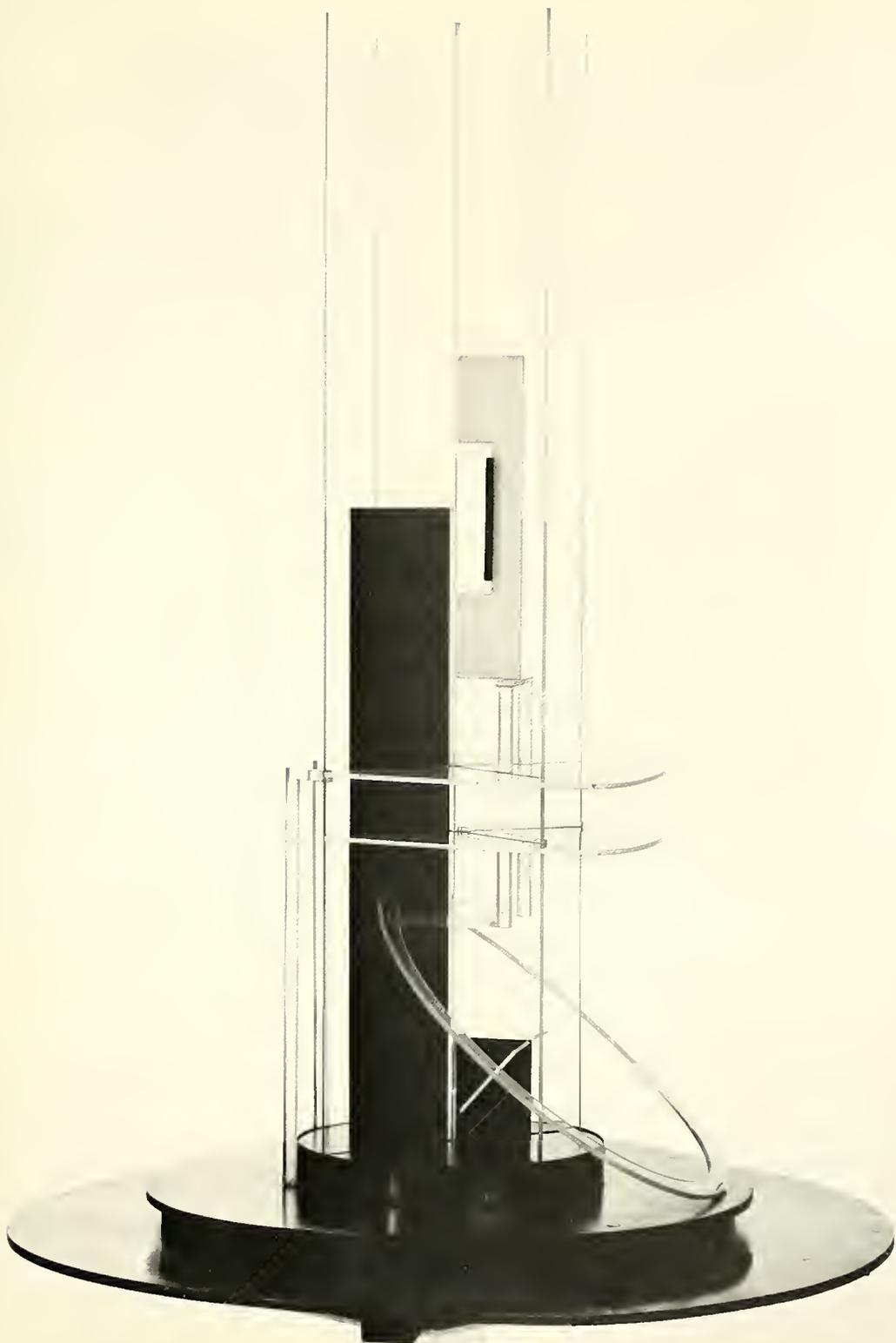
Figure with Sickle, 1957
India ink and collage on siena
paper, 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
Gift, Carmen Martinez and
Viviane Grimminger
82.2952

Naum Gabo

Gabo considered *Column* a work "of great importance not only to my own development, but it can be historically proved that it is a cornerstone in the whole development of contemporary architecture." He emphasized that the *Column* was the culmination of his "search for an image which would fuse the sculptural element with the architectural element into one unit." The vertical elements are rectangular constructions within parabolas which are determined by the dimensions of the bases.

