

the building that he thought were reasonable or necessary. "I suppose they take that to say that everything that is put there is totally with my approval, which is of course not so at all," he rejoins.

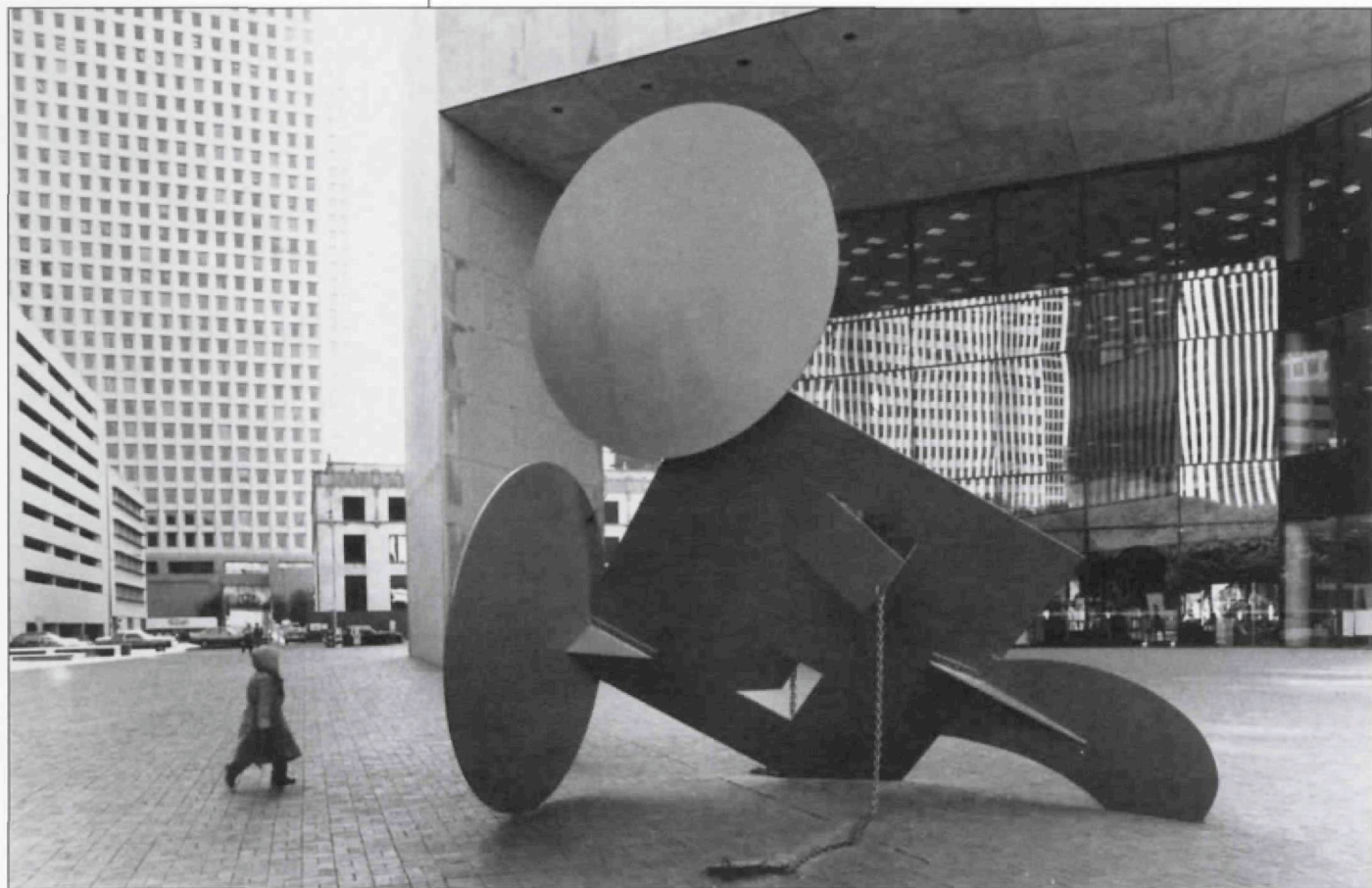
For many architects, Johansen's Mummies has been a compelling and influential source, occupying a special niche in the history of 1960s design. Is it inconceivable that in 50 years' time there will be a movement to restore the Mummies' original appearance? The case of the Mummies and the recent furor over the now-canceled Kimbell Art Museum addition underscores the need for landmark recognition of significant buildings that are fewer than 50 years old by the National Register. The arts council would do well to consider during its renovation that this intervention is but the beginning of a new act in the continuing history of this much-loved and much-maligned building.

The vulnerability of monuments of modern architecture is an issue that has recently been addressed in Europe at the inaugural conference of Docomomo, held in September in The Netherlands; this European pressure group was formed to grapple with the problems of documentation and conservation of important modern buildings. The need for a similar organization in the United States is all too apparent. If and when it is formed, perhaps its first conference could be held in Oklahoma City.<sup>28</sup> ■

Many thanks to the people who provided visual materials or other special assistance with this article: Drexel Turner, John Johansen, Karen Merrick, Liz Eickman, and Margaret Culbertson.

