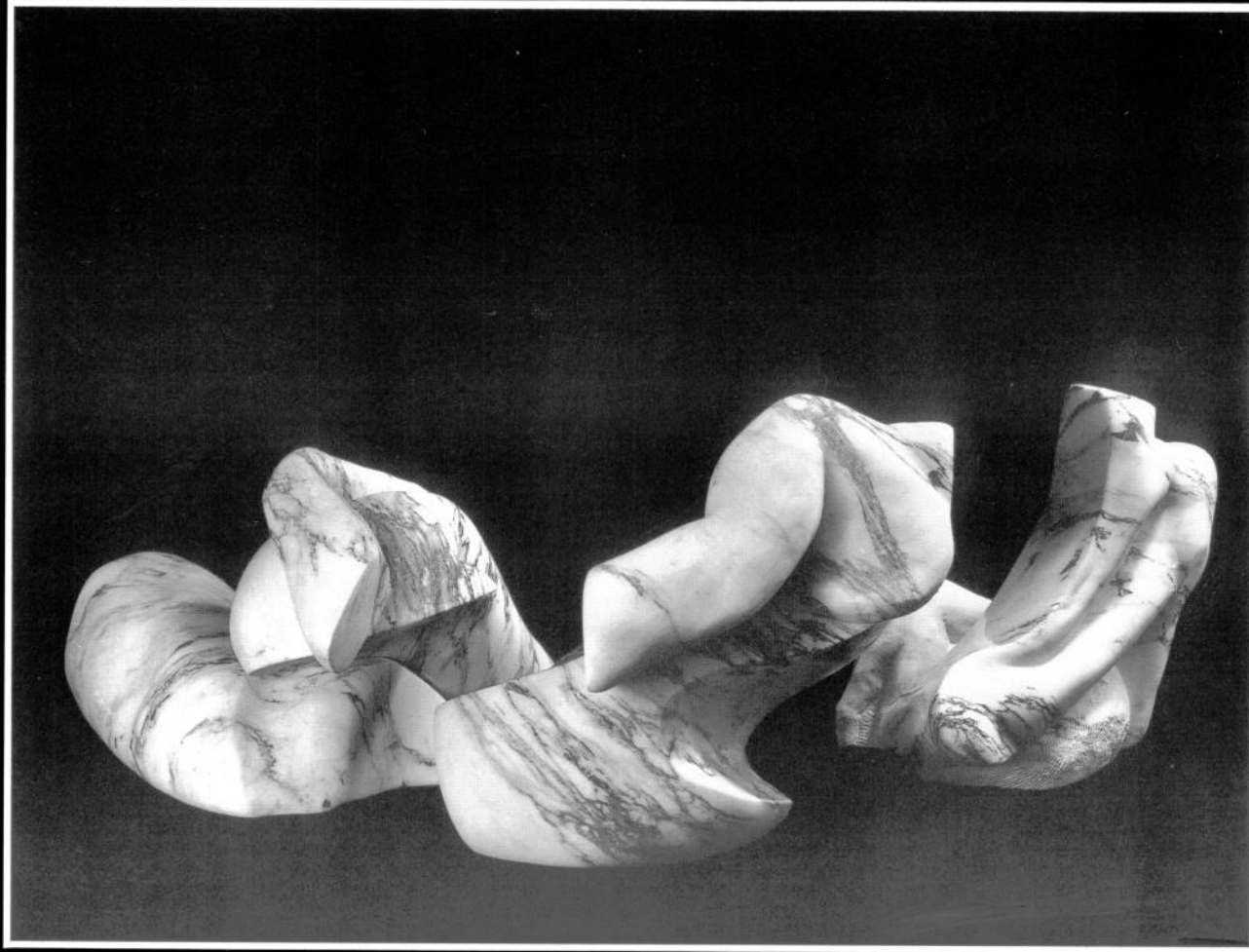


RICHARD MITZMAN



FRONT AND BACK COVERS: **Reclining Figure 4-piece '89** Paonazetta marble 40" x 26" x 16"

