Modern British Sculpture
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ROBERT ADAMS
KENNETH ARMITAGE
SVEN BERLIN
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HERBERT PALLISER
EDUARDO PAOLOZZI
WILLIAM REID DICK
Robert Adams

Robert Adams was one of the sculptors exhibited at the 1952 Venice Biennale and thus became known as a member of the Young British Sculptors generation. However, his work differs in style and theme from that of his contemporaries. He preferred to focus on formal aspects such as line and carving rather than modeling. Adams was commissioned to produce a sculpture for the Festival of Britain in 1951 and was invited to exhibit at the Venice Biennale for a second time in 1962. Adams received several notable architectural commissions and his monumental sculptures can be seen at Customs House, Heathrow Airport, and Baden-Powell House, London. He was represented by Gimpel Fils from 1948 until his death in 1984.

_Bather with Ball_ featured in Adams's second one man exhibition at Gimpel Fils in 1948. All of the works in the show were figurative, though they clearly demonstrated his tendency to experiment with abstraction and hint at his progression in that direction in later years.

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1 **ROBERT ADAMS 1917-1984**

_Bather with Ball (Opus 57), 1948_

Reinforced plaster, copper plated
Height 23 ¼ inches (60.5 cm)


In the late 1950s, Adams moved from working with wood to working with metal, and therefore from carving to welding. This change marks a complete shift in technique, from the subtractive processes used to carve to the additive, constructive processes of metal working. As he continued to experiment with the material, his work became increasingly asymmetrical, which Adams believed gave the sculptures dynamism. Many of his early forays into metal work are constructed around a central metal rod which provides the support upon which other pieces of metal are added. In a statement he composed for the catalogue to his ICA exhibition in 1957, Adams also explained how metal allowed him to explore planes, enclosed spaces, and balance in a way that wood had not.
**Rectangle with Holes No. 3** relates to a series of works Adams made in the mid-1960s of welded metal perforated with holes. *Large Screen Form* was exhibited in the Venice Biennale in 1962 and other similar works were presented at Gimpel Fils in November of the same year. Adams first began welding in 1955. In the present series, he emphasizes the three dimensional aspect of these otherwise flat pieces by puncturing them. The artist insisted that these works should be displayed free standing in front of a plain white background so that the reflected light highlights the perforations.

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**4 ROBERT ADAMS 1917-1984**

*Rectangle with Holes No.3, (Opus 254), 1966/8*

Bronzed steel
12¼ x 12½ inches (32 x 32 cm)

**PROVENANCE:** Gimpel Fils, London

**EXHIBITED:** London, Gimpel Fils, Robert Adams, 1966 (18)

Following Adams’s 1968 exhibition at Gimpel Fils, the artist turned away from welding, which had been his predominant technique for the previous decade, and began to work instead in carving marble and casting bronze and stainless steel. Stylistically, his sculpture also turned away from the London and New York avant-gardes and returned to the forms which link him to the School of St. Ives artists, particularly Nicholson and Hepworth. Barbara Hepworth had shown regularly at Gimpel Fils from 1956 and Adams was also friends with several of her former assistants, including Terry Frost and David Mitchell. By 1960 Hepworth was creating highly polished bronzes with circular or oval depressions and some planes patinated greeny-brown. While Adams never adopted her signature selective patination, he did employ her crisp transitions from curved to rectangular shapes, and her circular hollows and inlets, in his own cast work.

5 ROBERT ADAMS 1917-1984

Cylinder (Opus 312), 1969

Chromed steel
Height 13 1/8 inches (33.5 cm)

The present sculpture is part of a series of hatchet-shaped bronze forms that Adams first conceived in the early 1970s. They are all around one foot in height and polished. Viewed from the front or back, the sculptures appear approximately rectangular, but from the side they appear very thin and blade-like and need to be supported with a small wooden base. Like his earlier welded compositions, however, the hatchets are asymmetric and include an extra rectangular form on one side where the imagined handle would be attached. This series of bronzes are much more rigid than the flowing forms of his steel works from the previous decade.
Kenneth Armitage

Kenneth Armitage was one of the sculptors invited to participate in the 1952 British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Indeed, the unusual shapes and scored surfaces Armitage employed in his work resonate deeply with Herbert Read’s idea of the ‘geometry of fear’, a phrase used to describe this new type of assembled, constructed, and welded sculpture.