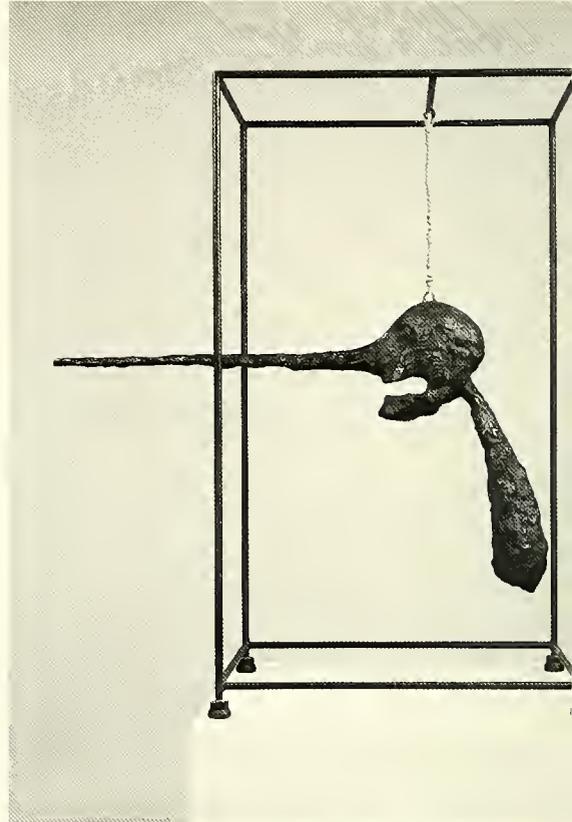
Gabo reconstructed the Guggenheim *Column* in 1957 after it had arrived damaged at The Museum of Modern Art in New York early in 1956. There are several versions of the column, ranging from five inches to over six feet high. It is very difficult to place these sculptures in sequence.

Column. ca. 1925; reconstructed 1957
Perspex, wood, metal and glass.
41½ x 29 x 29"
55.1429



Alberto Giacometti

About 1947 Giacometti ceased making minute sculptures, and his tall, thin skeletal figures began to appear. In *Nose* and *Hand*, both done in 1947, the artist enlarged a detail to such a degree that it would be impossible for him to realize the whole figure. As in *Hand* and *Man Pointing* of the same year, he has elongated forms for expressive effect and in accordance with his perception of the subject. Through the introduction of a steel cage in our sculpture, Giacometti has located the head within spatial confines, although the nose protrudes beyond them. The investigation of space preoccupies the artist here as it had in the early 1940s, when he made extremely small figures on large bases, and as it would during the next years in his group compositions.



Nose. 1947
Bronze, wire, rope and steel,
cage 51 3/4 x 18 1/2 x 15 1/8"
66.1807

The mountain is Piz Margna as Giacometti saw it from his summer retreat at Maloja near Stampa in Switzerland. The nervous energy of the individual pencil marks expresses the upward thrust of the mountain peak. The viewpoint from which the summit is shown is reminiscent of Cézanne's drawings of Mont Sainte-Victoire as seen from Les Lauves near Aix-en-Provence.

In sketches such as *Mountain* one can speak neither of perspective nor flatness, as the image tends to dissolve the picture plane. Nonetheless, a distance that defies measurement and an inevitable presence of objects or figures remain: it is the same distance that separates us from Giacometti's sculptures and the same presence with which these sculptures are endowed.

Mountain, ca. 1956-57
Pencil on paper, 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
57.1481





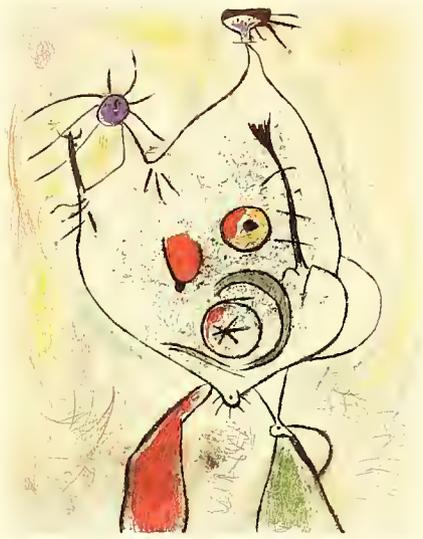
An Anxious Friend. Summer 1944
Bronze, 26 $\frac{3}{8}$ " h.
Gift, Dominique and John de Menil
59.1521

Max Ernst

During the summer of 1944, when he lived in Great River, Long Island, Max Ernst turned his attention to sculpture, a medium in which he had not worked for a decade. He was influenced by the Surrealist sculpture familiar to him in Europe in the 1950s—most notably, the work of his friend Giacometti. *An Anxious Friend* exhibits the artist's knowledge of primitive art, possesses an emphatic frontality and is amusingly endowed with female attributes. Ernst employed found objects in making the plaster: he decorated the front with drill bits and fashioned the figure's round mouth and eyes from a set of aluminum measuring spoons.

