

THE SCULPTURE OF
JACQUES LIPCHITZ

A CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ

VOLUME TWO

THE AMERICAN YEARS

1941 – 1973

ALAN G. WILKINSON



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Thames & Hudson

In memory of Bob Hubbard,

my friend and mentor

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Lipchitz at work on plaster for *Peace on Earth* (No. 664), commissioned for The Music Center of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, California. Photographed at Tommasi Foundry, Pietrasanta, Italy, September, 1967



Lipchitz in his studio at Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

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Lipchitz in his studio at Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

PREFACE, WITH NOTES ON CASTING

Alan G. Wilkinson

This is the second of the two-volume catalogue raisonné of the sculpture of Jacques Lipchitz. It documents the sculptures created during the second half (thirty-two years) of Lipchitz's working life, from his arrival in New York on June 13, 1941 until his death on the island of Capri on May 27, 1973. *Volume One: The Paris Years 1910-1940*, published in 1996, documented the sculptures created during the first half (thirty-one years) of Lipchitz's working life, from the 1910 *Seated Nude (No. 1)* to the 1940 *Flight* (No. 344). *Flight*, which was executed in Toulouse – where Lipchitz and his wife Berthe, anticipating the German occupation of Paris, had sought refuge in May, 1940 – was thought to have been the last sculpture from the Paris years. Recent research in the Lipchitz Archive at the Tate Gallery, London has brought to light a group of photographs of terracotta portraits dated “Toulouse 1940” and “Toulouse 1940-41” (see Nos. 344a to 344i in the Addendum to *Volume One: The Paris Years 1910-1940*, on pp. 23-24). Lipchitz mentioned these portraits in his autobiography, and they attest to the fact that he continued working on his sculpture in Toulouse in 1940, and during the winter months of 1941 before sailing to New York in early June of that year.¹ It is not known if any of these terracotta portraits have survived. They are reproduced here for the first time, and the originals will, perhaps, surface in the fullness of time.

Of the three hundred and forty-four sculptures documented in *Volume One: The Paris Years 1910-1940*, two bronzes, *Transparent*, 1930 (No. 245), and *Head and Hand* (also known as *Pastorale*), 1933 (No. 295) were incorrectly catalogued. They are now correctly catalogued in *Volume Two: The American Years 1941-1973*, as *Variation*, 1942 (No. 361), and *Pastorale* (also known as *Pastoral*), 1942 (No. 373). The Paris years now include three hundred and sixty-nine sculptures: three hundred and forty-two works now correctly catalogued in *Volume One*, and twenty-seven works which appear in the Addendum to *Volume One: The Paris Years 1910-1940*, on pp. 18-24.

Arrival, 1941 (No. 345), the first of the four hundred and three sculptures catalogued in *Volume Two*, was the companion piece to *Flight*, 1940 (No. 344). Lipchitz described *Flight* as being “very free and baroque in its organization, representing not only my emotions at this moment when I was fleeing with my family, but also a new and open expressionistic type of composition.”² Of *Arrival*, which shares the same stylistic features, Lipchitz commented: “...the mother holds the child who is saved... there was the specific feeling of escape from the horror of the fascists to the refuge of the United States.”³ *Arrival*, with its dynamic gestures and powerful illusion of movement, embodies the most characteristic and consistent features which unite many of Lipchitz's sculptures from the American years: from the 1940s, *Prometheus Strangling the Vulture* (Nos. 380-381); from the 1950s, *The Spirit of Enterprise* (Nos. 493-500); from the 1960s, *Bellerophon Taming Pegasus* (Nos. 615-623); and from the late 1960s and early 1970s, the twenty-six variations on *The Rape of Europa* (Nos. 670-695).

Unexpectedly, the challenges of compiling *Volume Two: The American Years 1941-1973* of this catalogue raisonné of Lipchitz's sculpture have been more difficult and demanding than those encountered in documenting the work from the Paris years. During the 1920s and 30s there were relatively few publications on Lipchitz's sculpture. The most useful, contemporary sources were Maurice Raynal's *Lipchitz* (1920), the first monograph on the artist, Roger Vitrac's *Jacques Lipchitz* (1927), the list of works in *Cent Sculptures par Jacques Lipchitz*, Galerie de la Renaissance (Jean Boucher), Paris (1930), and various articles in periodicals such as *L'Amour de l'Art*, and *Cahiers d'Art*. Almost all the information on the sculptures executed between 1910 and 1940 was, however, obtained from the reasonably well documented books and exhibition catalogues of Lipchitz's work, most of which were published in the 1960s and 70s, and from photographs in the archives of the Marlborough Gallery, New York.

