

Sculpture

VOL. I, ISSUE NO. 2





TO GAVE THEIR LIVES
MAJOR LIONEL
ROYAL DUBLIN FUS
STAIN ROBERT

20th Century American Sculpture

EXHIBITION

October 26, 2006 - November 27, 2006

Issue 2 of *Sculpture* accompanies an exhibition of over twenty works by some of America's most distinguished sculptors. Twelve of the works from the exhibition are highlighted in this publication. In curating this collection the emphasis was not to show *popular* works with which many collectors are already familiar; but to share rare models that we feel demonstrate the depth of the country's artistic achievement. We have taken care to select works that encompass both the first half of the century, when bronze casting was at the forefront, with more abstract creations from the second half.

Further information regarding price, details, biographical information and provenance for any of the works in the exhibition are available upon request. We encourage you to visit amtfineart.com in our 20th century American sculpture category to view the exhibition in its entirety. All the featured works are lifetime casts and sizes in the catalogue are measured without bases.

We hope you enjoy this special issue of *Sculpture*!

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GUTZON BORGLUM

(1867-1941)

John Ruskin

1903

Bronze with brown patina

14 1/2 in. high

Inscribed: *RUSKIN, Gutzon Borglum / 1903 and Roman Bronze Works N.Y.*

Long before embarking on the monumental sculptural program of Mount Rushmore in 1927, Borglum achieved an international following for his art during his extensive travels. Born in the Idaho territory, he lived for extended periods in California, France, Spain and England before the age of thirty and received commissions for both painting and sculpture. One notable commission was for a series of murals at the Queen's Hotel in Leeds, England for the Midland Railway Company that he obtained shortly after his arrival in London in 1896. Once the paintings were ready for installation, the artist made the trip to Leeds to oversee the work. While there, he was invited with a friend to see the eminent critic, John Ruskin, who lived nearby in the Eastern Lake District. In poor health and advanced years, Ruskin stayed bundled up in his greatcoat and blanket during the visit to his home, Brantwood. Borglum took the opportunity of the meeting to finish several sketches with the desire of one day turning them into a sculpture. The artist finally had time to complete a small statuette of Ruskin after his return to America in 1902. Although Ruskin had passed away two years before, his steady gaze and alert visage remained alive in Borglum's mind. In preparing the sculpture, he emphasized the expressive hands and flowing beard and mane, while hiding the frailty of the body within the folds of clothing. Even though the piece is less than 15 inches high, it feels massive, like a block of stone and presages his later colossal sculpture.

Borglum rushed this work, as well as six other pieces, to completion in order for them to be shown at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition. This World's Fair in St. Louis followed closely upon the heels of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago and the 1901 American Exposition in Buffalo. At these international exhibitions, the fine arts played a dominant role and artists gained exposure to a huge buying public. Without question Borglum knew that a sculpture of Ruskin, who was lionized on both sides of the Atlantic, would lead to the sale of several replicas. Indeed this was the case, and casts are now found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; the Rhode Island School of Design; Providence and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

When Borglum originally created a plaster model of John Ruskin, there was little concern about the translating its massive quality into a thin-shelled bronze. This was only possible, however, by great advances in the lost wax technique of bronze casting in America. The leading foundry for this type of casting was the Roman Bronze Works in New York, which was established only a few years prior. Their artisans were the first to be able to achieve successfully, as seen in this early cast, the production of such a large continuous surface without seams.





CARL PAUL JENNEW EIN

(1890-1978)

Cupid and Gazelle

1919

Bronze with black patina, gilding and polychrome
28 in. high

Inscribed: C.P.JENNEW EIN ROMA. 1919 / © and stamped:
PBU Co MÜNCHEN MADE IN GERMANY [Priessmann,
Bauer & Co. foundry]

PROVENANCE

Junius Spencer Morgan, Glen Cove, NY, c. 1925
John Pierpont Morgan II, his son
Estate of John Pierpont Morgan II

One of the most sought after fellowships available to young American sculptors was the Prix de Rome, which bestowed upon the recipient three years of study and housing at the American Academy in Rome and a yearly stipend of \$1,000.00. Jennewein received this honor in 1916 and used his time there to gain a thorough understanding of classical forms, as evidenced not only in ancient Roman statuary, but also as interpreted by baroque masters, such as Giovanni Bernini. Prior to his arrival in Italy, Jennewein had spent his youth making architectural reliefs as an apprentice in the New York firm of Buhler and Lauter. While his early work showed promise, it had a limited range of design and emotion. In Rome his skills flourished. The variety and diversity of sculptures available for his purview from the Roman Forum to the Borghese Gardens gave him an unlimited selection of subjects and styles from which to choose. The results were several beautiful small sculptures including *Coral*, *Comedy* and *Hercules Taming the Nemean Bull*.

