

biography

1936 Born Chicago, IL

education

1962–64 MFA, Southern Illinois University, Department of Art
1957–60 BA, Southern Illinois University, Department of Design
1954–57 University of Illinois, School of Architecture
1957–59, 1962 Special Studies with R. Buckminster Fuller

teaching

2003 Professor Emeritus, Sculpture Department, School of the Arts,
Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
2001–03 Acting Chair, Sculpture Department, VCU School of the Arts
1968–2003 Professor, Sculpture Department, VCU School of the Arts
1967–68 Assistant Professor, Edinboro State College
1964–67 Instructor, Northern Illinois University
1963–64 Graduate Assistant, Southern Illinois University

solo exhibitions

New Work, Gallery A, Richmond, VA (2013)
Art Works, Gallery A, Richmond, VA (2012)
What Women have Told Me, Art6, Richmond, VA (2008)
Tyranny of the Theoretical, Babcock Fine Arts Center Gallery, Sweet Briar College,
Sweet Briar, VA (2008)
Literary/Criticism, Hunt Gallery, Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, VA (2001)
Mackintosh Museum, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland (2000)
Instituto Cultural Peruano Norte Americano, Lima, Peru (2000)
Hewlett Gallery, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA (1998)
Faculty Focus, Anderson Gallery, VCU School of the Arts, Richmond, VA (1997;
also 1995)
Dangerous Terrain: Recent Sculptures and Drawings, Paul Mesaros Gallery,
West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV (1996)
Rockville Place for the Arts, Rockville, MD (1992)
1708 Gallery, Richmond, VA (1991)
Infrastructure, Portsmouth Museum, Portsmouth, VA (1991)
Northern Illinois University Art Gallery, Chicago, IL (1987)
College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA (1984)
Recent Work, ICA, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (1982)
Marshall University, Huntington, WV (1980)
Gallery K, Washington, DC (1977)
Baldwin Wallace College, Berea, OH (1977)
Edinboro State College, Edinboro, PA (1976)
Twentieth Century Gallery, Williamsburg, VA (1975)
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (1972)
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (1970)



Faculty Focus, September 29–
October 20, 1995;
installation view at the
Anderson Gallery.

Throughout its 40-year history, the Anderson Gallery regularly presented the work of School of the Arts faculty in solo shows, retrospectives, and group exhibitions, including faculty biennials from 1978 to 2004. During his tenure at VCU, Helfgott's work was featured in nine of these biennial exhibitions.

"We all got along and respected each other. Everyone was moving off in their own directions, and it was great to celebrate each other's successes with these shows. This sculpture has a solid wooden shape, like a head, underneath. I took a body grinder and chainsaw blade and hacked away. The wrappers on wine bottle tops used to be made of lead foil. I would save the foil and nail it to the surface."

