

Artistic Inspiration:

Creative Initiatives. What motivates an artist to do what they do?

Factors of Motivation in the Arts.

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## Introduction

When looking at various pieces of art by different artists, art that might be of a common genre or theme, it might be easy to see or perceive the similarities. For example, with abstract figurative sculptures, you might notice the lack of detail or simplification of the figure. Perhaps we see a common use of shapes, either organic or geometric, maybe it's the use of line or how they use different materials and techniques. Either way, different artists can share similarities between different works, but that does not mean they are the same. Apart from the obvious differences in media or materials used, either with the same artist or in a group of artists, it is their philosophy or approach to making art that I will explore here. What influences or motivates them as they work on and create their sculptures?

Within this paper, we will discover what motivates individual artists, then compare these findings looking for similarities. I believe that discovering common approaches and motivations used in making art by successful artists can be useful for any individual who wishes to make art of any kind. My approach to this question will come from my earliest teachings and influences and will focus on artists whose work deals with the abstraction of the human figure. I'll research the first artists I studied from my earliest educational experiences, artists like Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, who have been inspirational to my work. I will also look at and learn about some new contemporary [PBI] artists from my current educational experiences, like Stephen Fitz-Gerald and Jeremy Guy. These are artists I choose because of the style of their work, which I found fascinating or very similar to my own work. I also picked a few of these contemporary artists because of the materials they used, some of which I am very interested in using myself. The purpose of the literature review is to read and learn as much as possible about these artists and their influences and to share those findings with the reader.

## Literature Review

### Henry Moore

I would like to start with the artist that has most inspired and influenced me, Henry Moore. Moore was born the son of a miner outside of Yorkshire, England in 1898. He went on to revolutionize modern sculpture with his pierced, reclining female figures, his infusion of diverse influences like tribal sculptures, Renaissance art and natural forms into a powerful personal style (Gibson p44).

After his local primary school, Moore received a scholarship to secondary school where he discovered the work of Michelangelo and became interested in sculpture (O'Reilly p7). Henry Moore's long-time art teacher, Alice Gostick, was an important inspiration to him before and after World War I, when he returned from the army. She encouraged him to pursue a career in art and found a grant for people whose education had been interrupted by the war. It was with such a grant that Moore entered the Leeds School of Art in England (O'Reilly p8). After a year of studying art at Leeds, he announced that he wanted to be a sculptor and was so insistent that the school set up a sculpture department with him as the only student (O'Reilly p8).

In 1921, Henry Moore won another scholarship to study sculpture at the Royal College of Art in London, England. It was during the first few years of study at the college when Moore started to break from the traditional styles and started to develop his own style. Most art school training was based on studying Classical and Renaissance art and students were to copy classical sculptures. However, Moore wanted to break away from tradition and carve directly into the stone with hammer and chisel (O'Reilly p9). Henry Moore was at the Royal College of Art in London from 1921 until 1925. The greatest influence on him there, and his earliest sculptures, was the work he studied in English and European museums, in particular the classical, pre-classical, African and Pre-Columbian art. It was also during these years that Moore developed a principle he would use throughout his life, 'Truth to Materials'. He believed that stone or wood should look like stone or wood and not flesh. This exploration of other materials in his sculptures also influenced his work, which can be seen more readily in his wood figures as he strived to discover and follow the grain of the wood as he carved (Arneson p353).

After the 1930's, his work became more influenced by Surrealist work, most notably that of Pablo Picasso, and he began to explore the potential of other materials such as bronze. Although Moore agreed with some of the Surrealist ideas, he was never really totally associated with them. He would pick and choose aspects of the movement, like imagination and inventiveness, but preferred to control how his sculptures looked instead of letting his subconscious mind take over (O'Reilly p20). Also during the 1930's, as Moore's work became more abstract, he started using voids more as a way to open up certain masses and create different groupings, but he also looked at various kinds of space relationships. This began a continuing theme in his sculptural work; using the tension between void and solid and of forms enclosed within other forms. This interest in spatial problems led Moore in the 40's and 50's to explore greater uses of bronze and other metals and a way to enlarge the negative space of figures (Arneson p353).

