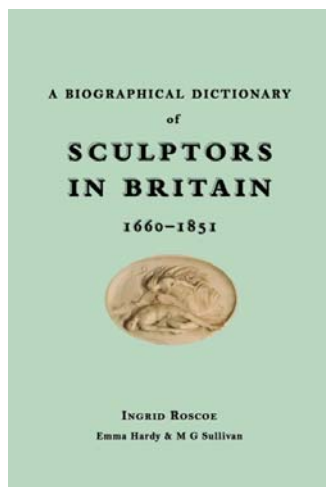


PMSA News and Events Archive 2009

The Gunnis Project



The book, *A Biographical Dictionary of Sculptors in Britain 1660-1851*, by Ingrid Roscoe, has recently been published by Yale University Press. Rupert Gunnis's *Dictionary of British Sculptors, 1951* (revised 1968), a remarkable achievement in its day, provides the starting point for the new dictionary, which also makes use of his extensive unpublished archive. Since his time much has been written on British sculpture and this dictionary draws on more than 3,000 relevant publications, original manuscripts, and information generously provided by the scholarly community, to rewrite all the major lives and add over 1,000 new ones. The aim has been to produce a work of reference that meets the highest modern academic standards, whilst retaining the humour and anecdotal flavour of Gunnis's book. The new dictionary is intended as an essential starting point for the next generation of sculpture historians, but is also useful to those with a general interest in British cultural history.

For further details, see our Publications page and for more information about the Gunnis Project, see: <http://www.henry-moore-fdn.co.uk/hmi/research/hmi-research-collaborations/the-gunnis-project>

Jaume Plensa wins The Marsh Award for Public Sculpture 2009



At the Whitechapel Gallery on Monday evening, 16 November 2009, the Catalan artist, Jaume Plensa was presented with the Marsh Award for Public Sculpture 2009. The prestigious annual award was presented by Boris Johnson, Mayor of London. Plensa was given the award for *Dream*, in St. Helens, a 20m high sculpture depicting the head of a young girl with eyes closed in meditation. The piece is constructed on the site of the disused Sutton Manor Colliery at St Helens. The material used is a concrete aggregate mixed with sparkling white Spanish dolomite. Commissioned by former miners and St Helens Council as part of Channel 4's Big Art Project, this 400 tonne sculpture, which is highly light reflective even on a dull day, is the artist's response to the miners' desire for a work that expressed the future of their community and landscape.

Jaume Plensa says that his sculpture is about celebrating life and the human experience; of standing between past and present, present and future, knowledge and ignorance. *Dream* was inspired by the spectacular setting, the local heritage, a vision for the future and the warmth, humour and passion of the former miners.

You can find out more about *Dream* and The Big Art Project at: <http://www.bigartsthelens.com/> and <http://www.sthelens.gov.uk/dream/>



Three other certificates were awarded to *Perceval* by Sarah Lucas; *The Lion* by Hsiao-Chi Tsai and Kimiya Yoshikawa; and the restoration of the Memorial to George III in Weymouth by Chris Daniels and Osirion Building Conservation.



To nominate an excellent public sculpture recently unveiled, or restoration recently completed, go to the Projects page

Obituary - John Poole

(Reproduced from The Independent, Monday, 16 November 2009 by kind permission of David Buckman and Chris Maume)

A. John Poole: Sculptor, letter-cutter and restorer whose love of architecture informed his monumental works



Anthony John Poole was one of the most distinguished and versatile British architectural sculptors, letter-cutters and restorers during the last half-century. His base was the Midlands, which has many of his sculptures, but his fine and often monumental works are to be found much further afield. Britain produced many excellent figurative sculptors during the 20th century whose achievement is now slowly being evaluated. The work of such skilled practitioners as Bainbridge Copnall, Frank Dobson, George Fullard, Richard Garbe, A. H.

Gerrard, Dora Gordine, Maurice Lambert and Leon Underwood has for too long been overshadowed by a national near-obsession with a few names such as Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore.

