

Henry Moore Exhibitions - Detailed Report



1 April - 30 October 2011

Venues

The Henry Moore Foundation, Perry Green

Exhibition Title

2011 Perry Green, Henry Moore Foundation, Henry Moore: Plasters

More Information

Until recently, plasters made by sculptors have been seen as a means to an end, rather than as works in their own right. This is the first exhibition to show the way in which that perception is changing. Curated by Anita Feldman, Head of Collections and Exhibitions, Henry Moore: Plasters has been in preparation for

four years, allowing Foundation conservators the opportunity to restore plaster originals for some of Moore's most iconic works. This selection spans three decades, with many sculptures being displayed for the first time in the UK, a stone's throw from the studios in which they were made. These studios, including the Bourne Maquette Studio, which is at the heart of the creative process, are also open to visitors. They offer a fuller understanding not only of Moore's working methods, but in particular of the role of plaster as a medium for sculpture. As well as enabling Moore to experiment freely with form and scale, plaster allowed the artist to work directly with found objects and incorporate them physically into his work at the maquette stage. It also had the advantage of being able to be both modelled and carved; once set, it could be chiselled and chipped away at like stone or wood. Initially many plasters were destroyed to prevent further casts being made once a bronze edition was complete. Over time, however, Moore increasingly retained his plasters, appreciating them as the original sculptures which he hand-coloured and textured. Significantly, the markings made by the artist are much more visible in the plaster than the bronze, giving the sculptures a more organic and sometimes even a scarred appearance. A number of sculptural ideas were only conceived in plaster and Moore's plasters, which are much less well-known, are not included in the catalogue raisonné of his sculptures. Very few plasters can be found outside the Foundation, with notable exceptions a substantial gift the artist made to the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1973 as well as works at Tate and on loan to the Dallas Museum of Art. The exhibition is accompanied by a major new book, co-published by the Royal Academy of Arts, Henry Moore: Plasters, with essays by Anita Feldman and Malcolm Woodward, who worked alongside Moore in the enlargement of the plasters. Other contributors to the book include Assistant Curator Claire Smith, and former assistants to Moore Anthony Caro, Derek Howarth and Phillip King.