SHAPING THE FUTURE THAT WAS
HENRY MOORE: THE SIXTIES CONFERENCE

Friday 2 September 2022 10:00 - 17:00
Henry Moore Studios and Gardens, Perry Green, Hertfordshire

Program

10:15  Coffee and registration
11:00  Welcome from Godfrey Worsdale, Director of the Henry Moore Foundation
11:15  Session 1 - A Different Landscape: Moore, Nature and Technology
       Chair: Margaret Garlake
11:15  Jonathan Vernon: Sixties Sculpture and the Human
11:35  Elizabeth Johnson: Bruce Nauman’s Light Trap for Henry Moore
12:15  Panel discussion and questions
12:45  Introduction to Henry Moore: The Sixties with Senior Curator of Collection and Research Dr Hannah Higham in the Sheep Field Barn gallery
13:15  Lunch
14:30  Session 2 - The Critical Climate of the Sixties
       Chair: Jennifer Powell
14:30  James Finch: Correspondences: Moore, his critics, and the art of the 1960s
14:50  Alex J. Taylor: Men of Form: Henry Moore and Frank Stanton
15:10  John J. Curley: Anthony Caro in the 1960s: Between High Modernism and New Brutalism
15:30  Panel discussion and questions
16:00  Closing remarks
16:15  Informal drinks reception
17:00  End
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Abstracts and speaker information

Jonathan Vernon
Sixties Sculpture and the Human

‘Humanism’ is a term that structures our imagination of Henry Moore’s work more than any other. For many, his figure sculptures have come to represent a progressively quaint post-War idealism, inviting critiques of the forms of difference that picture of ‘the human’ left out and casting the ubiquity of Moore’s work in public spaces as an extension of patrician liberal power.

The problem with this image is that humanism in the 1960s did not have a singular politics, or even a singular definition of the human. In fact, varying interpretations of what humanism should mean across the fields of politics, philosophy, psychology and visual art contained the germ of the issues that would structure social change as the grand political projects of the twentieth century were finally dismantled.

This paper is not an audit of Moore’s humanism. Rather, it seeks to make vivid the relationship of sixties sculpture to an emerging idea of the human through the work of the ‘New Generation’ sculptors, who at once absorbed and railed against Moore’s example. By examining the visual culture, discursive environment and intellectual background of the New Generation, especially on the sculpture course at St Martin’s School of Art, this paper asks what kind of humanity sculpture was capable of figuring in the period – and what its limits and potential can tell us about the later Moore.

Jonathan Vernon is an Associate Lecturer at The Courtauld Institute of Art, London. In 2020–21 he was a Leonard A. Lauder Postdoctoral Fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and his work has also been supported by the Henry Moore Institute and the Terra Foundation for American Art. He was awarded his PhD at The Courtauld in 2019 and served as the Ridinghouse Contributing Editor at The Burlington Magazine from 2014 to 2017. His latest publication, an article for the June-July issue of Sculpture Journal, tells the story of how Brancusi’s sculpture became a tool of Cold War cultural diplomacy.

Elizabeth Johnson
Bruce Nauman’s Light Trap for Henry Moore

This paper considers the relationship between Henry Moore and the North American-based artist Bruce Nauman (1941-) as a way to illuminate Moore’s continuing influence on emerging modes of sculptural practice in the late 1960s. It considers an informal series of photographs, drawings and sculpture produced by
Nauman in 1966 and 1967 that make reference to Moore. Combining close formal analyses of this series, primary critical commentaries and artist interviews, the paper suggests Moore was significant to Nauman as an emblem of a tradition of modern sculpture which the younger artist, known for his eclectic approach to medium, sought to “trap” and carry forwards during a period of significant change for sculptural practice in Europe and the Americas at the end of the decade.

It focuses particularly on the 1967 photographs Light Trap for Henry Moore, No. 1 and No. 2, establishing them as important precedents for the two series of holograms Nauman made in 1968-69. By charting a lineage that links Nauman’s pioneering work with holography to his engagement with Moore, this paper suggests Nauman mobilized – what was at the time – a cutting-edge technology to interrogate a tradition of modern sculpture for which Moore could be made to stand. Ultimately, it identifies Moore’s influence on high-tech virtual artworks that couldn’t seem further removed from the weighty monumental sculpture for which he was known.