#### Notes

- Mary Jo Nelson, "His Life Plethora of Crises, Defeats, Challenges, Triumphs," *Sunday Oklahoman*, 18 April 1982, news section. Mummies stage designer David Hays founded the National Theater for the Deaf in 1967 in Waterford, Connecticut, and Scism joined him as a member of its staff. Scism died in 1986 of cancer.
- Mary Jo Nelson, "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," *Sunday Oklahoman*, 24 March 1985, real estate section. The Oklahoma chapter of the AIA did at least declare it as one of Oklahoma's ten best buildings in 1983. Mary Jo Nelson, "Architects Select State's 'Best' Buildings," *Sunday Oklahoman*, 16 October 1983, business section.
- The prototype for the program was the Ford Foundation's Program for Theater Design, a group of models for innovative theater proposals, including one by David Hays and Peter Blake, that was prepared and circulated as a traveling exhibition under the title *The Ideal Theater: Eight Concepts* by the American Federation of Arts, which also issued a catalogue under that title (New York, 1962).
- Robert Hughes, "Toward a New Slang," *Time*, 31 May 1971, p. 68.
- See "John M. Johansen Declares Himself," *Architectural Forum* 124 (January-February 1966), pp. 64-67, in which he compares his designs to contemporary developments in the arts. See also Abby Suckle, ed., *By Their Own Design* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1980), pp. 66-77, for his discussion of electronic circuitry and ad hocism. Another possible influence was Johansen's trip to the Gulf of Mexico in the 1960s to study the prefabricated Grand Isle island mine; interconnecting towers and bridges were subsequently proposed for New York in his 1966 "Leapfrog City" concept. See Johansen, "New Town," *Architectural Forum* 127 (September 1967), pp. 44-53. Johansen's explorations in the 1960s certainly paralleled those of the Metabolists, and he admired the work of Archigram (Hughes, "Toward a New Slang," p. 68).
- "Statement on the Oklahoma Theater Center," John M. Johansen to author, 28 September 1990.
- See Peter Blake, "The Mummies Theater," *Architectural Forum* 134 (March 1971), pp. 30-37. The Mummies was cited in Nikolaus Pevsner's *A History of Building Types* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976) and in Arthur Drexler's *Transformations in Modern Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1979). From 1970 to 1972 the Mummies was published in *Architectural Record*, *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, *L'Architettura*, *Architectural Design*, the *AIA Journal*, and *Casabella*. Johansen was recognized as one of 45 international "Great Builders of the 1960s" in 1970. See *Japan Architect*, no. 165 (July 1970), p. 67. For Johansen's comments on the Mummies, see his "The Mummies Theater: A Fragment Not a Building," *Architectural Forum* 129 (May 1968), pp. 64-69; "An Architecture for an Electronic Age," *American Scholar*, 1966.
- Hughes, "Toward a New Slang," p. 68.
- Blake, "The Mummies Theater," p. 35.
- "AIA Honor Awards," *AIA Journal* 57 (May 1972). See Mummies Theater, p. 34, and Alley Theater, p. 32. The Alley Theater received the Bartlett Award.
- "Theatre Center Completes Plans to Take Over Mummies," *Oklahoma Journal*, 28 May 1972.
- Blake, "The Mummies Theater," p. 33.
- Mary Jo Nelson, "Culture Zone Plan Will Assemble Many Arts Agencies Downtown," *Sunday Oklahoman*, 13 January 1985, business section.
- Mary Jo Nelson, "Old Buildings, History Disappear as City Gets New Look," *Sunday Oklahoman*, 7 July 1983, real estate section.
- John Pastier, "Something Else Altogether in Oklahoma City," *AIA Journal* 70 (August 1981), pp. 40-46.
- "The Twentieth Annual P/A Design Awards," *Progressive Architecture* 54 (January 1973), pp. 70-73.
- Mary Jo Nelson, "Urban Renewal Projects to Top \$1 Billion," *Sunday Oklahoman*, 30 November 1986.
- John Johansen, 75, is currently teaching a seminar at the Pratt Institute and is a critic in its graduate program. He lectures in the U.S. and abroad. He has retired from active practice, but he prefers to say that he has "graduated" into the investigation of purely conceptual design work. He describes this body of work as "experimental - using advanced technologies projected 40 or 50 years into the future." See John M. Johansen, "The New Modernity," *Architecture and Urbanism*, no. 228 (September 1989), pp. 47-58.
- Elliott & Associates' work has been published in several interiors magazines, and *Architecture* briefly cited the firm's work in May 1988 and August 1990, and reviewed a bank design in the October 1990 issue. See also *Architects of the United States of America, 1989-1990* (Melbourne, Australia: Images Publishing Group, 1989), pp. 52-53.
- It is not surprising that Johansen moved quickly. He has witnessed the demolition of two of his houses, one in New Canaan and one in Westport, Connecticut. See Susan R. Winget, "Donahue's Demolition," *Progressive Architecture*, September 1988, p. 24; see also *Progressive Architecture*, May 1962, pp. 181-86. The Mechanic Theater in Baltimore underwent a major modification of its thrust stage without Johansen's collaboration, and he later found himself to be the butt of a critique of the altered building. See Allen Freeman and Andrea O. Dean, "Evaluation: A Troubled Theater Anchors Baltimore's Downtown," *Architecture* 67 (February 1978), pp. 32-37.
- Mary Jo Nelson, "Arts Council Bows to Architect's Wishes," *Sunday Oklahoman*, 17 April 1988, business section.
- Andrea Oppenheimer Dean, "Renewing Our Modern Legacy," *Architecture* 79 (November 1990), p. 69.
- The combined compositional analogies of electronic circuitry and arteries derives from Johansen's interpretation of Marshall McLuhan's book *Understanding Media*, which states that with electronic communication "we have extended the central nervous system itself in a global embrace abolishing time and space." See Johansen, "John M. Johansen Declares Himself," *Architectural Forum* 124 (January-February 1966), p. 66.
- Nelson, "Arts Council Bows to Architect's Wishes."
- Architects of the United States of America, 1989-1990*, p. 53.
- "AIA Component Awards," *Architecture* 77 (May 1988), p. 82.
- Hughes, "Toward a New Slang," p. 68.
- Docomomo's first conference was attended by 170 participants from 20 countries. See John Allen, "Instruments for Icons?" *Architectural Review*, no. 1125 (November 1990), pp. 5, 9.



Claes Oldenburg,  
**Geometric Mouse X**, 1971.  
Central Library Building,  
Houston Public Library, 600  
McKinney.

## Why a Mouse?

### PUBLIC ART IN HOUSTON

William Howze

Houston exhibits public art in all its varieties, functions, and range of meanings. Surveying public art here is remarkably easy, much easier than one might expect in view of Houston's reputation for urban sprawl and traffic congestion. These conclusions will not surprise *Cite* readers and longtime Houston residents. The overall value of public art in Houston cannot be obscured even by the easily solicited - and thought-provoking - accounts of the controversies that attach themselves to virtually every piece.

The city may sprawl and the freeways may be clogged, but public art is concentrated inside the Loop, south of I-10, within the overlapping zones of the museum district, the Texas Medical Center, the universities, and downtown. If time is limited, it is possible to see a wide range of work, without too much driving, in less than two hours - especially with the help of the Cultural Arts Council of Houston's brochure *A Cultural Guide to Houston*, the American Institute of Architects' *Houston Architectural Guide* by Stephen Fox, and the University of Houston's pamphlet *Art on Campus*. The list that accompanies this article attempts to bring the works mentioned in those guides together in one place with works on other lists provided by Paul Winkler of the Menil Collection, William Camfield of Rice University's Department of Art and Art History, and Marti Mayo, director of the Blaffer Gallery at the University of Houston.

It is easier to point to examples of public art than to define it: the water wall adjacent to Transco Tower; Claes Oldenburg's *Geometric Mouse X* in front of Houston Public Library's Central Building; Rufino Tamayo's mural *America* in the second-floor banking hall of Bank One, Texas. Public art is found in places where one might come upon it in the course of routine activities, even driving around town. It is a manifestation of the belief that art is good for us, that works of art enrich our lives by heightening our sensitivity to our surroundings and making us aware of their expressive qualities. We are surrounded by concrete and steel. What is their expressive potential? Look at the works of Mark di Suvero - not in a museum but in a park, in the context of the city, in the midst of daily life. This aspect of public art, its location in places people do not frequent deliberately to see art, is at the heart of all the controversies surrounding it. Location is therefore an essential consideration for an appraisal of public art.

