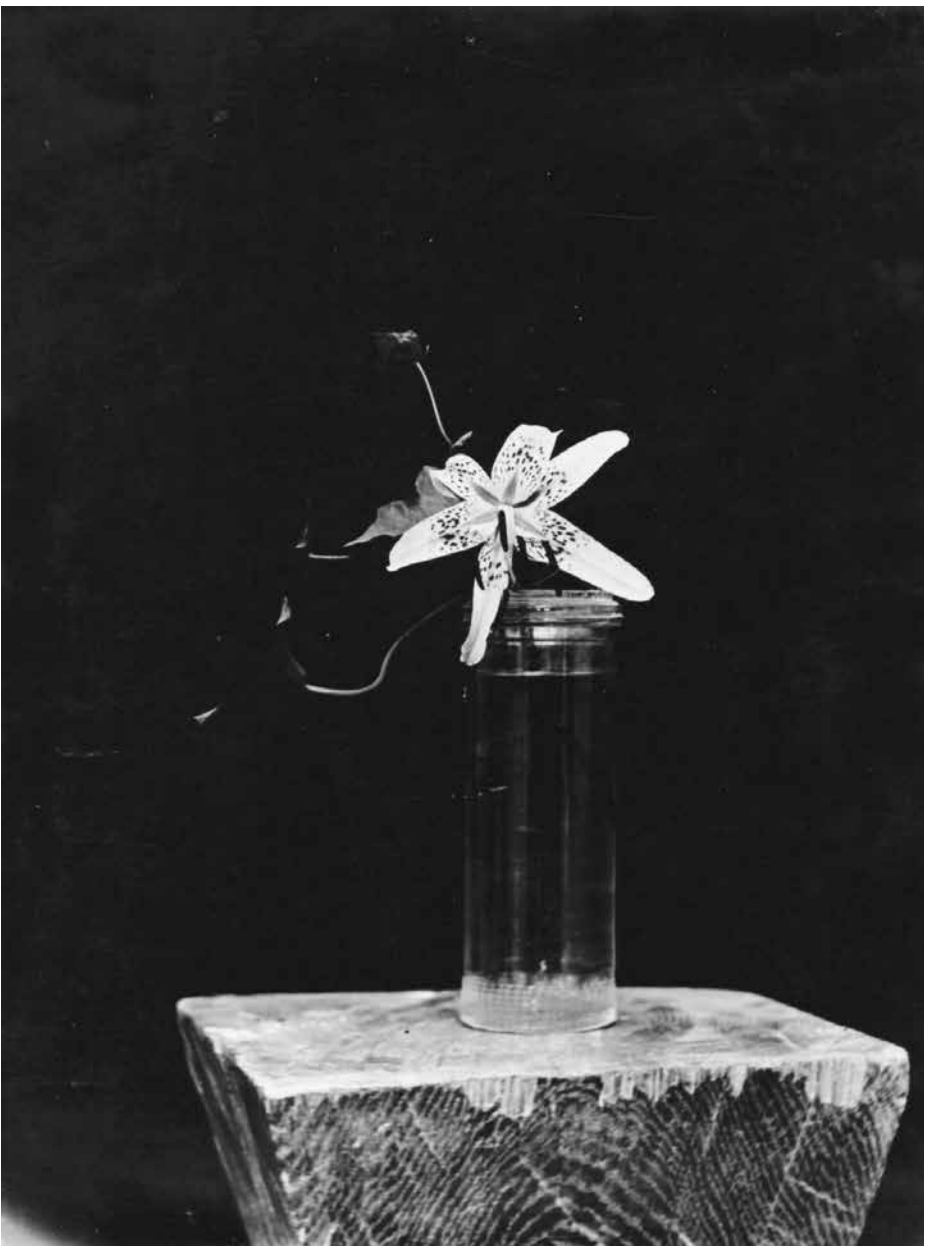


ABC-STUDIO BRANCUSI



01.



02.

cover: Self-portrait of the artist in his studio / c. 1933-1934

01. Lily / 1933 / Photo by Constantin Brancusi

02. Bouquet / 1930 / Photo by Constantin Brancusi

03. Le Commencement du monde / Sculpture pour aveugles / 1920 / Marbre / Constantin Brancusi
 "Avec cette forme, l'Oeuf ou le Commencement du monde, je pourrais faire bouger l'Univers....
 Nous sommes dans une sphère, mais nous jouons tout le temps avec d'autres sphères.
 Nous les combinons et nous les faisons briller."

03..

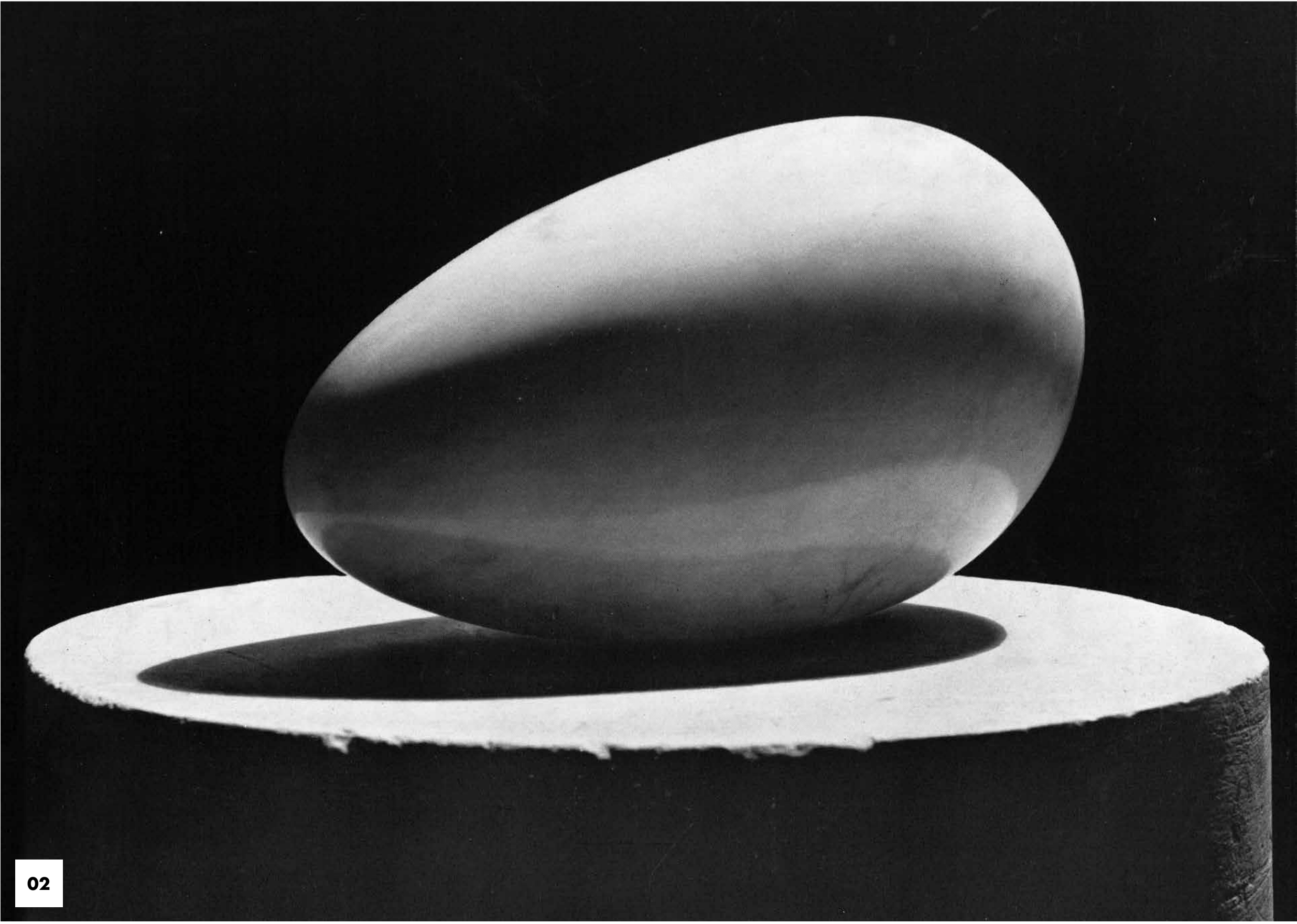


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04. King of Kings (Le roi des rois) / Constantin Brancusi / 1938 / Oak / Guggenheim Museum / New York

*	BRANCUSI - HIS LIFE AND CAREER IN CONTEXT (E / F / NL / D)
*	SCULPTURE - HISTORY & ACTIVITIES

Ernst H. Gombrich, in his precious essay ‘Meditations on a hobby horse’, stresses how works of art are in fact symbols. They suggest, they do not represent. The picture, the sculpture, the drawing all pretend to be what they really are not. They evoke something (objects, slices of reality, people...) whilst being something else: sheets of paper covered in pencil and charcoal scribbles or painted canvases or sculpted marble blocks or carved pieces of wood or bronze casts...and when the work of art represents conceptual ideas instead of something existing in reality, as it is often the case with the 1900s avant-gardes, the truth in Gombrich’s statement becomes even more evident because the artist has to use a metaphor to convey the opus’ ultimate meaning.

“The object of my meditations is a very modest wooden horse(...). Is it the portrait of a horse? Not really. Is it something that replaces the horse? Yes, that it is.”

(Pretend that...by Marco Dallari, general pedagogy professor at the University of Trento)

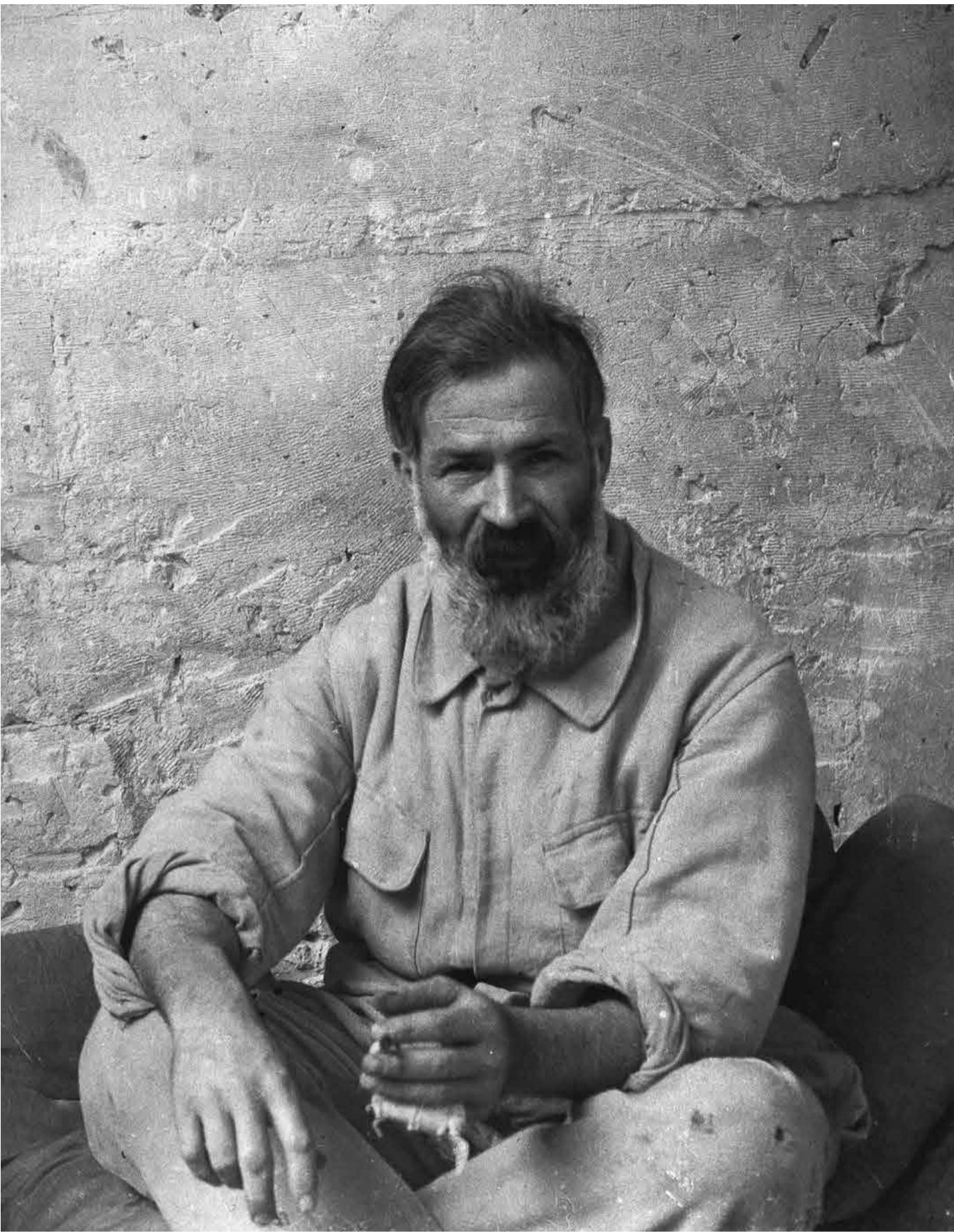
Welcome to our ABC-Studio in the frame of the exposition Brancusi. Sublimation of Form. - Europalia Romania in Bozar / Brussels. This magazine is partly an illustrated picture sheet selected from our specific collection to support the mediation work with our public and partly a visual homage and love letter to the artist and child in Constantin Brancusi. The table of contents indicates the basic theme structure.

You can find in the studio a library of reference books and binders around our ‘Table of Silence’ for your personal research according to your interests. Complementary to guiding the exposition we are offering games, toys, stories and hands-on activities in our set-up to celebrate the spirit and essence of Brancusi’s artistic work.

