

## Concentrations 51: Mark Handforth (Opening Event)

---

In conversation with Suzanne Weaver

March 22, 2007

Dallas Museum of Art

Sculpture Garden

Lisa Kays: Good Evening everyone. Thank you for joining us. It's my pleasure to introduce Suzanne Weaver, the Tim and Nancy Hanley Curator of Contemporary Art, here at the Dallas Museum of Art. She is the coordinator of our Concentrations series. And we are so pleased to welcome you to the opening of the 51<sup>st</sup> installation of the series; and to have artist Mark Handforth with us tonight. Now I will turn it over to Suzanne.

Suzanne Weaver: Thank you, so we'll each take a mic, and can someone take the stand away from us? We'll try not to be too much like Jerry Springer or Oprah. I want to thank everyone for coming; this is the time where you thank a lot of people kind of like the Academy Awards, but it does take a lot of people to pull this off.

I want to thank the generosity of Claire Dewar, Nancy and Tim Hanley, Cindy and Howard Rachofksy, whose gifts support the Concentrations series of exhibitions. I want to thank Gayle and Paul Stoffel who have actually donated a new work by Mark Handforth that is coming later on-- about a month from now.

I want to thank Lisa Kays from Public Programs and Kim Bryan from Development, Tamara Wootton-Bonner, Caitlin Topland, Brent Mitchell, and Vince Jones and our preparators. I always want to thank Charlie Wylie, who I can't say we are married because he gets upset with that, but we are like really great partners and friends and colleagues, and he always keeps me from going over the edge.

And I want to thank Gavin Brown for all his help. As I said earlier, Gavin has one of the smartest galleries anywhere, not just New York, but anywhere. And last but not least, I want to thank Mark Handforth who has -- what am I doing here, or is that you or --

Mark Handforth: That's me, it's probably me.

Suzanne Weaver: --who has really pulled out all the stops and has created this amazing sculpture that is smart, it's highly informed, it's like -- it like glides, and you know, speaks to everything around here and over there, but it's its own thing. So I really thank you Mark, it's been great to work with you.

Mark Handforth: Thank you.

Suzanne Weaver: It's been terribly rewarding, and I have learned a lot about art. And I also learned to be really flexible.

Mark Handforth: That's good, that's good.

Suzanne Weaver: That's good. Yeah. So what we are going to do is do this kind of tag team, and like I said, I hope it's not too much like Oprah, but I want to tell you a little bit about Mark.

He was born in Hong Kong in 1969. He currently lives and works in Miami. He attended the Slade School of Fine Art in London and the State Academy of Fine Arts in Frankfurt.

[00:01:43]

He has shown internationally and a few of his solo shows include The Modern Institute in Glasgow, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, Kunsthaus Zurich and he also did a Public Art Fund commission for the Doris C. Freedman Plaza in Central Park. He has been in prestigious group shows like at the Hirshhorn, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, and the 2004 Whitney Biennial. So let's give a warm welcome to Mark, and give it up, give it up to Mark!

[applause]

So, anytime Mark you want to take it away. I am going to ask you a question -- a couple of questions--and I've gotten questions from Dara and other people but I am sure, you know, afterwards people will be you asking questions.

But the one thing I want to talk to you about is, going back to your practice and process, when you came to the site what triggered your ideas about this work when you saw where this is going to go? What kind of triggered you, what you would do?

Mark Handforth: Okay, when you come -- this is a sculpture garden and sculpture gardens are kind of funny places because in some ways they are like the place where we show sculpture, but they are also a little bit like the sort of--not that they are like the prison yard of sculpture, but they are kind of the places where sculpture is contained and put away, and, you know, with these high walls and everything like that. So I think when I walked around, on the one hand you are looking at these amazing pieces, and they are amazing pieces, and at the same time you kind of wonder why they're all put away over here and like chopped away and hidden away behind the walls.

So I suppose the sense was to kind of try to make a piece that would kind of jump over the wall and get out of here. At the same time it's kind of bringing everything that was outside right into here because there's a funny relationship here. I like walls anyway, I like the relationship between one side of the wall and the other.

And so it seemed to me that you have to kind of -- you had to make a piece that would kind of be -- it's kind of alive somehow, and just pulls itself together and just kind of climbs out of here. It's also that -- I mean it's -- what am I thinking?