group exhibitions

Gallery A, Richmond, VA (2012; also 2011)
A Shriek from an Invisible Box Revisited III, Rack and Hammer Gallery, New York, NY (2005)
The Lab Gallery, New York, NY (2005)
House, Boyden Gallery, St. Mary's College of Maryland, St. Mary's City, MD (2004)
Metaphor in Nature, Rack and Hammer Gallery, New York, NY (2004)
All About Drawing, Eisentrager-Howard Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE (2004)
25 x 25, 1708 Gallery, Richmond, VA (2003)
Main Art Gallery, Richmond, VA (2003)
Reynolds Gallery, Richmond, VA (2003)
Making a Mark, Visual Arts Center of Richmond (formerly Hand Workshop Art Center), Richmond, VA (2003)
A Shriek from an Invisible Box, Meguro Museum, Tokyo, Japan (2001)
Crossing Borders, V.A.M. Design Center Gallery, Budapest, Hungary (2001)
Erotic Art, Rowbottom Fine Art, Cumberland, RI (2000)
The Bridge, D'art Center, Norfolk, VA (2000)
Objectives, Falk Gallery, Newport News, VA (1999)
The Millennium 2000, Rack and Hammer Gallery, New York, NY (1999)
Essence of Water, Aster Plaza, Hiroshima, Japan; traveled to Fijiya Company, Kyoto, Japan (1998)
Biennial, Fijiya Company, Kyoto, Japan (1998)
The First Annual Sculpture, Object & Functional Art Show, Fulcrum Gallery, Richmond, VA (1997)
Esculturas VCU, Galeria Instituto Cultural Peruano Norte (ICPNA), Mira Flores, Lima, Peru (1996)
Gallery Miyazaki, Osaka, Japan (1996)
Artists of the Cité Internationale des Arts, Bedford Gallery, Longwood College, Farmville, VA (1996)
Mechanical Advantage, Susan Lemberg Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, Bennington, VT (1995)
Reifying the Personality, Philadelphia Art Alliance, Philadelphia, PA (1994)
Faculty Focus, Anderson Gallery, VCU School of the Arts, Richmond, VA (1993; also 1991, 1989, 1987, 1985, 1982, 1980)
1708 Gallery, Richmond, VA (1993)
Portrait/Self/Portrait, Frank E. Brown Gallery, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA (1992)
Artifice in Gesture/Virginia Sculpture, Peninsula Fine Arts Center, Hampton, VA (1990)
1708 Gallery, Richmond, VA (1989; also 1985, 1984, 1980, 1978)
Tributary/3000 Years in the Course of Art, Peninsula Fine Arts Center, Newport News, VA (1989)
The Art of Richmond, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, NC (1989)
Sculpture Now, Danville Museum of Fine Arts, Danville, VA (1989)
Un/Common Ground: Virginia Artists 1988, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (1988)
The Figure, Peninsula Fine Arts Center, Newport News, VA (1988)
Portrait: Faces of the Eighties, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (1987)
Expression Now, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, NC (1987)
Richmond Wood Sculpture, Peninsula Fine Arts Center, Newport News, VA (1987)
Boatwright Festival Exhibition, University of Richmond, Richmond, VA (1987)



The Alumni of the Masonic Temple, June 18–July 23, 1983; installation view at the Anderson Gallery.

The Alumni of the Masonic Temple featured works by nearly 20 artists who had studios in this iconic building—then the home of much of the influential art activity in the city—located at 101 West Broad Street. Helfgott maintained a space there from 1973 until 1982, when all residents were evicted to make room for the Richmond Foundation for the Arts.

“I moved to Richmond in 1968. In 1969 or 70, I rented a studio in the Bowers Coffee Building (Bowers Brothers Warehouse) at Cary and 13th Streets. I was there for a few years until the owner wanted to rehab it, turn it into condos or something. After that, I moved to the Masonic Temple building, which was owned by Dr. Good, a mason whose sister wanted to open a gallery there. The studios were great—and big. I shared a studio with Jim Baumgardner (Professor Emeritus, VCU Painting and Printmaking). It worked out because we liked the same classical music.”

Virginia Artist: Myron Helfgott, April 29–May 24, 1970; installation view at the Robinson House, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.



From 1965 to 1977, artists awarded Certificates of Distinction in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' Virginia artist biennials were given the option to present solo shows at the Robinson House, a historic building on the museum's campus that was once a Confederate soldiers' home.

