

FAIRMOUNT PARK ART ASSOCIATION

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SCULPTURE SITE EXPLORATION

On Wednesday, October 25 the Fairmount Park Art Association will explore the siting of a "mock-up" of Henry Moore's Three Way Piece Number 1: Points at various locations along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and in Fairmount Park. Purchased and installed by the Art Association in 1967, the bronze sculpture was created in 1963 by Henry Moore, one of the most distinguished sculptors of the 20th century. The Art Association is investigating alternative sites which might offer greater visibility for this important work in Philadelphia's collection of public art.

In preparation, the Art Association engaged the sculptor Maurice Lowe (who worked with Henry Moore in England) to supervise students at the Graduate School of Sculpture of the University of Pennsylvania to create a portable model of the one-ton sculpture using styrofoam and papier-mache. Using the traditional "pointing" system, the "mock-up" was made in four interlocking parts. It resembles the bronze in scale and color.

Staging and photographing the "mock-up" will give the Art Association an opportunity to examine the effects of the surrounding landscape, architecture, traffic and pedestrian flow. Likewise, it will reveal the impact of the work on another site. Moving the "mock-up" to various locations along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and the Samuel Memorial in Fairmount Park will provide an opportunity for the Association to consider the advantages

and disadvantages of each site and ultimately decide whether to relocate the sculpture or have it remain at the JFK Plaza site.

The relocation of works of art in public spaces has become a national issue. It raises questions of whether a work of art is site-specific. (That is, was the work created specifically for the site at which it is located.) For example, Cowboy, by Frederick Remington, located along Kelly Drive is a site specific work. Art Association archives indicate that Remington visited Fairmount Park in 1905 and was invited to select the specific site where his work would eventually installed. In creating his sculpture of a cowboy mounted on a horse that appears to have come to a sudden halt, Remington considered the woodland area, the elevation of the rock that acts as the base, and the view of the work from the drive. Thus, the site played an important role in the aesthetic decisions the artist made while creating the sculpture.

Unlike the Cowboy, Henry Moore's Three Way Piece Number 1: Points was not created with a particular site in mind. Three Way Piece Number 1: Points exemplifies Moore's interest in the observation of nature and natural form, dominating themes throughout his career. In 1934 he wrote, "The observation of nature is part of an artist's life, it enlarges his form-knowledge..." The work, currently installed at John F. Kennedy Plaza, has a smooth, pebble-like form at first glance. Yet, as one walks around it, it appears to be a massive bird-like creature haunched on three points. The full scale plaster model for the original work was made in an outdoor studio in Moore's home at Much Hadham, Hertfordshire and was cast in Berlin by Noack Foundry. Two other casts were made of this work: one is located on the campus of

Columbia University in New York, and the other belongs to a private collector in Lake Forrest, Illinois. During the 1960's Moore created a series of bronzes, partly to meet the demands of public art commissions, and partly to satisfy his own desire to work in a big scale. Three Way Piece Number 1: Points was created during that period. It is with careful consideration that the Art Association, in an effort to bring greater visibility to this important work of art, proceeds to explore alternative sites for relocation.

The Fairmount Park Art Association is a private, non-profit organization established in 1872 with a charter to "promote and foster the beautiful in the City of Philadelphia, in its architecture, improvements and general plan." The Art Association has a long-standing commitment to the integration of art and urban planning. By placing works of art throughout the City, the Art Association makes the experience of sculpture and art available to all Philadelphians in the course of their everyday lives.

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