‘In our way of working we believe in the value of research, study and exchange. Experimenting with different educational and work modalities which are bound neither to consolidated routines nor to one single educational theory. We believe in change, in the idea of never stopping and in constantly looking for the best conditions in that moment for children and adults of all ages. Because real knowledge questions itself and welcomes values and harmonises multiple opinions.’ (Gualandi Foundation / Bologna)

A small ABC-Bird logo at some places in this magazine shows possibilities and suggestions to get also creative yourself at home or at school. A choice of ideas and templates can be found on our website www.abc-web.be / Get Inspired / Cahiers.

The flying supplements “Brancusi in Context” and “Sculpture” complete the main issue of this mediation magazine for the Brancusi Exposition.



01.

Constantin Brancusi
French-Romanian Sculptor
Born: February 19 / 1876 / Hobitza / Romania
Died: March 16 / 1957 / Paris, France
The second of four children, Brancusi was born in a small farming village. He had a difficult childhood, in part due to the challenging relationships with his father, a property manager of a monastery, and the children from his previous marriage. After several attempts to leave home, Brancusi finally did so permanently in 1887, at the age of eleven.

In 1904, he moved from Romania to Paris passing Budapest, Vienna, Munich, Rorschach, Bâle, Langres, famously travelling most of the way by foot. The story became part of the legend surrounding Brancusi as a peasant with an exotic heritage; the mythology was actively promoted by the artist himself, who wore Romanian peasant clothing, even on formal occasions, and carved all of his own furniture.

01. Brancusi en tenue de travail / vers 1924

02. Constantin Brancusi Memorial House / Hobita / Gorj County / Romania



02.



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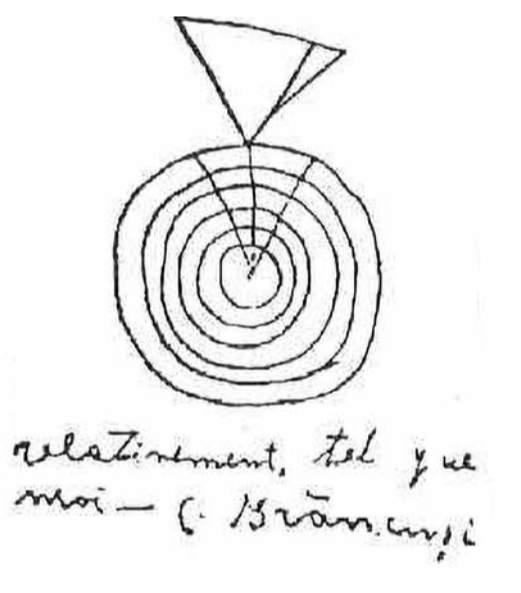


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06. Brancusi en tenue de plongeur dans un restaurant de la chaine Chartier / Paris / 1904



06.

04. Europe 1900

05. Brancusi arrive le 14 juillet 1904 à Paris

06. “relativement, tel que moi - C. Brancusi”
(“My inner self - somehow” or “Relatively as myself”)
Untitled (Autoportrait) / c. 1928 - 1933
It is a symbolic portrait of the artist, tinged with humour and mystery. It is in line with Brancusi’s research on portraiture, particularly the portrait of James Joyce (1929). The spiral evokes Picabia’s formal inventions or Duchamp’s Rotoreliefs and refers to a cyclic world while the pyramid expresses, according to Brancusi, the destiny of humanity.



07. Marcel Duchamp, Constantin Brancusi, Tristan Tzara dans l’atelier / 1921

“Brancusi was a marvellous little man with a beard and piercing eyes. He was half astute peasant and half real god.”
(Peggy Guggenheim)

08. Brancusi in his studio / 1946

09. Brancusi playing Contra-bass / Romania / ca. 1910

10. Brancusi in his studio / 1923 / 11 Impasse Ronsin / Paris

11. Brancusi's Hand mit Werkzeug / 1946

12. Brancusi at work in his atelier / 1924



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13. Exterior of Brancusi's studio / 1956 / 11 Impasse Ronsin / Paris

14. Vue d'atelier / ca. 1923

13.





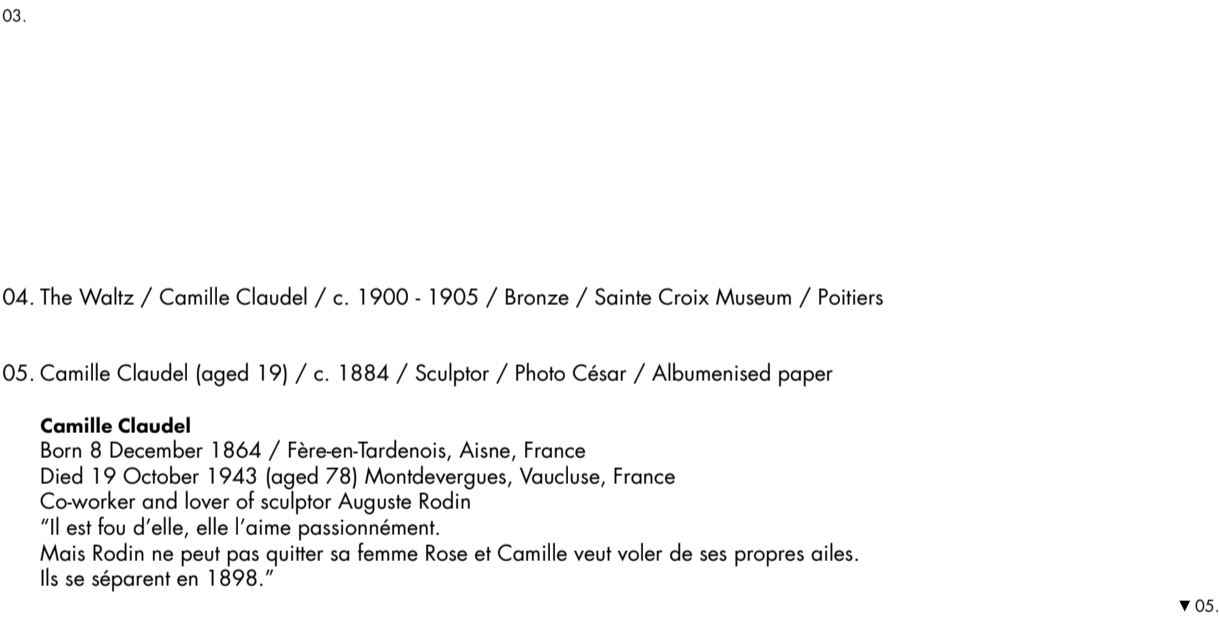
01. Rodin au milieu de ses oeuvres installées à l'intérieur de son atelier-musée, après la reconstruction de Pavillon de l'Alma à Meudon / 1902

Auguste Rodin
Auguste Rodin / Sculptor / Born 12 November 1840, Paris, France
Died 17 November 1917 (aged 77) Meudon, France
Brancusi meets Rodin in 1907 in Meudon and works in his studio as an assistant from March 24 to April 27
His quote after leaving Rodin :
"Nothing grows well in the shade of a big tree"

"Sans les découvertes de Rodin, tout ce que j'ai réalisé n'aurait pas été possible."

02. The Thinker (Le Penseur) Auguste Rodin / Bronze sculpture / Paris

03. The Kiss (Le Baiser) / Auguste Rodin / 1886 / Marbre / Musée Rodin / Paris



04. The Waltz / Camille Claudel / c. 1900 - 1905 / Bronze / Sainte Croix Museum / Poitiers

05. Camille Claudel (aged 19) / c. 1884 / Sculptor / Photo César / Albumenised paper

Camille Claudel
Born 8 December 1864 / Fère-en-Tardenois, Aisne, France
Died 19 October 1943 (aged 78) Montdevergues, Vaucluse, France
Co-worker and lover of sculptor Auguste Rodin
"Il est fou d'elle, elle l'aime passionnément.
Mais Rodin ne peut pas quitter sa femme Rose et Camille veut voler de ses propres ailes.
Ils se séparent en 1898."



06. The Kiss / Brancusi / 1908 / Limestone / Philadelphia Museum of Art ▼ 11.

06. The Kiss / Brancusi / 1908 / Limestone / Philadelphia Museum of Art

07. The Kiss / Brancusi / early 1940

08. External modillion, façade of Saint-Pierre, Aulnay-de-Saintonge, France

09. External modillion, façade de Saint-Hilarion, Perse, Commune d'Espalion, France



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"Le baiser a représenté pour moi le chemin de Damas."

"J'ai voulu (par Le Baiser) rappeler non seulement l'image de cet unique couple d'amoureux, mais de tous les couples anonymes de ce monde qui se sont aimés avant de se quitter... Chacune de mes sculptures a été motivée (à son origine) par un sentiment très profond."

10. The Kiss (Le Baiser) / Constantin Brancusi / 1907 - 1908 / Plaster / Nasher Sculpture Center
Always welcome if you like to mail us your personal kiss-photo.... : mail@abc-web.be

11. Gate of the Kiss / Brancusi / 1938 / Tirgu Jiu / First World War Memorial / Rumania

12. Baiser / Brancusi / 1909 / Version en pied / Montparnasse Cemetery / Paris
Dédiée à Tanioucha Rachevskaia, jeune femme russe, qui se donne la mort en décembre 1910, à la suite d'un amour malheureux pour un jeune Roumain, ami de Brancusi

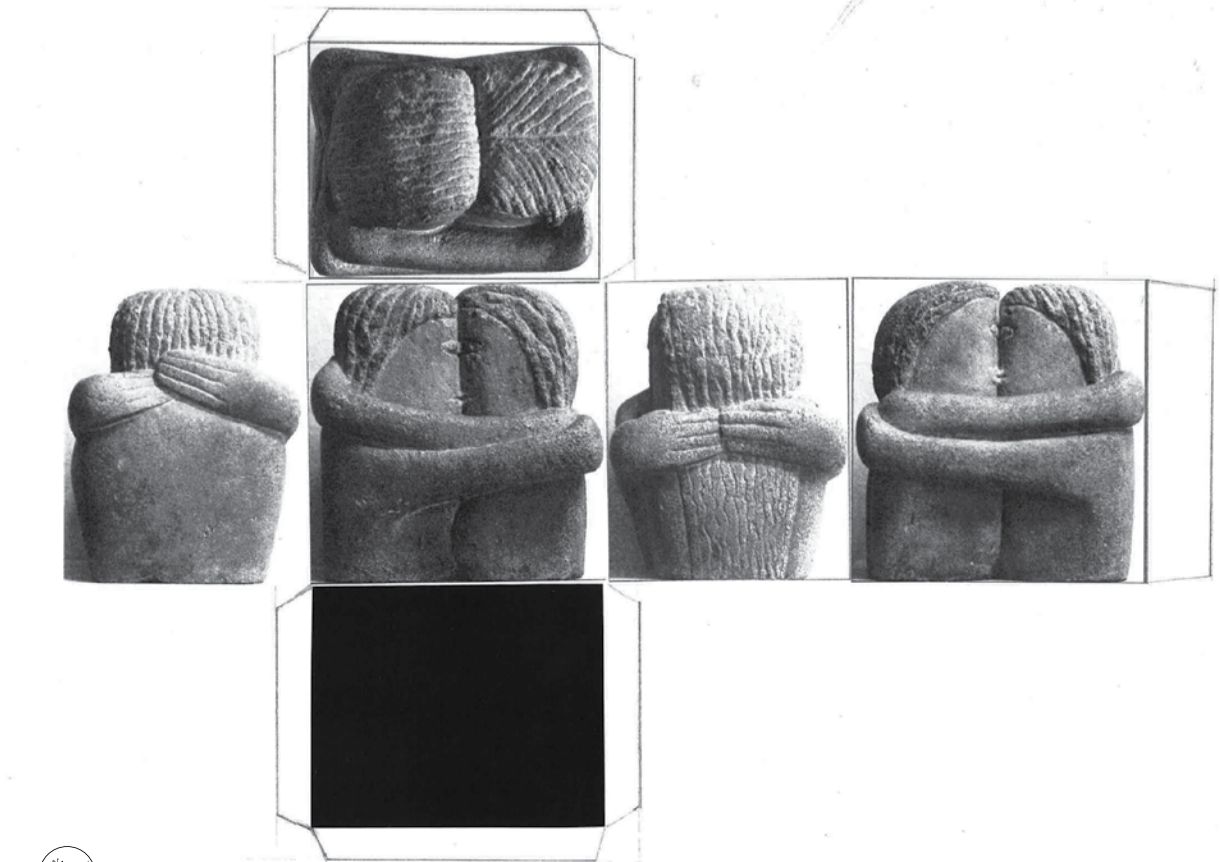
13. The Kiss / Brancusi / 1907 - 1908
To make your own Kiss-Sculpture in paper, please download the template on our website www.abc-web.be / Get Inspired / Cahiers