Early in his career as a professional artist, which only started after he finished his service in World War II, Armitage had already landed on his signature formal style: flat human figures, joined in unexpected ways, who appear to be pulled and pushed by the world around them. To create these figures, he would model plaster directly over a wire netting armature. The idea of unifying many figures into one was inspired by seeing a woman holding two children walking through London on a windy day; their bodies appeared to be one mass with an assortment of arms and legs sticking out.

**7 KENNETH ARMITAGE 1916-2002**

*Standing Group, c. 1952*

Plaster
Height 30 inches (76 cm)
PROVENANCE: Estate of the Artist; Collection of Daniel Katz, London
Sven Berlin

Sven Berlin worked in an astounding variety of media over the course of his career, including carving stone and wood, painting and drawing, and writing poetry and prose. He began his adult life as an adagio dancer in music halls before transitioning to the visual arts and moving to St. Ives in the late 1930s. Berlin quickly became integrated into the group of St. Ives Moderns living and working in the area. In the postwar period he helped found the Crypt Group and the Penwith Society. Despite this, he is not always remembered as one of the St. Ives artists, perhaps because he left the region in 1953 due to political tensions with his colleagues, and lived a rather solitary life for the rest of his career.

Berlin’s carvings are distinguished by their elegant forms and carefully chosen material. The present work is a testament to Berlin’s great physical strength as porphyry is a very hard stone that is notoriously difficult to carve.

8 Sven Berlin 1911-2000

The Hawk

Devon porphyry
19 x 3 x 3½ inches 48.3 x 7.6 x 9 cm

PROVENANCE: Property of a public institution, acquired directly from the artist in 1974, de-accessioned 2012
Lynn Chadwick

Lynn Chadwick was another of the sculptors presented at the British Pavilion of the 1952 Venice Biennale. His work, and that of many of his contemporaries, marked a departure from his predecessors by focusing on assemblage and construction. Chadwick won the prize for sculpture at the 1956 Biennale and was made a CBE in 1964. Originally trained as an architectural draughtsman, Chadwick's unique approach to sculpture focuses on the essential structure of the piece. His works are often constructed from welded iron rods to create semi-abstract animals and figures.

The present work is a small, early example of Lynn Chadwick's Beast series. This series of powerful, animalistic geometric sculptures were reportedly inspired by a visit to the Avenue of Lions at Delos during Chadwick's trip to Greece in 1955. Despite its diminutive scale, the present work has the primal and dynamic presence of a four-legged animal creeping tentatively forward.

The Chadwick Estate have confirmed the attribution of this sculpture.

9  LYNN CHADWICK 1914-2003
Beast, c.1955
Iron
Height 8¼ inches (21 cm)
Geoffrey Clarke was part of the same generation of sculptors as Lynn Chadwick and indeed both of them had work in the ‘Young British Sculptors’ British Pavilion of the 1952 Venice Biennale. Clarke learned to weld alongside Chadwick on a course run by British Oxygen while still a student at the Royal College of Art as the college had no welding facilities.

Clarke used primarily found and industrial materials in his work which gave it a powerful directness. This new visual language allowed Clarke to experiment with balancing delicacy and strength, abstraction and figuration, the secular and the profane. The present work toes the line between figurative and abstract, presenting the symbolic figure of Icarus, the ‘fallen’ man, on a crucifix form, thus combining Pagan and Christian imagery.

