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Oscar Nemon's Portraits of Sigmund Freud

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Abstract

Portraying Sigmund Freud during the 1930s brought worldwide fame to Oscar Nemon (1906–1985). Two seminal portraits of the psychoanalyst drew international attention to Nemon's contemporaneous and future sculptural work. Freud sat for Nemon twice, in 1931 and 1936. The first portrait transformed Nemon's standing as a portrait sculptor. His portraits of Freud, along with his later sculptures of Winston Churchill, would become his most famous, most referenced, and most widely reproduced

works. Although they owe their popularity and reputation primarily to their famous model, these works by Oscar Nemon are nonetheless accomplished and exceptional examples of portrait sculpture. This paper explores the historiography of Nemon's portrayal of Freud; the context of commissioning the portraits; their creation; and the relationship between sculptor and model. It also examines how the sculptor's work developed from the first take in 1931 to later versions of portraits.

Keywords: *Oscar Nemon, Sigmund Freud, portrait, sculpture, modernism*

Introduction

Portraying Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis and one of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century, brought worldwide fame to Oscar Nemon (1906–1985),¹ bringing into focus both his contemporary and future sculptural work. Freud sat for Nemon twice, in 1931 and 1936: the first portrait resulting from these encounters became crucial to Nemon's recognition as a portrait sculptor.

Years after the first sittings in 1931, Nemon's encounters with Freud were anecdotally retold and transmitted from author to author – starting with Nemon himself, who was undoubtedly the primary source. Nemon had given statements in interviews published in newspapers in 1931 and 1936, which were retold by other authors – initially writers of newspaper articles, and afterwards Paul Federn,² Heinrich Meng,³ Michael Molnar,⁴ and more recently the sculptor's daughter, Aurelia Young.⁵ Nemon himself returned to this material in post-war interviews as well as in his memoirs.⁶ Specific episodes have been recycled in a number of recent texts, citing details from Nemon's biography. While this wealth of material certainly has value, it works against reconstructing the circumstances of Nemon's portrayal of Freud: factual testimonies blur into recollections and impressions, and the authenticity of real events dissolve into anecdotes.

Nemon's sculptures of Freud, which include portrait heads and full-length sculptures erected as monuments, have not yet been the subject of thorough research and analysis in the field of art history. This study seeks to connect them into a whole, enabling better critical judgement and demonstrating the shift in Nemon's approach in terms of style and form following what we may consider his later portrait of Freud as distinct from the earlier version.

First encounter, 1931

During his sojourn in Vienna, from 1924 to 1925, Nemon became acquainted with the psychoanalyst Paul Federn, one of Freud's closest disciples and collaborators. Six years later, in July 1931, while he was establishing himself in Brussels, Nemon received an invitation from Federn to come to Vienna and make a portrait of Freud on behalf of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society (*Wiener Psychoanalytische Vereinigung*) to mark Freud's 75th birthday.⁷

Claims that Freud “only once agreed to be portrayed in a sculpture” for his 75th birthday, when he was portrayed by Nemon,⁸ or that Nemon's portrait was “the only one Freud posed for in the last years of his life”⁹ are incorrect. A portrait in the form of a medal was made in 1906 by the Viennese

sculptor and medallist Karl Maria Schwerdtner, and Freud also sat for two other sculptors before Nemon: he was portrayed from life by Paul Königsberger and František Juraň.

Ten days before meeting Oscar Nemon, on July 14, 1931, Freud was portrayed in Pötzleinsdorf by the Czech sculptor František Juraň.¹⁰ A decade earlier, in 1920, a bust of Freud had been created by the Viennese sculptor Paul Königsberger.¹¹ From that point on, Freud, who was known for keeping his private life hidden from the public, refused any attempts to “perpetuate” him. In fact, Freud had already refused a request for Nemon to make a medal with his image earlier in 1931.¹²

On this occasion, however, his colleagues finally managed to persuade him to do the sittings.¹³ Freud agreed – not because he wanted the bust, but “to help a young artist.”¹⁴ Paul Federn later recorded:

“Freud did not like to sit as model; with reluctance he yielded to friends and relatives who intensely wished a portrait of him. The excuse for his reluctance was that his photographs were excellent while painting or sculpting took so much time and the outcome was problematic. Twice I introduced to him young painters who showed originality and skill, but while working they became embarrassed and were not able to render personality. Therefore it was with the hesitance of a diplomat that I once more approached Freud before his 75th birthday with the very young but already renowned sculptor, Mr. Olem Nemon.”¹⁵

That summer Freud resided at Khevenhüllerstrasse 6, in the Viennese suburb of Pötzleinsdorf. The Mautner Villa was a large house with a garden, which the Freuds had rented a few months earlier for their stay in the countryside.¹⁶ Oscar Nemon's first encounter with him was recorded by Paul Federn:

“After introducing the artist to Freud in the garden of his summer home (...) he was left alone to show the Professor a collection of photographs of his works. Freud immediately became interested in what Nemon had to say, and liked the originality of his work as well as the man himself. The work started the next day.”¹⁷

The most likely date of this visit was July 24, 1931, as evidenced by one of Freud's diary notes. During the last decade of his life, Freud kept a very specific, extremely reduced diary, laconically recording those daily events that seemed important to him. In this short diary of his, next to the date “Juli, Fr(eitag) 24,” Freud entered: “Bildhauer O. Neumann.”¹⁸

Nemon and Freud had in common their Jewish cultural heritage, on which Freud commented in a letter, although neither was observant. At a time of mounting antisemitism, this may have contributed to a feeling of affinity between them, in addition to their respective professional ambitions and a dedication to making a mark in their chosen fields. Something about Nemon clearly appealed to Freud, who decided to proceed with sittings for the 1931 bust. Nemon was an accomplished and wry conversationalist but one of a particular kind. Through his quiet charisma, his strength

as a listener, and his particular talent for subtle, empathetic, sometimes teasing interactions with his sitters,¹⁹ he was able to establish a deep connection with them: a considerable advantage for a portrait sculptor.

Sittings for the portrait took place on several occasions over the course of a week or so²⁰ – “always during the brief intervals between Freud seeing patients,” as Nemon recalls.²¹ In a letter to psychoanalyst Max Eitingon, his student and friend, Freud wrote of his encounter with Nemon:

“Someone is making a bust of me, the sculptor Oscar Neumann from Brussels, from his appearance a Slavic eastern Jew, Khazar or Kalmuck or something like that. Federn, who is usually highly inept in discovering unclaimed geniuses, forced him on me. But this time there is something or rather quite a lot in it. The head which the gaunt, goatee-bearded artist has fashioned from the dirt – like the good Lord – is a very good and an astonishingly lifelike impression of me. He has kept quiet about how he intends valuing the work, but I didn't order it from him.”²²

In the beginning, Freud was reserved and distant, not saying much during the sittings.²³ In addition to his aversion to being portrayed, his remoteness, sometimes verging on morose bitterness as observed by his housekeeper when Nemon showed her the portrait,²⁴ may have been caused by his malignant illness. Freud was tormented by pain in his jaw caused by an oral prosthesis, which he had worn since 1923, when he underwent a “radical operation for cancer of the jaw which had removed a tumour, together with part of his upper and lower jaws and a section of the soft palate. To allow him to talk or eat (or smoke), it was necessary for him to wear a cumbersome device in his mouth, which was often painful and frequently a torture.”²⁵ On April 23, 1931, less than two months before Nemon's arrival, Freud had undergone another jaw tumour surgery: “The operation was successful, but the discovery of precancerous tissue disturbed the equilibrium Freud had established with his affliction.”²⁶ Freud's psychophysical condition in the years following this operation is perhaps best described in his own words, in a letter addressed to his associate, the German psychoanalyst Karl Abraham, in 1924:

“To avoid being cross with me you have to feel yourself (intensively) into my condition. Though I am supposed to be on the way to the recovery there is deep inside a pessimistic conviction that the end of my life is near. That feeds on the torments from my scar which never cease. There is a sort of senile depression which centres in a conflict between an irrational love of life and more sensible resignation...”²⁷

In his first portrait of Freud, however, Nemon did not delve deeply into this state of mind, or explore it. Instead, he chose to communicate the surface appearance of the psychological nuances he observed in his model, seeking the right balance between the idealized image and Freud's human and intimate sides.

The portrait created in clay during these sessions in Pötzleinsdorf became the model for three Freudian heads in bronze,

in wood, and in stone, all commissioned by Paul Federn on behalf of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society.²⁸ Nemon made them in Brussels, without his sitter being present,²⁹ and delivered them in late October 1931.³⁰ “The members of the Viennese Psychoanalytic Society as well as Freud’s friends and relatives were invited to see the busts and vote on which one should be chosen as a gift. The result was a draw, and it was decided to leave the choice to the Family and Freud himself.”³¹

In relation to this, Freud made a brief note in his diary: “Okt., Do. 29, Drei Büsten von Nemon,”³² and in a letter to Max Eitington he commented:

“At the moment my room is uncanny for me, apart from myself it houses three heads on high columns which try to resemble me and between which I have to choose; three busts by the sculptor Nemon in Brussels, all actually interesting, a birthday present from the Vienna Society. The artist worked on me in Pötzleindorf, for a while now I’ve had enough ‘honours’.”³³

Freud chose the portrait in wood for himself, saying that “with its lively and friendly expression it promises to be a pleasant roommate.”³⁴ When he was forced to leave Vienna to live in exile in London in 1938, Freud took this exquisite portrait with him. The head in stone, according to Heinrich Meng, was given to Freud’s brother Alexander, and the third one went to Heinrich Meng himself in Basel.³⁵

Referring to earlier unsuccessful attempts to portray him, Federn later announced that Freud’s letter accepting the birthday present gave him as well as members of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society relief and satisfaction that “this time the work was well done.”³⁶ In that letter, addressed to Paul Federn on November 1, 1931, Freud thanked him for the gift and commented on the three busts that were offered to him with witty conciseness, paying tribute to the artist:

“Dear Doctor,

A few days ago you appeared in my home with three busts asking me to choose one among them to keep as a gift from the Viennese Society. The choice was not an easy one. Although the busts were made by the same hand and represent the same person, the artist gave each of them an individual charm and distinction not shown by the others and not easily relinquished. Finally, since however, I cannot have three heads like Cerberus I decided in favour of the one made in wood. With its vivacious and friendly expression it promises to become a pleasant roommate.

To you who found the artist and upheld him, as well as to the Society which presents me with this, my double, I must express my hearty thanks. For such a gift is symptomatic of spirits which one values the more the less frequently they were met with in one’s life, and still such sentiment belongs to the best things which one can give to another.”³⁷

Wanting to compensate the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, which was then struggling in difficult times, grateful Freud asked the Society to accept three thousand shillings for the Vienna Polyclinic and the Institute for Psychoanalysis.³⁸

Reflecting on his stay in Vienna between 1924 and 1925, Nemon recalled in his memoirs that “Freud was attracting great interest in Vienna during that same period by his growing fame as a psychologist.” It is not known which of Freud’s publications Nemon had read by the time of receiving the commission in 1931, but he was certainly familiar with Freud’s work and shared his profound interest in the human psyche, the investigation of which was central to Nemon’s own work as a portrait sculptor. From the 1930s onwards, Nemon counted many distinguished psychoanalysts including Paul Federn, Heinrich Meng, Princess Marie Bonaparte, René Laforgue and Donald Winnicott amongst his friends, reflecting their shared preoccupations and explorations whether in clay or on the page.

Suggesting his respect for Freud, in an interview he gave shortly after the portrait sessions in 1931, Nemon called him “a great man”: “I consider it the most beautiful task of my life so far that I was allowed to model Professor Freud.”³⁹ He certainly read Freud’s books and kept them in his home library.⁴⁰ He also knew that making Freud’s portrait was a great opportunity to advance his career, for he was still largely unknown at that time as a portrait bust specialist. His sitters of renown would largely follow on from the Freud commission, helped by his 1932 exhibition at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, where he showed the Freud bust for the first time.

