

# ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

MODERN | BRITISH | SCULPTURE



## **Winter Exhibition 2021**

### ***From Evolution to Extinction and Back***

Today should be the first day of the London Art Fair, however, lockdown has sent LAF, as with many other cultural events, to reside in the digital realm.

And so here within the requisite twenty works for this virtual fair I have formed an Exhibition out of works within my specialist area of interest:

Sculpture, Paintings, Drawings and Prints by Modern British Sculptors, with the catchy title ***From Evolution to Extinction and Back***.

Featuring works by:

Robert Adams

Kenneth Armitage

Edward Bainbridge Copnall

Ralph Brown

Jacob Epstein

Dora Gordine

Bryan Kneale

Bernard Meadows

Paul Mount

I very much hope you enjoy the art presented and please do not hesitate to contact me for full details on works in this Exhibition.

With best regards

Alex Puddy



## EVOLUTION - Edward Bainbridge Copnall MBE 1903-1973

Portland stone  
Circa 1930

PROVENANCE  
A Private Collection

LITERATURE  
Illustrated page 95 'Bainbridge Copnall, Painter and Sculptor'

Height 183.00cm [72.05 inches]  
Width 113.00cm [44.49 inches]  
Depth 113.00cm [44.49 inches]

'To begin in the beginning' but unfortunately not in spring as it is a cold wet January... the first work in this Exhibition must be **EVOLUTION** by Edward Bainbridge Copnall. Carved from a four-tonne block of Portland stone this work is described at length in his biography, within the aptly named chapter 'The big block of stone'.

In his own words "I took the first chapter of Genesis and after a while I evolved a shape growing out of the rugged ripples of stone which formed the base; the shape grew up and passing through like a fish like form developed into a stony man which whilst growing upwards, twisted sideways. The name was 'The Evolution'".

Inspired by the work of Eric Kennington Copnall's true vocation as an architectural Sculptor, searching to find the hidden forms within stone (looking to carve directly within the truth to material tradition), came just a little later in his career. After leaving the RA schools (early to make a living!) in 1925, his first profession was that of a society portrait painter, it was only in 1929 after a short period of self-isolation in Slinford, Essex that he turned his hand to the chisel, though he never entirely left the paint brush behind.

His career however was never truly fulfilled. Despite Epstein's praise... Copnall's work is 'full of dramatic emotion and large-scale qualities', grand commissions in the 1930s for: RIBA HQ – a similarly styled relief 'Architectural Inspiration', fourteen stone reliefs for the First-Class dining salon on the Queen Mary and works for Broadcasting House and the Adelphi Building

(Dawn). His style (one could describe it as Art Deco), and his practice of working in collaboration with architects became outmoded and with the impending 'independence of sculpture' (sculpture seen as stand-alone not as part of a building), as championed by the standard bearer for the Modernists Herbert Read, his bright start as an architectural Sculptor was somewhat overshadowed by the coming generation of sculptors (Moore and Hepworth). In his later years it was I think best put by Copnall himself when in 1965, as president of the Society of Modern British Sculptors, he described how 'modern architecture is becoming more sculptural itself' – a quotation which in hindsight looks remarkably prescient.

Jacob Epstein, that towering figure of English sculpture (though of course he was American by birth), had similarly carved works (direct carving, truth to material) to be considered within the whole of the architectural scheme. These included the infamous (crumbling) figures for the BMA building on The Strand, and Day and Night (his son Theodore modelling for the figure of Day) for Charles Holden's Westminster HQ. For the London Underground, a project where he worked alongside Henry Moore (West Wind) –Epstein having recommended Moore for this his first public commission – of course being before they fell out...

It was also at around this time in the summer (July and August) of 1928 that the drawing – (graphene on rather rubbish paper) given the title **ODALISQUE** here in this exhibition, was made. Epstein worked in feverish bouts of activity with one such episode producing a series of life drawings or as he put it



## ODALISQUE - Sir Jacob Epstein KBE 1880-1959

Frame height 62.50cm [24.60 inches]

Frame width 73.00cm [28.74 inches]

Graphene on Paper

Date 1928

Signed: Epstein

LITERATURE:...

