



FOREWORD

Fire and Soul - the Bronzes of Rubin Peacock

A singular characteristic of Rubin Peacock's sculpture is a unique ability to give space, form and scale to pre-verbal truths about the human condition through the energy of its physical presence.

His bronzes explore the mystical connectivity between ancient sculpture—in some instances, native American iconography—the totemic traditions of old Europe and Central and North America, and the bold forms rooted in ancient rites and rituals that are fused to contemporary geometric abstraction. To some extent these sculptures recall the early European and American Modernists, infusing biomorphic and geometric forms with visual balance.

Regardless of their physical dimensions, his sculptures, in the intensity of their poetic form, are monumental in feeling. Take a look at “Ancestral Terrain,” 1980, (page 96) for instance. Its implied scale is greater than its physical mass.

Psychologically, sculpture is an accumulation of views seen sequentially and apprehended as a complete idea in the mind. This requires that the object under consideration must maintain a constant tension and torque of arresting shapes. Throughout his 50-year career, Peacock has been cognizant of this aesthetic truth and gives it his own unique understanding and its fundamental importance to the creation of poetic form. In his sculpture in memory of Abbott Lambert, 1998 (page 171) we see an example of this point.

“Melodic Contour II,” 2009, (page 137) moves toward sensuality and a concentration of shapes that are centered on a collar-like form. An effusion of flowering curves is restrained by a bronze belt, not tightly bound, serving as a fulcrum for the mass above.

All art is both personal and universal, emerging from a force that extends the idea of Humanism into a tactile experience. This observation is especially true of bronze sculpture. Born in the white heat of the foundry, cooled with care, polished with pride, it is a solid example of an individual's relationship to the thoughts and feelings of the times.

I have known both loquacious and laconic sculptors, Peacock is of the latter variety. This is appropriate, for his sculptures speak volumes in the lit silence of his studio. He understands that bronze, like stone, has a special meaning for sculptors. Bronze casting requires arduous and demanding labor. But, its longevity is equivalent to its poetic seriousness. Peacock grasped this truth 50 years ago and, because of this, his work has undiminished fire from the crucible of his soul.

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