

## Summary

### ANDRZEJ JAROSZ/ British inspirations in Wrocław sculpture

The inspiration coming from British sculpture at the turn of the 1950s was one of the ways followed by the artists from Wrocław who were creating their own identity at that time. This influence enriched the teaching of three key professors: Antoni Mehl, Xawery Dunikowski and Borys Michałowski who pointed directions of sculpture development. This British stream, next to French and Italian stimulations, was marked in the work of the local sculptors (Jerzy Boroń, Leon Podsiadły, Władysław Tumkiewicz, Feliks Kociankowski, Marian Kowalski), it was also present in works performed by leading ceramic artists (Krystyna Cybińska, Mieczysław Zdanowicz), and raised painters' interest as well (e.g. Anna Szpakowska-Kujawska). We are able, for instance, to trace echoes of Barbara Hepworth and Lynn Chadwick's art. Especially Henry Moore's sculpture was welcome with a strong reaction from by the Wrocław milieu who showed Modernist tendencies in 1959 when a travelling exhibition of Moore's work had its stop in the premises of the local Town Hall. The reaction was related to a more general phenomenon, namely Moore's impact on whole Polish art within freedom quota legitimised by the PRL [The People's Republic of Poland] which was "permitted" but strictly defined. The published texts by Adam Kotula and Piotr Krakowski (*O nowej rzeźbie* [On New Sculpture], 1961) put British sculpture on the map.

Reinterpretations of Western art could be traced in Wrocław since ca. 1957 in works of the first generation of sculptors educated here. They were references to formal patterns and also discussions or even occasionally contradictions with famous Britons (Łucja Skomorowska-Wilimowska). Archaism and the cult of material derived from Moore, Hepworth's pure and open form or Chadwick's steel and biomorphic compositions used to inspire the local sculptors to perform synthetic, aiming at abstraction or organic sculptures that took an advantage of natural qualities of substance. The contacts with British art were continued in the 1990s and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. At present the artists from the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław confront themselves with the concept of ephemeral, contextual and site-specific sculpture.