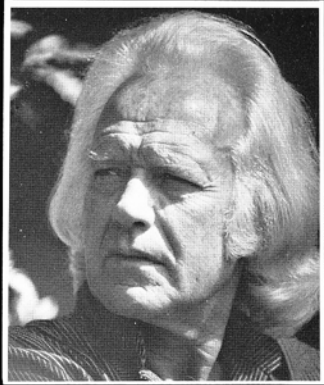
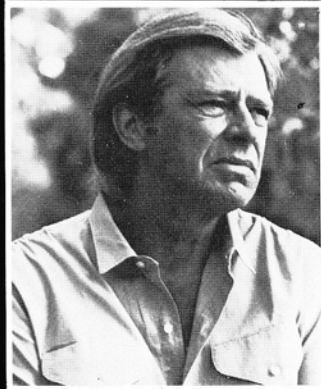


five sculptors

edoardo villa



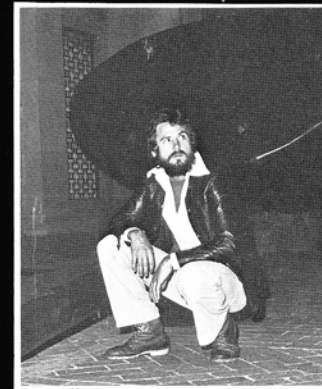
johan van heerden



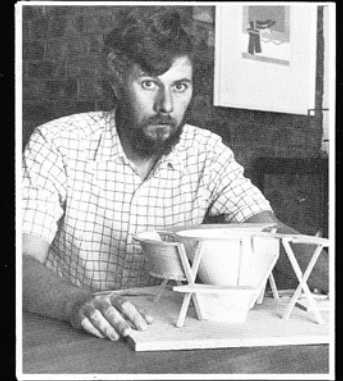
neels coetsee



gavin younge



ian redelinghuys



an exhibition of metal sculpture

**SA National Gallery
1820 Settlers National Monument
Johannesburg Municipal Art Gallery
Pretoria Art Museum**

Johan van Heerden, guest artist at Metalart '77, was originally moved not towards art at all, but towards engineering. Indeed his work today shows a rare technical skill found only in a delicate marriage between art and engineering.

While studying engineering at the Bloemfontein Technical College, Van Heerden, aged 16, looked into a college art class. Not long after, he switched courses. It was in Bloemfontein that he completed his first sculpture.

Driven by an urge to visit Paris, he spent two years scraping together enough money for a boat ticket and finally in 1952, at the age of 22, he got there. His years in Paris had a profound and lasting influence on him. He studied, not altogether happily, at the Académie de la grande Chaumière under Eduard Goerg and Eduard Macavoy and later at the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

But his most formative teaching was from sculptor Ossip Zadkine, for whose classes Van Heerden returned to the Grand Chaumière. He had been losing faith rapidly in Parisian academics. In Zadkine, however, he found a teacher who was not concerned with "saleable" art, and one who had no system, no golden principles for success. But he did force his pupils to examine themselves, their desires, their art – and to ask who? ... why? ... what?

In 1955 Van Heerden decided to return to South Africa and to his beginnings, to evaluate his progress. Here he mounted the first non-figurative exhibition of paintings and sculptures ever to be seen in South Africa. To a public wholly unfamiliar with non-representational art, it was not a success.

Though sluggish in their first response, the critics formally recognised his talent in 1956 when he was awarded first prize in the SA Association of Arts' Transvaal Artists exhibition in Pretoria. Abroad, acceptance was not as slow in coming. Van Heerden was the only South African in the "Europe and Africa" category chosen to participate in the 1956 Guggenheim International Awards, shown in Paris and New York. He was also the youngest of the artists represented.

Nonetheless, in the late fifties he went through a lean creative period. His renewal, and his way back to sculpture, were catalysed by the same form – jewellery. He had tried to find a marketable application for his work without compromising it, and so he began to design and make jewellery in metal.