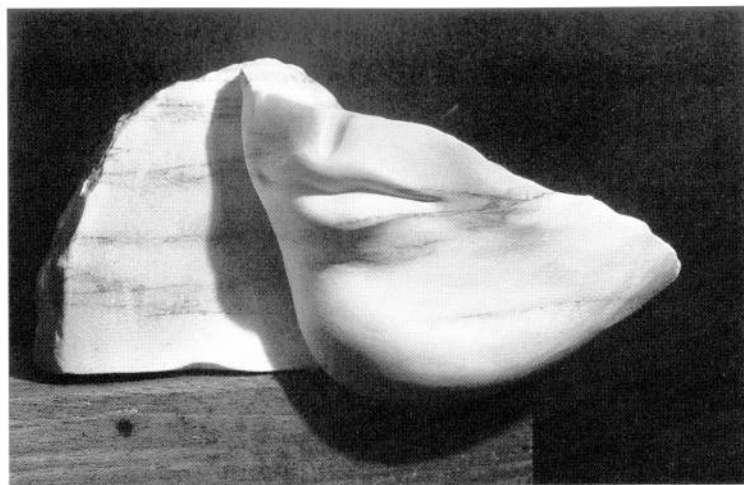


Boundary Gallery

Richard Mitzman
Sculptures and Drawings
1 June-19 June 1990
Tuesday-Saturday 11.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.

Boundary Gallery

98 Boundary Road London NW8 Telephone: 071 624 1126



ABOVE: **Face '89** Carrara marble 10" x 10" x 6"

OPPOSITE: **Seated nude, April '90** Ink and wash 8" x 12"

Richard Mitzman by Peter Fuller

There are several reasons for taking an interest in Richard Mitzman's work. Firstly, he is a sculptor who believes in direct carving; it would be unthinkable for him to get others to cut the stone for him. Secondly, he has a feeling for the materials with which he works, in his case Italian marbles; and, thirdly, he recognises that all sculptural form is rooted in, and springs out of, the body itself.

Many of today's 'New Sculptors' ignore such qualities altogether. Indeed, I was shocked, a few years ago, when a leading critic wrote in an introduction to a major national sculpture exhibition, 'Sculpture is what sculptors do. No other definition is possible.' I take a very different view. There are just two things that sculptors, as sculptors, can do: carving and modelling. Construction is just a rather specialised extension of the latter; and as for taking walks, tying twigs, or pouring out heaps of coloured sand; well, such activities are something else altogether, something, in my view, much less interesting. Much of the New Sculpture seems to me sans skill, sans tradition, sans everything.

What I like about Mitzman's work, above all else, is his unqualified commitment to – for want of a better phrase the humanist tradition. I understood that he used to look after

Henry Moore's teeth; Moore would, I am sure, have approved of his dentist's sculptural ambition. Certainly, looking at Mitzman's figures, I was reminded of something Moore once said about his own work: 'I think the humanist organic element will always be for me of fundamental importance in sculpture giving sculpture its vitality. Each particular carving I make

takes on in my mind a human, or occasionally animal, character and personality, and this personality controls its design and formal qualities, and makes me satisfied or dissatisfied with the work as it develops.' This is something which, on the evidence of these sculptures, Mitzman seems to have understood.

I do not, of course, intend to imply that Mitzman's works are as successful in an aesthetic sense as Henry Moore's. I hope that he will not mind me saying that I sometimes worry about the silkiness of his surfaces, and the amorphously

seductive sexuality manifest in some of these pieces. I would like to see a greater toughness in his drawings; and more awkwardness in his forms. Even so, Mitzman possesses not only technical skill, but also imagination and sculptural intelligence. At a time when good new sculpture is, so to speak, thin on the ground, this is a remarkable first one-man show.



Peter Fuller
April 1990

Peter Fuller is Art Critic of the Sunday Telegraph and Editor of Modern Painters.

Whilst this catalogue was in preparation the news came of Peter Fuller's tragic death in a motor accident on the 28th of April.

