About the Art

- Mostly known for more stylized, sleeker portrait heads produced later in his career, the artist here has given the surface of the sensitively rendered head an expressive, obviously hand-worked treatment. The edge of a modeling tool has been used to incise the eyebrows and the hairline.

- The noted art historian and critic David Driskell wrote that William Artis “has not attempted to solve problems with his art but has seen beyond those obstacles often binding the human spirit. He has encountered through his art the meaning of a universal world” (1971).

- The base of this sculpture was probably made by the artist himself.

About the Artist

1914: Born Washington, North Carolina  
1914: Born February 2 in Washington, North Carolina  
1927: Moved to New York, New York  
1930s: Studied privately with Augusta Savage and at the Art Students League with Robert Laurent, both major sculptors in the Harlem Renaissance  
1935: Made the Ackland’s Head of a Boy  
1947: Awarded a Rosenwald fellowship to study with Ivan Mestrovic at Syracuse University in New York  
1954–1965: Taught at Nebraska state Teachers College  
1966–1975: Taught at Mankato State College, Minnesota  
1971: Retrospective exhibition at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee  
1977: Died April 3 in Northport, New York