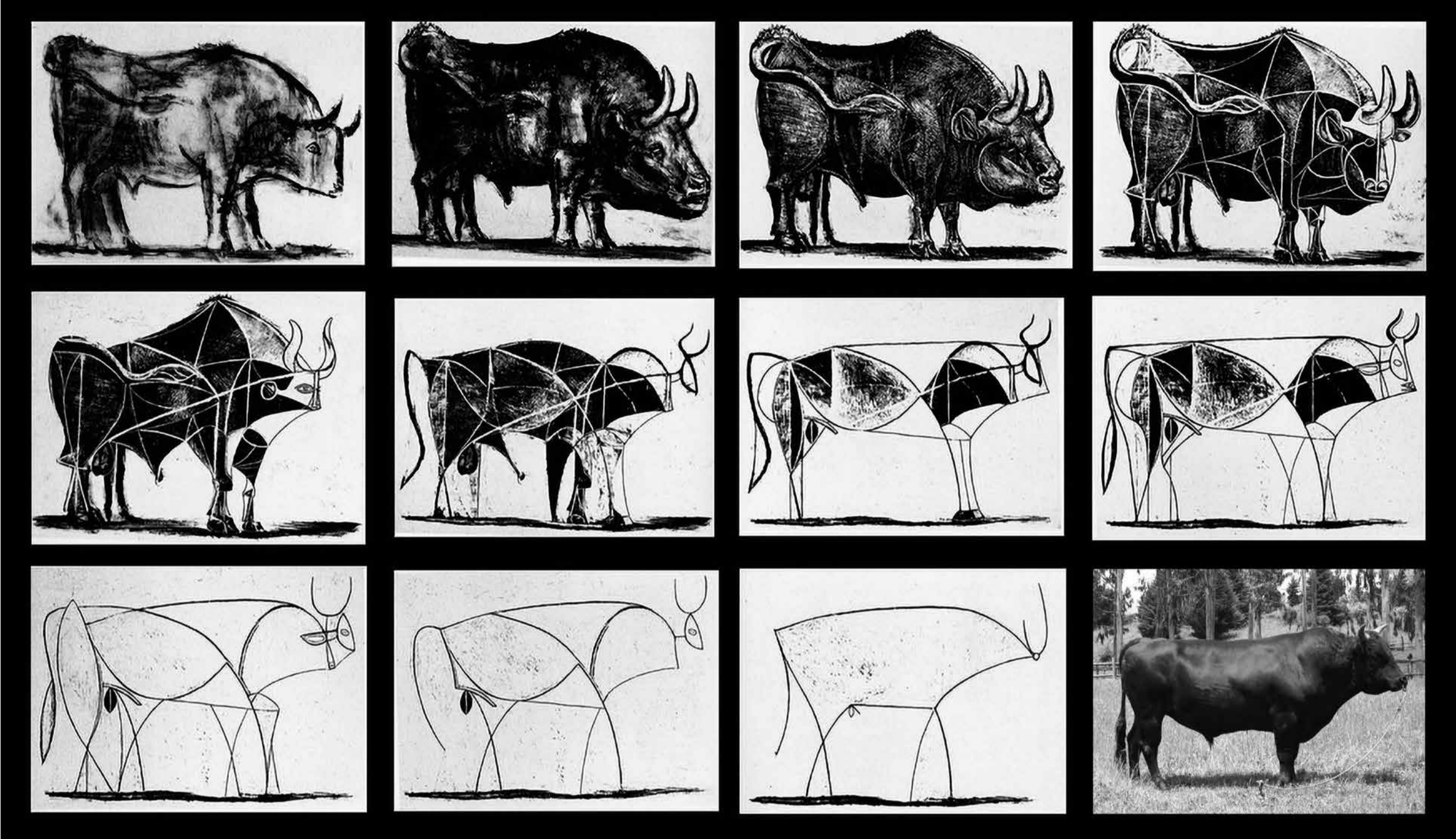


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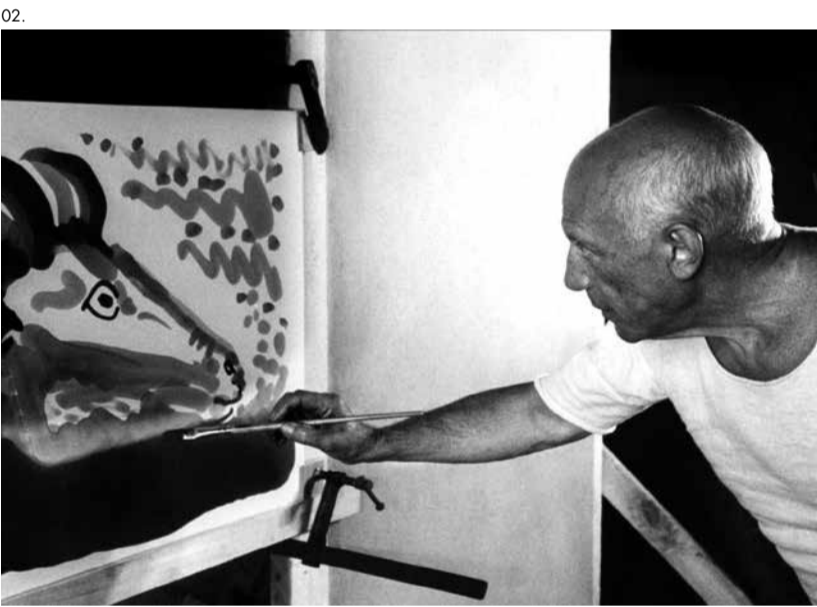
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01. Bull / Pablo Picasso / ca. 1945 / Is a suite of eleven lithographs in which Picasso usually takes apart the image of a bull to reveal its essence through a progressive analysis of its form. From representational to a simple linear abstraction, Picasso created what has become a “master class” in abstraction. Its theme has been variously interpreted as a comment on war (brutality), virility, a representation of the Spanish people or as a reflection of Picasso himself.

Pablo Picasso / Born 25 October 1881, Malaga, Spain / Died 8 April 1973 (aged 91) Mougins, France / Known as artist for painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, stage design / Regarded as one of the most influential artists of the 20th century.



02. Picasso painting a Bull / 1956 / Image from the documentary 'the Mystery of Picasso'

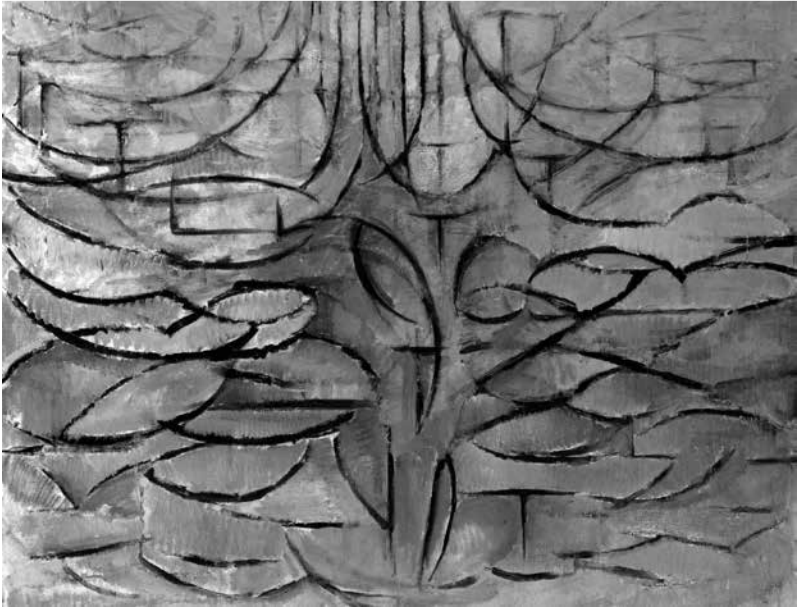
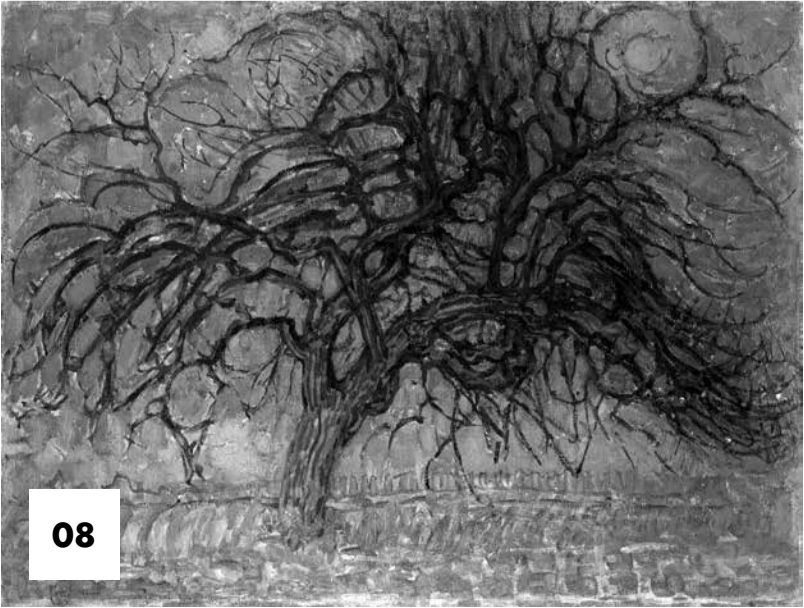


03. Bull's Head / Pablo Picasso / 1942 / Paris / Bronze Sculpture / Private collection

04. Pieter Cornelis Mondriaan / Born 7 March 1872, Amersfoort, Netherlands / Died 1 February 1944 (aged 71) Manhattan, New York, USA
Dutch painter and theoretician and one of the pioneers of 20th century abstract art.



05. Piet Mondrian / Left: 'De rode boom' / 1908
Middle: 'De grijze boom' / 1911
Right: 'Bloeiende boom' / 1912





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06. Un enfant devant une sculpture de Constantin Brancusi / Le soleil salue le coq / Photographie de René Burri / 1955 / Kunsthaus Zürich

07. Looking at Brancusi sculptures / Photography of René Burri / 1955 / Kunsthaus Zürich

08. Looking at art / Constantin Brancusi / The Kiss / photographed by Francis Miller / 1949



07.



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09. Actress Silvana Mangano with sculptures by Constantin Brancusi / Princess X / MoMA New York / 1956

10. Child looking at Bird Sculpture of Brancusi / Photography of René Burri / 1955 / Kunsthaus Zürich

11. Un uomo osserva la scultura 'White Seal' di Constantin Brancusi / 1965 / Guggenheim Museum NY



▼ 11.





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01. Constantin Brancusi in his studio at 11 Impasse Ronsin with his dog Polaire / Photo by Man Ray / 1930 / Paris

02. Brancusi Constantin / Self-portrait (with dog) / ca. 1930 - 1939

03. Brancusi at the foot of the Endless Column at Voulangis with Stoor (Steichen's dog) / Summer 1926 / From a 35 mm movie of Man Ray

04. Brancusi and Stoor (Steichen's dog), on the boat for New York / September 1926

05. Constantin Brancusi, autoportrait avec la chienne Polaire dans l'atelier / vers 1921

"Ma sculpture Le Coq n'est plus un coq; et mon Oiseau n'est plus un oiseau: ils sont devenus symboles. J'ai toujours cherché le naturel, le beau primaire et direct éternel!... Je souhaite que mes Oiseaux et Coqs remplissent tout l'Univers expriment la grande Libération! Mes Oiseau volent, mais Le Coq chante!..."

"Wanneer je een vis ziet denk je toch niet aan zijn schubben? Je denkt aan zijn snelheid, zijn drijven, zijn flitsende bewegingen gezien door het water... Wanneer ik vinnen, zijn ogen en zijn schubben zou afbeelden, zou ik zijn beweging vasthouden; alleen een patroon of vorm van realiteit afbeelden. Ik wil alleen de flits van zijn geest weergeven."

"Quand vous regardez un poisson, vous ne pensez pas à ses écailles, n'est-ce pas? Vous pensez à la vitesse de son mouvement, à son corps étincelant et flottant, vu au travers de l'eau. Eh bien! Voilà ce que j'ai voulu exprimer! Si j'avais reproduit ses nageoires, ses yeux et ses écailles, j'aurais arrêté le mouvement et j'aurais obtenu un simple échantillon de la réalité! Moi j'ai voulu saisir l'étincelle de son esprit."

08. The Flying Turtle (The Turtle) / Constantin Brancusi / 1943 / marble / When it was first exhibited at the Guggenheim Museum in New York in 1955, The Turtle was mounted and photographed upside down. "My turtle is now flying", Brancusi said to the curators and so The Turtle became The Flying Turtle.

09. Three Penguins / Brancusi / 1912
Brancusi first tackled the problems associated with creating a harmoniously selfcontained sculptural group.

10. Leda / Constantin Brancusi / c. 1920
According to classical mythology, the god Zeus changed into a swan in order to seduce the beautiful Leda. Brancusi explained to visitors of his studio that he chose to modify the transformation - changing Leda, rather than Zeus, into a swan. He explained, "I never could imagine a male being turned into a swan, impossible, but a woman, yes, quite easily".