It is later in his life, after becoming well known in the art world and after much study and exposure to other artists, exploration of materials and techniques that his influences shifted some. His primary inspiration was still the human figure, but he began to make more connections in his work to the natural landscape; bones and pebbles found on casual walks around his home, as well as human features and shells. He often found himself exploring the principles of form and rhythm in his study of these natural objects. His work also began to focus on spatial relationships, or negative space, and its relation to positive space (Gardner p9). Other tools that Henry Moore used quite often in his work are sketching and the maquette. A maquette is a small model of an idea and Moore used these quite extensively as he developed his sculptures. He liked being able to study the idea of his forms on a smaller scale so that he could hold it in his hand and move it around to see all sides, while outside in the natural light, versus having to move himself around large sculptures. He quite often made several maquettes of an idea before becoming satisfied enough to make his final piece (Gardner p17). Later works were also made to be outside and monumental, displayed with the landscape surrounding it. Moore believed the work needed to be outside for the natural light to have its full effect through curves and hollow shapes that incorporated the countryside into the work (Weidemann p93).

## Barbara Hepworth

Barbara Hepworth was born in Wakefield, Yorkshire in 1903. Her father was a county engineer and believed in giving his daughter his time and a good education (Bradley p7). Because of her early fascination with natural forms, texture, drawing and modeling, Hepworth decided at 15 to become a sculptor. With her family's approval and support, she enrolled and received a scholarship at the Leeds School of Art, where she would become good friends with fellow sculptor Henry Moore (Britannica p1).

After studying at the Leeds School of Art for two years, Hepworth went on to the Royal College of Art in London, England from 1921 until 1924. Important early influences on her then were the works of Jean Arp and Constantin Brancusi, as well as her friend Henry Moore (Funk & Wagnalls p1). It was in the mid 1920's that Barbara Hepworth met her first husband, sculptor John Skeaping. They lived and worked in London and exhibited their own work at their studio. In 1928 they moved to Hamstead where Hepworth gave birth to her first son a year later. In 1931, Hepworth parted with husband John Skeaping. Barbara Hepworth would meet her second husband and partner for the next 20 years, Ben Nicholson, while showing her work at a joint exhibit in 1933 (Bradley p9).

Barbara Hepworth's earliest works involving sculpture were based on the human figure and were naturalistic with simplified features. By the early 30's, her work had become more abstract, and she focused on using simple elemental forms like the oval. Her work at this time included natural-looking biomorphic shapes of natural materials and severe, geometric pieces with straight edges and immaculate surfaces (Britannica p1). The idea of piercing a piece first occurred in 1931 and most of her work from then on included area voids that were sometimes painted. Hepworth liked the seemingly endless options available to altering a shape by the addition of a void and passed this interest on to Henry Moore (Funk & Wagnalls p1).

When Barbara Hepworth returned to work after giving birth to triplets in 1934, her work had become totally abstract, abandoning all naturalism, focusing more on space, size, texture and weight, as well as the tensions between forms (Bradley p11). It was during the period of the 30's and 40's that Hepworth explored more of the simplified forms, concentrating on the problem of contrast between mass and space. Her forms became

more open and perforated, enough so that the interior negative space became as important as the solid, positive mass surrounding it. It was in the 40's that Hepworth started defining her voids and negative spaces more by stretching fitted wire or strings across them (Britannica p1).

Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson were divorced after 30 years of marriage in 1951. Shortly after the divorce, Hepworth's oldest son died unexpectedly in a plane crash and the work she produced at this time returned to her earlier naturalistic expression on the human figure, but with a darker more brooding sense (Bradley p14). The works of Barbara Hepworth were produced mostly in various stone and wood, but in the late 1950's she began to experiment with metal and most of her work after that time would be cast in bronze (Modern Arts p252).

Before her death at the age of 72 (Bradley p 15), Barbara Hepworth would show us through her career as an artist, that there have been three strong influences and inspirations on her work. The first and foremost was the human form and the landscape, but also the one in relation to the other. The work she produced later in life would come to deviate from the human figure and landscape and become more purely visual in conception (Modern Arts p 255). Her second influence was an avid interest in ovals and how voids or negative space could influence the positive space. She felt that carving and piercing her forms opened them up to a variety of curves that could change with the original contours of her piece and with the addition of negative space to that material (Modern Arts p254). Her use of materials, and third inspiration, was one unusual aspect of Barbara Hepworth's work and her approach to beginning a piece. Unlike some artist who might have a general idea for a form as they begin their work, she knew exactly what she wanted to make from the beginning and searched for just the right material to bring that idea to life. Her ideas were not totally complete, as she allowed the material to aid her as she worked. Giving the material in some sense, its own voice in what it was to become. She would also sometimes live with blocks of stone or wood for years, before finally realizing the potential form within that material. Other times she would come across some raw material and know instinctively which if her ideas would be best suited for it (Modern Arts p254).