The exhibition was entitled *Têtes*, because he exhibited only portrait heads, and it was extremely successful for Nemon. It provided him with new portrait commissions and at least for a time, he was financially well off – so much so that in 1934 he replaced his studio, which was in the suburbs of Brussels, with a new, spacious, and well-lit studio at an exclusive location in the city centre, at Rue Thérésienne 8, in the immediate vicinity of the royal palace. His new studio was visited by prominent and cultured citizens of Brussels, as well as by members of the Belgian royal family – “the entire palais was already in my studio,” as Nemon wrote to his sister. There, in 1934, 1935, and 1936, he organized three solo exhibitions, the most notable being the first, held in December 1934. John Rothenstein, the former director of the Tate Gallery in London and a long-time friend of Nemon, would later write: “His success was assisted by the eminence of his subjects, for the 1934 Exhibition included busts of King Albert I, Emil Vandervelde – the President of the Second International – and Auguste Vermeylen, a notable historian of the Flemish School of Painting.”⁴¹

Portrait of Sigmund Freud, 1931

Freud’s sitting for a portrait in sculpture soon became the news of the day. Viennese papers covered the story, illustrated by photographs of the work and of Nemon and Freud posing together in the garden with the clay head (Fig. 1).⁴² The most extensive and noteworthy article was published in the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*;⁴³ it was an interview with the artist, giving his immediate impressions of Freud as his model.



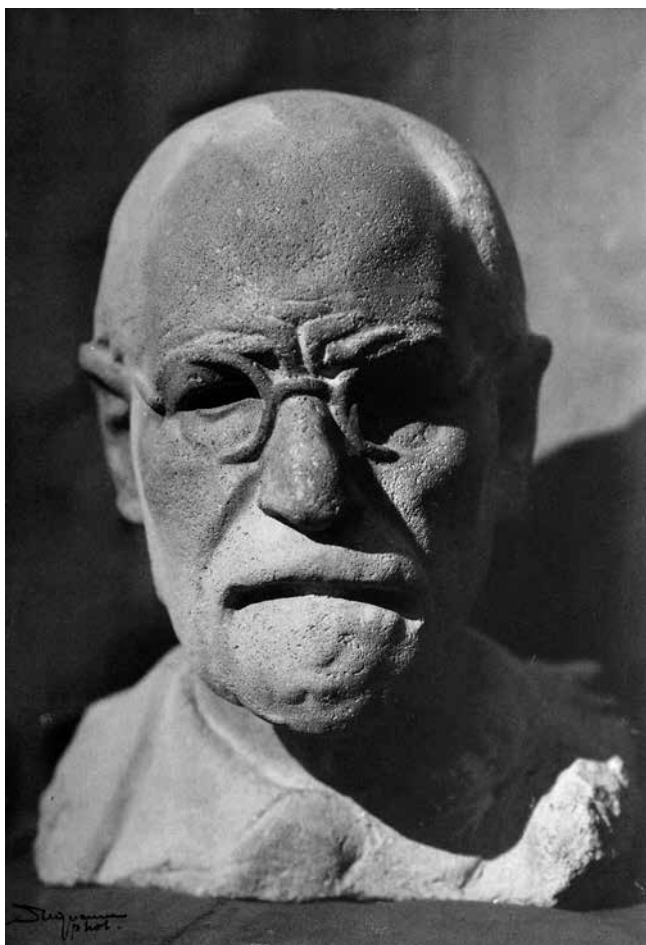
1. Oscar Nemon and Sigmund Freud, Pötzleinsdorf, 1931. © Estate of Oscar Nemon (photo: Freud Museum, London)
Oscar Nemon i Sigmund Freud, Pötzleinsdorf, 1931.

Nemon touched on the difference between photographs of Freud and his lived experience of the man, suggesting a belief that his art had the ability to connect with and interpret layers of experience contained beneath the surface. He also placed his work within the sculptural canon of modern art by alluding to Rodin, bearing evidence to the way in which his formal education and years of artistic experience made him aware of his own relationship to his contemporaries and predecessors. Finally, he turned from the specific to the intangible, referring to “the whole man” as his deepest subject. The account of the sittings dramatizes the process of initially working closely with a sitter and then stepping back to allow the work to assemble and complete itself away from the direct stimulus in the studio, where the artist regains the agency to author the created object.

After the portrait sessions in Pötzleinsdorf, Nemon left Vienna with his sketches and returned to Brussels. By October 1931, he had completed the three life-size heads in three different materials: one carved in wood, another cast in bronze, and a third one in stone. A more precise typological definition of the three portrait sculptures classifies them as a reduced bust, with a very shortened chest (Figs. 2–4).

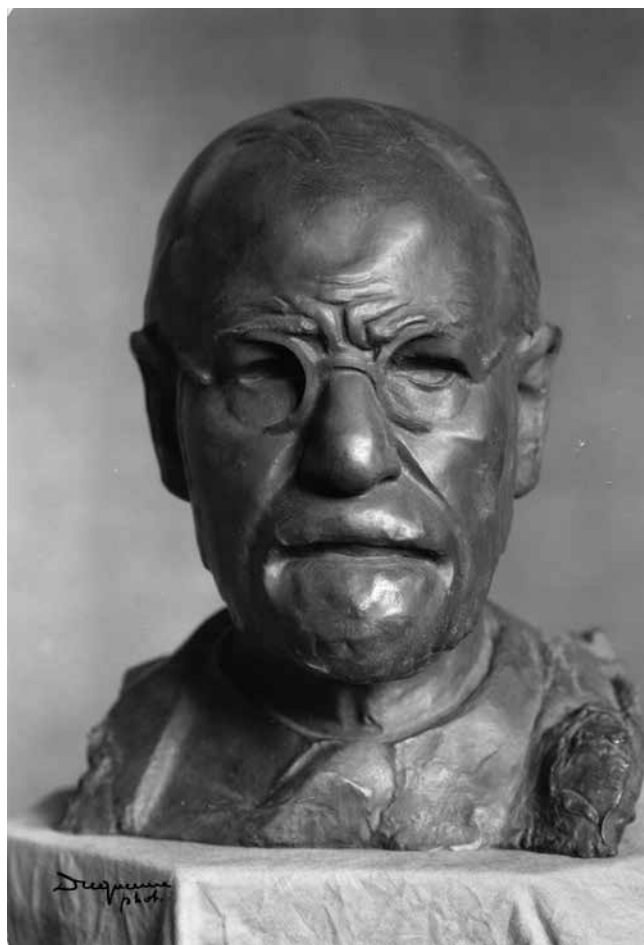
Thanks to his skill and ability to work quickly, Nemon made all three sculptures in a relatively short time. It should be noted, however, that Nemon did not carve the stone bust, but instead made it in artificial stone. Although a competent stone carver, Nemon preferred modelling in clay and most of his portrait sculptures were finished as bronze casts. Pertinently, he had a short deadline to complete the commission and carving in stone would have taken much more time. The technique of casting in artificial stone was not new to Nemon; he had made some of his other sculptures in this material. Since they were made from the same model, the busts cast in stone (Fig. 2) and in bronze (Fig. 3) do not differ in their plastic articulation. However, the textures of these separate materials respond to light in completely different ways. The third sculpture is characterized by the specificities inherent in the technical procedure of working with wood, and its chiselled surface takes on a more expressive character (Fig. 4). Nemon was not used to working with wood, and this wood portrait – albeit an extraordinarily successful work – is unique in his oeuvre.

The wooden portrait bust is now displayed in the Freud Museum in London. The current location of the other two busts is unknown. It is only certain that the cast of a portrait



2. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, 1931. Cast stone, h. c 37 cm. Location unknown. © Estate of Oscar Nemon. Photo: Duquenne, Bruxelles (Oscar Nemon Archive Center, Boar's Hill, Oxford)

Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, 1931., lijevani kamen, v. oko 37 cm, smještaj nepoznat



3. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, 1931. Bronze, h. c 37 cm. Location unknown. © Estate of Oscar Nemon. Photo: Duquenne, Bruxelles (Henry Moore Institute Archive)

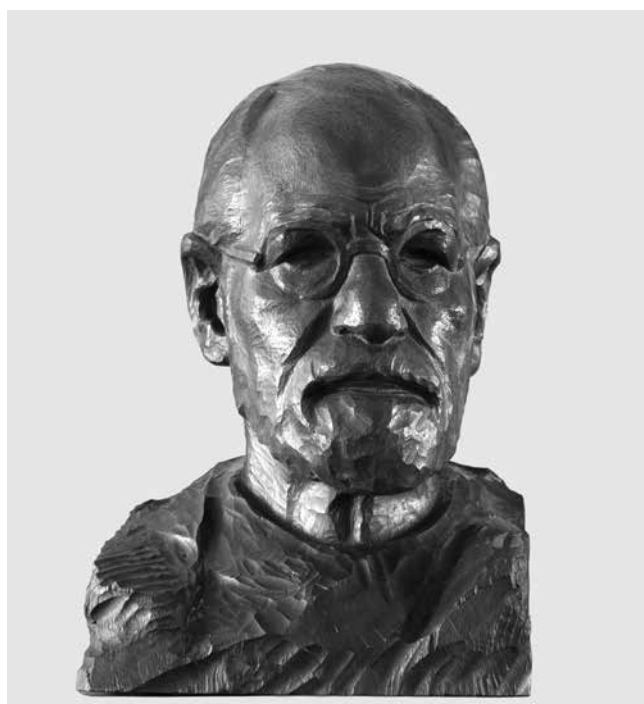
Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, 1931., bronca, v. oko 37 cm, smještaj nepoznat

in stone was sent by Nemon to the publishing house of the Psychoanalytic Society (Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag) in Vienna in 1932.⁴⁴ A letter⁴⁵ from Adolf Josef Storfer⁴⁶ to Nemon, in which this casting – *Steinabguss der Freud-Büste* – is mentioned, confirms that Nemon did not carve a portrait of Freud in stone. This is also indicated by the photograph made by the Duquenne photo studio and taken in Brussels at the time of the bust's creation, which shows that it was produced by casting, not carving.

The 1931 *Portrait of Sigmund Freud* has the stylistic and morphological features characteristic of Nemon's portrait sculpture of the 1920s and 1930s.⁴⁷ These portraits display a modernist reduction, while remaining recognizable – the need to produce a likeness is fulfilled without submitting to a strict mimetic matrix. Departure from conventional portrait realism is achieved by moderating and limiting the descrip-

4. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, 1931. Wood, 37 × 25 × 23 cm. London: Freud Museum. © Estate of Oscar Nemon © Freud Museum, London (photo: Daniel Zec, 2012)

Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, 1931., drvo, 37 × 25 × 23 cm, London, Freud Museum



tion of facial particularities, but all the essential physiognomic details are retained. Surface treatment is particularly important: the “epidermis”, imitated in the sculpting process, has been transformed into a modernist surface. Instead of offering a mimetically precise and literal transcription of human tissue into the sculptural medium, Nemon's portraits of Freud speak almost exclusively in the visual language of sculptural surfaces. Reconstructed and coded, the sculpted face is read in accordance with the modernist paradigm of reduction, established by Rodin's plastic innovations.