Frank E. Brown Gallery, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA (1987)
Process/Image/Portrait, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (1986)
Watermelon Show, Hironnelle Gallery, New York, NY (1986)
Un'Idea Meccanica, Anderson Gallery, VCU School of the Arts, Richmond, VA;
traveled to Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY (1985)
Patricia Wayne Gallery, Richmond, VA (1985)
Here and Now, Philadelphia College of Art, Philadelphia, PA; traveled to Greenville
Country Museum of Art, Greenville, SC (1984)
Anderson Gallery, VCU School of the Arts, Richmond, VA (1984; also 1980, 1978)
Alumni of the Masonic Temple, Anderson Gallery, VCU School of the Arts,
Richmond, VA (1983)
Artists Doing Store Windows, June Jubilee, Richmond, VA (1981)
Six Sculptors, Edinboro State College, Edinboro, PA (1979)
Lamp Show, Anderson Gallery, VCU School of the Arts, Richmond, VA (1979)
Twenty-one Billboards by Twenty-one Artists, City 1 Arts Festival, Richmond, VA (1979)
Gallery K, Washington, DC (1978)
Off the Wall, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA (1978)
Virginia Artists Biennial, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA
(1977; also 1971, 1969)
Gallery Marc, Washington, DC (1975; also 1971, 1970)
University of Maryland at Towson, Baltimore, MD (1975)
Nancy Lurie Gallery, Chicago, IL (1974)
Visiting Artist, Marshall University, Huntington, WV (1974)
Extraordinary Realities, organized by Whitney Museum of Art, New York, NY;
traveled to Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY, and Contemporary Arts Center,
Cincinnati, OH (1973)
