



## 01 September 2013 - 31 January 2014

### Venues

Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

### Exhibition Title

2013-14 Oxford, The Ashmolean Museum, Bacon / Moore: Flesh and Bone

### More Information

On 12 September the Ashmolean will open its Autumn 2013 programme with a major exhibition which brings together works by Francis Bacon (1909-1992) and Henry Moore (1898-1986). Francis Bacon Henry Moore: Flesh and Bone will show 20 paintings by Bacon alongside 20 sculptures and 20 drawings by Moore which have been selected by Martin Harrison, editor of the Francis Bacon catalogue raisonné, and our own director, Richard Calvocoressi. The exhibition will explore themes such as the

treatment of the human figure and the artists' responses to the violence of the twentieth century. It will show surprising parallels in the work of two giants of twentieth-century western art whose careers have rarely been linked until now. In their different mediums, Moore and Bacon created unforgettable images of the human figure; their distinctive visual languages marked by a growing simplicity and monumentality of form. Their perspectives differed: Moore clung to a belief in humanism, while Bacon espoused a post-humanist, nihilistic view of the world. In expressing their visions of humanity, the two artists had very different approaches: Bacon working from the outside in, disintegrating and dissolving form; Moore from the inside out, pushing anatomical structure to the surface. The two artists were united in their love of sculpture, especially that of classical antiquity, Michelangelo, and Rodin. In the early 1970s, the forms in Bacon's paintings became increasingly sculptural. Bacon often talked about making sculpture, even inquiring on one occasion if he could take lessons from Moore. In recognition of this influence, works by Michelangelo and Rodin from the Ashmolean's famous holdings will be shown as a prelude to the exhibition. Professor Christopher Brown CBE, Director of the Ashmolean, says: "This is one of the most ambitious and exciting exhibitions we have mounted since we reopened in 2009. It compares the two greatest British artists of the twentieth century, and promises to be both visually thrilling and immensely thought-provoking."