Basic Detail Report

Studies for Sculpture

Date
1946

Primary Maker
Henry Moore

Medium
Pencil, wax crayon, coloured crayon, wash, pen and ink, chinagraph on paper

Description
Although Henry Moore worked primarily as a sculptor, the shortage of materials during World War II encouraged him to turn to drawing as an outlet. He was especially fond of wax crayons and used them frequently during this period, including in the present work. After the war, he incorporated drawing into his practice more regularly as a way to work out ideas for sculptures. The reclining abstracted figure—derived, in part, from Mesoamerican sources—is a hallmark of Moore's sculptural oeuvre. In this sheet, he depicted various sculptures of reclining figures on a number of registers. Moore also included figures standing or seated around the sculptures, indicating his interest in how his work would be viewed and displayed. The central register depicts Memorial Figure, a stone sculpture Moore completed the following year for the grounds of Dartington Hall in Devon, England. The rectangular frame at the lower left, and possibly the one at the upper left as well, show Reclining Figure, an elm-wood sculpture the artist made in the same year as the drawing. This repetition may be explained by Moore's belief that "to draw a piece of sculpture from a single point of view was to limit its full plastic possibilities." He continuously reworked his ideas, sometimes returning to previous works in different mediums. Studies for Sculpture—along with Reclining Figure itself—was shown the year it was created in Moore's first American retrospective, held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. It was lent to the exhibition by William G. Roehrick, Class of 1934, H1971, who left the drawing to Hamilton College upon his death in 1995. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS, 2017)

Dimensions
Composition: 14 3/4 × 10 7/8 in. (37.5 × 27.6 cm) Sheet: 14 3/4 × 10 7/8 in. (37.5 × 27.6 cm) Frame: 24 7/8 × 20 7/8 × 2 in. (63.2 × 53 × 5.1 cm)