While Jennewein could draw upon other sculptors and sculpture for his subject matter, he could also be inspired by the world that surrounded him. In Rome he fell in love and married an Italian woman, Gina Pirra and within a year, they had their first son Paolo. The baby was a source of constant joy for the artist, and he revelled in his son's youthful development. Wanting to capture this moment of infancy, Jennewein sought out a novel composition. He decided to place his child astride a gazelle. At first glance this would seem to be a peculiar choice of animal, but in truth gazelles were a popular exotic species in those days and could be found nearby on the grounds of the Borghese Gardens. As well, only three years before, in 1916, Paul Manship had executed the seminal bronze, *Dancer with Gazelles*, which the artist clearly knew well. Jennewein's sculpture distinguishes itself in its addition of cherub's wings to the child and the elaborate saddle fastened around the gazelle's girth, which in effect elevates the composition to pure caprice. Manship's work glorifies the grace and delicacy of the female form in animal and human. Jennewein's sculpture, on the other hand, treads in the opposite direction. Here, the cherub is precariously balanced above a skittish male gazelle. Both males are ready to jolt, but perhaps not long together. *Cupid and Gazelle* was extremely well-received after its exhibition at the Academy in Rome in 1920. It received an honorable mention at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1921, and a replica was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY in 1922. Ultimately, Jennewein had cast thirteen examples produced for sale. Without question the finest casts were completed by the Munich founders, Preissmann, Bauer & Co. In fact, the Metropolitan exchanged their 1922 purchase for a cast by the German concern in 1933 at the urging of the artist himself.





CARL AUGUSTUS HEBER

(1875-1956)

Girl with Crane

1913

Bronze with brown patina

14 in. high

Inscribed: *C A Heber 1913* and stamped: *ROMAN
BRONZE WORKS N-Y-*

Like most sculptors of his generation, Heber was trained in the Beaux-arts style at the academic ateliers in Paris. His work was characteristic of the age and displayed a deliberate blending of exacting detail with dynamic action, whether created on a monumental scale for the World's Fairs, or on a diminutive scale as seen here. Heber's *Girl with Heron* is clearly a clever variation on the famous *Boy with Heron* modeled by Frederick MacMonnies in 1890. Whereas the heron enfolds the boy in the former piece, the heron literally bursts from the grasp of the young maiden in the latter:



MALVINA CORNELL HOFFMAN

(1887-1966)

Russian Dancers

1911

Bronze with brown patina

10 1/2 in. high

Inscribed: *M. Hoffman* © / *Modern art FDRY. N.Y.*

During a visit to London, Hoffman was electrified by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballet Russe performing at the Palace Theater and in particular by the famous Anna Pavlova. *Russian Dancers* is the first in a series of sculptures inspired by the dancer. It depicts Pavlova and Mikhail Mordkin from a performance of *Autumn Bacchanal* and the sculpture was awarded a first prize at a Paris exhibition. Originally it was cast in an edition of about twenty by the Roman Bronze foundry. Hoffman cast this model at a later date and gave it to her personal secretary, Samuel L. Lovich.

PAUL HOWARD MANSHIP

(1885-1966)

Actaeon

1924

Bronze with greenish brown patina

28 in. high

Inscribed: PAUL MANSHIP © and Alexis Rudier Fondateur. PARIS.

PROVENANCE

George Fitzmaurice (possibly acquired from the artist)

By descent to Sheila Fitzmaurice Shay

Generously lent by James Graham and Sons Gallery, NY

Actaeon was conceived in 1923 while Manship was living in Paris and at the height of his artistic career. It is one of Manship's most dramatic compositions. As in his famous *Dancer and Gazelles*, he employs three forms all in motion. The kinetic positioning of the hounds and the Greek inspired chiseling used on Actaeon's hair and the necks and tails of the hounds creates a tension that transcends the more gentle and lyrical feel of *Dancer and Gazelles*. He was challenging the conventional boundaries of composition as he chose to have neither hound have a paw on the ground. The most striking feature of the sculpture is its strong diagonal thrust forward and up. Off of this diagonal are many triangular relationships that make this one of his most sophisticated and intellectual compositions.