Height 43.00cm [16.93 inches]

Width 55.00cm [21.65 inches]

'studies of life rather than studies of form'. This resulted the following year in an exhibition of *Seventy-Five Drawings* held at the Godfrey Phillips Gallery, accompanied by a fully illustrated limited edition (220) book published by Herbert Wellington priced at £15 – quite a sum back then I would have thought. The Models for these drawings were Armina Peerbhoy (Nee Devi) and her younger sister Miriam Patel. Discovered by Epstein when they were manning a stand selling exotic trinkets at the British Empire (World Fair) Exhibition in 1924 (both had run away from their husbands), they soon became Epstein's favourite models. Given the nicknames Anita and Sunita (and son Enver) it is most likely Sunita here is the model, described by Epstein's sinuous fluid line her gaze questioning, suggestive and by the title we are to assume inviting.

Dora Gordine a contemporary of Jacob Epstein was feted as being a 'Genius', 'Gifted' and 'Possibly the finest woman sculptor in the world'. Her early life (born in Latvia) and even her date of birth – hence the ? is to some extent a self-constructed mystery. It is known that in 1921 she became an Estonian citizen going on to live and work as an artist of privilege in Paris in the 20s, latterly in a purpose-built studio (here she also learnt to cast and patinate in bronze), settling in England by the mid-30s via a failed marriage and time in South East Asia.

Gordine exhibited at the Paris Salon and by arrangement of the great sponsor and collector George Eumorfopoulos at The Leicester Galleries, continuing to show throughout the 20s and 30s. Many commissions followed and by the end

of the decade in 1938 she had been made an Associate of the Society of British Sculptors, becoming a Fellow in 1949.

Her work can be seen in the purpose built and still extant – it is now an excellent Museum – Dorich House (Do (Dora) Rich (Richard) Hare – her shy aristocratic husband). The brick-built house cum studio completed in 1936 is devoted to the life and work of the artist having examples of her portraiture and figurative work – often dancers, most with her signature rich textured patina, some carrying a flavour of the East.

It is then unusual to have here an undocumented and until now unknown work, signed and stamped with her favourite (where she trained in Paris) Valsuani foundry mark. In discussion with Jonathan Black (Art Historian and co-author of the excellent book – Dora Gordine (sculptor, artist, designer), it has been suggested that this large **BRONZE BUST** is possibly a member of the Debenham family, cast circa 1926-28, or Lord Ossory, cast circa 1938-39.

With Modern Art most roads lead to Picasso, when the talk is of early Modern British Sculpture it is most likely to be Henry Moore. It was under Moore's wing that Bernard Meadows, as his first and longest serving assistant (he started in 1936), learnt his craft, eventually with his fellow sculptors Adams, Armitage, Chadwick, Clarke, Butler, Paolozzi and Turnbull came to the fore as one of the heirs to Moore after the War.





## BRONZE PORTRAIT BUST - Dora Gordine 1895?-1991

Height with plinth 58.50cm [23.03 inches]

Plinth square 25cm [9.84 inches]

Bronze on Granite Base

Circa 1930s

Signed in the cast: Dora Gordine

Valsuani Founders Paris stamp

...

Height 43.00cm [16.93 inches]

Width 21.00cm [8.27 inches]

Depth 27.00cm [10.63 inches]

It is then at the Art Olympics representing Great Britain at The Venice Biennale of 1952 that we see Meadows emerge with his fellow sculptors under the collective moniker (given to them by Herbert Read) of the 'Geometry of Fear' group. For Meadows his experiences in the War were formative. He started out as a conscientious objector serving in the RAF (air sea rescue) in India and latterly on the Cocos islands, here he observed crabs marching up the beach and no doubt heard the cockerel crow each morning. These experiences were then distilled and through his work transcended into spiky expressions 'human substitutes' of the trauma felt by a generation that endured the horrors of a world war and its aftermath.

**COCKEREL** here with an obvious homage to Picasso delights in its 'Distillation of the essence of Cockiness' he is though both a frightening and frightened fighting bird, strung out, his skeletal frame highlighted (like a startled x-ray) in the bright contrasting colours of black and yellow (other prints are black and red). A version of this print was exhibited at the 1952 Biennale in a small edition, with this version signed and dated 1968 (most likely from the same lithographic stone plate) being one of an unknown numbered later edition.

In 1960 after giving up his post at the Chelsea School of Art and taking up the position of Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy, Meadows abruptly stopped using the metaphor of animals and turned instead to the imagery of 'armed figures'. Inspired by a visit to Florence where he saw the fortified city as menacing, Meadows was drawn to Michelangelo's unfinished bust of Brutus in the Bargello and the monumental bronzes of medieval Condottieri



## COCKEREL - Bernard Meadows 1915-2005

Frame height 55.50cm [21.85 inches]

Frame width 45.50cm [17.91 inches]

Lithograph Print

Date 1968

Signed and dated: Meadows '68

PROVENANCE...