Location offers a useful way to categorize public art and to think about its functions. Where is it found? In Houston, four types of locations account for virtually all the public art in the city: the grounds of museums, college campuses, the plazas and lobbies of major commercial and public



**INDEX OF PUBLIC ART IN HOUSTON**
**DOWNTOWN**

- Unknown artist  
**Untitled [Battle of San Jacinto]**  
Stained glass. Texas Commerce Bank Building, 712 Main Street, interior.
- John Alexander  
**Lily Pads**  
Oil on canvas, 1977. Music Hall, 810 Bagby, interior.
- Louis Ametis  
**Spirit of the Confederacy**  
Bronze, 1908. Sam Houston Park, 1100 Bagby.
- Dennis Ashford  
**Begin Odd-Even Tomorrow**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1979. First City National Bank Building, 1001 Main Street, interior.
- Tim Bailey  
**untitled**  
Forged steel, 1988. One Allen Center, 500 Dallas.
- John Biggers  
**The Quilting Bee**  
1981. Music Hall, 810 Bagby, interior.
- Mike Biggers  
**Cambria I**  
Painted steel. Allen Center Plaza, Smith at Clay, through June 1991.
- Mike Biggers  
**Various works**  
Forged steel, glass, and aluminum. One Allen Center, Sculpture Gallery, 500 Dallas, through June 1991.
- Jerry Bywaters  
**Buffalo Bayou**  
1941. Federal Office Building, 515 Rusk, interior.
- William Conlon  
**Red Shift**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1975. First City National Bank Building, 1001 Main Street, interior.
- Jean Dubuffet  
**Monument au Fantôme**  
Polychrome polyester resin and fiberglass, 1977. 1100 Louisiana Building, 1100 Louisiana.
- Helen Frankenthaler  
**Blue North**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1968. First City National Bank Building, 1001 Main Street, interior.
- Emilio Greco  
**Grande Baigneuse No. 2**  
Bronze, 1957. Bank One/Texas drive-in branch, Preston at Louisiana.
- Barbara Hepworth  
**The Family of Man**  
Bronze, 1970. First City Tower, 1001 Fannin.
- Alexandre Hogue  
**Buffalo Bayou**  
1941. Federal Office Building, 515 Rusk, interior.
- Ellsworth Kelly  
**Green Angle**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1971. First City National Bank Building, 1001 Main Street, interior.
- Robert Kushner  
**Architectural Arabesque**  
Bronze, 1986. Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1201 Louisiana.
- Richard Lippold  
**Gemini II**  
Stainless steel, 1965/66. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana, interior.
- Morris Louis  
**Delta Epsilon**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1960. First City National Bank Building, 1001 Main Street, interior.
- Jim Love  
**Area Code**  
Metal, 1962. Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Avenue, interior.
- Daniel MacMorris  
**Allegorical murals**  
1939. City Hall, 901 Bagby, interior.
- Vincent Maragliatti  
**Modern Houston and other murals**  
Fresco, 1929. Texas Commerce Bank Building, 712 Main Street, interior.
- Marcello Mascherini  
**Ballet Dancer**  
Bronze, 1950. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana.
- Enrique Miralda  
**Figuras**  
Steel core, iron, concrete, and cement, 1982. Sawyer Building, Lubbock at Hemphill.
- Joan Miró  
**Personage and Birds**  
Polychrome bronze, 1970. Texas Commerce Tower, 601 Travis.
- Henry Moore  
**Large Spindle Piece**  
Bronze, 1968, 1974. Allen Parkway across from Jefferson Davis Hospital.
- Louise Nevelson  
**Frozen Lacas**  
Black painted steel, 1979. Enron Building, Four Allen Center, 1400 Smith.
- Kenneth Noland  
**Graded Exposures**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1967. First City National Bank Building, 1001 Main Street, interior.
- David Novros  
**Untitled**  
Fresco. Pennzoil Place, 700 Milam, interior.
- Claes Oldenburg  
**Geometric Mouse X**  
Painted steel, 1971. Central Library Building, Houston Public Library, 600 McKinney.
- Claes Oldenburg  
**Inverted "Q" Prototype**  
Black epoxy-coated rigid foam. First City Tower, 1001 Fannin, interior.
- Albert Paley  
**Untitled (heroic banners)**  
Painted steel, 1987. Wortham Center, 550 Prairie, interior.
- Charles Peabworth  
**Garden of the Mind**  
Polished aluminum sculptural relief, 1971-72. Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1200 Louisiana, interior.
- Pio Pulido and Sylvia Orozco  
**A United Community**  
Tile and brick. Sixth Ward Community Park, Kane Street at Trinity Street.
- Peter Reginato  
**High Plains Drifter**  
Cor-ten steel, 1973. Allen Center II, 1200 Smith.
- Tony Rosenthal  
**Bronco**  
Stainless steel, 1980. 1010 Lamar Building, 1010 Lamar, interior.
- Naomi Savage  
**One Step for Mankind**  
Photographic etching in stainless steel, 1979. Tranquillity Park, Bagby between Walker and Rusk, east wall.
- Carroll Simms  
**The Guitar Solo**  
Bronze, 1981. Music Hall, 810 Bagby, interior.
- Ned Smyth  
**Palm Columns**  
Mosaic tile and masonry, 1986. Entex Building, 1201 Milam, interior.
- Frank Stella  
**York Factory B**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1970. First City Tower, 1001 Fannin, interior.
- Rufino Tamayo  
**America**  
Acrylic on canvas, 1955. Bank One/Texas, 910 Travis, interior.

Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1986, Isamu Noguchi with Fuller & Sadao, architects. Anthony Caro, **Argentine**, 1967, foreground; Ellsworth Kelly, **Houston Triptych**, 1986, background.



David Smith, **Two Circle Sentinel**, 1961.



buildings, and city parks. In terms of the relationship of the art work to its setting, these locations range from the intimate and carefully arranged museum grounds to the vast and less ordered parks, with campuses and building plazas falling in between.

The most controlled location that can still be considered public is the Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, on the northeast corner of Montrose and Bissonnet. This is a place surrounded by art institutions: it is in front of the Glassell School of Art, across Bissonnet from the Museum of Fine Arts, and across Montrose from the Contemporary Arts Museum. Isamu Noguchi's enclosure of grassy berms and concrete walls is the work of art encountered by most of the public as they drive through the intersection, but the opening in the wall on Montrose and the curving entrance on Bissonnet make it clear that this is no secret garden. It is an inviting one, although the invitation is clearly formal.