11. The Seal (Miracle) / Brancusi / 1924 - 1932 / White marble / Guggenheim Museum NY.

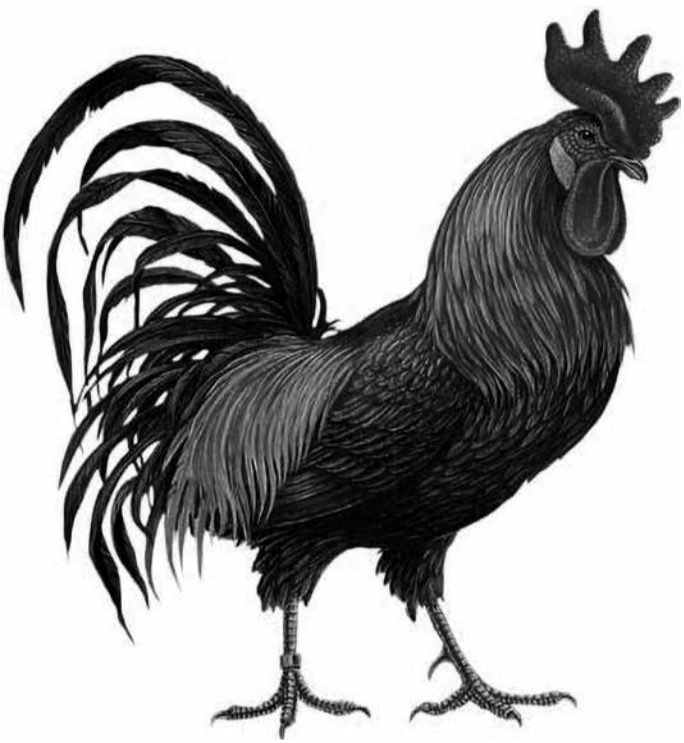


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06. 'To cock a snook' / The literal sense of it is to make a rude gesture by putting one thumb to the nose with the fingers of the hand outstretched. Its figurative meaning is to show contempt by being insulting or offensive / Illustration by the Danish artist Thomas Vilhelm Pedersen

07. Illustration d'un coq / Unknown artist

12. Le Coq / Constantin Brancusi / 1935 / Plâtre original de l'unique version en bronze poli
"Le coq chantait -co-co-ri-co- et chaque son faisait un zig ou un zag dans son cou. Le coq de Brancusi est une scie de joie. Ce coq scie le jour de l'arbre de la lumière. Toutes ces sculptures sortent d'une fontaine humaine : Le coq Le Phoque." Jean Arp / Mai 1929

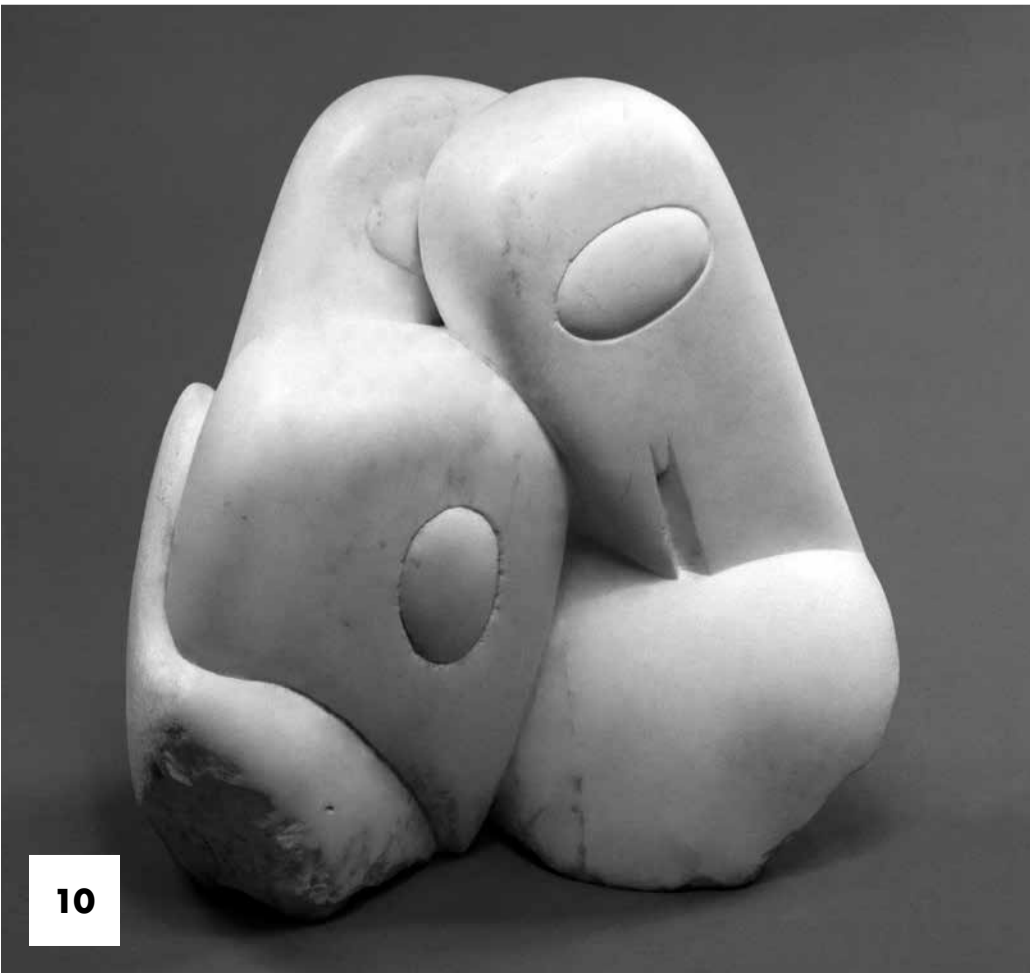


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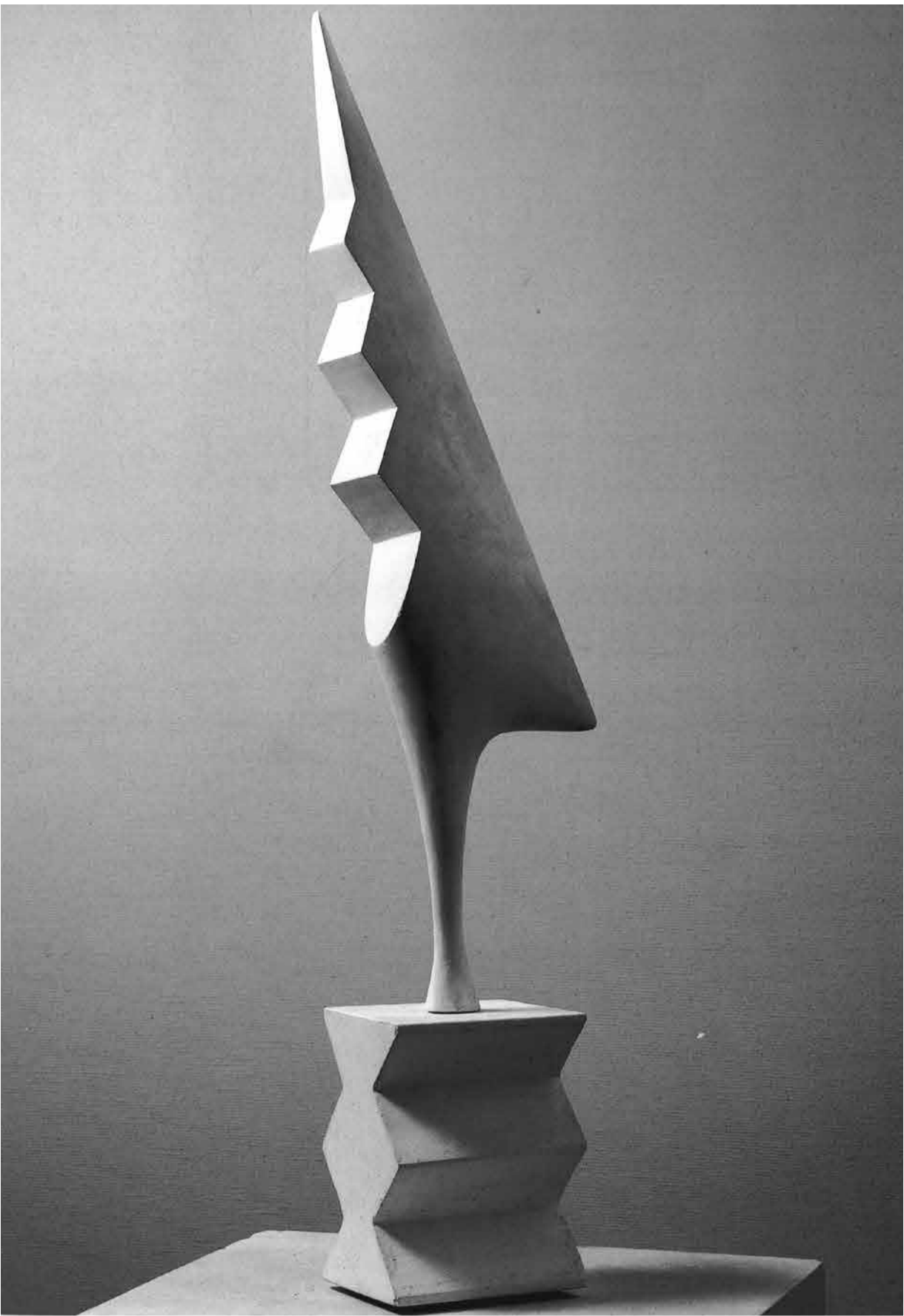
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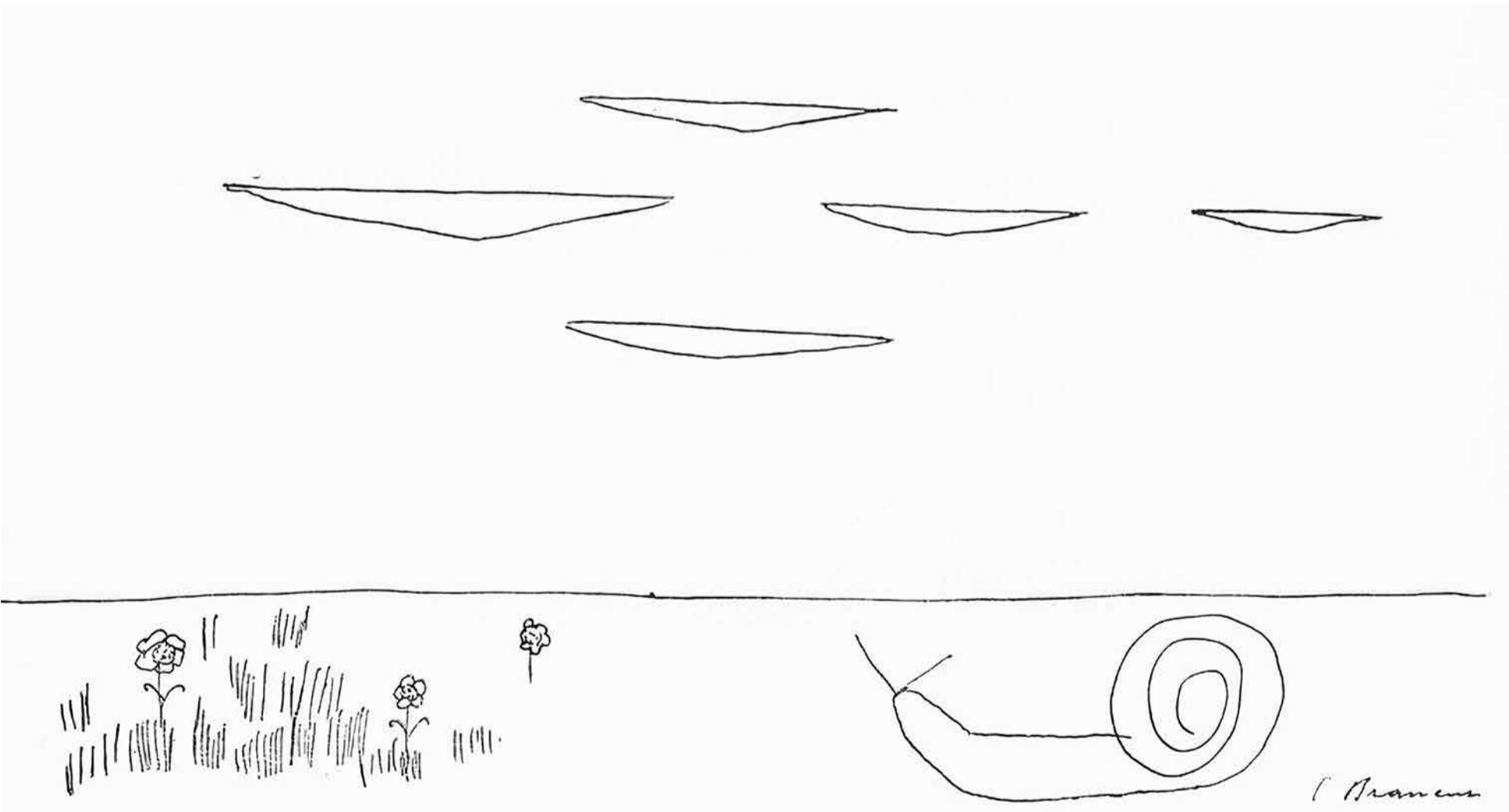


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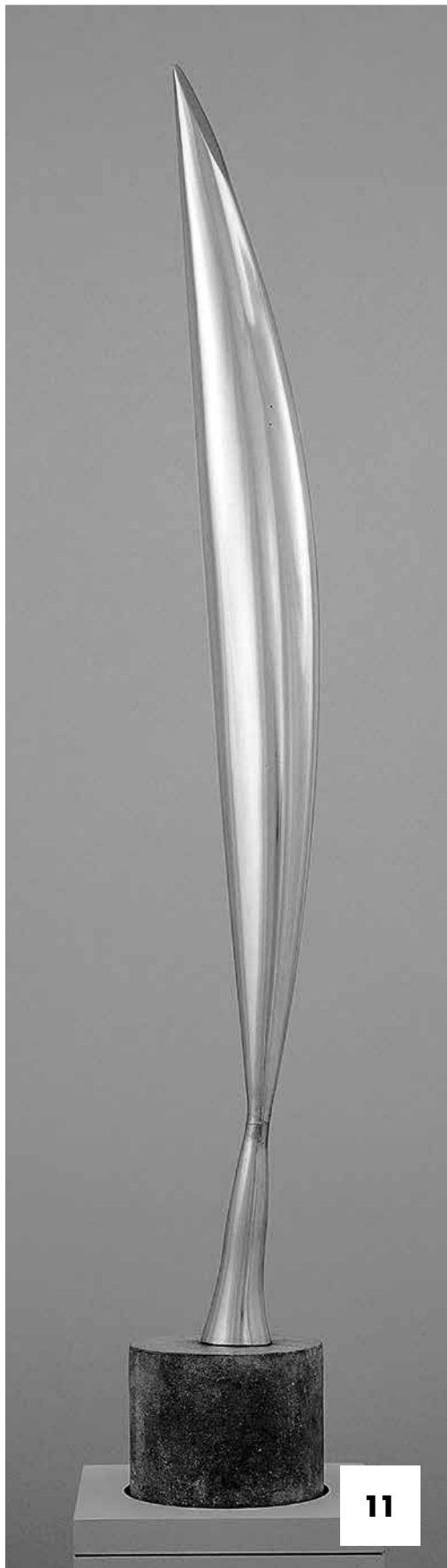
13. The Fish / Constantin Brancusi / 1930 / blue-blue-grey marble on three-part pedestal of one marble and two limestone cylinders
 "When you see a fish you don't think of its scales, do you ? You think of its speed, its floating, flashing body seen through the waterI want just the flash of its spirit!" Constantin Brancusi
14. Rapace en vol (Roofvogel, Raubvogel, Bird of prey) / Roumanie / Photo by Brancusi / 1937 - 1938
15. Drawing Brancusi / Illustration for Ilarie Voronca's 1929 poetry book "Plante si animale" (Plants and animals)
16. L'oiseau dans l'espace / Slideshow, light and shadow photos by Brancusi / vers 1932
17. Bird in Space / Brancusi / 1932-1940 / Polished brass / Guggenheim Collection, Venice
 "The bird - I am always working on it. I have not yet found it. It is not a bird, it is the meaning of flight."
 "C'est le vol qui m'a occupé pendant toute ma vie."
 Constantin Brancusi



▲ 15.