Height 38.00cm [14.96 inches]

Width 29.00cm [11.42 inches]



**DRAWING FOR SCULPTURE (ARMED FIGURE) - Bernard Meadows 1915-2005**

Frame height 40.70cm [16.02 inches]

Frame width 44.50cm [17.51 inches]

A seated figure facing right

Pencil with Wash and Bodycolor

Date 1960

Signed with monogram (M) and dated 60 (1960)

...

Height 21.00cm [8.27 inches]

Width 26.50cm [10.43 inches]



**DRAWING FOR SCULPTURE (ARMED FIGURE) - Bernard Meadows 1915-2005**

Frame height 40.70cm [16.02 inches]

Frame width 44.50cm [17.51 inches]

A seated figure facing left

Pencil with Wash and Bodycolor

Date 1960

Signed with monogram (M) and dated 60 (1960)

...

Height 22.00cm [8.66 inches]

Width 26.70cm [10.51 inches]

Bartolomeo Colleoni (who looks a bit Mussolini to me) among others. These sculptures, along with Holbein's portrait of Henry VIII, Meadows saw as the embodiment of the 'oppressive and corrupting influence of power, as well as its precariousness'. In his words 'these figures are armoured, aggressive, protected but inside the safety of the protected shell they are completely soft and vulnerable'. He goes on to relate to Tycoons who are 'protected by the paraphernalia of their offices and retinues but who are soft inside. Bullies are frightened people', how true...

His works on paper and in bronze go on to express these observations and through his series of **ARMED FIGURES**, here exemplified as seated with spiked (blades and knives), multi layered, square shouldered (to support medals of a soviet General?) protective armour supporting a turret like head, with strangely vulnerable spindly legs that seem to be drawn with echoes of kicking or lashing out. Both these drawings (made in 1960) were exhibited in the British Pavilion of the 32nd Venice Biennale in 1964, previously having been on a trip around the Commonwealth 1961–1963 with the British Council touring exhibition 'Recent British Sculpture'.

Returning to the 1950s we can look back to 1953 to Ralph Brown's first exhibition with fellow Yorkshireman Henry Moore, being an early purchaser of his work. In this same year Brown made a sculpture intitled 'Tragic Group' – it was destined for but never entered into that touchstone of Modern British Sculpture, being the competition for the commission to undertake a work under the theme of the 'Unknown Political Prisoner' (the competition

eventually being won by Reg Butler). Brown's (figurative) four figures of inmates of a concentration camp set his stall as both a social (realist) and socialist sculptor.

Arguably his best and probably most well-known work is 'Meat Porters'. Commissioned in 1959 by Harlow Art Trust as the centrepiece for the town's new market square. I have visited the work and it is in context a powerful and striking portrayal of butchers, or the meat porters of Smithfield market, carrying a full (one presumes) beef carcass with the strained sinews of flesh, both human and animal, taught with effort. The work is also perfectly scaled and placed with space within what we would now consider a small low-rise development.

It is within the context of the Hatfield sculptural project that another commission emerged – Brown made a number of studies in bronze of swimmers 1959 -1960 which became the basis for a fountain installed at Hatfield in 1961. Within this series, **DIVERS** being one, Brown 'Confronts the technical and imaginative challenge of using inert materials to convey the feeling of weightlessness which human beings experience in water'. One can with ease bring to mind the TV image of (in this case two) divers encased in a water bubble as they enter (tumble into) water from height.

Throughout his career of 60 years Brown's sculpture and drawings ceaselessly explored the human body with a 'sometimes dark and disturbing sensuality' which, on occasion, his 'erotic equivalent forms' going too far for some, with



## DIVERS - Ralph Brown RA 1928-2013

Height including plinth 54.00cm [21.25 inches]

Bronze

Date 1959 / 1960

1 of an edition of 8

### PROVENANCE

A private collection...

Height 48.00cm [18.90 inches]

Width 24.00cm [9.45 inches]

Depth 14.00cm [5.51 inches]



works being deemed inappropriate, removed from exhibitions and commissions cancelled. Despite this or perhaps because of his determination not to compromise, Brown was elected to the RA in 1968, becoming a full academician in 1972.