To contextualize Nemon's work within wider portraiture, we may consider Shearer West's remarks concerning the relation between portraiture and modernist art:

“The place of portraiture in the twentieth century is complicated by its diversity: while some artists of the avant-garde attempted totally abstract ‘portraits’, others continued a tradition of institutional and private commissions. This resulted in the extremes either of stylistically experimental works or of portraits that were firmly tied to existing conventions of representation, with many examples somewhere in the middle.”⁴⁸

It is not easy to position Oscar Nemon's portraiture in one of the three currents, although the bulk of his portrait work – like the portraits of Freud – could be referred to as “somewhere in the middle.” There are, however, portraits of his that fit the modernist idiom of stylistic experimentation,⁴⁹ as well as those that follow the mimetic conventions of the genre.⁵⁰

At the time of Nemon's stay in Brussels, the dominant part of portrait sculpture in Belgium was traditional portraiture conceived in mimetic terms, ranging from academic realism to Rodinism. Nemon stood out from the traditionally oriented Belgian portrait sculptors in that he nurtured the continuity of modernity of mild reduction, moderate stylization of forms, avoidance of descriptiveness, and a free way of modelling the surface – whose source was the sculpture of Auguste Rodin. Nemon's understanding of portrait sculpture, furthermore, was largely shaped by his appreciation of Charles Despiau⁵¹ and Aristide Maillol,⁵² and their approach to simplification and summarization of form. Nemon thus brought the relation between tradition and modernity to a carefully balanced ratio; portrait sculpture in his oeuvre was a reinvented and modernized genre. Modernist portrait sculpture in Belgium emerged largely under the influence of Cubism and Art Deco. Cubism, however, also influenced the portrait realists, who introduced, albeit very discreetly, the language of sharp edges and flat surfaces into their design. Nemon also made portraits in this style – some in a discreet and others in a clear-cut geometric stylization.⁵³

To what extent did Nemon's portrait follow “clear Rodinian characteristics,”⁵⁴ which was reportedly how he experienced the face of Sigmund Freud when he first saw him in person? The facial musculature reveals soft modelling and smooth flow of surfaces that melt into each other; broken masses and sharp edges appear in only three places (which are, at the same time, the only places with facial expression): in the “ornamented” detail of the frowning forehead with deep wrinkles, at the place where the eyebrows draw near each other (the depiction of hard, angular clefts and furrows cut

into the skin by the contracted eyebrow muscles is on the verge of stylization); then, in paired wrinkles extending parallel along the face from the nose to the corners of the lips; and finally, in the detail of the circular frame of the spectacles.

The motif of the eyeglasses is a very specific portrait detail, and a very demanding one in sculptural design. Many sculptors try to avoid it,⁵⁵ or they take it too literally, making a detailed but unnecessary, intrusive addition that may ruin a portrait. Making eyeglasses in sculptural design without disturbing the mimetic integrity of the portrait sculpture is no easy task. Nemon masterfully solved this problem, so that the spectacles became an integral part of the portrait and an important attribute of his subject's personality. In his 1931 Freud portrait, the eyeglasses look unobtrusive and natural, as if fused with the face. The procedure that Nemon intuitively applied here is in line with the “closing principle” in Gestalt psychology: the full circular shape of the spectacles is completed by the observer's perception. Their partial display, in accordance with the reduction procedure, also appears transparent like glass. This “deception of the eye,” in which Nemon specialized, became a distinctively masterful leitmotif that appeared in several of his portraits.⁵⁶

Depicting eyes is one of the key mimetic elements in portrait art; it is the detail that “revives” the portrait and gives expression to it, providing insight to the psyche of the person being portrayed – because the eyes are “windows of the soul” and “the lamp of the body.” The eyes, therefore, are an essential portrait detail, through which communication is established between the portrait and the one who observes it. Nemon portrayed Freud's eyes in the “negative”, nevertheless managing to accentuate them as the most suggestive detail of his face: the eyes, with no pupils indicated, are deeply shaded, almost resembling eye sockets. The confrontational gaze is directed straight at the observer, but also hidden in the shadow. Freud's veiled eyes watch us through the oculus of the spectacle frame, just as we gaze through them into the darkened interior of the famous model, who revealed the curtained side of the human mind by exploring the subconscious.

Can the psyche of the famous archaeologist of the mind be read from what we see? In other words, did Nemon's sculpture succeed in what we call a “psychological portrait”?⁵⁷ The 1931 portrait is not a mere mask, but a representation of an intelligent, refined face, which judges us resignedly. But warmth and impression of intimacy are lacking – the face that Nemon perceived as “tender, soft-boned and lively”⁵⁸ is portrayed as serious and restrained; it doesn't directly manifest thoughts and feelings. The portrayed physiognomy is strong and solid, almost idealized in its distant mental superiority, but it is also a face that stoically endures the act of making a portrait, as if it were a surgical procedure. In contrast to Freud's own (possibly ironic) commentary on the sculpture's “vivacious and friendly expression,” it is possible to interpret this portrait as fluctuating between intellectual rigour, suspicion, and resignation. Within this register, Freud's expression also hints at indifference, apathy, and reconciliation with the inevitable, reflecting the subtlety and complexity of Nemon's portraiture, from the earliest days of his public recognition.

Along with the eyes, the mouth is another striking detail that articulates the plasticity of the sculpted head and adds expression to the face. A deep gap in the closed mass of the lower part of the head, like a broken hollow with edges slightly bent downwards – this is a mouth that could start talking. Description and detailing of Freud's beard and hair have been avoided, showing the extent to which secondary details were merely summarized. Nemon's 1931 portrait of Sigmund Freud, therefore, whether in wood, bronze, or cast stone, is an accomplished piece of portrait sculpture, which justifiably drew attention to Nemon's talent at that point in his career.

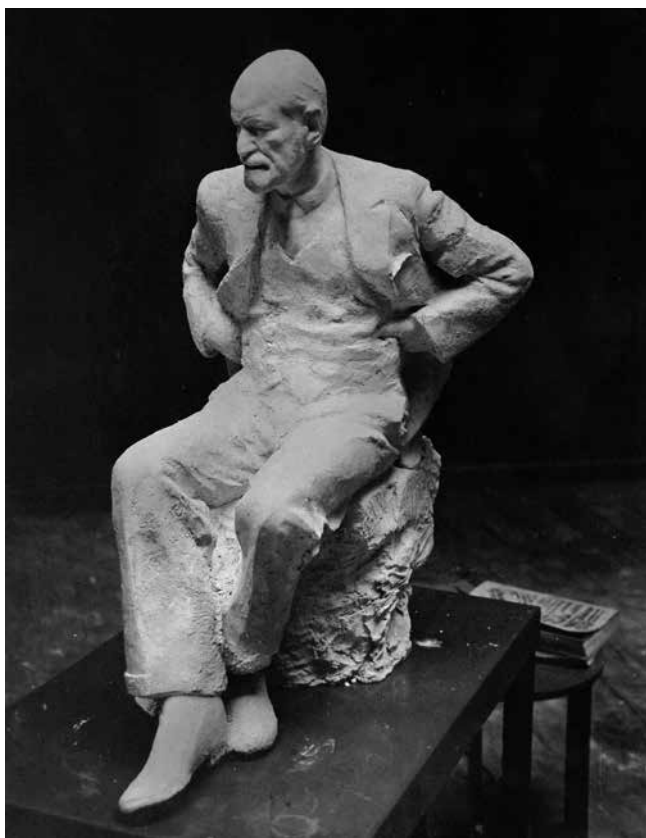
Second encounter, 1936

At the end of 1935, Oscar Nemon planned to re-portray Sigmund Freud to mark his 80th birthday in May 1936. This portrait would be conceptually, typologically, and stylistically different to the first. Writing to his close friend and patron Simonne Hottet Dear on December 20, 1935, Nemon commented that Freud had agreed to several portrait sessions in early January of the following year. The sculpture he envisioned would be “a small statuette, and it is precisely this that he intends to give to Freud, if it turns out flawless.”⁵⁹

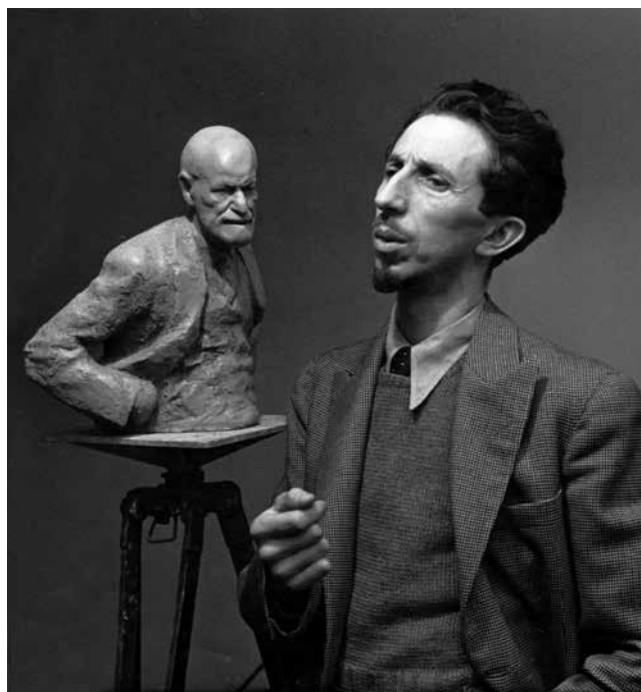
The sessions actually began in early February 1936, at Freud's famous address at 19 Berggasse in Vienna. Freud

wrote in his *Kürzeste Chronik*: “Di(enstag) 21/1 1936 Nemon & Königsberger”,⁶⁰ and on February 1: “Sa(mstag) 1/2 Eine Woche Nemon”.⁶¹ In those weeks, Nemon made a full-figure portrait, in a sitting position, which became the prototype for later enlargements and variants in various degrees of reduction. Freud posed for Nemon over 12 sessions; at first reluctantly and in a bad mood, wondering if all that was necessary. But gradually he became interested in the sculptor's work.⁶² Shortly after the portrait sessions, Paul Federn wrote to Nemon: “Freud spoke of you and your work with much praise and warmth; he believes in your greatness as an artist.”⁶³

The portrait was once again commissioned by Freud's students and associates, who intended to give it to Freud for his 80th birthday.⁶⁴ A Belgian newspaper article from 1936 confirms this, stating that, “The statue of the famous Austrian scientist, the work of the Belgian sculptor O. Nemon, was purchased with the help of an international foundation and will be housed in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society on the occasion of Professor Freud's 80th birthday.”⁶⁵ The location of the original sculpture is unknown,⁶⁶ it is known to us only through photographs. Its small dimensions were suitable for a gift, something that Freud could keep on his desk. The height was probably 23 centimetres as this is the size of numerous castings in plaster and bronze which were made later.



5. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, 1936. Plaster model. © Estate of Oscar Nemon © Freud Museum, London. Photo: Keystone View Company, Bruxelles, 1936 (Freud Museum, London)
Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, 1931., gips, London, Freud Museum



6. Oscar Nemon with his bust of Sigmund Freud, 1936. © Estate of Oscar Nemon. Photo: Otto Salomon (Oscar Nemon Studio Archive)
Oscar Nemon s bistom Sigmunda Freuda, 1936.

In addition to the small birthday statuette, around 1936 Nemon made Freud's half life-size half-length portrait (Fig. 6),⁶⁷ a reduced bust (Fig. 7)⁶⁸ and a full-length seated figure, also half life-size (Fig. 5), which was installed at the



7. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, c 1936. Terracotta, 21.7 × 15 × 15 cm. Boar's Hill, Oxford: Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive. © Estate of Oscar Nemon (photo: Daniel Zec, 2018)

Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, oko 1936., terakota, Boar's Hill, Oxford, Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive

Psychoanalytic Institute in New York in 1947. Based on the 1936 portrait sessions, Nemon also made a superb portrait head of Sigmund Freud, which will be discussed later in this paper. The seated portrait was later enlarged, cast in bronze and erected in 1970 as a public monument in London, near the house where Freud spent the last years of his life. Nemon also made a medal, which was reportedly given to Freud on his 80th birthday in 1936.⁶⁹

Oscar Nemon was not the only sculptor to portray Sigmund Freud in 1936, nor was he the last. In 1936, Willy Lévy (Peter Lambda) made a plaque,⁷⁰ and in 1938, a life-size bust of Freud, now housed in the Sigmund Freud Museum in Vienna. Willy Lévy visited Freud in London in 1938.⁷¹ Perhaps it was then that he became the last sculptor to portray Freud from life.

