



Horse and rider

2015

Solid stainless steel

109.5 inches by 40 inches by 105.875 inches
(278 centimeters by 102 centimeters by 269 centimeters)

© Charles Ray, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery

Photo: Ron Amstutz

Charles Ray (b. 1953, Chicago, USA)

Charles Ray grew up in Chicago with his parents, who owned and ran a commercial-art school that was founded by his grandmother. Ray then attended the Art Institute in Chicago, the University of Iowa (receiving his BFA in 1975) and Rutgers University (receiving his MFA in 1979). Ray is currently a Professor Emeritus in the UCLA Department of Art. Ray was trained in High Modernism and influenced by the constructivist aesthetic of Anthony Caro and David Smith, Roland Brener and Robert Morris. Other influences were Giacometti, Rodin, and the Greek Kouros.

Considered a sculptor's sculptor, he thinks sculpturally by making his pieces in space rather than focusing primarily on the material, and by embedding the sculpture—in space, time, and the civic realm. He is interested in intentionality, work that defies explanation and makes one ponder, and the intensity of making, allowing details that show the presence of the maker. His work

is informed by science—especially physics and philosophy, including mereology. His work varies in style, subject, presence, and scale, and materials include steel, porcelain, and aluminum. Ray's work has been shown at the Whitney Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and Kunstmuseum, Basel.

Horse and rider (2015)

Made of solid stainless steel, the artist is seated on Hopper, a famous Hollywood horse. Both of them being “over the hill,” they are “embedded” in their particular time and space. In contrast to a military statue, this sculpture is not built on a pedestal.

The fiberglass model for this work was digitally scanned in 3D and carved from solid blocks of stainless steel using computer-guided machinery. The sculpture weighs 9.5 tons.

Reflections

Take a close look at Horse and rider by Charles Ray. Do you notice anything slightly odd or off about the horse, the rider, or their accessories? What is the impact of these idiosyncrasies?

How does Horse and rider's location, including its proximity to other works, and orientation impact how your experience of the sculpture?

Does this work remind you of other types of statuary or artworks exhibited in public space? How does that inform your interpretation of Horse and rider, 2014?