Biographical Notes

Richard Mitzman, born in London in 1945, graduated in dentistry at University College Hospital in 1967. His interest in sculpture was kindled during his doctoral studies at the University of Southern California, primarily due to the intensely sculptural approach to dental restorative work which he encountered there.

During his years in practice in Wimpole Street, he was known among his colleagues for his superlative carving in amalgam, a subject on which he also lectured extensively.

Upon his return from the United States in 1971 he took up sculpting in earnest, joining an experimental sculpture class. His first carvings in marble were executed on a family holiday in Italy in 1980, when he discovered the remarkable artists colony of Pietrasanta near the marble quarries of Carrara.

Following this holiday, a coincidental meeting with Henry Moore furthered his resolve to pursue the career of a sculptor. He became Henry Moore's dentist, chosen by Moore because he liked the idea of having a dentist who was also a fellow sculptor.

Mitzman decided to leave dentistry and concentrate upon



sculpture at the peak of his professional career. In June 1987 he sold his practice and spent over a year in Pietrasanta, gradually becoming more confident in his new profession.

From his earlier focus on abstract pieces relating to organic forms he has developed towards more figurative modes of

expression, concentrating exclusively on the female form, in an anonymous examination that often truncates or conceals the face of the subject. His bodies are muscular, active; the figurative concern of their portrayal is matched formally by the dynamism of their surfaces.

Mitzman strongly believes that one of the most important elements in sculpture is the quality of personal touch that can only be created in the process of carving the material. He carves exclusively in marble in order to achieve different types of finish from perfectly

smooth polished and slightly roughened rasp finishes to the ridged tooth surfaces.

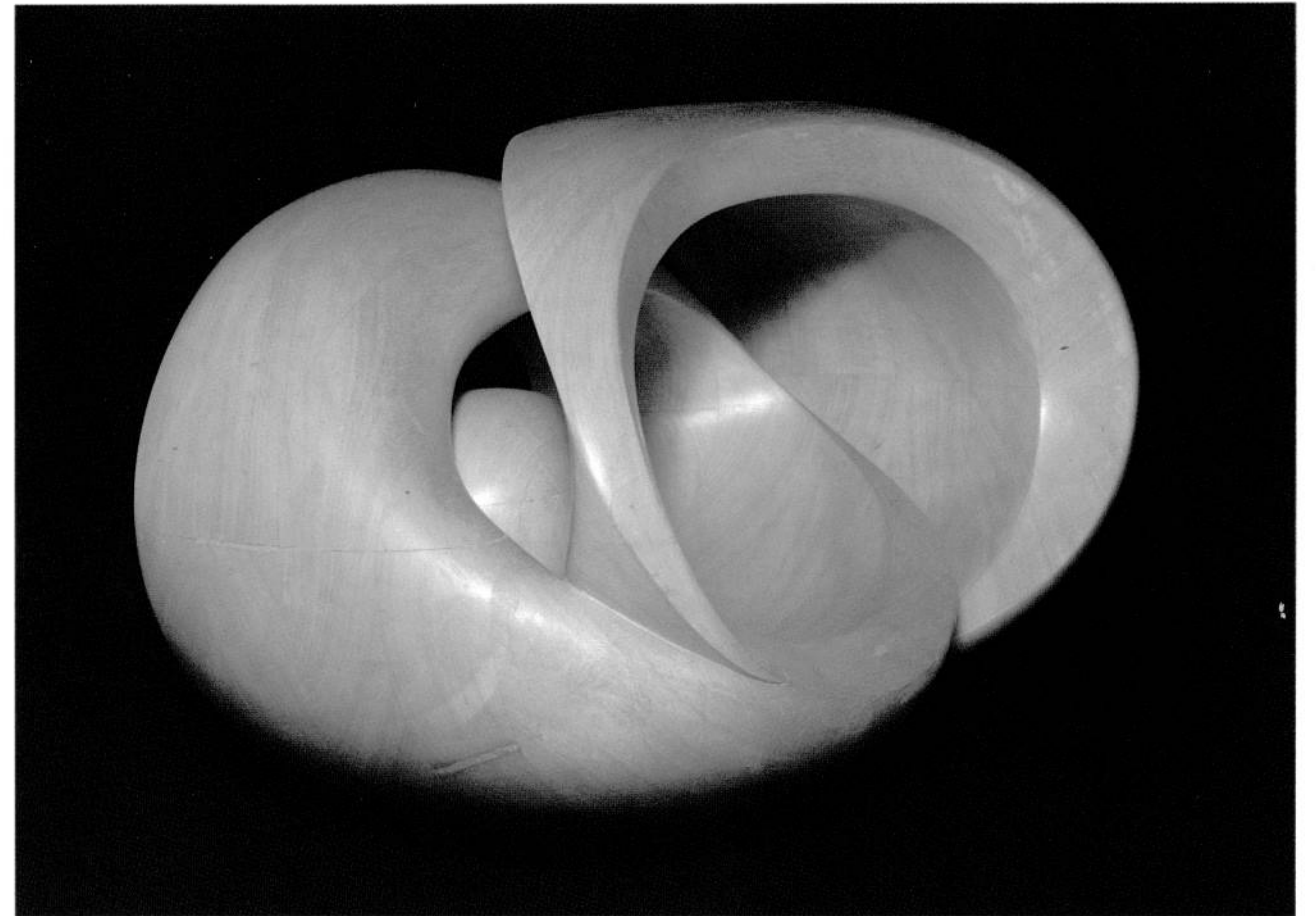
His drawings are an important complement to his sculptural work – he feels that they enhance and highlight the problems and opportunities of his three dimensional work.