Portrait of Sigmund Freud, seated figure, 1936

Nemon's 1936 portrait of Freud (Figs. 5, 9, 10, 11) has little in common with his first. This time, he conceived a completely different type of portrait sculpture: a full-length figure in a

sitting position, and he responded to this demanding compositional task with an inventive solution, uniting rest and movement. He prevented the sitting posture from seeming too static by articulating the lower and especially the upper part of the body by positioning the arms (elbows) and legs (knees) so as to penetrate the space in different directions. Through the use of diagonal compositional axes, the sculpture becomes dynamic. This is achieved by an ingenious combination of a specific Freudian standing posture – with the arms propped on the hips, the pelvis protruding forward – with a sitting position. The head is slightly tilted forward and the knees are bent, with elbows on opposite sides of the knees. Along with the upper body posture, the angled knees suggest movement, so the whole body appears to be preparing to stand up. With balanced movements and weight distribution, the composition forms a re-invention of the *contrapposto* of a seated figure.

Freud's characteristic standing posture is immortalized in photographs and film footage, including a photograph taken in July 1931 in the garden of his summer residence in Pötzleinsdorf: the photograph shows him inspecting his newly completed portrait, shown to him by his portraitist.⁷² In another 1931 photograph, which shows Freud sitting while Nemon portrays him, Freud has his legs crossed, with his left thigh resting on the knee of his right leg. The same sitting pose with crossed legs has been recorded in numerous other photographs.⁷³ In his sculpture, however, Nemon presents the seated Freud in a completely different way – with his knees apart, his left lower leg bent and pulled back, and the right slightly protruding forward, with his right foot placed directly in front of the left. Nemon combines this position with Freud's very characteristic standing posture – his arms high above his hips, his elbows protruding backwards and to the side. However, Freud did not actually sit like that. In his later years, he usually sat leaning back in a chair, slanting heavily on his back and, in his characteristic way, reclining comfortably in a backrest – as, for example, he was portrayed in 1936 by the Viennese painter Wilhelm Krausz.⁷⁴ Nemon considered depicting Sigmund Freud in this way, as evidenced by an interesting collage of two photographs from that time – one shows Freud sitting leaning on a chair and posing for Nemon, who is right next to him, with a pencil and a drawing pad in his hands. The second photograph shows Nemon's unfinished sculpture of a seated Freud in clay, as a mirror image of a scene captured during a portrait session (Fig. 8).⁷⁵

Nemon's seated portrait – an assertive, penetrating, and energetic pose in which there is strength and mobility – is in fact Nemon's own invention, re-composition, and idealization, which does not document the authentic state and appearance of the model, but represents the idea of him; it does that through the composition and form (although not the scale) of the sculptural monument. Nemon's 1936 sculpture is certainly thought of as a monument to Sigmund Freud and his work. But it "grew into" a monument gradually, from a small "statuette", as its author called it, through a half-life figure intended for the interior of a public institution, to the



8. Nemon's unfinished sculpture of a seated Freud in clay and plaster, as a mirror image of a scene captured during a portrait session, photo-collage. c 1936. © Estate of Oscar Nemon © Freud Museum, London. (Freud Museum, London)

Nemonova nedovršena skulptura sjedećeg Freuda u glini i gipsu, kao zrcalni odraz prizora koji je zabilježen tijekom portretne sesije, fotokolaž, oko 1936., London, Freud Museum

final statue cast in the desired size and erected as a public monument in urban space.

Freud's head was also modelled in a completely different way from the 1931 portrait. Moving away from his first take, Nemon omitted descriptive elements, such as the details of the spectacles, and placed an emphasis on the facial expression instead (Fig. 7).

Monument to Sigmund Freud, Institute of Psychoanalysis, New York, 1947

The statuette given to Freud for his 80th birthday was conceived by Nemon on a larger scale, and as early as 1936 it was enlarged to half its natural size. The opportunity for a public installation of the portrait first appeared in 1947, when Nemon made a cast for the Psychoanalytic Society and the Institute of Psychoanalysis in New York.⁷⁶ The sculpture was donated to the New York institution by an anonymous donor from Belgium, as a sign of "deep gratitude to the United States of America and to Sigmund Freud."⁷⁷ It was placed in the lobby of the Institute and unveiled on November 12, 1947.⁷⁸ Paul Federn gave a speech at the unveiling,⁷⁹ and the event was covered by an article in the *New York Times*.⁸⁰

The pedestal of the New York sculpture, also designed by Nemon,⁸¹ is inscribed with verses in Greek from Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex*: "Who resolved the dark enigmas and was a man most mighty" – the same verse that was engraved on the medal given to Freud for his 50th birthday in 1906.⁸²

Sigmund Freud Monument, London, 1970

Nemon's full-length portrait of Freud finally reached the size and the status of a public monument in 1970,⁸³ thanks to the efforts of Donald Winnicott, one of Britain's leading psychoanalysts. The bronze cast was commissioned by the British Psychoanalytic Society, at a cost of £10,000.⁸⁴ It was set in Hampstead, London, next to Swiss Cottage Library, not far from the house on Maresfield Gardens where Freud spent the last 15 months of his life after emigrating from Vienna. This monument to Sigmund Freud was unveiled on October 2, 1970. At the unveiling ceremony, which according to a newspaper report was attended by about 200 people, Freud's daughter Ana gave a speech.⁸⁵ In 1998, the sculpture was moved to its present location at the corner of Fitzjohn Avenue and Belsize Lane, a site even closer to Freud's former London home, where the Sigmund Freud Museum is now located.⁸⁶ The new location is certainly more suitable for a monument, which is raised on an elevated triangular site amid grass and trees, flanked by two busy streets. At this position, it fits in well with the surrounding space, revealing itself from several key angles (Figs. 9, 11).

While making an enlargement of his sculpture to exhibit in a public space (Fig. 10),⁸⁷ Nemon also made one very important modification. Compared with the original 1936 model, the upper part of Freud's body is now leaning forward even further, thus making the contrapposto of the figure in the position between sitting and standing even more pronounced, and the whole sculpture more dynamic. It looks imposing, worthy of the character it represents – just as Paul Federn described Freud: "He was the strongest character I



9. Oscar Nemon, *Sigmund Freud Monument*, 1970. Bronze, 180 × 110 × 152 cm. London: Hampstead. © Estate of Oscar Nemon (photo: Daniel Zec, 2012)

Oscar Nemon, Spomenik Sigmundu Freudu, 1970., bronca, 180 × 110 × 152 cm, London – Hampstead



10. Oscar Nemon with the clay model of Sigmund Freud Monument, c 1969. © Estate of Oscar Nemon. Photo: Falcon Nemon Stuart (Oscar Nemon Studio Archive)

Oscar Nemon uz glineni model Spomenika Sigmundu Freudu, oko 1969.

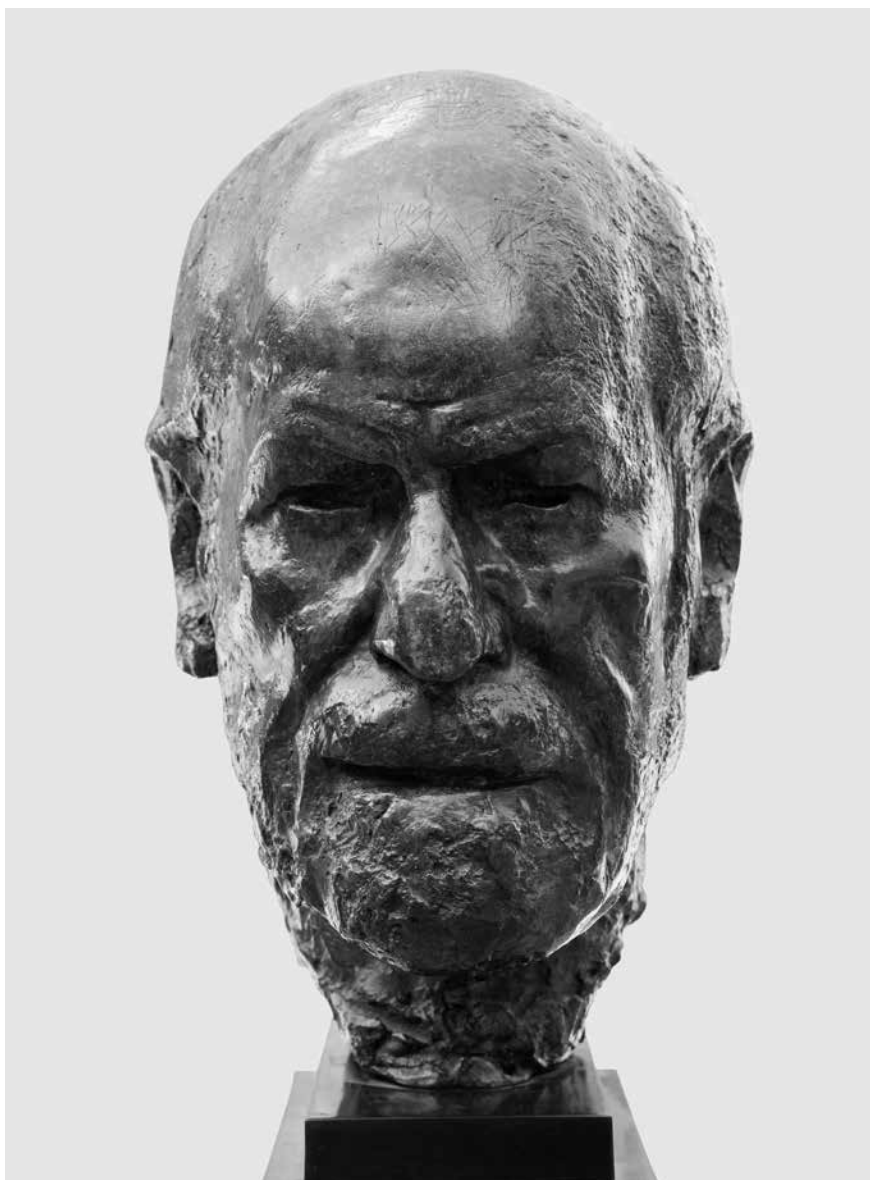
ever met. One must think of Galileo, Cromwell, Zola, Jefferson, Lincoln, to find his equal.”⁸⁸ Monumental strength and expressiveness is achieved by a carefully thought-out composition, through which the observer’s eye is guided, directed, and focused on the head of the figure, which addresses us from a height provided by a cubic pedestal of white limestone, “in Nemon’s hallmark pose of heroic mental confrontation, arranged to suit Freud and highlighting his intellectual activity.”⁸⁹

After the monument was erected in London, an initiative arose in 1972 to erect an identical one in Vienna. An international *Sigmund Freud Memorial Committee* was established, which included “prominent psychoanalysts, poets, writers and artists.”⁹⁰ The idea, which was not realized at the time, was revived in 2017, and the following year a second cast of the Sigmund Freud Monument was erected in Vienna,⁹¹ in the courtyard of the Vienna Medical School. It was unveiled on June 4, 2018, on the 80th anniversary of Freud’s exile from Vienna in 1938.