▼ 16.





01. Maiastra / Constantin Brancusi / 1912 (?) / Brass on limestone base / Guggenheim Collection, Venice

02. Firebird Suite / Pictures at an Exhibition / Composed by Moussorgsky / The Philadelphia Orchestra / LP Cover / Columbia Masterworks / Vinyl / 1956

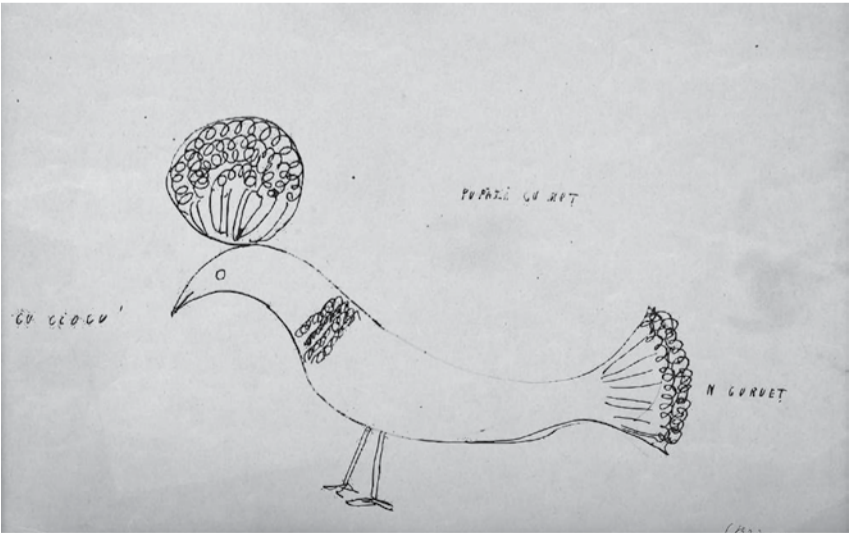
03. Stravinsky by Picasso / Sketch / c. 1920
The Firebird (L'oiseau de feu) is a ballet and orchestral concert work by the Russian composer Igor Stravinsky based on the Russian fairy tales of the firebird and the blessing and curse it possesses for its owner. / First performed at the Opéra de Paris on 25 June 1910

04. Maiastra / Brancusi / Pencil on paper / c.1910 / Private collection

05. Maiastra / Brancusi / 1912 / White marble, marble base / Philadelphia Museum of Art

“Je travaille à l’Oiseau enchanté (Maiastra) depuis 1909 et j’ai l’impression que je ne l’ai pas fini. Je voudrais représenter l’impondérabilité dans une forme concrète.”

“Les oiseaux enchanté m’ont ensorcelé et je ne m’en suis jamais libéré.”
Constantin Brancusi



06. ‘Hoopoe with topknot’ / Pupaza cu mot / Drawing by Constantin Brancusi



04. Maiastra / Brancusi / Pencil on paper / c.1910 / Private collection

07. The Firebird / Ivan Bilibin / 1899 / Painting / Oil on canvas



05. Maiastra / Brancusi / 1912 / White marble, marble base / Philadelphia Museum of Art





08. Lizica Codreanu / Une danseuse roumaine dans l'avant-garde parisienne / Brancusi's Studio 1 / 1922



09. The Sorceress (La sorcière) / Constantin Brancusi / 1916 - 1924 / Walnut on limestone base / Guggenheim Museum NY



10. The Sorceress (La sorcière) / Constantin Brancusi / 1916 - 1924 / Walnut on limestone base / Guggenheim Museum NY

08. Lizica Codreanu / Une danseuse roumaine dans l'avant-garde parisienne / Brancusi's Studio 1 / 1922

09. The Sorceress (La sorcière) / Constantin Brancusi / 1916 - 1924 / Walnut on limestone base / Guggenheim Museum NY

11. Ballet dancer Tamara Karsavina as Zhar-Pitsa (The firebird) / 1910 / Paris / Ballet Russe

12. Lizica Codreanu with Brancusi's costumes in Brancusi's studio / 1922
 "Around 1922 Constantin Brancusi designed some costumes for Erik Satie's musical composition Gymnopédies. They were close friends and it was in that same period that Brancusi met the Romanian dancer Lizica Codreanu. She had come to Paris with her sister Irina who was studying sculpture. The sculptor showed his Atelier to Lizica and took some pictures of her and began to study the costumes like moving sculptures,..."

If you like to create a hat like Lizica is wearing you can find templates for different sizes on our website www.abc-web.be/ / Get Inspired / Cahiers





01.

01. Mlle. Pogany II (4 different angles) / Constantin Brancusi / 1919, cast 1925 / Polished Bronze / Katharine Ordway Collection / Yale University Art Gallery

02. Mademoiselle Pogany I / Constantin Brancusi / 1912-1913 / Plâtre / Centre Pompidou, Paris



03. Head of a Woman / Brancusi / before 1930 / Pen and reddish-brown ink on light grey wave paper / Art Institute Chicago

04. Princess X / Constantin Brancusi / 1915 / White Marble / Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

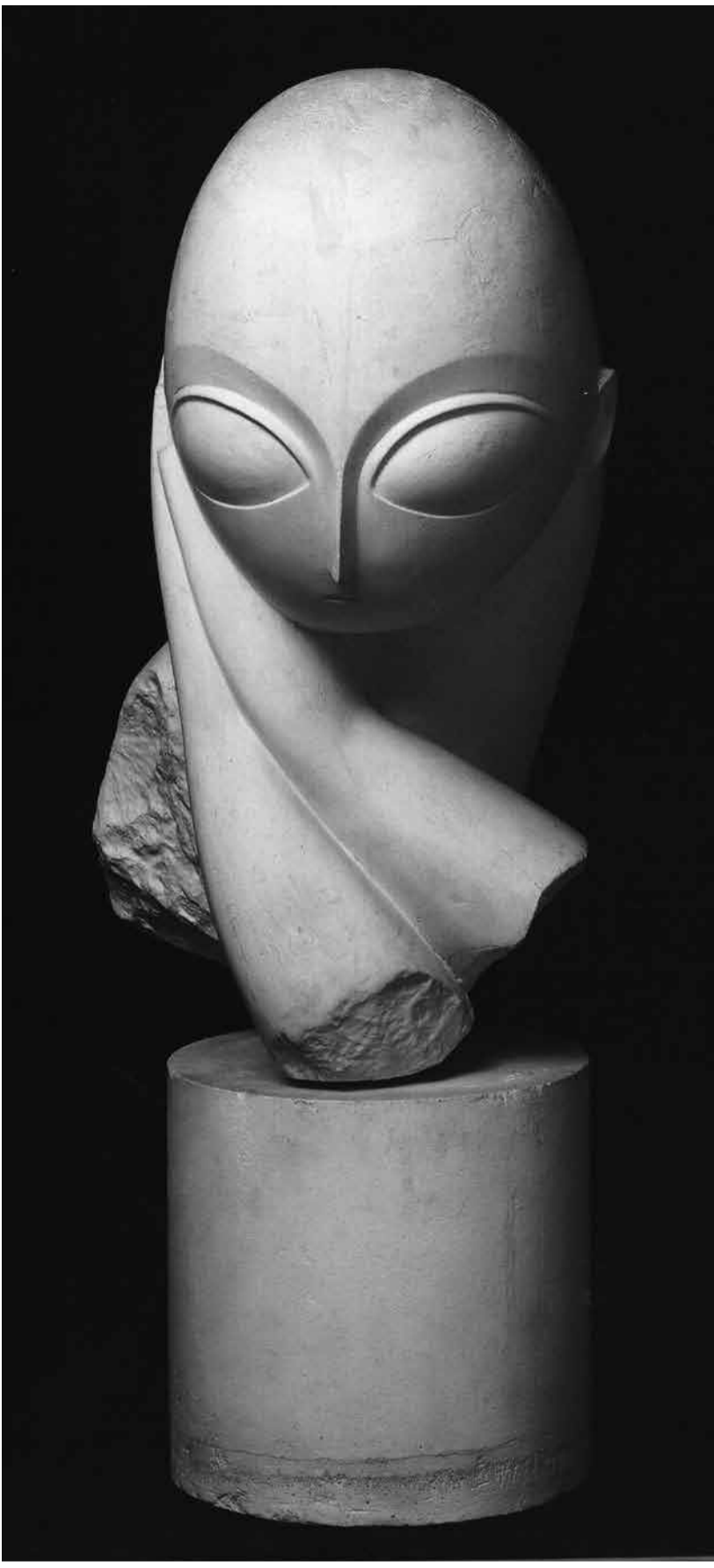
05. Nu assis de profil / Constantin Brancusi / circa 1912 / Wax Crayon on paper

▲ 03.

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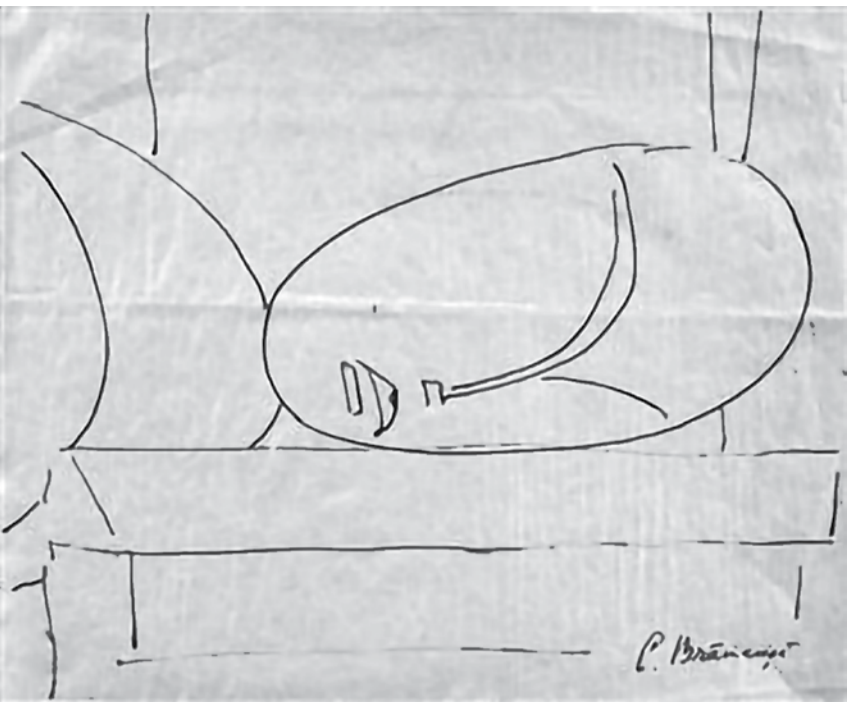




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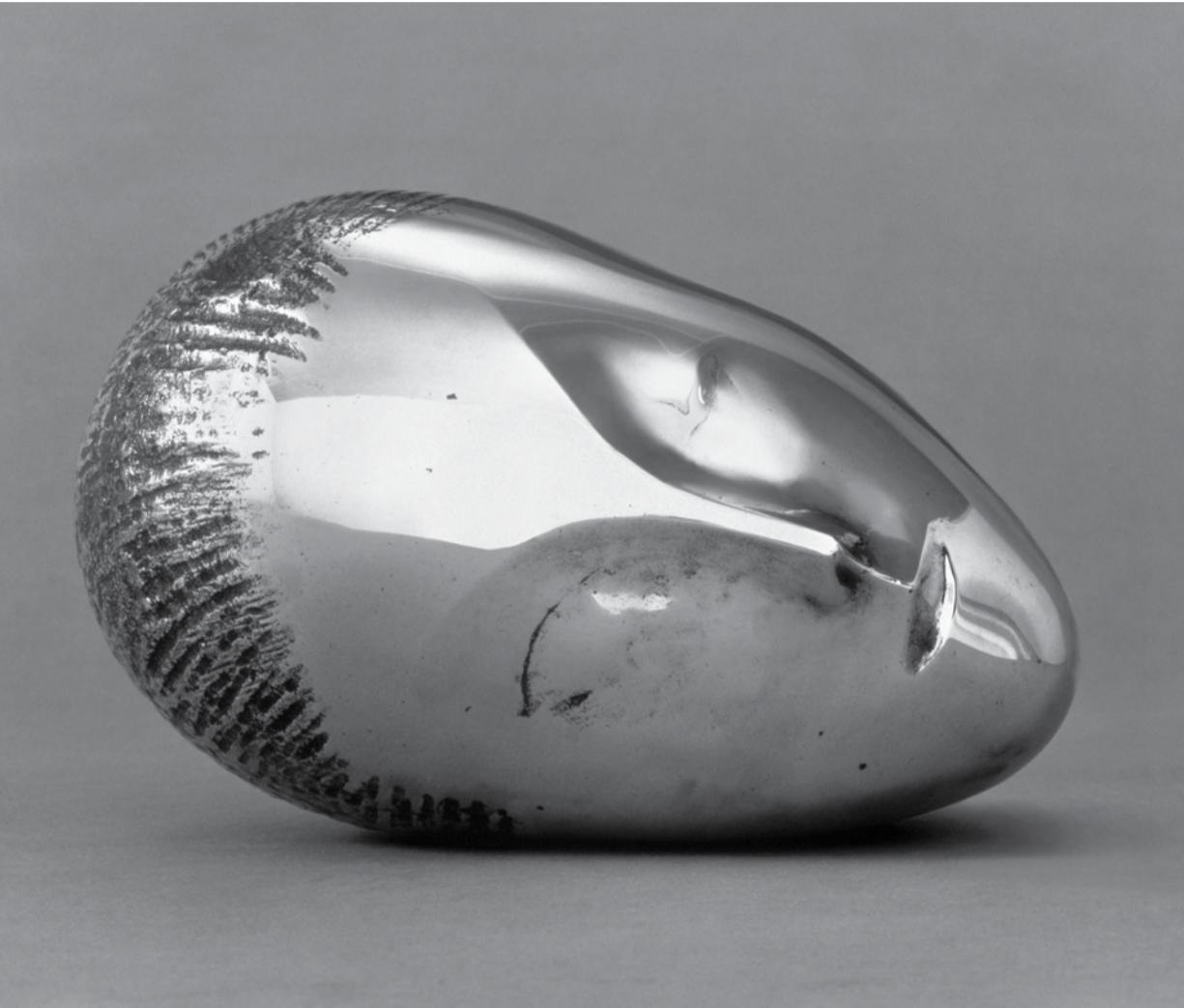
06. La Baronne R. F. / 1909 / Photo
Constantin Brancusi / Pierre

07. Muse endormie / C. Brancusi /
1909 (?) / Drawing



07.

