



01 April 2005 - 31 October 2006

Venues

Henry Moore Foundation

Exhibition Title

2005-06 Perry Green, Henry Moore and the Challenge of Architecture

More Information

This popular exhibition in the grounds and studios at Perry Green offered a fresh insight into the fascinating topic of Moore's links with the world of architecture. Open to the public by appointment only, the show offered a unique insight into the sculptor's work, exploring the conflict between his interest in nature and the

increasing tendency for his art to be shown in urban environments. Viewing Moore's sculptures in the fields of Perry Green it is immediately apparent that he intended to emphasise the intrinsic harmony between his work and the landscape. What happens, however, when this relationship is disrupted? Moore repeatedly stated that architects considered public sculpture as an afterthought, as 'mere surface decoration' to adorn their buildings, and attempted to redress this perceived imbalance, initially by making sculpture more integral to the building, before finally using tough abstract 'architectural contrasts of masses' which could stand as a force in their own right. The exhibition, encompassing five thematic areas, was the first to address these conflicts. Starting in the 1920s, with Moore's architectural drawings and collaborations with Charles Holden for the West Wind relief on London's Transport Headquarters, the show will explore both realised and abandoned architectural projects resulting from his associations with Serge Chermayeff, Wells Coates, Maxwell Fry, Walter Gropius and Berthold Lubetkin. These are followed by the artist's post-war work with Marcel Breuer, Gordon Bunshaft and IM Pei. Particular attention is paid to Moore's collaborations with Michael Rosenauer, including models and original maquettes for the Time/Life Building in London's Bond Street and the unrealised English Electricity Headquarters project for the Strand. Focusing upon a selected group of architectural commissions, including Rotterdam's Bouwcentrum Wall Relief and experimental sculptures for UNESCO, which make use of elements such as steps, benches and walls, the exhibition also demonstrates how Moore envisioned the complex relationship between architecture and sculpture. In fact, rather than allow the restrictions of a particular environment to disrupt his creativity, he produced work that was not site-specific. This stood in contrast to many contemporary public sculptors, yet enabled him to create work that could be associated with, yet remain distinct from, architecture as a whole.