11. Oscar Nemon, *Sigmund Freud Monument*, 1970. Bronze, 180 × 110 × 152 cm. London: Hampstead. © Estate of Oscar Nemon (photo: Daniel Zec, 2012)

Oscar Nemon, Spomenik Sigmundu Freudu, 1970., bronca, 180 × 110 × 152 cm, London – Hampstead





12. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, c 1936–1947. Bronze, 40 × 26 × 30 cm. Boar's Hill, Oxford: Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive. © Estate of Oscar Nemon (photo: Daniel Zec, 2018)

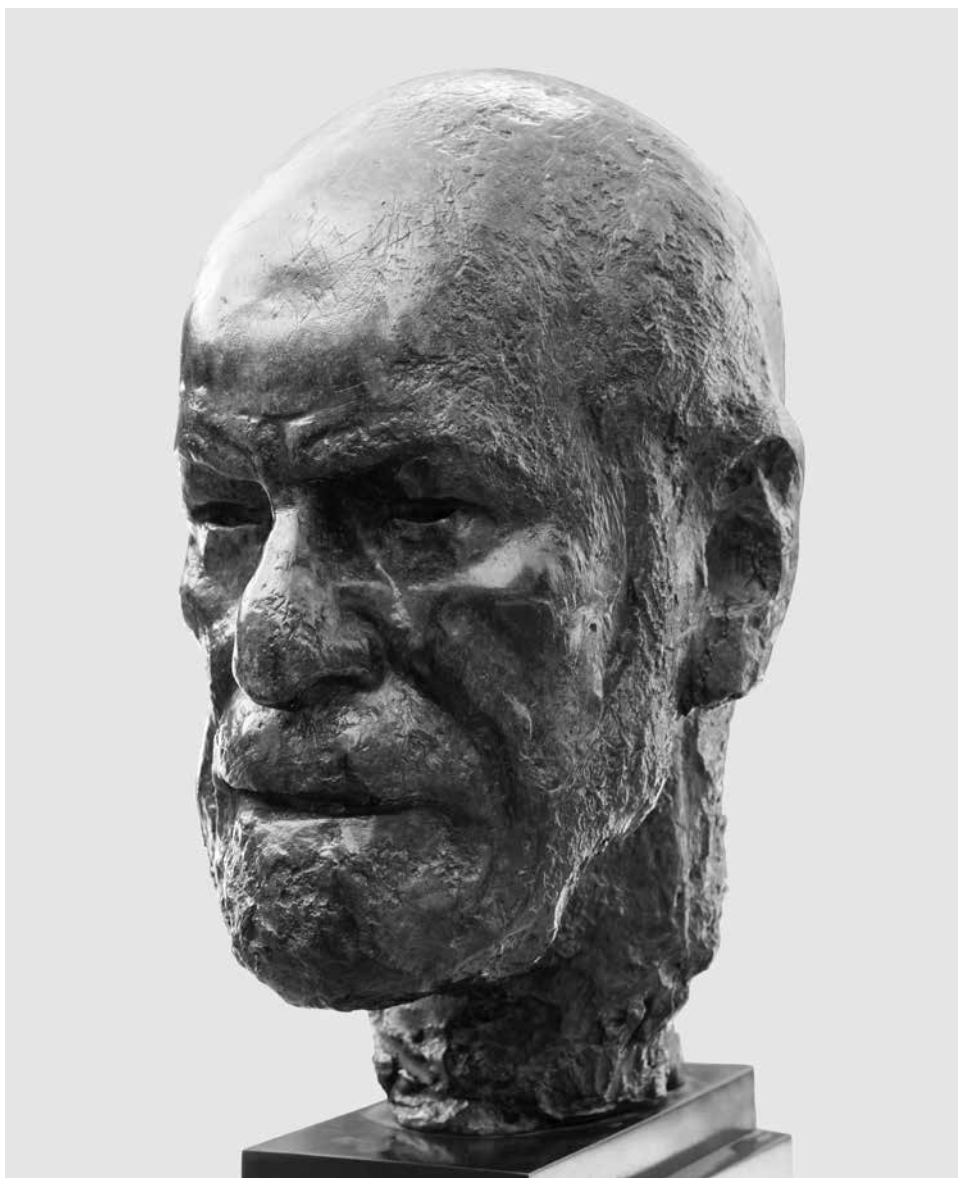
Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, oko 1936. – 1947., bronca, 40 × 26 × 30 cm, Boar's Hill, Oxford, Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive

Portrait head of Sigmund Freud, c. 1936–1947

This portrait of Sigmund Freud, sculpted as a portrait head without a bust, is comparable to the head in the portrait of a full sitting figure from 1936: the two are alike except for the approach to detail, especially in the expressive treatment of the surface. This is the difference between a portrait intended for close-up observation and a monumental sculpture in full figure, intended for viewing from a distance. This time, Nemon reached for significant formal changes to emphasize psychological characterization. He changed his approach to a description of his model (there is no longer any trace of

idealization) and introduced two key morphological shifts: one is the change of proportions, and the other is the treatment of the sculptural surface.

The terracotta piece in which this portrait is preserved was only a transitional substance in which Nemon's work resided, in the stage of hibernation, until its completion in bronze. When transformed into metal, it revealed its full expressive power. Therefore, this bronze casting should be used when analysing and reading this sculpture: it is characterized by a particularly expressive surface, receptive to the effects of light that transforms this work into an entirely new sculptural



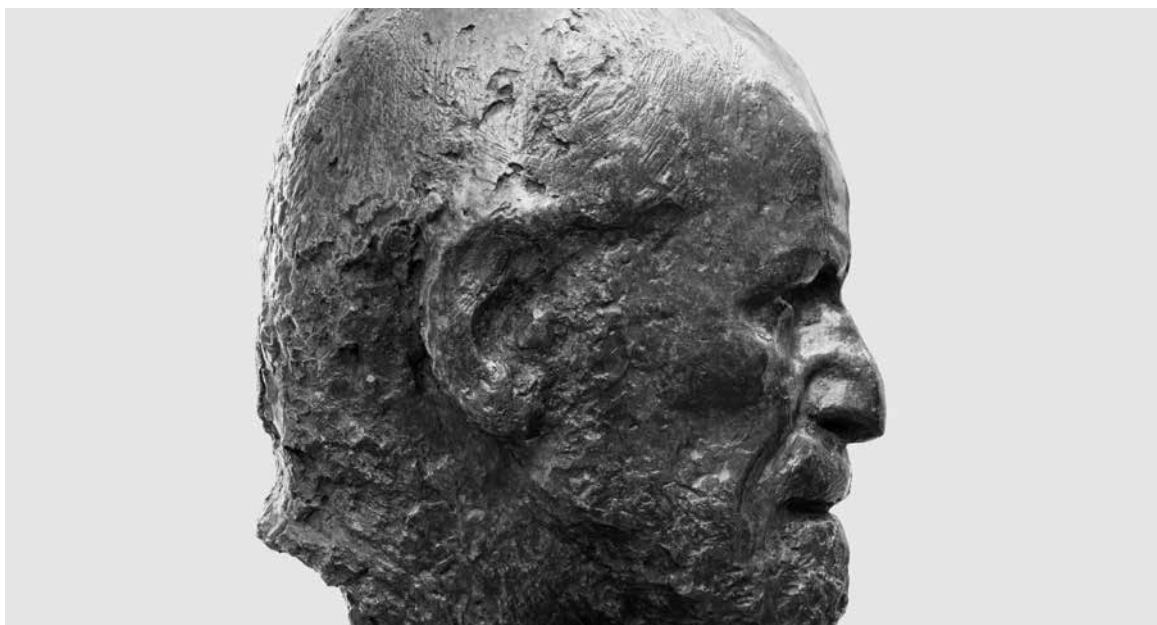
13. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, c 1936–1947. Bronze, 40 × 26 × 30 cm. Boar's Hill, Oxford: Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive. © Estate of Oscar Nemon (photo: Daniel Zec, 2018)
Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, oko 1936. – 1947., bronca, 40 × 26 × 30 cm, Boar's Hill, Oxford, Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive

entity. Uneven and rough, wounded by small furrows and lines and crumpled parts alternating with smooth facets, this surface speaks suggestively for itself, emphasizing the facial expression and depiction of psychological state of the model even further (Figs. 12–14).⁹²

Compared with the first portrait, the proportions of the head and the face have now changed – the skull and face are elongated, and the large, ovoid skullcap now contrasts more markedly with the face. The sculptural modelling does not alleviate the degradation of the elderly epidermis and weakened facial muscles: the eyes are sunken and the edges of the eye sockets are clearly delineated, the nose is narrower and beaked, and the cheekbones are strikingly pronounced, emphasizing the sunken cheeks. The edges, where the sur-

faces of the front of the face meet, form arabesque lines that frame the face in a wave, flowing from the frontal ridge of the temporal bone over the edges of the eye sockets, towards the cheekbones and down towards the cheek grooves along the mouth, meeting in the chin oval. The opening of the mouth allows only an anxious sigh or exhalation, and the narrowed eyes without the indicated pupils, the frowning eyebrows, and the forehead of the focused face all show inner tension.

Nemon has here re-created and redesigned Freud's face by elongating its proportions and dramatically processing the sculpture's surface, giving it an expressive quality. Freud's dolichocephalic skull, however, is not just Nemon's clever solution aimed at achieving an associative depiction of the portrayed person. The elongated proportions correspond to



14. Oscar Nemon, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, c 1936–1947 (detail). Bronze, 40 × 26 × 30 cm. Boar's Hill, Oxford: Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive. © Estate of Oscar Nemon (photo: Daniel Zec, 2018)

Oscar Nemon, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, oko 1936. – 1947., bronca, 40 × 26 × 30 cm, Boar's Hill, Oxford: Oscar Nemon Studio Museum and Archive

what he saw – Freud was now older and weaker, his body was in the final stages of a malignant disease, and he had lost much of his weight, which is noticeable in the changed volume of the head. But more than informing about his age or health, this portrait communicates Freud's "presence" – Nemon captured the essential truth of his personality, his character and nature, touching on who Freud really was, regardless of his age and physical state. The element of idealization, present in the earlier portrait, had disappeared. Or so it seems – in this portrait we can read the "heroic resignation" recognized in Freud at that time by his follower Marie Bonaparte.⁹³

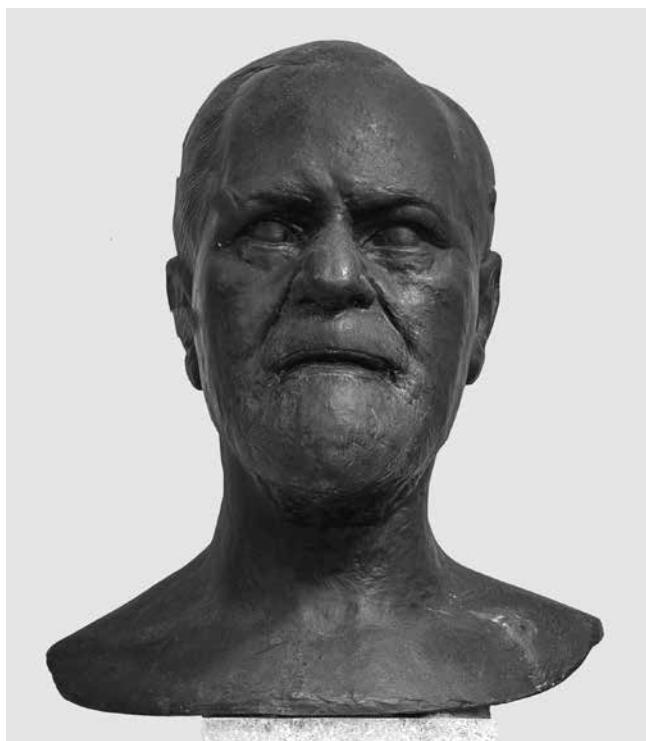
The motif of the spectacles, the iconographic attribute of erudition that describes the Freud-professor and the Freud-intellectual, has been abolished – Freud no longer "hides" behind the impersonal disguise of science, as in the first portrait. Before Nemon and before us now appears the Freud-man, even more suspicious and even more sceptical. The expression of his personality, character, and inner state is much more pronounced. If the first portrait was a "mask" of a psychoanalyst, shaped by the sculptor's impression and awe of his model, the second portrait was deepened by repeated portrait sessions and contacts between the artist and the model, who had become closer. The psychological characterization present in the first portrait is now even more emphasized by the examination of Freud's state of mind, which the artist carried out this time without restraint.