After considerable success in this sphere, Van Heerden began to sound out the possibilities inherent in wood, metal and stone on a larger scale. Today he still approaches his medium almost as if engaging in an endurance test – for himself and for his material. It's a process of experience and knowledge hard won, as he wrestles to find how far he can push his medium to accept the imprint of his conception.

Van Heerden has executed numerous commissions, including those for the Pretoria Art Museum, University of South Africa, University of the OFS, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Jan Smuts Airport and the National Gallery. He has exhibited at various one-man and group exhibitions, including a number of International Art Biennales. His most recent one-man shows have been in the Cape and in Pretoria.

Johan van Heerden

Born 1930 on a farm at Bethal, Transvaal. Received elementary education in Lindley, Orange Free State, under stringent domestic and financial circumstances. Commenced engineering studies in Bloemfontein, but left in favour of part-time art classes at the Technical College there. Worked simultaneously as a photographer and commercial artist in order to continue these studies as well as afford tuition in elocution and singing.

Left for Paris in June 1952, on meagre personal savings. Commenced studies at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière where, for the first time it was possible to use a model. Received instruction from Eduard Goerg and Eduard Macavoy, but soon relinquished this in favour of sculpture under Ossip Zadkine, who, thus far, was undoubtedly the first, and later proved to have been the only master of significant value. Realised, however, that to work independently was the true solution. Nevertheless continued studying the technique of etching and utilising the facilities of the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

Two visits to Spain proved to be of inestimable value, where interest in the primitive Spanish School, primarily that of their prehistoric cave art, stimulated an already existing interest gleaned from prehistoric art in South Africa.

Exhibited paintings in a group exhibition in Dusseldorf and Mainz on an exchange system between these cities and Paris. Also exhibited sculpture with the Ateliers de Zadkine in Paris.

Visited various European countries, and returned to South Africa after a sojourn of two and a half years.

Held first one-man exhibition in Johannesburg, subsequently in Pretoria and a third in Bloemfontein. Won first prize in exhibition of work of Transvaal artists in Pretoria in 1956. In the same year was the only South African artist chosen to represent the Africa/Europe section at the Guggenheim Award exhibition in New York and Paris (being the youngest exhibitor).

Since then many exhibitions in South Africa. Several commissions executed in the last few years, stainless steel being the medium. Commissions – Kenridge Hospital, Parktown – Jan Smuts Airport – Department of Interior, Pretoria – Castrol House, Parktown. Also represented in last year São Paulo Biennale with four stainless steel works.

Exhibitions

- 1955 – First one man exhibition of paintings, Johannesburg Lidchi Art Gallery.
- 1956 – National Museum, Bloemfontein exhibition of paintings, youngest of five artists (the only South African) chosen as entrants from the Europe-Africa Continental section for Guggenheim Award Exhibition in New York and Paris.
- 1956/57 – Exhibited in first Quadrennial Exhibition of S.A. Art at the Johannesburg Art Gallery.
- 1956 – Graphic Art Exhibition (group show) Lidchi Art Gallery.
– Won first prize Transvaal Artists in Pretoria.
- 1957 – Group show, Lidchi Art Gallery, Johannesburg – six artists (paintings and etchings).