University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY (1972)
Collectors' Circle Show, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (1972)
Arts USA II, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL (1971)
Virginia Sculptors, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond and Chrysler Museum
of Art, Norfolk, VA (1970)
30th Semi-Annual Southeastern Competition and Exhibition, Southeastern Center for
Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, NC (1969)
Drawing Invitational, Wisconsin State University, Oshkosh, WI (1969)
American Drawing Biennial XXII, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA (1966)
Chicago Sculpture 66, Ontario East Gallery and University of Illinois, Circle Campus,
Chicago, IL (1966)
Outdoor Garden Sculpture, Ontario East Gallery, Chicago, IL (1966)
Drawing and Sculpture, Ontario East Gallery, Chicago, IL (1965)
Happening with Allan Kaprow, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL (1964)

grants & awards

Theresa Pollak Prize for Excellence in the Arts, *Richmond Magazine* (2006)
Virginia Commission for the Arts, Project Grant (1992)
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Professional Fellowship (1989)
Virginia Commission for the Arts, Artist Grant (1985)

residencies

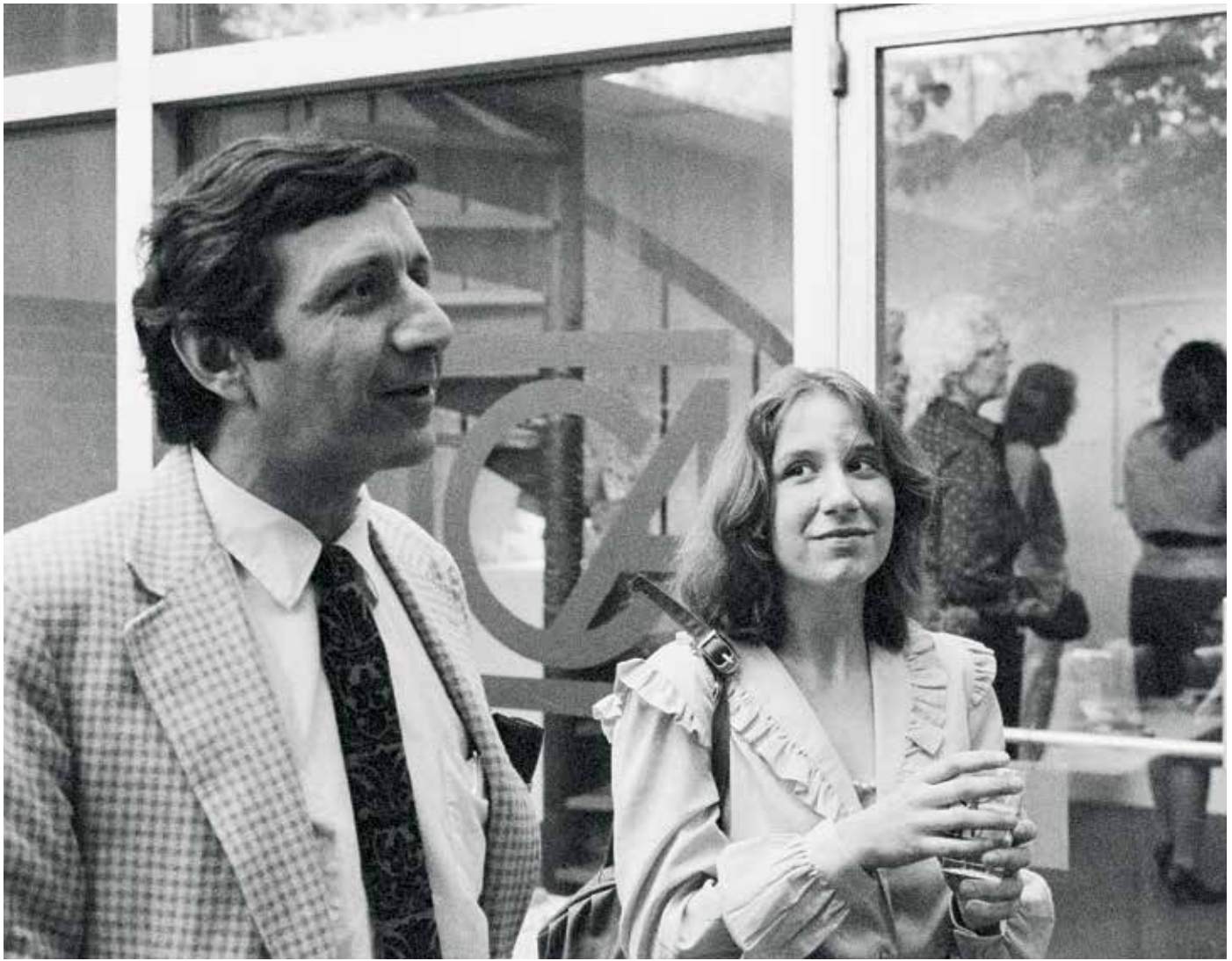
Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France (2000-2011, 1997, 1995, 1989)
Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Amherst, VA (2006)
Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Amherst, VA, Patricia and Jerre Mangione
Fellowship (2005)