Several exhibitions in recent years and Liverpool University Press's series of volumes in the "Public Sculpture of Britain" series have done much to heighten awareness of overlooked sculptural delights in our towns and cities, and their makers. Poole and his work are typical, one of the last sculptor-craftsmen upholding the values of traditional practice and technique.

Poole – who worked as A. John Poole – was born in Birmingham in 1926. His father, George, a professional soldier and later a tool setter, and his mother, Jessie, were keen on self-improvement. They encouraged John and his older brother, David, to develop their talents. John's primary school headmaster appreciated his artistic precocity and encouraged him early to sit the entrance examination for the local Moseley Road Junior School of Art, which he joined just after his 12th birthday.

Poole continued his fine art studies, specialising in sculpture, at Birmingham School of Art from 1940-43. There he gained a grounding in the principles of brief responsive design solutions that would prove invaluable when, as a professional, he tackled jobs not only in traditional materials, such as stone and wood, but others such as ciment fondu, resin and stainless steel.

Graduating early, aged 17, Poole refined his letter-cutting skills in the Birmingham design studio that William Bloye had established about 20 years earlier. Bloye, Birmingham School of Art's head of sculpture until his retirement in 1956, had in the early 1920s studied for short periods with Eric

Gill. Gill's practice left a lasting impression on his own and Poole's work. Bloye and Poole became close friends.

In December 1944 Poole's training was cut short when he was called up for basic training with the Coldstream Guards, followed by officer training with the King's Shropshire Light Infantry (4th Battalion). As a lieutenant he served in France and in Germany as a liaison officer during the Nuremberg trials. He was subsequently recruited as an officer in the Parachute Regiment 7th (Light Infantry) Battalion, serving in Egypt and Palestine.

In 1946, he married Daphne Buscall, who had been a contemporary at Moseley Road and Birmingham School of Art. After studying ceramics and teaching it, she re-trained in silver and goldsmithing and became a fine jeweller.

While in Palestine, Poole mulled over whether he should study architecture or sculpture on demobilisation. He decided that sculpture would offer greater artistic freedom, but a love of buildings would be reflected in work that was often architectural and on a monumental scale.

In 1948, Poole resumed studies at Birmingham School of Art; he left in 1949 with a National Design Diploma High Merit Award for letter-cutting and stonework. He set up a studio in Bournville, at first mainly doing freelance jobs for Bloye or for stonemason yards such as Wilkinson and Griffiths and W. H. Fraley. Trudging round the cemeteries of Birmingham, carving the names of war dead on family memorials, was back-breaking work, but Poole said that it completed his apprenticeship in the art of letter-cutting. He would also broaden his knowledge with sculptural restoration.

Between 1952 and 1961, when he moved his studio to Bishampton, Worcestershire, Poole supplemented his income by teaching sculpture part-time at Mid-Warwickshire College of Art and Walsall School of Art. One result of the valuable contacts he was making with artists and architects came in 1959 with his first notable commission, *The Sower*. Placed at the New Central Library in Cannock, Staffordshire, this free-standing, heroic, 7ft figure carved in Belgian granite represented Man "sowing the seeds of knowledge".

Humanity was a strong theme in Poole's sculpture and he carried out much ecclesiastical work. He had a long-standing association with the Church of St Francis of Assisi, Bournville, and the Cadbury family, particularly Sir Adrian Cadbury.

During the 50 years after *The Sower*, Poole completed some 150 significant works, excluding memorials and commemorative plaques. Thirty of his major commissions were in and around Birmingham, including *The Rotunda Relief* at Lloyds Bank (1963). It was in jeopardy when the future of the rotunda building itself was in doubt, but was saved as part of the facelift of the Bull Ring and is now Grade II-listed by English Heritage.

Other significant works by Poole include in Liverpool, the St John's Precinct mural (1965); in Leicester, the Crown Court Royal Coat of Arms (1969); the sculptured doors at Brown and Shipley in Birmingham (1975); *Lucifer Bringer of Light*, exhibited at New College, Oxford (1988); *Icarus Falling*, a private commission (1997); and *Home Front Memorial*, Coventry Cathedral (2000). Poole worked up till his death, including his *John Donne*, another private commission (2009).