Although he worked episodically in this medium, Ernst's sculpture is not central to his oeuvre. Consistent with his paintings and drawings, *An Anxious Friend* commands an insistent presence and provokes the imagination.





Woman Doing Her Hair Before a Mirror.
1958

Ink, crayon, charcoal and gouache
on paper, 16 1/8 x 15"
48.1172 x 505

Joan Miró

This drawing exemplifies what Miró called his *tableaux sauvages* ("wild pictures"), begun in 1954 and continued through the era of the Spanish Civil War. The figures in these works are grotesquely shaped, as here, where Miró contrasts the pinhead with the ungainly, swollen body. There are touches of whimsy: the nude combs wispy strands that are visually rhymed with the overgrown hair of her armpit, and the hand mirror held up at the top of the sheet seems to sprout its own growth.

Freedom of drawing technique parallels that of the imagery. Miró spatters ink within the contours of the torso, which creates a textural effect. By contrast the background is scribbled throughout with crayon in a spectrum of ethereal color. Despite the impression of child-like handling Miró fabricates, this work is highly sophisticated, a cousin of some of González's figurative sculptures depicting the same subject.

Joan Miró (with Joseph Lloréns Artigas)

In 1965 Miró began work on a ceramic mural commissioned by Harry F. Guggenheim, President of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, in memory of his wife Alicia Patterson Guggenheim, who had died in 1965. Almost two hundred ceramic plaques were executed in Spain by Miró in collaboration with his old friend Lloréns Artigas, the Spanish ceramicist. The mural was designed to occupy the first wall encountered as one ascends the Guggenheim's spiral ramp, and it is partially visible as one enters the Museum's rotunda.

The artist has interwoven letters of Mrs. Guggenheim's first name into the bold calligraphy and brightly colored design of the mural.



Alicia. 1965-67
Ceramic tile, 97 x 228½"
Gift, Harry F. Guggenheim in memory of
his wife Alicia Patterson Guggenheim
67.1844

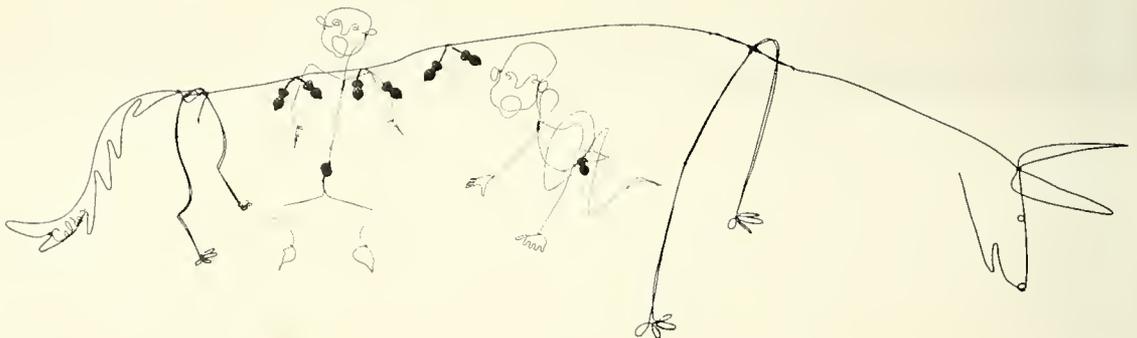
Alexander Calder

Calder's earliest artistic efforts were humorous line drawings made when he was an illustrator for the *National Police Gazette*. Subsequently, in 1926, he turned to wood carving, constructing animated toys and figures for his miniature circus and creating large figures out of wire. *Romulus and Remus* is essentially a line drawing in space in which the medium is bent wire rather than ink. Despite its large size, it retains all the freshness and spontaneity of the rapidly executed drawings as well as the delightful humor present in all Calder's work. The use of the material itself is witty: wooden doorstops represent nipples and genitals. The artist treats a mythological subject with inventiveness and irreverence.