collections

Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA
Corcoran Museum of Art, Washington, DC
Federal Reserve Bank, Richmond, VA
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA
Numerous private collections

bibliography

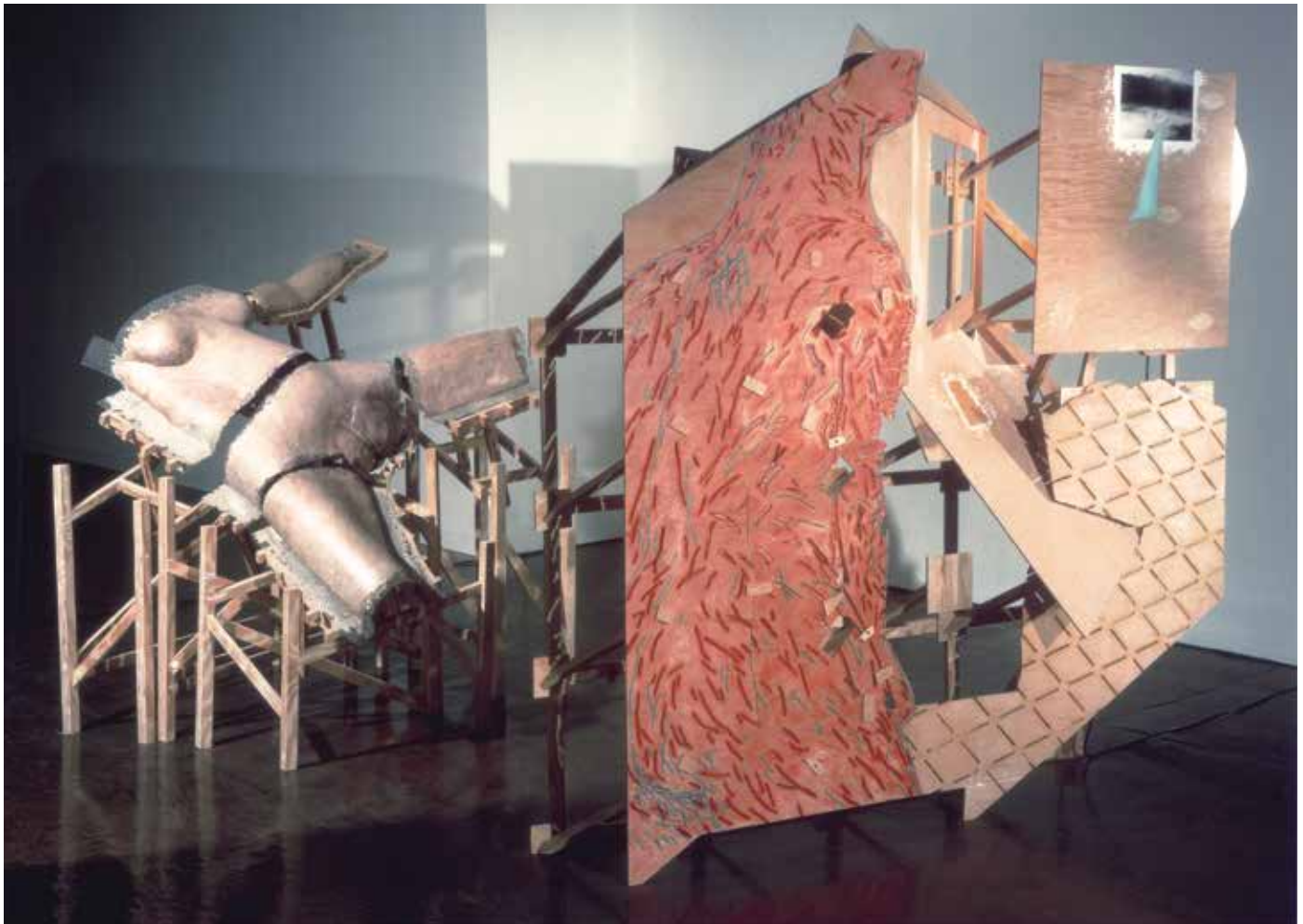
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- Biddle, Phyllis. "Myron Helfgott's Mixed Media Rorschach Tests." *Gallery: Richmond's Visual Arts Magazine*, January-February 1989, pp. 7-8.
- Boyd, Julia W. "Myron Helfgott." In *Un/Common Ground: Virginia Artists 1988*. Richmond: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1988, pp. 36-43. (catalogue)
- _____. *Process/Image/Portrait*. Richmond: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1986. (catalogue)
- Chenoweth, Ann. *Myron Helfgott/Recent Work*. Richmond: Institute of Contemporary Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1982. (brochure)
- Close, Timothy. *Infrastructure*. Portsmouth, VA: Portsmouth Museum, 1991. (brochure)
- Cossitt, F. D. "Emphasis on Decorative." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 8 May 1977, p. K-4.
- _____. "Helfgott Sculpture." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 5 October 1975, p. H-4.
- _____. "Sculpture Show in Richmond Offers Variety." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, May 1975.
- _____. "Fantasies in Lead and Balsa." *Arts in Virginia*, Vol. 14, Fall 1973, n.p.
- _____. "Helfgott Sculpture Stirs Imagination." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 12 November 1972, p. C-4.
- _____. "Busy Week Looms on Exhibit Front." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 3 May 1970, p. J-4.
- _____. "Richmond Scene is Highly Active." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 12 October 1969, p. 4-G.
- _____. "Museum Biennial Still Controversial." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 11 May 1969.
- Cruger, George. *Portrait: Faces of the '80s*. Richmond: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1987. (catalogue)
- Delehanty, Suzanne. *Virginia Artists 1977*. Richmond: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1977. (catalogue)
- "District for the Arts Dream Has Some Disturbing Elements." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 7 December 1980, p. L-4.
- Doty, Robert. *Extraordinary Realities*. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1973. (catalogue; available online: <https://archive.org/details/extraord00doty>)
- Erickson, Mark St. John. "Multiple Images of Myron." *The Virginia Gazette*, 26 September 1984.



Helfgott with his daughter, Megan, at the entrance to the ICA. *Myron Helfgott: Recent Work*, May 10–June 27, 1982; installation view at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

“At the VMFA, Virginia artists were segregated; we showed our work in the Robinson House, not the main building. Because of potential competition from 1708 Gallery, the VMFA gave Julie [Boyd] a position and a half for the ICA. She and Ann Chenoweth invited local artists and New York artists to show together. And, you know, it looked terrific. You couldn’t tell the difference. The ICA at the VMFA was a great thing. Julie wanted to show my work early on; no one else wanted to do it. She was very generous, and I am grateful to her.”

