



# FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

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## **MEIJER GARDENS PREMIERS MAJOR U.S. RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION OF BRITISH SCULPTOR LYNN CHADWICK**

*More than 40 works trace five decades of Chadwick's career as one of the most important British sculptors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., — September 30, 2009** — Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, one of world's most comprehensive sculpture and botanic experiences, is the premier location of the first U.S. retrospective exhibition of British sculptor Lynn Chadwick, since the artist's death in 2003. "Lynn Chadwick: In Contact" is on view October 9, 2009, through January 3, 2010. More than 40 sculptures and five lithographs trace five decades of Chadwick's career as one of the most important British sculptors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Chadwick's sculptures display a fascinating evolution of personal images through a powerful series of abstracted human figures, animals, birds and imaginary beasts. Chadwick continued developing his critically acclaimed body of work into the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to present this important survey of Chadwick's sculpture," said Joseph Becherer, Chief Curator and Vice President at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. "His role as one of the seminal British artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is undisputed as are his contributions to the figurative tradition in sculpture."

Chronologically, the exhibition begins with the highly geometric and strongly linear figures and beasts of the 1950s and traces Chadwick's career through the majestic and sensuous male and female forms of the 1980s. Some of the most important conceptual frameworks of 20<sup>th</sup> century art— Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, and Existentialism—are clearly understood in the display of more than 40 sculptures.

"I look upon an artist as a person who is in contact with humanity generally and is able to act as a sort of connecting link to express to them how they are," said Chadwick in an interview prior to his death. "I do not analyze my work with my senses. I wait until I have got the feeling that I know what I am going to do before starting to work. A conscious effort to draw ideas from their subconscious sources would lame and slow down the creative capacity."

Chadwick frequently used trapezoids, triangles and rectangles to create his forms. Many figures also portrayed or implied movement such as his early mobiles, his dancing *Teddy Boy and Girl* series in the 1950s, his cloaked walking women with windswept hair in the 1980s and his figures ascending or descending stairs. His abstracted figurative tradition also suggests his notion about the lack of individuality in the modern world and the existential anxieties of living in the post-war climate.

Concurrently on display is "Henry Moore: Master Printmaker." This exhibition displays 24 master prints given to Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park by Lillian Heidenberg, one of Moore's primary gallerists.

Both Chadwick and Moore were draftsmen early in their careers. Chadwick worked as an architectural draftsman before transitioning into sculpture, while Moore used etchings and lithographs to explore many of his major sculptural themes. Inspired by Moore, Chadwick maintained a lifelong commitment to the figure; however, Chadwick's forms were mostly linear and planar rather than the rounded and organic forms of Moore.

Both exhibitions are open to the public October 9, 2009 through January 3, 2010.

“British sculpture factors prominently in our permanent collection which, in addition to bronzes by Moore and Chadwick, features magnificent examples by Hepworth, Nash, Frink, Gormley, Woodrow, Flanagan, and Goldsworthy among others,” said Becherer, “making both the Chadwick and Moore exhibition even more rewarding to our guests.”

“Lynn Chadwick: In Contact” is organized by Landau Traveling Exhibitions in conjunction with Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. The works on display are from the permanent collection of the Philip and Muriel Berman Museum of Art at Ursinus College. The exhibition is sponsored by The Meijer Foundation and the Botanic and Sculpture Societies of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park.

### **Exhibition Activities**

“Lynn Chadwick: In Contact” at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park includes the following educational activities:

