



Fig.12  
Caro at Emma Lake, 1977

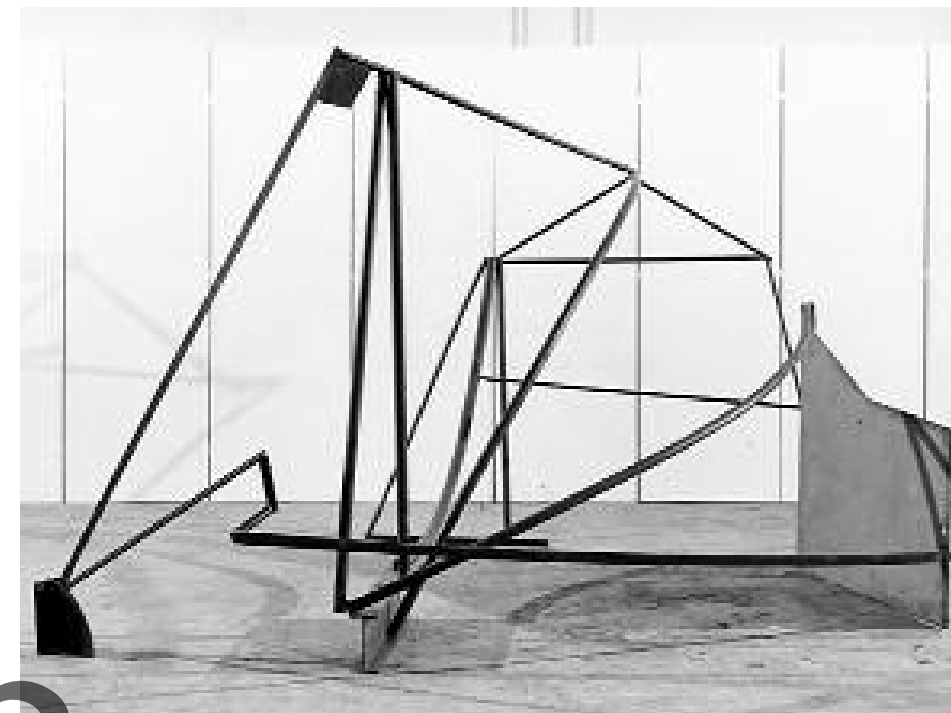


Fig.13  
*Emma Push Frame*, 1977-8  
Steel, rusted painted and blacked  
213.5 x 274.5 x 343 cm (84 x 108 x 135 in)  
Würth Collection, Künzelsau, Germany  
(B1.175)



Fig.14  
Pablo Picasso, *Project for a Monument to Guillaume Apollinaire*, 1962  
Enlarged version after 1928 original maquette, painted steel  
198.1 x 74.8 x 159.8 cm (78 x 29½ x 63 in) including base  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of the artist

Loder, founded Triangle Artists' Workshop in upstate New York – now based in Brooklyn – a programme modelled on the Emma Lake workshops that brings together selected artists from all over the world to work in close proximity.

While at Emma Lake, Caro employed the Canadian sculptor Douglas Bentham as his assistant. Together, they created more than 20 sculptures that became known as the *Emma Lake* series. Apparently conceived in direct opposition to the massive *York Pieces* made three years earlier, the character of the *Emma Lake* series was actually a consequence of the remote location of Emma Lake and the inherent difficulties of getting materials to the residency. Most of the material employed was tubular steel and angle iron, which was not only readily available but could also be handled easily without the aid of mechanical equipment.<sup>53</sup> (The 'sculpture studio' at Emma Lake, at that time, was the car park.) Because of these human and environmental limitations, the works Caro constructed in the summer of 1977, and then completed in May of 1978, were deliberately linear and relatively light.

The lyrical, cage-like structures of *Emma Dipper* (1977; plate 43), *Emma Push Frame* (1977-8; fig.13) and *Emma Dance* (1977-8; plate 44) could be

read as contour drawings of the profiles of the massive *York Pieces*, yet there is an undeniable Picasso influence. To prepare for his trip to Emma Lake, Caro went back to his roots and revisited the drawings of Picasso. This connection becomes even clearer when we consider the gestural relationship between these sculptures and the early works on paper from 1953 to 1954 discussed previously. Although much larger in size, the *Emma Lake* works are plainly related to Picasso's wire constructions of the late 1920s (fig.14). Their structural language, however, is completely Caro's; like his open, linear constructions of the 1960s, the *Emma Lake* pieces both come up off the ground and spread out horizontally, defining the space they inhabit. As it does in the sculptures that incorporate mesh planes, *Carriage* and *The Window*, Caro's drawing claims and activates the space, enclosing a fictional interior yet still allowing the eye to move in and around. The elegance of the *Emma Lake* works recalls the 'naked sculptures' of the early 1960s, while their complexity is indebted to Caro's experimentations in his *Table Pieces*. In the *Emma Lake* series, Caro magically suggests a type of grand cursive script. The *Emma Lake* series proves 'that complex drawing moving in and out of three dimensional space' is not 'beyond sculpture's possibilities'.<sup>54</sup>

