

## **Modernism**

# **Reshaping the World: Education Resource for Visual Art**

This material supports studies in the Visual Arts outlined in the Victorian Curriculum for The Arts: Scope and Sequence F-10 – Creating and making, exploring and responding and VCE Visual Arts Units 1 and 2, Outcomes 1, 2 and 3. Suitable for Years 9 -10. This lesson can be adjusted to suit other year levels.

### **Pre visit preparatory questions:**

What is sculpture?

List as many ways as you can to make sculptures.

What is meant by the term 'Modernism'?

Name two painters and two sculptors of the Early Modern period (1890 – 1945). Why are they considered modern?

### **At the Studio:**

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

1. **Do tour** of Studio (Explore)
2. **Teacher led discussion** with students about four sculptures - Karl's 'Modernist' works - Vienna and Australia (respond and interpret).

Chose from:

**Mask (Dining room) c.1919**

**Kneeling Nude (Studio) c.1924**

**Malay Boy (Dining room) 1940**

**Prophet (Sunroom) 1953**

**Moses (Studio) 1956**

**Totem (Studio) 1970**

**Fallen Warrior (Porch) 1968**

**Kneeling figure (Garden) 1968**

3. In groups of two, **students choose two further sculptures**, make sketches, write about them (Explore and Express)

### **Guiding questions:**

- What makes Karl Duldig's work modern? (What makes this work modern?)
- How did he work? (materials and techniques) (How is this work made?)
- What kinds of work (themes and subject matter) did he favour? (What is this work about?)
- What connections can you see in his work with other trends in modern art of the twentieth century? (Does this work reflect a particular style or trend in 20<sup>th</sup> century art – what and why?)

### **Activities**

Choose a work and sketch it. Explain why you chose that piece and whether it is typical of his other work.

If yes, explain how. If not, explain why not.

Make mention of material, technique used, use of space, viewpoint, and subject matter. What is modern about this piece? What is traditional?

## Teacher Resources:

Duldig Studio background material for Modernism tour, Modernism timeline, Bibliography, photos of selected artworks (supplementary material).

## Additional information:

### Materials:

Karl explored many different materials - marble, steatite (soapstone), wood, bronze, other metals, clay, plaster, cement fondue throughout his career. In later years he favoured clay. He also explored stained glass and woodblock printing.

### Techniques:

- Karl used a variety of techniques - Reductive (carving) and Additive (construction or modelling)
- Direct carving without preparatory maquettes (Brancusi also used this)
- Casting in bronze using the 'lost wax' technique

### Themes/Subject matter/ stylistic explorations:

- *Masks* - Karl explored the theme of masks throughout his career. Which other artists have focused on masks? Symbolist painters, Viennese Secessionists (at a time when Freud's revolutionary concept of an unconscious was being developed and debated), Picasso, Modigliani, Brancusi, Henry Moore
- Some of his faces and figures show the influence of *Surrealism*
- *Idealism* - A number of Karl's works are part of the Universalist trend in thinking which followed the end of World War 2. Karl shared the hope that after the horrors of two world wars, a future based on shared values could be created for all nations. In two of his works, *Moses*, and the mural *Progress of Man*, now destroyed, these values are explored.
- Emphasis on *process, textural effects and spontaneity* explored by Auguste Rodin
- *Negative space* explored by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Vincas Jomantas
- *Found objects*

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