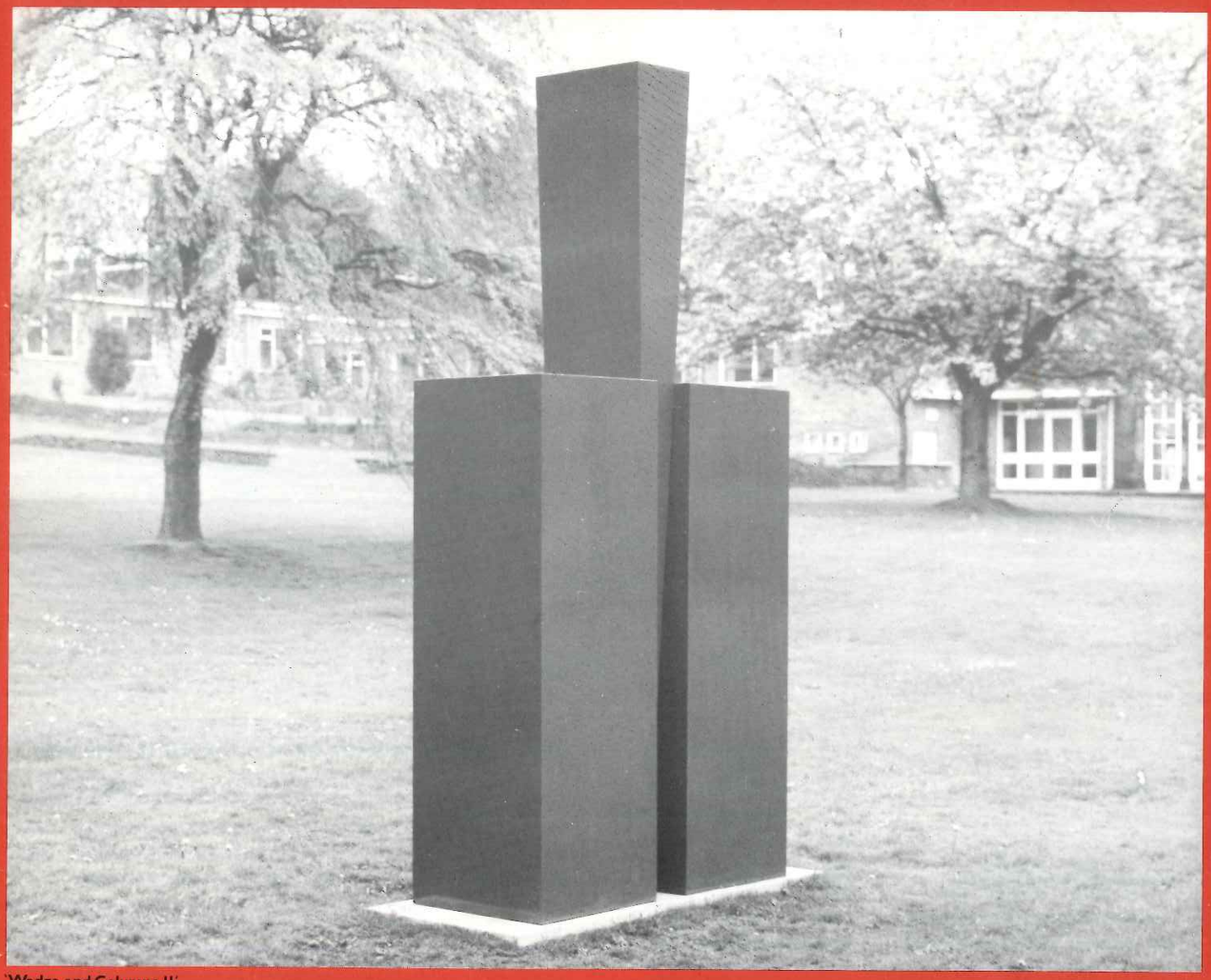
ROY KITCHIN



'Wedge and Columns II'