**Geoffrey Clarke**

10 GEOFFREY CLARKE 1924-2014

*Daedalus, 1952*

Iron on slate

21½ x 12½ x 2 inches (55 x 32 x 6 cm)

Francis Derwent Wood

Derwent Wood was born in Keswick in the Lake District. He studied in Lausanne and Karlsruhe when he was young before returning to London in 1887 to study at the Royal College of Art and later at the Royal Academy Schools. He taught at Glasgow School of Art, 1897-1905, and was Professor of Sculpture at the Royal College of Art, 1918-1923. He was elected to the Royal Academy in 1920. Derwent Wood received several notable commissions for architectural sculpture including four large roof figures for the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the British Linen Bank, both in Glasgow, and the Britannic House in London. He also produced and exhibited many classically-inspired freestanding sculptures such as the present work, which bears a resemblance to the Louvre’s Venus de Milo, and was exhibited at the Venice International Biennale in 1910. Derwent Wood won the Royal Academy Schools’ gold medal in 1895 with his *Dedalus and Icarus* group, and his marble *Atalanta* from 1907 is in the Manchester City Art Gallery. A bronze cast of the same sculpture is in Chelsea Embankment Gardens.

11 FRANCIS DERWENT WOOD 1871-1926

dTorso, 1900

Bronze, incised and dated *F. Derwent Wood. 1900*

Height 17 inches (43 cm)

EXHIBITED: Venice, International Biennale, 1910 (153), as ‘Torso de Donna’
Ursula Edgcumbe was awarded the Slade Scholarship for sculpture in 1918 and trained in both modelling and carving techniques. She exhibited at the British Decorative Art exhibition in 1931, with the National Society of Sculptors in 1933, and had a solo exhibition of her work at Leger and Son in 1936. Edgcumbe worked in both English freestones and Italian marbles, both of which she worked in fine detail. The present work is likely in a local stone such as sandstone or limestone. She moved from sculpture to painting in 1960 and her paintings were exhibited with the London Group and the Women’s International Art Club.

12 URSULA EDGCUMBE 1900-1985
The Finding of Moses, 1921
Stone
30 × 18 inches (76.2 × 45.7 cm)

13 URSULA EDGCUMBE 1900-1985
Study for The Finding of Moses, 1921
Pencil, pen, and ink
15 × 10 inches (38 × 25.5 cm)
Louis Richard Garbe

Louis Richard Garbe, a London-born sculptor who trained at the Central School of Arts and Crafts and the Royal Academy Schools, worked in a wide variety of materials. His father was a craftsman who specialised in making ivory and tortoiseshell objects. Garbe apprenticed under his father very early in his career, which is undoubtedly where he learned his very fine ivory carving skills. Garbe was a key contributor to the resurgence in the use of exotic materials in sculpture, including ivory. During the 1930s, Garbe collaborated with Royal Doulton on a series of ceramic sculptures. The smooth finish and pure white of the present ivory sculpture mirrors the aesthetic he produced in those porcelain works. He was elected a Royal Academician in 1936.

14  LOUIS RICHARD GARBE 1876-1957

Renaissance, 1930

Ivory carving on bronze base
Height 14½ inches (36.5 cm)

PROVENANCE: Dr Gordon Scott, bought FAS 1972
Garbe had many artistic influences, such as Chinese jade carvers, Japanese ‘netsuke’ and Gothic stonemasons. *The Red Shawl* evokes classical sculpture through its pose, drapery and hairstyle, although the title makes no allusion to Greek or Roman history or mythology. The piece was intended to be decorative and seductive, and therefore relates to the earlier movement of ‘Art for art’s sake’ advocated by Whistler and Moore. Garbe’s use of lacquer gives the work a rich surface, punctuated by the deep red of the shawl which heightens the figure’s eroticism by highlighting, rather than hiding, her nudity.
Henri Gaudier-Brzeska moved to London in early 1911 and quickly formed friendships with Jacob Epstein, Ezra Pound and T.E. Hulme. He was an important figure in the group of avant-garde artists and writers in pre-First World War London who invented Vorticism. Gaudier-Brzeska was primarily a sculptor and he was especially interested in the dynamism and clean forms achievable through carving. Gaudier-Brzeska joined the French Army in August 1914 but was killed in action in the following summer.