Paul Mount like Bernard Meadows was a conscientious objector and pacifist, with his service (which broke into his studies) being as a driver for the Friends Ambulance Unit in North Africa and France. On his return he completed his course at the Royal College of Art starting out as a painter of portraits and urban landscapes and teacher at Winchester College. So far so conventional however, it was a job offer to return to Africa to teach at the Yabba Technical Institute in Lagos that set his career on a new path.

It was 1955, an exciting time to be in Nigeria, that Mount quickly realised sculpture not painting would offer his students something practical (to earn a living) whilst tapping into the deep roots of the indigenous Yoruba sculptural tradition. It was also at this time that his interest in sculpture turned practical, starting to carve utilising the freely available local woods of iroko and ebony.

It was Mount's natural flair for design, interest in 'The character of forms' and appreciation of the relationship between architecture and sculpture, that led him to receive commissions for large-scale Architectural Reliefs. One such commission in 1960 being a sculptural wall (he was working now in cast iron and steel) for the Swiss Embassy in Lagos, this being one work in long line of successful collaborations with architects.

In 1962 Mount returned from Africa to settle in Nancherrow, near St Just in Cornwall. Here he joined the Penwith and Newlyn Artist Groups, exhibiting his abstract, cast iron and bronze and latterly stainless-steel works alongside Hepworth, Denis Mitchell and John Milne etc. Mount's sculpture can be seen in relation to the landscape, but his interest with machinery influenced his development towards a more angular industrial form than other Cornish modernists, 'I like form for its own sake whether it's in sculpture, design, music (he was accomplished pianist/organist), architecture or painting.'

His love of music and rhythm crossed over into his work – the work here **CARNIVAL** showing an 'energy and rhythm that counterbalances the weightiness of its materials'. One can also observe how Mount manipulates the reflective surfaces of the mirror like stainless steel to 'multiply perspectives and images, in the process constructing what might even be considered a sculptural chord'. In the work **GINGLYMUS** the dictionary term meaning 'A hinge-like joint such as the elbow or knee, that allows movement in only one plane' one can see Mount playing with these intersecting planes 'by juxtaposing the parts of the sculpture you can build another virtual sculpture inside it with reflections' or in another quote his work can be seen through the prism of humanism 'The way that two shapes relate is as important as the way two people relate.'

Robert Adams 'the neglected genius of post-war British sculpture' was in common with other artists here represented; first a painter, soon moving to sculpture (self-taught), initially carving in wood abstract organic forms, a



## CARNIVAL - Paul Mount 1922-2009

Height on plinth 142.00cm [55.90 inches]

Stainless Steel on Slate Base raised on a Perspex Plinth

Circa 1980

Signed on slate base: Paul Mount

New Art Centre Label

Unique

...

Height 120.50cm [47.44 inches]

Width 62.00cm [24.41 inches]

Depth 20.00cm [7.87 inches]



## GINGLYMUS - Paul Mount 1922-2009

Height on plinth 42.00cm [16.53 inches]

Stainless Steel on Slate Base raised on a Perspex Plinth  
1984

Signed on slate base: Paul Mount  
New Art Centre Label

Unique

...

Height 37.00cm [14.57 inches]

Width 37.00cm [14.57 inches]

Depth 37.00cm [14.57 inches]

conscientious objector (serving in the civil defence as a fire warden) and a creator of large-scale architectural works. He did however complete his studies prior to the War.

Adams received recognition early in his career being selected to create a work (Apocalyptic Figure - 3m high) for the 1951 Festival of Britain, with international recognition coming soon after when exhibiting alongside the Bernard Meadows Etal at the 1952 Venice Biennale.

Adams by dint of exhibiting at the 52 Biennale was part of the group encapsulated by Herbert Read within his 'geometry of fear', group. Adams's work however was more constructed, more architectural, less spiky and less politically charged than the others. His rigour in searching for a formal code of abstraction reflecting the modern industrial world (Constructivist) led him into contact and exhibit alongside 1951–56 Victor Pasmore and other similarly minded artists, going on in 1956 to participate in the seminal 'This is Tomorrow' exhibition at the Whitechapel. Further architectural collaborations followed both in the UK and in 1957 in Germany resulting in an impressive concrete wall relief for the Gelsenkirchen City Theatre. In 1962 Adams was back exhibiting at the Venice Biennale – here with his beautifully crafted, welded and often perforated metal sheets shown against well-lit backgrounds staged to allow light to break through.

**SQUARE MINUS (1969/3, OPUS 307)** made in 1969 came at a time of upheaval for Adams, a move to the country not going as planned and an



**SQUARE MINUS (1969/3, Opus 307) - Robert Adams 1917-1984**

Height on plinth 31.00cm [12.20 inches]

Chromed Steel

Date 1969

Signed: ADAMS 1969

Edition: 1 of 3

PROVENANCE...