14 JUNE – 26 JULY 1986

Stoke-on-Trent City Museum & Art Gallery

Bethesda St, Hanley

Telephone (0782) 273173

SCULPTURE

Mon-Sat 10.30 – 5pm Sun 2 – 5pm Admission Free

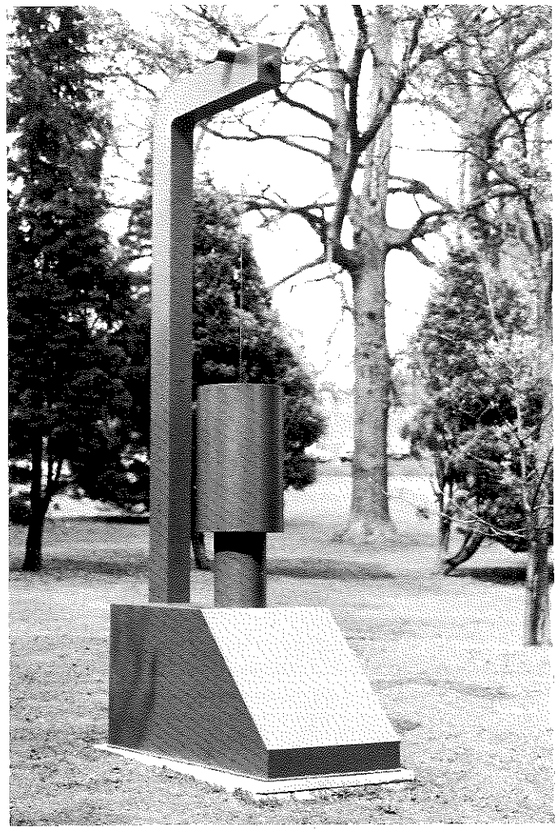
Some notes on the Sculpture by Pam Brown

Comprising just three elementary units, ***Wedge and Columns II*** is an exceedingly economical sculpture which stands as if calmly and silently bearing witness to its own controlled power.

The two parallel columns, which are not joined, seem incapable of offering much resistance to the wedge unless it is by virtue of their obvious weight, and so the wedge is allowed to slip quietly down, parting the columns. There are no powerful tensions or mighty forces actually employed or illustrated; the work is held in a steady passive state by the tip of the wedge, which rests on the ground.

The source of the quiet assertive strength of ***Wedge and Columns II*** is found in its absolute symmetry and purity of form: there are no superfluous embellishments, simply two square columns and a wedge. This austere statement is deeply satisfying. Whereas with other sculptures one feels bound to their energy fields by the pent-up forces they contain, with ***Wedge and Columns II*** one is magnetically drawn into its peaceful hieratic presence because the strong, powerful elements are at rest, inert.

Wedge and Columns II was the first of several sculptures to be painted red oxide, a colour eminently suited to the sculptor's more monumental works. Although recognizable for its industrial and functional connotations, its use here symbolically heightens the underlying religious air of the sculpture and is in total sympathy with the form.



"P.M." 1981, Steel, 12'2½"×6'0"×2'6".

The configuration of the flat slab-like elements of the lower portion of ***D.G. II*** establish the format for the whole structure, initiating the layers of alternate space and mass that move horizontally and vertically throughout the sculpture, synchronized in perfect harmony. In contrast to these thinner units are the two large blocks, each capable of exerting enormous pressure on the cylinders beneath, but here supported to some extent by the immense inherent strength of the cylindrical form, the columns to the rear, and the overhead jib and cable arrangements. The sculpture is absolutely self-contained: all the pressures and forces are balanced and are indivisible from the form, thus the physics and the form are one.