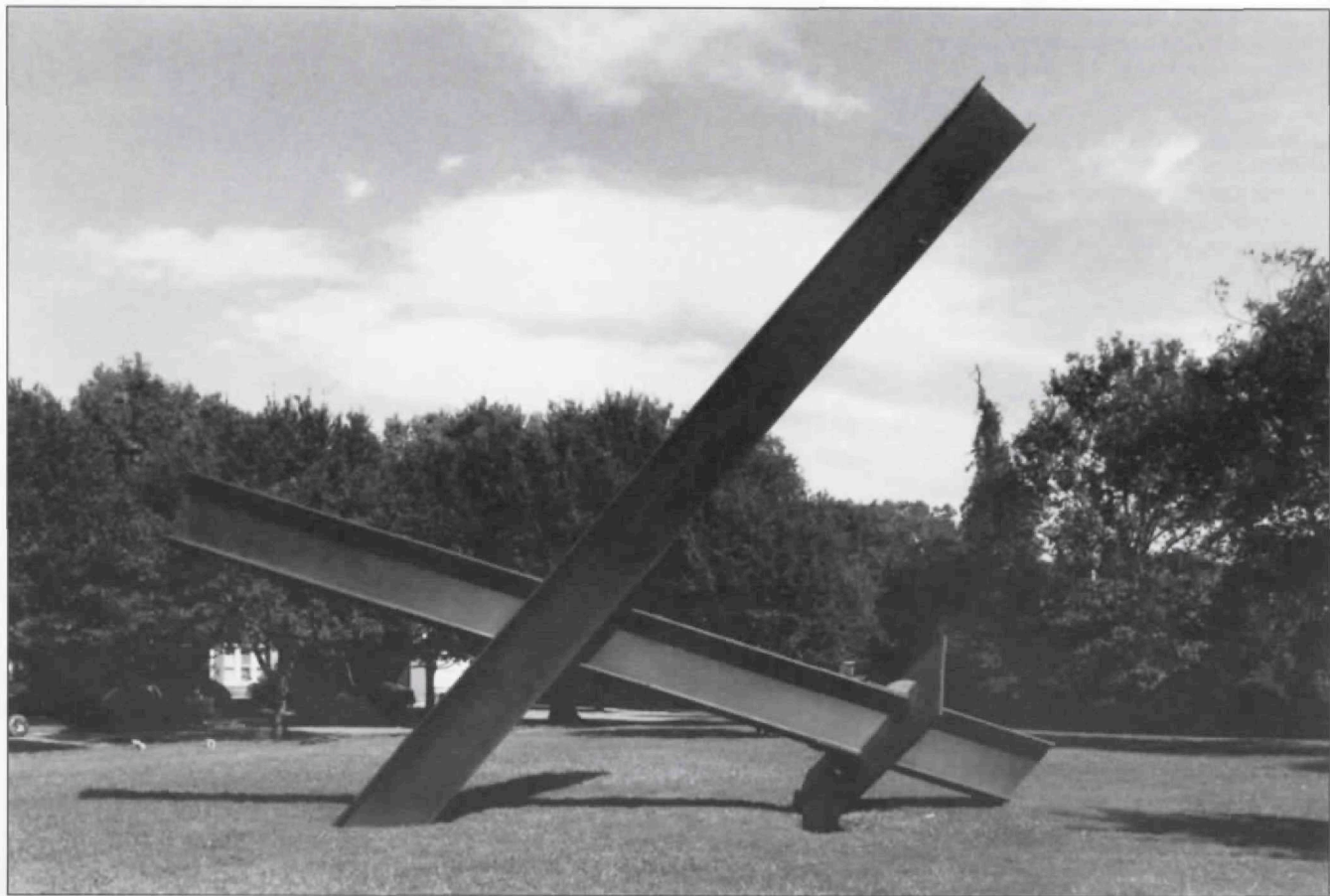
What is inside? As much as anything else, the garden creates a subtle, almost concentric sense of being enclosed, especially when one enters from Bissonnet. Berms and walls enclose the viewer; the crowns of trees enclose the walls; buildings – the dark curve of the museum's Brown Pavilion and the silver flank of the CAM close by, church spires and apartment and office towers farther away – enclose the trees; and ulti-

mately the great blue Texas sky encloses all. (This is arguably one of the ten great pieces of Texas sky, especially looking east toward a clearing thunderstorm.)

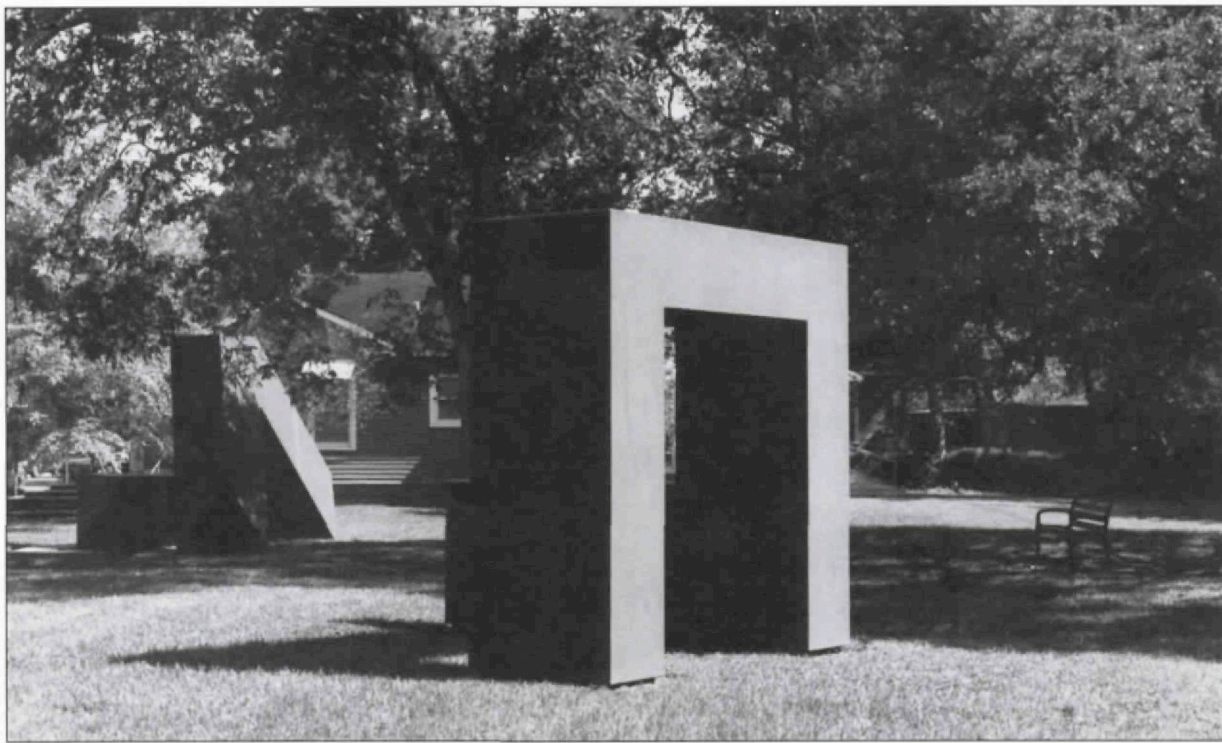
The next impression the garden provides is one of textures – granite, concrete, gravel, and grass – and their ordered arrangement. Noguchi's garden is about texture and proportion as much as anything, the hidden dimension made visible. The enclosing sky, buildings, trees, and walls create a perceptible perimeter around what at first seems to be an open space. But freestanding walls and low earth berms subtly break up the space. One has a clear sense of a perimeter from which one is cut off, and this creates a spatial paradox: an open labyrinth. The labyrinth is occupied by challenging objects, if not a minotaur. In such a setting one has to ask, What do these objects have in common? Certainly the large sculptures that command attention – the Matisse *Backs*, Ellsworth Kelly's *Houston Triptych*, and Anthony Caro's *Argentine* – create a sense of metamorphosis, of forms arrested in the midst of change. This feeling is reinforced as one moves around the garden: everything seems to undergo a metamorphosis. Spatial relationships and the objects change in one aspect or another; Pietro Consagra's *Conversation With the Wind* actually moves. One is forced to confront the fact that the more one tries to gauge the relationship of the objects to each other and to the space, the more complex that relationship becomes. Among other rewards, the sculpture garden provides a place to sharpen one's perception before encountering works in less controlled environments, such as one can find just a block away on the south lawn of the Museum of Fine Arts. That spit of land divides a stream of traffic that distracts one's attention from such fine works as Paul Manship's *Hercules Upholding the Heavens* and Eduardo Chillida's *Abesti Gogora V*.

The Menil Collection has managed to project its aesthetic of passion and intellect from inside its galleries to an area of several blocks that includes the Rothko Chapel and the campus of the University of St.

