

HERMAN WALD

by DAVID FRAM



*"The Challenge" Bronze.
"The man who has not challenged the skies and the
earth with his fists has gained nothing."*

There was a time when the apostles of art were questing unceasingly for new forms and new methods in painting and were initiating many new movements and "isms". It was one of the finest periods of artistic challenge and revelation in technique, in expression and composition as well as in the aesthetic and metaphysical realms.

At the beginning of the twenties, soon after the first world war, daring experimentations in the plastic arts were conducted by the Parnassians. Every studio, art exhibition and gallery was caught up in the revolution of that interesting and creative period. Old truths and laws were swept aside and new concepts and perceptions were brought forth as Mount Parnassus was conquered by the Renaissance of the twentieth century.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that our own sculptor Herman Wald should have fallen under the spell of the deep surge and stir of those creative years. Herman Wald, a child of his time and a product of that search for new truths, began his artistic creation with a devoted, yet cautious quest for new truths. His path led him at first to stark realism. But already at that time his sculptures were illuminated by a special quality which sprang mainly from the artist's personality, his emotions and moods. His sculptures of that period are distinguished by realism of line and figuration and by their exactitude and faithfulness to the subject, which established Herman Wald at once as a very good, indeed outstanding, portraitist. Later Wald obviously became discontented with realism in itself and gradually turned towards the heroic and the colossal.

The artist now fell under the spell of power and surge. He became possessed by the gigantic, by bulk, by Parnassus. He triumphed over the mechanical difficulties of his art, and created huge, monumental works in marble, wood, bronze and copper. Here Wald became the creator of the eternal memorial. It is sufficient to mention only a few of his colossuses, of his expressive sculptures such as "Kriah" and the Monument of our Martyrs, the memorial to the six million of blessed memory of the martyred Jewry, to appreciate the profoundness and aesthetic impact of Herman Wald's artistic achievement.

In his themes Wald now begins to express his special technique, a specific Waldian understanding. His latest work fits harmoniously into modern architecture. His shapes and lines clearly stress the modern tendency towards the skyscraper. But apart from range and stature, Wald is also an artist of ideas. His sculptures are not only technical achievements; they reflect, to a large extent, his mood, his soul, his artistic whims and fancies. Furthermore it is obvious that, apart from his artistic virtues, Herman Wald expresses his own original philosophy. He imbues his works with his own interpretation of the subject, with his own opinion and his incisive comment.

In the several decades during which Herman Wald has lived and created in South Africa, he has reached the summit of Parnassus. He has fashioned himself into a gifted artist of impressive stature and he has created great artistic values in the monumental plastic art. He has discovered in his striving and development his own Waldian truth — the colossus. □

"Muzsika"

Fibreglass for Bronze.

"If musicians had to play on the strings of their own fibre they would never go flat"



"Lot's Wife" Fibreglass.

"Humanity has always been fossilized — right from the pre-historic Serfontein caves up until the concrete age of today".