- Association of Arts, Cape Town – one man show – paintings.
- Association of Arts, Pretoria – one man show – etchings and paintings.
- Association of Arts, Pretoria – exhibition of works by four Johannesburg artists.
- Lidchi Art Gallery – exhibition of graphics.
- São Paulo Biennale – etchings.
- 1958 – Venice Biennale – paintings, drawings and etchings.
- Lidchi Art Gallery – Univleis competition.
- Helen de Leeuw Gallery, Johannesburg – paintings.
- Contemporary Transvaal Art – sculptures and paintings.
- 1959 – Lidchi Art Gallery – group show.
- Association of Arts, Pretoria – “Art Fiftynine” – eight artists’ works.
- São Paulo Biennale – etchings and paintings.
- Transvaal Academy Exhibition – two oils.
- 1960 – Quadrennial exhibition of South African Art.
- Yugoslavia Graphic Art Exhibition.
- Contemporary Transvaal Art – at the Oula – Pretoria sculpture.
- Group show, Helen de Leeuw Gallery, Pretoria – jewellery.
- 1962 – Washington USA – exhibition of jewellery.
- 1963 – New Association of Arts Gallery – exhibition of works by Transvaal artists who have participated in Biennale (Venice and São Paulo).
- Association of Arts, Pretoria – retrospective one man show (10 years).
- 1964 – S. Art Today – Rembrandt Corporation – sculptures and paintings.
- S.A. Association of Arts, Pretoria – jewellery exhibition.
- 1965 – Gallery 101 – Johannesburg – exhibition of paintings, drawings and sculptures – one man show.
- S.A. Association of Arts, Pretoria – paintings, drawings and sculptures – one man show.
- Department of Information exhibition of jewellery in Florence.
- Wolpe Art Gallery, Cape Town – one man show – sculptures, paintings and etchings.
- 1966 – Republic Festival Exhibition – paintings, sculptures and etchings.
- Hester Rupert Art Museum, Graaff-Reinet – one oil (given).
- Association of Arts, Pretoria – exhibition of paintings.
- 1967 – Association of Arts, Pretoria – exhibition of sculpture in Ciment Fondu – one man show.
- OFS Arts Society – group show – drawings.
- 1968 – NSA Durban – one man show – drawings
- 1969 – Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg – paintings and drawings – one man show.
- Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg – jewellery – one man show.
- 1971 – S.A. Association of Arts, Republic Festival – sculpture.
- 1973 – São Paulo Biennale – four sculptures, stainless steel.
- 1978 (Sept) – Gallery International, Cape Town exhibition of sculpture – one man show – stainless steel and bronze.
- 1978 (Nov) – S.A. Association of Arts, Pretoria – exhibition of sculpture – one man show – stainless steel, mild steel and bronze.
- “Orpheus” for the music conservatoire.
- 1968 – Pretoria Art Museum – sculpture in wood “Eroica”.
- 1971 – Norwich Union, Salisbury – fountain, stainless steel.
- Kenridge Hospital, Johannesburg – cross, stainless steel.
- Jan Smuts Airport – sculpture, stainless steel.
- 1972/74 – “Civitas” – Department of Interior, Pretoria – sculpture, stainless steel.
- 1974 – Castrol House, Johannesburg – wall sculpture, stainless steel.
- 1975 – Northcliff House, Johannesburg – sculpture, stainless steel.
- Johannesburg Art Gallery – sculpture, stainless steel.
- Synagogue (Remembrance Hall), Vereeniging – sculpture, stainless steel.
- 1976 – National Gallery, Cape Town – sculpture, stainless steel.
- 1977 – Rand Afrikaans University – trophy, bronze.
- SABC – yearly TV Award “Artes”, gilded metal.
- 1977/78 – Entrance portal – Hoër Tegniese Skool, Pretoria Tuine.
- 1979 – New Volkscas Bank, Pretoria – sculpture, stainless steel.
- 1980 – New Opera House, Pretoria – sculpture, stainless steel.
- 1980/81 – Civic Centre Cape Town – commission for major sculpture, stainless steel.

Articles published on Johan van Heerden

- Artlook 10 – September 1967
- Artlook 30 – May 1969 – by Lionel Abrahams
- Crossflow 5

Commissions

- 1965 – Pretoria Art Museum – sculpture (granite).
- 1966 – University of South Africa – sculpture in wood.
- University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein – four panels for the Music Conservatoire “The 4 Seasons”.
- University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein – sculpture (mild steel, bronze)

Johan van Heerden



Untitled



Untitled



Untitled



Untitled