

### Bruce McLean to Finally Get Real Retrospective

by Ashitha Nagesh 29/05/14 11:05 AM EDT

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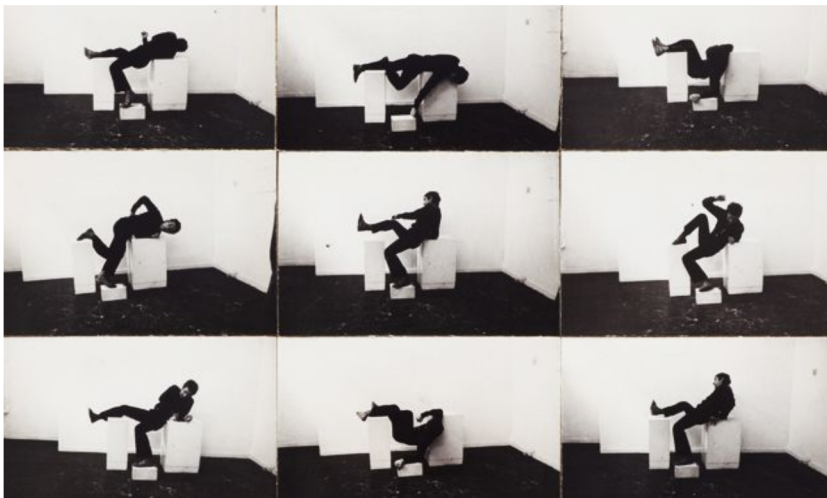
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Bruce McLean, "Pose Piece for Three Plinths Work" (1971)  
(Photo: David Roberts)

British artist **Bruce McLean** is to finally be the subject of a full career survey, after he famously made the **Tate** stage a mocking one-day "retrospective" in 1972. The exhibition will open at **Firstsite**, Colchester, on June 14.

The show promises to be varied: it will include more than 80 works spanning five decades, encompassing sculpture, painting, photography, drawing, ceramics and film.

McLean is perhaps most well known for his ironic sense of humour, which saw him mimic the poses of each of the **Tate Gallery's Henry Moore** sculptures.

It was when the gallery invited him to exhibit that he asked, with mocking intent, for the one-day "retrospective." The show, aptly titled "King for a Day," took place on March 11, 1972.

In the mid-1960s McLean was a student of two heavyweights of British sculpture, **Anthony Caro** and **Phillip King**, at what was then the **St. Martin's School of Art**.

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However he rebelled against their formalist approach, and became one of the foremost conceptual artists of his generation.

In 1965, McLean abandoned conventional studio production and worked more with impermanent materials such as water.

He also staged performances satirising the art world, national bureaucracy and institutional politics.

Many of these were done as part of **Nice Style**, a group he established in 1971 that came to be known as "The World's First Pose Band."

From the mid-70s, McLean started working less in performance and more with painting and ceramics – although he maintained his subversive approach.