

George Rammell / WORKS  
IN PROGRESS

## CATASTROPHE

*Catastrophe* was my first marble carving and the central work of my exhibition at the Burnaby Art Gallery. The piece began as a four ton block requiring fourteen months of concentrated carving.

The title denotes the Greek creation myth, describing the transition of celestial bodies into human deities. This event is called a catastrophe or catastorphism.

### NOTE

This photo of the 1977 piece, *Catastrophe*, is included as an example of a work which has been exhibited and photographed in its complete state.—B.C.



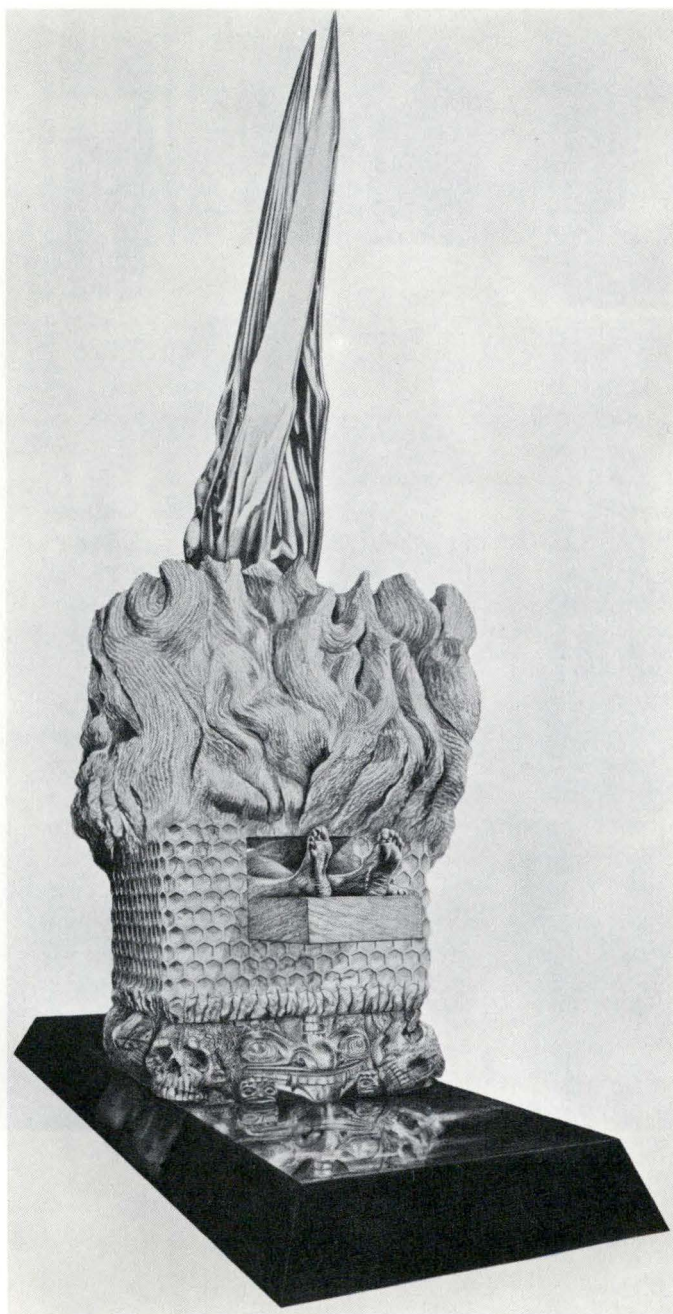
## PYROLITH

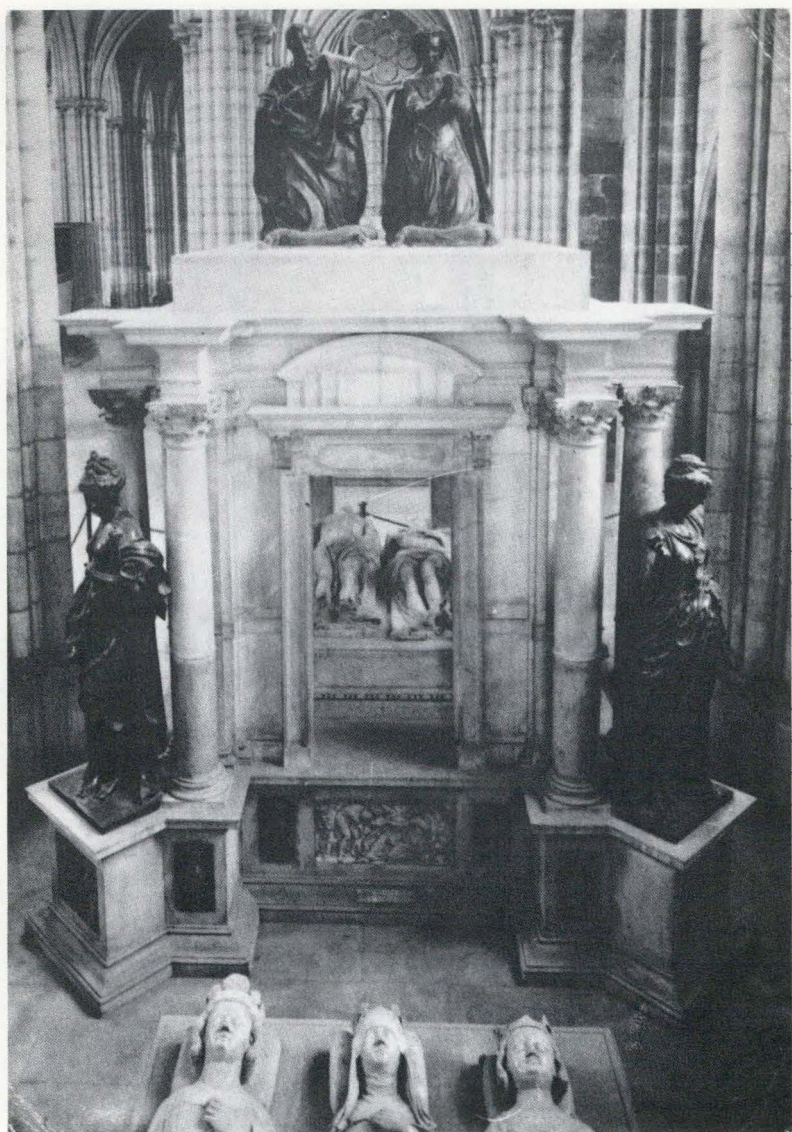
*Pyrolith* (1980-1985) grew out of my need to create the image of a ritual that incorporates images of my own ancestral origins and the rites that belong to the people indigenous to the area of the world that I call home. Perhaps this is an impossible notion, but a sense of ritual and belonging is important to me. The tombs of medieval European cathedrals, which I toured in 1973 and again in 1976, when I visited the tomb of Henri II of France by Germain Pilon, and the shamanistic mortuary art of the coast are the two art forms I feel the most affinity for. From our mosaic culture I've composed various forces in an iconographical drama. The piece began with an eight ton marble block which had sat since 1900 in an abandoned quarry on Nootka Sound, Vancouver Island. When I first saw the stone, I peeled off the thick moss and felt the importance of this curious volume from a chapter of the last century. In it I saw the grain spiralling up like smoke rising in the wind. The work began in 1979 and required over six years to complete, an anachronism these days, when spontaneity is the norm. Employing cultural associations through the use of ancient media demands a major commitment, but I feel satisfaction in knowing my work functions through an incarnate system. These concerns connect with ancient works, which captivate us through their primal mysteries. Rather than a portrait of the past, this piece is my reaction to the self-destructive forces within us. I aim for beauty, but the beauty I achieve is in a state of its own demise. Our collective nature controls all individuals. A conglomeration of deities fuels the present; the phoenix makes its descent into chaos, like a heron caught in a burning oil slick.