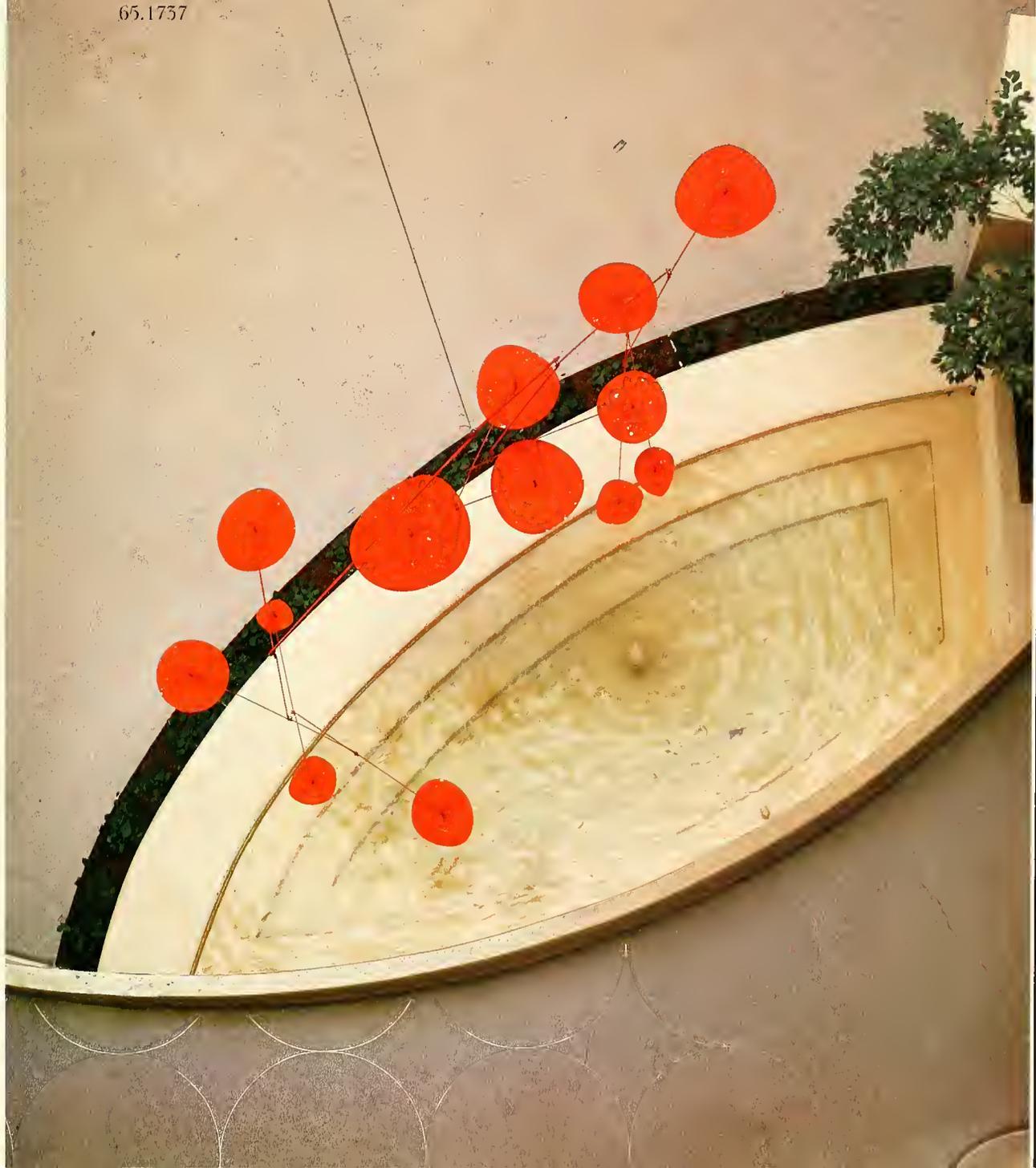
Red Lily Pads is at once an abstract composition of red-painted discs, rods and wires, and a giant emblem of leaves floating on water. With the complex distribution of weight, Calder maintains a continually changing equilibrium. The large scale of this mobile activates the Guggenheim's interior space, and the suspension of abstract shapes exemplifies mobility and freedom.

In the 1940s Jean-Paul Sartre wrote about Calder's work: "A mobile does not suggest anything; it captures genuine living movements and shapes them. Mobiles have no meaning, make you think of nothing but themselves. They are, that is all; they are absolutes. There is more of the unpredictable about them than in any other human creation.... In short, although mobiles do not seek to imitate anything... they are nevertheless at once lyrical inventions, technical combinations of an almost mathematical quality and sensitive symbols of Nature."

