

The Museum of Modern Art

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ADVANCE FACT SHEET

THE SCULPTURE OF RICHARD HUNT

"... the seeds of artistic revolution sown, grown and reaped during the last fifty years should see the rich fruits of their harvest nurture a new art in this wiser half century. An art which need not seek strength in revolt, but in the creative pulse of its authors, an art having at once sinew and gut as well as heart and soft flesh." -- Richard Hunt, (1957, aged 23).

Dates: March 25 - June 7, 1971

Director: William S. Lieberman, Director, Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art.

Contents:

In this first major museum retrospective of Hunt's work, forty pieces of sculpture and a selection of drawings and prints cover his development during the past 15 years -- from "found-object sculptures" through linear "drawings-in-space" and the "Antique Study" series to the more solid and denser monolithic, enclosed form of the late 1960's, as well as his recent architectural commissions.

William S. Lieberman says:

"Not yet forty years of age, Richard Hunt can be ranked as one of America's foremost sculptors today. Although this retrospective offers a clear and discernable stylistic progression, his individuality as a sculptor follows no predictable or accepted pattern. Neither is Hunt afraid to rearticulate and return to themes and ideas previously expressed in his own work. The Museum's survey presents a continuing and eloquent dialogue between the artist and his materials.

"Hunt's use of materials in metal (as opposed to plaster, stone and wood) has been consistent throughout his astonishingly short career. A seminal influence was the welded metal sculpture of the Spanish sculptor Julio Gonzalez which he first studied in 1953. At the same time, Hunt's first work also has aesthetic reference to the critical acceptance in the United States of 'junk' sculpture in the late 1950's. Hunt's personal decision to construct, to weld together his sculpture from the trophies of the junkyard, originated, however, because it was a way to obtain materials inexpensively and, perhaps more importantly, offered him a direct, conceptually clean method of manipulated forms in space. Explicit reference to the human figure, to plant animal shapes, is also consistent throughout Hunt's work.

"In the 1960's he started the first of a group of sculptures which deal with classical themes explored in the direct metal technique. Evolving from this experimentation came another series in which the reference to the antique is strongly mixed with an increasing

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interest in botanical and zoological forms. Concurrently he was also very preoccupied with a kind of drawing in space reminiscent of work of Gonzalez and David Smith but unmistakably marked by the artist's own imagery and vitality.

"In the later 1960's Hunt's sculpture reflected a new reference to linear elements and also showed a growing interest in rock forms and geology.

"More recently, as he has been sought out to execute large commissions, he sees himself developing an 'architectural style' requiring new formal and technical approaches. The most recent sculpture in the exhibition is a study for an image of the Cross commissioned by St. Mathew's Church in Chicago, the city where Richard Hunt was born and still lives."

The Museum of Modern Art first acquired sculpture by Hunt in 1957. Other museums lending to the exhibition are: The Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo; the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the New Jersey State Museum, Trenton; and the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City.

Catalogue:

Sculpture of Richard Hunt by William S. Lieberman with chronology compiled by Carolyn Lanchner. 24 pages; 17 black and white illustrations; \$1.50. To be published by The Museum of Modern Art, March 25, 1971.

Additional material, including black and white photographs, available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7501.