- Exhibition Chicago Sculpture '66*. Chicago, IL: Chicago Circle Art Gallery, 1966. (catalogue)
- Flinn, Mary. "Interview with Myron Helfgott." *Blackbird*, Vol. 1, no. 2, Fall 2002, blackbird.vcu.edu.
- "Helfgott Art Is Featured in One-Man Show at ICA." *Richmond News Leader*, 1 May 1982, p. A-6.
- Here and Now*. Greenville, SC: Greenville County Museum of Art, 1985. (catalogue)
- Hess, Thomas. *Virginia Artists 1971*. Richmond: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1971. (catalogue)
- Merritt, Robert. "Art's Creative Demands Form Common Ground." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 17 January 1988.
- _____. "City's Artists Lead Selections." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 8 February 1987, pp. 1, 9.
- _____. "Portraits Reflect an Intricate Process." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 11 June 1986, p. B-8.
- _____. "Myron Helfgott." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 1 May 1982.
- _____. "Store Windows." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 28 May 1980, p. A-6.
- Near, Pinkney. "Myron Helfgott." *Clue*, Vol. 1, no. 1, August-September 1984, pp. 10-11.
- _____. "Myron Helfgott." *1708 E. Main*, March 1984. (newsletter)
- Newton, Karen. "Zen Sculpting." *Style Weekly*, 9 April 2013.
- Proctor, Roy. "Three Virginia Sculptors Have a Theatrical Bent." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 14 June 1986, p. A-53.
- _____. "The Wit of Myron Helfgott." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 15 May 1982, p. A-50.
- Risatti, Howard. "Myron Helfgott: Recent Multi-Media Installations." *Sculpture*, November 2009, pp. 43-45.
- Ryan, Dinah. "Helfgott's Parade." *Blackbird*, Vol. 1, no. 2, Fall 2002, blackbird.vcu.edu.
- _____. "Myron Helfgott." *New Art Examiner*. June/Summer 1992, p. 44.
- "Sculptor to Explain Imagery." *Richmond News Leader*, 8 May 1982, p. A-45.
- "Six Local Artists in Museum's Invitational." *Richmond News Leader*, 3 January 1988.
- Slipek, Edwin. "Close Inspection." *Style Weekly*, 28 February 2012.
- Styron, Thomas. *Off the Wall*. Norfolk, VA: Chrysler Museum of Art, 1978. (catalogue)
- "Tyranny of the Theoretical." *Blackbird*, Vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 2009, blackbird.vcu.edu.
- Wyrick, Pete. "Best Local Art on View." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 13 Feb 1972.
- _____. "Myron Helfgott." *Richmond News Leader*, 12 February 1972.
- Zalecki, Megan. "Simply Experience." *Richmond Arts Review*, 29 March 2013.
- Zeitlin, Marilyn A., Morris Yarowsky, and Myron Helfgott. *Alumni of the Masonic Temple*. Richmond, VA: VCU Anderson Gallery, 1983.



Helfgott's *Waterfall after Duchamp* with its original figure, installed at 1708 Gallery in 1991.

“After I saw Marcel Duchamp’s *Étant donnés* for the first time, I came back to Richmond from Philadelphia and tried to make a waterfall like the one in Duchamp’s piece. I asked Joe Seipel, who co-owned the Border [Café] at the time, if he had one of those Miller High Life signs with the waterfall that I could use, but he said they were collectors’ items and difficult to get.

I decided I needed to first figure out how to make the waterfall before doing anything else. Later, after I had finished my sculpture, a friend gave me a copy of Duchamp’s installation notebook for *Étant donnés*. Duchamp and I had solved the waterfall in the same way, using a metal disk with punched holes.

Originally, my piece included a figure, but I removed it. Duchamp made the oddest female portraits I’ve ever seen; his lover, the Brazilian sculptor Maria Martins, posed for *Étant donnés*. I knew I couldn’t make a figure as odd as his.”