Romulus and Remus, 1928
Wire and wood, 51 x 112 x 50"
65.1758



Red Lily Pads, 1956
Painted sheet metal, metal rods and
wire, 42 x 201 x 109"
65.1737

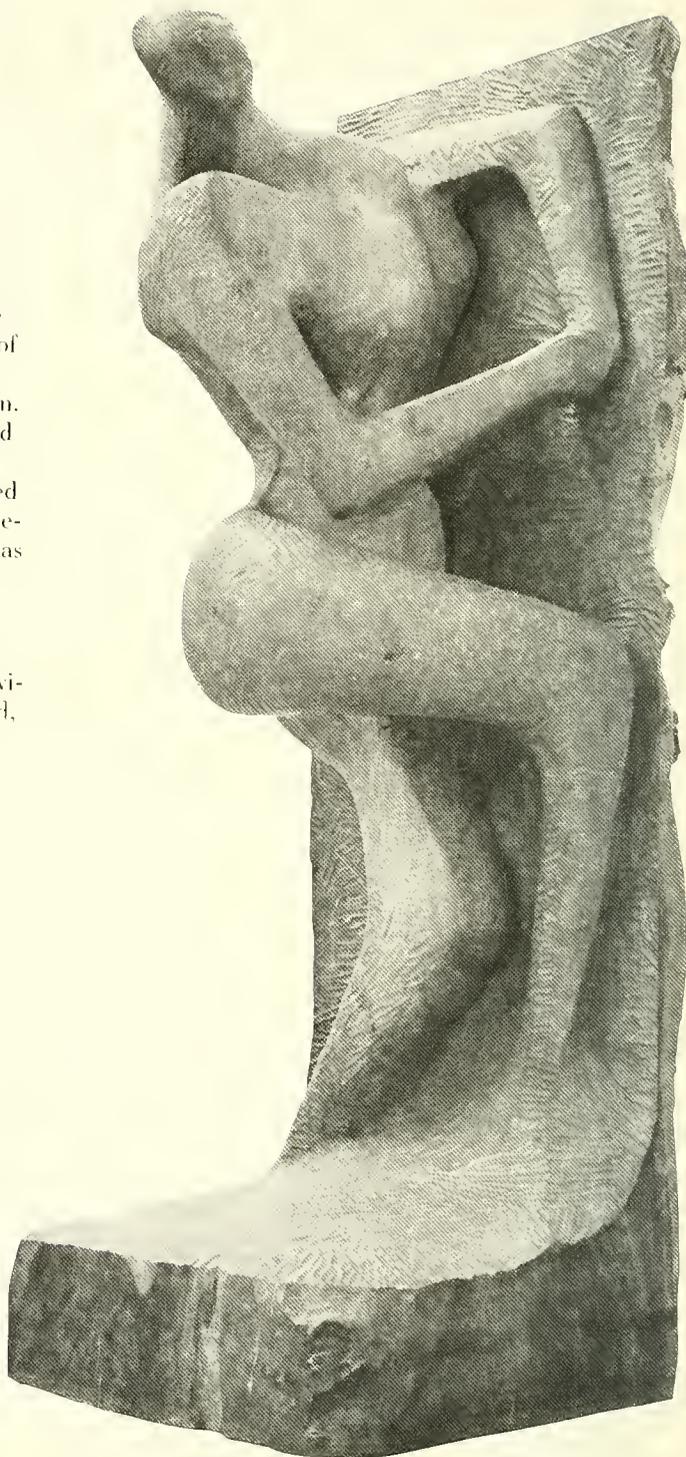


Henry Moore

When he was commissioned by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in 1956, Henry Moore commenced to carve a horizontal reclining figure which was related to his bronze *Reclining Figure* of 1956. As he worked, the artist transformed the Guggenheim sculpture into a vertical composition. He has stated that “although, of course, I changed it considerably, it shows the great importance of gravity in sculpture. Lying down, the figure looked static, whilst upright it takes on movement, and because it is working against gravity it looks almost as though it is climbing.”

The towering female figure is attached to the elm block and can, therefore, be defined as a high relief. The sculpture’s rough surface bears visible evidence of how Moore carved directly into the wood, a technique not often encountered in his mature work.

Upright Figure, 1956-60
Elm wood, 111" h.
60.1582



Exhibition 84/5

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