

## Something in the Way She Moved

**Candida Smith**, the youngest daughter of sculptor **David Smith**, was awestruck when, as a teenager, she discovered her late father's drawings of

seum's Smith retrospective, on view from the 3rd of this month through May 14.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, when Smith was en-

rolled at the Art Students League in New York, Graham was pushing the boundaries of dance, creating a new, distinctly modern form that

prized self-expression and embraced sexuality. "If you can imagine seeing the human figure doing things—making shapes, defining space, carrying meaning in an entirely new way—it would have been profoundly impressive" to a young art student like her father, says Candida, who is sure that he must have seen a Graham performance.

David Smith subsequently incorporated the choreographer's bold physical shapes into the simplified forms of his metal sculptures. *Lamentation*, Graham's seminal 1930 piece with a lone dancer trapped inside a tube of fabric, influenced his welded-iron piece *Billiard Player Construction* (1937), Candida says. "When Graham extends her fist in one direction and a knee in the other, a stretch is made that is of a similar shape to the stretched metal," she explains.

For a deeper exploration of the esthetic connections between the two modernists, the Sackler Center will also present a public program on the 21st of next month featuring films of Graham in *Lamentation*, a live performance by Graham dancers, and a participatory movement exercise led by **Janet Eilber**, artistic director of the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance in New York.

"Looking at a Smith sculpture," says **Carmen Giménez**, the Guggenheim's curator of 20th-century art and organizer of the

Smith retrospective, "one can see dance all over."

—*Rebecca Spence*



**Martha Graham**, dancing. "It was a revelation, like an invisible bond extending into my life," says Smith, then a dancer-in-training who had studied the Graham technique.

The drawings, which highlight the connection between the great modernist sculptor and the founder of modern dance in America, were based on pictures of Graham performing *Lamentation* taken by renowned dance photographer **Barbara Morgan**.

One of the photographs, as well as one of Smith's resulting drawings, is included in an exhibition exploring his influences, "From Concept to Contemplation: David Smith at Work," at the Sackler Center for Arts Education at New York's Guggenheim Museum. The show is running concurrently with the mu-



**TOP** David Smith's 1938 sketches labeled "Martha Graham—Photo Barbara Morgan." **ABOVE** A 1935 photo by Morgan of Graham performing *Lamentation*.

**RIGHT** Smith's *Dancer*, 1935.

