



150 cm weight cased: 720 kg

Medium

bronze

Signature

stamped Moore

Ownership

The Henry Moore Foundation: gift of the artist 1977

More Information

Henry Moore's lifelong fascination with the reclining figure was sparked by a chance discovery he made in Zwemmer's bookshop on London's Charing Cross Road in 1922. Browsing the publications, he saw a small reproduction of a Chacmool, a Mesoamerican sculpture depicting a reclining figure, supported on its elbows, with its head turned and gaze directed over its shoulder. Moore was immediately struck by the figure's pose, both still and alert, and he began to explore it in sketches and sculpture. The subject proved liberating and inexhaustible, freeing Moore to experiment with endless variations. In the 1950s, he produced several reclining figures shrouded in drapery. Draped Reclining Figure 1952-53, a commission for the Time-Life building on New Bond Street, London, is the first sculpture to feature realistic drapery. Moore's interest in drapery had been ignited while sketching blanketed figures sheltering from the Blitz and was then rekindled by the classical sculpture he saw during his first visit to Greece in 1951. Draped Reclining Figure was initially made in plaster, which Moore built up to create a richly textured surface evoking ripples, creases and folds. The work exemplifies Moore's belief that drapery can serve to reveal form and emphasise the tension in a pose. In 1954, he explained the development of the idea: 'I have tried in this figure to use drapery from what I think is a sculptural point of view. Drapery played a very important part in the shelter drawings ... and what I began to learn then about its function as form gave me the intention, sometime or other, to use drapery in sculpture in a more realistic way than I had ever tried to use it in my carved sculpture...Drapery can emphasise the tension in a figure, for where the form pushes outwards, such as the shoulders, the thighs, the breasts, etc., it can be pulled tight across the form (almost like a bandage), and by contrast with the crumpled slackness of the drapery which lies between the salient points, the pressure from inside is intensified.' [1] The cast of Draped Reclining Figure destined for the Time-Life Building, was sited on the roof terrace behind Time-Life Screen 1952-53 (LH 344); an abstract relief carved in Portland stone which forms an integral part of the building. [1] Henry Moore quoted in *Sculpture in the Open Air: A Talk by Henry Moore on his Sculpture and its Placing in Open-Air Sites*, edited by Robert Melville and recorded by the British Council 1955; typescript copy in The Henry Moore Foundation Archive, Perry Green.

Draped Reclining Figure

Catalogue Number

LH 336 cast 0

Artwork Type

Sculpture

Date

1952-53

Dimensions

artwork (including base) (approx height): 110 x 157.5 x 87.5 cm
artwork: 157.5 cm pedestal: 180 x 95 x 90 cm case: 192 x 110 x