- **Member Opening, October 8, 6–8 PM**  
Opening Lecture “Tradition and Innovation: The Figurative Sculpture of Lynn Chadwick” with Joseph Becherer at 7 PM. A Members-Only event.
- **Sculpture Demonstration, October 11, 2 PM**  
Discover how Lynn Chadwick sculpted his works of art while watching local artist and Meijer Gardens staff member Jenny Flanders create sculpture with plaster. Observe how versatile and fun working in plaster can be as Flanders explores the many possibilities of shape and form. Free with paid admission to Meijer Gardens.
- **Curator’s Choice with Joseph Becherer, October 13, 7 PM**  
Join the Chief Curator as he gives the “inside scoop” on “Lynn Chadwick: In Contact.” Walk through the exhibition and learn about the background and inspirations of this fascinating artist. Free with paid admission to Meijer Gardens.
- **Gallery Walk, October 27, 7 PM**  
Walk through “Lynn Chadwick: In Contact” and view the works through the eyes of local architect Wayne Norlin. Discover what special things architects look for and how Chadwick’s architectural training may have influenced his sculpture. Free with paid admission to Meijer Gardens.
- **Understanding Modern British Sculptors, November 8, 2 PM**  
Today, the “YBA” (Young British Artists) form a solid core in contemporary art. However, throughout the 20th century, British sculptors were always at the forefront, creating and defining Modernism. This lecture with Sue Eberle will focus on the British sculptors represented in Meijer Gardens’ permanent collection including Moore, Gormely, Flanagan, Chadwick, Caro, Hepworth, Goldsworthy, Frink and Nash. Explore the answers to questions such as: What styles and aesthetics do these British sculptors share? What innovations do they bring to art? What makes them quintessentially British? Free with paid admission to Meijer Gardens.
- **Perspectives, November 10, 7 PM**  
Join a horticulturist, an educator and a development director as they explore “Lynn Chadwick: In Contact” from their own perspectives. Feel free to participate in the discussion and discover it is not necessary to be an art expert to find deeper meaning in art. Free with paid admission to Meijer Gardens.
- **Shape and Form: Fun with Abstraction, November 14 and 21, 1–3 PM**  
Uncover a new skill while having fun making artwork based on “Lynn Chadwick: In Contact.” Make an abstract sculpture using shapes made from wood or clay, and experiment with plaster-like materials—much like Chadwick did—as you create your sculptures. Materials will be provided and all ages are welcome. This event is taught by GVSU Art Education Students. Free with paid admission to Meijer Gardens.

### **About Lynn Chadwick**

One of several talented British sculptors who burst upon the international art scene in the late 1950s, Lynn Chadwick (1914-2003) frequently used geometric forms in describing human and animal figures. Chadwick's abstract imagery and figurative tradition developed over the course of four decades. Chadwick studied at the Merchant Taylors School and began his career as an architectural draftsman. After serving in World War II, he began designing furniture, textiles, and architectural projects. In the late 1940s, the artist began creating mobiles, similar but very independent of those created by Alexander Calder. Chadwick moved away from kinetic elements in his repertoire, and continued to create works in welded iron and bronze. His abstracted human figures, animals, birds and imaginary represent some of the most important conceptual frameworks of 20<sup>th</sup> century art – Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, and Existentialism.

Chadwick achieved international success in 1956 when he won the International Prize for Sculpture at the Venice Biennale. In 1962, he was invited to carry out an open-air sculpture project for the Festival dei Due Monde with Alexander Calder and David Smith. Chadwick received the Carborundum Company's Sculpture Major and Minor Awards to produce *Manchester Sun* for the Williamson Building for Life Sciences at the University of Manchester in 1963. He later opened his own foundry in Lypiatt Park.

### **About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park**

One of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park serves more than a half-million visitors annually. Meijer Gardens was recently named one of the world's 30 "Must-See Museums" by Patricia Schultz, author of *1,000 Places to See Before you Die*. The 132-acre grounds feature Michigan's largest tropical conservatory; one of the largest children's gardens in the country; arid and Victorian gardens with bronze sculptures by Degas and Rodin; a carnivorous plant house; outdoor gardens; and a 1750-seat outdoor amphitheater, featuring an eclectic mix of world-renowned musicians every summer. The internationally acclaimed Sculpture Park features a permanent collection including works by Rodin, Oldenburg, Moore, Bourgeois, and Plensa among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with recent exhibitions by Picasso, Degas, di Suvero, Borofsky and Calder. For more additional information, please visit [www.MeijerGardens.org](http://www.MeijerGardens.org)

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