

OSBORNE SAMUEL

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

HENRY MOORE (1898-1986)



Working Model for Reclining Figure: Bone Skirt, 1979

Bronze
69 (W) cms
(0.00 x 27.12 in)
P.O.A.

From the edition of 9
Ref:LH5/723

Provenance: Private Collection, London

The classic sculpture Reclining Figure - Bone Skirt, is one of Moore's most recognisable and iconic figures. This is the working model for a marble sculpture which was owned by his daughter Mary and was subsequently reworked as a monumental carving in travertine marble dating from 1978. At the time Moore was spending the summers at a villa he had built near the Carrara quarries in Italy. Moore observed in 1931: "The human figure is what interests me deeply, but I have found principles of form and rhythm from the study of natural objects such as

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pebbles, rocks, bones, trees, plants ... bones have marvellous structural strength and hard tenseness of form, subtle transition of one shape into the next..."

Moore returned again and again to the reclining figure, initially inspired by the early Mexican Chacmool sculptures he saw at the British Museum in the 1920s. The subject re-occurs throughout his career with infinite variations of form and line, here the use of drapery to accentuate the shape and continuous line of the body.

I want to be quite free of having to find a 'reason' for doing the Reclining Figures, and freer still of having to find a 'meaning' for them. The vital thing for an artist is to have a subject that allows to try out all kinds of formal ideas - things that he doesn't yet know about for certain but wants to experiment with, as C