### NOTE

*Pyrolith* is completed, but due to considerations of weight and scale, it has never been completely assembled. The assembled size will be 17' x 10' x 4'6"; it is made of Nootka grey marble, Vermont blue marble, bronze, cast brass, and black granite.—B.C.

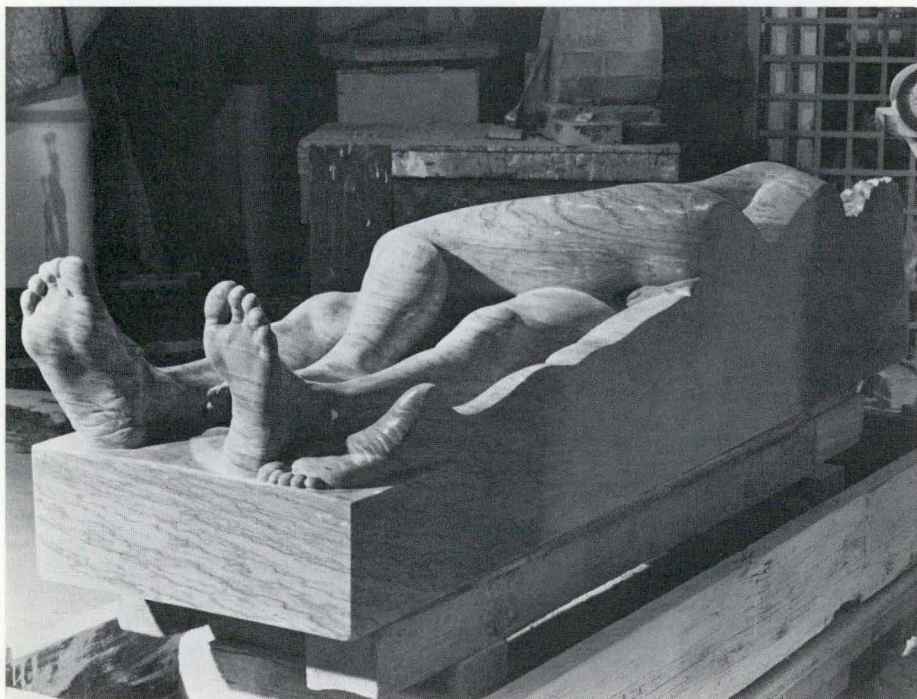




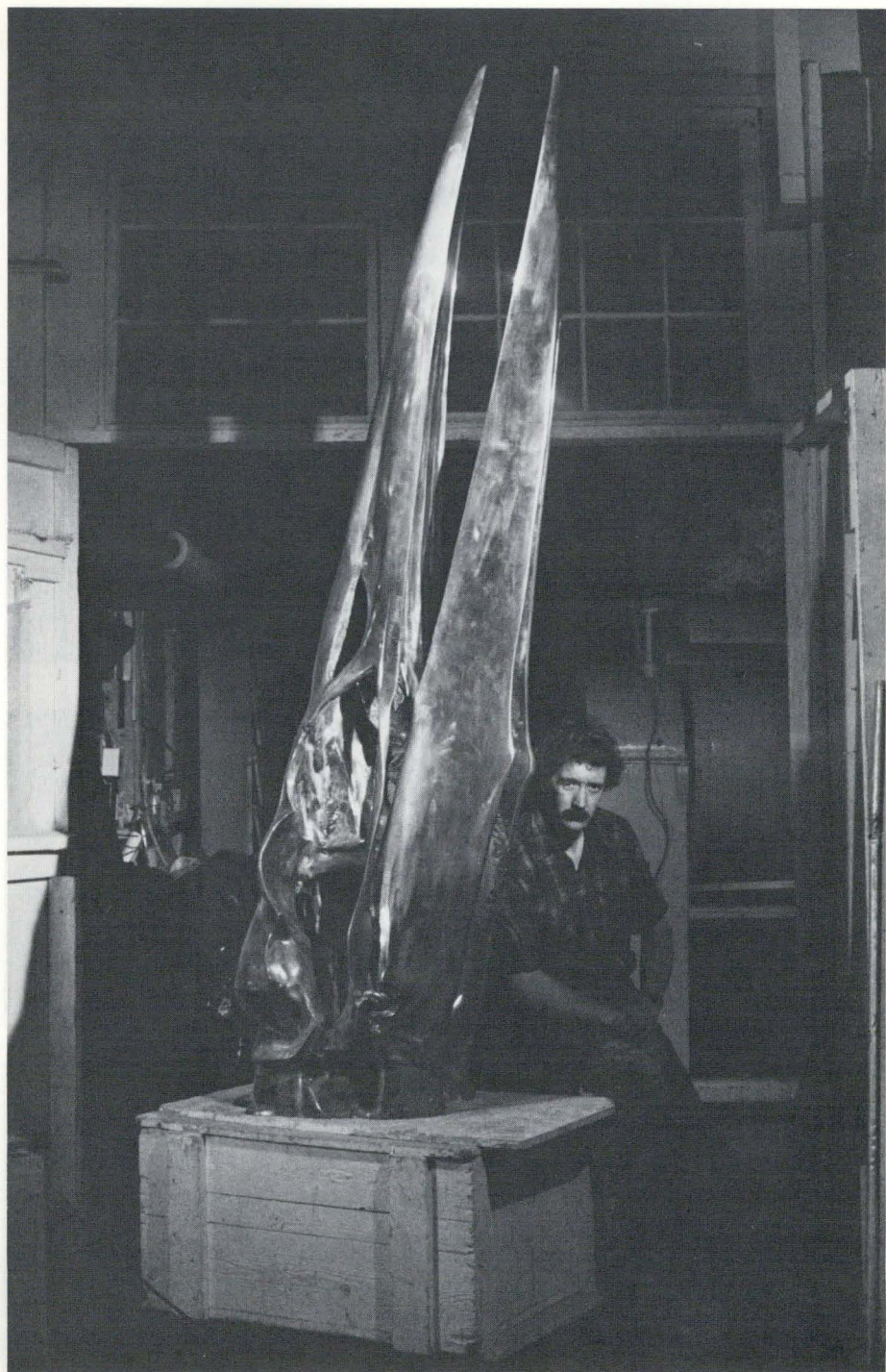




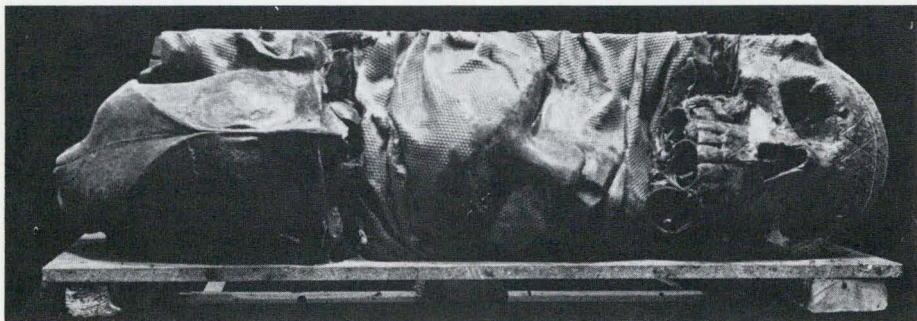
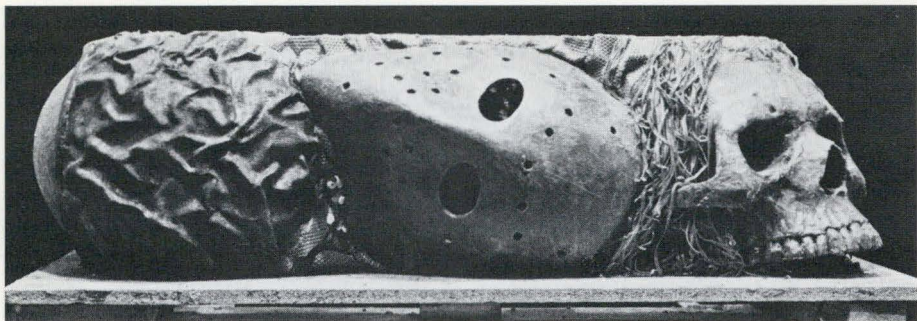




