



The Brancusi Effect 12/6 – 21/9 2014

Press conference: Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 10 am

Opening: Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 7 pm

The Romanian sculptor Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957) is numbered among the 20th century's most influential artists. With his considerations of the way that pedestal and presented work relate to each other he launched a reorientation of the relationship between object, viewer and space. This had a decisive influence on minimal art and the aesthetic of the installation as a whole.

Moreover, Brancusi's work is seen as the initial point of a reflection on the artwork's historical and institutional positioning. The exhibition *The Brancusi Effect* takes this potential into account as well as the strongly documentary aspect implicit in Brancusi's artistic approach, which was expressed in countless photographic images of installations taken in his studio. The exhibition presents original photographic material together with selected positions of contemporary art that reference Brancusi, and so creates an imposing spatial installation comprising various sculptures that reflect the recent currency of the sculptural within contemporary art.

Photographs of Brancusi in his studio in the *Impasse Rosin* in Paris, showcase how he used installative arrangements to present his works as a spatially unified work of art. Brancusi moreover also personally photographed individual works, in order to translate the special aura of his sculptures into the medium of photography. The loan from the Kunsthau Zurich provides a fascinating insight into the thinking and the production methods of this artist, who, between tradition and modernity, created a work of singularity within the European avant-garde.

Further insight into the work of Brancusi can be drawn from the work *Les 58 numéros flotents*, an unwilling collaborative work between Brancusi, the Japanese photographer Soichi Sunami and the Italian publisher Giovanni Scheiwiller, directed both formally and conceptually by Marcel Duchamp's invisible hand. The five photographs conclude the operation started by Duchamp on Brancusi's work which began with the installation at Brummer Gallery in 1933 and which completely overturned the reading of the work and paved the way for its future, American perception. Alessio delli Castelli's work on these objects, oscillating between documents and works of art, is presented in the catalogue alongside Paola Mola's original studies on the subject.

The contemporary positions in the exhibition are characterised by an enormous heterogeneity, but share an interest in the relationship between work and pedestal, work and space and the modular principle, exemplified in one of Brancusi's most famous works *Endless Column*. The combination of different materials, the

coexistence of different volumes and the dissolution of the idea of a supporting pedestal in favour of an integral sculptural component, also characterise the selected works by international artists.

An Te Liu transforms Styrofoam parts from transport packaging of hi-fi equipment or household appliances into elegant modular bronze sculptures. In *Ok Ok Ok Ok Ok*, Sofia Hultén, spans a floor-to-ceiling filigree column out of old car jacks. The works by Koenraad Dedobbeleer muddle up the perception of the relationship between objects and their appearance; the works appear both as sculpture and as pedestal of a sculpture. Ute Müller in turn combines found materials with organically shaped sculptures into dense sculptural arrangements.

The exciting interior and exterior insights arising out of this coexistence of different sculptural positions, in the glass pavilion of Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz, in essence once more serve to emphasize the currency of Brancusi.

Artists: Saâdane Afif, Wilfrid Almendra, Nina Beier, Anca Benera & Arnold Estefan, Constantin Brancusi, André Cadere, Koenraad Dedobbeleer, Alessio delli Castelli, Thea Djordjadze, Paulien Föllings, Isa Genzken, Konstantin Grcic, Jürgen Mayer H., Sofia Hultén, Haraldur Jónsson, An Te Liu, Josephine Meckseper, Ute Müller, Anca Munteanu Rimnic, Shahryar Nashat, Olaf Nicolai, Odilon Pain, Luiz Roque, Rudi Stanzel

Curators: Vanessa Joan Müller, Nicolaus Schafhausen

A publication with texts by Paola Mola and Alessio delli Castelli is being produced to accompany the exhibition (published by Sternberg Press, in collaboration with Dan Gunn).

#Brancusi

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Press release

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