

FIORE DE HENRIQUEZ (1921-2004)

Sculptor

A Memorial Exhibition

29 September – 23 October 2004



WOLSELEY FINE ARTS

INTRODUCTION

Sadly, Fiore died on June 5 this year at the age of 82. Preparations for this exhibition were already under way and the planned retrospective exhibition is now taking place as a memorial exhibition. The exhibition consists of some 30 works, mainly in bronze but some in marble, to span a sculpture career of over 60 years. Works in the exhibition include portraits, self portraits and free work, and a stunning series of portraits of musicians, including Strauss, Mahler and Mozart.

Fiore was born in Trieste, Italy in 1921 and studied at the Academy of Fine Art in Venice. Her first exhibition took place in Florence in 1947. It was the destruction of her first public commission, a monument in bronze of Don Giovanni Cuomo for the town of Salerno, blown up on the day of its inauguration, that made Fiore leave Italy for England in 1949.

Between 1951 and 52 Fiore was invited by the Royal Academy in London to do three statues (triple life size) for the Festival of Britain and in 1953 she became a British citizen. From the second half of the 50s until 1975 she spent a few months each year touring Northern America, working and lecturing. In 1961 she met Lipchitz in the States and introduced him to the foundries of Tuscany, where he started working and bought a house. In 1966 Fiore bought the ruined hamlet of Peralta nearby, which she painstakingly restored.

Sculpturally, the association prompted freer imaginative forms and looser techniques, including 'semi-automatic' modelling directly in wax. Instinctive rather than intellectual, Fiore drew her conceptions from the material, only sometimes working to a pre-formed idea.

'The moment I embrace a piece of clay to make a sculpture, I think of how it's going to grow... Clay is very soft and pliable, so feminine: la creta. It then become plaster, more virile and rigid: gesso, that I can carve with a knife. Later it become feminine again as la cera, wax, pliable again, with fire this time. Then il bronzo, again masculine, hard. From feminine to masculine, over and again. And you must think all the time: what will I do?

'Will I leave something feminine or make [it] more masculine with the knife? . . . this is how you discover what you have, and take it further.'

True to her training, she stuck to traditional materials. Technically, the pieces are often ambitious, balancing on a narrow base, with spiralling volumes and rough surfaces. The large scale and often disturbing figural forms evoke comparisons with the work of Elisabeth Frink.

Fiore was brought up as a girl but developed male organs in puberty. She was secretive about, yet proud of her dual sexuality. This clearly influenced her work that combines a female softness and sensitivity with masculine strength. Indirectly, androgyny informs much of her sculpture, which ranges from monumental public pieces to tender portraits of newborn babies. There are recurrent twinning motifs of paired heads and conjoined figures, and ambiguous creatures belonging to more than one realm.

From 1948 to her death, Fiore made in the region of four thousand portraits. Among them: Augustus John (1952), Margot Fonteyn (1956), Peter Ustinov (1953), Lawrence Olivier and Vivien Leigh (1958), Field Marshall Sir Claude Auchinleck (1962), a full statue of him in his desert uniform, commissioned by the Royal Academy and now in a square in Birmingham. Her portrait of John F. Kennedy was commissioned by the Fairleigh Dickinson University of New Jersey in 1963. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (1987/88) has her portrait aboard the Ark Royal, and also in a hospital of which she was patron in the north of England.

Despite being a prolific artist, both as a portraitist and in free work, Fiore exhibited her work rarely. We are therefore grateful for the opportunity to re-introduce her work to the British public although, saddened that Fiore did not live to see this happen.

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MMIV



Jemima Pitman, cat. no. 1



Shepherd and Dog, cat. no. 7



The Last Kiss, cat.no. 9



Calabrian Woman, cat. no. 14



Mahler Playing the Waves, cat.no. 22



Maternity, cat.no. 28



Brother and Sister, cat. no. 26

COLOPHON & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dinah Voisin and Jan Marsh for all their hard work and continuous support without which this exhibition would not have taken place.

The catalogue was prepared by Hanneke van der Werf of Wolseley Fine Arts Ltd, 2004

Frontcover: Fiore sculpting, photographer unknown

Frontispiece: Felix Fonteyn

Back cover: Fiore and Augustus John (cat. no. 2) by Felix Fonteyn.

Catalogue numbers 1, 7, 9, 14 Felix Fonteyn; 22, 26, 28 Hanneke van der Werf

Digital versions of photo's by Felix Fonteyn kindly provided by Neil Ferber.

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Most works are for sale.

All enquiries to Wolseley Fine Arts.

Sizes are height before width before depth.