## Alexander Archipenko

Alexander Archipenko was born in the Russian city of Kiev in 1887 and died at the age of 77 in New York City in 1964 (Britannica p1). His father was an engineer and inventor, which led to a lifelong fascination by his son for creating forms. While his father thought of an invention as a mechanical problem, Archipenko saw the aesthetics of the assembly of the individual pieces and forms (Time p36).

After studying in Kiev, where he became a trained engineer and a successful sculptor, he moved to Paris in 1908. As an artist in Paris, he left his formal training behind and became more involved with radical art groups like the Cubist (Britannica p1). Because of the influence of artists like Picasso and Braque, Archipenko began to explore the association between interlocking voids and solids and between concave and convex surfaces. This exploration of surfaces and forms led to Alexander Archipenko developing a sculptural equivalent to the Cubist paintings (Britannica p1).

In 1923 he settled in the U.S. where he continued to explore Cubism in sculpture. His painted sculptures, which consisted of many-colored shapes arranged upon a flat plane, were considered pioneer works (Time p36). He boldly used glass, wood, clay, metal or mother-of-pearl to achieve new effects, often allowing the materials to control their final destinations. He also often carved holes in his sculptures to turn space inside out and tried making concave what nature made convex. Archipenko was also one of the first artists to use color in his sculptures as a way to add dimension (Time p36).

Looking back at the research on Moore, Hepworth and Archipenko, I am happy and excited to find that I can still learn and be inspired from them again. My current educational experiences have lead me to become familiar with more contemporary artists, like Wouttrina De Raad and Scott Stoll. My research on motivation and inspiration with these current artists and others will hopefully provide more insights from different points of views, possibly include using alternative or newer materials or different thoughts on the use of form and space. The artists I have chosen to research here, I have chosen for a number of reasons. Some because of the style of their work, how they integrate the human form into their work, which appeals and connects with me. I have also found myself drawn

to some artists because of their use of materials and the techniques they used and to others by their use of positive and negative space. As I moved into studying contemporary artists, I have found the amount of research material is limited primarily to each artist's individual websites. I believe this is due to possibly a smaller body of work and even perhaps to being lesser known than some other contemporary artists. I feel that to gather any more definite information about their philosophies, inspiration or work processes would require direct contact, something I was not prepared for nor had the time for while writing this paper. However, since these are the artists I chose to include in my research, I plan and hope to do just that as the scope of my research and work broadens and continues.

### Stephen Fitz-Gerald

North California artist Stephen Fitz-Gerald works in many different media and for many different purposes. His work ranges from life-sized figurative sculptures, abstract sculptures, photography, poetry, fiction, musical compositions and functional pieces for the home like jewelry, furniture and site specific work of sculptures. Overall, his work is derived from life, the sea and the natural environment. Fitz-Gerald feels for his work to be successful, it must satisfy an aesthetic that provokes the viewer to interact and engage on a personal level.

The greatest influence on his work was his father, also a sculptor, who was in return heavily influenced by Henry Moore. Stephen Fitz-Gerald's work has an organic nature to it, but he chooses to work mostly in a non-static material like metal and strives to show the warmth and fluidity of the idea and the hand that created it. His figurative works are stylized and use high-tech materials and construction techniques, but also represent and show an early exposure to the figurative works of the ancient Greek art ([sfitzgeraldfineart.com](http://sfitzgeraldfineart.com)).

### Scott Stoll

American artist Scott Stoll lives and works in Boston, Massachusetts. He has a career in the health and human services and also in sculpture. The range of media he uses includes wood, ceramics, limestone, mixed media, and cast bronze.

Stoll believes there is for all of us, a powerful attraction for certain forms that evolve in nature, whether in bones, shells or stones. He feels this attraction can draw us into a relationship with the work where the viewer can engage with the form or go as far as becoming the line, curve, or sharp edge and feel the harmony or tension of mass and balance.

