

The Harlow Art Trust took over the commission after its formation in 1953, however, prior to this, Mary Spencer Watson had corresponded with Frederick Gibberd regarding the nature of the piece. Initially Gibberd approached Watson writing giving details of the proposed location "...in a little piazza at the south end of our first neighbourhood shopping centre [on which is] a community centre."<sup>28</sup> and whilst not able to commission her at that stage asks for her ideas. He continues "We do not know what the sculpture should be, but it is certain an abstract design would not be looked on with favour, although we have a very fine Hepworth - and it is felt that the sculpture, in some way, should try and express the community idea - the little square is the focus for Community life in the area."<sup>29</sup> Watson's sketch model was well received with one caveat; that the Centaur be holding "a coronet - age crowning youth."<sup>30</sup> this led to interesting correspondence regarding coronet vs. lyre, evidently frustrating the artist: "I gave much thought to find an idea which would be in keeping with both the Community Centre - and to escape the banal conception of "community" which we have so often seen in the Communist and Fascist style of muscular young men and maidens with implements of communal labour. I chose Chiron because he in his wisdom as a teacher incorporated all the activities embodied in a community centre. Needless to say one could not have him like the 6 armed dancing Siva wielding a symbol of each attribute of his wisdom in 6 arms, so I chose music as being fundamentally an art enjoyed by people in community"<sup>31</sup>. Reinforcing her thinking of the relationship of the sculpture to the site, she states in another undated note "His cave was surely an early form of community centre."<sup>32</sup> Patricia Gibberd observed: "the interest was immediate and great, because among the very small population at the time, the arrival of a caravan on the forecourt of the Moot House - the community centre where the work was sited - from which emerged each morning a working sculptor was news and the object of much curiosity."<sup>33</sup>

1. 'Harlow Art Trust', Patricia Gibberd, Landscape Design Pt138, May 1982, p20
2. Letter from Frederick Gibberd to Mary Spencer Watson, dated 10.12.1952, Harlow Art Trust archives.
3. Ibid
4. Letter from Frederick Gibberd to Mary Spencer Watson, dated 6.2.1953, Harlow Art Trust archives.
5. Letter from Mary Spencer Watson to Frederick Gibberd, dated 2.3.1953, Harlow Art Trust archives.
6. Harlow Art Trust archives.
7. As 27