

HIGH ALTITUDE FLIGHT OF SCULPTOR HEIDE MESSING MCDONALD

A huge success was the exhibition in the Munich gallery OPEN ART for the German born sculptor Heide Messing McDonald from Beloeil, Quebec. Television and newspaper reported positively and in detail on the sculptures in marble, alabaster and silver. Well-known personalities from politics and business, among whom also the President of the Bavarian Landtag, Johann Böhm, and his personal counsel, Herr Weidel, attended the vernissage to pay homage to the arts.

An invitation to visit the Bavarian Landtag was followed up gladly by Heide Messing McDonald and husband, her ever present, and what seems important, very humorous companion on her world travels. Proudly she shows off her souvenirs. For one, a gold-plated coat of arms of the Bavarian Landtag, the other a small enamel work in the form of the Bavarian State coat of arms, which can also be seen as a wall hanging in the building of the Bavarian Landtag. Decorative pins become memorable pieces, when asking later <Remember when?>

Important bronze sculptures may still be view at the OPEN ART gallery in Grosshadern by Munich.

Asked about her works, the artist explained in a previous interview with the Echo: At first my sculptures were abstract, then I turned more towards the figurative, the human figure in clean, definite lines.

Her works – in limited editions – show clearly the preference of the artist for the portrayal of women in their relationship to their environment, workplace, family, and their role in modern society.

The actual creative phase of this warm hearted and sensible artist shows female sculptures in strictly closed form with a lively force of expression. Woman as healer, teacher, comforter, lover, friend and mother, in free and basic simplicity. From this period of creativity Heide Messing McDonald counts these to her most important works:

ALLÉGRESSE, bronze – three female figures to symbolize friendship

LA BELLE HISTOIRE, bronze – three women with a book, woman as guardian of wisdom, experiences are exchanged

ONCE UPON A TIME, white alabaster – mother and child on a bronze bench

LE LIEN MATERNEL, bronze – mother and child

QUEST FOR EQUALITY, black African stone – three women move in a circle, the status symbol of a banker, a briefcase, opens the otherwise closes circle at three points.

WINTER IN QUEBEC, bronze – charming sculpture

The artist remembers: I took my grandmother in a wheelchair through a park in Kassel, in beautiful Hesse. A magnificent peacock with fan-opened tail strutted along. Suddenly my grandmother, then already old, pointed to an inconspicuous, but very busy grey sparrow not far from the proud peacock. <You see, my child> she said <So it was always with the women>. One for me very vivid and descriptive comparison, given by the right person at the right time. I have never forgotten it.

Heide Messing McDonald creates monumental-size concrete sculptures, large format bronze-like works of strong character. The tension of her work lies in the omission of the superfluous. The artist calls this minimalizing.

The often block-like simplification of the formal leads too a progressive internalization of the ethical messages that are being brought forth with sensitivity.

Even though, the expressive lies in the original simplicity of the figures, their movement often just hinted at, and because of this, becoming more definite, stimulating the viewer to an interaction with the artwork.

And expressly in this interaction with art lies a wonderful opportunity for an exchange among differing cultural circles and for improvement of the understanding among peoples, which is, as generally thought, a basic requirement for the living together in peace of people from different ethnic origins.

Contributing to this demanding and important process, especially in view of the globalization of human destinies, is Heide Messing McDonald with her exhibition in Tokyo, Japan. She reports enthusiastically, eyes glowing: I am exhibiting from February 14 to 19, 2000 in Tokyo. In the International Group Exhibition Tokyo 2000, I am the only one from Canada. As a Canadian of German origin, I view this as a double honor. Artist from Australia, Germany, France, Jamaica, the United States and the United Arab Emirates show their work in cooperation with Montague Art Galleries Inc. New York.

The exhibition is presented in the Bungei Shunju Gallery in the district of Ginza. This district, with its many hotels and restaurants, is being compared to the 5th Avenue of New York.

My husband and I are looking forward to get to know the Japanese culture and way of life. A well-known Japanese dancer, for example, will be closing the exhibition. It truly will be a great experience for us.

Heide Messing McDonald had the titles of the bronze sculptures that she is exhibiting in Tokyo translated into the language of the country. A charming gesture towards the host country, Japan. Her new creations in silver and pewter will also be presented to the public in Japan. Invitations were forwarded to the Delegation du Québec à Tokyo and the Canadian Embassy. Many preparations have to be met, and not to forget <husband>.

Heide Messing McDonald, shortly before her departure to Japan: It is wonderful that the Echo are reporting further on my career as an artist and my activities.

Back in Europe...the silver and pewter works of the artist can be seen within the framework of an exhibition of Marc Chagall in February 2000, in Germany at D-72622 Nürtingen-Reudern, Breitackerstr. 6, Galerie <Die Treppe>, TELEPHONE 07022 31277.

In Québec the artist is represented at the gallery <Balcon d'art>, 650 rue Notre Dame, Saint-Lambert Qc J4P 2L1 Tel: (450) 466-8920, fax: (450) 466-9101 with her signed silver jewelry, also in the style of <simplified total> and pewter articles.

Contact: Heide Messing McDonald, www.ligwwwd.com/iai/ Postal address: 521 Lecorbusier, Beloeil Qc J3G 3P1

We will report further about Heide Messing McDonald and her exhibitions in the next editions. We wish her continued creative strength and success.

<Toi, toi, toi> (good luck) and spit over your shoulder three times. That goes not only for artists of the theatre, but also for the married couple Messing McDonald for Tokyo.

Das Echo, February 2000
By Lucia M. Trommer