Mark di Suvero, **Bygones**, 1976. Menil Collection, park between Menil Collection and Rothko Chapel.







Left: Tony Smith, **Marriage**, 1962, foreground, and **Spitball**, 1966, background, Menil Collection grounds.

Below: Carroll Simms, **The Tradition of Music**, 1986. Texas Southern University, central plaza.



Thomas with remarkable skill and subtlety. Of course, chronologically it might be more accurate to say that the aesthetic first manifested at St. Thomas and the chapel has been concentrated in the Menil.

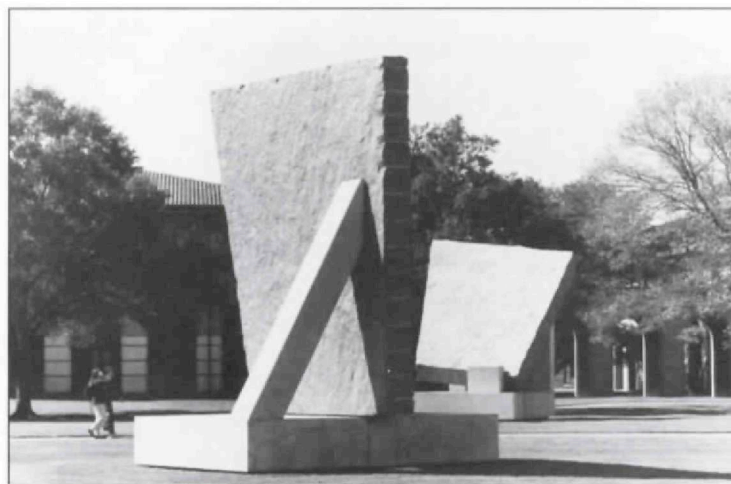
Surrounded by small houses painted a uniform gray, like so many well-behaved parochial school children in matching jumpers and slacks, the grounds of the Menil are hardly less controlled than the MFA's sculpture garden. It is amazing that this obvious aesthetic gambit works, but the effect is actually pleasing, perhaps because little houses are part of the fabric of the whole district, only here the weft has been dyed grey. The sensibility that judged that effect so nicely was clearly at work in the placement nearby of Mark di Suvero's *Bygones*. Though made of two massive steel I-beams, *Bygones* is mostly hidden from view by trees until one is practically upon it. The trees, which create a roughly square perimeter around the sculpture, obviously mark the site where another small house once stood. What happened to the house? Who lived here? Did these intersecting beams form a cross, erected to memorialize the place, that has fallen in its turn? Or are the beams part of the former structure itself that has been partially excavated? Were there buildings here of heroic proportions before these little houses were built? In this aspect, *Bygones* recalls 19th-century photographs of the great Sphinx at Giza, before the body was excavated, when the head alone rested mysteriously on the sand.

The trick of hiding a work of heroic scale in a residential neighborhood is repeated on the adjacent lot, where Barnett Newman's awesome *Broken Obelisk* soars out of a small pool beside the Rothko Chapel. Here is another work one might associate with Egypt and the ancient world and, as the break implies, with its ruin and our present fallen state. But how can an object that at first glance appears so august also be relatively unimposing? This response exposes an ambivalent view of the past and its monuments: one can be awed by them and at the same time feel superior, simply because those who made them have vanished. The irony here, of course, is that this is not an ancient monument but a work of our own time. *Broken Obelisk* repays extended contemplation; the setting is perfectly complementary.

More amusing but no less calculated is the Menil's placement of two pieces by Tony Smith where Mulberry Street runs into Branard: *Marriage* and *Spitball*. Here again is a residential lot, vacant except for a small building, probably a remodeled garage apartment, on the back corner. The sculptures are roughly the same size as the little building; their juxtaposition encourages one to make comparisons. From the northeast corner, across the street, *Marriage* perfectly frames the door of the house. Is there some sort of equivalency between the sculptures and the building? Is this a demonstration of the differences between real structures and ideal structures? Formally, the Smith pieces are similar to Penzoil Place; they could be maquettes for alternative versions of the twin towers.

Perhaps that is why they seem so much at home near Philip Johnson's University of St. Thomas campus. However, the little house asserts its own vernacular aesthetic from the back corner of the lot. If one were to combine the aesthetic of the little house with that of Smith's works, would the result look like something by Robert Venturi?

The next step in location is the campus of Texas Southern University. In the central plaza stand three works by Carroll Harris Simms, *African Queen Mother*, *Jonah and the Whale*, and *The Tradition of Music*. Prominently placed on this traditionally African-American campus, these sculptures are as unambiguous as the bronze portrait of The Founder by John Angel in the academic court at Rice — but how much more challenging and rewarding Simms's pieces are. Angel's portrait of William Marsh Rice can be associated with seated portraits of founders on any number of American college campuses, with seated figures of statesmen (notably Washington and Lincoln), and ultimately, of course, with ancient Egyptian stone sculptures of seated pharaohs. On the other hand,



Michael Heizer, **45°, 90°, 180°**, 1986. Rice University, Court of Engineering.

Simms's figures evoke the forms and textures of African cultures and the integration of those cultures into the American experience. *The Tradition of Music* presents an abstract figure that could be either an opera singer or a gospel singer, overlaid with shapes that suggest Victorian puffed sleeves as well as the textures of African textiles, sculpture, and even ritual scarification. Simms celebrates this rich mixture of traditions, and anyone looking upon his sculptures can share in that celebration. His works can hold their own in any setting — see another example of

*Jonah and the Whale* near the tennis courts at the University of Houston, for example, or the artist's *Guitar Solo* in the lobby of the Music Hall downtown. But in the center of the campus, where the association with the mission of Texas Southern University is clear, they are inspirational.

The University of Houston displays the benefits of a policy that dedicates a percentage of building funds to public art. In the courtyard of the Fine Arts Building on the main campus there is a bronze figure of Orpheus by Gerhard Marcks that represents the best qualities of public art. In a simple and direct way, it clarifies one's expectations of public art by raising the question, What would this space be like if this sculpture were not here? For one thing, the space would be virtually indistinguishable from many similar courtyards in garden office buildings and hotels. So on a very fundamental level, this figure, which holds a violin, functions as a sign: this space, it signals, has something to do with music and with art. And it has something to do with performance, not that the figure is in the act of playing his instrument. He

Ruth Pershing Uhler  
**The First Subscription Committee**  
1935. Julia Ideson Building, Houston Public Library, 500 McKinney Avenue, interior. Murals by other Public Works Art Project artists are elsewhere in the building.

#### MENIL COLLECTION/ UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

Mark di Suvero  
**Bygones**  
Cor-ten steel beams and milled steel plate, 1976. Menil Collection, park between Menil Collection and Rothko Chapel.

Michael Heizer  
**Isolated Mass/ Circumflex (#2)**  
Mayari-R steel, 1968-72. Menil Collection, front lawn.

William Kohl  
**The Young Obelisk**  
Cor-ten steel, 1971. University of St. Thomas, 3921 Yoakum, garden.

Clark Murray  
**Untitled**  
Primed and painted welded steel pipe, 1973. University of St. Thomas, Jerabek Activity and Athletic Center.

Barnett Newman  
**Broken Obelisk**  
Cor-ten steel, 1963-67. Rothko Chapel, 1409 Sul Ross.

