

Kozar, Andrew J., foreword by Gruber, Francis S., *R. Tait McKenzie — The Sculptor of Athletes*, (University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1975).

Andrew Kozar reveals R. Tait McKenzie as the heroic person he was when alive. Now, nearly forty years after McKenzie's death, this biography of him and his work as a sculptor of athletes provides an excellent perspective from which to view and study the insights McKenzie had into the human in action in sports.

The author's thorough and careful search and research bridges the gaps that many of us have not been able to span. Each sculpture has been traced to its present location, with the exception of three or four pieces that have not been found. The McKenzie Papers are quoted frequently, especially the written notes that either Dr. McKenzie made at the time, as well as some of Mrs. McKenzie's comments.

Francis S. Gruber, of the Art Department, The George Washington University, identifies the art milieu in which McKenzie lived and worked, including artists who particularly influenced him.

A catalog of illustrations, plus plates of quite a number of the sculptures shows some 129 of McKenzie's sport works indicating where at least the original or one copy is located.

A chronology outlines the major moves and positions of his life and seen all together in this form, is cause for wonder as to how one person could possibly get them all done in a span of seventy years. It is evidence that he was acknowledged by his peers in his lifetime, a leader, a scholar and an artist.

This list of exhibitions at which many of his works were shown, supports the fact that McKenzie was recognized as an artist of repute in the international art world. This is not to say that he wasn't criticized for favouring the classic school of sculpture.

But perhaps most of all, this book reveals how complete a man McKenzie was, at a time when mind and body were thought to be such distinct entities. His sculptures of the athlete in action in a sport show the emotional responses which are basic in any performance or response in the game situation. Sculpture is used as another language to communicate the essence of the sport, that mark of the athlete's total absorption in the activity. The pictures in this book are evidence that McKenzie not only knew how the human body functions, but understood, too, the feelings, the emotions, which make the action a whole, which mobilize and focus the directed release of energy.

In these days, when we besmirch the ideal, belittle the practitioner and doubt the synthesizer, it is good to find real evidence that one of us, in his pursuit of the ideal, was able to put together his knowledge, scholarship and skills to become an heroic man — R. Tait McKenzie.

Every physical education historian is indebted to Andrew Kozar for his scholarly biography of a great man whose influence can be brought to focus in our time.

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