An important part of his work lies in the study of objects found on the beach near his home. The challenge he finds is in conveying some of the inherent energy or vitality from the object observed into the final sculpture. Some of the pieces resemble the objects from which they were inspired, while some take on the aspects of the human figure, landscapes or unique creature species ([stollsculpture.com](http://stollsculpture.com)).

### Jeremy Guy

English born artist Jeremy Guy has fifteen years' experience in sculpting and holds a degree in product design from Leeds University in London. He moved to Ontario Canada in 2007 where he currently lives and works.

Guy was always been fascinated by all things stone, like an unusual pebble or shell, and this has carried over into his professional career as an artist. Jeremy Guy describes his work as the transformation between states of being, whether between curves and edges, femininity and masculinity, strength and fragility or mass and void. Inspiration might come from anything like a worn rock, fluids mixing together or his own emotions. Even though his work is essentially abstract and not based on the human form, he does realize that a number of his pieces do allow themselves to be recognized as having the human figure as a descriptive element. He sees his work as being elemental and timeless in their simplicity and as a way to enhance the environment, either public or private

All of Jeremy Guy's work is made of a composite material or engineered stone. The material is a combination of marble and/or granite mixed with a polyester resin as a bonding agent in a 90/10 ratio. Smaller pieces are cast in fiberglass molds, allowing for multiple castings. Larger pieces are more unique or one-of-a-kind and are made by coating a fiberglass armature with the composite material to at least an inch in thickness. The

pieces are then ground smooth and diamond polished to reveal and enhance the stone texture ([jeremy-guy.com](http://jeremy-guy.com)).

### Wouttrina "Riana" De Raad

Wouttrina De Raad was born of Dutch heritage but grew up on a coffee and rubber plantation in the Indonesian jungle and is currently living on an old dairy farmstead outside of River Falls, Wisconsin. She has been a working artist in various media since 1969, when she gave up the comfort of a full-time job to pursue her interest in sculpture and teaching workshops in 1995. Her current work is in life-size concrete mosaic statues done in the American folk art tradition or style.

De Raad's inspiration comes from her past, both in customs and a rich culture, as well as her experience living on a farm. Riana's love for the country and gardening has led her to create outdoor environments or rooms with concrete furniture and sculptures. Some of her work lights up and creates paths or walkways to fountains, animals, human-shaped birdhouses or benches that help to transport visitors to a magical place.

Beauty, function and longevity are Riana's main objectives, but she wants her work to provoke imagination and to look old, as if it has been in place for many years. Her work is done with two layers of metal mesh for strength, followed by one to two layers of concrete. To make the mosaics, she uses pottery shards, glass, pebbles and various found objects that are applied with a tile adhesive and finished with grout ([concretemosaicsculptures.com](http://concretemosaicsculptures.com)).

### Ruth Burink

Ruth Burink is an abstract figurative artist living in Monument, Colorado. Her work is done primarily in stone and bronze and she describes her work as nature centered and spiritual in concept. Like Barbara Hepworth, she likes to study her material and choose the best piece to fit her idea. This way she is able to reveal a form within her material, letting the material play its role, allowing the form to develop more naturally. Ruth Burink also feels that her carvings help to keep her centered and in the present. Her belief is that the

stone represents the past, her carving and working on the stone is the present and the final sculpture is the future. She strives to capture grace and beauty in all her work through careful design and finish work (burinksculpture.com).

In this section, we learned as much about each of the different artists as possible. While researching Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Alexander Archipenko, I was able to find quite a bit of information about each of them through the course of their lives. The research included information from their births, their schooling and influences in their work. In contrast, I found very little information in my research about the contemporary artists represented here. Because these artists are not as well-known, I was limited to what I could discover on their websites. I believe to learn more about them, a person would need to contact them directly, which was something I was not prepared to do while doing this research.

### Methodology

The following is a review of the material researched from the Literature Review section. Key or important factors and information about the formation of these individuals as people and artists and the influences and motivations behind their work will be restated as a way to focus on important and key information and findings. All of these artists are successful in their own ways and any comparison of their education, influences and philosophies might reveal some possible similarities. Is it possible these similarities are intended or accidental, conscious or unconscious decisions about how to explore their media and ideas? I believe anything discovered through such comparisons could lead to further insight, with more knowledge gained through discovery and additional research, which would aid any artists in creating more meaningful work.