Tony Smith  
**Marriage**  
Painted milled steel, 1962. Menil Collection, Mulberry at Sul Ross.

Tony Smith  
**Spitball**  
Painted milled steel, 1966. Menil Collection, Mulberry at Sul Ross.

Tony Smith  
**New Piece**  
Painted milled steel, 1966. University of St. Thomas, Academic Mall.

Tony Smith  
**The Elevens Are Up**  
Painted milled steel, 1963. University of St. Thomas, Academic Mall.

Tony Smith  
**The Snake Is Out**  
Painted milled steel, 1962. University of St. Thomas, Academic Mall.

Hannah Stewart  
**Passage**  
Steel and cast concrete, 1972. University of St. Thomas, West Main at Mount Vernon.

#### MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON

Emile-Antoine Bourdelle  
**Adam**  
Bronze, 1889. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Louise Bourgeois  
**Quarantania I**  
Bronze with painted steel base, 1947-53. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Alexander Calder  
**The Crab**  
Painted steel, 1962. South lawn.

Anthony Caro  
**Argentine**  
Painted steel, 1967. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Eduardo Chillida  
**Abesti Gogora V**  
Granite, 1968. South lawn.

Pietro Consagra  
**Conversation With the Wind**  
Painted steel, 1962. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Mark di Suvero  
**Magari**  
Welded steel, 1977. South lawn.

Raymond Duchamp-Villon  
**The Large Horse**  
Bronze, 1914. Main Street entrance lobby.

Lucio Fontana  
**Space Concept Nature I and II**  
Bronze, 1965. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Alberto Giacometti  
**Large Standing Woman I**  
Bronze, 1960. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Robert Graham  
**Fountain Figures**  
Bronze, 1983. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Barbara Hepworth  
**Bryher II**  
Bronze, 1961. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Bryan Hunt  
**Arch Falls**  
Bronze on limestone base, 1981. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Ellsworth Kelly  
**Houston Triptych**  
Bronze, 1986. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Alexander Lieberman  
**Around**  
Painted steel, acquired 1970. Off exhibition.

Auguste Maillol  
**Flore Nue**  
Bronze, 1910. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Paul Manship  
**Heracles Upholding the Heavens**  
Bronze, 1918, acquired 1939. South lawn.

Marino Marini  
**The Pilgrim**  
Bronze, 1939. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Henri Matisse  
**Backs, I-IV**  
Bronze, 1909-30. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

William McVey  
**Painting, Music, Sculpture, and Flower Arrangement**  
Indiana limestone, 1935. South lawn.

Mimmo Paladino  
**The Sound of Night**  
Bronze, 1986. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Auguste Rodin  
**Walking Man**  
Bronze, 1905. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Joel Shapiro  
**Untitled**  
Bronze, 1990. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

David Smith  
**Two Circle Sentinel**  
Welded stainless steel, 1961. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Frank Stella  
**Decanter**  
Stainless steel, bronze, and carbon steel, 1987. Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden.

Charles Umlauf  
**Pietà**  
Bronze, 1947. South lawn.

#### RICE UNIVERSITY

John Angel  
**Founder's Memorial: William Marsh Rice**  
Bronze, 1930. Academic Court.



Michael Heizer  
45°, 90°, 180°  
Granite and concrete, 1986.  
Court of Engineering.

Jacques Lipschitz  
**Portrait of Gertrude Stein**  
Bronze. Fondren Library,  
Alice Pratt Brown Art  
Library.

Jim Love  
**Paul Bunyan Bouquet II**  
Lovett College courtyard.

William McVey  
**Man Drawing Power From  
the Sun and Transforming  
It Into Energy**  
Abercrombie Laboratory.

Carl Milles  
**The Sisters**  
Bronze, circa 1950. Ellen  
Hale Lovett Memorial  
Garden at Jones College.

#### TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER

Mark di Suvero  
**Pranath Yama**  
Cor-ten steel, 1978. Baylor  
College of Medicine,  
Michael DeBakey Center,  
1200 Moursund, interior.

Nancy Graves  
**Ten lithographs based on  
geological maps of lunar  
orbiter and Apollo sites**  
Lithograph, 1972. University  
of Houston College of  
Pharmacy Building, 1441  
Moursund, interior.

Walter Hancock  
**Arion**  
Bronze, 1980-87. Methodist  
Hospital, E. Lillo Crain  
Garden, 6565 Fannin.

Bruce Hayes  
**The Extending Arms  
of Christ**  
1959. Methodist Hospital,  
6565 Fannin, façade of  
west wing.

Peter Hurd  
**The Future Belongs to  
Those Who Prepare for It**  
Tempera, 1952. Houston  
Main Building (Prudential  
Building), 1100 Holcombe,  
interior.

David Novros  
**Untitled**  
Fresco, 1981. Baylor  
College of Medicine,  
Michael DeBakey Center,  
1200 Moursund, interior.

Wheeler Williams  
**The Family**  
Indiana limestone, 1952.  
Houston Main Building  
(Prudential Building), 1100  
Holcombe.

Ben Woitena  
**Mirage II**  
Welded and painted steel,  
1986. Baylor College of  
Medicine, Michael  
DeBakey Center,  
1200 Moursund.

#### HERMANN PARK

Enrico F. Cerracchio  
**Sam Houston**  
Bronze, 1925. Northwest  
corner of park.

Bob Fowler  
**Elephant**  
Houston Zoological  
Gardens entrance,  
1513 Outer Belt.

Jim Love  
**The Portable Trojan Bear**  
Wood, 1974. On zoo  
train route.

Hannah Stewart  
**Atropos Key**  
Bronze, 1972. Atop hill in  
front of Miller Outdoor  
Theater.

Frank Teich  
**Dick Dowling**  
Granite, 1905. North  
MacGregor Drive at  
Hermann Loop.

#### TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

John Biggers  
**Web of Life**  
Mural, 1978. Texas  
Southern University,  
Samuel M. Nabrit  
Science Center, interior.

Carroll Simms  
**African Queen Mother**  
Bronze, 1968. Texas  
Southern University,  
Martin Luther King  
Humanities Center.

Carroll Simms  
**Jonah and the Whale**  
Bronze. Texas Southern  
University, School of  
Education and Behavioral  
Sciences.

Carroll Simms  
**Man and the Universe**  
1958. Texas Southern  
University, Samuel M.  
Nabrit Science Center.

Carroll Simms  
**The Tradition of Music**  
Bronze, 1986. Texas  
Southern University,  
central plaza.

#### UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

Unknown artist  
**Nigerian head, court  
of Benin**  
Bronze, 19th century.  
Student Life Building,  
International Student  
Lounge.

Various artists  
**America: The Third  
Century**  
Collotype, lithograph, and  
silkscreen, 1976.  
Computing Center lobby  
and hallways.

Scott Burton  
**Benches**  
Granite, 1985. Architec-  
ture Building entrance.

Mark Clapham  
**Cougar**  
Bronze, 1970. Hofheinz  
Pavilion lobby.

Malou Flato  
**Untitled**  
Ceramic tile, 1985.  
Cougar Place lawn.

Peter Forakis  
**Tower of the Cheyenne**  
Cor-ten steel, 1972. Anne  
Garrett Butler Plaza.