The face, as seen and portrayed by Nemon, is also a reflection of Freud's health and psychological condition. In a letter to Stefan Zweig, sent shortly after his 80th birthday, Freud writes that he "cannot quite get used to the pitifulness and helplessness

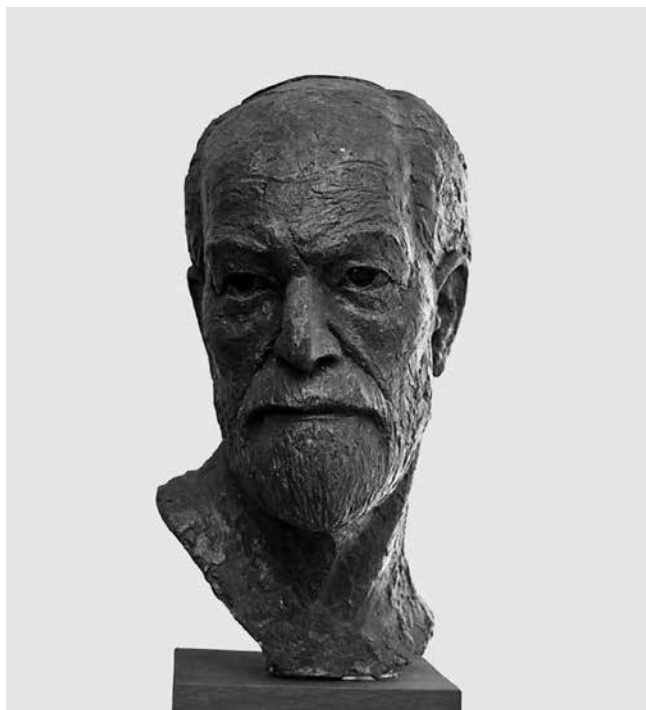
of old age, viewing the passage into non-existence with a kind of longing."⁹⁴ Freud was then living out his last years, beyond the time doctors had expected him to survive. Two weeks before the sessions for Nemon's second portrait began, he underwent a very painful operation in which a rather large tumour was removed.⁹⁵ It was the first of several surgeries that year. Yet this Freud of Nemon is not the weakened, helpless old man we see in photographs and short films from Freud's last years, or the distorted form drawn by Salvador Dalí, claiming that Freud's skull in a surrealist sense reminded him of a snail.⁹⁶ As he posed for Nemon, Freud asked him if he would show the two sides of his face differently. Nemon, who thought he was portraying a person's character and not the details of his face, replied that he did not see the difference.⁹⁷

A very good analysis of this portrait of Sigmund Freud was made by Đurđa Petravić Klaić, writing on the occasion of the donation of the sculpture to the Modern Gallery in Zagreb.⁹⁸ The author presents a thesis on the "double portrait of Freud-Nemon, which reflects both the sculptor and his model," finding that Nemon's portrayal should be interpreted as a psychoanalytic process – "interpretation-psychoanalysis of Freud as a subject in light of key metaphors of S. Freud, but also of Lacan's concept *stade du miroir*."⁹⁹ Klaić emphasizes the revelation of Freud's suffering and pain as the portrait's primary layer. However, more than a picture of Freud's physical or mental anguish, Nemon's portrait of Sigmund Freud is something else: a representation of heroic resignation, supplemented with cynicism.

A testimony of how significant the influence of psychoanalysis was in Nemon's approach to portrayal comes from Nemon's wife, Patricia Villiers-Stuart: "His early encounters with Freud as one of his sitters had a profound effect upon



15. Paul David Königsberger, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, 1920. Bronze. Photo: © Hubertl / Wikimedia Commons / CC BY-SA 4.0
Paul David Königsberger, Portret Sigmunda Freuda, 1920., bronca



16. Willy Lévy (Peter Lambda), *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, 1938. Plaster and paint, h. 44 cm, inv. nr. B-2158–G. Freud Museum, Vienna. Photo: Universität Wien, Monuments das Wiki zu den Denkmälern der Universität Wien, https://monuments.univie.ac.at/index.php?title=Datei:Denkmal_Sigmund_Freud_760.jpg
Willy Lévy (Peter Lambda), Portret Sigmunda Freuda, 1938., obojeni gips, v. 44 cm, Freud Museum, Beč

him, helping him to see through to the core of people's natures.⁷¹⁰⁰ Nemon thought the same.¹⁰¹

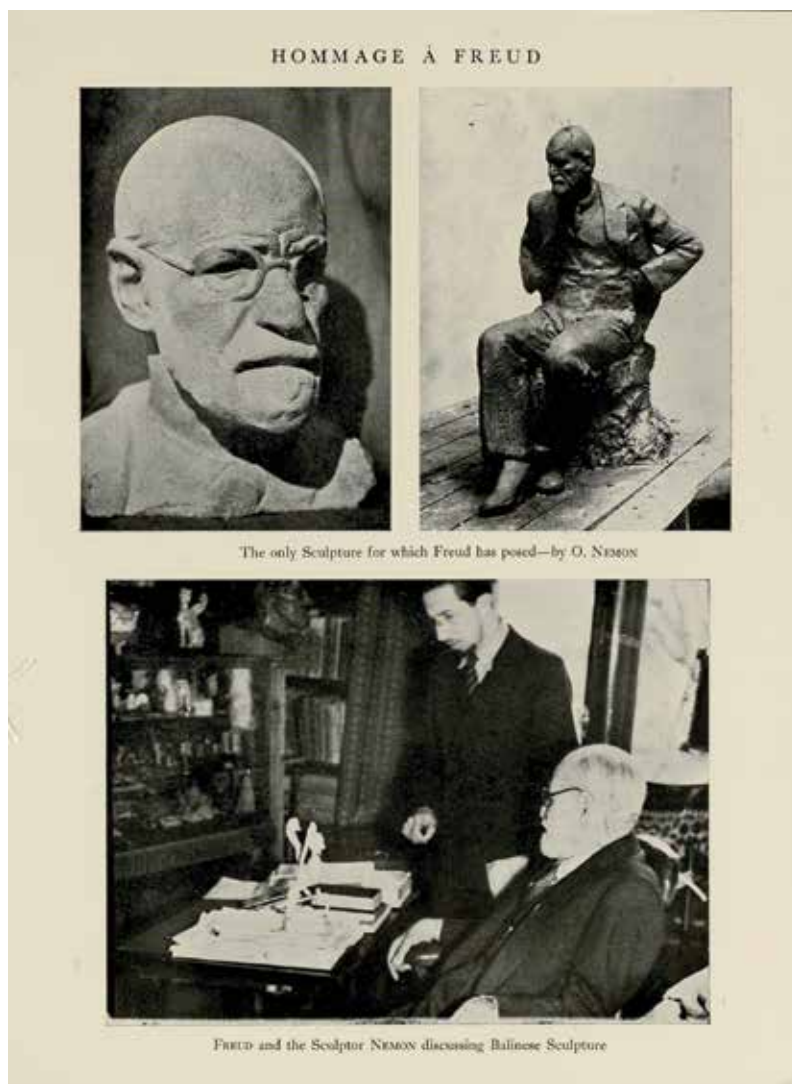
The exact date of this sculpture's creation is not known. Here I propose a wider time span, between the portrait sessions of 1936 and 1947, when a seated portrait of Freud was cast in bronze for the Institute of Psychoanalysis in New York. However, it is possible that the portrait was created even later. Significantly, this portrait head of Freud does not appear in newspapers, unlike the bust from 1931 and the full-length figure from 1936. It is even more unusual that it was not recorded by photographs, as Nemon very meticulously documented his works, especially the more important ones. It is also indicative that it has been preserved only as a terracotta model, from which no bronze castings were made at the time the work was created. It is possible that Nemon designed this head as a study for a full-figure statue. What is certain is that, regardless of the question of dating, this exquisite portrait is one of Nemon's best and most impressive portrait sculptures.

Portraits of Freud by the other sculptors – Lambda's (Fig. 16), and Königsberger's (Fig. 15) – were both executed in the typological form of a reduced bust (Lambda's is more inventive because of the diagonally truncated bust and the head rotated toward the shoulder). Both sculptors depicted a bare bust and neck, and both omitted a sculpturally demanding detail of the spectacles. Lambda presented the older Freud, and his portrait is rougher and more expressive. Both busts, deprived of clothing, suggest the concept of heroic nudity, so it could be said that they stand in the line of classical monuments. Yet these portraits are far from so-called academic realism. Ultimately, the differences between Nemon's portraits of Freud and the portraits of Freud by the other two sculptors are evident: Nemon's striking, expressive and powerful works surpass them by far.

Concluding remarks

Oscar Nemon's portraits of Freud were key to his recognition and well-deserved reputation as a portrait sculptor. Articles in newspapers, magazines, and other publications where Nemon's portraits were reproduced and discussed helped publicize the works, along with the exhibitions where Nemon showed his portraits of Freud. Among the numerous press releases, notices, and articles in newspapers, magazines, and other publications, a piece from the *London Bulletin* in 1938 stands out,¹⁰² with reproductions of photographs of Nemon's portrait sculptures of Sigmund Freud – a bust from 1931 and a sitting figure from 1936 – with a comment: "The only sculpture for which Freud has posed – by O. Nemon" (Fig. 17).¹⁰³ The *London Bulletin* was an avant-garde magazine focused on modern fine art and poetry, edited by E.L.T. Mesens, and published in London from April 1938 to June 1940. Although, as the title explicitly states, the magazine page was dedicated to Sigmund Freud rather than the one who made his portrait, the very inclusion of Nemon's works is significant.¹⁰⁴

Although Nemon's portrait sculpture spanned through a variety of idioms in terms of style and form – as evidenced by his 1931 and 1936 portraits of Freud – in general it was



17. 'Hommage a Freud', *London Bulletin*, ed. E.L.T. Mesens, The London Gallery Ltd, 4–5: July 1938, p. 23.

'Hommage a Freud', *stranica časopisa London Bulletin*, 1938.

directed towards the type of modernity characterized by "mild reduction and moderate stylization of forms." He did not sacrifice the principle of resemblance in favour of achieving greater expressiveness or a systematic reduction of the sculptural form. After his post-cubist portraits of Art Deco syntax in Brussels,¹⁰⁵ Nemon never again radicalized the language or reached for thorough stylization and reshaping the human face, nor did he carry out the level of expressiveness he achieved in the portrait heads of Freud from 1936–1947. Nemon's portraits and statues of Sigmund Freud are exceptional examples of portrait sculpture, and the head of Freud (dated 1936–1947) is one of the most exquisite and most impressive portrait sculptures in Nemon's oeuvre.

Through the recent inclusion of his portrait of Sigmund Freud in the National Museum of Modern Art in Zagreb, Nemon's sculpture has been integrated within the narrative of Croatia's twentieth-century cultural history.¹⁰⁶ He remains, however, relatively unrecognized in Britain, where he lived from 1938 until his death in 1985 and created a considerable part of his work. To date, Nemon's portraits of Freud are displayed in the Freud Museum in Hampstead, and the Nemon Studio Museum and Archive at Boars Hill near Oxford.¹⁰⁷ It is to be hoped that, with the increasing recognition of the contributions made by émigré artists to Britain's cultural heritage, Nemon will come to be counted among them.