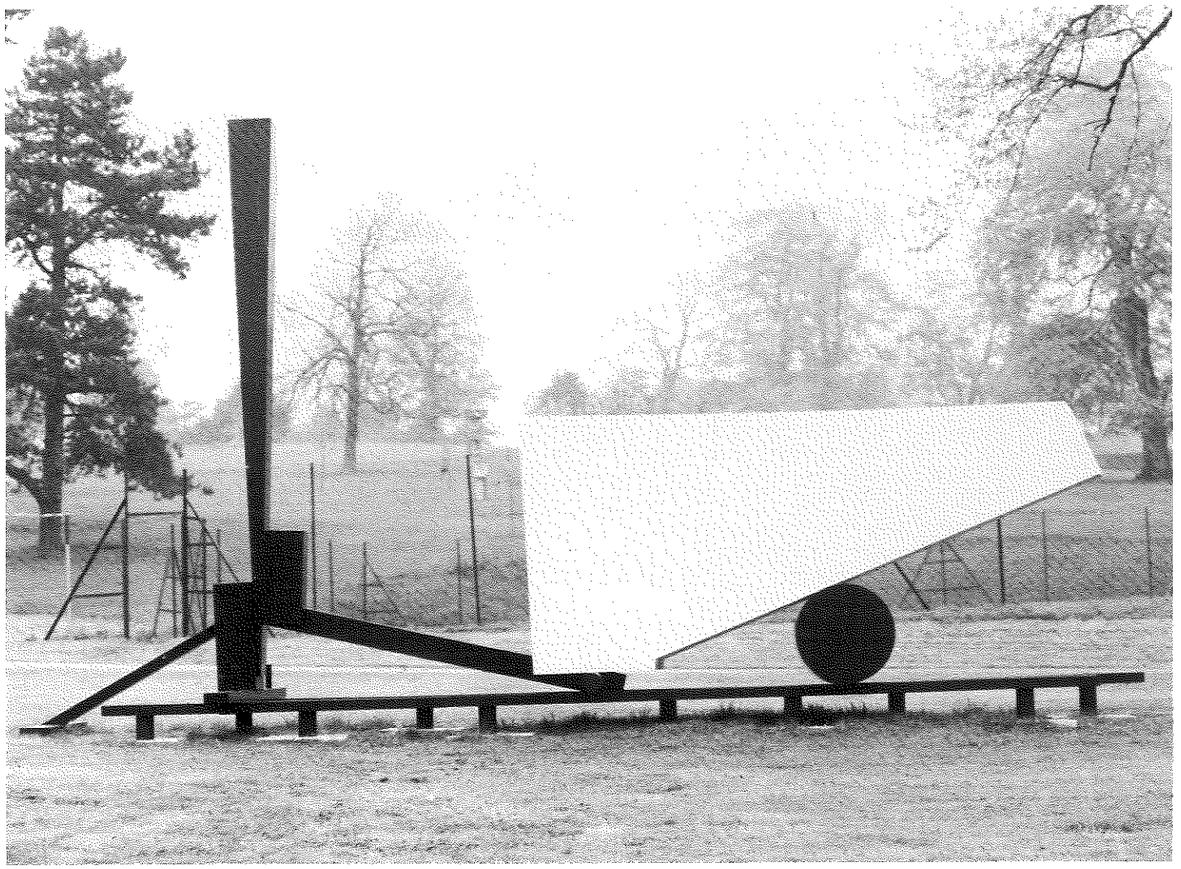
The repeated image used to such great effect in the sculptures of ancient civilizations produces both that same fathomless dignity, and, coincidentally the potent zone between the two groups of mass. It is extraordinary how the atmosphere of this space, tranquil when, viewed from without, becomes charged with dramatic intensity once it is entered; the area the sculpture is controlling becomes strongly apparent. ***D.G. II*** is almost totally abstract. There are few traces of mechanistic implication and if there is any connotation it is humanistic, for the sculpture is majestically serene.

Sine Track is principally concerned with the purely sculptural qualities of a Sine-bar, an implement used by engineers to calculate angles. Kitchin has a deep, abiding respect and understanding of the wonder of precision measuring instruments, perceiving them to be mystical, symbolic and ritualistic in nature.

The lower three components of the work partially adhere to the essential forms of a Sine-bar and the heavy rectangular block on top could represent the unit being measured. However, the sculpture does not literally illustrate a Sine-bar, it is rather a manifestation of its inherent potency. Because of the diagonals and forceful shape of the pierced lower element of ***Sine Track*** it looks distinctly capable of bearing the massive load pressing down upon it, both visually and in physical terms. The presence of the two robust broached rollers serves to create a slender gap between the sculpture and the earth and provide the clue to ***Sine Track's*** surprising double image. Not only are the mystical and physical powers of the sine-bar encapsulated in the work, but also bound up in the sculpture is the notion of a low-loader's trailer section. As the motive power can be applied to either end of a low-loader, so — because of the sculpture's absolute horizontality and symmetry — it too would be capable of movement in either direction at the slightest touch.