Bob Fowler  
**Untitled**  
Cor-ten steel, 1966.  
University Center Arbor.

Charles Ginnever  
**Troika**  
Cor-ten steel, 1979. West  
lawn, Science and  
Research Building 2.

Joseph Grau-Garriga  
**Evocacio Oriental**  
Woven fiber, 1967. Isabel  
C. Cameron Building,  
interior.

Willi Gutmann  
**Big Orange**  
Painted steel, 1971.  
General Services  
Building lawn.

Linda Howard  
**Round About**  
Brushed aluminum, 1978.  
College of Optometry  
Building lawn.

Manashe Kadishman  
**On 1969**  
Cor-ten steel. Entrance  
14 esplanade.

Lee Kelly  
**Waterfall, Stele,  
and River**  
Stainless steel, 1972.  
Cullen Family Plaza.

William King  
**Collegium**  
Aluminum, 1984.  
Walkway between  
Communications and Fine  
Arts buildings.

Ron Kleeman  
**The Four Horsemen and  
the Soho Saint**  
Serigraph, 1976. Isabel C.  
Cameron Building.

Scott Burton, **Benches**,  
1985, at the entrance  
to the Architecture  
Building at the Univer-  
sity of Houston. In the  
background, Brian Wall,  
**Ali**, 1978.



Gerhard Marcks,  
**Orpheus**, 1959.  
University of Houston,  
Fine Arts Center  
courtyard.

stands as if waiting for a cue, resting his instrument against his shoulder. He holds the bow vertically in front of him, lightly touching his forehead with its tip, a posture of reflection and preparation that creates a certain amount of tension. The placement of the figure within the courtyard enhances the sense of performance: it stands to one side, in front of a blank brick wall that could serve as a stage curtain. Because the center of the courtyard is essentially empty, a viewer standing there is in effect in the wings of the auditorium where Orpheus is about to perform. In this arresting way the figure commands the entire space — no less magical than the mythological Orpheus' ability to charm beasts and rocks and trees with his music.

Walking out of the Fine Arts courtyard into the central campus reveals an antidote to the perhaps overly sentimental *Orpheus*: large-scale sculptures made from steel beams, plates, and cylinders. Here is a different world. What are these objects about? They are a puzzle; and it seems perfectly appropriate for a college campus to be littered with puzzles. The campus

resembles one of Saul Steinberg's cartoons in which ampersands, question marks, and equations dominate a landscape populated by tiny human stick figures. Such works as Clement Meadmore's *Split Level* can be seen as an analog for statistical tables, philosophical statements, and the formal qualities of literary texts. These aesthetic and physical manifestations of intellectual challenges dominate the campus. Most of the university's sculptures are large enough — bigger than a car — to be seen at a considerable distance, and they are interesting enough to command closer inspection, so one is drawn from one part of the campus to another in search of them, an enjoyable way to spend a Saturday morning. Though much larger in scale than the areas dedicated to outdoor sculpture at the Menil or the Museum of Fine Arts, the campus still functions much as the sculpture garden does.

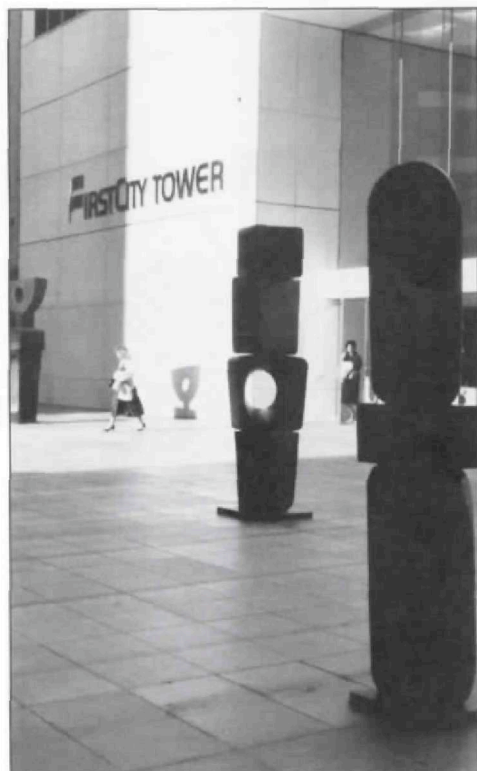
Like the recent graduate, one is faced beyond the campus with the real world, where the relationship between art and its setting cannot always be so carefully controlled. This is the realm where art becomes really public. Nevertheless, the lessons learned from the figure of Orpheus still apply. What would the downtown library plaza be like without *Geometric Mouse X*; what would the plaza of First City Tower be like without *The Family of Man*; what would Hobby Airport be like without *Call Ernie*?

Why a mouse? In front of a library, a replica of Jiminy Cricket singing "E-N-C-Y-C-L-O-P-E-D-I-A" to entice children into the world of books might seem more appropriate. But libraries are complex institutions, not exclusively for children — especially a downtown library — and *Geometric Mouse X* is a complex work of art. Of course the

Mark di Suvero, **Pranath Yama**, 1978.  
Baylor College of Medicine, Michael  
DeBakey Center, 1200 Moursund.







Barbara Hepworth, **The Family of Man**, 1970. First City Tower, 1001 Fannin.

© 1990 Paul Hester, Houston



Jim Love, **Call Ernie**, 1985. Hobby Airport, between terminal and parking garage.

© 1990 Paul Hester, Houston

association with Mickey Mouse is irresistible, but what prompts it? The disks that represent ears? And what else? The color? The size? The material? A cartoon mouse is already an abstraction, but what do the chains have to do with Mickey Mouse? And the flaps or doors to which the chains are attached, where the eyes would be – how can they be related to Mickey? Everyone has different associations with these elements. The chains could suggest an anchor; the flaps look like inspection ports of some sort, or theater projection windows – a tenuous connection with Mickey Mouse cartoons. This is not a piece to be labeled simply and dismissed. Even in its current distressed condition – faded, rusted in patches, and evidently battered by its own chains and steel disks – *Geometric Mouse X* manages to retain its delightful qualities and demand repeated, thoughtful examination. It complements the library, which has many similar qualities as an institution as well as a building.

The same mental process that transforms orange-painted steel plates into a mouse easily turns Barbara Hepworth's abstract bronze totems on the plaza of First City Tower into *The Family of Man*. The simple interpretation is that the family of man (allowing for Hepworth's prefeminist phrase) consists of a wide variety of types, represented here by abstract shapes. But what shapes these are. One could make endless lists of forms evoked by Hepworth's "family": Maya glyphs, Cycladic figurines, totems of the Northwest Coast and Oceania, the forms of Klee and Miró rendered in bronze, even the monolith in the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. No doubt many of these associations are reinforced by the collections at the Menil, but Hepworth has not just created an inventory of shapes, and they do not merely stand for or represent the diversity of humankind. They stand for Hepworth's belief that forms themselves are part of the family of man. In this way *The Family of Man*, perhaps more than any other piece of public art, reinforces the fundamental premise of the public art movement.

It is hard to imagine a better urban location for Hepworth's *Family of Man* than the First City Tower's triangular marble plaza at Fannin and Lamar. At a pedestrian level, in every sense of the phrase, these pieces function as a sign of accessibility and democracy. Their eternal or timeless quality seems particularly desirable for a financial institution at the moment. Hepworth's sculptures lend the bank many of the same values associated with Greek temples before the modern era in architecture.

