

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Self-Guided Visit: Art in the Garden/Moore in America

Grades: 3-8

Time: 10:30 a.m. until closing

Meeting Place: Everett Garden Gate

Tour Location: Daffodil Hill Way and the Benenson Ornamental Conifers

Teacher Guide

Welcome to The New York Botanical Garden! *Art in the Garden/Moore in America* is a self-guided exploration of art and nature that introduces students to the work of renowned sculptor Henry Moore. Students will be challenged to find connections between the natural landscape and the sculptures and will explore ways to interpret art through inquiry-based discussion and activities. This tour addresses New York State Social Studies Standard 2, the Arts Standard 4, and Scientific Thinking Standard S5a.

There are 20 monumental sculptures situated throughout the 250 acres of the Garden grounds, which were chosen specially for this exhibition. Some were brought to the Garden in several pieces and then reassembled and painted for the show. The six sculptures on this route represent Moore's work from 1955 to 1985.

Please remind your students of the following guidelines:

Please stay on the paths until you reach the sculptures, follow your leader, keep with the rest of the group, and keep voices low. It is okay to touch the sculptures (please be aware some surfaces may be hot)—groups are encouraged to walk up to them, walk around them, and touch them, but please no climbing, as that will cause damage.

About the Artist:

Henry Spencer Moore (1898–1986), born in the coal-mining town of Castleford, Yorkshire, in England, is one of the world's most well known and beloved 20th-century sculptors.

At the age of 10, Henry Moore knew that he wanted to be a sculptor. Moore began studying sculpture as an art student in 1919.

Henry Moore attended the Leeds School of Art, where he founded the sculpture department because of his strong interest in pursuing this medium. At the time, he was the only student in the department! He also won scholarships to continue his studies. So remember to always think big and aspire to your dreams!

His first solo show of sculpture was held in London in 1928. The following year Moore and his wife, Irina, moved to Hampstead, London, a center for artists and writers, where he made his living teaching sculpture and exhibiting his work. In 1940 the couple moved to Perry Green in the Hertfordshire countryside. There, Moore lived and worked for the remainder of his life, drawing inspiration from the surrounding landscape and collecting objects in nature that would provide ideas for his sculpture.

Moore's works are displayed around the world. His subject matter is often a reclining woman, a

mother and child, or a relationship in nature. His sculpture makes reference to the landscape and flowing hills of the countryside.

In 1977 he helped to establish the Henry Moore Foundation, donating his estate, lands, and works to the Foundation, which continues to support education and promotion of the arts and an appreciation of Moore's work.

About Moore's Work:

Henry Moore intended that his monumental works be presented in expansive landscapes where their mass and size could be seen from many angles, in a great variety of light, and in differing seasons. He wanted people to get up close and touch them.

To create these massive works, Moore used a process called "lost wax." First, he produced a small model, or maquette, which he used to study the form and grasp its shape from all around. Then he created a larger replica in clay, plaster, or another impermanent material. Moore made a rubber mold of the sculpture to replicate the form in wax, and then poured molten bronze into the mold, which melted away the wax leaving the final, solid bronze sculpture.

You can view several of Moore's maquettes along with some tools and found objects from his studio in the Orchid Rotunda of the Library building.

General Questions for Discussion:

- *Do you see straight lines or corners in the sculptures? Why do you think that is?*
- *Do you like the colors of the sculpture? Why do you think Moore choose these colors and this material? Do you think that other materials might work better?*
- *Do you think the sculpture is too large or small for their setting?*
- *Why do you think Henry Moore turned to nature for inspiration? Look around where you are standing now—what natural objects would you use for inspiration? Do you think there are as many ideas for making art in the man-made world? Like what?*
- *How do you think this sculpture would look in different weather? On a cloudy/sunny/rainy/snowy day? How about at sunrise or sunset? Do you think the sculpture might look different in moonlight? What if you looked at them in the dark with a flashlight? Would they look larger?*
- *Walk around the sculpture—does it look like the same sculpture at every angle?*
- *Touch the sculpture—how does it feel? Soft, smooth, rough, hot or cold?*
- *Do these sculptures make you feel any particular emotions, for example strong, small, comforted? Happy, sad, confused?*
- *Henry Moore devoted his whole life to creating art and sculptures. Do you think that a person should spend their life making art? Does it add value to its surroundings? Does it hold value to you? Why or why not?*

Suggested Route and Specific Questions for Discussion:

1. After the School Group Check-In booth, encourage your group to use the restrooms and water fountains before you begin your journey.

