

## ELZA MAYHEW

### *Stela I* and *Stela II*, 1963

#### DESCRIPTION

*Stela I* and *Stela II* (1963) are a pair of cast aluminum sculptures created by Victoria-based artist and UBC alumna Elza Mayhew (1916-2004). Mayhew was known for her abstract sculptures that were typically carved in polystyrene and then cast in aluminum or sometimes bronze. She worked primarily from sketches, rarely from models, and described her works as highly structured and architectural while always relating to the human form. Pocked and inscribed, the stelae's surfaces and slab-like forms reference monuments from the Greco-Roman world.

In 1964, Mayhew would represent Canada (with Harold Town) as one of the first Canadian women to exhibit at the Venice Biennale, bringing her innovations in sculptural methods, use of industrial materials and exploration of the human experience to an international audience. These sculptures were two of the thirteen that were included in the exhibition at the Biennale. They are an integral part not only of Canada's artistic heritage, but also of the history of how that heritage has been presented to the world.

With this donation, the University will add to its significant holdings of outdoor art at the same time as increasing the representation of women artists in the collection. The strength of the Belkin's collection and archives resides in a focus on West Coast artistic practice from the 1950s to the 1970s, and these works will greatly enhance an understanding of the experiments and concerns of this era.

#### DIMENSIONS, MATERIALS

*Stela I*, 1963, aluminum, 183 x 51 x 26 cm

*Stela II*, 1963, aluminum, 183 x 51 x 26 cm



*Stela I* suspended by chains in preparation for transporting to Venice, 1964.

## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Elza Mayhew (1916–2004) was born in Victoria, BC. She received a BA from UBC (1936) and MFA (1963) from the University of Oregon. Mayhew produced commissioned works for international events such as Expo 67, Expo 86 and an international trade fair in Tokyo, as well as for public institutions such as the Bank of Canada, the University of Victoria, the Canadian National Capital Commission and the Royal British Columbia Museum. Her work is included in the collections of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, the National Gallery of Canada, Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria. Mayhew was a member of the Royal Canadian Academy, and was an active member of the Limners Society.



*Stela I* and Elza Mayhew, circa 1963.

## LOCATION

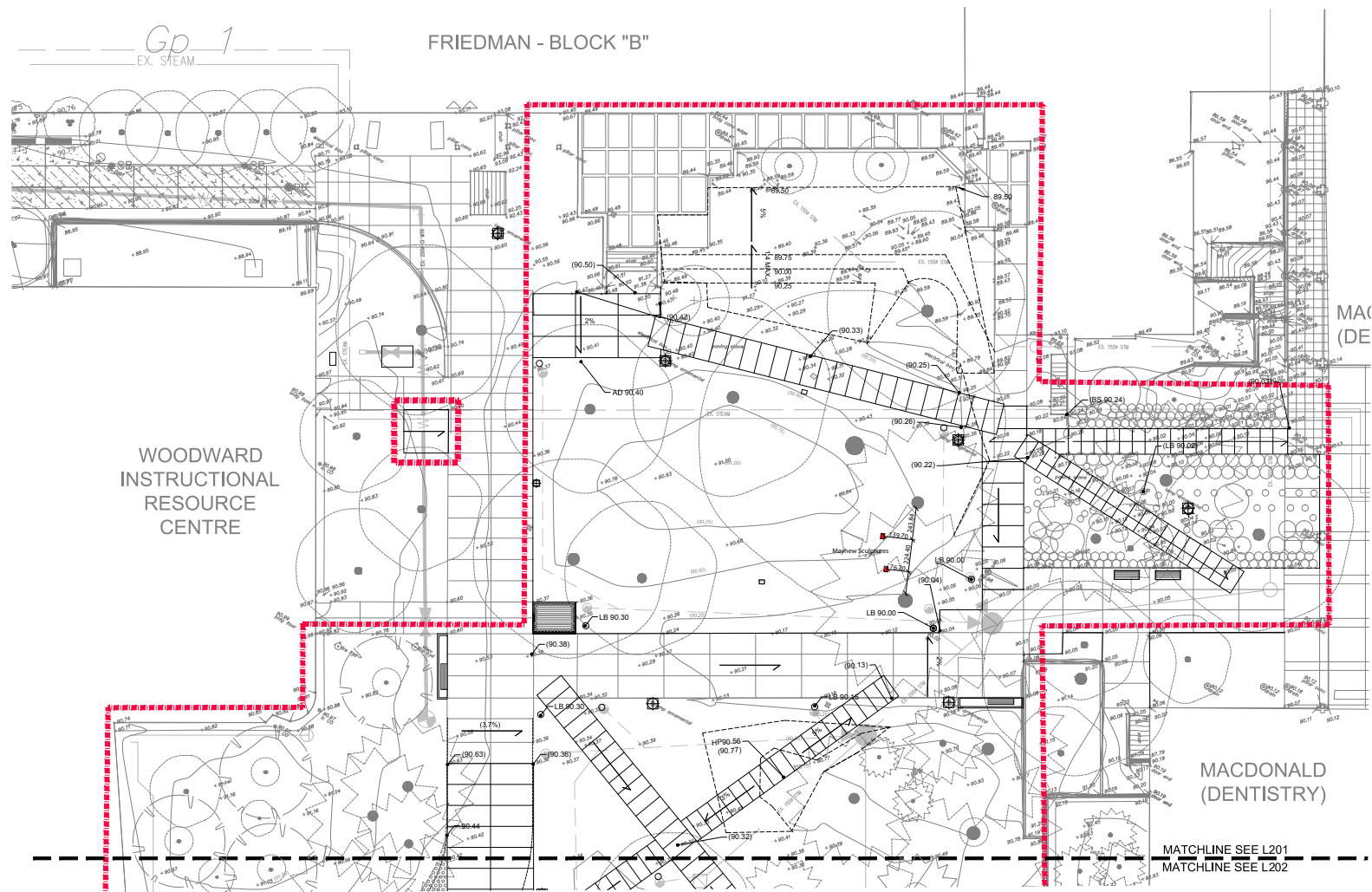
The proposed location for *Stela I* and *Stela II* is amongst a stand of mature trees in the green space on the east side of the Faculty of Dentistry. This location provides excellent site lines from multiple vantage points while at the same time, the sculptures' human scale, materiality, and relationship to the ground and surrounds allows for direct and unimpeded one-on-one encounters. With architecture of the same period in the background, the Friedman building (Thompson, Berwick & Pratt architects, 1961) offers a related design lexicon. Broadening these relationships between site and context, a neighbouring artwork installed on the south side of the MacDonal building is a ceramic wall mural, *Untitled* (1971) by Robert Weghsteen, that presents with its luminous silver-grey surface and abstract organic forms, a strong visual relationship to the Stelae.