Notes

- 1 Oscar Nemon (Osijek, 1906 – Oxford, 1985), a sculptor born in Osijek, Croatia, made most of his sculptural work during his stays in Brussels (1925–1936) and in the United Kingdom (1936–1985), primarily as a portrait sculptor. He portrayed from life some of the most significant historical figures of the 20th century, and is best known for his portraits and monuments of Sigmund Freud and Winston Churchill. See in: AURELIA YOUNG – JULIAN HALE, *Finding Nemon, The Extraordinary Life of the Outsider Who Sculpted the Famous*, London – Chicago, Peter Owen, 2018; DANIEL ZEC (ed.), *Oscar Nemon: memoari, eseji, osvrti i zapisi* [Oscar Nemon: Memoires, essays, reviews, notes], Osijek, Muzej likovnih umjetnosti, 2016.
This paper is a revised version of the chapter with the same title in the doctoral dissertation: Daniel Zec, *Život i djelo kipara Oscara Nemona* [Life and Work of Oscar Nemon, Sculptor], PhD Diss., Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 2020.
- 2 PAUL FEDERN, 'Notes', *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 16: 4 (1947), 595–597.
- 3 HEINRICH MENG, 'Freud and the Sculptor', in: Hendrik Marinus Ruitenbeek (ed.), *Freud as We Knew Him*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1973, 350, 351. Meng's text was originally published in: *Zeitschrift für Psychologie und ihre Anwendungen*, 15 (1956), 149–151.
- 4 MICHAEL MOLNAR (ed.), *The Diary of Sigmund Freud 1929–1939, A Record of the Final Decade*, London, The Freud Museum, 1992, 101, 197, 282.
- 5 AURELIA YOUNG – JULIAN HALE (note 1), 61–66.
- 6 OSCAR NEMON, *Sigmund Freud*, typewritten manuscript, Freud Museum, London; OSCAR NEMON, 'Sigmund Freud', in: Daniel Zec (ed.), *Oscar Nemon: memoari, eseji, osvrti i zapisi*, Osijek, Museum of Fine Arts, 2016, 71–83.
- 7 OSCAR NEMON, *Vienna*, typewritten manuscript, Oscar Nemon Estate, Oscar Nemon Studio Archive, Pleasant Land, Boar's Hill; OSCAR NEMON (note 6), 71–83.
- 8 'Homage a Freud', *London Bulletin*, ed. E.L.T. Mesens, The London Gallery Ltd, No. 4–5, July 1938, 23; JOHN BLACKWOOD, *London's Immortals: The Complete Outdoor Commemorative Statues*, London, Savoy Press, 1989, 168–169, 168; JAMES R. LANCASTER, "'I Knew Sir Winston Well": Churchill and Oscar Nemon', *Finest Hour, The Journal of Winston Churchill*, 137 (2007–2008), 15.
Recollecting his encounters with Freud in his memoirs, Oscar Nemon states that Freud refused to pose for a sculptural portrait, alluding that he was the only one who made Freud's portrait in sculpture. OSCAR NEMON (note 6), 71, 73.
- 9 PETER CANNON-BROOKES, 'Oscar Nemon: The years in Osijek, Vienna, and Brussels', in: *Face 2002: the 39th exhibition*, London, The Society of Portrait Sculptors, 2002, 16; ĐURĐA PETRAVIĆ KLAČIĆ, 'Oscar Nemon – posljednji portret Sigmunda Freuda' [Oscar Nemon: The last portrait of Sigmund Freud], *Informatica museologica*, 38: 3–4 (2007), 171.
- 10 František Juraň made a relief bust for a memorial plaque to be placed in the house in Příbor where Freud was born, which was unveiled in October of that year. See: MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 100; 110.
- 11 ERNST JONES, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 3, New York, Basic Books, 1957, 25; ULRIKE MAY, 'Fundstücke zur Freud-Biographik in der Exilpresse', *Luzifer-Amor*, 19/38 (2006), 140–148; ERNST FALZEDER – EVA BRABANT (eds.), *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi*, V. 3, 1920–1933, Cambridge – London, Belknap Press, 2000, 32.
- 12 PIERO RISMONDO, 'Freud als Modell', *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, Vienna, August 5, 1931, newspaper clipping. The Henry Moore Institute Archive, Papers of Oscar Nemon, Collection Reference: 2004.21 (further on: HMIA, PON, 2004.21), Box 4, Scrapbooks.
- 13 PIERO RISMONDO (note 12); 'Freud-Privat', *Neues Wiener Journal*, No. 15257, Vienna, May 10, 1936, 8.
- 14 K.R. EISSLER, Interview with Annie Urbach-Federn, December 6, 1952, typewritten, p. 19, Archive of Wiener psychoanalytische Vereinigung, Vienna, no designation of the archival fund.
- 15 PAUL FEDERN (note 2), 595.
- 16 MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 96.
- 17 PAUL FEDERN (note 2), 595.
- 18 Sigmund Freud, 'Kürzeste Chronik', in: MICHAEL MOLNAR, *The Diary of Sigmund Freud*, XI; 11. Oscar Nemon changed his family name Neumann to Nemon around 1931.
- 19 GERALD TAYLOR, 'Tribute to Oscar Nemon', *The Oxford Times*, Oxford, April 26, 1985. I would like to thank Nemon's daughter-in-law, Dr Alice Hiller Stuart Nemon, for the information on Nemon's character and personality.
- 20 In an interview with Nemon (PIERO RISMONDO, note 12) P. Rismondo states that Nemon came to Freud "eight days ago," which would be on July 29, but Rismondo's newspaper article was probably published a few days later, which roughly coincides with the date from Freud's diary. Belgrade Newspaper *Politika* stated that the sittings lasted for four days (Z., 'Oskar Nemon, vajar ljudskih duša' [Oscar Nemon, a sculptor of human souls], *Politika*, Belgrade, No. 9565, January 1, 1935, 7).
- 21 OSCAR NEMON (note 6), 74.
- 22 'Freud – Eittington, 3 August 1931', in: MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 100; 282.
- 23 PIERO RISMONDO (note 12).

- 24
Nemon first showed the portrait to Freud's housekeeper Paula Fichtl. Her comment was that "the professor looks angry."
- 25
MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 91.
- 26
MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 97, 98.
- 27
ERNST JONES (note 11), 67–68.
- 28
MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 100; 111; PAUL FEDERN (note 2), 595.
- 29
PIERO RISMONDO (note 12).
- 30
MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 100; 111.
- 31
PAUL FEDERN (note 2), 595.
- 32
Sigmund Freud, 'Kürzeste Chronik', in: MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 13; 111.
- 33
Freud-Eitington, 1 November 1931, Sigmund Freud Archive, Freud Museum, London: SF/ME/11131; MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 111; 284.
- 34
"... die mit ihren lebendigen und freundlichen Ausdruck ein angenehmer Zimmergenosse zu werden verspricht" (Freud-Federn, November 1, 1931). Sigmund Freud. Sigmund Freud Papers: General Correspondence, 1996; Federn, Paul; Photocopies and transcripts; 1929 to 1931, Manuscript/Mixed Material. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, accessed April 17, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss39990.02512/?sp=57>; MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 284.
- 35
HEINRICH MENG (note 3), 350. In his memoirs, Nemon states that Alexander Freud asked for a head in bronze.
- 36
PAUL FEDERN (note 2), 595.
- 37
Sigmund Freud's letter to Paul Federn, Vienna, November 1, 1931. Sigmund Freud Papers: General Correspondence, 1996; Federn, Paul; Photocopies and transcripts; 1929 to 1931, 1929. Manuscript/Mixed Material. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, accessed April 17, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss39990.02512/?sp=57>
This letter of Freud's was published in English translation in: PAUL FEDERN (note 2), 595–596.
- 38
Ibidem.
- 39
PIERO RISMONDO (note 12).
- 40
There is a 1928 Paris edition of Sigmund Freud's *Ma Vie et la Psychanalyse. Suivie de Psychanalyse et Médecine* in Nemon's personal library. It is not known whether Nemon acquired the book before or after meeting Freud.
- 41
JOHN ROTHENSTEIN, 'Sculptures of our time', in: DANIEL ZEC (note 1), 211, 213.
- 42
'Auf Anregung...', *Wiener Bilder*, Vienna, August 9, 1931, 6; 'Eine Porträtbüste Professors Siegmund Freud', *Die Stunde*, Vienna, August 5, 1931; 'Professor Freud', *Neuer Wiener Tagblatt*, No. 215, Vienna, August 6, 1931, 5; 'Eine Porträtbüste Sigmund Freuds', newspaper and date unknown (1931); 'Der Wiener Gelehrte...', *Das interessante Blatt*, No. 33, Vienna, August 13, 1931, 2. Paper clippings, HMIA, PON, 2004.21, Box 4, Scrapbooks.
- 43
PIERO RISMONDO (note 12).
- 44
A.J. Storfer, letter to Oscar Nemon, Vienna, February 12, 1932. Oscar Nemon Archive Centre, Boar's Hill, Oxford.
- 45
Ibidem.
- 46
Adolf Josef Storfer (1888–1944), Austrian writer, journalist and publisher. From 1925 to 1932, he was director of the International Psychoanalytic Publishing House (*Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag*) in Vienna and co-editor of Freud's collected works.
- 47
Such as portraits of Prof. Lorain (c 1929), Sándor Ferenczi (c 1931), Rene Laforgue (c 1934–1936), August Vermeylen (1934).
- 48
SHEARER WEST, *Portraiture*, Oxford – New York, Oxford University Press, 2004, 188.
- 49
See: DANIEL ZEC, 'Modernistička sastavnica u opusu Oscara Nemona i kontekst modernizma i avangardnih kretanja u Bruxellesu 1925. – 1936.' [The modernist component in Oscar Nemon's oeuvre and the context of modernism and avant-garde movements in Brussels (1925–1936)], *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti*, 44/1 (2020), 149–162.
- 50
See: DANIEL ZEC, 'Portret, portretna skulptura, mimetizam i modernistička paradigma: vrijednosno pozicioniranje portretnoga kiparstva Oscara Nemona' [Portraiture, portrait sculpture, mimetism, and the modernist paradigm: An assessment and positioning of portrait sculpture by Oscar Nemon], in: Dalibor Prančević (ed.) *Pojavnosti moderne skulpture u Hrvatskoj: protagonisti, radovi, konteksti*, Split, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Splitu, 2021, 88–110.
- 51
I thank Nigel Boonham, Nemon's assistant, for the information about Nemon's appreciation of Despiau. Daniel Zec, interview with Nigel Boonham, London, February 18, 2012.
- 52
"For me there is only one sculptor today and that is Maillol", Oscar Nemon, letter to his sister Bella Neumann, Brussels, November 27, 1932. HMIA, PON, 2004.21, Box 7.
- 53
DANIEL ZEC (note 49), 149–162. About Nemon's portraits on medals and plaques, see: DANIEL ZEC, 'Medaljerska dionica

u briselskom opusu kipara Oscara Nemona' [Sculptor Oscar Nemon's medal works during his Brussels period], *Peristil*, 63 (2020), 199–211.

54

PIERO RISMONDO (note 12).

55

For example, the sculptors Königsberger and Lambda who, besides Nemon, also portrayed Freud, omit the motif of spectacles. In 1934, Nemon also portrayed the Belgian King Albert I with the spectacles, in contrast to a number of Belgian sculptors (A. Boute, E. de Bremaecker, J. Canneel, J. Lagae, J. Van der Stock) who omitted the motif of spectacles in their portraits of the Belgian sovereign.

56

Next to a series of portraits of unknown sitters from the late 1920s and the 1930s, the most prominent are the portraits of Henry Simont (c 1932), Emile Vandervelde (1932), King Albert I of Belgium (1934), August Vermeylen (1934), Milan Grol (1941–1943), and Harry S. Truman (c. 1961).

57

The term “psychological portrait” refers to a type of portrait that aims to capture and convey the subject's inner emotional or psychological state, personality, and character, rather than simply their physical appearance. This can be achieved through capturing the sitter's gaze, facial expression, and body language in a way that suggests their inner thoughts or feelings.

58

PIERO RISMONDO (note 12).

59

Oscar Nemon, letter to Simonne Hottet Dear, Zagreb, December 20, 1935, Archives et Musée de la Littérature, Brussels, fund: Simonne et Paul-Henry Spaak, ML 7288/2249-2323, NEMON Oscar, no. 02316.

60

Sigmund Freud, *Kürzeste Chronik*, in: MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 28. Paul Königsberger was a Viennese sculptor who portrayed Freud from life in July 1920.

61

Ibidem.

62

OSCAR NEMON, ‘Comment J'ai fait le buste de Freud’, *Psyché – revue internationale des sciences de l'homme et de psychanalyse*, 107–108 (1955), 481.

63

Paul Federn, letter to Oscar Nemon, Vienna, February 18, 1936. HMIA, PON, 2004.21, Box 5.

64

MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 197.

65

“La statuette de l'illustre savant autrichien, oeuvre du sculpteur belge O. Nemon a été acquise par souscription internationale et sera placée dans les locaux de la société psychanalytique de Vienne, à l'occasion des 80 ans du professeur Freud.”; ‘Le Professeur Freud’, newspaper and date unknown (*La Dernière Heure?* 1936), paper clipping, HMIA, PON, 2004.21, Box 4, Scrapbooks.

66

It may have been lost as early as 1938, when the Nazis seized the library and property of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society.

67

Patinated plaster, 37 cm high. Private collection.