It's a funny thing, the way I make work is I make it quite -- on the one hand it's quite intuitive, and on the other hand I suppose it's quite informed. But I don't like to let the informed part of my work really take over too much from the intuitive.

So all of these things here and this sculpture are kind of like -- they are like sort of discarded elements that all kind of pulled together and grow up to kind of climb out in a way, and I think I wanted that to be this, a piece that was sort of about, I suppose, a little bit about these discarded elements that would pull themselves together.

And yet at the same time all of these elements are so much the elements of sculpture out there, or the sculptures in here. It's this material that becomes sculpture. So I wanted it on the one hand to be very much like a sculpture I suppose and on the other hand I wanted them to really be themselves, and not change too much. I'm very--I suppose anyone who knows-- I'm am very interested in ready-mades, I suppose, as an artist, and --

Suzanne Weaver: And so how did you choose these ready-mades? I mean --

Mark Handforth: How do I choose the ready-mades? Well, the chain snake is obvious, you know, when you see a chain it becomes a snake; that's something that you do. And I suppose this -- I think there are certain things that you do to material that are inevitable, you have to do it. When you see a pipe, you bend it. When you see a chain, you make it into a snake, and when you see a lamppost, you twist it up. It's just the way you deal with stuff on the street.

And in a way when I was making it -- you know, things like this piece here or the crowbar, you know, you just got to stick it in there. It's just something that you do, and I think that there's a funny thing that goes on in your head where you are -- on the one hand, when you are talking about all this, you have all this information, and on the other

hand you've really got just forget about it and do all the things that just seem natural to do. So I suppose in terms of the material --

Suzanne Weaver: Well, so speaking of the crowbar, I mean that wasn't in the original proposal, nor were a number of things in the original proposal.

Mark Handforth: No, there wasn't a lot in the original proposal. That's another thing, it's very different when you make a proposal for something, and in some ways it doesn't have that much to do about what happens. It has a little bit to do what happens at the end, but there is a huge difference between making a drawing or making a model and then making a real thing. And I kind of make my work as well, you know, I actually kind of -- I like to make these things, I enjoy making them, and it's good for me.

So I really -- I like to be in all of this process of putting things all together of something I do. I suppose in a way, when you are -- you have a sense of what's going to be really good in the end, then you try to kind of express through a little drawing or a model, but it doesn't really, you know, there is a big difference between saying, I can take, you know, I can take this beam and twist it up on a little plastic model and then taking a beam and twisting it up, it's a whole different story.

So in a way, I think what you are doing when you are proposing something is, you are throwing an idea out there, and saying, "If you let me run with this, I will make it really good."

(00:06:36)

But then when you start to make it, it's a whole different -- I guess it's a slightly lyrical process, and it's a very intuitive process and you just go -- ah, question, yes.

Audience Member: (Inaudible).

Mark Handforth: Yeah, that's a really good question. I stopped yesterday.

Suzanne Weaver: Absolutely.

Mark Handforth: That's the hardest thing I think, knowing how to stop. That's actually the most important thing probably is to stop when it's good.

Suzanne Weaver: Now I can tell you he had us running to the paint store and to Home Depot and things like that. It didn't stop until it was done. That's another question I had for you because it's like this heavy material that seems very kind of spontaneous and you are improvising as you go along. And it sounds really weird, but like all of a sudden we

decided when you came here, we have got to have this florescent color.

Mark Handforth: I think the thing about material is that you have got a kind of -- when you live in the world, you have got to just like take the world on and just twist it to your means. I just feel as way of life you have got to do that. I just feel with material you have got to do that. So I don't know - - I don't want to kind of defer to the material always. I suppose in a way if I have a problem with the modernist movement in sculpture, it's too much deference to the material. I just think we're bigger than the material; we do what we want with that. I think that's also true with life. I think we take life and we do what we want with it, and I think you've just got to do that with everything you see.

So when you see a lamppost, you just pull that the thing down. When you see a beam, you twist it up. You do whatever you want to it and I think that that's the whole -- I guess that's the way I work. Sometimes it's really hard. Sometimes I suggest doing these things when I get asked to do them and it's like, oh my God, what did I -- what was I thinking? But you know on the other hand when you have done all of that, you have actually got somewhere. I think that that's really important somehow is that kind of -- just as a way of making art. I think that's kind of what we are also about, this business of just taking a lot of material in and just moving it to your world and moving and twisting with it, playing with it.

