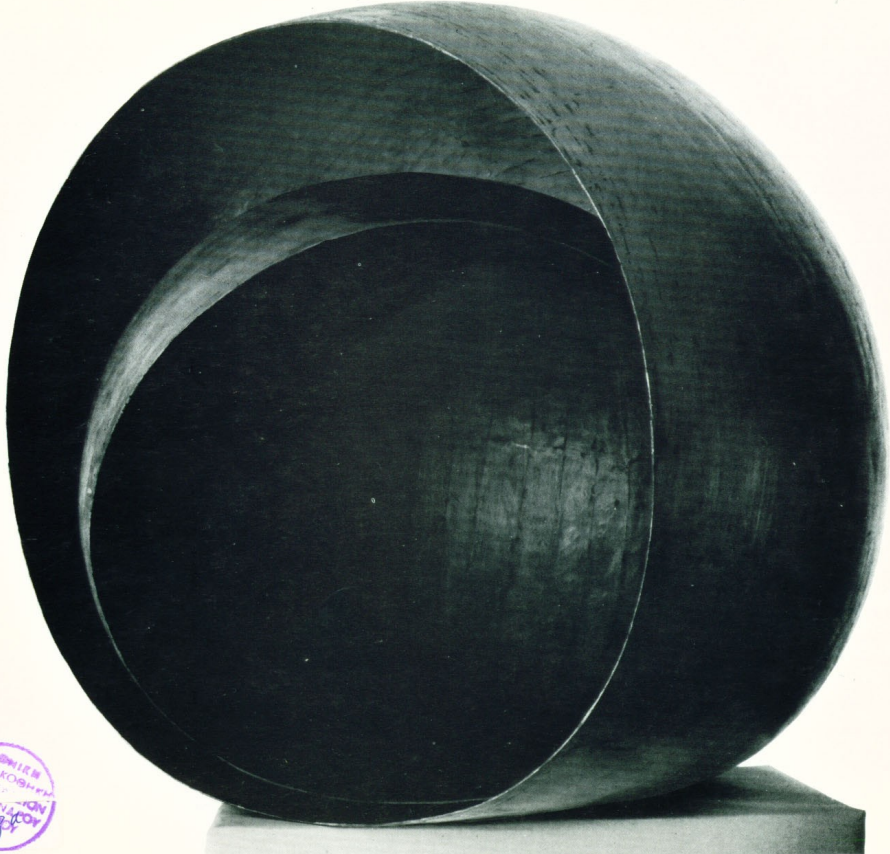


5. Художественная керамика  
1609



Sculpture Exhibition  
29 May - 30 June 1967  
New Forms Gallery  
9a Valaoritou Str. - Athens

By the present show the sculptor Sossio Houtopoulou-Contaratou brings us in contact with her new conception which has been developed in silence and isolation during her five year absence from the public eye. Introspective by nature, she has always sought after the innermost causes acting behind the phenomena and determining their shape, movement and evolution.


In her previous work the composition emanated from a central nucleus which modulated and coordinated the plastic elements, yet still leaving some flexibility for further elaboration. Between the outer and inner space there was an unlimited circulation, since the currents, created by voids, traced out a cyclic motion from the nucleus to the outward space and vice versa.

The steps the sculptor has followed until she achieved her actual expression are not apparent in the pieces on display. Nevertheless, we may well imagine them. They represent a transition from plurality to unity, from the variety of tensions to a single condensed intensity, from commotion and fluctuation to purification and serenity. Furthermore, and this may possibly be her main transition, she now sets up concrete barriers to her problems. For she excludes concessions towards free development of composition, that would provide easier solutions, and confines the sculptural action to certain given terms.

Fundamentally there is still a central focus or nucleus which in accord with the spirit to be expressed takes up analogous spherical forms. However, on this occasion, it does not function as a motivating force for a series of more or less free interpretations, but operates as an effective piece of matter with definite demands. It becomes a concrete material form that seeks to be projected in the space beyond. It, otherwise, becomes a particle with accumulated power striving to find response and convey its meaning not into an inconceivable and impersonal world but within a specific and adjacent surrounding.

