



MACCONNAL - MASON

ESTABLISHED 1893



**Henry Moore, OM, CH, FBA, RBS (1898 - 1986)**

**Head**

Lead and string

Height - 5½ in - 14 cm, excluding hard wood base

**Artist description:**

Henry Moore was born to Mary Baker and Spencer Moore. His father worked as a mining engineer in the Wheldale colliery in Castleford. Spencer Moore was an intelligent, self-taught man with artistic tendencies, enjoying both music and literature. He saw a proper education for his children as the route out of the mines and to a better life. Therefore, Henry attended infant and primary school in Castleford, where he first began sculpting in clay and wood. By the time he was just eleven years of age he had decided to become a sculptor, having taken inspiration from the achievements of Michelangelo.

Moore's obvious enthusiasm, talent and interest in sculpture won him a scholarship to Castleford secondary school where he continued his studies.

Moore was first employed as a teacher at the school he had once attended, but this was to be a short lived affair as he was called up for service in the Prince of Wales own Civil Service Rifles. He was sent home to recover in hospital after being injured in a gas attack at the Battle of Cambrai in 1917.

After the War he received an ex-servicemen's grant and attended the Leeds School of Art, where he met and befriended fellow pupil Dame Barbara Hepworth, DBE (1903-1975). He went on to study at the Royal Academy of Art after winning a scholarship in 1921. Moore was a regular visitor to the British Museum and became increasingly interested in the primitive art of Mexico, Egypt and Africa. In 1924 he acquired the position of Instructor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy. A travelling scholarship to Italy in 1925 allowed him to be further influenced by the works of Masaccio, Michelangelo and Giotto. It was not long before Moore was holding his first solo show at the Warren Gallery in 1928.

During the 1930's Moore exhibited with the Unit One group, initiated by Paul Nash (1908-1946) to showcase the latest advancements in British Art, both surreal and abstract. Other members of the group included Ben Nicholson, OM (1894-1982), Barbara Hepworth, Edward Burra (1905-1976), Tristram Hillier (1905-1983), John Armstrong (1893-1973), Edward Wadsworth (1889-1949) and Nash himself.

Moore was very much involved in the British surrealist movement and participated in the first International Surrealist Exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries, London in 1936.

Upon the outbreak of the Second World War he was appointed an official War Artist. This resulted in some of Moore's best known works, those of the haunting groups of figures huddled together in the London Underground bomb shelters. Due to the shortage of supplies during this period (1940-43) he focused almost entirely on works on paper, employing pencil, watercolour, wax relief and pen and ink to great effect.

In 1943 he received a commission to carve a Madonna and Child for the church of St. Matthews, Northampton. He was awarded many commissions throughout his career but St. Matthews was the first in a series of what was to become some of his most important family group pieces. His first major retrospective was held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1946 to much acclaim. Two years later he took the international prize for sculpture at the Venice Biennale.

After this great success Moore received numerous international commissions, for substantial outdoor sculptures such as the four-part concrete screen (1952) for the Time-Life Building in New Bond Street, London; Wall Relief No. 1 (1955) at the Bouwcentrum in Rotterdam, his first and only work carved entirely out of brick; and Reclining Figure (1956-58) for the UNESCO building in Paris.

He received a British Order of Merit in 1963. Moore donated many of his works to the Tate Gallery following a significant exhibition organized by the Arts Council of Great Britain, held at the Serpentine, London in 1978. He died at his home in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire in 1986.

His works can be seen in public collections and museums throughout the world: Argentina; Australia; Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Canada; Canary Islands; China; Czech Republic; Denmark; Finland; France; Germany; India; Iran; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Japan; Liechtenstein; Luxembourg; Mexico; The Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Portugal; Romania; Saudi Arabia; Singapore; Spain; South Africa; South Korea; Sweden; Switzerland; Taiwan; UK; USA and Venezuela.