### Writing in Air

The *Writing Pieces* and *Ceiling Pieces* that followed, in the late 1970s, seem to combine Caro's experience in Saskatchewan and the ongoing investigations of his *Table Pieces*. The *Writing Pieces* are not as 'dependent' on the table edge as the earlier table sculptures. Like the earlier *Table Pieces*, many of the later small-scale sculptures are painted and also include instruments such as wrenches, pincers, tongs, callipers, hatchet blades, nuts and scissors. A much smaller series in number, the *Ceiling Pieces* were intended to be suspended from above, dangling down, effectively shifting the relationship between the viewer and the work. Collectively these two groups of works allow Caro to give free rein to the possibilities of using line. Volume and plane become completely secondary elements. Fluid, cursive, flamboyant line takes centre stage. Caro says he titled the *Writing Pieces* because for him 'they are

like writing'.<sup>55</sup> However there is an inherent contradiction in the *Writing Pieces*. Although the title of the series evokes the act of writing, and infers the gesture of moving pen or pencil with ease across a sheet of paper, the arrangements of the works themselves in metal are unexpectedly much more fluid than mere handwriting. With human writing, the gesture comes from the hand and it can be jerky, stunted, mangled and scratchy, while with Caro's *Writing Pieces* it is almost as if the motion flows out from the wrist. Caro takes the action of writing and extends it, abstracts it into broad movements yet still maintains an intimacy that is translated optically, which shapes our understanding of these works. While looking at them we recall the sensation of our own ability to write because they embody how we want and expect handwriting to be: a series of beautiful, loopy, sinuous lines.

1 Warrior

1953-4

Monotype on vellum  
25.3 x 20.2 cm (10 x 8 in)  
(D97)

This *Warrior* monotype is one of a series of numerous early works on paper, in which Caro's interest in traditional subject matter is combined with his new appreciation of the pre-Columbian and African cultures that inspired artists such as Henry Moore, Pablo Picasso, Paul Gauguin and Henri Matisse. The overall sparse quality of line and rough appearance of this warrior foreshadow Caro's *Trojan War* series created 40 years later.



2 Bull

1954

Brush and ink on newsprint  
45.7 x 58.4 cm (18 x 23 in)  
(D184)

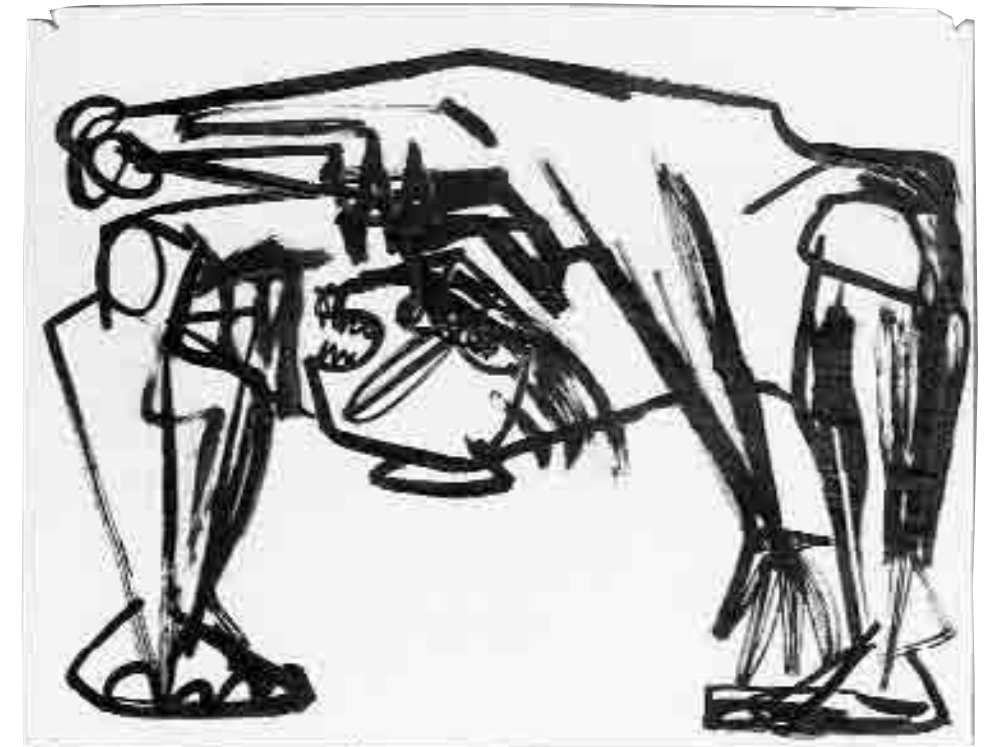
Part of a large series of brush-and-ink works on paper, this bull also displays Caro's preoccupation with the work of Picasso. Since he was from Spain, it is not surprising that Picasso would make the bull, the bull fight and eventually the Minotaur an important part of his visual repertoire. Here, Caro takes this bull imagery and makes it his own. Like Picasso, he strips down the bull to a contour line yet by pushing the image to the very edges of the paper, he is able to retain all of the brute force that this animal evokes.