From the School Group Check-In booth, walk down the hill along **Daffodil Hill Way** until you come to **Two Piece Reclining Figure: Points, 1969 (#13 on Moore Map)** on your right. *Estimated walking time is 4 minutes.*

Why do you think that this sculpture is in this particular part of the Garden? Does it blend/contrast with its surroundings? Does it mimic something in the environment—for example a rock or a tree?

This sculpture was intentionally placed by this large rock outcropping, which is hundreds of millions of years old. As a child, Moore used to roam the countryside of Yorkshire, which was dotted with rocks and boulders. This piece, created in 1969, displays Moore's modern work, in which he breaks down the figure into multiple pieces. This makes the piece resemble both the landscape and a human figure, depending if you look at it as one cohesive piece or in separate sections.

2. Continue along **Daffodil Hill Way** and walk straight through the four-way intersection, following signs for the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers**. You will come to **Large Totem Head, 1968 (#12 on Moore Map)**.

Encourage students to explore the dark interior of this piece—how does it make you feel? What does it remind you of? Does it look like anything in nature? If you were the artist, what would you name this piece?

Although his source of inspiration for this piece is unknown, some think it resembles a seed pod or a cave. Relating to the sculpture's name, **Large Totem Head**, the two holes could represent eyes on the head of the totem. This sculpture was placed here to complement this 250-year-old black oak—one of the largest trees at the Garden.

3. Continue your journey along **Snuff Mill Road**, crossing the Bronx River. Turn right into the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers**, and stop at the entrance to explore the **Large Reclining Figure, 1984 (# 7 on Moore Map)**.

Do you see holes in the sculpture? These holes, or negative spaces, create frames you can look through. How many different frames you can find in this piece? Choose one to look through. How does the landscape look different through the frame? How does it change? Does it look like a photograph? Walk around the sculpture. Does it look different depending on where you are standing?

Lay down on the grass and look up at the sculpture. How does it look against the sky? Does it look larger? Are you laying in its shadow? Do you feel like you a part of the sculpture by laying down here?

This sculpture was originally created in 1938 as a 13-inch model. Forty six years later, in 1984, Moore created this monumental piece in fiberglass. Here at the entrance to the Benenson Conifers its milky white color, designed to look like bone, contrasts sharply with the varying shades of green. This work was assembled from four pieces, with one person climbing inside of the sculpture in to bolt it all together. There is actually a trap door for the person to exit around the back.

4. Continue along this path into the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers** until you arrive at the three sculptures called **Upright Motives, 1955–1956 (# 8, 9, & 10 on Moore Map)**. *Estimated walking time is 6 minutes.*

Look carefully at these sculptures. Can you find any objects and shapes that you recognize? Do you see any natural or manmade objects within each sculpture? Look at the landscape around you—does it remind you of a specific time period or geographic location?

Moore wanted to make his works accessible to the public and harmonize with urban landscapes. These sculptures incorporate industrial objects, such as metal files and screws, as well as found natural objects. These **Upright Motives** are thought to resemble Native American totem poles.

5. Continue along the path and stay to the right on the main path. You will arrive at **Three Piece Reclining Figure: Draped, 1975 (#11 on Moore Map)**.

Encourage the students to walk around this sculpture and explore it from different angles. Look at it as one whole sculpture, and then two/three different sculptures. How does it change depending on how you view it? Can you find a rabbit's face hidden in the sculpture?

This sculpture represents a strong, tough form. It looks very different depending on which angle you approach it from. It can be viewed as one uniform piece or as three separate pieces.

6. Finish the loop through the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers**. Walk to the end of the path back to **Snuff Mill Road**. You have almost completed the **Art in the Garden** tour!

7. To complete your tour, turn left and retrace your steps back to the **Everett Garden Gate**, the **Clay Family Picnic Pavilions**, and the restrooms. Alternatively, to continue your adventure through the Garden and explore more sculptures, turn right onto **Snuff Mill Road** and continue on your own to the **Rockefeller Rose Garden**, the **Lilac Collection**, the **Cherry Collection**, and the **Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden** (open to the public at 1:30 p.m.).