Entwined Couple '87 Carrara marble 40" x 24" x 14"



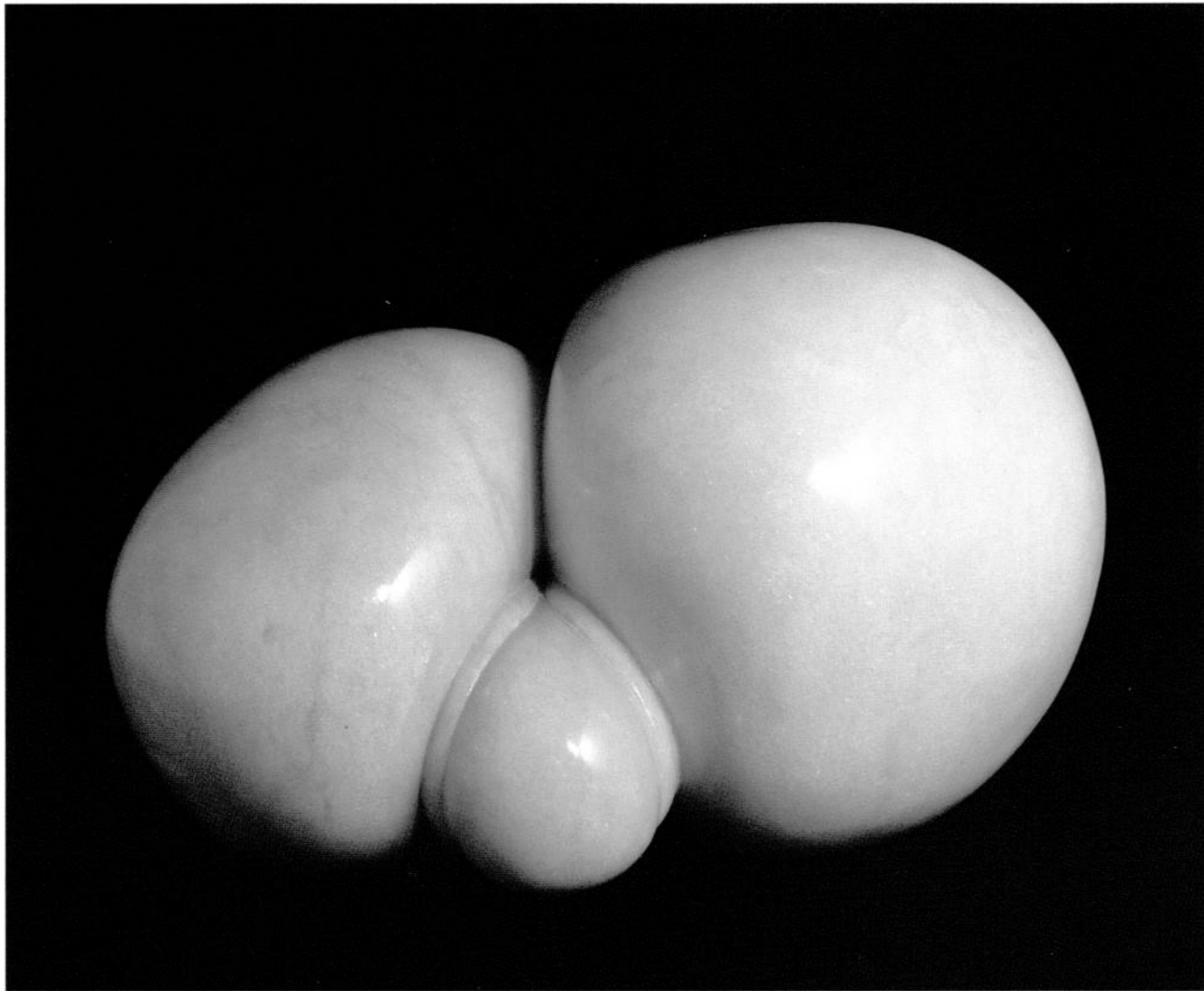
Twisted back, May '89 Graphite 24" x 34"