This is the only recorded cast of Gaudier-Brzeska's Bath stone carving *Crouching Fawn* of 1913. It was cast by The Leicester Galleries and bought in 1925 by the American Mina Kerstein Curtiss on her honeymoon for 40 guineas. The patinated plaster cast that is now in the Tate collection (T03729), presented to the national collection by The Leicester Galleries in 1939, is believed to have been the 'shop sample' from which clients would commission casts. The Leicester Gallery account books indicate that this was the only bronze to be cast, making it exceptionally rare. In 1913 Gaudier-Brzeska's artistic focus was largely on stone carving rather than modelling, which explains the precision and clarity of form in the present bronze cast.

This cast has been inspected and approved by Dr Evelyn Silber.

16 HENRI GAUDIER-BRZESKA 1891-1915
*Crouching Fawn*, 1913
Bronze
12 × 10 × 5 inches (30.5 × 25.4 × 12.7 cm)
PROVENANCE: Purchased by Mina Kerstein Curtiss, Bethel, Connecticut, in 1925 at The Leicester Galleries (for 40 gns); Private Collection, UK
The Old Rectory in Finningham, Suffolk was built on the site of the previous original rectory for the village which was demolished around the turn of the century. Eustace Corrie Frere, a South African architect probably related to the Rector’s family, was invited to design the new residence. He had previously been commissioned to design several other buildings in the Arts & Crafts style, including St Johns House in Holborn and the Rye Street Hospital in Bishops Stortford. Building began in 1907, but even though the building was lauded by the Royal Institute of British Architects, Rev. Leonard Hanbury Frere declined to live in it when it was completed.

Eric Gill, who was also an accomplished sculptor, draughtsman, and typographer, carved the present foundation stone for the rectory in 1907. Gill studied in Chichester at the Theological College, and then at the Technical and Art School. In 1900, Gill began a three year apprenticeship with an architect in London. He attended evening classes in monumental masonry at the Westminster Technical Institute and in lettering with the calligrapher Edward Johnston at the Central School of Arts & Crafts around the same time. In 1903 he left his apprenticeship to work on his own, earning his living by cutting lettered inscriptions in stone. He claimed, ‘It was providential good fortune that I was able to do lettercutting. I managed to hit on something which no-one else was doing and which quite a lot of people wanted.’
This stone was laid 16 May 1907 by Winifred daughter of John Tudor Frere of Roydon and Finningham, the means of rebuilding the rectory were provided by Temple Frere who was rector of Finningham 1805-1829.

E.G. Frere Architect
Ian Hamilton Finlay was a Scottish sculptor, poet, and graphic artist. Born in Nassau, Bahamas, he grew up in Scotland and briefly attended the Glasgow School of Art. Finlay’s first success was as an author, and the press he founded in 1961, Wild Hawthorn Press, helped to disseminate his visual art. As a sculptor, Finlay experimented with a range of materials and techniques including stone carving, assemblage, and neon and glass work. Finlay’s work explored themes such as nature, militarism, and classical form.

Finlay and his wife, Sue, bought Stonypath Farm outside Edinburgh in 1966 and set about transforming it into a vast poetry and sculpture garden which they renamed Little Sparta. Many of the sculptures featured in this garden complex dealt with themes of war and nature and the intersection of creation and destruction. As Finlay said, ‘Certain gardens are described as retreats when they are really attacks’. There are several different versions of aircraft carriers in Finlay’s work, both in Little Sparta and in private and public collections. They vary in size, material, and detail. He even sculpted a topiary at Little Sparta into the form of an aircraft carrier.

18 IAN HAMILTON FINLAY 1925-2006
**Untitled (aircraft carrier), 1973**
Limestone
Length: 5¼ inches (13.3 cm)
PROVENANCE: From the collection of the late Professor John Golding
Gerald Laing

Although initially a Pop artist working primarily in painting, in the late-1960s Gerald Laing transitioned suddenly to sculpture. In 1969 Laing acquired Kinkell Castle, on the Black Isle, in Scotland and restored it in 1977 setting up a substantial bronze foundry there to handle his own work. His first sculptural works were on the cutting edge of Minimalism, but in the early 1970s Laing decided to turn back to figuration.