Suzanne Weaver: Your wife, Dara gave a great -- it was a really wonderful observation. As we walked through *Fast Forward* we went through all -- you know, we passed the Minimalists and Post-Minimalists, and we came out in the sculpture garden. It was like following this history, and we come to this, and it's like -- it's so informed with what took place all through there and how do you think about that with the history of sculpture, especially Modernist sculpture?

Mark Handforth: I mean, I love sculpture. I mean, I am really into sculpture. And I think the history that we know, we should know and we have to know, like all histories. I think it's important that we know all histories, and at the same time, once we've learned everything, it's also important we kind of throw it out the window a little bit and do whatever we want. But to a certain extent, I don't know that we are free to do whatever we want until we really understand what's going on everywhere else. I think -- in a way, -- like it was funny, we were just in the bar before we came in talking about one of the people I thought about probably more with this piece was Tatlin or someone like that, and in some ways I think that you are going to see it in terms of these pieces here, but in some ways when I was putting it together, I was thinking quite a lot about that.

You know, those sort of almost Constructivist collage ideas. There is a whole load of stuff, all that stuff is brilliant and all that stuff's material, and I feel like, you know, the moment we are in, which is a movement-less moment, essentially gives us the freedom to really do whatever we want, and I think that's the great benefit of living in the here and now or right now. There is no orthodoxies at all, I don't think.

Audience Member: Could you talk about the SpongeBob Squarepants?

Mark Handforth: SpongeBob Squarepants? He will appear in another piece, at a later date in Washington. The anthropomorphic thing SpongeBob Squarepants? That's an important too, that's part of the age we live in--the freedom to be a sponge, and at the same time be a real major player.

Suzanne Weaver: We also kind of talked -- you made me go back and look at sculpture like you know, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and what do you think are some of the major preoccupations of sculptures since, you know, centuries, the biggest thing that working with heavy objects and heavy things you deal with.

Mark Handforth: I mean, I think sculpture is...Sculpture is almost the oldest-- I mean it's, you know, I guess, we all know what the oldest profession is, but sculpture is a pretty old profession, and it goes back a long way, and I think that the business of putting things into the world is the essence of sculpture, and what's really good about it. The reason why I did this sculpture first of all was because I didn't really want to translate things; I just wanted to make things.

(00:10:58)

So that when the things were there, they were just the things. It's very hard for someone to walk up to this thing and say, "I don't what it is." I mean, everyone knows what this is, it's a chain snake. When I was having this made, I had -- I worked with these honky-tonk welders and I said "I am making this big chain snake" alright, yeah, big chain snake. It's true with some of the other works and I really wanted to have this sort of language that's a kind of common language, there is nothing, there's no one who can say, they don't know, that's a lamp head, there is nothing to explain -- there's plenty to talk about, but nothing to explain to a certain extent, and I wanted to hit this language that was very direct. I wanted them to be things. I think that's the nature of sculpture.

I mean and then there is all, you know the other things about, you know, was dealing with weight, dealing with material and conquering material, weightlessness, and all those kinds of things.

Suzanne Weaver: So it was like a still a thing --

Mark Handforth: Yes, definitely a thing. Yeah, I mean you can put it out on a street, it might not be a sculpture anymore, but it would be a something, you know --

Audience Member: (Inaudible)

Mark Handforth: Oh, yeah, yeah, it's complete. I mean in fact, there's a light, you see there is a light there. The one thing I really notice when I came in is that that light is always on, and even during the day, that light never goes out. That's like the starter light for Dallas or something.

So in a way when I was walking around here and I was kind of looking at the sculpture garden during the day, I really kind of took into account that light -- I mean there's these beautiful things in the city all around us that are kind of, these magical -- there are just magical things all around. I think in a way, it doesn't really make sense to deal with any kind of notion of a private space or an enclosed space or a white-walled space. This is the space, it's all around us, we are in it, and it's great. And I think the work inevitably has to deal with that. Work in the public realm is in the public realm, and the public realm is a huge thing. That's what's kind of great about it.