Biography

1926	Born Peterborough
1936	Moved to Birmingham. Apprentice joiner, began carving the human figure.
1945-48	Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.
1948-54	Assistant to William Bloye, FRSBS, Sculptor, worked with him on large scale sculpture and neo-classical architectural decoration.
1952-54	Studied sculpture at Birmingham College of Art.
1954	Began work as freelance architectural Sculptor, commissions included the complete recarving of the decoration on Birmingham Cathedral tower
1954-60	Personal sculpture in bronze be came less figurative; more organic and anthroporphic
1961	Part-time teaching, Wolverhampton College of Art. Sculpture influenced by the imagery of industrial technology; first use of steel
1964	Became full-time lecturer, Wolverhampton College of Art
1971-1983	Lecturer in Sculpture, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne. Sculpture increased notably in scale
1983 - present	Devoted to working full-time on the making of sculpture.



"BUFFERS END" 1979 Steel 16'0"×26'10"×7'0".

One Person Exhibitions

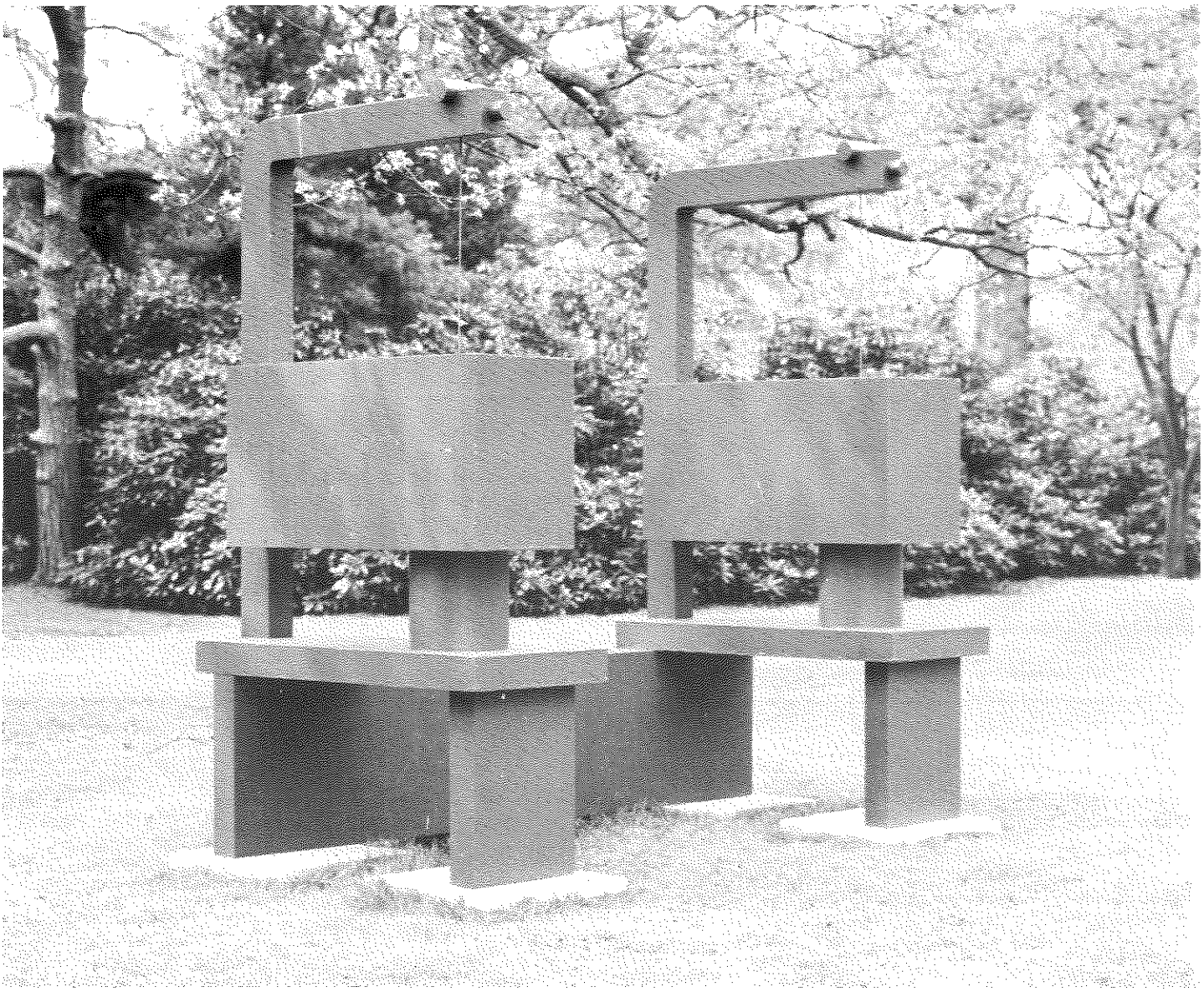
1968	Wolverhampton Art College
1976	Hatton Gallery, Newcastle University (also 1978)
1979	Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham
	Newcastle University (outdoor)
1980	Wolverhampton Art Gallery,
	Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester (outdoor)
1983	Cooper Gallery, Barnsley, Yorkshire Sculpture Park
	Eton College Gallery, Windsor
1984	Sutton Manor, Nr. Winchester (outdoor)
	Spacex Gallery, Exeter (in and outdoor)
1986	Margam Sculpture Park, Wales (in and outdoor)