LIST OF WORKS

1 - Jemima Pitman, 1952 *(illustrated)*

Bronze, edition 11 34 x 22 x 25 cm

2 - Augustus John, 1952 *(illustrated)*

Bronze, edition 5 46 x 66 x 37 cm

3 - Choirboys, 1952

Bas relief. Bronze, 36 x 26 x 10 cm
cast in an edition of 7, 1995

4 - La Madonnina, 1956

Bronze, edition of 9 27 x 16 x 6 cm

5 - The Cellist (Amaryllis Fleming), 1958

Bronze, 150 x 90 x 60 cm

6 - Newborn, ca. 1959

Also known as 20 x 22 x 14 cm
Face of Birth, Bronze, ed. of 11

7 - Shepherd and Dog, 1959 *(illustrated)*

Bronze, edition of 7 25 x 10 x 7 cm

8 - Horse with Three Heads, 1960

Bronze, edition of 7 20 x 31 x 13 cm

9 - The Last Kiss, 1968 *(illustrated)*

Bronze, unique 43 x 31 x 21 cm

10 - Hands of the Artist, 1975

Bronze, cast in an edition 16 x 31 x 16 cm
of 7, 2001

11 - Hands, 1975

Carrara marble 40 x 30 x 18 cm

12 - Japanese Noble Boy, 1978

Bronze, edition of 7 20 x 13 x 20 cm

13 - Calabrian Woman with Children, 1980

Bronze, edition of 20 24 x 9 x 5.5 cm

14 - Calabrian Woman, 1980 *(illustrated)*

Bronze, edition of 20 20 x 5 x 4 cm

15 - The Shepherd, 1982

Bronze, edition of 11 17 x 14 x 10 cm

16 - The Dolphins, 1983

Bronze, edition of 11 23 x 29 x 15 cm

17 - Self Portrait (with hand), 1987

Bronze, edition of 7 31 x 22 x 22 cm

18 - Johann Strauss, 1988

Bronze, edition of 7 30 x 16 x 19 cm

19 - Johann Strauss, 1988

Bronze, edition of 7 41 x 18 x 14 cm

20 - Johann Strauss, 1988

Bronze, edition of 7 32 x 24 x 16 cm

21 - Mahler Conducting, 1988

Bronze, edition of 7 65 x 16 x 21 cm

22 - Mahler Playing the Waves, 1988 *(illustrated)*

Bronze, edition of 7 46 x 32 x 27 cm

23 - Schubert on Wave of Inspiration, 1988

Bronze, edition of 7 54 x 31 x 32 cm

24 - Mozart, 1988

Bronze, edition of 5 24 x 25 x 30 cm

25 - The Wind, 1998

High Relief. Bronze, 65 x 77 x 39 cm
edition of 7

26 - Brother and Sister, 1991 *(illustrated)*

Bronze, unique 47 x 45 x 20 cm

27 - Tenderness, c. 1998

Carrara marble 30 x 30 x 20 cm

28 - Maternity, n.d. *(illustrated)*

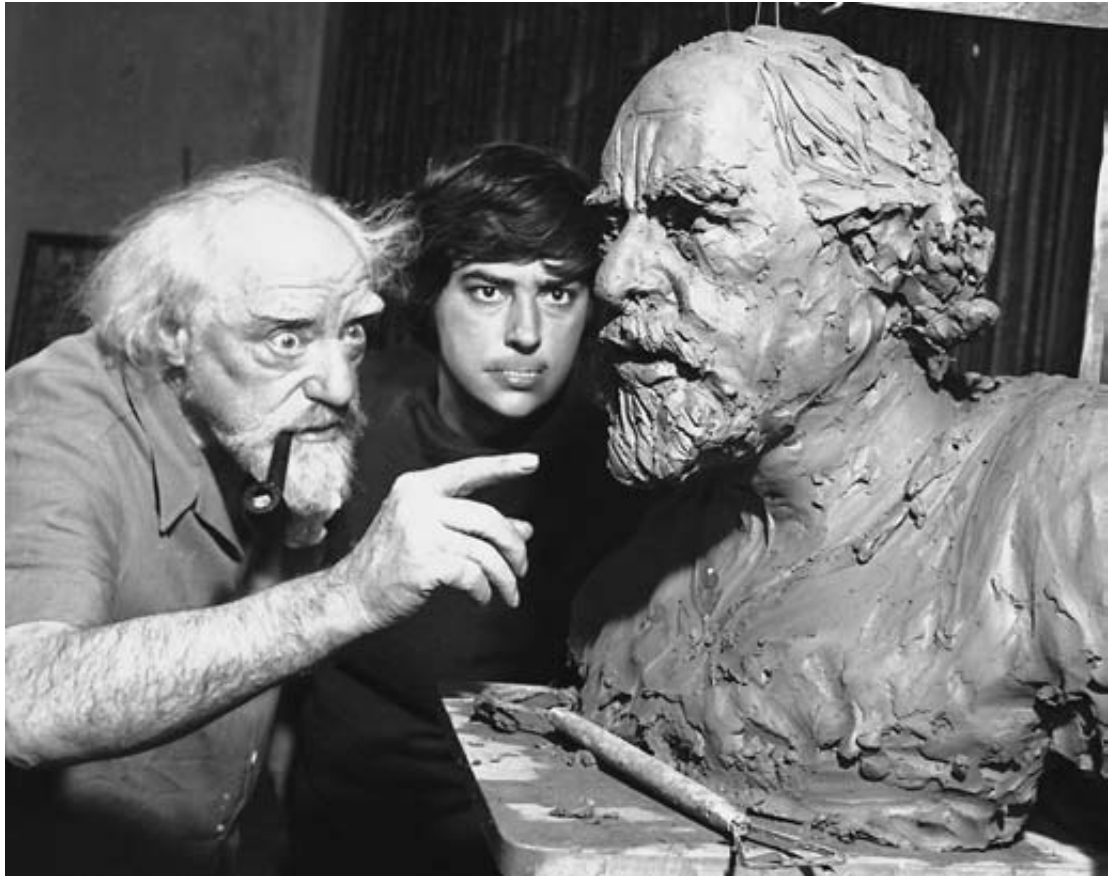
Bas relief, Bronze, 36 x 22 x 10 cm
cast in an edition of 7, 2001

29 - Novice Priest, n.d.

Bronze, edition of 20 16 x 5 x 3 cm

30 - Self Portrait, n.d. *(illustrated)*

Bronze, 2 artists proofs 53 x 34 x 32



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