Height 30.50cm [12.01 inches]

Width 30.50cm [12.01 inches]

Depth 0.50cm [0.20 inches]

upcoming touring retrospective – Square Minus being shown (another of the edition of 3) at the last stop (Campden Arts Centre) where additional works were added and were for sale. This outwardly simple work has, however, on closer inspection delicate ripples on or beneath the surface, being a good example of Adams's understated sculptural elegance which belies its inner complexity.

Adams often worked in series, methodically exploring and developing aspects of an idea, working and re-working them, seeking balance and proportion, always striving for compositional perfection. Here in two examples of his late work these bronzes: **GERMINATION 1980 (OPUS 405)** and **OVOID VARIATION No. 1 1980 (OPUS 397)** go back to his early interest in the organic, both meditating on the purity of the curve their 'smooth brown surfaces holding within them other forms pregnant with life', each suggesting latent growth and the potential for birth and life. Adams's life itself could be seen to have been dedicated to the search for this beauty of form and structure.

Born on the Isle of Man Bryan Kneale is a 'Manxman'. As an artist he completed his training at the RA schools in 1951 having won the Rome scholarship where he travelled through Italy 'The entire Italian culture (is) sculptural', noting that his sculptural awakening came in Verona on viewing a 17th century figure of a soldier in Armour. It could also be said that a warm shard of buckled shrapnel from a German Shell (the only one to drop on the Isle of Man) brought to him on his childhood sickbed by his father had a lasting



**GERMINATION 1980 (Opus 405) - Robert Adams 1917-1984**

Height on plinth 47.20cm [18.58 inches]

Bronze on wood base  
Signed: 1980 ADAMS 3/6  
Edition: 1 of 6

PROVENANCE  
A private collection...

Height 45.00cm [17.72 inches]  
Width 31.50cm [12.40 inches]  
Depth 1.50cm [0.59 inches]





**OVOID VARIATION No.1 1980 (Opus 397) - Robert Adams 1917-1984**

Height on plinth 48.00cm [18.89 inches]

Bronze on wood base

Signed: 1980 ADAMS 3/6

Edition: 3 of 6

**PROVENANCE**

The New Art Centre, London Label...

Height 45.80cm [18.03 inches]

Width 48.80cm [19.21 inches]

Depth 1.70cm [0.67 inches]

influence. **OASA** from 1981 was exhibited at the Redfern Gallery has a fractured architectural quality (it reminds me of a Gehry Project) and sits well alongside Bryan's quote 'I always liked the idea of being totally in charge of the shape'.

However, before turning rather dramatically in 1960 to sculpture, Bryan was first a painter (also portraits), having a number of successful shows at the Redfern Gallery and in 1955 winning First Prize at the Daily Express Young Painters Exhibition – it is to me however more interesting to note that Lucian Freud came second and Frank Auerbach third, with the Judges being Herbert Read, Anthony Blunt and Graham Sutherland.

In painting Bryan constructed his images using a pallet knife 'cutting and shaping with this tool was a direct way of painting. It suited me – these acid lines' **FLOWERS** and **ROSES** show his highly developed style of that time described well by Andrew Lambirth as having a 'sharply pleated structure'.

We leap forward now to the later part of the 1980s to a time when Bryan was teaching at the Royal Academy Schools, then in South Kensington, and so near to the Natural History Museum. After gaining permission it is here that Bryan delved into the collections hidden away in the basement of the Museum discovering skulls and skeletons of elephants, giraffes, gorillas and as shown here an **ANTEATER**. These rather amazing anatomical studies were commented on by David Attenborough as having 'with piercing clarity the



**OASA** - Bryan Kneale MBE RA b.1930

Bronze  
Stamped BK 81  
Cast 1981

PROVENANCE

Mr R Warby  
Purchased Redfern Gallery Exhibition September 29 to October 23, 1981

...

Height 12.00cm [4.72 inches]  
Width 13.00cm [5.12 inches]  
Depth 14.00cm [5.51 inches]



**FLOWERS** - Bryan Kneale MBE RA b.1930

Frame height: 72.50cm [28.54 inches]

Frame width: 119.00cm [46.85 inches]

Frame depth: 10.50cm [4.13 inches]

Oil on canvas

Circa 1956

Signed: Bryan Kneale

Height 59.00cm [23.23 inches]

Width 104.50cm [41.14 inches]



## ROSES - Bryan Kneale MBE RA b.1930

Frame height 124.00cm [48.81 inches]

Frame width 93.00cm [36.61 inches]

Oil on canvas

Date 1959

Signed: Bryan Kneale 1959

PROVENANCE...