I mean, the second thing I think it is good about -- I mean this work is I guess suppose is slightly enclosed, but the thing I really think is fascinating about putting work out into the public realm is this business of being judged on the terms of the realm of the world outside, slightly escaping the bounds a little bit of the museum and the art world. I think it's really good, when you have a piece of work that just has to sit out there and deal with whatever people think about it. You know, sit on those terms, which are quite tough terms actually. They don't you know, no one is doing you a favor when you stick it out on the street, and on the other hand maybe they really like it, and then you have won.

Audience Member: Talk about the social contract.

Mark Handforth: Yeah, that's like a kind of a feeling. When you come here and you are in this garden, when you first come this garden is like a little society, they are all living here, all these sculptures somehow. So in some ways, if you are going to put something here, you are going to be kind of, you are going to be living with all these other sculptures, but at the

same time you can kind of live with them on your own terms. I think, you know, maybe it is a little bit like life, but I think there is something very important about that notion of the way that the thing on the one hand, it's very much itself, but necessarily it lives in terms of everything else, in terms of this wall, in terms of that lamp, in terms of this church, in terms of this high rise, in terms of this Tony Smith, in terms of this -- it's like in terms of all these other things. I think the work has to kind of like live within that world somehow. Alright.

Audience Member: (Inaudible).

Mark Handforth: I think -- yeah, I mean the colors, this sort of poop brown color they mean is actually quite Caro in some ways. Now I think there is a very specific relationship to all of that. I think you got what you've come with, and I think, in a way, I think my relationship to British sculpture is a bit like my relationship to my family.

(00:15:30)

You know it's like, that's when I was born, that's when I grew up, that's what I have. That's the information I have, much like my relationship to the period I grew up in and all of the things I feel about the place I grew up. So in a way that's what I have, that's where I come out of. On the other hand I think there is something, there is a point where you kind of take all of that language and you sort of jump to somewhere else. You know, and I think -- I suppose my job is a little bit to kind of take the whole thing where I want to go.

And also I think there's a funny thing about the way that there was sort of a -- there was something a little bit fearful about classic British sculpture. I felt like I was always a little bit afraid, and I suppose when I came to America, I didn't want to be afraid anymore.

Audience Member: (Inaudible).

Mark Handforth: Cragg I would look at. Early Cragg I think is fantastic. You know these Cragg pieces where he picked up stuff on the beach, those kind of pieces are great pieces, I think. But I think there's a kind of a moment when, or maybe it happens with everyone, where it kind of drifts out into this -- oh, is that a Cragg? I think I am...

Suzanne Weaver: Yeah.

Mark Handforth: Anyway, I'm not knocking that sculpture, you know what I mean? There is a big difference between picking up plastic off a beach and constructing a map of Britain on that, and I think that there's an interesting dialog there. There's also very interesting people in Britain.



Britain is an interesting place. In the '70s and '80s British artists never expected to get anywhere, and they never did. So there are a whole lot of artists that were involved in performance, and all this kind of facets of work that never really expected a career, and they never got one, and some of that work is really interesting too, it's kind of going in a very different direction. You know, I suppose that that's, yeah that's the side of British art and I think it's fantastic actually, kind of got lost along way a little bit though.

Audience Member: Do you think the open shackle should be a symbol of something that got away from us?

Mark Handforth: Sorry, that's a good question.

Audience Member: I mean the open shackle.

Mark Handforth: The open shackle? Oh that something kind of escaped away? Yeah, I think something did get away from us on that. Yeah, I mean, yeah, it was kind of at the end of the chain, I was like this sort of -- well the chain anyway was this big over-sized thing, so it was kind of beginning -- you know, to begin with something that kind of got in the way of the material.

Suzanne Weaver: Let me ask you something because a lot of things were—not a lot—but a few things were added from the drawing and the model like you know, the stake nail or something like that, more of the aluminum, you know, piping -- and just things kept adding, there's a little cobra there, or crowbar, but when I saw this I thought, my god, this is all about painting, drawing, and sculpture, and you said, it's all about drawing.

Mark Handforth: Right.

Suzanne Weaver: So what do you mean by that?

