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Bryan Hunt

Monuments and Wonders 1974–79

October 2–October 27, 2007

Reception:
Friday, October 5
5:30–7:30pm

Gallery Hours:
Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–6pm



Hindenburg, 1974, silver leaf on silk paper on balsa wood, 8 x 8 x 49 1/2 inches

September 2007, Philadelphia, PA - Locks Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of important early works by sculptor Bryan Hunt. This will be the first time in close to twenty years that the works in the exhibition, created between 1974 and 1979, will be shown together. *Monuments and Wonders 1974–79* will be accompanied by a scholarly catalogue bringing together virtually all of Hunt's significant early works, including those from several museum collections and include an essay by Constance Lewallen. This will be Hunt's fifth exhibition with the Locks Gallery.

Hunt (b. 1947 in Terre Haute, IN) developed an early interest in architecture and space exploration (having worked as a technical assistant at the Kennedy Space Center in his teens) and the early works exhibit his fascination with the history and construction of buildings, monuments and flying machines. In 1968, Hunt moved to Los Angeles and studied at the Otis Art Institute. He continued to live and work in LA until 1976, part of a dynamic scene that included Allan McCollum, Lynda Benglis, Bruce Naumann, and Chris Burden.

During these years in LA, Hunt produced an extraordinary body of work. Curator Sue Scott has called 1974 the pivotal year of Hunt's career. "In only twelve months, he created five important sculptures that moved his work in a new direction, laying a firm foundation for years of intense creativity. These five works – *Empire State with Hindenburg*, *Nankow Pass (Wall of China)*, *Hoover Dam*, *Tower of Babel*, and the first of a

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series of airships – with their curious amalgamation of art, science, technology and philosophy were radically different from sculpture then being shown in galleries and museums.” These works were a challenge to the cult-like followers of Minimalism and Earth Art and a sophisticated and idiosyncratic response to classical and modern sculpture.

Following these earliest works came a series of sculptures depicting the volumes of lakes and quarries and then the first of his signature waterfall sculptures.

Hunt, like such artists as Anthony Caro and Nancy Graves, reinvigorated bronze as a viable material for contemporary art. Writing in 1984 in the *New York Times* about Hunt's early waterfalls and the fluid movement suggested by the bronze surface, Michael Brenson commented that "Bryan Hunt comes closest to meeting the modernist requirement of truth to materials." By choosing bronze for early works such as *Nankow Pass (Wall of China)*, 1974, Hunt presciently redirected attention back to bronze at the same time creating work unlike anything done before.



Installation view, Locks Gallery, 2007

His first solo exhibition in Los Angeles was at the Jack Glenn Gallery in 1974, but he was soon showing internationally including solo exhibitions at The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, The Clocktower, New York (1974). These early works were also included in critical group exhibitions of the time, including “Young American Artists” at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (1978), “made by sculptors” at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1978), “Decade in Review” at the Whitney Museum of American Art (1979), and “Visionary Images” Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago (1979). Many of these early works are in museum collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Locks Gallery is located at 600 Washington Square South in Philadelphia, PA. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm. For additional information, please contact Locks Gallery at 215.629.1000 voice, 215.629.3868 fax, or info@locksgallery.com.

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