### Henry Moore

Henry Moore was first inspired to create and become a sculptor, after viewing works by Michelangelo. One of the first true supporters of this dream was an art teacher by

the name of Alice Gostick, who encouraged him to follow his dream and study sculpture. When Henry Moore returned from serving in World War I, Alice Gostick helped his education and dream of becoming a sculptor by finding a grant for returning vets. With the help of that grant, Moore first studied art at the Leeds School of Art and later went on to study at the Royal College of Art in London.

It was at the Royal College of Art that Moore became frustrated or bored with the traditional methods of learning sculpture and started to create his own style. The preferred method of teaching sculpture at that time was to study Classical and Renaissance art and to copy those works. Moore did not agree with this method and started to explore carving directly into the stone with hammer and chisel.

The first influence on his style of carving at this time was the work of pre-classical or primitive art, of Africa and Columbia. He liked the simplicity of the figures and the abstract way they were represented. During this same period, Moore was introduced to the idea of 'Truth to Materials', where an artist tries to stay true to the materials they are using instead of making them look like something else. In other words, stone or wood should look like stone or wood and not flesh. Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth too, were known to meticulously follow the grain of the wood when carving, almost to the point that the wood itself dictated what shape it would take. The concept of 'Truth to Materials' was embraced by many Modernists working at this time, as another way to reject the past teachings and ways that art was produced.

Other influences on his work were Surrealist artists like Pablo Picasso and the use of other materials like bronze. With the Surrealists movement, Moore liked their ideas behind imagination and inventiveness, but did not want to take it as far as some did and allow his subconscious to take over. He instead preferred to have some control over how his figures looked when finished. With these influences and his work becoming more abstract, Henry Moore also found more interest in the void and its relationship to positive space. A void is negative space or empty air, surrounded by positive space or solid material. Moore started to use the void more as a way to open up solid masses and even as a way to link spaces together, both positive and negative. There was also the relationship between positive and negative space and how they can affect each other or create a sense of tension or balance. With this increased use of negative space, Moore found materials like bronze more suitable

as it allowed him to increase the size of the negative space without compromising the strength or integrity of the material.

After becoming well known in the art world and exploring the possibilities of other materials, Henry Moore's influences shifted a little. He was still inspired by the human figure, but started to make more connections in his work to the natural landscape and how his sculptures fit or were related to them. He would become inspired by stones, pebbles, shells or bones he found while on walks around his home, and found himself exploring the principles of form and rhythm in these natural objects and their connections to the human figure. Moore also started to use maquettes more often, which are small models of larger ideas, and would often make several maquettes of one piece in order to study it in his hand and move it around to see it from all sides. Moore also liked to bring them into the light outside to see how the natural light worked with the forms. Later work were also made to be outside and monumental, to be displayed with the landscape surrounding them and to allow the natural light to have its full effect through curves and hollow shapes that reflected the countryside.

### Barbara Hepworth

From an early age, Barbara Hepworth had a fascination with natural forms, texture, drawing and modeling and decided to become a sculptor at the age of 15. With the approval and support of her family, she received a scholarship to study at the Leeds School of Art. From there she went on to study at the Royal College of Art in London, where the early influences on her were the works of Jean Arp, Constantin Brancusi and her friend Henry Moore.

Her earliest works were based on the human figure, were naturalistic and with simple features. Barbara Hepworth's work would evolve to become more abstract and focusing on more elemental forms like the oval. She would combine and use natural-looking biomorphic shapes with geometric edges and precise surfaces and treatments. The idea of the void playing a major role in sculptures first occurred to Hepworth during this productive period in the 30's, an idea she has passed to countless artists' sense.

Barbara Hepworth's later work after became totally abstract with no sense of naturalism at all. In its place was a more concentrated focus on space, size, texture and weight along with a tension between forms. This study of tensions extended into positive and negative space, with more perforated forms, negative space becoming as important as positive space and voids stretched by wire or strings.

The three strongest influences on her career will continue to be the human form and the landscape and the relation of one to the other, her use of ovals and her play with positive and negative space and voids and her strong conviction to materials and their use. Barbara Hepworth with start by knowing exactly what she wanted to make, then search for just the right material to make it with, sometimes searching for years to find it. She also felt strongly about allowing the material to have a voice or influence on how any final shapes or sculptures would be completed. She would also live with blocks of stone with wood for many years before realizing its potential. The majority of Barbara Hepworth's later works were cast in bronze where she continued to explore the use of space, patina's and texture.