A photograph of Nemon posing next to Freud's bust with his arms outstretched was reproduced in the *Evening Standard*: ‘The Londoner's Diary, Peace and Good Will’, *Evening Standard*, London, December 24, 1938, 6.

68

Portrait of Sigmund Freud, c. 1936, terracotta, patinated, 21.7 × 15 × 15 cm; sign. laterally down: NEMON. Oscar Nemon Estate Collection.

69

NAOMI KATCHER (ed.), *The Freud Centenary Exhibit*, exhibition catalogue, New York, 1956, 78.

The information about the date of the medal and that it was gifted to Freud is not entirely reliable.

70

MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 205.

71

Freud's London visitor list, *Visitors, 1938*, dark blue notebook LDFRD 5238, Freud Museum London.

72

Peter Cannon-Brookes presented the idea that Nemon based his seated portrait of Sigmund Freud on photographs of the first portrait sessions in Pötzleinsdorf in 1931. See: PETER CANNON-BROOKES (note 9), 16. Although Freud actually set for Nemon in 1936, the assumption is not unjustified.

73

After Nemon fled to England, many sculptures from his studio in Brussels were destroyed by the Nazis. Reportedly, the invaluable film recording of Freud posing for Nemon was also destroyed at that time. See in: GEOFFREY MOORHOUSE, ‘Freudian Victory, Sculpture’, paper clipping, newspaper and date unknown (October 1969, 19), Sigmund Freud Archive, Freud Museum, London: SF/ME/11131. It is not known whether the alleged film was made during the first portrait sessions in 1931 or 1936.

74

Wilhelm Victor Krausz, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud*, 1936, oil on panel, 72 × 55.5 cm. Library of Congress, Washington DC, USA. Sigmund Freud Papers: Artifacts and Paintings; oil portrait painting of Freud [Manuscript/Mixed Material] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss3999001830/>.

75

Sigmund Freud Archive, Freud Museum, London, SF/ME/11131.

76

The original plaster model is today housed in the depot of Nemon's studio and archive on Boar's Hill.

77

LAWRENCE KUBIE, *The New York Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, a press announcement on the unveiling*, November 12, 1947, The New York Psychoanalytic Society & Institute Archive, A.A. Brill Archives & Special Collections, NYPSI.

78

Ibidem.

79

PAUL FEDERN, ‘Freud amongst us’, *Psychiatric Quarterly Supplement*, 22 (1948), 1–6. This article is a longer version of Federn's speech on the occasion of the unveiling of the Freudian monument at the Institute of Psychoanalysis in New York in 1947. The

same article was also published in: Hendrik Marinus Ruitenbeek (ed.), *Freud as We Knew Him*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1973, 216–221.

80

'Sensitive and Angry Man', *New York Times*, New York, November 23, 1947, 166.

81

G.R. Langer, Carpenter and Builder, An account for making a pedestal designed by Oscar Nemon on November 4, 1947; New York, December 10, 1947, A. A. Brill Archives & Special Collections, NYPSI.

82

The medal was made by the Viennese medallist Carl Maria Schwerdtner in 1906, on the occasion of Freud's fiftieth birthday.

83

On Nemon's Monument to Sigmund Freud in London, see: GEOFFREY MOORHOUSE, 'Freudian Victory, Sculpture', paper clipping, October 1969, 19, Sigmund Freud Archive, Freud Museum, London: SF/ME/11131; CLAIRE BULLUS – RONALD ASPREY, *The Statues of London*, London – New York, Merrell Publishers Ltd, 2009, 178; JOHN BLACKWOOD (note 8), 168–169; PETER CANNON-BROOKES (note 9), 16; NIGEL BOONHAM, 'Masterwork: Sigmund Freud by Oscar Nemon 1970', in: *Face 2002: the 39th exhibition*, London, The Society of Portrait Sculptors, 2002, 10.

A review of London monuments by C. Bullus and R. Asprey states that the Monument to Sigmund Freud was based on Nemon's first portrait of Freud (1931) and according to studies that followed during the 1930s, the last of which was made in London. The presented data are incorrect.

84

'Statue of Sigmund Freud to Be Put Up in London', *New York Post*, October 22, 1969, paper clipping; 'Freud on a Pedestal', paper clipping, October 1969. HMIA, PON, 2004.21, Box 4, Scrapbooks.

85

'Freud statue unveiled', *The Times*, London, October 3, 1970, paper clipping, HMIA, PON, 2004.21, Box 4, Scrapbooks.

86

Historic England, 'Sigmund Freud Statue', accessed July 29, 2018, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1431355>

87

The dimensions of the plaster model are 180 × 110 × 152 cm.

88

PAUL FEDERN (note 79), 1–2.

89

NIGEL BOONHAM (note 83), 10.

90

'A Sigmund Freud Monument for Vienna', in: *The Anglo European Review and Intelligencer*, London, Spring 1972, 21–22.

91

Thanks to the efforts of the University of Vienna, the British Psychoanalytic Society, the Department of Psychology and Psychotherapy of the Medical School in Vienna, and the Oscar Nemon Estate.

92

Two bronze castings were made recently, and one of them is on permanent display in Modern Gallery (National Museum of Modern Art) in Zagreb. On the 100th anniversary of Nemon's birth in 2006,

it was donated to the Museum by Dr Alice Hiller Stuart Nemon. The other one is in the holdings of the Oscar Nemon Estate.

93

"J'ai vu, surtout, Freud, à quatre vingt deux ans, prendre avec sa famille le chemin de l'exil vers la libre Angleterre où, à peine un an plus tard, il allait mourir, vaincu par un mal atroce supporté avec une résignation héroïque." MARIE BONAPARTE, 'Freud, Cime de la pensée', *Freies Oesterreich – La libre Autriche, revue antihitlerienne*, Paris, May 1, 1940, 18.

94

Sigmund Freud's letter to Stefan Zweig, Vienna, May 18, 1936, Sotheby's, *Freud, Sigmund, Autograph Letter, Prof. Dr. Freud Wien, IX., Berggasse 19., autograph envelope, [Vienna,] Strassergasse 47, 18 May 1936*, accessed August 2, 2018, <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/music-continental-russian-books-manuscripts-115402/lot.142.html>

95

MICHAEL MOLNAR (note 4), 196.

96

ERNST JONES (note 11), 235.

97

'Sensitive and Angry Man' (note 83), 166.

98

ĐURĐA PETRAVIĆ KLAJIĆ (note 9), 170–175. The author, however, presents a number of inaccurate data in this paper.

99

ĐURĐA PETRAVIĆ KLAJIĆ (note 9), 172.

100

Patricia Nemon, *Appreciation*, handwritten, Museum of Fine Arts, Osijek, archive.

101

"The psychology of art was one of Freud's great preoccupations. I don't know if he learned much about sculpture, but he taught me very interesting things about the psychology of art, and even about patience. I count those sessions with Freud among the best memories of my life." OSCAR NEMON, 'How I Made the Bust of Freud', in: Hendrik Marinus Ruitenbeek (ed.), *Freud as We Knew Him*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1973, 290.

102

'Hommage à Freud' (note 8), 23.

103

Along with the photographs of the sculptures, a photograph of Freud's study was reproduced showing Nemon standing next to Sigmund Freud sitting in his chair, the eyes of both men fixed on a small sculpture on Freud's desk. In the background, on a bookshelf, Nemon's wooden portrait head of Freud is seen. Caption below the photo: *Freud and the sculptor Nemon discussing Balinese Sculpture*.

104

About Nemon's relations with E.L.T. Mesens and also with René Magritte in London in 1937 and 1938, see in: DANIEL ZEC (note 49), 150–151.

105

See in: DANIEL ZEC (notes 49 and 53).

106

"Nemon's work is integrated as a Croatian and universal herit-

age in the review of the history of Croatian sculpture of the 20th century." ĐURĐA PETRAVIĆ KLAJIĆ (note 9), 170. Nemon, however, did not identify himself as Croatian, but instead viewed himself as being of Yugoslav origin, naturalised as British in 1946.

107
Nemon Studio Museum and Archive at Boars Hill near Oxford is on the site where Nemon lived and sculpted from 1948 until his death in 1985.

Sažetak

Daniel Zec

Nemonovi portreti Sigmunda Freuda

Portret Sigmunda Freuda, utemeljitelja psihoanalize i jednoga od najutjecajnijih mislilaca dvadesetoga stoljeća donio je Oscaru Nemonu (1906. – 1985.) svjetsku slavu, stavivši istovremeno u fokus njegov tadašnji, ali i sav predstojeći kiparski rad.

Sigmund Freud pozirao je Nemonu dva puta, 1931. i 1936. godine, a izvedba prvog portreta postala je uporištem afirmacije i ključnim mjestom recepcije Oscara Nemona kao portretnog kipara. Portreti Sigmunda Freuda, uz one kasnije Winstona Churchilla, najpoznatije su, najcitiranije i najreproduciranije kiparove portretne skulpture. Svoju popularnost i reputaciju zahvaljuju ponajprije svom slavnom modelu, odnosno njegovu kulturnom statusu ikone znanosti i kulture zapadne civilizacije. Međutim, Nemonovi su radovi i vrsni primjeri portretnoga kiparstva, a glava Sigmunda Freuda (1936. – 1947.) jedna je od najkvalitetnijih Nemonovih portretnih skulptura.

Rad se bavi kontekstom nastanka portreta, narudžbom, odnosom između kipara i modela, historiografijom Nemonova portretiranja Freuda, a donosi temeljitu analizu realiziranih verzija portreta i spomenika Sigmundu Freudu te komparaciju Nemonovih portreta s kiparskim portretima Freuda drugih autora.

Godine 1931. Nemon je povodom Freudova sedamdeset petog rođendana po narudžbi Bečkoga psihoanalitičkog društva izveo Freudov portret. Portretne sesije, održane u vili Mauthner u bečkom predgrađu Pötzleinsdorf, rezultirale su trima bistama – u umjetnom kamenu, bronci i drvu. Verzija u drvu, koju je Freud odabrao kao svoj rođendanski dar, danas se nalazi u Freudovu muzeju u Londonu. Portret iznosi idealiziranu interpretaciju koja zahvaća bit Freuda

kao intelektualnog predvodnika psihoanalize, odražavajući rane kiparove dojmove i njegovo uvažavanje Freudovih intelektualnih doprinosa.

Pet godina poslije, 1936. godine, povodom Freudova 80. rođendana, Nemon još jednom radi Freudov portret. Ovaj je put koncipirao posve drugačiji tip portretne plastike: punu figuru u sjedećem položaju, a na zahtjevan kompozicijski zadatak odgovorio je inventivnim rješenjem što ujedinjuje mirovanje i pokret. Puna figuru u sjedećem položaju, u pola prirodne veličine, 1947. godine postavljena je u Institutu za psihoanalizu u New Yorku. Sjedeći portret je kasnije uvećan, odliven u bronci i 1970. godine postavljen kao javni spomenik u Londonu, u blizini kuće u kojoj je Freud proveo svoje posljednje godine života. Osim sjedeće figure, Nemon je oko 1936. godine napravio i Freudovo poprsje u pola prirodne veličine te reduciranu bistu.

Nemon je na temelju portretnih sesija iz 1936. godine napravio i izvrstan portret Sigmunda Freuda, u tipološkoj varijanti glave bez poprsja (datiran između 1936. i 1947.). U odnosu na prvi portret Nemon ovdje poseže za značajnim formalnim mijenama, koje su u službi psihologizacije portreta.

Nemonovi portreti i spomenici Sigmunda Freuda vrsni su primjeri portretnoga kiparstva, a glava Sigmunda Freuda (1936. – 1947.) jedna je od najkvalitetnijih i najistančanijih Nemonovih portretnih skulptura i uopće jedan od najupečatljivijih modernističkih kiparskih portreta prve polovice 20. stoljeća kojim je ovjekovječena jedna od ikona zapadne civilizacije.

Ključne riječi: Oscar Nemon, Sigmund Freud, portret, skulptura, modernizam