Mark Handforth: Yeah, but it's kind of about painting too, but it's drawing in the sense that the -- I suppose the way that I work with this piece was quite direct, I suppose. I mean, I enjoyed making this piece probably because of the -- you know there is a process where you can kind of keep control of all these things, the best thing about drawing, and when I say drawing, I mean all kinds -- I don't mean necessarily fine drawing, but I mean the process of getting an idea from your head to someone.

And this was quite, for me this was a quite a direct process, even though it involved lots of like, weight, and all that kind of stuff, and labor and everything; but it was very much, I was very much in control

of it. It was very physical I suppose in a way and it was a very direct process of coming from what I wanted to do to this piece. And I suppose in that sense it feels to me a lot like drawing, if that's what drawing is. I'm not sure.

Suzanne Weaver: Any other questions?

Audience Member: How important is it for the light to actually work?

Mark Handforth: It was really important for the light to function -- yeah, it seems to me that the the lamp obviously is a thing in and of itself. And it seems to me extremely important that it functions well, because anyway, I mean I make a lot of pieces that deal with light anyway, and I really... Light is this thing, that just, it almost has a life of its own, and exists on its own terms outside of everything, and I think that's such a--and also light is one of these incredible things we just have everywhere, and it's just such a crazy, beautiful, nutty transcendental thing, and it's you know, you have these cat eyes over there, on that tree, it's lights everywhere that it is just extraordinary, and I think that it's one of these banal things that's just unbelievable. So I think in a way as a material for work, this is the best in some ways.

Audience Member: Two unrelated questions: first of all, I sort of see a chain, and see it in it's constricting and binding in part of strangulation and you really describe a chain completely [inaudible] snake. Could you kind of comment on that, and especially in light of you original comments about being an enclosed, bound space? And second, when did you choose the colors and did that work over there have any relation to your color choice?

Mark Handforth: Right.

Suzanne Weaver: That's a good question.

Mark Handforth: That's a good question.

Suzanne Weaver: I am wondering, when he chose those?

Mark Handforth: The snake, I mean the chain snake, you know we have on the one hand the chain snakes, you know we make chain snakes. I live in Miami, and people make chain snakes all the time, the smaller ones, and you put your mailbox on them, and they are like, the things that you can do when you weld, and then you know, if you go around any honky-tonk neighborhood, you will see chain snakes, this is something people do with chain.

And the reason I like--they are not this big of course--but then you know, one of the things I like very much in the world I suppose and in work, is the kind of, there's almost like a natural order to the way that materials end up, and this ends up in its natural way, chain, you know the chain, I mean, I make rope snakes too. There are certain things that just end up being coiled up, and they -- it's almost inevitable that they form a snake.

Audience Member: This is bound.

Mark Handforth: Yeah, bound is a whole different thing, but that's, yeah, this is very much not bound, but in a way that's I think, that's why I ended up with snakes. I mean I like the snakes, and also I suppose I deal with stars and snakes. I do all these things that are quite, I guess they're quite strong symbols in and of themselves, and that's why I am drawn to sunrises and those kind of things that exist as sort of--on the one hand they exist as these very kind of like two dimensional symbols, and here they exist as a kind of reality, and then they exist as a kind of imagery that flows across the board. And I think that's another thing I wanted very much to have in my work all along with this you would deal with these things that were non-hierarchical, or cross all these areas.

It's a weird thing to be an artist, we are in the strange environment, sort of fetishized, closed off, elitist environment, yet at the same time there's all of the stuff in the world that's broad and stretches across everywhere, and that seems to me that's the most interesting material. So in terms of the color, I mean yeah, that di Suvero, that's a massive presence here necessarily, but I didn't really use that much red, I used a little bit of red on the--this is the di Suvero color.

Suzanne Weaver: But you also have the I-beam, you know.

Mark Handforth: Well, I do have the I-beam. I mean in a way those things are all, that's all here, all of that stuff. I mean I suppose my feeling about all of those things is that that language is available. As an artist, you can just use whatever language you want. There's a whole set of languages available and you can pick and choose them. I suppose that's always been my feeling about it, that there is no -- you are not beholden to one or to the other and in choosing one you are not knocking another. And then mixing them all together, it's also fine, I suppose, that's my sense.