If a discussion of public art in Houston and the importance of location leads anywhere, it is to Enrico Cerracchio's bronze equestrian portrait of Sam Houston and its magnificent location at the entrance to Hermann Park. The interpretation is straightforward. Even for those unfamiliar with Texas history, the elements are easy to read: a man, a horse, a gesture, a triumphal arch, an elevated site that terminates a



Joan Miró, **Personage and Birds**, 1970. Texas Commerce Tower, 601 Travis.

© 1990 Paul Hester, Houston

prominent boulevard: here is a victorious leader of unrivaled civic prominence. The sculpture and its location work together to create meaning as effectively as any of the other pieces discussed in this essay. Particularly notable is the fact that it manages to address itself equally well to passing cars and to people on foot in the park.

*Sam Houston* demonstrates that public art has as much of a history in Houston as many other cultural institutions. Clearly, much has changed in the neighborhood of Hermann Park since Cerracchio's monument was erected, and the changes have not always been for the better, but the mounted figure of the city's patron hero has probably defended the park and its environs as effectively as anyone could. The well-placed pieces of great public art elsewhere in the city have equally beneficial effects. ■



Luis Jiménez, **Vaquero**, 1980. Moody Park, 3725 Fulton.

© 1990 Paul Hester, Houston

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Gerhardt Knodel<br><b>Gulf Stream</b><br>Wool and mylar, 1976. M.D. Anderson Library lobby.   | Bronze and marble, ca. 1920-30. <b>Peggy's Point</b> Fountain, corner of Richmond and Main Street.   |
| Jim Love<br><b>Landscape With Blue Trees</b><br>Steel pipe and plate with bronze, 1982-83. Courtyard between Cullen College of Engineering Building and North Wing. | Marcel Bouraine<br><b>Solitude</b><br>Stone, 1926. Glenwood Cemetery, 2525 Washington Avenue   |
| Gerhardt Marcks<br><b>Albertus Magnus</b><br>Bronze, 1955. Law Center Plaza.  | Mel Chin<br><b>Manila Palm</b><br>Steel, fiberglass, burlap, and rope, 1978. Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose.                        |
| Gerhardt Marcks<br><b>Orpheus</b><br>Bronze, 1959. Fine Arts Center courtyard.  | Charles Ginnever<br><b>Pueblo Bonito</b><br>Cor-ten steel, 1977. Knox Triangle, Waugh Drive at Feagan.                                       |
| Clement Meadmore<br><b>Split Level</b><br>Cor-ten steel, 1971. Esplanade at Conrad Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management.                               | Luis Jiménez<br><b>Vaquero</b><br>Molded fiberglass, 1980. Moody Park, 3725 Fulton.  |
| Richard Miller<br><b>Sandy in Defined Space</b><br>Bronze, 1967. Science and Research Center, east entrance plaza.  | Jim Love<br><b>Call Ernie</b><br>Steel, 1985. Hobby Airport, between terminal and parking garage.  |
| Jesús Bautista Moroles<br><b>Lotus</b><br>Granite, 1982. School of Social Work courtyard.   | Frank McGuire<br><b>Axis</b><br>Painted Cor-ten steel, 1978. West End Multi-Service Center, 170 Heights Blvd.                                |
| Reuben Nakian<br><b>Leda and the Swan</b><br>Bronze, 1977. LeRoy and Lucile Melcher Hall, courtyard.  | Doug Michels, Hudson Marquez, Chip Lord<br><b>Save the Planet</b><br>1963 Ford Thunderbird, 1987. Hard Rock Cafe, 2801 Kirby Drive.          |
| Peter Reginato<br><b>Luncheon on the Grass</b><br>Welded steel, 1979. University Center Underground plaza.  | Robert Murray<br><b>Tikchik</b><br>Painted steel, 1972. 4200 Montrose.   |
| Tom Sayre<br><b>Contemplation</b><br>Cor-ten steel, 1979. Near University Center Satellite east lawn.   | John Orth<br><b>Christ of the Workingman</b><br>Oil on masonite panel, 1952. Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 4411 Dallas Avenue, interior. |
| Salvatore Scarpitta<br><b>Manhole Uprising Sled</b><br>Mixed media on canvas, 1978. Art and Architecture Library, interior.   | Beverly Pepper<br><b>Polygenesis</b><br>Cast ductile iron, 1982. Four-Leaf Towers, 5100 San Felipe at Post Oak.                              |
| Carroll Simms<br><b>Jonah and the Whale</b><br>Bronze, 1973. Tennis courts.   | Tom Sayer<br><b>Red Shift</b><br>Steel, 1979-80. Brookhollow Complex, Loop 610 at Highway 290.   |
| James Surls<br><b>Flower Woman</b><br>Pine, oak, and gum wood, 1977. Wortham Theater Complex lobby.   | Carroll Simms<br><b>Jonah and the Whale</b><br>Bronze, 1975-79. Fifth Ward Multi-Service Center, 4014 Market.                                |
| Masaru Takiguchi<br><b>Orbit I</b><br>Camphor wood, 1968. Science and Research Building lobby.  | Leo Tanguma<br><b>The Rebirth of Our Nationality</b><br>1972-73. Continental Can Company Building, 5801 Canal.                               |
| Masaru Takiguchi<br><b>Orbit II</b><br>Camphor wood, 1968. Law Center, Frankel Room.  | Rolf Westphal<br><b>East of the Pecos</b><br>Painted steel, 1973. 3410 Montrose.   |
| Sofu Teshighari<br><b>Iroku</b><br>Wood and aluminum alloy, 1965. Agnes Arnold Auditorium lobby.  | Rolf Westphal<br><b>West of the Pecos</b><br>1974, 1976. Houston Intercontinental Airport, Will Clayton Parkway.                             |
| Brian Wall<br><b>Ali</b><br>Painted steel, 1978. College of Technology plaza.   | Mac Whitney<br><b>Houston</b><br>Painted steel, 1983. Stude Park, 1031 Stude Drive.  |
| Francisco Zúñiga<br><b>Mujer con las Manos Cruzadas</b><br>Bronze, 1972. Charles F. McElhinney Hall.  | James Wines<br><b>Indeterminate Façade</b><br>Brick, 1975. Best Products Company showroom, 10765 Kingspoint Road.                            |
| <b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>  |  |
| John Biggers<br><b>The Negro Woman in American Life and Education</b><br>Mural, 1953. Blue Triangle Branch YWCA Building, 3005 McGowan, interior.                   | Ben Waitena<br><b>3/4 Time</b><br>Painted Cor-ten steel, 1975. Memorial Park, Woodway at Memorial.   |
| Ilya Bolotowsky<br><b>WPA mural</b><br>1939; liquitex on canvas, 1980 reconstruction. Houston Intercontinental Airport, Terminal C lobby.                           | Ben Waitena<br><b>Archway</b><br>Welded and painted steel, 1983. Greenway Plaza between Buildings 9 and 11 (3700 block of Richmond Avenue).  |
| Gutzon Borglum<br><b>Untitled</b>   | Ben Waitena<br><b>Cibolo</b><br>Welded and painted steel, 1977. Three Riverway off Woodway. ■  |