

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RALPH BROWN

THE FIGURE IN THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES

14 September - 22 October 2016



RALPH BROWN
Figure/Head
1963, Bronze

Deeply influenced by his time studying in Paris in the early 1950's *Ralph Brown & The Figure of the Fifties and Sixties* casts a new light on Brown's powerful approach to the figure, re-examining it within the context of Modern British and European figurative sculpture.

"At Musee D'Art Modernes I saw Richier's 'L'Orage' which quite bowled me over, astounded me".

RALPH BROWN

Paris in the 1950s was an exciting melting pot for artists who were enjoying a post-war freedom to experiment with expression. Whilst in Paris, Ralph Brown met many notable sculptors such as Germaine Richier and Alberto Giacometti and spent five

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Kings Place
90 York Way
London
N1 9AG

020 7520 1480

months in the atelier of Russian cubist sculptor Ossip Zadkine. Brown also enjoyed both formal and clandestine viewings of Auguste Rodin's plaster reserves at his Meudon studio, later writing his RCA thesis on the artist and Medardo Rosso.

These formative experiences were to resonate with Brown for the rest of his career and for the first time this exhibition will show not only the fruits of these experiences in powerful sculptures such as *Clochard* but also works of the well known artists he met in Paris and later in Italy such as Marino Marini. The exhibition also explores the way in which Brown's British contemporaries were developing the figure at home and as such hopes to offer an exciting insight into the monumental leaps and bounds figurative sculpture made in such a short time highlighting Brown's connection with this impressive band of pioneers all experimenting with such boundless energy.

Ralph Brown was born in Leeds in 1928, and was the younger contemporary of the eminent group of Yorkshire sculptors that include Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore and Kenneth Armitage. He studied at Leeds College of Art, where both Moore and Hepworth attended, and the Royal College of Art where he was taught by Frank Dobson, John Skeaping and Leon Underwood. Like Moore, who befriended Ralph and encouraged him by buying his work, Brown's art has always been deeply rooted in the figurative tradition.

Ralph Brown came to national prominence in the late 1950s with his large-scale bronze *Meat Porters*, commissioned for Harlow New Town, Essex. His work attracted much critical acclaim and was shown alongside his contemporaries Kenneth Armitage, William Turnbull and Eduardo Paolozzi. Brown was elected a Royal Academician in 1972 and his work can be found in many prestigious public collections including the Tate Collection, London; Arts Council of Great Britain; Leeds City Art Gallery and many other public collections in Britain and overseas.

For him [Brown] the body has the capacity to contain and reflect the universe and Brown's articulation of forms and manipulation of materials have unfolded and disclosed its dark and intimate spaces.

DR GILLIAN WHITELY

Artists in the exhibition include: Ralph Brown, Germaine Richier, Auguste Rodin, Marino Marini, Henry Moore, Kenneth Armitage, Lynn Chadwick, Bernard Meadows and Robert Clatworthy. A fully illustrated exhibition catalogue with an introductory essay by Dr Judith LeGrove will be published to coincide with the exhibition.

Gallery open Monday - Saturday 10am - 6pm
For more information please contact:
Katharine Evans
katharine@pangolinlondon.com
T: 0207 520 1480 www.pangolinlondon.com

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IMAGE SHEET



Man with Carcass, 1959, Bronze



Swimming Woman, 1960, Bronze



Clochard, 1955-56, Bronze

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