But in saying that, I am not saying that the work is ambiguous. I am not saying that the work is uncertain. I am not saying that the work is made without a consciousness or a sense of purpose. I think that -- I think we are at a point where we can take everything and quite

purposely we do what we want with it. And I think that's a deliberate decision, it's not an accident. I'm in a show that just closed, it was about the uncertainty of sculpture, and my problem about the notion of the uncertainty of sculptures is I don't think sculpture an uncertain project. I don't think you make things uncertainly, I think you make them to definitively and with every certainty, I suppose that's my sense.

Suzanne Weaver: Well, although they can be – Yours is definitely with conviction, although there could be -- I think they were thinking on the theme with that exhibition “uncertain” because there could be, you know it moves back and forth from drawing, painting and various things that's it's doing, but that's what it's doing. It didn't start--it's not uneasy, it's not like timid.

Mark Handforth: No, no, no, it's like they're on their own certain terms, I suppose.

Suzanne Weaver: For other people they could -- you can see what got to them, and it could seem uneasy to the viewer, but not to the artist.

Mark Handforth: Right, Yeah, I think as an artist you are kind of -- you're, yeah, you are in control of what you do, and I think that's what's interesting about what you do. You have this ability to kind of to make these things. I think that's kind of what you do. I mean, and in terms of what you do, I think you're totally in control whether it describes an uncertain, or there are uncertain times, it's a whole lot of a question.

Suzanne Weaver: You did reference Anthony Caro in your statement, so what does Anthony Caro do?

(00:24:50)

Mark Handforth: Alright, well, in the statement I talked about Caro because I was talking about the way that when I first did the proposal here one of the things I was interested in was there's this thread in sculpture to do with the way that weight gets off the ground, and it's something that happens in Bernini, and something that happens in Caro, and it's something that happens in all these kind of sculpture, and I quite like that idea of taking all this heavy material and making it weightless, lifting it up. I like that for a variety of reasons, but I mean, partly because of what physically that does, but also because of I guess suppose what that means is an idea, the idea of taking all this heavy stuff and just releasing it.

And there's also, I suppose, when I was first making work, one of the things that I was very interested in were these loose Super 8 films, these Jack Smith's films which were very loose. In Jack Smith's films,

they're these little Super 8 films where they are tracking around pieces of rebar, people are dancing, and the film is really free form. I saw them when I was first at art school and there was this way of working where you didn't--partly because, obviously he never intended to make any money and he was just making work, but this business of just letting your work go, just traveling with it, and I suppose I like the idea of dealing with sculpture in those terms, that it could just travel, it could move, it could dance, it could do all these things that it wanted to do, and this piece is a little bit like that too, it's like a dance.

This is like the dancer around the corner that's at the wrong party, but it's dancing.

Suzanne Weaver: Definitely, well, it was brought up in the Matisse symposium, talking about the cinematic moment. So it deals with like the physicality of time and passage of time, because it also changes all the time, you are not quite sure when it changes, but it does deal with the physicality as movement and change.

Mark Handforth: Yeah, I mean, the whole thing about all the sculpture in the round, it's a very classic kind of conversation, I suppose. But this is not sculpture in the round in the sense that you walk around and you sort of appreciate it in the same sense, it's just a very different piece from everywhere, from every angle you get a different feel when it's turning up its back to you, [inaudible]. I wanted it to be this piece that could operate in a very strong way.

Suzanne Weaver: Any other questions? How are we doing on time? Gavin, you don't have another question? Dara? Allen, okay who else do we have. Okay, this one is for you.

Mark Handforth: Oh, that's great.

Allen: Experiencing this sculpture garden, you see all these greats and this monumental Mark di Suvero, and when you think of sculpture, you think of like perfect house with the Henry Moore in front, or when I look at this, I think of Alexander Calder and the mobile, and then I think of Mark di Suvero because of the heaviness and the rivets and the weight of this entire sculpture.

But in the contemporary art of today, generally speaking, outdoor sculpture in my view has fallen out of favor, and although we can think about a few exceptions to this rule, generally speaking contemporary arts today are not that focused with outdoor sculpture. They are mainly focused on painting and things that we can experience in a gallery or in a museum. So Mark, what is driving you

to put your stuff outdoors and somehow paint these strange colors and break all these rules.