During the American years, the ever increasing flow of books and exhibition catalogues provided a far more detailed and comprehensive record of Lipchitz's sculptural output than had been available for the Paris years. However, many of these publications included lists of sculptures without photographs of all the works. For example, between 1942 and 1951, there were five exhibitions of Lipchitz's sculpture at Curt Valentin's Buchholz Gallery, 32 East 57th Street, New York. The small catalogues produced for each show are the most valuable sources of information for the work produced during these years. To cite one example, in the catalogue for the 1946 exhibition at the Buchholz Gallery, twenty-two sculptures are listed, with the title, date, medium and size of each work, but only twelve are illustrated. I have located photographs of all but one of the ten sculptures which are listed but not illustrated. I was unable to find a photograph of one of the two bronzes entitled *Sketch for Massacre*, 1945, cat. Nos. 14 and 15. In this instance, and in other cases when I have been unsuccessful in locating a photograph of a sculpture listed in a book or catalogue, the work has been included. It is now catalogued as *Sketch for Massacre: Maquette No. 2*, 1945 (No. 393), with the note: "Photograph unavailable. Catalogue No. 15 in: *Jacques Lipchitz*, Buchholz Gallery, New York, 1946." Another example is *Virgin in Flames II*, 1952 (No. 486), with the note (there were no catalogue numbers): "Listed in Henry R. Hope, *The Sculpture of Jacques Lipchitz*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1954, p. 92".

The five Buchholz exhibition catalogues of 1942, 1943, 1946, 1948, and 1951, were obviously the most important documents for establishing the chronology of Lipchitz's sculpture produced between 1941 and 1951. The following dealer catalogues were invaluable in documenting much of the subsequent work, particularly the thematic "series" sculptures: *Jacques Lipchitz: Thirty-Three Semi-Automatics 1955-1956 and Earlier Works 1915-1928*, Fine Arts Associates, New York, 1957; *Jacques Lipchitz: Fourteen Recent Works 1958-1959 and Earlier Works 1949-1959*, Fine Arts Associates, New York, 1959; *Jacques Lipchitz: Images of Italy*, Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York, 1966; and *A Tribute to Jacques Lipchitz: Lipchitz in America 1941-1973*, Marlborough Gallery Inc., New York, 1973. Finding photographs of all the works in the "series" sculptures, such as the *Thirty-Three Semi-Automatics* of 1955-56 (Nos. 502-534), and the twenty-four *Images of Italy* of 1962-63 (Nos. 575-598), was akin to the pleasure one feels on completing a jigsaw puzzle. And one has the satisfaction of knowing that of the work produced during these periods of intense creativity, the catalogue is complete.

In establishing an accurate chronology of Lipchitz's sculpture from the American years, as for the work from the Paris years, *Jacques Lipchitz: Sketches in Bronze*, by H. H. Arnason (1969), and *My Life in Sculpture*, by Jacques Lipchitz, with H. H. Arnason (1972) were also indispensable. So were the many photographs in the archives of the Marlborough Gallery, New York, in the Lipchitz Archive at the Tate Gallery, London, and those which have been stored for many years at Lipchitz's studio at Hastings-on-Hudson, New York. Most of the photographs of the sculptures in the Addendum to *Volume One: The Paris Years 1910-1940* were found in the Tate Gallery's Lipchitz Archive, and among the photographs at the Hastings-on-Hudson studio. There is nothing more exciting than to discover photographs of hitherto unknown sculptures, such as the terracotta portraits of 1940 and 1940-41 (see Nos. 344a to 344i in the Addendum to *Volume One: The Paris Years 1910-1940*, on pp. 23-24). They fill unprecedented gaps in Lipchitz's work, while photographs of other unrecorded sculptures extend the scope of one's knowledge of existing themes and styles. As expected, photographs of the unique bronze casts of a number of the brilliantly innovative "transparents" of 1925-31 have surfaced, and are included in the Addendum to *Volume One*, Nos. 190a, 190b, 216a, 244a and 260a, on pp. 20-21. Prior to sifting through the hundreds of photographs which for many years had remained undisturbed in the Hastings-on-Hudson studio, I had managed to find photographs of only nineteen of the twenty-six *Variations on a Chisel* sculptures of 1951-52, which Lipchitz referred to in his autobiography.⁴ I was both relieved and exhilarated to discover photographs of an additional ten chisel sculptures, bringing the total to twenty-nine. While the *Twelve Transparents* of 1942 (Nos. 361-372) were the first of the "series" sculptures from the American years, the *Variations on a Chisel* bronzes (Nos. 455-483) constituted a series in a quite different way, a way which was to become one of the defining characteristics of Lipchitz's sculpture during the remaining twenty years of his working life. With the *Transparents* of 1942, as with those of 1925-31, it is the open, lyrical construction of the forms, rather than the subject matter, that unifies the series. The *Variations on a Chisel* bronzes, on the other hand, are stylistically very closely related, in that each sculpture evolved from a wax, modeled in the form of a chisel without its handle, to which Lipchitz added figurative elements. And within the series, there are the closely related variations of the major themes: Hebrew objects, begging poets, dancers, and centaurs enmeshed. In some of the later "series" sculptures, such as three of the studies of 1963 for the monument for *Daniel Greysolen, Sieur du Luth* (Nos. 604-606), six of the studies of 1964 for *Bellerophon Taming Pegasus* (Nos. 615-620), and eleven of the series of twenty-six bronzes of 1969-72 on the theme of the *Rape of Europa* (Nos. 685-695), the variations are so similar that very careful scrutiny was required to distinguish one from another. There were no such difficulties in differentiating between closely related works from the Paris years.