Height 101.00cm [39.76 inches]

Width 70.00cm [27.56 inches]



**ANTEATER** - Bryan Kneale MBE RA b.1930

Frame height 66.00cm [25.98 inches]

Frame width 75.00cm [29.52 inches]

An anatomical drawing 1990

Conté on Paper

Signed & dated: Bryan Kneale 1990

PROVENANCE...

Height 43.50cm [17.13 inches]

Width 53.50cm [21.06 inches]



## TYRANNOSAURUS - Bryan Kneale MBE RA b.1930

Frame height 82.50cm [32.48 inches]

Frame width 99.00cm [38.97 inches]

Conté on Paper

Circa 1990

### PROVENANCE

Collection of James Helzer...

Height 73.50cm [28.94 inches]

Width 56.00cm [22.05 inches]



## STEGOSAURUS - Bryan Kneale MBE RA b.1930

Frame height 82.50cm [32.48 inches]

Frame width 99.00cm [38.97 inches]

Conté on Paper

Circa 1990

### PROVENANCE

Collection of James Helzer...

Height 52.50cm [20.67 inches]

Width 69.50cm [27.36 inches]





## IGUANODON - Bryan Kneale MBE RA b.1930

Frame height 100.00cm [39.37 inches]

Frame width 81.50cm [32.08 inches]

Conté on Paper

Circa 1990

### PROVENANCE

Collection of James Helzer...

Height 71.50cm [28.15 inches]

Width 55.00cm [21.65 inches]

quintessential character of the animals that once animated them'. Interestingly Bryan painted a portrait of his brother Richard some years earlier in 1958.

It is easy to imagine that these drawings helped Bryan to win another competition. This time to provide the artwork for a stamp series celebrating the anniversary of the Palaeontologist Sir Richard Owen. The exhibited here **TYRANNOSAURUS** and **STEGOSAURUS** were used for an issue of stamps for the Marshal Islands in 2015, with other (part) drawings selected and published on the Fleetwood First Day Cover for the 'Great Britain: Owen's Dinosauria Stamps', issued in the UK on August 20, 1991. **IGUANODON** also exhibited here was not used.

It is I think interesting to note that Owen entered the word 'Dinosaur' into English language as part of his title for a lecture at the British Association Advancement of Science on Friday 30th July 1841 – hence the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

And finally, here is the 'Back' in this exhibition 'From Evolution to Extinction and Back'. Back to humanity and to this **SEATED GROUP** by Kenneth Armitage.

Receiving his formal training as a sculptor at the Slade, at first a carver but he soon became a modeller and caster with the human figure his central tenet. After the War – his service was in the Army – his career was fully launched as with others by being chosen to exhibit at the 1952 Venice Biennale, joining



## SEATED GROUP - Kenneth Armitage CBE 1916-2002

Frame height 48.00cm [18.89 inches]

Frame width 66.00cm [25.98 inches]

Lithograph on Wove Paper

Date 1960

Artists Proof – Edition size 300

Printed by Curwen Studio, London

Annotated P / R

Height 40.00cm [15.75 inches]

Width 58.00cm [22.83 inches]

with Adams and Meadows in this exhibition. Armitage gathered prizes and in 1953 took up the first Gregory Fellowship for sculpture at Leeds University. Another showing at the Biennale in 1958 then two years later he produced this simple lithograph 'I like to express an idea as simply as possible,' Armitage here seeking to show feelings expressed through the body – the entwined arms and hands being for me somewhat poignant.

His diverse influences included: Brancusi, the sculpture of Egypt and the stripped back forms of the Cycladic sculpture (much in evidence in this work) as seen in the British Museum, ancient standing stones and randomly Chinese dolls. Armitage's character was somewhat temperamental, however, as a counterpoint he did introduce into his sculpture a rare commodity in his time – humour.

I hope you have enjoyed this whistle stop tour and so to end I feel the last word in this exhibition should go the artist (Armitage) "I believe that art is something shared among us and feel almost apologetic for the effort and specialisation involved in its production."

All works will be available to view here at Taddington Manor  
Our opening hours are Monday–Friday 9am–5pm and Saturday by Appointment  
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