08. Muse endormie / Constantin
Brancusi / 1910 / Bronze poli /
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

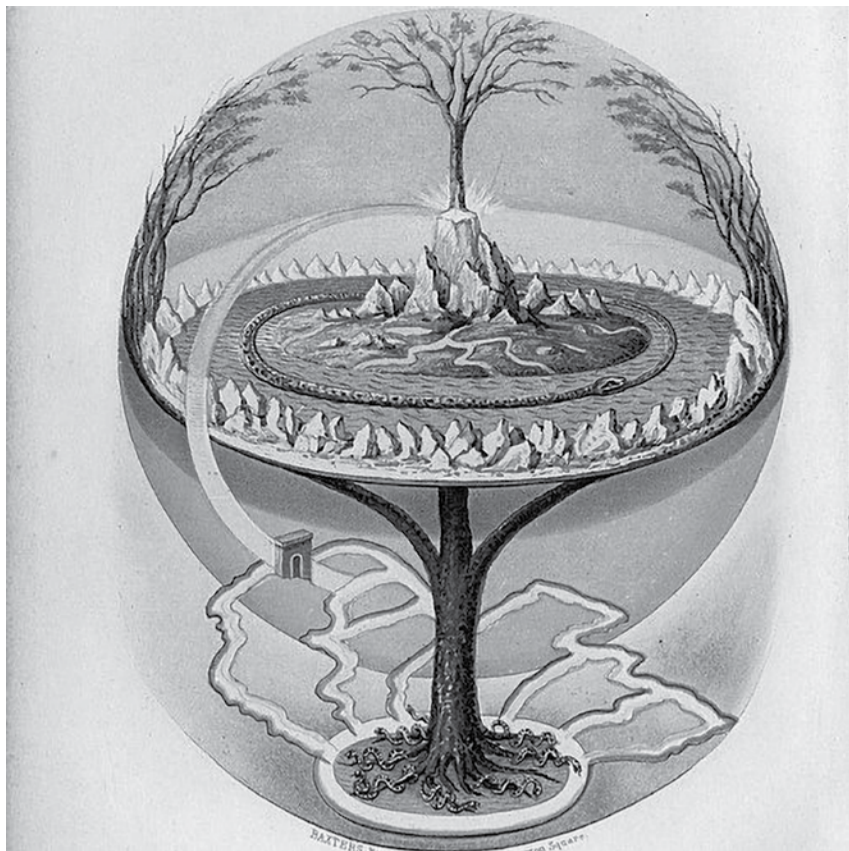


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09. Femme se regardant dans un miroir
/ Constantin Brancusi / 1909 /
Detail



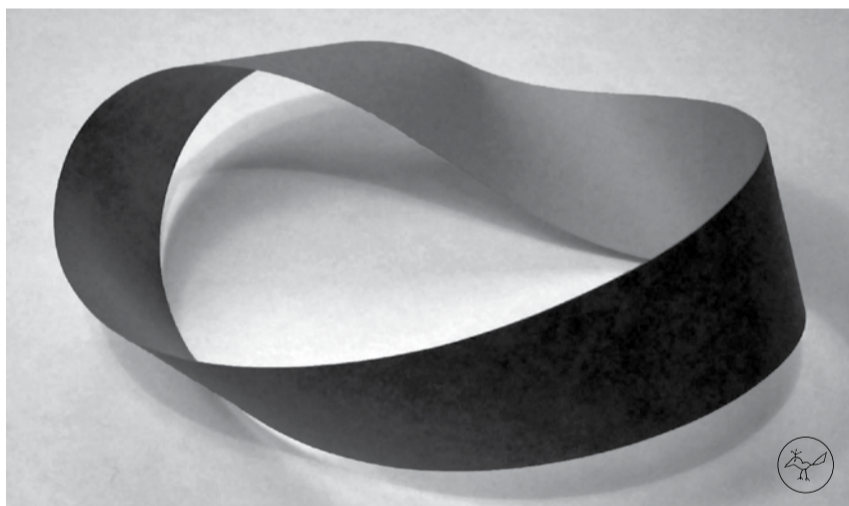
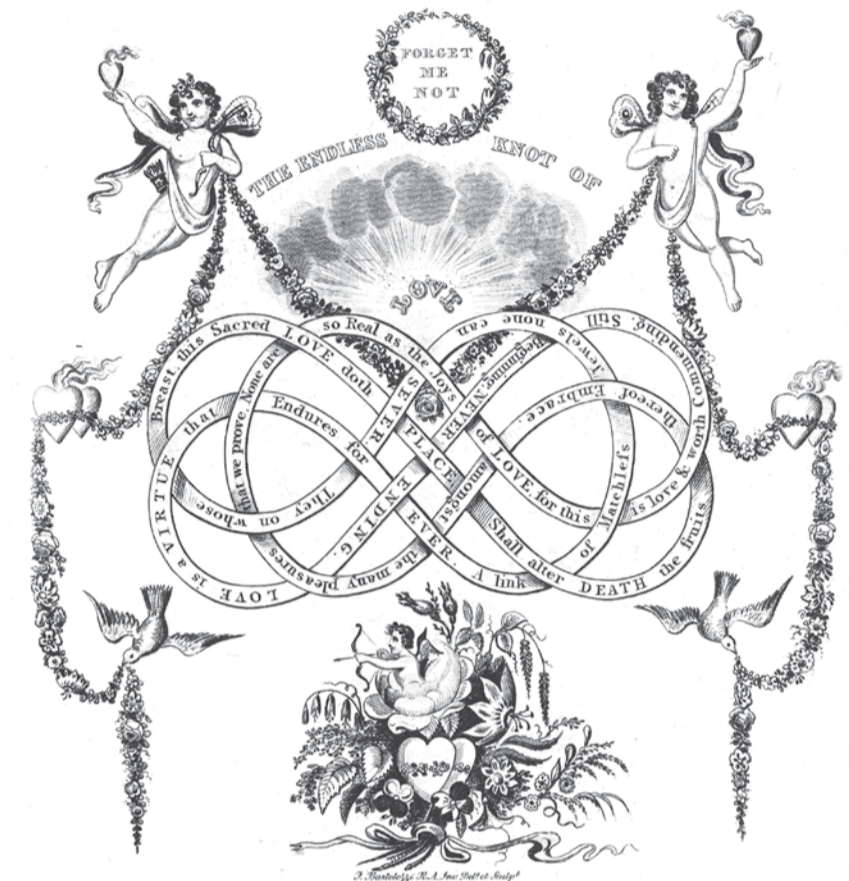
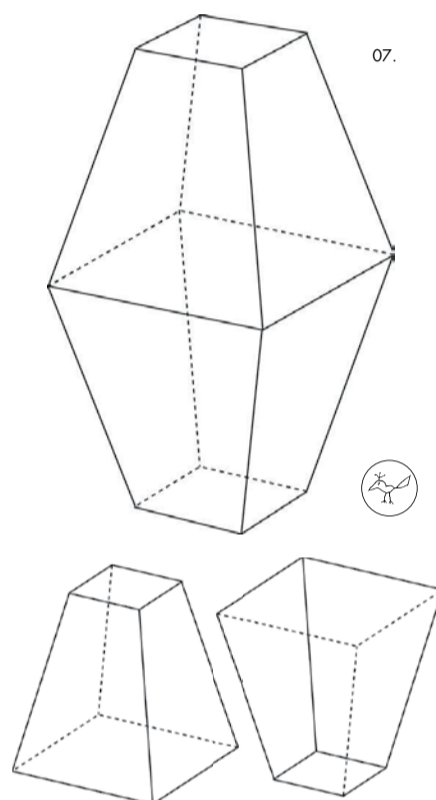
01. Norse mythology celebrates a giant ash tree called Yggdrasill, known as "The World Tree". Its uppermost branches reached into and, in fact, supported the heavens. Its roots provided mankind with the source of all wisdom.

02. The endless Knot of Love / Francesco Bartolozzi / late 1800 / Engraving

06. The infinity symbol (sometimes called the lemniscate) is a mathematical symbol representing the concept of infinity. It looks like a horizontal version of number 8 - a line that never ends / created by John Wallis, mathematician / 17th century



07. Construct your own Edless Column in paper with 17 rhomboidal modules. Templates to copy are to find on www.abc-web.be / Get Inspired / Cahiers



03. A Möbius strip made with a piece of paper and tape (www.abc-web.be / Get Inspired / Cahiers).
If its full length were crawled by an ant, the ant would return to its starting point having traversed both sides of the paper without ever crossed an edge.



04. La Table du Silence / Constantin Brancusi
/ 1937 - 1938 / Pierre / Ensemble
Monumental de Targu-Jiu / Roumanie

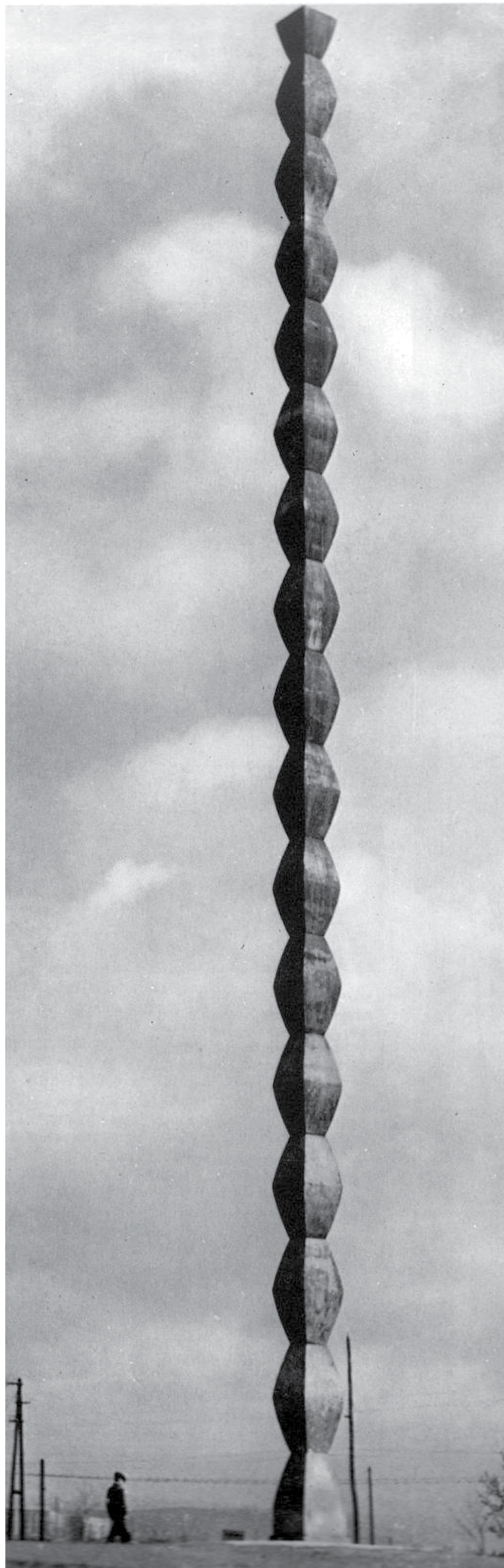


05. Children toys / Minitremu / Romania / 1993

The Little Endless Column and the Little Table of Silence are reinterpretations of the monumental works Table of Silence and Endless Column by Constantin Brancusi. They are a small tribute paid to the artist, but also a way through which both works are within children's reach and also at the grasp of those who have not forgotten to be children.

Through them we can have direct contact with a minimalist and symbolic type of time and space representation, and also the opportunity to evoke the uncommon life and biography of one of the most influential sculptors of the twentieth century.

The Romanian artist couple Monotremu was inspired by their toddler son to create Minitremu, a playful project that aims to bring art into children's lives at an early stage in an innovative and unpretentious way. Minitremu translates Constantin Brancusi's monumental works into wooden toys, colourful and meaningful objects which children can interact with and enjoy. As the artists state, "one of our goals was to de-institutionalize Brancusi and bring him toward a tangible dimension for kids." To create The Little Table of Silence and The Little Endless Column, they used only non-toxic colours and children friendly materials.



08. The Endless Column / Constantin Brancusi / 1937 / Târgu Jiu / Romania
Often called the Column of Infinity, it symbolises the “Infinite Sacrifice” of the Romanian soldiers.
The Column stacks 17 rhomboidal modules, with a half-unit at the top. The incomplete top unit is thought to be the element that expresses the concept of the infinite. All 17 rhomboidal modules accumulate a total height of 29.3 m.
The site was listed in the 1996 World Monuments Watch by the World Monuments Fund.

