

# The Art and Life of Henry Moore

## Audio guide

HENRY MOORE  
STUDIOS & GARDENS

### ***Three Way Piece No.1: Points 1964–65***

This piece is situated at the far, right-hand corner, towards the back of the gallery. It's the largest sculpture in the exhibition and draws the visitor in from the entrance.

The work, titled *Three Way Piece No.1: Points* 1964-65, stands taller than a person at nearly two-metres high and over two-metres wide. It is presented on a large circular grey plinth on the ground, about three metres in diameter. It's not covered by an acrylic case, so we can explore it from all angles.

Our first impressions on encountering the work, apart from its vastness, are "What can it be?" and "What is it made of?"

This abstract sculpture is a warm creamy white in colour, perhaps like stone, bone or ivory but is in fact plaster. It's textured all over with scratch marks drawn-in and dark brown flecks which cover the surface. Unlike our expectation of plaster being dry, the surface has a soft sheen and reflects the light above: this effect has been created by a shellac coating, to which some colour has been added.

The top of the sculpture is curvy and undulating. At the bottom, three legs taper down to points, balancing the sculpture on the plinth.

The organic forms have lumps and bumps like a featureless head, a ridge like a spine and a large rump. There is no definite front or back to the sculpture. Each viewpoint is different and we get a sense of movement as we move around the piece.

The shape and colour of this solid mass suggest many organic forms. Could it be an enormous tooth like a molar, a woolly mammoth, a giant dinosaur vertebra, a bison or even a polar bear? It's certainly such a size.

This monumental piece is one of a selection made by Moore in his specially built studio in Perry Green. Here, he was able to build large wooden armatures to construct the sculptures that would later have been covered in scrim and plaster. In the following recording, Moore reflects on the practicalities and limitations of working at scale.

**Henry Moore:** This is the three-piece sculpture. It was meant to be possible to turn it over, put it in three or four different positions. It could have stood not in the way it is now, but on its side, over the other way. It was this attempt to show underneath views, top views, side views, bottom views, everything, and that's why it's called Three Way sculpture.

[...] Where I made a mistake was, I made the sculpture too big [...] to show it one way and turn it another way: it should've been only half the size, but in plaster one could do it. But one hadn't realised that by the time it came round. We all make mistakes and we can't help it.

[Music]