

ROSZAK'S SCULPTURE

I always thought a sculptor ought to look like a sculpture. Henry Moore does. So does Giacometti. So does Ted Roszak.

Henry Moore presents a bland mass, like his statues. Giacometti's face is strong, yet Giacometti loves all that is weak. This sculptor does not resemble his statues, but he suggests them. Roszak stands before you the way statues once did, pushing space away, imposing themselves, making you feel that there is only one thing left for you to do: look.

Anaximander said that in leaving the world, we pay for the injustice of having occupied a certain space; so whatever occupies space is guilty, man or statue. I think Giacometti's feeling is like the Eleatic's; Giacometti feels statues are guilty, and his own are generally of thin or meager metal. But Roszak has a very different feeling. His sculptures take up as much space as they can. His star cannot, of course, occupy as much space as a star; but evidently Roszak would like it to. His bird is bigger than any known bird, but you feel when you see it, that it would like even more space. Roszak's lyre-like insects are much larger than their living prototypes. His insect forms I like best of all; (I know that this is not a purely aesthetic judgment).

Men have asked: Why did God make bugs? And they have asked the question to deny God's perfection, arguing that in making the world with bugs in it, He made the world badly and was wrong. In fact, bugs we like to kill. When Kafka wanted to symbolize family guilt, he transformed his protagonist into a bug, and showed the effect of the transformation on a father, a mother, a sister. But Roszak makes bugs that are metamorphized into themselves, into bigger themselves. They are at large, they unfold like the most delicate blossoms, they are like musical instruments—often they are like music. And they have this priceless virtue, which for me, at least, no real bug has: they are innocent.

And because Roszak's sculptures are — or want to be—inno-cent, they have a right to the lovely, silvery green textures he encrusts them with. Also, they have a right to their blackness when they are black. These forms say that they do not want to die, and that they have the right to continue. When we are gone, they will still expect to be in front of someone.

I think Roszak, who was once a Constructivist, has the passion and the lyricism to construct a whole jungle: the snakes, the birds, the leaves, the insects, the man-eaters, the life—green or silvery, black or pied.

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