Elizabeth Johnson is Senior Lecturer in Critical and Contextual Studies at the Cambridge School of Art, Anglia Ruskin University. She is currently developing a book investigating how contemporary artists are using digital technologies to pioneer new socially-engaged models of monumentality. Previously she has held positions as Henry Moore Foundation Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at University College London, Associate Research Fellow in the Vasari Research Centre for Art and Technology at Birkbeck, and Arts and Humanities Research Council Research Fellow at the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. She holds a PhD in Humanities and Cultural Studies from the London Consortium, University of London. Her writing has been published in Sculpture Journal, Archives of American Art Journal and reproduced in the Whitechapel/MIT Documents of Contemporary Art series on The Object.

Ryan Bishop
“When a White Flash Sparked”: Microtemporalities, Military Technology and Ballistic Aesthetics in Henry Moore’s “Atom Piece”

In a sense, almost all military technological development since the middle part of the 19th century to the present is essentially aesthetic, in that it is an attempt to prosthetically extend and modify human perception in order to accelerate judgement and inform action. In other, more common and connotative meanings of aesthetics, military technology during this same time period has informed traditional aesthetic modes of cultural production in the arts: popular and high, conservative and avant-garde, traditional and experimental. Rather than looking at the military and its operations as the content of artistic and aesthetic exploration, this talk briefly explores military technology as the conditions of possibility and means of production for artistic works and experiments. These means are simultaneously material, technological and imaginary (noetic), with the goal of understanding the works and their media formation as both a product of an aesthetic condition and constitutive of that condition.

Particularly the talk will take up those technologies that produce microtemporalities, infinitely short snippets of temporal phenomena made into storable, reproducible
spatial forms that find their way into artistic productions. As such, it brings into
dialogue the “ballistic aesthetics” operative in the photographic work of Harold
Edgerton along with a sound piece by the artist Leif Inge to explore elements at play
in Moore’s “Atom Piece” and place it within a context of works that self-reflexively
examine the technological conditions of their production through an aesthetic
manipulation of time and space.

**Ryan Bishop** is Professor of Global Art and Politics at Winchester School of Art,
University of Southampton. He is the lead editor of the journal *Cultural Politics* (Duke
UP) and two book series “A Cultural Politics Book” (Duke UP) and with Jussi Parikka
“Technicities” (Edinburgh UP). His most recent book is *Technocrats of the
Imagination: Art, Technology and the Military-Industrial Avant-garde* (co-authored

**James Finch**

**Correspondences: Moore, his critics, and the art of the 1960s**

Writing on the occasion of Henry Moore’s 1960 Whitechapel Gallery exhibition,
Anthony Caro asserted of that ‘When you try to think clearly about Henry Moore you
are deafened by the applause. The picture is not man-size, but screen-size’. These
words reflect not only Moore’s international reputation, but anticipate the ways in
which artists and their work so often became conflated from the 1960s onwards.
That same year, for instance, Moore’s appearance on John Freedman’s television
interview series ‘Face to Face’ put him in the context of prominent public figures from
Carl Jung to Martin Luther King.

Caro went on to lament that Moore had ‘paid heavily for his stardom’, and posited
him as ‘out of touch with post-war developments in art’. Throughout the 60s,
however, Moore’s work was consistently placed in dialogue with new artistic
tendencies, whether through the way his work was exhibited (such as his inclusion in
group shows), his positioning by Marlborough Fine Art, or the ‘correspondences’
between Moore and other artists, present as well as past, detected by critics such as
David Sylvester. In this paper I will focus upon critical responses to Moore’s work of
the 60s, in particular the comparisons drawn between Moore’s work and sculptors
working in different idioms in Britain and beyond.

**James Finch** is a curator and art historian specialising in British art of the 19th and
20th centuries. He is currently Assistant Curator, 19th Century British Art at Tate
Britain where he has worked on several exhibitions and displays of historic and
modern British art.