19 GERALD LAING 1936-2011

*Galina I, 1973*

Bronze

11 ⅜ x 8 x 9 inches (30 x 20 x 23 cm)

Edition of 10, later cast


**EXHIBITIONS:** New York, Max Hutchinson Gallery, 1976; Chicago, Zolla Lieberman Gallery, 1976; Houston, Max Hutchinson Gallery, 1979
In 1973 Laing embarked on the first piece in what was to be a long series of variations on the head and body of his wife Galina. These were unequivocally figurative and reminiscent of the mannerist forms of Modernism. His initial aim was the representation of the intricate arrangement of mass and voids that made up the body and space around it.

**20 GERALD LAING 1936-2011**

*Galina VIII, 1976*

Bronze

19 × 15 × 13 inches (48 × 38 × 33 cm)

Edition of 1st cast 4; edition of 2nd cast 10

The works in the series became increasingly naturalistic. and, in works like Conception, retains only a few stylized hints of abstraction. As Laing’s work became progressively classical he turned more to portraiture and public sculpture. He also learned from the master craftsman George Mancini, of the historic Morris Singer Foundry, to cast bronze.

21 GERALD LAING 1936-2011
Conception, 1978
Bronze
32 × 19 × 26 inches (81 × 48 × 66 cm)
Edition 8 of 10
Bernard Meadows met Henry Moore in 1936 while studying at the Royal College of Art and subsequently became his studio assistant and close friend. After the war, Meadows began to distance himself stylistically from his mentor, moving more towards animal forms. He exhibited four sculptures in the 1952 Venice Biennale alongside many other Young British Sculptors, including Chadwick and Clarke.

Fallen Bird and Large Fat Falling Bird are part of a series of sculptures of animals that constituted the bulk of Meadows’ creative output in the 1950s and 1960s. His first foray into depicting birds came when he was commissioned in 1954 to create a sculpture for the Hertfordshire Director of Education. Meadows produced a highly naturalistic representation of a cockerel, although it was almost twice life size. This successful and well-received sculpture led to Meadows’s subsequent creation of many varied and increasingly abstract and geometric depictions of animals.

Meadows himself said that ‘birds can express a whole range of tragic emotion, they have a vulnerability which made it easy to use them as vehicles for people’ (Bowness, p.14). Vulnerability is certainly an apt descriptor of the present works, which convey the plight of young birds fallen from the nest through outstretched legs and wings, and open, calling mouths.

22  BERNARD MEADOWS 1915-2005

Fallen Bird

Bronze, signed with initial, conceived in 1961 and cast in an edition of 6 and 1 artist’s cast
Length 17 inches (43 cm)

PROVENANCE: Private collection, UK.


23  BERNARD MEADOWS 1915-2005

Large Fat Fallen Bird

Bronze, signed with initial on the base; conceived in 1966 in an edition of 6 and 1 artist’s cast; signed with initial on the base
Length 25½ inches (65 cm)


Not illustrated
Meadows changed direction stylistically in the 1950s, towards powerful, aggressive representations of the human figure. These large and imposing works morphed again in the late 1960s into more sensuous, organic forms such as the present work. The highly polished brass patina of this work is also typical of his work from this period.

After becoming a professor at the Royal College of Art, Meadows established his own foundry near the sculpture school so he could maintain a close eye over the casting of his works. Even with this level of control over production, he continued to carry out the patination and polishing of his bronzes himself.