Knife Edge Wood Jelutang 12" x 22" x 12"



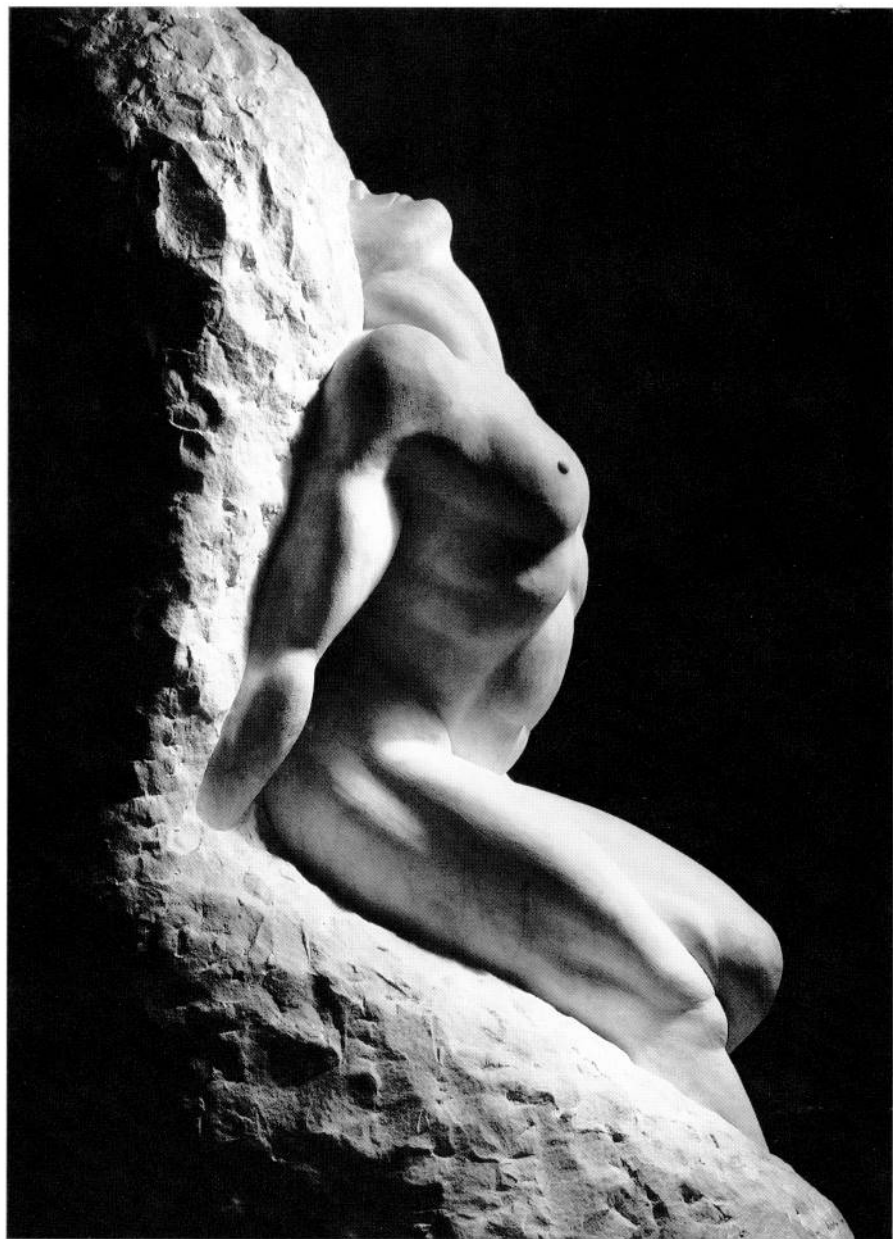
Pink Lady '89 Rosa Portugal marble 39" x 15" x 12"