### Alexander Archipenko

Alexander Archipenko's engineer and inventor father led him to a lifelong fascination for creating forms. In the solutions to mechanical problems by his father, Alexander Archipenko found beauty and wonder in the assembly of the individual pieces, shapes and forms.

After studying and becoming a sculptor, Alexander Archipenko would move to Paris and become influenced by other artist and movements like Pablo Picasso and the Cubists. He would develop a truly Cubist style of sculpture with his exploration of interlocking voids and solids and his use and interplay between concave and convex surfaces. This exploration of Cubism in sculpture would continue in Alexander Archipenko's work as he arranged shapes upon a flat plane, or boldly used different and new materials to achieve new effects, like with mother-of-pearl. He would also allow the materials to have some control over their final destinations and would introduce voids into his work to turn space inside out and was also one of the first artists to use color in his sculptures as a way to add dimension.

### Stephen Fitz-Gerald

The greatest personal influence on the work Stephen Fitz-Gerald would be his father, who was also a sculptor and influenced by Henry Moore. Fitz-Gerald's work has an organic nature to it, while choosing to work mostly in the non-static media of metal and attempting to show warmth and fluidity behind the hand that created it. He does work in many different media and for different purposes, creating functional pieces for the home like jewelry and furniture to abstract sculptures and site-specific works of sculpture. His figurative works are stylized and use high-tech materials and construction techniques, but also represent an exposure to traditional Greek figurative works.

### Scott Stoll

Boston artist Scott Stoll also works in a wide range of media, including wood, ceramics, limestone, mixed media and cast bronze. Stoll believes that all of us have a powerful attraction to certain forms that evolve in nature, like bones, shells or stones. This attraction helps to engage us in the work, becoming the line, edge or curve and feeling the tension between masses or shapes.

An important part of his work is the study of natural objects found near the beach and on walks near his home. Stoll challenges himself to convey some of the inherent form into his final sculptures, which might resemble the original form, the human figure, the landscape or something entirely unique and unexpected.

### Jeremy Guy

Jeremy Guy has always been fascinated by all things stone and earned a degree in product design from Leeds University in London. He describes his work as the transformation between stages of being, like between curves and edges, femininity and masculinity or mass and void. Inspiration might come from anything like a worn rock, fluids mixing together or his own emotions.

### Wouttrina “Riana” De Raad

Local artist Wouttrina De Raad, or Riana, was born of Dutch heritage and grew up in the Indonesian jungle on a rubber plantation. She works in various media and lives on an old dairy farmstead outside of River Falls, WI. Her current work is in life-size concrete mosaic statues done in the American folk art tradition or style. De Raad’s inspiration comes from her past customs and cultures to her experiences living on a farm. Her love for country and gardening led to outdoor environments with sculptures, concrete furniture and lighted pathways. The main objectives of De Raad’s work are beauty, function and longevity, but she also wants it to provoke imagination and look as if it’s always been there.

### Ruth Burink

Ruth Burink works primarily in stone and bronze and describes her work as nature centered and spiritual in concept. Burink likes to study her material and choose the best piece to fit her idea. This way she is able to reveal a form within her material, allowing the form to develop more naturally. Ruth Burink also believes that the stone represents the past, her carving and working on the stone is the present and the final sculpture is the future. She strives to capture grace and beauty in all her work through careful design and finish work.

### Results/Findings

After reading this Mythology and seeing just that information which was relevant to the personal and professional development of each artists, we begin to see some similarities. We can review these similarities by looking at what we have learned about their early life before schooling, what formal education they may have had and what key motivators and inspirations are associated with their work as sculptors of figurative work. It is my belief these findings will be greatly beneficial to my future study and inspiration as an artist, as well as anyone else.

The first artists we know to have an early interest in the arts was Henry Moore, who wanted to become a sculptor after viewing the works of Michelangelo. Moore also had the support of art teacher Alice Gostick. Barbara Hepworth had an early fascination with natural forms and also decided to become a sculptor at an early age and had the support of her family. The inventor and engineer father that Alexander Archipenko grew up with gave him a lifelong fascination with creating forms. Stephen Fitz-Gerald is the only of our contemporary artists who mentions any early influence on him and that was his father, who was also a sculptor and heavily influenced by Henry Moore.