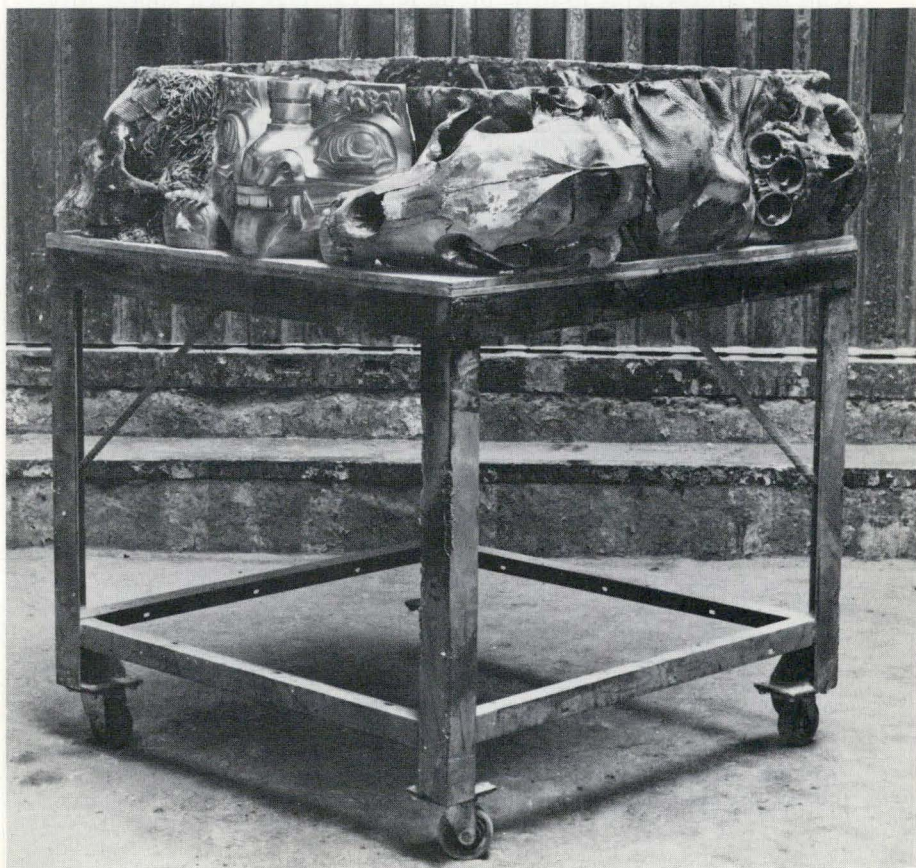














## BLACK WAND

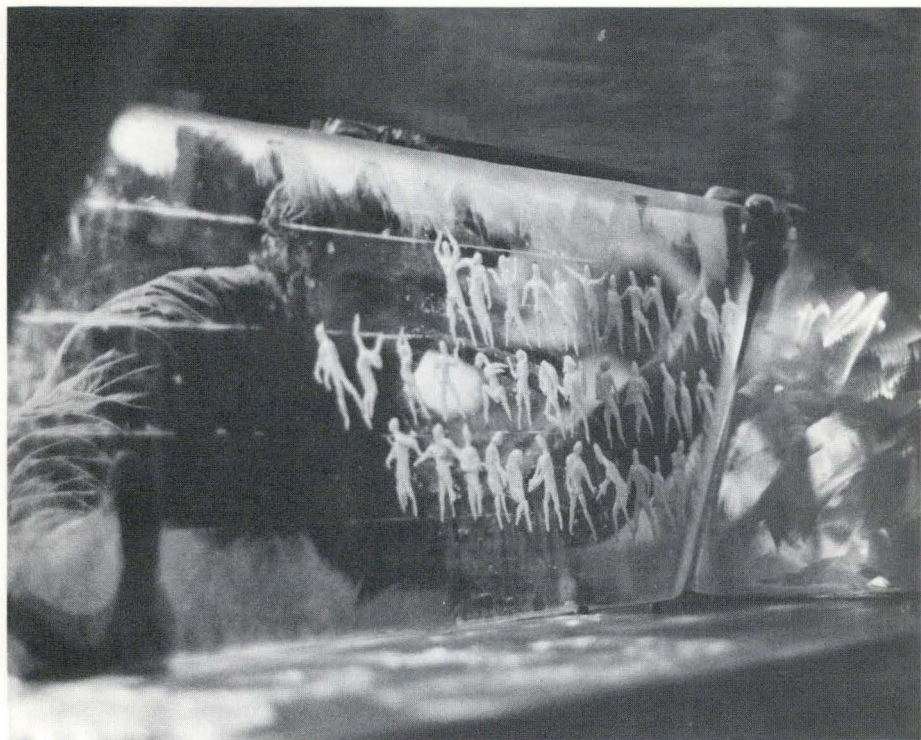
*Black Wand* (1984-1987) developed from a small marble piece I carved while teaching a workshop in Anchorage, Alaska. The art centre was within view of a nuclear missile base on the outskirts of town. This high technology was contrasted by the Aluet participants carving their traditional icons in stone. This dramatic contrast seemed to me synonymous with Wilson Duff's writings from his book, *Images Stone B.C.*, of "slave-killers" and "images of power." This piece is my reply to these pre-historic carvings which appear to describe a culture structured on procreation. I have contrasted old and current power symbols: the bird head is cantilevered from a menacing black