

# maria cristina carlini

## **A specific view and comprehension of space in Maria Cristina Carlini's sculpture**

When sculpture leaves the privileged, consecrated space of the art gallery or museum to be exposed in an urban environment, its' function obviously changes. What used to be an artwork among other artworks becomes a landmark in the cityscape. The dialogue established between the sculptor's idea transformed into new physical reality and the spatial empiricism of the scene where real life goes on, is in fact an open horizon of relationships to be developed among various subjects.

That's what Maria Cristina Carlini's public sculpture that would hardly be called monument is essentially about. A monument is intended to celebrate some distinguished person or an important historical event, while a three-dimensional statement formulated by an artist is, first of all, a specific vision and comprehension of space in correlation to time in its various aspects up to its most abstract, absolute notion – eternity. However, the viewer has always to ask himself where the limits of a single sculpture are and how to define the position from which the artist's statement is to be looked at. The question persists due to the fact that some sculptures demand a unique point of view and the others open infinite approaches to their forms and surfaces. Carlini's work does not represent a pre-existing reality in sculptural terms, so in this sense it cannot be considered as a prolongation of spatial phenomena with other means but instead constructs new entities having their own nature that address the viewer to imagine, to look, to discover the visual knots which define the space and finally situate him within, considering his position as an integral part of the newly created spatial construction. The volume of the sculpted structure is generally considered the opposite of emptiness but modern sculpture has introduced as well as legitimized the empty - "negative" parts of a sculpted entity to be perceived as an equal element of the whole. The other notion not to be neglected is time – difficult to identify because uncertain, related to the genesis of forms, but the viewer has to be aware of it in order to establish and understand his own temporal experience. There is time in sculpture and time of the sculpture that can be seen in Carlini's art through her will to create particular relationships between invention and specific locations where the sculptures are exposed. The viewer is, in fact, involved in the step-by-step discovering of various aspects of the sculptural volumes settled in existing urban contexts and when moving around he cannot deny their presence - in the sense that the very moment of looking at the actual artwork has its "before" and its "after", not of the same nature like the limits of space where one is situated. In other words, the sculpture, too, has its hors-champ, overpassing the edges of the material – stone, clay, wood, metal - in which it is executed.

Maria Cristina Carlini works with clear ideas about what she wants to achieve. The realisations follow the concepts, the structures grow out of the characteristics of each particular vision how they are going to integrate into ambiance. Her sculptures are focused on balance between the monumental and the symbolic, between spatial effect and meaning, the physical and the spiritual. In this sense, Carlini is a classic artist able to find a modern expression for her thoughts and feelings.

***Brane Kovič***