Birth '81 *Rosa Portogalo marble* 16" x 9" x 9"



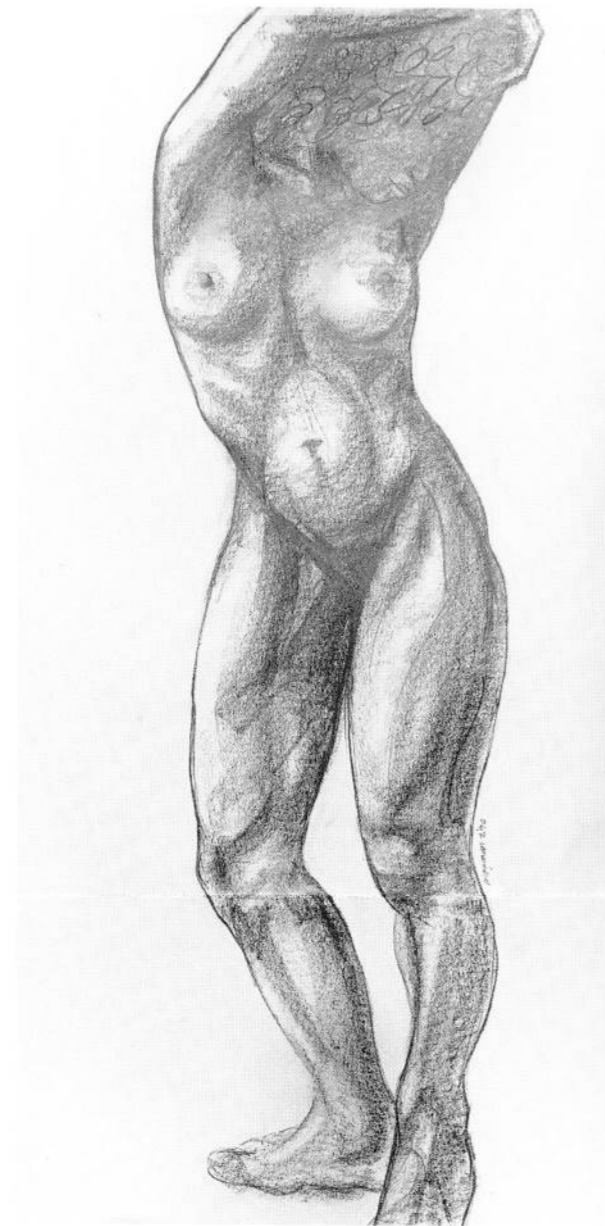
Black Lady '82 *Belgian Black marble* 16" x 11" x 14"



Tregiffian Piece '88 Carrara marble 22"×16"×46"



White Lady '87 Greek marble 46"×20"×16"



Standing nude, Feb '90 Graphite 24" X 47"



Standing nude, August '89 Graphite 24" X 34"