“Il est signifiant que Brancusi ait retrouvé, dans la Colonne sans fin”, un motif folklorique roumain, la colonne du Ciel (columna cerului), qui prolonge un thème mythologique attesté déjà dans la préhistoire. La conception de l’axis mundi en tant que colonne de pierre soutenant le monde reflète très probablement les croyances de cultures mégalithiques” Mircea Eliade

09. Jack and the Beanstalk / 1734 / Fairy tale / England
In this story, Jack climbs the gigantic beanstalk grown out of the magic beans to a land high in the sky ...

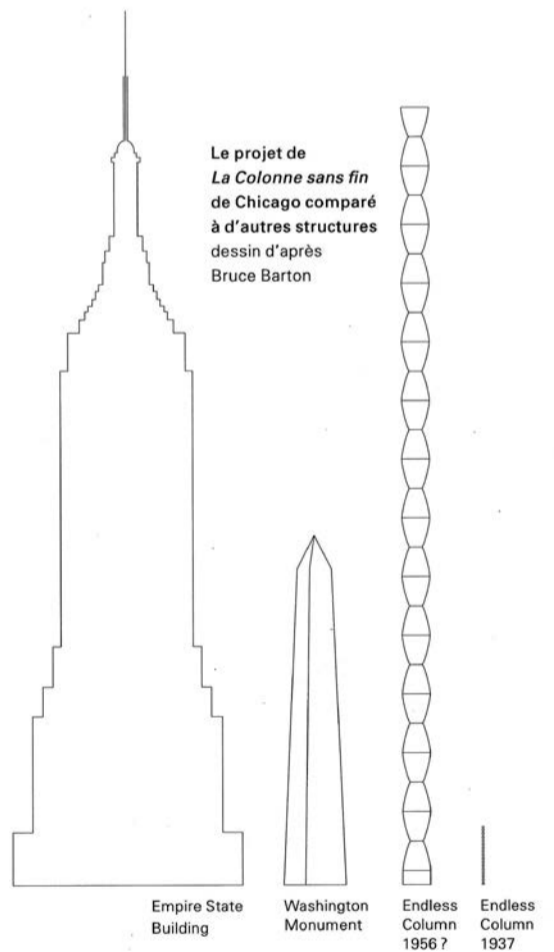
10. In ancient India, Buddha is said to have sat under the Bodhi tree, which grew to spectacular heights, in order to reach spiritual enlightenment...

11. Maypole (Maibaum) / A tall wooden pole is erected as a part of various European folk festivals, around which a maypole dance often takes place.
Some scholars classify maypoles as symbols of the world axis. In certain beliefs and philosophies “Axis Mundi” is the world center, or the connection between Heaven and Earth.

12. Porch pillars / Traditional rural house / Romania

13. In the Bible, Jacob dreams of a ladder reaching into the sky that the angles use to move between heaven and earth. / Darstellung wie sie in den ursprünglichen Lutherbibeln zu finden war / um 1534

“Les éléments de ma Colonne sans fin sont la respiration-même de l’homme, son propre rythme.”
Constantin Brancusi

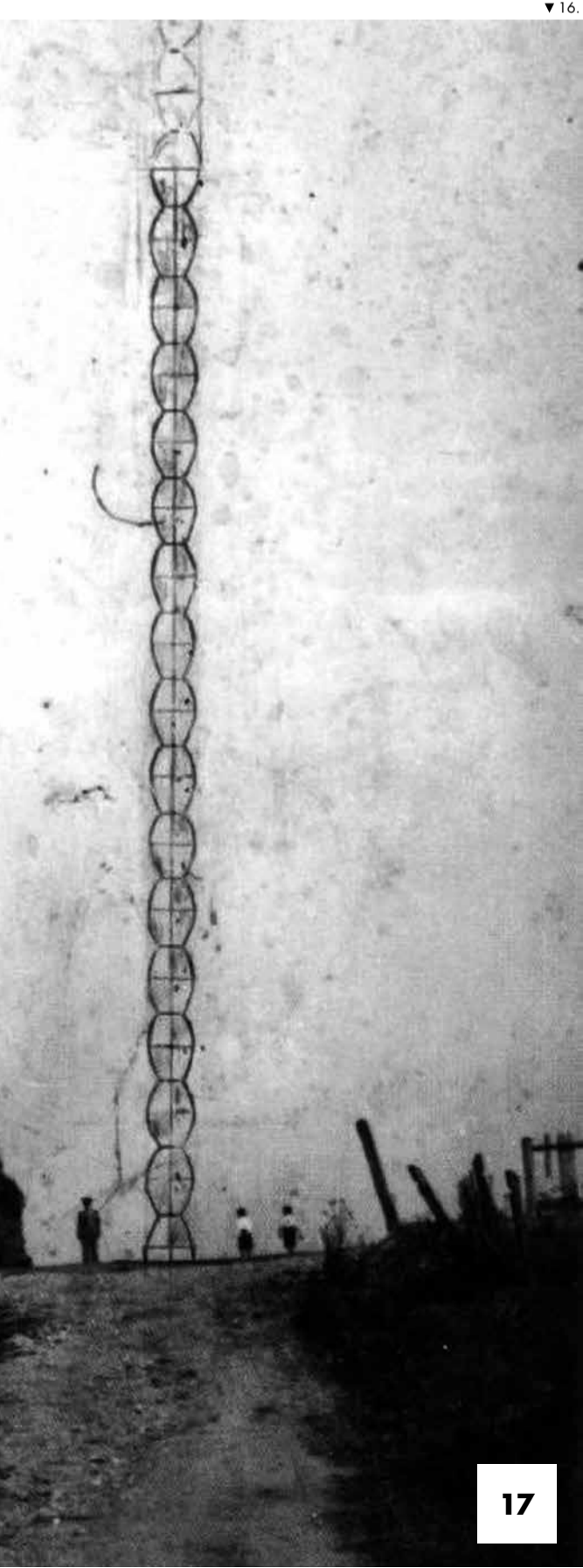
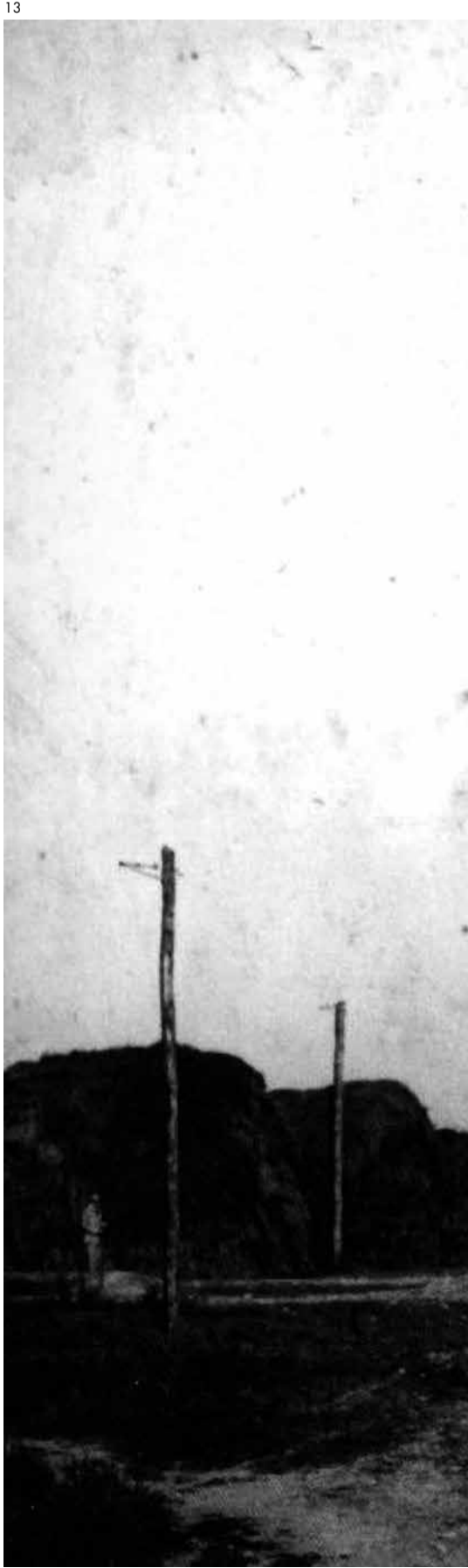


17. “J’aimerais installer une colonne dans Central Park. Elle serait plus grande que toute autre construction, trois fois plus grande que votre obélisque de Washington, avec une base d’une largeur correspondante (60 mètres ou plus). Elle serait en métal. Dans chaque pyramide, il y aurait des appartements, ou les gens pourraient vivre, et tout en haut, je mettrais mon oiseau, un immense oiseau en équilibre sur le faite de ma Colonne infinie.”
Constantin Brancusi
(Etude pour La Colonne sans fin que haute de 400 (152) mètres à Chicago / 1956)

14. Construction Documentation of the Endless Column / Photo / 1937 - 1938

15. En 1920, Brancusi taille en trois jours une Colonne sans fin de 7,17 mètres dans un chêne du jardin de son ami Steichen.

16. Construction Documentation of the Endless Column, Târgu Jiu, Romania / 1937 - 1938





Isamu Noguchi
Born November 17, 1904 / Died December 30, 1988 / Japanese American sculptor, artist and landscape architect
In 1926 Isamu Noguchi saw an exhibition in New York of the work of Constantin Brancusi and he was so impressed that he went with the help of a fellowship to Paris and worked from 1927 to 1929 in Brancusi's studio. Despite a language barrier between the two artists (Noguchi barely spoke French, and Brancusi did not speak English), Noguchi was taken as Brancusi's assistant. During this time, Noguchi gained his footing in stone sculpture, a medium with which he was unacquainted, though he would later admit that one of Brancusi's greatest teachings was to appreciate "the value of the moment". Inspired by the older artist's reductive forms, Noguchi turned to Modernism and a kind of abstraction with an aura of mystery.
He became one of the most important sculptors of the twentieth century's and with a wide range of materials he designed also public landscapes, gardens, playgrounds, dance sets, tables and even light sculptures.

03. Sunken Garden / Isamu Noguchi / 1961 - 1964 / Chase Manhattan Bank Plaza New York

04. Isamu Noguchi in his 10th Street Studio / Long Island City / 1966



01. Isamu Noguchi / Arnold Newman (American, 1918-2006) / c. 1941-1945 / Philadelphia Museum of Art: Gift of R. Sturgis and Marion B. F. Ingersoll / 1945

02. Fish Face / Isamu Noguchi / 1945 / Black Slate / Collection unknown



02.



03.

Some notes over his time with Brancusi out of his book
"A Sculptor's World" :

"He spoke no English, and I no French. Communication was through the eyes, through gesture and through the materials and tools to be used. Brancusi would show me for instance precisely how a chisel should be held and how to true a plane of limestone. He would show me by doing it himself, indicating that I should do the same. Certainly I was no help to him whatsoever in the beginning, and results could have been obtained without being so particular; but, no, it had to be done just his way no matter how long it took me to master it. The large saws he used must not be forced but must gently cut of their own weight. The wide blade of the axe leaves its mark and that is how it should be left - the direct contact of man and matter. There was this unity throughout. The one thing Brancusi could not stand was lack of absolute concentration, as when he detected that my mind had wandered to the sunny outdoors. I could understand his saying that if I were not at one with the work, do something else, but don't try to be a sculptor."

"Wherever he was, everything had to be all white. He wore white, his beard was then already white. He had two white dogs that he fed with lettuce floating in milk. My memory of Brancusi is always of whiteness and of his bright and smiling eyes."

"Brancusi used to say how lucky were the young people of the new generation such as myself, who could look forward to uninhibited and true abstractions, not like himself who always started out from some recognizable image in nature. I remember listening with some skepticism, and wondering whether he was bequeathing a blessing or a curse."

"Brancusi could have become the perfect architectural sculptor. His work clearly has a deep awareness of architectural space. In all his capitals, doorways, columns, furniture and pedestals, he gives a wonderful view of what architectural sculpture might be."

"Brancusi said that when an artist stopped being a child, he would stop being an artist. Children, I think, must view the world differently from adults, their awareness of its possibilities are more primary and attuned to their capacities. When the adult would imagine like a child he must project himself into seeing the world as a totally new experience. I like to think of playgrounds as a primer of shapes and functions; simple, mysterious, and evocative : thus educational. The child's world would be a beginning world, fresh and clear."

"Brancusi made me realise that what I had learned previously - the quick ways of doing things - was always wrong. It is a search you have to enter - into yourself."