Collections

Scottish Sculpture Trust
Highland Sculpture Park
Yorkshire Sculpture Park
Margam Sculpture Park
Cleveland Art Gallery
Scunthorpe Borough Council
Dunaujavros Town Council, Hungary
Various Private Collection

Group Exhibitions

1962	Leadlanarch Festival
1964	Wolverhampton Art Gallery (also 1966)
1966	Hamilton Gallery, London (also 1967)
1969	Wolverhampton Polytechnic Gallery (also 1972, 1978)
1973	Sheffield Polytechnic Gallery
1974	Hatton Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne University (also 1976, 1983)
1976	Newcastle upon Tyne Festival (outdoor)
1977	Metal Art Precinct, South Shields
	Northern Arts Gallery, Newcastle Upon Tyne
	Newcastle Upon Tyne, Polytechnic Gallery (also 1978, 1979, 1982)
1978	Yorkshire Sculpture Park (outdoor)
1979	Newcastle upon Tyne University
1980	Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne
1983	The Esplanade, Rochdale (outdoor)
1983/84	'Drawing in Air' Touring Exhibition, Ceolfrith Gallery, Sunderland; Glyn Vivian Gallery, Swansea; Bolton Art Gallery; Henry Moore Study Centre, Leeds
	Yorkshire Sculpture Park (outdoor)
	Margam Sculpture Park, Wales (outdoor)
1984	Cleveland Gallery, Middlesbrough
1985/86	'Sculpture & Architecture — Restoring the Partnership' Touring Exhibition.
	Winter Exhibition, Yorkshire Sculpture Park
1986	National Garden Festival, Stoke-on-Trent



"D.G. II" 1981, Steel 8'4½"×9'0"×4'10".

Catalogue

Steel sculptures

1.	*Buffer's End*	16'0"×26'10"×7'0"	1979
2.	*Wedge and Columns II*	10'3"×4'9½"×2'1"	1980
3.	*P.M.*	12'2½"×6'0"×2'6"	1981
4.	*D.G. II*	8'4½"×9'0"×4'10"	1981
5.	*Wedges Mills III*	9'2½"×10'1"×4'9½"	1981
6.	*Sine Track*	3'8½"×8'2"×1'3"	1983

Wood Maquettes

7.	*Steel Key I*	6¾"	1978
8.	*Buffer's End*	8"	1978
9.	*Wedge and Columns II*	7¾"	1980
10.	*Artic II*	4¾"	1980
11.	*Wedges Mills III*	8½"	1980
12.	*Interesting Load*	6¾"	1980
13.	*P.M.*	12¼"	1981
15.	*Inclined Impasse*	4"	1981
16.	*Sun I*	6¾"	1982
17.	*Blake*	5¾"	1982
18.	*Wellington*	6¾"	1982
19.	*E.X.P.*	4"	1982
20.	*Reciprocator*	6¼"	1982
21.	*Friction Bench*	3¼"	1982
22.	*Sine Track*	2¼"	1983
23.	*Fulcrum Point*	5¼"	1983
24.	*Sun II*	6"	1983
25.	*Mechanical Arch*	7½"	1983
26.	*T.S. II*	7"	1984

The dimensions for the steel sculptures are given in the order of height, then length, then width. The wood maquettes are listed with their approximate height.