Location within stand of trees with view looking south toward the UBC Hospital Koerner Pavilion.



## SITE PLAN



**Karen Kiest**  
**Landscape Architects**  
111 West John Street, Suite 305  
Seattle, Washington 98119  
USA  
206 323 6032  
[www.kk-la.com](http://www.kk-la.com)

UNIVERSITY OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

project:  
**PR 2015**

DENTISTRY  
COURTYARD
**UBC PROPERTIES TRUST**

drawing:

## GRADING PLAN

date: 06/03/2016  
drawn by: IB  
checked by: KK  
project #:

REVISIONS	
issue:	date:
AUDP	02/04/2016
DP SUBMITTAL	03/10/2016
DRC	03/10/2016
DP REV	03/24/2016
SLP	06/03/2016
DP CORR.	06/03/2016

sheet:

**L201**

## MOUNTING, DRAWINGS, ENGINEERING

Concrete foundations installed with bases flush to the ground. Engineering consultation underway.

## MAINTENANCE

*Stela I* and *Stela II* are among the 25 outdoor artworks in the University art collection and will be maintained by the University through the direction of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery.

## SIGNAGE

In-keeping with all of the new Outdoor Art signage, the plaque consists of a simple, bent, with QR code, Belkin Gallery and Outdoor Art logos, and the inscription:

ELZA MAYHEW

*Stela I* and *Stela II*, 1963

Cast aluminum

Gift of the Estate of Elza Mayhew with support from President Santa J. Ono and the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Enhancement

ʔamət məkw tə art sya:ys wəni? ʔə tə šxwʔaməts tə shəŋqəmiŋəŋqən - hay tə xwməθkwəyəm; tatələt tə tə sqəqaʔtəl ʔə wə məkw tə xwməθkwəyəm ʔi? tə Gallery.

All of the artworks in the Outdoor Art Collection are situated on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the həŋqəmiŋəŋ-speaking Musqueam people; the Gallery encourages viewers to reflect on this relationship.

## CONTACT

Barbara Cole, Curator of Outdoor Art

Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery

The University of British Columbia | xʷməθkʷəy̓əm | Musqueam Territory

Phone 604 417 5597

barbara.cole@ubc.ca