



koos den houting

The sculptor, Koos den Houting, was born on April 12, 1939, in Alicedale in the Cape Province. He studied art for two years in Bloemfontein and then in Johannesburg for a further two years. He taught art in Durban until his appointment as lecturer in sculpture at the Pretoria College for Advanced Technical Education. Here he is using his considerable talents in helping to train young sculptors of the future.

Since 1963 he has participated in several group shows and, in 1968, held a one-man exhibition in Johannesburg. His exhibition in Pretoria this year proves that he is one of South Africa's most talented young sculptors.

In his early work he used several materials including soapstone and wood; but he has always shown a preference for wood which he now uses exclusively: all his latest sculpture is in this medium.

As a theme he uses the totem and the human figure — the human figure wrestling and moving in energetic vigour: an expression of strength and personal vision. His early totems are forceful and sculpturally monumental.

In his latest work the human figure is beginning to fade. He has become more interested in the evolution of the totem — attractive, graceful and more decorative by nature. He also uses colour inlay together with light and dark wood in order to achieve greater effect. The colour is not overdone but fuses subtly into and forms a rapport with the wood. Each totem bears the strong, personal Den Houting stamp — a stamp which belongs to him alone.

With his latest door-knob sculptures Den Houting treads on new territory. These door-knobs are both aesthetically pleasing and functional.

In the use of and feeling for his material he has completely established himself. Under his competent chisel forms swell out and hollows are created and the wood altered into ever changing forms. His art is a fusion of a whole series of discoveries which culminates in his latest imaginatively rich work.

He is never pretentious.

His approach is genuine.

This is Koos den Houting.

B.T.S.

