



Two Shelterers Eating

Henry Moore

Not on display

Title/Description: Two Shelterers Eating

Artist/Maker: Henry Moore

Born: 1941

Object Type: Drawing

Materials: Chalk, Crayon, Ink, Paper, Pencil, Watercolour, Wax crayon

Measurements: Unframed: (h. 165 x w. 155 x d. 1 mm) Framed: (h. 312 x w. 320 x d. 53 mm)

Inscription: signature

Accession Number: 94

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Britain, England, Europe

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Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

Moore's annotation on the verso of *Two Shelterers Eating* affirms the importance he places on expressing sculptural form in his drawings:

'Expression of human element does not depend only on facial expression. A deeper and (more) moving and lasting human meaning comes from the figures' entire pose (which is also its full sculptural relationships throughout) the way it holds itself.'

His note likewise reiterates the centrality of the body, even in this drawing that focuses on the figures' faces. Further instructions to himself suggest his aims in conveying the mood of the figures: 'Try to intensify sense of apprehension (quiet apprehension).' And a note in pencil: 'Try to give idea that something has just happened or is about to happen.'

A sketch for this drawing is found on page ninety-five of Moore's Second Shelter Sketchbook. In the sketch the figures seem even more haunted, with skull-like faces. Their features have been softened and fleshed out in the final drawing, yet hollow eyes continue to express acute concern. Their faces are heightened in the bright white of the wax, and squares of yellow and grey in the background provide a patchwork of light and dark.

Although the focus of these two figures is on their faces, they are not intended to be descriptive portraits; rather, they are generalised images - like all of Moore's shelter drawings. However, they do include unusual specifics for Moore's oeuvre. The act of eating is strangely domestic, and the clothes are more descriptive than his typical blankets or ambiguous drapery. These elements suggest that Moore may have referenced found imagery in addition to his own memories and notes for this drawing. He made notes and small sketches from the London Underground stations, when they were being used for shelter during the Blitz. He is also known to have sourced imagery from such magazines as *Picture Post* for some of his shelter drawings.

Tania Moore, September 2020

Exhibitions

'Henry Moore at Dulwich Picture Gallery', Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, 12/5/2004 - 12/9/2004

Further Reading

Steven Hooper (ed.), Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection, volume 1 (Norwich: University of East Anglia, 1997)

Ann Garrould, Anita Feldman Bennett and Ian Dejardin, Henry Moore at Dulwich Picture Gallery (London: Scala Publishers, 2004)

Tania Moore, Henry Moore: Friendships and Legacies (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre, 2020)

Provenance

Purchased by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury in 1953.

Donated to the University of East Anglia in 1973 (Sainsbury Centre).