missile; the phallic form of the ancient club is disguised as a new device of control. Yet this is a weapon which exhibits the images of its own victims or slaves. The trapezoid of glass panels is the conscience of the weapon.

There is a subliminal suspense in the piece evoked through the authority of its weight. Current artists who work with stone emphasize the intrinsic gravity of the medium. Earlier sculptors have, conversely, used gravity to create illusion, as in old Inuit reflection images which appear to possess their own orbit of existence.

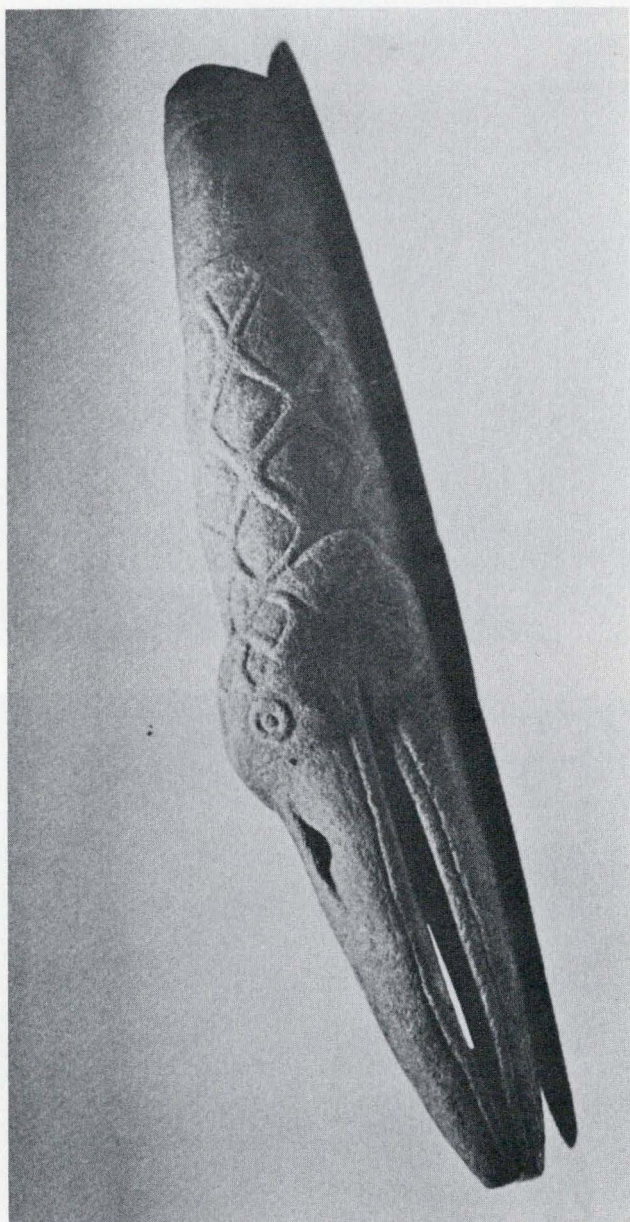
My original intention was to let the piece rock freely, but this proved to be far too dangerous, so I've made it stationary, like a displayed club or sorcerer's wand, concealing its potential.

