

Leonardo Lucchi's sculpture

By GUSTAVO CUCCINI

Contemporary sculptor Leonardo Lucchi rightly inserts himself into the varied panorama of contemporary art...

In the world of his figures, different linguistic codes stratify themselves in correspondence with the many superimposed layers of culture; through a process of decantation of a given objective, visual reality is fixed and verifiable through experience, in a sign-abstract representation of pure visibility which leads us once again to the presumed subject.

A uniform, circular motion begins, a journey of parting and returning, between the artist and the references of his work, which generates an esthetical pathos of sublimation and which tones down and diminishes the tension in the faces of the wrestlers, the athletes and Amazons, leading them back to the absorbed intimacy of lovers and young women. Even the horses, whether fallen and defeated or in love and crazed, crystallize impetuous energy in geometric compositions: the space around them coagulates and fixes the movement, without closing it in.

This densely profound space is the measure of the bronzes and marbles themselves, the wood and wax, the instrumental media of watchful thought substantiated by technical convictions and confidence in the materials: from the epiphanous festivity and leaping, the sculptures rise gradually to unique and universal communication. Moving from the figurative tradition and from cultured citation, Lucchi's sculpture recalls, without a doubt, the same origins of the typological line of formation...

...The awareness of his craft and the serene acceptance of it reconciles the sculptor with the material and its demands, particularly in the choice of bronze, which implies an indirect relationship with the finished work, subject to the final chisel marks when made possible by an alloy poor in tin, is indicative of a mental training that is solid and insensitive to the sirens of fashion and the easy tendencies. The phases of work, from the cast mould to the wax, until the melting and the finish, slacken the creative tension and indicate the old days of the *bottega*, or workshop, conjuring up generations of experience and alchemy's secrets.

It is in this condition that the artist rediscovers the motivations of his own work and finds a linguistic structure within the work itself, relieving art from the fate of becoming a purely productive practice. An enunciated self control grows from this rigorous composite, an interior order that leaks out of the luminous surfaces and linear chills. The figures place themselves in positions that challenge natural centres of gravity and yet resolve themselves in admirable balance; bodies and objects couple suspended over an emptiness made of a substance which exists and is felt, but remains invisible. This substance creates a lived space, an atmospheric mobility, and a sense of interior space as well as open air. The unforeseeable light with which the statues are invested never escapes the control of the form, rather it melts with the form and becomes light on the bronzes, the marbles, the wood and on the golden jewels and precious monochrome miniatures. It's a quiet light which catches the peremptory act of motion and suspends it in an interminable pause; a pause which opens the soul to meditation and suggests silent comprehension.

In less suspicious times, Leonardo Lucchi proclaimed his faithfulness to the figure, and for the figure, he leads us back to the images of the mind and the soul, to modestly filtered individual emotions, from the expressionless faces and contained gestures to the collective sentiment of tradition and faith.