



# Henry Moore in his maquette studio

John Hedgecoe

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**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** Henry Moore in his maquette studio

**Artist/Maker:** John Hedgecoe

**Object Type:** Photograph

**Materials:** Photograph

**Measurements:** 515 x 415mm (framed)

**Accession Number:** 50264

**Production Place:** Britain, England, Europe

**Credit Line:** Donated by the Hedgecoe family

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Henry Moore is photographed by John Hedgecoe in his maquette studio at Perry Green, Hertfordshire. Hedgecoe described how 'portraits in the working surroundings of a person have an intriguing extra dimension. You are taking two separate subjects at once - the person and the environment - and arranging a balance between them.' [1] Hedgecoe went on to explain how he incorporated as much of the background as possible without overpowering the sitter.

Moore adopts a natural pose, as if he is working on the plaster maquette for a reclining figure that is on a turntable in front of him. Moore is surrounded by maquettes, plasters and found objects from floor to ceiling, which serve to demonstrate his sculptural processes. A plaster model for *Large Spindle Piece* is on a stand behind him, which echoes an elephant skull at the right of the composition. These frame a model for Moore's *Time/Life Screen* for Bond Street, which is on a shelf along the back wall.

There are many pebbles at the front of the composition. Moore described the benefits of surrounding himself with found objects such as stones and bones, when he explained 'anything I find that has a shape that interests me - [I] keep it around in that little studio so that if any day I go in there, or evening, within five or ten minutes of being in that little room there will be something that I can pick up or look at that would give me a start for a new idea'. [2] The elephant skull became the basis of a portfolio of prints in 1970. It had been given to Moore in 1965 by Juliette Huxley, wife of the biologist Sir Julian Huxley, after Moore had admired it in their garden. Julian Huxley was also photographed by Hedgecoe.

John Hedgecoe went into Moore's maquette studio the first time they ever met in 1956. He described Moore working at the turntable as pictured here; 'A small turntable was immediately in front of him and on this there was a small plaster maquette. As he talked to us he kept turning and inspecting the small sculpture from all angles.' [3] Even in this recollection over three decades later, he conveyed excitement in being allowed into this space, 'This was the inner sanctum, the maquette studio, a secret place where he worked out his ideas for his sculptures and was not to be disturbed.' [4]

Despite Hedgecoe's indication that the maquette studio was the sculptor's private space, it was photographed more than any other of Moore's studios and by many photographers. The studio thus became a widely distributed part of Moore's public image. Jon Wood writes how in the twentieth century, artist studios were often described with a sense of mystery, in keeping 'with the avant-garde preoccupation with archaeology, anthropology and psychology'. [5] Hedgecoe also produced a colour photograph during the same sitting, this time, rather than looking directly at the camera, Moore inspects the maquette.

Moore and Hedgecoe remained friends from their first meeting in 1956 until Moore's death in 1986 and during this time, Hedgecoe took around 6,000 photographs of Moore. [6] In some of his photography manuals Hedgecoe used his images of the sculptor as an example of how to take a prolonged portrait of a single subject. [7] As Hedgecoe explained, with photography 'you capture forever a frozen instant of time. But how much more meaningful those images can be is made plain when you see a progression of pictures of the same person taken over a long period of time.' [8]

His photographs of Moore formed the basis of four books, which incorporated Hedgecoe's photographs alongside Moore's words. Although he produced around 30 photography manuals, these were Hedgecoe's only books on a single subject.

Tania Moore, December 2020

[1] John Hedgecoe, *What a Picture! The Complete Photography Course* (London, Mitchell Beazley in association with Channel Four, 1983), p.90.

[2] Elizabeth Brown, 'Moore looking: Photography and the Presentation of Sculpture' in Dorothy Kosinski (ed.), *Henry Moore: Sculpting the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New Haven, CT and London: Dallas Museum of Art and Yale University Press, 2001), p.291-2.

[3] John Hedgecoe and Henry Moore, *Henry Moore: My Ideas, Inspiration and Life as an Artist* (London: Ebury Press, 1986), p.7.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Jon Wood, 'A Household name: Henry Moore's studio-homes and their bearings, 1926-46, in Jane Beckett and Fiona Russell, *Henry Moore: Critical Essays* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), p.32.

[6] As estimated by Charlotte Bullions and Emily Unthank at the Henry Moore Foundation, 2020.

[7] John Hedgecoe, *Photographing People* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), p.56.

[8] Ibid.

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## Further Reading

John Hedgecoe and Henry Moore, *Henry Spencer Moore* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1968)

John Hedgecoe and Henry Moore, *Henry Moore: Energy in Space* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1973)

John Hedgecoe and Henry Moore, *Henry Moore: My Ideas, Inspiration and Life as an Artist* (London: Ebury Press, 1986)

John Hedgecoe, *A Monumental Vision: The Sculpture of Henry Moore* (London: Collins & Brown, 1998)

Tania Moore, 'Portrait of a Friendship: John Hedgecoe's Henry Moore' in *Henry Moore: Friendships and Legacies* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre, 2020)

Marin R. Sullivan, 'Henry Moore's Public Identity', in *Henry Moore: Sculptural Process and Public Identity*, Tate Research Publications, 2015,  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/henry-moore/marin-r-sullivan-henry-moores-photo-graphic-identity-r1151299>

