

Marlborough

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JACQUES LIPCHITZ: *EARLY WORKS, RELIEFS AND WORKS ON PAPER*

November 1 - December 8, 2007

New York, NY (October 19, 2007) - *Jacques Lipchitz: Early Works, Reliefs and Works on Paper* will open at Marlborough Gallery, 40 West 57th Street, on November 1 and continue through December 8, 2007. It will include 54 sculptures and 68 drawings. These include a group of early sculptures from 1910 to 1916, the heart of the exhibition - twenty stone, polychrome, and bronze reliefs from 1918 to 1923, and finally a group of works from 1925 to 1933 culminating with his powerful anti-fascist statement, *David and Goliath* of 1933. Within these boundaries it charts the course of one of the most fertile and innovative sculptors of the twentieth century. This will be the first exhibition of Lipchitz's work at Marlborough in almost four years and is noteworthy in that it concentrates on the increasingly recognized stone and bronze bas reliefs, many never before exhibited by Marlborough and some never before exhibited anywhere.

Among the notable early works in the exhibition are *Horsewoman with Fan* of 1913, *Spanish Servant Girl* of 1915, and *Mother and Children*, 1914-15, the last of which reflects the myriad interests of the young artists in Paris during this period including African and Russian Byzantine imagery and about which Lipchitz admitted, "Of the works of this period, it is one I particularly like . . . There is first of all the mother-and-child theme, deriving from my feeling for my own mother - a theme . . . to which I have returned again and again."

Paired with many of these important sculptures are associated drawings which reveal the artist's formal process and the conceptual development of the finished work. While some of the work, such as his *Sculpture* of 1915, display an attempt by Lipchitz to simply "... make an art as pure as a crystal...", this seemingly effortless simplicity is deceptive. The difficult process from conception to execution which Lipchitz called "... a long and painful process of education..." is often laid bare with a freshness and immediacy in the works on paper. These drawings became increasingly important in his work. In fact, it was in 1918 that as Lipchitz notes, "I was not equipped to continue with my free-standing sculpture, so I made drawings and gouaches, preparatory sketches for a series of bas reliefs. In these, perhaps because I was thinking them out so completely with colored drawings, I began to experiment with polychrome." The results of these experiments include *Bas Relief II* of 1918 and *Bas Relief II* of 1923 as well as several bronze bas reliefs of 1918 and 1919 simply titled *Still Life*. These were groundbreaking for the artist and ultimately led to important commissions for patrons like Albert Barnes in the early 1920s, including his *Reclining Figure with Guitar* of 1923.

Even in a sculpture that was later realized in the round, such as his *Man with Guitar*, 1920, Lipchitz points out that it "... is now completely frontalized, composed of massive, integrated blocks. I even eliminated the shaft of the guitar, squaring off the body and integrating it completely with the torso of the figure. The asymmetrical staring eyes give to the figure a peculiar sense of almost hypnotic power which emphasizes its specific human personality. This is a work that is important to me as an anticipation of the monumental totemistic *Figure* of 1926 to 1930."

However, not all the work of this period is angular, blocky masculinity. In the seductive curves of *Reclining Woman* of 1921 Lipchitz notes, "I realized that I must change my entire approach for this commission, and the experiment in curvilinear forms was to have a most profound effect on my sculpture for the next decades." It was the increased success that these works engendered that allowed Lipchitz the freedom to expand the boundaries of his artistic vocabulary, noting of his *Musical Instruments* of 1925 that, "it is cubism with a difference, extremely free, open, interpenetrated, and dynamic. The guitar or mandolin becomes a dancing figure and both figure and guitar become a kind of architecture." These explorations eventually led to his celebrated monumental bronze of 1927, *Joy of Life*, "a dancing figure with a large guitar, related to and, I think, a result of many things I had done before. It is a culmination of all my findings in Cubism but at the same time an escape from Cubism." Taken together the exhibition presents the early aesthetic development and maturation of one of the twentieth century's artistic masters.

Born in Lithuania in 1891, Lipchitz arrived in Paris in 1909 where he quickly established himself as an artist whose impact contributed to the revolution of twentieth century art. He began exhibiting in Paris in 1912 and his first solo show took place at the Galerie de l'effort moderne (Léonce Rosenberg) in 1920. Lipchitz' emigrated from France at the time of the first German invasion, arriving in the United States in 1941. Shortly after, Lipchitz began exhibiting at the Bucholz Gallery, New York, and continued to exhibit in galleries and museums until his death in 1973.

Lipchitz' work is included in the collections of over one hundred of the most important museums throughout the world, including Centre National d'Art et de Culture George Pompidou, Paris, France; Centro Museo de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France; The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Tate Gallery, London, England and Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel.

An illustrated catalogue will be available at the time of the exhibition.

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