3 Figure

1954

Brush and ink on newsprint  
45.7 x 58.4 cm (18 x 23 in)  
(D205)



4 Baby with a Ball

1954

Brush and ink on newsprint  
58.4 x 45.7 cm (23 x 18 in)  
Collection Dieter Blume  
(D233)





36 *Clearing*

1970

Steel and aluminium, painted burgundy

145 x 152.5 x 376 cm (57 x 60 x 148 in)

Gift of the Friends of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1972  
(B941)

Like earlier pieces, *Clearing* is also indicative of Caro's interest in incorporating a 'table' form into his compositions. Instead of acting as an element upon which various appendages, shapes and forms spring off of or hover below, the table shape in *Clearing* creates a ceiling plane that pushes the centre of gravity down; in turn, the piece sprawls along the floor. The thickness and height of the three table supports are varied, which causes the 'tabletop' to rest at an angle, suggesting a diagonal force that further enhances the motions of downwards and outwards.

47 Table Piece CCCLXXXVIII

1977

Steel, rusted and varnished

102.9 x 111.8 x 53.3 cm (40 7/8 x 44 x 21 in)

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art  
(B400)

On his return to London after his time at the Emma Lake workshop in Saskatchewan, Caro created a series of *Table Pieces* inspired by the works he had just recently composed. With its cage-like appearance and thin, fluid lines, *Table Piece CCCLXXXVIII* bears a striking similarity to *Emma Dipper*. And, like the *Emma Lake* series, this *Table Piece* not only outlines space, it defines it. With its highly calligraphic overall composition, this sculpture prefigures the later series of *Table Pieces* aptly called the *Writing Series*.



50 Ceiling Piece A

1979

Steel, rusted and varnished

124.5 x 86.4 x 57.2 cm (49 x 34 x 22½ in)  
(B555)

Created in tandem with the *Writing Pieces* are the *Ceiling Pieces*, which were intended to be suspended from above. *Ceiling Piece A* orients itself as a right angled triangle, with one leg running parallel just below the ceiling and the other pointing straight down to the floor, ending with four delicate thread-like loops. The substance of the sculpture plays itself out within the hypotenuse angle. The *Ceiling Pieces* loom over us, and yet their delicate lines are reminiscent of spider webs. The overall presence of these sculptures is both familiar and uncomfortable.



51 Ceiling Piece D

1979

Steel, rusted and varnished

142.2 x 106.7 x 61 cm (56 x 42 x 24 in)  
(B558)



56 Chicago Fugue

1986–7

Bronze and sheet bronze, welded  
853 x 457 x 366 cm (335 3/4 x 180 x 144 in)  
Private Collection, USA  
(B1877)

Created before Caro participated in the special 'Art Triangle Barcelona' workshop in 1987, *Chicago Fugue's* deconstructed xylophone shape evokes references to jazz – forms that look like giant musical notations seem to hover above and below. Due to this association, Caro's interest in the work of Matisse can also be considered another reference point for this sculpture, as evident in the large solid curving shapes that are juxtaposed against thin, straight angular lines. The sculpture also carries certain vestiges of pieces such as *Serenade* (1970–71; plate 39). However it is the central grate/table element that anticipates the 'bench' works which Caro went on to create in Barcelona.