Prior to joining Tate, James was Curatorial Assistant at the Royal Academy of Arts,
and undertook a doctoral thesis (University of Kent/Tate) on the art criticism of David
Sylvester. James has published widely, particularly in the field of post-war art and
criticism, with essays published or forthcoming on the criticism of Sylvester and John
Berger, and artists including Lucian Freud and Frank Auerbach.
Alex J. Taylor

Men of Form: Henry Moore and Frank Stanton

In late 1965, C.B.S President Frank Stanton was finishing the rigorously planned program of art and design for the network’s new headquarters in midtown Manhattan. Its aesthetic pinnacle was Stanton’s plush 35th-floor office, a space planned around and eventually dominated by Moore’s Working Model for Locking Piece (1962). At one level, the presence of Moore’s sculpture served to demonstrate Stanton’s elite taste, and in so doing, probably also contributed to mounting concerns that the artist was becoming a “businessman’s sculptor.” In this paper, I will further consider how the presence of Moore’s art at C.B.S. was also tied to more complex corporate imperatives. As others have recounted, Stanton and Moore had worked together on the Lincoln Center commission, a process that would provide the focus for the network’s self-consciously high-brow television special Henry Moore: Man of Form (1965). From Stanton’s inner sanctum to this mainstream broadcast, Moore’s art was deployed – I want to suggest – as a counterpoint to widespread period criticisms concerning the quality of mass media programming, and its impacts on the taste of the American public.

Alex J. Taylor is an Associate Professor in the Department of History of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh. His second book Forms of Persuasion: Art and Corporate Image in the 1960s was recently published by the University of California Press. He was previously the Terra Research Fellow in American Art at Tate.

John J. Curley

Anthony Caro in the 1960s: Between High Modernism and New Brutalism

This paper will focus on Anthony Caro’s painted steel works of the 1960s that were championed by Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried; I will argue that this Americanization simplified Caro’s works, repressing their conflicting rhetorics of high and low, America and Britain. For instance, in the 1950s Caro was influenced by Henry Moore, as well as his friends (and Independent Group members) Nigel Henderson and Alison and Peter Smithson. Situating Caro’s works in these British art circles allows us to see how he fused Moore’s modernism with the Pop, “as found” qualities advocated by the Independent Group. This understanding of Caro’s works from this period will thus complicate their perceived American, high modernist purity.

John J. Curley is Associate Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art and Rubin Faculty Fellow at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC. He is also a Paul Mellon Centre Mid-Career Fellow for 2022-23. He has published widely on postwar American and European art, including a 2021 article in Art History on the connections between the paintings of Morris Louis and Cold War cultures of rationality. He is the author of A Conspiracy of Images: Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter, and the Art of the Cold War (Yale University Press, 2013) and Global Art and the Cold War appeared in 2019 (Laurence King). He is currently at work on a
long essay on Anthony Caro (drawing on research carried out in 2015 at the Henry Moore Institute) and a new book project provisionally titled "Critical Distance: Black American Artists in Europe 1958-1968."

**Margaret Garlake** is an independent art historian and former visiting lecturer at the Courtauld Institute of Art. She has written widely on post-war British Art, including her seminal book New Art, New World: British Art in Post War Society.

**Dr Jennifer Powell** is Curator of Painting and Sculpture at the Royal Academy. She previously worked as a curator at Tate Britain and the V&A, and most recently Jennifer was Head of Collections, Exhibitions and Research at Kettle’s Yard, Cambridge. Jennifer has lectured in the Department of History of Art at the University of Cambridge since 2013 where she teaches on modern and contemporary art and supervises postgraduates. Jennifer has published widely on modern and contemporary sculpture and specialises in British and French sculpture from c.1920-today, exhibition cultures in London post-1945 (the subject of her PhD) and national identity constructions. Her work on Henry Moore has been published in Sculpture Journal and as part of Tate’s Henry Moore and Public Identity project. She also curated the Henry Moore galleries at Tate Britain.