

J. Pillhofer - "Sculptures | Drawings"



_ Pillhofer: Sitting man, 1964, Indian ink, 42 x 49 cm | Archangel, 1968, bronze, 40 x 30 x 29 cm

Opening / Vernissage: Mi., 4. December 2019, at 19.00 o'clock

Duration of exhibition: 4th of Dec. - 2nd of Feb. 2020

Opening speech: Dr. Silvie Aigner (fine arts historian, editor in chief - Parnass)





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Josef Pillhofer is regarded as one of the strictest and most compact sculptors in Austria. His aphorisms, such as this one, are characteristic of this:

"The sculpture is able to show, emphasize and make visible what is characteristic of the human figure. [J.Pillhofer - early 1980s]

His sculptures show nothing ill-considered, nothing excessive, nothing superfluous, their simplicity, almost simplicity, is not simple, nor is there any premeditated reduction to primary structures that very often confront US American artists with a complex European charge.

In Josef Pillhofer's sculptures, tension, weight, and relation are applied. Form complexes penetrate each other, stagger rhythmically, build steps and overhangs. Between the carefully stretched corner points, the cubic edges delimit succinct shapes that appear surprising and powerful. Convincing. On closer inspection along the edges, we see surface curvatures that create tremendous tension. Thus, these concentrates of form unfold a wealth of integrating, responding and opposing relationships in a very small space, which become particularly apparent when several sculptures are assembled in one room.

Despite all severity, however, J. Pillhofer was also keen on enjoyment, as was Leopold Rosenmayr with his Festive speech on the occasion of the awarding of the prize of appreciation of the Province of Styria to Josef Pillhofer, held in Graz on 5. December 1983:

LR] "Pillhofer unfolds the ability to endure the tension between nature and the abstract concept; indeed, he is almost a master at making the impact of the structures of the real emerge through the comprehensive indirectness, the indirectness of his form. Whoever does not see the abstract logic in the nature-oriented figuration that characterizes Pillhofer's sculptural work of the last decade understands his concept of nature and does not understand his naturalness.

I see Pillhofer's work as a guide to enjoyment. This has its importance in a time as overcrowded as it is scanty. Only they, pleasure and beauty, teach us how to fail". [End of quote]

Josef Pillhofer was born in Vienna in 1921 and grew up in Mürzzuschlag. After attending the Kunstgewerbeschule (school of in Graz (1938-41) he began his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. He had scholarships in Paris (1950-51) and later in Rome (1957). In Paris at the Académie de la Grand Chaumière he was a pupil of Ossip Zadkine. He maintained close contact with Constantin Brancusi, Henri Laurens, Alberto Giacometti and Serge Poliakoff.

He became close friends with the poet Paul Celan and the writer Ingeborg Bachmann.

Josef Pillhofer died in Vienna in July 2010.

For some more informations with both artists please refer to "Downloads" (workinfo, invitation), to



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