



JOAN MIRIAM ADAMS

## 4 winged lion woman

Bear Creek Park, 8966 139A Street, in ornamental garden area  
1994

Surrey artist Joan Miriam Adams developed her concept for a winged lion woman from mythologies and archeological figures. The enormous sculpture, which she carved from a 3.3 ton block of black granite, presides over Surrey's Bear Creek Park like a sphinx.

Adams chose to sculpt the piece on site, enabling the public to watch the fascinating process. As she transformed the rock through hard labour, she emphasized the underlying themes of persistence and strength as transformational agents — in life as well as in art. She writes, "There has never been a time when a woman (or a man) needed more the strength and durability of a sphinx". The image itself was taken from ancient mythology and remade in the image of a contemporary woman.

Surrey Metro Savings purchased the artwork for a nominal fee and donated it to the City of Surrey.

Joan Adams graduated with a degree in sculpture from Emily Carr Institute. Her keen interest in mythologies led to the creation of an earlier piece, *Metamorphosis* (1989), in which she transformed an 8-foot block of BC granite into a spiritual image of a woman becoming a bird. Currently Adams is carving an 11-foot sculpture from limestone. The theme is taken from *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1917) by T. S. Eliot: "I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each... I have seen them riding seaward on the waves, combing the white hair of the waves blown back."

City of Surrey Public and Community Art Collection

