



**Location**

Coover Hall, Exterior West Entrance

**Materials**

Vermont Marble, Concrete

**Size**

8 ft x 14 ft

**Date**

2008

**About the Work of Art**

The Moth is a sculpture of contrasts. Although its subject matter appears to be delicate, the material Mac Adams chose for this piece is heavy and full of mass. The three marble slabs within the sculpture combine to form the image of a moth. As the focal point of the sculpture, the image of the moth is created through the negative forms of the marble, creating a window in which light casts a shadow of a moth upon the concrete surface.

The Moth is the first sculpture of its kind by Mac Adams. It is an organic form that interacts with the natural surroundings in which it is placed. He describes its creation as a problem-solving process, originating from an idea of a wooden puzzle that he received as a gift. The puzzle consisted of small cut-out zoo animals that interlocked to form the image of an elephant. The concept of parts converging to make a whole intrigued Adams, as he began to think about shadows as units or cells within a larger sculpture.

In 1947, the first use of the term "bug" was recorded in a data notebook at Harvard University. A moth had flown into a research computer and caused a circuit to malfunction, thus coining popular the phrase "debugging a computer program." This legend of the computer "bug" resonates within Coover Hall, but as every discipline has a reverence for the natural world, Adams has designed this sculpture to be accessible and meaningful to all.

*The Moth*, 2008 by Mac Adams (Welsh, b. 1943). Vermont marble. Located near the west entrance of Coover Hall. Commissioned by University Museums. An Art in State Buildings Project for Coover Hall. In the Art on Campus Collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. U2008.539abc

## About the Artist



Mac Adams (b. 1943 Welsh) is an internationally renowned sculptor. He studied at the Cardiff College of Art before going on to Rutgers University. He has taught at Caldwell College for Women, Fordam University, Montclair University and Sarah Lawrence College. He has been a professor at State University of New York at Old Westbury, New York since 1988.

Mac Adams's international reputation has grown over the last 30 years. His sculptures play elaborate games with shadows and natural light. His art is in the collections of dozens of large institutions, including the Chase Manhattan Bank and Microsoft to London's Victoria and Albert Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

For more information on Mac Adams and his work, visit [www.macadamsstudio.com](http://www.macadamsstudio.com).



## About the Art on Campus Collection

Iowa State University is home to one of the largest campus public art collections in the United States. Over 2,500 works of public art, including many by significant regional, national and international artists, are located across campus in buildings, courtyards, open spaces and offices. In 1982, the University Museums created the Art on Campus Collection that codifies acquisition, education and care and conservation of the campus public art collection.

From its founding, Iowa State has recognized the value of integrating art with the educational experience. From early founder Peter Melendy and first President Adonijah Welch's vision for central campus to President Raymond Hughes' embrace of public art to President James Hilton's construction of the Iowa State Center as a hub for cultural spaces, the arts have remained an integral part of Iowa State.

## About University Museums

University Museums is a distinctive organization that encompasses two art museums (**Brunnier Art Museum** and **Christian Petersen Art Museum**), a National Historic Landmark historic home museum (**Farm House Museum**), a sculpture garden (**Anderson Sculpture Garden**), and one of the largest campus public art collections in the nation (**Art on Campus Collection**). University Museums brings world-class exhibitions with educational programming to Iowa State University, actively acquires works of art to add to the more than 30,000 permanent collection objects, conserves and preserves collections, conducts and publishes curatorial scholarship, and fosters student engagement.

University Museums, Iowa State University - 1805 Center Drive, 290 Scheman Bldg, Ames, IA 50011

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*This information sheet is intended to be used in addition to viewing the Art on Campus Collection.  
At no time should this sheet be used as a substitute for experiencing the art in person.*

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