From the Literature Review, we know that both Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth studied art at Leeds School of Art and at the Royal College of Art in London. Archipenko first studied in Kiev to become an engineer and sculptor before moving to Paris and leaving his formal training. Again, with our contemporary artists we find that only Jeremy Guy mentions any formal education, which is a product design degree from Leeds in London. We discover here that all three of our modern artists had an early fascination with art, had the support of family or friends and went on to study art also. The same can not be said for our contemporary artists due to a lack of breadth to the information available for these particular contemporary artists, which does not provide specific information regarding early influences and education, but that is something I believe was there to a degree in each of them. However, we do know that Stephen Fitz-Gerald was influenced by his father early on and Jeremy Guy formally studied design. Now we will look at the many things that inspire these individuals as artists. The following paragraphs will list those inspirations by artists, allowing us to more easily see the similarities and connections.

The earliest influences on Henry Moore were the works of pre-classical, African and Pre-Columbian art. Another early influence, one used throughout his career, is the concept of truth to materials. Moore had also been influenced by Surrealists like Pablo Picasso and the exploration of other materials like bronze. His interested in voids lead to a lifelong study on spatial relationships, exploring the tension between void and solid and forms enclosed within other forms. Later in his life, Moore began making more connections to the natural landscape and natural objects like stones, pebbles and bones found on walks, and often studied the principles of form and rhythm in these objects. His later works also

became monumental and were meant to be outside, displayed and incorporated into the countryside.

Barbara Hepworth's earliest works were influenced by the human form and were naturalistic with simplified features. As her work grew toward abstraction, she focused on more elemental forms like the oval and natural materials, also believing in staying true to the materials. Hepworth's later works became more influenced by the void and the relationships it could create between forms and space. She also explored size texture and weight as well as the problems or contrast between mass and space and defining her voids.

Alexander Archipenko's work is probably most influenced by his fascination with individual pieces and forms, seen in his development of a Cubist style of sculpture. He also explored the association between interlocking voids and solids and between concave and convex forms, turning space inside out. Archipenko also explored the use of different materials, allowing them to give voice to their final destinations.

Stephen Fitz-Gerald also works in a variety of media but prefers to work in metal and strives to show the fluidity of the material and the hand that created it. His figurative works are done in metal, are very stylized and use high-tech materials and techniques, but still reflect an early exposure and influence to Greek art. Overall, his work is inspired from life, the sea and his natural surroundings and environment and has a very organic nature to it.

Scott Stoll is another artist who works in a variety of media and believes there is in all of us a powerful attraction to forms that evolve from nature. Therefore, an important part of his work is the study of natural objects he has found and conveying some of that inherent energy from the object back into the final sculpture. He wants the viewers of his work to become engaged with it, maybe going so far as becoming one with a line or edge or feeling the harmony or tension between masses.

Jeremy Guy's greatest influence is anything stone, or natural objects like rocks, pebbles or shells. He describes his work as a transformation between states of being, like between curves and edges, strength and fragility and mass and void. Inspiration can come from anything like a worn rock, fluids mixing together or his own emotions. Guy also sees his work as being elemental and timeless in its simplicity and as a vehicle to enhance its environment.

The life-size concrete mosaic work of Wouttrina De Raad are done in an American folk art style and are inspired by her past cultures and customs, as well as her experiences living on an old farmstead. She also has a love of the countryside and gardening which inspire her to create outside environments. De Raad strives for her work to have beauty, function and longevity. She wants her work to not only last a long time, but to also look like it has always been a part of its environment.

Ruth Burink describes her figurative work in stone and bronze and nature centered and spiritual in concept. She also believe in truth to materials and letting the materials influence the final outcome of the sculpture. Burink tries to capture grace and beauty in all her work through careful design and finish work.