24  BERNARD MEADOWS 1915-2005

Frightened Torso, 1961

Bronze, signed with initial, conceived in 1961 and cast in an edition of 6 + 1 artist’s cast
Height 14½ inches (37 cm)

In 1955, Henry Moore was invited to design a new sculpture for the courtyard of the Olivetti office in Milan. He determined that a vertical sculpture would complement the low, horizontal profile of the building after visiting the site and seeing a lone Lombardy poplar on the opposite side. Composed of amorphous, organic shapes stacked one atop the other, Moore himself described them as resembling totem poles from the American Northwest. Although the sculpture for Olivetti was never realised (Moore lost interest when he discovered that the courtyard would essentially be a car park), he went on to create thirteen *Upright Motive* maquettes, of which five were enlarged into full size bronze sculptures.

While Moore is perhaps best known for his horizontal reclining figure sculptures, he did experiment with vertical forms at regular intervals throughout his career. *Upright Motives* could be seen as the synthesis of these experiments with form over the prior twenty years. Factors such as his early interest in non-Western art, his surrealist sculptures of the 1930s, and his commissions in the 1950s which encouraged him to consider mid-century architecture in more detail, contributed to the aesthetic developed in this series.

**25 HENRY MOORE 1898-1986**

*Upright Motive: Maquette No. 12, 1961*

Bronze, conceived in 1955 and cast in 1965 in an edition of 9; signed, inscribed with the edition number 7 of 9 and stamped with the foundry mark *H Noack Berlin*. Height 12½ inches (32 cm)

PROVENANCE: Marlborough Gallery, London, UK; Private collection, Dublin, Ireland


Born in Yorkshire, Herbert William Palliser first trained as an architect in Harrogate before studying at the Central School of Arts and Crafts and at the Slade School of Fine Art. Palliser exhibited at the Royal Academy, the New English Art Club, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, and the Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts. He received several important public commissions during his career, including the Calcutta War Memorial in 1924; the Cobra Fountain, New Delhi in 1932; and the Roosevelt Memorial for Westminster Abbey in 1946.

26 HERBERT PALLISER 1883-1963
Balthur’s Eagle, 1930
Stone
Height 11 3/8 inches (28.8 cm)
PROVENANCE: Mr & Mrs Alan Fortunoff, New York
Paolozzi first began modelling clay reliefs while he was still a student at the Slade School and he continued to experiment in the medium while resident in Paris from 1947-48. The present relief was almost certainly made and fired at the Central School of Art in 1949-50, where Paolozzi became a part-time teacher after he returned from Paris. This work’s abstract language shows the interest Paolozzi had in Paris for works by Paul Klee, as well as for ancient Assyrian sculpture he discovered in the British Museum. He also made a series of twelve similar bas-reliefs which were cast in concrete for the architect Jane Drew (Private Collection) around the same time; and in 1951 a related terracotta was bought by the National Gallery of South Australia.

27 EDUARDO PAOLOZZI 1924-2005

*Untitled (Relief), c.1949-50*

Terracotta

$\frac{3}{4} \times 13 \times 15$ inches ($8 \times 33 \times 41$ cm)

**PROVENANCE:** Acquired directly from the artist; private collection
This symbolic figure of the seventeenth-century scientist Sir Isaac Newton is drawn from William Blake’s colour print, Newton. Paolozzi often explored the connection between science and art in his sculpture, linking the human form with the mechanical. In his first Newton, a small relief sculpture, Newton’s body looked partly bolted together, as if he himself were a mechanical construction. The best-known version of Paolozzi’s Newton is the monumental bronze sculpture designed for the forecourt of the new British Library in London. This maquette is for a later version of the same subject and shows the figure stacking shapes rather than holding a compass.
Sir William Reid Dick was born and trained in Glasgow. He moved to London in 1908 and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors in 1923. He received several prominent commissions for monumental memorial sculptures following the First World War, most notably the Kitchener Chapel in St. Paul's Cathedral. While much of his work was closely related to architecture, some of his most formally innovative and materially simple pieces were his smaller works. These introduced modern elements into the academic sculpture tradition. The present work is a plaster maquette for the sculpture known as Madonna and Child. This work was produced in both stone and bronze. A stone version was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1927 as The Child, another of unknown medium at the Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts, and a white marble version was shown again at the Royal Academy in 1929.