

The Arts

Toronto honours Henry Moore

By Jenny Pearson

The opening of the new Henry Moore Sculpture Centre at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, represents a sizeable chunk in the pattern of world recognition that is at last achieving the proportions due to the great sculptor, born in Yorkshire in 1898 and still heavily engaged in work at Much Hadham in Hertfordshire.

The sculpture centre in Toronto was built mainly for the purpose of housing a gift from the artist of works out of his own collection, valued at \$15m., which the museum's director William J. Withrow has described as "one of the most generous gifts ever made by an artist to an art

museum".

Artists have made gifts to museums before — but it is not often that a museum responds with such lavish enthusiasm as this. The new sculpture centre, occupying 10,000 square feet, has made it possible for all the works given by the artist to be put on view together, in addition to various other examples of his work already in the gallery's possession. As a result, the Toronto gallery now has a collection of Henry Moore's work second only to that of the Tate Gallery in London. It is also being used to show works by other leading contemporary sculptors.

The Moore gift includes 18 bronzes of varying sizes, 41 original plasters and some 200 lithographs and etchings. Among the bronze forms is *Two Forms* (1966-69), weighing about 8 tons, 20 feet long and 12 feet 8 inches high, and an earlier work, the 5 feet high *Warrior with Shield* (1953-54). The original plasters include a 91 inches long *Reclining Figure* (1951) and *Draped Reclining Woman* (1957-58).

Surveyed *en masse*, a collection of works all by one artist gives the sensation of entering an incomparable and overwhelming landscape, the workings of an extraordinary mind made visible. I remember the sensation from years ago on entering the old Palais de Dance in St Ives, Cornwall, where Dame Barbara Hepworth houses and works upon her private world of form.

That Henry Moore should be so splendidly honoured outside his own country is in keeping with the earlier pattern of his recognition. Heralding the event in his column last year, Terence Mullaly, art critic of the *Daily Telegraph*, commented that it was "shaming . . . that this recognition has come from abroad rather than from his native Britain."

Mullaly noted that it was North America, not Britain or even Europe, that first acknowledged Moore's international stature with a retrospective exhibition in 1946 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Today over two thirds of his pieces of sculpture and drawings are in North American public and private collections and there are a great many examples of the sculptor's work to be found in public places, sited in such a way that they complement their architectural setting and are themselves seen to advantage.

Aside from his gift to the centre Toronto has named after him, Henry Moore has also arranged that in future the museum will be able to buy examples of most of his future bronzes at the cost of casting.

The Henry Moore Sculpture Centre, initiated in response to his gift, is part of an extended programme to enlarge the gallery's facilities so that other collections received in recent years can be properly housed — at the same time creating two large new galleries to be used for major loan exhibitions. A spacious new gallery located between the Moore wing and the Gallery's central area is devoted exclusively to the works of contemporary Canadian artists. There is also a new gallery for prints and drawings.

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The sculptor with his bronze *Warrior with Shield* (1953-54).