Looking back on this materials, we see all of these artists are first inspired by the human figure, with the exception of Jeremy Guy, who admits that his simplified and elemental work often does resemble the human form. All of these artists have also worked in and explored a number of different materials and the possibilities they offer. We also see the concept of 'Truth to Materials' being an important influence on Moore, Hepworth, Fitzgerald, Guy and Burink. There are a few examples of other movements in art influencing their work, like the Surrealists influenced Moore and the Cubists heavily influenced Archipenko. The use of the void and spatial relationships were also an important influence on the works of Moore, Hepworth, Archipenko, Stoll and Guy. These artists also worked on simplified figures that focused on the elements or principles of art, like line or rhythm, and how they might be stressed in their work. They also studied relationships between size, shape, textures and masses. A good number of our artists were also inspired by nature and natural objects they might have discovered, as well as their environment and the relationship of their work to that environment and landscape.

### Conclusion

Looking back at what inspires and influences these different artists, I was surprised to see as many similarities as we did. All of our modern artists showed an early interest in art and sculpting and had some kind of support from either teachers or family. Each of them also went on to study art formally in school but also throughout their careers in their

exploration of concepts and materials. Unfortunately, the research found here did not show that similarity with our contemporary artists. However, I believe that if there were more in-depth research material available on each of the contemporary artists here, we would find similar interest in art from an early age and support of one kind or another as well as other similarities apart from the ones we did find.

One of the similarities we did discover among all of these individual artists was their belief and use of the concept of 'Truth to Materials', a concept I was familiar with but one I did not fully understand or consider in depth until now. We know that many Modern artists used or practiced this concept as a way of breaking from traditional teachings and to create works that were new or different. For artists like Moore, Hepworth, Burink and many others, the concept of truth to materials allows the material to play a more fundamental and major role in the work by giving the material a voice in the final outcome of their sculptures or whatever it is being made. I feel allowing the material to have a more direct impact of the final sculpture can only lead to more possibilities with that sculpture.

Another common practice was that many of these artists used was a range of materials in their work that explored the possibilities of each while expanding their own options in trying new materials. For example, both Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth used bronze as a way of creating works that allowed for more emphasis on the voids due to the strength of the material. My own journey through the MSE program at UWRF has led me to explore and use many new and different materials. The use of new materials has allowed me and other artists to do new and different things with their art. I have found it is also another way to explore and learn about different techniques that might carry over into other projects and ideas. I choose to research Jeremy Guy for this paper because I was very interested in his use of material. All of his work is done with engineered stone, which he makes himself using a combination of stone materials and epoxy. The pieces are cast into molds then sanded and polished to give them a high gloss finish. This is a process I definitely wish to learn more about and will hopefully find an opportunity to use on my own work.

All of these artists put conscious effort into different relationships within and between the figures. These relationships might be between shapes, lines or spaces, both positive and negative, as well as unthought-of relationships to our landscape or

environment. Most of these artists also explored the possibilities of voids or negative space and its influence on the positive space. Even forcing the idea that the negative space is just as important as the positive space. In my own work, the voids have never played such an important role and the idea of doing that seems to have endless possibilities.

We have also discovered that a number of these artists also look to find natural objects for their inspiration, and that at times it is the study of the elements and principles of art found in these objects and their relationship to human forms that help to influence their sculptures. This is just one example of the discovery of a similarity between these artists that should lead to further study and exploration. My work has always been inspired by thoughts and ideas and worked out in sketches. It is refreshing to see that inspiration can come from just about anywhere.

So how can this research be useful to myself or any other artists? For many years, my own work has been very simplified, consisting of basic shapes, lines and voids. My figures have always been developed in sketches, sometimes starting from an idea about how something could look or from a thought centered on my children or family. Looking at all of this research and what motivates these artists has inspired me to try and experiment with different ways to create my abstracted figures. For example, I had never really thought about the conscious effort to focus on simple elements or principle of either art found in the human form or our environment as inspiration, or to be inspired by a pebble or bone found on the ground. The idea of letting the wood or material dictate how something will turn out is both exciting and slightly scary at the same time. I feel there are many new possibilities here that I, or anyone else, can use in their work.

I have discovered that doing this research has proven more than useful in that I have learned more and again from artists I had known before, but I have also learned from newer and unfamiliar names. Creativity comes in many forms and places. It can be inspired by the human figure or landscape or our relationships to them. It can be reflective of the objects around us, and found in simple relationships between lines or shapes. Inspiration for ideas can come from materials, or have to wait for the right materials to come along, and these materials can also influence their final appearance. Creativity, inspiration and motivation all come from many different places, like love or nature, the humane form or sea shells, but it has to start and be driven from within.

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