Steidl

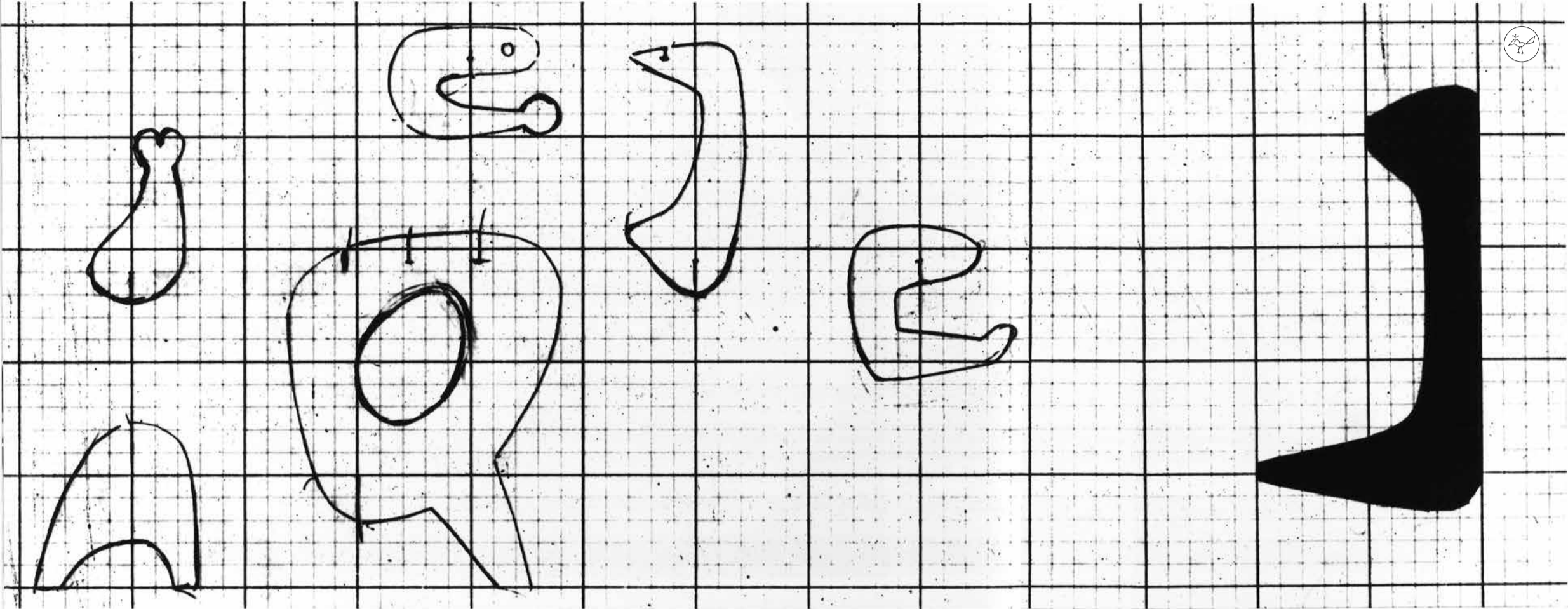


05. Portrait of Isamu Noguchi / circa 1935 / Photograph by George Platt Lynes



05.

06. How to Make a Sculpture / Isamu Noguchi / 1945 / Drawing, Graph Paper / Worksheet Cut Outs
The template to make your own Noguchi Sculpture (Fisch Face) in paper is to find on our website
www.abc-web.be / Get Inspired / Cahiers

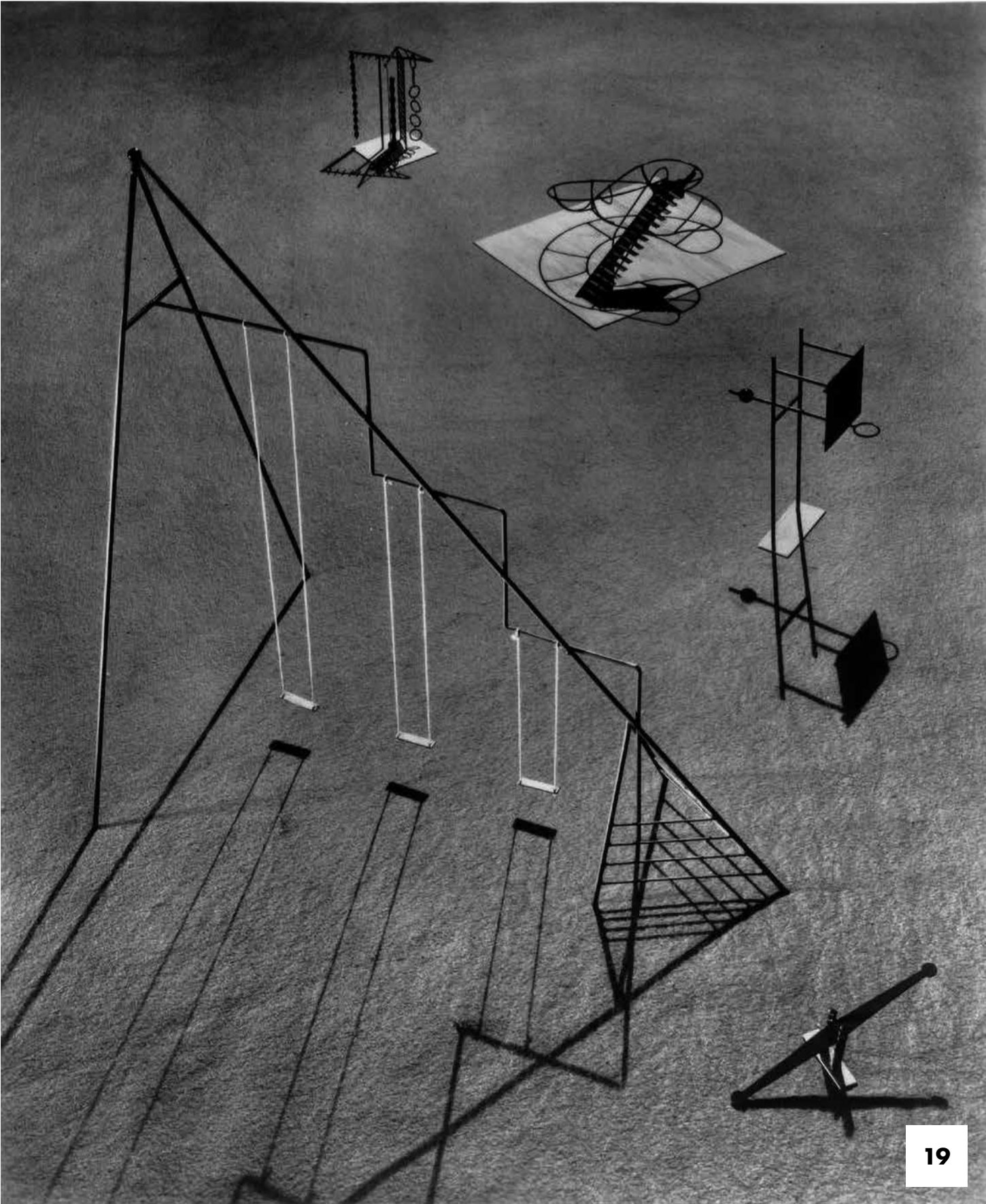


06.

▼ 08.



07. Noguchi studio / 33 MacDougal Alley / 1945



08. Contoured Playground / Isamu Noguchi / Image of Noguchi's playground equipment for Ala Moana Park, Hawaii / Proposed size, about 100 feet square / c. 1940

When we are no longer children, we are already dead.

Quand nous ne sommes plus des enfants, nous sommes déjà morts.

Als we geen kinderen meer zijn, zijn we al dood.



Reality lies in the essence of things, and not their external forms.

I give you essence.

Yes, bring friends, people to whom this would be a pleasure, simple or amusing people, good-looking women, but never art critics or dealers; and if you want to remain my friend, never write anything about me as long as I live. (Brancusi about opening of one of his exhibitions.)

Michelangelo is too strong, his „moi” overshadows everything.

Whatever you do is not for fun or for study, you must treat it as the best thing you'll ever do.

Who is no longer a child is no longer an artist.

When we choose not to be Master, everything comes our way; when we long to possess, it's nowhere to be found. Such is the forbidden fruit.

Morality is the religion of beauty. Beauty is the harmony of opposing things.

Exactitude is the confusion of familiar things. Art is creating things one is unfamiliar with.

An artist: someone who loves things for themselves – not to pocket them. A true artist makes things despite himself. A false artist makes things for the glory. Ever since artists were invented, the arts have vanished.

When one is in the sphere of the beautiful, no explanations are needed.

If we limit ourselves to exact reproduction, we halt the evolution of the spirit. If the thing we make is not connected to the absolute necessity of evolution, it is useless and harmful.

Is it [possible] that the more difficult it is to reconcile things the greater is the beauty? Works of art are mirrors in which everyone sees his own likeness.

Art gives birth to ideas, it does not represent them. Art comes to life intuitively, devoid of preconceived reasons, because it is the reason itself and cannot be explained a priori (beauty is absolute justice).

They are imbeciles who call my work abstract; that which they call abstract is the most realistic, because what is real is not the exterior form but the idea, the essence of things.

There hasn't been any art yet. Art is just beginning.

Theories are patterns without value. What counts is action.

Les théories sont des échantillons sans valeur. Ce n'est que l'action qui compte.

Simplicity is not an objective in art, but one achieves simplicity despite one's self by entering into the real sense of things.

La simplicité n'est pas un but dans l'art, mais on arrive à la simplicité malgré soi en s'approchant du sens réel des choses.

Simplicity is not an end in art, but one arrives at simplicity in spite of oneself, in approaching the real sense of things. Simplicity is complexity itself, and one has to be nourished by its essence in order to understand its value.

Créer comme un dieu, commander comme un roi, travailler comme un esclave.

In order to make free and universal art one must be a God to create it, a King to control it and a slave to make it.

Don't look for obscure formulas or mystery in my work. It is pure joy that I offer you. Look at my sculptures until you see them. Those closest to God have seen them.

Zoek niet naar formules, mystiek of duister. Ik geef je alleen maar vreugde. Zie mijn beelden zoals jij ze ziet. Hoe meer ze je al kijkend naderbij komen, hoe dichterbij ze bij God zijn.

N'y cherchez pas de formules obscures ou de mystère. C'est de la joie pure que je vous donne. Regardez-les jusqu'à ce que vous les voyiez. Les plus près de Dieu les ont vues.

Beauty is absolute balance.

Le beau c'est l'équité absolue.

The bird – I am always working on it. I have not yet found it. It is not a bird, it is the meaning of flight.

C'est le vol qui m'a occupé pendant toute ma vie.

It is not the things themselves that are difficult to make, but to put ourselves in a condition to make them.

Dingen zijn niet moeilijk te maken; wat moeilijk is is onszelf in de gemoedstoestand te brengen om ze te maken.

Les choses ne sont pas difficiles à faire, ce qui est difficile, c'est de nous mettre en état de les faire.

To see far, that is one thing; to go there, that is another.

Voir loin est une chose, y aller est une autre.

It is something to be clever, but being honest is worthwhile.

D'être malin, c'est quelque chose, mais d'être honnête, ça vaut la peine.

Male nudes in sculpture are not even as beautiful as toads.

Les hommes nus dans l'art plastique ne sont même pas aussi beau que des crapauds.

The greatest happiness is the contact between our essence and the eternal essence.

The good Lord is dead. That's why the world is adrift.

Direct cutting is the true road to sculpture, but also the most dangerous for those who don't know how to walk. And in the end, direct or indirect, cutting means nothing; it is the complete thing that counts.

La taille directe c'est le vrai chemin vers la sculpture, mais aussi le plus mauvais pour ceux qui ne savent pas marcher. Et à la fin, taille directe ou indirecte, cela ne veut rien dire, c'est la chose faite qui compte.

High polish is a necessity, which certain approximately absolute forms demand of some materials. It is not always appropriate; it is even very harmful for certain other forms.

Le poli c'est une nécessité que demandent les formes relativement absolues de certaines matières. Il n'est pas obligatoire, même il est très nuisible pour ceux qui font du bifteck.

Architecture is inhabited sculpture.

It is an attempt, to solve the maddeningly difficult problem of getting all the forms into one form.... Look at the body of a man, or a woman. Isn't it a lovely thing? But how foolish it is to try and copy it. Is it not better for an artist to create something beautiful on his own?

What is real is not the external form, but the essence of things. Starting from this truth it is impossible for anyone to express anything essentially real by imitating its exterior surface.

Ce n'est pas la forme extérieure des choses qui est réelle, mais l'essence des choses; partant de cette vérité, il est impossible à quiconque d'exprimer quelque chose de réel en imitant la surface expérieure des choses.

Sculpture must be lovely to touch, friendly to live with, not only well made... fancy living with Moses, by Michelangelo, even if we do acknowledge and admire his power! We should not be made to feel like atoms in its presence, but we should respond and vibrate to the miracles of life. What is so glorious as the privilege that man enjoys of being alive, and being able to see and discover beauty all around him.

The representational sculptors will work for years, learning how to represent an outstretched arm, and then the poor arm has to stay outstretched forever. You'd think he would get tired...

In de kunst is eenvoudig geen doel, maar men komt door het benaderen van de ware betekenis van de dingen, ondanks zichzelf, tot eenvoud.

Als de werkelijkheid wordt gezien is alles mooi. Het zijn de gedachten van de mens die het universum in stukken breken.

Kunst vertegenwoordigt geen ideeën maar brengt ze voort - zodat een waar kunstwerk intuïtief tot stand komt, zonder van tevoren uitgedachte beweegredenen, omdat het zelf de beweegreden is en men daarvan vooraf geen rekenschap kan afleggen.

Il y a un but dans toutes les choses. Pour y arriver il faut se dégager de soi-même.

A quoi bon la pratique du modèle? Elle n'aboutit qu'à sculpter des cadavres.

Je ne veux pas d' "Oeuvre Complète", c'est un monument pour les morts – je suis en plein travail.

Les mesures sont nuisibles, car elles sont là, dans les choses. Elles peuvent monter jusqu'au ciel et descendre par terre sans changer de mesure.

Cette gloire, elle s'en fout de nous, quand nous courrons derrière elle, mais quand nous lui tournons le dos, c'est elle qui court derrière nous.

Je ne suis plus de ce monde, je suis loin de moi-même, plus attaché à ma personne. Je suis chez les choses essentielles.

Simplicity is not an end in art, but one arrives at simplicity in spite of oneself, in approaching the real sense of things. Simplicity is at bottom complexity and one must be nourished on its essence to understand its significance.

Besides...you cannot make what you want to make, but what the material permit you to make. You cannot make out of marble what you would make out of wood, or out of wood what you would make out of stone....Each material has its own life, and one cannot without punishment destroy a living material to make a dumb senseless thing. That is, we must not try to make materials speak our language, we must go with them to the point where others will understand their language.

I never seek to make what they call a pure or abstract form. Pureness, simplicity is never in my mind; to arrive at the real sense of things is the one aim.

C'est la joie pure que je vous donne.

My life has been a succession of miracles.