Over the years, he gained increasing recognition, being elected an associate of the Royal Society of British Sculptors in 1960, then fellow in 1969. He was warden of the Guild of Memorial Craftsmen, chairman of the Society of Church Craftsmen and honorary fellow of The Royal Birmingham Society of Artists.

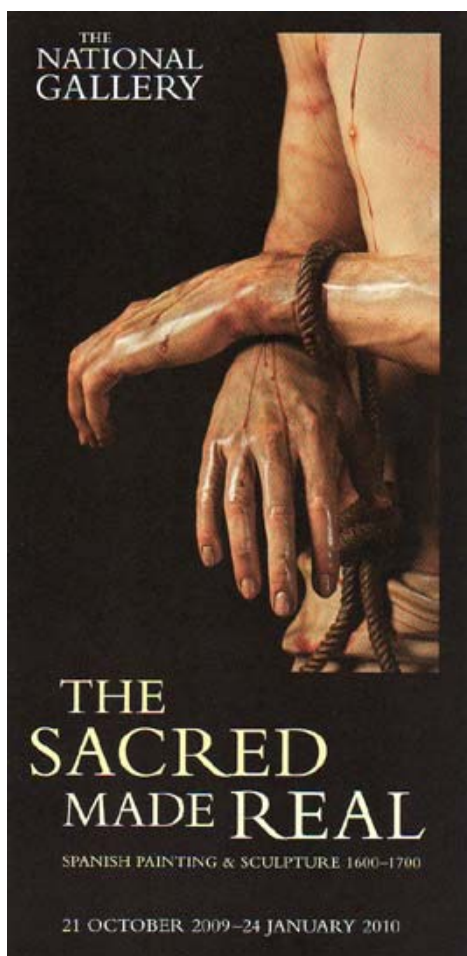
He was twice winner of The Otto Beit Medal for excellence in sculpture, in 1969 for the 17ft welded steel The Risen Christ for St Dunstan's Church, King's Heath, Birmingham, and in 1974 for the high altar and ambo at St Helen's Cathedral, Brentwood, Essex. He gained the Diploma of Merit from Universita delle Arti, Salsomaggiore, Italy, in 1981. In 1985 he was first-prize winner in the Saudi National Guard bronze sculpture competition and in 1991 he was awarded joint first prize in the Liverpool Cathedral Great West Door competition.

David Buckman

Anthony John Poole, sculptor and teacher: born Birmingham, 20 February 1926; married 1946 Daphne Buscall (died 2005, two sons both deceased, two daughters); died Bishampton, Worcestershire 2 September 2009.

The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600-1700

The National Gallery, London, 21 October 2009 - 24 January 2010



This exhibition will bring together paintings and painted wooden sculptures by the great Spanish realists of the 17th century. 'The Sacred Made Real' will provide a reappraisal of the crucial role of these hyper-realist sculptures in the development of Spanish art. Providing a unique experience, sculpture and painting will be displayed side-by-side. This will be the first major exhibition to explore this relationship.

Most Spanish sculptures from this time were dedicated to key Christian themes. 'The Sacred Made Real' will explore how painters and sculptors combined their skills to create arrestingly real depictions of the saints, the Immaculate Conception and the Passion of Christ. Sculptures from this era were painstakingly carved from wood, gessoed and intricately polychromed (painted in many colours).

Many of the sculptures were polychromed by Francisco Pacheco, who taught a generation of painters, including Velázquez and Cano.

In addition to important canvases by Velázquez, Cano and Zurbarán, 'The Sacred Made Real' will feature sculptures carved by Gregorio Fernández, Juan Martínez Montañés and Pedro de Mena, and polychromed by Francisco Pacheco and Alonso Cano.

