

William King | The Early Work of William King

December 2, 2006 through January 27, 2007

EXTENDED through January 27th

The gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of early sculpture by William King. This show is organized by Sanford Schwartz and accompanied by an illustrated catalog.

Now eighty-one, William King has been showing figurative sculpture on a regular basis in New York for over fifty years. His familiar, often long-legged, figures, embodying a unique blend of social satire, fantasy, and an affectionate eye for everyday life, have long been recognized as a distinctive contribution to American art. "The Early Work of William King," which covers primarily pieces made in the 1950s, when the artist was in his late twenties and early thirties, represents the first time, however, that a period of King's career has been looked at intensively.

Bringing together thirty works from private and museum collections, including those of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Guggenheim Museum, the exhibition follows a young virtuoso of many materials—wood, clay, metal—as he sought to find his voice. As shown by the 1953 "Miss Bowman," a witty portrait in pine of a scrutinizing young woman, King, at the time, was evolving an art full of precise observation about the body language of contemporary life and yet almost abstract in its feeling for materials and form. Among his subjects were dancers and babies, musicians and couples, friends and family. Taken together, they cast new light on a veteran artist, and present some of the shrewdest and most sensitive delineations of people made by an American in any medium.

King's work has been the subject of over 60 one-person exhibitions. Most recently the gallery presented a survey of his recent terra cottas. The artist lives and works in East Hampton.