

Terry Owen Mathews (b. 1931)

The Matriarch, 2/10, 1993

Cast bronze

Sunnylands Collection 2009.1.10003

Brief Description:

The Annenbergs displayed *The Matriarch* by Terry Mathews the Game Room.



Talking points:

Terry Mathews was brought up in Uganda and has lived in Africa most of his life. He worked in safari tourism for many years until he lost sight in his left eye after a shooting accident. That is when he started focusing more intently on sculpting African wildlife, which he excelled with due to his first hand experience with bush animals. Mathews emphasizes that his work is not strictly representational and that he attempts to express a mood because “the movement or lack of it is more important than the anatomical detail.”¹

The piece depicts a mature cow elephant, the matriarchal head of the herd, with her daughters.² The colored-surface of the bronze is the result of an applied patination, a process during which chemicals are applied to the surface of the bronze for a period of time (sometimes also treated with heat) for the purpose of coloring the metal. According to Terry Mathews, the Annenbergs commissioned multiple pieces in addition to *The Matriarch*.³

¹ “Terry Owen Mathews, SAA AFC, Wildlife Sculptures in Bronze.” *Artists for Conservation: Supporting Nature through Art. Web.* <http://www.natureartists.com/artists/artist_biography.asp?ArtistID=565>.

² “The Matriarch.” Correspondence between Terrence Mathews and Kacey Donner. E-mail. 27 August 2016.

³ “Biography and work.” Correspondence between Terrence Mathew and Kacey Donner. E-mail. 22 August 2016.