Either hermetically sealed or leaving open passages to the air streams, the spherical core develops into the space around it and beneath the outward shell which acts as a barrier to its furthestmost expansion. There is a vigorous activity in its attempt to be in harmony with the shell above in order to be jointly enrolled into a cosmic order. The central core receives and emits counteracting tensions, and sculptural action, being thus confined into the inner compositional set, becomes more significant and intense.

By the shifting of the scope from the infinite to the finite, the attempt for communication and assimilation of the nucleus with its surrounding negative and positive space becomes harder, the resistance increases and the conflict between the "push" and the "pull" acquires dramatic dimensions. But at the same time, the metallic creations of Sossio Houtopoulou-Contaratou take up a human quality as they move into an intimate and tangible world. So the barriers which she places between the endless and the limited, rather than narrowing down the idea give it condensation and depth. Nevertheless, among the exhibits there are certain deviations from this dominant conception such as those of the spiral or the ovoid form.



Although, we could not say that the idea behind her works had been preconceived. For it is a purely sculptural idea that has been born and has taken shape from within its plastic image. Material form and mental concept have been blended together by mutual transaction. Perception, construction and purification have been coordinated with sharpened sense into convincing and aesthetically justified forms.

The hard technique she uses and the precision of finishing rejoin her sculpture to the traditional patient and painful working of the material. Using steel sheets, she manages to turn them out into flexible and suggestive shapes. To overpower the nature and the resistance of the material, she cuts this into small strips or other appropriate shapes. Thus she builds up the structure and joints the grooves through welding. She then eliminates or softens the joints by the use of a grinding wheel achieving a shining and well polished surface. The effort is fully rewarded by the result. For the various pieces of metal have been remoulded into a cohesive, undisturbed whole with impressive perfection.

Combination of personal technical experience, high artistic sensitiveness and mental striving, the recent work by Soso Houtopoulou-Contaratou reveals her faith in the genuine sculptural values and in the yet unexplored possibilities of their renewal.

EFFIE FERENTINO

## C A T A L O G U E

1. Spherical elements in movement. 1967. Welded steel sheet 71 X 65 X 63 cm.
2. Spiral movement. 1964. Welded steel sheet 47 X 59 X 37 cm.
3. Rotation. 1965. Welded steel sheet 53 X 52 X 48 cm.
4. Ovoid form. 1966. Welded steel sheet 58 X 40 cm.
5. Interacting elliptical forms. 1966. Welded steel sheet 81 X 65 X 55 cm.
6. Extension in space. 1964. Welded steel sheet 73 X 67 X 55 cm.
7. Nucleus in development. 1965. Welded steel sheet 53 X 52 X 48 cm.
8. Successive spherical shapes. 1967. Welded steel sheet 51 X 40 X 44 cm.
- 9-20. Ink drawings.