Sculpture in Painting

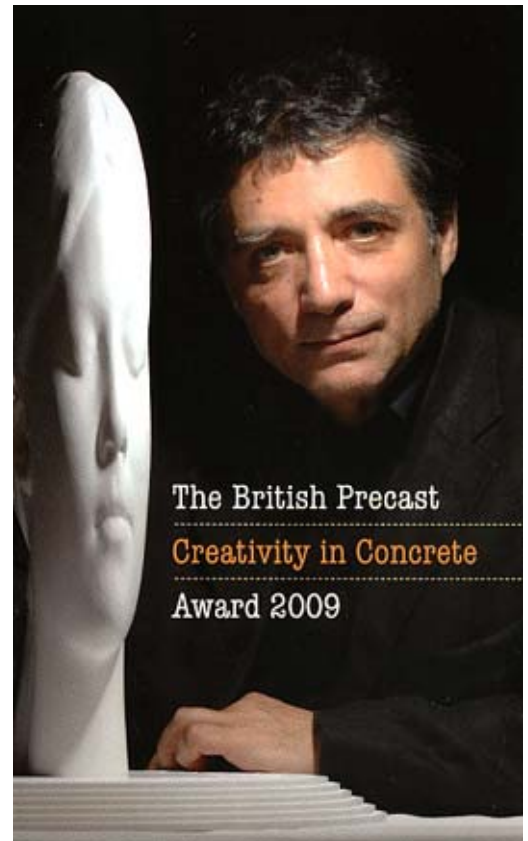
Henry Moore Institute, Leeds

10 October 2009 - 10 January 2010

This show at the Henry Moore Institute will reveal the many ways in which sculpture has figured in painting, from the Renaissance to the present day, from Titian to de Chirico and beyond. Featuring major loans from this country and abroad, the exhibition explores themes such as the animation of sculpture within painting, the influence of sculptural forms on painting, and the representation of sculpture in painting

The British Precast Creativity in Concrete Award 2009

Each year, British Precast presents a special award to an architect, designer or artist in recognition of a particular achievement for the creative use of concrete. The 2009 award goes to internationally renowned artist Jaume Plensa for his design of 'Dream', a magnificent 20m high concrete sculpture of a girl's head with her eyes closed, in a dream-like state, which now stands on the site of a former colliery in St Helens. The Award was presented to Jaume Plensa on Thursday 1 October 2009 at the Garry Weston Library, Southwark Cathedral.



Jaume Plensa with a model of 'Dream'



Jaume Plensa with Martin Clarke, Chief Executive of British Precast and Garry McBride of Evans Concrete, the company that played the lead role in turning Dream into reality

Dream has already attracted much acclaim from the art world and has featured in Channel 4's Big Art programme. For further information contact: catleggatt@geminiprmarketing.com

Eva Rothschild in Conversation

Tate Britain Auditorium, Tuesday 6 October 2009, 18.30–20.00

This year's Duveens Commission is Eva Rothschild's Cold Corners 2009, which fills the entire space of Tate Britain's long central galleries with a twisting, sequential line of 26 triangles. Rothschild talks to curator, writer and lecturer Andrea Schlieker about her investigation of objects that achieve a powerful presence with minimum materials.

£7 (£5 concessions), booking recommended
Price includes drinks afterwards
For tickets, book online or telephone: 0207 887 8888

Book Launch

St. Ethelburger's Centre, Thursday 24th September 2009, 19.15 - 21.00

This Is Not A Gateway produce an annual publication Critical Cities: Ideas, Knowledge and Agitation from Emerging Urbanists. While cities are expanding, 'gateway's' into official discourses have narrowed. In response, the contributions to this anthology prise open the urban field, making its complexities explicit, and allowing new and divergent ideas, practices and sites of knowledge to surface. Collectively they suggest the need for, and potential of, a transformation in our

approaches to new urban realities, through a timely injection of optimism, creativity, rigour and collaboration.

Critical Cities: Ideas, Knowledge and Agitation is the first in a series of books produced by urban platform This Is Not A Gateway, in association with independent publisher Myrdle Court Press. It brings together a collection of critical papers, visual essays, transcripts of recorded conversations and actions by emerging urbanists. The publication draws its contributors from a wide variety of fields, including law, architecture, film, community organising, art and academia.

All welcome. RSVP - coordinators@thisisnotagateway.net

For more information, go to: <http://thisisnotagateway.squarespace.com/>
