



Monumental Dreams: The Life and Sculpture of Ann Norton

Caroline Seebom

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In 1929, the Museum of Modern Art opened its doors, showing the astonishing paintings of Picasso, Matisse, and other avant garde artists. Young American artists quickly responded by experimenting with impressionism, cubism, and abstraction.

In *Monumental Dreams*, author Caroline Seebohm tells the riveting story of how Ann Norton (1905–1982)—a child of the South who had eschewed her Alabama roots to become a sculptor in New York City—joined this new guard. She studied with John Hovannes and Jose de Creeft and was studio assistant to Alexander Archipenko. Her work was well received, and by age 35, she had already participated in group shows at MOMA and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Despite her burgeoning career, Norton found New York a difficult place to live. In search of paying work, she moved to Florida, where she became a teacher at the Norton Gallery and School of Art, founded by retired Acme Steel president Ralph Hubbard Norton. The two built a relationship based on love as well as common aesthetic values, and after his death, she built her finest and lasting work. Today, her monolithic sculptures—in the spirit of Stonehenge, Henry Moore, and Buddhist temple art—can be admired in the Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens.

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