

Spomenik je izveden kao vitak stup, na vrhu raščlanjen u lik majke koja uvis diže svoje dijete zanosnom kretnjom ljubavi, i s uzdignutom glavom unosi se u oči djeteta kao da ulijeva u njega svu svoju nadu i želju da ga minu sve boli i patnje ovoga svijeta. Spomenik je zamišljen kao *memento* na strahote fašizma, ali ujedno i kao optimistična *poruka* budućim generacijama, da se unatoč pretrpljenim grozotama uzvišeni ideali čovječanstva moraju i dalje prenositi s koljena na koljeno. S ovakovom svojom idejom spomenik izlazi iz okvira i vremena u kojem je nastao, te obuhvaća u svojoj biti ideale cjelokupnog čovječanstva. (sl 5).

Sretnim sticajem okolnosti Osijek danas posjeduje ovaj spomenik trajne umjetničke vrijednosti.

Treba žaliti, što su Nemonova djela u tako velikom broju stradala, ili im se zametnuo trag, te je teško prodrijeti u zagonetku velike njegove nadarenosti, i to tim više što je od samog početka svoje umjetničke djelatnosti bio neobično marljiv i plodan. Kolikogod su portreti dominirali u njegovom opusu, ipak je stvarao mnoga djela slobodne figuralne koncepcije. Iskrenost i profinjena misaonost u Nemonovim djelima u tren oka osvoji svakoga tko ima osjetilo za suptilnost ljudske psihe, stoga zamišljamo da je neprocjenjiv gubitak to što njegov razvoj, patnje, sazrijevanja i saznanja ne možemo pratiti kroz nizove njegovih djela i što ne možemo, ma i fragmentarno doživljavati vibracije u tim stvaranjima počam od skulpture »Bola«, »Pastira« i »Sfinge«, rađenih u najranijoj mladosti, sve do spomenika u Osijeku, simbola uzvišene smirenosti ljudskog bola. Nije nam dano, da kroz njegove brojne glave i biste naslutimo duh i živi dah epohe kojoj on pripada, počam od glave njegove bake, prof. Stijića i drugih u Osijeku; glava, rađenih u bečkim umjetničkim krugovima, te kasnije glava rađenih u Njemačkoj, Belgiji, Francuskoj i Engleskoj sve do posljednjih koje su ga dovele do tako dominantne ličnosti kao što je bio Churchill.

Vjerujem, da bi njegov potpuni opus u portretnom kao i u slobodnom stvaranju isto tako karakteristično odražavao nemirni, smioni i dramatični vijek današnjice, kao što su to mogla učiniti mnoga umjetnička djela neprolazne vrijednosti u mnogim značajnim epohama historije čovječanstva.

OSCAR NEMON

One of the masters of portrait art, Oscar Nemon was born at Osijek on the 13th of March, 1906. While he was in the fifth form of the nonclassical secondary school in his native town, he distinguished himself with a sculpture named »Pain« which was later displayed in an exhibition. When he was in the sixth form he sculpted a portrait of his teacher and of some friends. And in the same year at this young age he hired a studio in common with his friend, Đorđe Petrović, a young painter. As candidate for the final examination at his school, he created a bronze relief portrait bust of at that time Mayor of Osijek, Dr. V. Hengl. — In 1923 and 1924 he arranged two exhibitions of his own, where his works attracted great interest and were praised by his critics. One of them, his one-time teacher, professor Jenny who had a very clear and positive judgment of his pupil, wrote in the daily newspaper of the time: »Here, before our eyes, we have no works of a beginner and no casual success, but a talent with positive achievements whose further development is quite certain because — this youth works and thinks for himself«.

At this early stage of development, besides portraits, he also exhibited creations of fancy, such as »Shepherd«, »Sphinx«, »Sceptic« and others. All these, if we

look back to this early phase, arouse our special interest. He was then, as one of his critics put it, opposed to snobbery in painting and to academic painting in general, and turned to the newest trends in art, to Pablo Picasso's cubistic direction, while Ivan Meštrović became his ideal in sculpture.

After his school leaving examination he went to the Viennese »Akademie der bildenden Künste«, but there he — not tolerating the limitations his professors imposed on his enthusiasm — soon left to open his own Studio in the Gumpendorferstrasse in order to work independently. Here his friends introduced him to intellectual and artistic circles and so he started to work on portraits of many an interesting personality of that time, such as Richard Strauss, Leo Slezak and Richard Tauber.

In 1927, he went to Brussels to continue his study of sculpture at the »Académie des Beaux Arts«. From there he made frequent visits to Germany, France and England sculpturing and earning numerous successes with exhibitions in which his excellent portraits of Sigmund Freud, Marsall Foch, General Gustave Auguste Ferrié, Charles Lindbergh and so on, were on display. In Belgium he was commissioned to sculpture portraits of the Royal Family. Many of his works were exhibited in the Brussels »Musée Royal« which unfortunately were, both portraits and figurative compositions, completely destroyed during the German occupation of Belgium in World War II.

Before World War II started, Nemon emigrated to England where he married, founded a family and has been living there ever since.

In England he was given the task to portray Lork Beaverbrook, the former Prime Minister Mac Millan, Marshall Montgomery, Winston Churchill, Queen Elisabeth and other prominent personalities.

Some of his early works do still exist in Yugoslavia (in Belgrade, Zagreb and Osijek) but many of his later works exist no more. Not only because many were smashed to pieces in Brussels and Vienna, but because he several times changed his abode and completely lost evidence of many of them. For this reason it is extremely difficult to make a complete survey of his achievements. A survey of his great opus could certainly be of special interest as in it the dramatic and technically advanced age in which he lived would be reflected and so could the numerous personalities that were his contemporaries.

Owing to the contact he was maintaining with his native country, one of his generous ideas have come true when on the invitation of the Jewish Community at Osijek, he conceived and donated to his native town the model for a monument. This monument, cast in bronze, had been erected in 1965 in a small park and there it is to be seen. Psychologically it is to function as a memento and as the artist's message. As a memento it should make us not to forget the innumerable Jews from Osijek and Slavonia who had to suffer incredible tortures and had been killed as victims of fascism in the last war. As the artist's message it has to remind us that inspite of committed terrors and errors, the sublime ideals of humanity have to be carried over from generation to generation. This idea, with an exquisite sense for beauty and charm, has been realized in the form of a tall column which at the top gets transformed into a woman's bust that is enchantingly raising her baby aloft as if to pour into it her hopes and wishes to save it from all pains and sufferings of this world. In reality this is an altogether human figure representing mankind in general and its ideals which are being eternally transferred in defiance of tragic collapses humanity in times and again has to endure.