

For **Simone Turra** sculpture is an accumulation of archetypal forms, which mysteriously animate the experience of every human being. The artist brings them into being in the moment in which his search creates an indissoluble link between man and nature. «Nature – writes Arturo Martini – is hidden behind an apparent reality. Only the artist is admitted to the mysterious cloister where, in a flash of mutual understanding, nature surrenders and manifests itself in an act of unexpected confidence». Simone Turra's sculpture is born from this close contact, or abandon, and he makes the work a place from which emerge elements of memory, new form of knowledge or dialogue with the energies of the universe. He opts for formal synthesis, for the pure form, for linearity, for that sense of suspension and waiting which delineates precise and evocative structural elements. The clarity and beauty of nature are revived in his form, which seek harmonious, plastic solutions through which run irresistibly fascinating ancient civilisations. He challenges rigidity in the name of expressive simplification sustained by the incisiveness of the outlines and by the circumscribed compactness of the masses, which put the figure in the sacred dimension. The point of departure is the figure and nature, but the artist lets his mind wander through the material, seeking elements of poetry and creative freedom which bring to mind the expressive potential of a blank sheet. His intention is to give lightness to the forms that stands as spiritual essences and communicate the tensions which tie man to the environment in which he lives. «I like the everyday – says the artist – which gives birth to an infinity of relations within the body. I am increasingly attracted by the figure, which I place alongside other human figures, but also by trees, which I represent with an anthropomorphic, but rough, appearance. I am looking for the essence of form, which I find as important as drawing, through the study of bodies and also of emptiness which can be created by placing these bodies side by side. Because it is emptiness which determines the relationship between bodies». Simone Turra's figures have flying hands, arms which open like branches to encompass the sky and feet like roots which come out of the earth with an overwhelming life force; they are presences which move the space around them, because, in their formal perfection where every surface irregularity has been eliminated, they bring into play a multiple wave motion, which passes uninterrupted from the twisted trunk, through the emptiness, to the delicate lines of a body shaped by the slow movement of a thinking hand. Man and tree are often an indissoluble pair in the works of this artist and it is perhaps for this reason that the material he has mostly used for his works has been wood. «I am tremendously attracted by rock – the artist, however, makes clear – stone, marble, sandstone, granite, because of their beauty and, who knows, maybe also for that perverse way of making sculpture by chipping away which has always fascinated me. And making works in bronze means giving material such as stone and wood a new guise and in this way creating new emotional relationships. Because every material has its own field of enquiry and hence arouses different reactions in whoever looks at the work, whoever comes close to and touches it». Hands, in fact, run over the surfaces, now uncontaminated, smooth and soft, now ruffled by the scratching of a mark tracing out the history of skin turning into bark. And the sensations alternate, chase after each other like the voices of children playing in the street. Music also enters into these works as a unifying element between material and spirit: slow music, with long pauses, music which leads to a metaphysical dimension smoothed by light and by time.

Simone Turra's sculpture, then, is at one and the same time silence, mystery, the passage from one dimension to another, a way of dreaming material as an accumulation of lots forms, of primordial elements which go back to archetypes of time and space, so that, as the artist says «at times I have the feeling I am quoting». Simone Turra likes above all to describe landscapes, because «the parts of a sculpture are like the parts of a mountain, they belong to the individual but they exist in their own right». The artist explains, however:

«My works are the mirror of contemporary life in that I am here, now, living. I carry the past, what has already been created or filtered, on my shoulders yet at the same time I try to express in my work what I am living and seeing. I describe therefore the people and also the landscape which surrounds me and I especially love the beauty and richness of the various relationships of form and space but also emotions. I don't need the people who look at and touch my work to discover something particular about me, on the contrary, I would like everyone to use the work for their own ends, to take whatever they can from it with their own individual perception. For me a work is finished when a third person can make it his or her own». He continues, however, to refer to the past and continues to delve into because «I still have a lot to discover – he says – and I am still amazed and moved when I get close to past masters and also to the art of ancient civilisations».

**Riccarda Turrina**