Actaeon was a young hunter who stumbles upon Artemis by a pool in the woods. While he was caught spellbound by her beauty she was furious at being spied upon, bathing with her nymphs. She dips her hand into the pool and splashes him with water. As the drops landed upon his head, antlers sprouted and he transitions to a stag. His hounds leap at him and he runs as they begin their assault and he is unable to utter a human sound to call them off. Artemis' revenge was complete, as no mortal was to live to boast that he had seen the goddess bathing.

Manship has been credited with revitalizing the classical tradition and others have countered that he freed the ties that bound American sculpture to realism. It has been argued whether it was he or Saint-Gaudens who ushered in the "national style." The answer lies perhaps in extraordinary number of students and artist's who were to be so greatly shaped by Manship's style.







ALBIN POLASEK

(1879-1965)

Forest Idyl

1924

Bronze with greenish brown patina

25 1/2 in. high

Inscribed: 1924 © ALBIN POLASEK and stamped: ROMAN BRONZE WORKS N-Y

As a fellow at the American Academy in Rome from 1910 to 1913, Polasek gained first-hand experience with classic Roman statuary, which in turn had evolved from high-classical Greek art. The mainstay of this period was an understanding and appreciation for torsion and motion within the confines of the figure. *Forest Idyl* was composed to be seen frontally, but also includes a slightly spiraling twist in the young woman's torso. This is coupled with the romantic interchange between doe and fawn and makes this work an extremely successful melding of movement and poise.

ROBERT INGERSOLL AITKEN

(1878-1949)

Lamb s Club Memorial

c. 1920

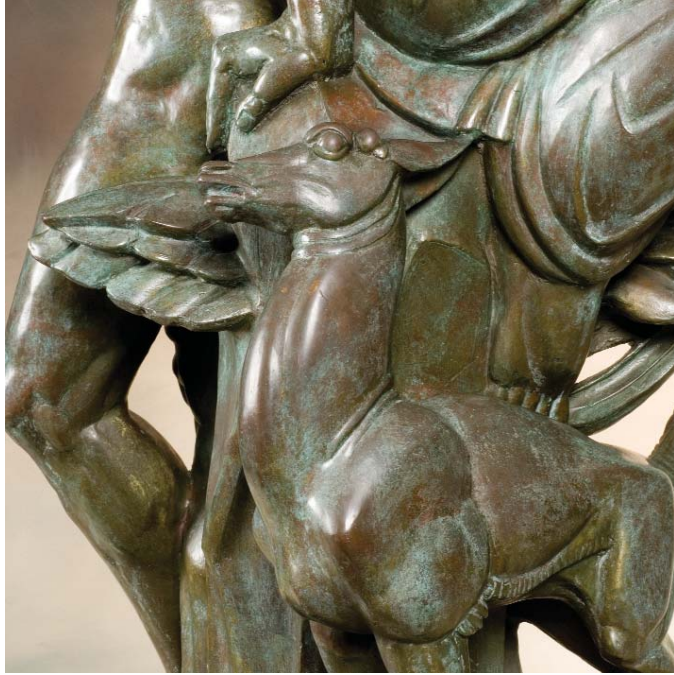
Bronze with brown patina and gilding

38 1/2 in. high

Inscribed: AITKEN and stamped: ROMAN BRONZE WORKS N-Y

The Lambs Theatre Club, founded in 1874, was America's first professional organization committed to the arts. Its structure is based upon its namesake formed in London five years before. The English club had been named after the playwright, Charles Lamb, and his sister Mary. Both clubs enjoyed word play and called their president, the Shepherd, and their members, the Flock. This terminology took on an added poignancy during World War One, when tragically four American *lambs* were killed. As a fitting remembrance, the club commissioned one of their own to design a memorial sculpture. Aitken was by reputation a sensitive sculptor, and due to his closeness to those fallen men, created a work that shows not only inner pathos, but also outward strength. The shepherd transcends and crosses time, an obvious symbol dating back to the Psalms and a fitting reminder of those lost, yet still cherished.





ALBERT WEIN

(1915-1991)

Arcadian Idyll

modeled in 1943, cast in 1989

Bronze with greenish brown patina and gilding

46 1/2 in. high

Inscribed: WEIN © and stamped: 1989 3/12

PROVENANCE

Estate of Albert Wein, New York

Very few artists of the twentieth century have so successfully achieved a balance between the extremes of classicism and modernism, as did Albert Wein. His sound foundation of academic excellence provided the basis for the modernist approach that distinguished his work even when he moved into abstraction. Few sculptors have garnered as many medals, accolades, fellowships, commissions and competitions as he did. Like Manship before him, Wein won the Prix de Rome in 1947 and his time there had profound impact on his work. Both Manship and Wein drew significantly on classical themes for subject matter; yet what distinguished Wein, was his ability to grow stylistically throughout the decades.

