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Excerpts from (an article printed in December 2010):

„The praise of life. A few sculptures by Ryszard Wojciechowski”

[...]

Wojciechowski made the human being the central subject of his art. A figure appears virtually in all his works known to us. From the formal perspective, the sculptor treated human body ruthlessly. It served as a means of his expressive statement: he deformed it, flattened it – the shapes were characteristically crumpled, wrinkled; their surface was covered by a relief pattern of a drawing, sometimes supplemented by a mosaic or fresco. This original style remained practically unchanged until the very end. It gave the artist's works their unique, easily identifiable trait, valued by the critics as a sign of artistic maturity. With all their power and expressiveness, Wojciechowski's sculptures have a very evocative, lyrical mood. Despite being strongly deformed, they are traditional, even conservative; they do not adhere to the avant-



Quinn of the Nature - 1992 (fragment)
Author - Ryszard Wojciechowski

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garde solutions of their times.

This humanistic theme and anatomical deformation encourage us to link Wojciechowski's works with the trend of New Figuration, which was heralded in the late 1950s, and its clear presence in American and European art dates back to mid 1960s. The expressive figuration focused on a human being, on emotions, existential questions and tragedies. We can

find the means of expression and allusiveness typical for this trend in Wojciechowski's sculptures. However, these similarities do not go beyond the formal aspect of his works. It is hard to find the anxiety, pessimism, physical and moral misery of humanity, which are so typical for New Figuration. On the contrary,

the artist exposes the most valuable aspects of human nature – creative abilities; the most immanent feelings, such as love or maternity. He represents a specific kind of humanism, fascination with the essence of humanness, our relationships with the surrounding world, bonds with the sphere of other beings. The rules of beauty and harmony prevail in the way they are presented.

[...]

The woman holds a special place in Wojciechowski's works. She is usually presented as a mature matron. Her face is covered with wrinkles and her body suggests fulfilled maternity (full breasts, broad hips).

Her characteristic features (convex forehead, flat nose, prominent cheekbones) as well as ornamental forms, bring to mind pre-Columbian archetypes (Wysłani aby żyć, 1974; Matka Ziemia, 1979). The fact that that these works are both archaic and mythical is additionally emphasized by their titles: Matka Ziemia (Mother Earth), Majestat Wszeczycia (The Majesty of All Life – 1978), Ołtarz istnienia (The Altar of Existence - 1966). Their central element is a woman, whom – in keeping with the titles of these works – we read as The First Mother, The Source of Life, Mother Earth – the life-giving force, able to bear fruit. Wojciechowski used the common cultural connection between the earth and the woman.

[...]

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on the surface of Wojciechowski's sculptures. They form a sequence that surrounds the main performance, and together they make a strong connection. Usually, it is a part of the zodiac wheel. It reminds us that the laws of nature and human life are governed by the cosmic order established by the Creator, and revealed to the world above the Moon

through celestial bodies. Thus, the zodiac wheel is a link between the world above the Moon and the earthly nature. Ryszard Wojciechowski seems to emphasize this relationship in a particular way. The artist's world is ruled by cosmic determinism.

[...]

Ryszard Wojciechowski's sculptures have an exceptional power of

influence, which comes from the expression of the form, a unique tension born on the border of act and deformation, realism and abstraction. Our attention is attracted by the rich texture, the contrast of mixed techniques and materials. But the greatest power of these works lies in their content, their symbolic impact. In a masterly – although undoubtedly intuitive way – Wojciechowski reaches the viewer's hidden layers of knowledge, mythology. He provokes a chain of associated thoughts and questions. Here lies the magic and power of his art.

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