### NOTE

*Black Wand/Slave Killer* was started in 1984 and is now nearly complete. It is of black limestone, stainless steel, 1½" thick green glass, red neon light, and lead. When complete, it will be 1'8" x 16' x 1'6".—B.C.



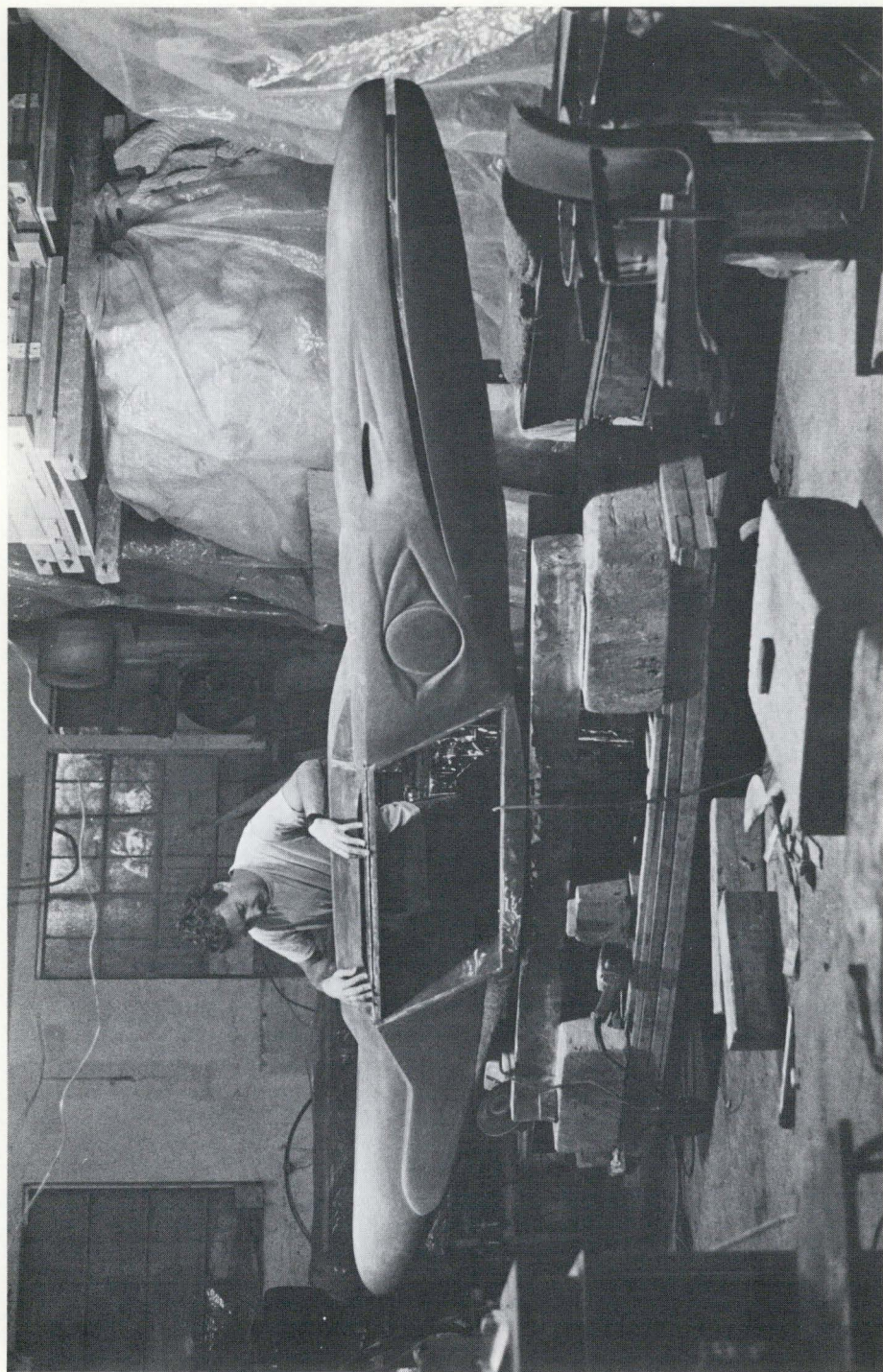
















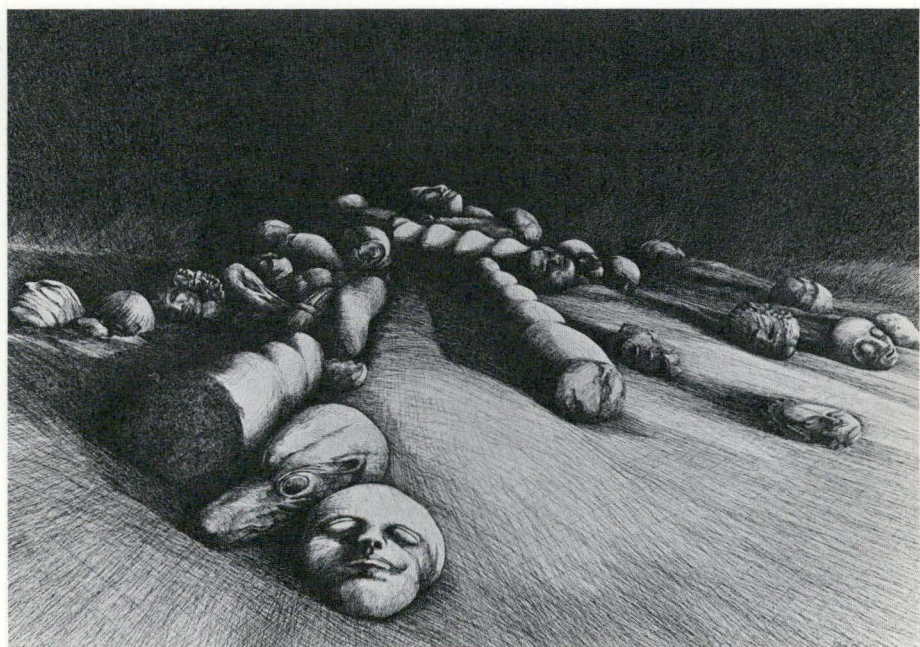


## BLACK MOUND

In all my work there is a feeling that the subject presented is being controlled, destroyed or consumed by a force infinitely larger than itself. One could speculate on an abuse of power, or chaos itself taking over. In *Black Mound*, the ravages of this phenomenon have won against a cluster of mythic heroes. Yet it is quite indiscernible whether these are shards of sculpture or remains on a deserted battlefield. Whatever their state, these heads are not at all lifeless. They sit like seeds, skulls of ancient ancestors watching for a chance to escape their fate.

### NOTE

The photograph opposite shows a concept for a large granite and earthform sculpture of an as yet undetermined specific scale.—B.C



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*photography*: John Copage
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