In the 1930's Wein was actively involved in WPA projects and his volumetric forms and clean lines typified the style of the period. One of the sculptors that Wein openly acknowledged as an influence was Leo Friedlander. While many of Wein's contemporaries considered study at the Beaux Arts Institute anathema, Wein had little interest in being "modern for modern's sake." It was Friedlander who gave Wein his life long focus in sculpture. Friedlander asked him if he was familiar with the statue of Lorenzo di Medici and then declared "That figure has the essence." Friedlander shared with Wein what essence meant, particularly in regard to Chinese painting and these ideas shaped Wein's vision of the true meaning of art. In 1940 he had his first exhibition at The National Academy of Design and he moves into strong figural work steeped in rich allegorical themes. In 1950 he exhibited at The Whitney and in 1951 he participated in the "Watershed" exhibition for American Sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum. He garnered fellowships from the Huntington Hartford Foundation, the Ford Foundation and had exhibitions at the San Francisco Museum of Art and the Jewish Museum. In the fifties he experimented with welding and a cubist angularity crept into his forms. He took abstraction back toward volumetric shapes in the 1960's, working in marble and polished bronze that bears an affinity to the work of Jean Arp. In the 1970's, Wein received the commission for the largest granite, bas relief ever executed, the Libby Dam. It took three years and can be likened in scope to Gutzon Borglum's Mount Rushmore. From the seventies to the time of his death in 1991, he went through a rich and productive period, sculpting some of his finest compositions. In many ways, he had come full circle and having exhausted all that abstraction could offer, he returned to the freedoms he found within a representational style.

Wein Felt that "every good work of art is a good abstract composition" or could at least be represented by one. That the subject, devoid of details, and pared down to only what is necessary to convey the "essence" of the composition is what really mattered in a truly great work of art.



ALBERT WEIN

(1915-1991)

Pygmalion and Galatea

modeled in 1979, cast in 1987

Bronze with reddish-brown and green patina

24 1/4 in. high

Stamped: WEIN SC and inscribed: 1979 © / '87 3/12 TX
[Talix foundry]

There were few mythological and allegorical themes which Wein did not put his hand to in sculpture. In the 1970's Wein made a decisive return to modern classicism and rendered his version of *Pygmalion and Galatea*. It is the allegory of a sculptor whose ivory sculpture of ideal female form turns to flesh before his eyes. In Wein's model, the sculptor looks up in adoration at his creation come to life. The simplicity of lines and planes in these pared down forms is the result of a mature style.

ALBERT WEIN

(1915-1991)

Bacchante

c. 1968

Bronze with brown patina

33 in. high

Inscribed: WEIN 1/13

EXHIBITED

Grand Central Art Galleries, New York, NY, 1983, *Albert Wein, N.A., Sculpture in Environments*, illus.

Bacchante is Wein's most major female figural composition. It was photographed as a fountain piece in the Grand Central Art Galleries exhibition to encourage collectors to purchase Wein's work in more monumental sizes. This model is believed to be one of only two casts conceived in the late 1960's while the sculptor was in California. The sprightly pose is offset by the strong hand gestures, making it an avant-garde and unforgettable form. In assessing modern sculpture one looks for pieces which speak a new language yet unused by other artists and *Bacchante* is that work for Wein.







SEYMOUR LIPTON

(1903-1986)

Untitled

1951

Monel metal on steel

23 in. high

Signed: *Lipton* and dated: '51

During World War II the oxyacetylene torch was perfected and this allowed for a whole new approach to sculpture. Welding, rather than carving or modeling, became the method of choice for self-expression. As with many New York sculptors, Lipton relished the chance to make three-dimensional art that concerned itself with forms and underlying structure and not with mimicking nature. In the 1950's he experimented with various sheet metals as supports and welded upon them alloys for color and texture. His works, because they are three-dimensional, have mass, as well as their own inherent logic, and rational minds see order within the artificially created space. Lipton's pieces from this period were enthusiastically received and more than 150 museums owned his work by the end of the decade.

HARRY BERTOIA

(1915-1978)

The Winds

c. 1965

Beryllium, copper and brass

36 1/2 in. high

Bertoia has been credited for bringing sound to sculpture. Around 1960 he began creating "sonambient" works that create pleasing tonal music when played. Harry often gave concerts with them and other musicians incorporated the tonal sounds into their compositions. *The Winds* is a sound sculpture that makes a soft rustling sound when played and mimics the movement of wheat moving rhythmically in the wind. This work has been recorded with the Harry Bertoia Research Project.





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