



Expressive Edge

Margaret Sheffield

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Analyzing the history of sculpture from an unusual angle, Margaret Sheffield tackles the character and function of "edge" in sculptural line, from classical Greece to the present. She identifies three kinds of sculptural edge: the "containing" edge (as found in Classical sculpture), the "expansive" (Baroque) and the "in flux" (as seen in contemporary sculpture). In Michelangelo's *Slaves* series, for instance, which was completed in 1547, the figures' broken lines project turmoil in deprivation, whereas the broken edges of an Isamu Noguchi piece express an entirely different, Eastern view of beauty as irregularity. Rodin's "multiple silhouettes" portray passionate vitality; in the Futurist Boccioni's work, violently uneven--almost serrated--edges reveal Futurism's adoration of vigor, industry and speed. Sheffield takes us up to the present moment with a look at contemporary artist Maya Lin, whose mobile edges counter sculptural permanence with an evocation of flux, and Pipilotti Rist's video installations.

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