



Barbara Hepworth Makutu Sculpture

LUTHERVILLE, MD

Makutu is a cast-bronze abstract sculpture by Dame Barbara Hepworth. It features the hole through the simple overall form and difference in patina on the interior and exterior that are emblematic of her work. This cast from 1970 is the third of nine in the series. Other casts can be found at the Tate Gallery in London and the University of Arizona Museum of Art.

We were contracted to perform the conservation treatment of the work, which remained in the collection of the original owner. Exposure over half a century had led to loss of the original patina and deterioration of the finely finished surface. Based upon research into other examples in the Makutu series and inspection of protected surfaces, we determined the original patina and finish scheme.

Conservators cleaned the sculpture to remove failed coating, loose corrosion, and soiling. Selective patination with varying chemical concentrations was applied to restore the exterior finish. The interior was also patinated chemically to the bright green-blue original color. A coating of custom-blend microcrystalline waxes with corrosion inhibitors was applied to the brown outer surfaces and then buffed to a high-shine. The interior was lacquered to maintain the original patina intention. We provided maintenance recommendations as a means to prevent future deterioration as well as promote longevity of the treatment.

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/makutu-sculpture/>

SERVICES PERFORMED

Art Conservation
Conservation Treatments
Metal Conservation—Draft