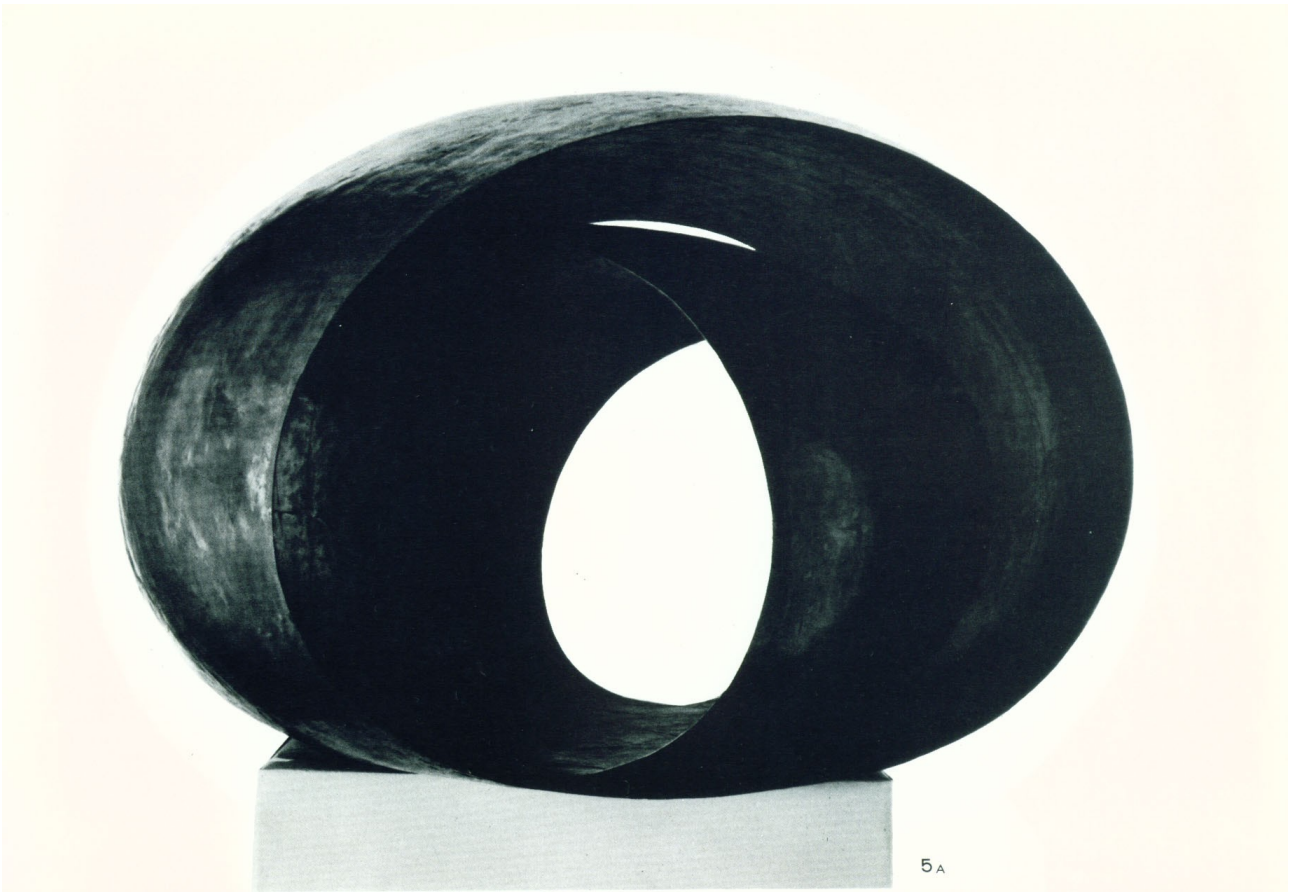












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SOSSO HOUTOPOULOU—CONTARATOU

Born in Athens.

- 1949-1955 Studied drawing and sculpture under the sculptor Henri Paquet in Geneva.
- 1957 Panhellenic Exhibition, Athens.
- 1957 Greek Landscape Exhibition, Zygos Gallery, Athens.
- 1958 Greek Young Artists Exhibition, Zygos Gallery, Athens.
- 1959 Painting and Sculpture Exhibition, New Forms Gallery, Athens.
- 1960 Panhellenic Exhibition, Athens.
- 1960 Biennale of Buenos Ayres, Argentine.
- 1960-1961 Painting and Sculpture Exhibition, New Forms Gallery, Athens.
- 1961 "Drawing International" organized by the American Federation of Arts, U.S.A.
- 1962 "Contemporary Greek Artists" Bezalel National Museum, Jerusalem.
- 1962 One-man show, New Forms Gallery, Athens.
- 1962 "Sculptura Contemporanea" Galleria Pagani del Grattacielo, Milan - Italy.
- 1963 Panhellenic Exhibition, Athens
- 1963 Greek Young Artists Exhibition, organized by the Greek Section of International Association of Art Critics, School of Fine Arts, Athens.
- 1963 Biennale of Alexandria.
- 1964 Exhibition organized by W.I.A.C., F.B.A. Galleries, London.
- 1964 Biennale of Buenos Ayres.
- 1964 Greek Painting, Sculpture and Graphic (Wolfgang - Gurlitt Museum, Linz) Austria.
- 1964 Painting and Sculpture Exhibition, New Forms Gallery, Athens.