Mark Handforth: That's a good question. Outdoor sculpture is a problem. It has a kind of shocking tradition, and it's like a difficult game to play. And I think that in a way one of the reasons why I chose to do it is because it has this weird tradition of this -- when I went to art school they used to talk about the Henry Moores. Some Henry Moores, they used to call them "turd in the square" sculptures because there was in every big square you would have this Henry Moore, and it become this kind of-- it was as ubiquitous on the street as a lamppost was or anything.

Partly one of the reasons I like them is because it is as ubiquitous as a lamppost, so this is this sense on the one hand of sculptures that you expect a sculpture out there. But on the other hand it struck me that this is a very interesting area, because you would exist on the street, on the street's terms, but on the other hand it was a very difficult area, because you were fighting against this whole tradition of bad public art, that's a tricky area to kind of work in, but I like it.

Suzanne Weaver: So talk about the monument.

Audience Member: (Inaudible)

Mark Speaker: Alright.

Audience Member: (Inaudible)

Mark Handforth: I actually think there is a way to put things on the street that are still radical, and still really do something. I just think the process of doing that is—I think there is a game that needs to be played to get these things out on the street. And part of that game is a whole, is a business of persuading people to kind of get behind something that they wouldn't normally get behind, and then you get the thing built. I am doing a piece right now which is a commission (let's hope it goes), but it's a commission in Washington, and it's a huge crumpled star to put on the Mall that we wouldn't really think that they would go for something like that, but right now through a process of tiny models and lots of conversation, everybody's behind it.

I think there is a way to get good stuff out on the street. I just think it's a really conscious activity of putting things out there. And in a way there were some good things, that there have been some good things out on the street anyway. There's a great Bruce Nauman in Frankfurt for example. It's a crazy piece, it's a cinder block diamond with lights. The most austere public sculpture that you can imagine, but somehow they managed to get it out there.

Every now and then I think these really interesting pieces kind of like slip out. It's like they're slipping through the cracks or -- but I don't think they're slipping through the cracks, I think it's a very deliberate effort to get good things out there. But it's a much tougher call than trying to get something radical into an art gallery, or into a museum. I think the street's where it's at and you got to get out on the streets somehow.

Suzanne Weaver: I think we have time for one more question.

Audience Member: To follow on from Adam's question. Talking about the public sculpture in here, what strikes me very different is that, there seems to be a real distance between the manufacture of these objects and the artists themselves. I know you have had an incredible struggle not only in making this, but in getting it here. How you are going to cope on going with that difference? How are you going to continue to make these things with your own hands? And how important is that?

Mark Handforth: I like making them. Yeah, that's a very good long-term question. I do make all these pieces myself. I have help doing them but I really am quite involved in them. Somehow for me that's important in terms of the making of the work, because it seemed to me that even if you move from much larger scale, you shouldn't somehow absolve yourself of the need to make the work, and I wanted to still be very involved in the making of the work.

So hopefully I think I intend to keep saying, and I suppose that at certain point maybe I'll get too tired or too weak, or maybe the pieces will get smaller then, but you know up until a point I think I would like to really stay involved in the making of the things up to the -- but it did almost kill me, so.

Audience Member: I wanted to ask you because you won't be here anymore, but I am looking at it and I trying to make sense of it, and I want to ask the artist. I see it totally different then you, and you made it, because I see structure and organization with buildings all around, and squares here, and this looks to me like a weed of metal and disorganization, but that building is organized, that building is organized, this is a 90 degree angle, and it's sort of like making a social commentary on urban life and weeds coming out, and just growing like crabgrass, and things like that. Am I close?

Mark Handforth: No, no, you are close. All of these things are kind of discarded elements. These are all the bits that are crumpled up and dropped and abandoned. In a way these aren't the fine pieces, these are the bits that get thrown away. Yeah, absolutely. And weeds are great

anyway, weeds are sort of the surviving plants. So if this is the weed of the sculpture garden, I think that's a good thing, good luck to it, let's hope it rains and it keeps going.

Suzanne Weaver: Keeps going! Well, I want to thank everyone for coming. This has been a great evening, and a couple of people I forgot to thank was Caitlin Topen, and Brent Mitchell, again thanks for everyone coming, it's been a great evening, I really appreciate it.

Total Duration: 35 Minutes