

# MIT List Center

## Henry Moore Three Piece Reclining Figure

This sculpture is by Henry Moore, the most influential British sculptor of the 20th century. Early in his career, he composed sculptures from a single mass undulating biomorphic forms that evoke both the human figure and the natural landscape. By the time of this 1976 work, three-piece reclining figure, draped, Moore had begun breaking them into pieces to reveal articulations of space.

Anita Feldman, head of collections and exhibitions at the Henry Moore Foundation.

He actually said once that they were two and three-piece experiments. As you walk around the sculpture, it opens up in different ways, and you have that play of positive and negative space. And you do things in which you illuminate something that is perhaps essential, but you learn how essential it is by leaving it out.

With its clean, hard edges, this sculpture has an almost architectural muscularity well-suited for an urban environment. But the modernist work also pays homage to the history of art.

Moore sculptures, they're also referring back to the whole tradition of world sculpture, not just pre-Colombian and African, but also the history of Western sculpture. In this case, you've got this big, draped form and the reclining figure itself are motifs that go back to Hellenistic sculpture. He wanted to give people the feeling of continuity that modernism can be a really intrinsic part of daily life.

To hear more about Moore's other work at MIT, please press 3, 1, 8 then the pound key.