In *Volume Two: The American Years*, the design of the book, and the cataloguing procedures remain unchanged from those of *Volume One: The Paris Years*. The catalogue of the sculpture includes four hundred and three works, Nos. 345 to 747. The plate section includes 129 full page illustrations of many of the most important works reproduced on a much smaller scale in the catalogue section. In assigning titles to the sculptures, I have followed those most frequently used in previous publications with which Lipchitz was involved. If a sculpture has been known by more than one title, the one less frequently used appears in brackets, as for example, *Theseus and the Minotaur*

(also known as *Theseus*), 1942 (No. 360). Where there are two or more preparatory studies for a larger sculpture, I have, in the interest of clarity, altered their original titles in the following ways. In the 1948 catalogue of the Lipchitz exhibition at the Buchholz Gallery, New York, Nos. 13 and 14 are both called *Rescue II (Study)*, 1947. Here they are catalogued as *Rescue II (Study): Maquette No. 1*, and *Rescue II (Study): Maquette No. 2* (Nos. 402-403). Lipchitz sometimes included roman numerals in the titles of sculptures to differentiate between several preparatory studies for a larger work, such as *Birth of the Muses I*, and *Birth of the Muses II* of 1944 (Nos. 382-383), or to differentiate between two versions of the same theme, such as *The Joy of Orpheus I*, 1945, and *The Joy of Orpheus II*, 1945-46 (Nos. 395-396). There was no reason to alter these titles. I have added roman numerals to the titles of certain groups of studies for larger works. For example, *Sketch for the Monument for du Luth I* of 1963 (No. 603), the first of five studies for the large monument for Daniel Greysolon, *Sieur du Luth*, is obviously more economical than *Sketch for the Monument for du Luth: Maquette No. 1*. This was not feasible with certain existing titles. For example, in the 1946 catalogue of the Lipchitz exhibition at the Buchholz Gallery, New York, Nos. 2 and 3 are both called *Sketch for Benediction I*, 1942. Here, the roman numeral I refers to the large bronze *Benediction I*, 1942-44 (No. 359). They have been catalogued as *Sketch for Benediction I: Maquette No. 1*, and *Sketch for Benediction I: Maquette No. 2* (Nos. 357-358). I have also added roman numerals to the titles of the series *Variations on a Chisel*, 1951-52 (Nos. 455-483), and to some of the groups of works within each of the three series *The Rape of Europa*, 1969-72 (670-695), *The Last Embrace*, 1970-72 (Nos. 696-711), and *A Partir de*, 1971 (Nos. 722-737).

Two problems remain unresolved in the documentation of the sculpture from the American years. As mentioned earlier, there are several works, such as *Virgin in Flames II*, 1952 (No. 486), listed but not illustrated in various publications, of which photographs have not been found. I expect that these photographs may surface in the future. More problematic are the nineteen photographs of two groups of sculptures, with no information as to the title, date or dimensions of the works. The five bronzes in the first group (Nos. 537-541) are, I believe, related to the series of *Thirty-Three Semi-Automatics* of 1955-56, Nos. 502-534, and to Nos. 535-536. I have assigned descriptive titles to each of the five bronzes, and dated them c. 1955-56. The second group comprises fourteen unidentified portraits (Nos. 630-643). As there are relatively few differences in style and technique between these portraits, the dated portraits of the early 1940s (Nos. 351-356), and those of the 1950s and 60s (Nos. 543-547, 567-569, 611-613, and 625-626), it would be a futile exercise to hazard a guess as to the various dates of these fourteen portraits. They have been catalogued as a group, immediately after the 1966 portraits of *Skira* and *Leidesdorf* (Nos. 625-626), and the undated portraits of *Cournant*, *Kaplan* and *Hamburger* (Nos. 627-629), in order to form a "problematic," portrait section, and because my intuition tells me that most of them were executed during the last few years of Lipchitz's working life. They are published here for the first time. The author would appreciate being notified, c/o the publisher, by anyone who is able to shed light on the identity of these portraits.

During the American years, Lipchitz preferred to model directly in clay, a practice which dates from his student years in Paris in 1909-10. "I have continued," he commented in later life, "to use this method ever since that time because I believe strongly that it is superior to all others.