



Exhibition: **ANDREU ALFARO**
IVAM – Institut Valencia d'Art Modern
2nd October – 9th December

Organized by: IVAM – Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

Curator: Vicente Jarque

The exhibition consists of 92 pieces ranging from the late 50's to nowadays and displayed under the criterion of including works especially representative of all the periods of the artist's career and the most important series of each of them. On occasion of the exhibition, the IVAM has organized an educational workshop about Andreu Alfaro's work. The activities developed in this workshop introduce the participants in the creative processes and the analysis of the expressive mechanisms of the artist. Participants work on the formal and space features of the public sculptures of the *Generatrices* series, and afterwards, in a second activity, they make a sculpture of simplified forms: a drawing in space. The workshop will be held from Tuesday to Friday for group visits with advance booking and Sunday mornings for families. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue including images of the works exhibited and texts by Vicente Jarque, Tomàs Llorens, Eduardo Arroyo, Francisco Calvo Serraller, José Francisco Yvars, and Consuelo Ciscar, director of the IVAM.

One of the most startling aspects in Andreu Alfaro's career is his wide variety of interests; his ability to work with a number of different materials depending on a diversity of plans which range from an abstract or geometric character to a stylized figurative one. In fact, the foundation of his entire work is the concept of drawing as plastic and symbolic language; through it Alfaro understands his sculptures as castings of a line in three-dimensional space.

On the other hand, Alfaro's work has remained partly outshined because of the popularity reached in the 70's by the *Generatrices*, those sculptures made of a series of metal rods or sticks following a mathematic law. The forms so achieved offered a number of views and proved to be especially suitable to become public sculptures. This circumstance, together with the lack of

exhibitions of this artist's work in Valencian galleries (since Alfaro has normally presented his pieces in Madrid for many years), has involved that Alfaro is the most well-known artist, but also the one whose pieces remain most unknown.

In order to correct this view through the comparison of Alfaro's works, and taking into account that the last great exhibition devoted to this artist in Valencia took place in the IVAM in 1991, and the fact that since that time he has been working tirelessly, it seems appropriate to make a new revision of the artist's collection of works. Thus, the exhibition to be presented in the IVAM from 2nd October onward aims to offer the most complete image possible of Alfaro's career so that the audience can inspect it in all its multiple dimensions and registers, that is to say, all its richness.

The exhibition presents an important special feature: it is composed of works from the own artist's collection. Thus, the pieces are *alfaros* conserved, repurchased or reconstructed by the artist himself, who has contributed to make a selection of his work. In a certain way, this pieces are a selfportrait of the artist's career; an estimated image of what the author, after more than fifty years of work, considers to somehow summarize his paths, concerns and interests, which have been many but always developed in the frame of an outstanding inner coherence.

ANDREU ALFARO (Valencia, 1929) got his start in art as draftsman and painter in the second half of the 50's, presenting his first solo exhibitions in 1957 and 1958. His early sculptures already show the artist's firm arrangement on formal experimentation, what relates him to the sculpture of that period representing the legacy of Constructivism in Europe. He entered the Grupo Parpalló in 1959 and contributed to its ideological reorganization towards an analytical art then named normativism.

Despite Alfaro's career is changeable and diversified, he has nevertheless maintained some basic conceptions such as the incorporation of the methodology of industrial processes and materials to the artistic creation, and the belief that sculpture must serve to symbolize attitudes or collective arguments. Until the middle 60's, Alfaro works the same with tinfoil and wire as with rods and laminate plates used in industry, composing geometric forms in which space constitutes an inherent element of the works. In these early years Oteiza's theoretical influence on him is rather important. During the second half of the 60's, Alfaro's language becomes more synthetic, early in tune with Minimalist aesthetic; in this time he also makes some pieces in wood and faces for the first time the matter as mass, a traditional problem of sculpture the artist will not pay too much attention to in future. In the 70's, he made himself known to a wider audience with some works in coloured plexiglas in which he skillfully exploits the plastic possibilities of symmetry and geometric shapes repetition. These pieces produce startling optical and kinetic effects that include its author in these artistic movements in a special way.

Already in the 80's, after the important retrospective that took place in 1979 (Velázquez Palace – Retiro Park, Madrid), Alfaro changed the direction of his works and turned back to basic problems of sculpture, like volume, or

introduced new ones, such as representative art, by taking as a basis thoughts on traditional cultural motifs (human body, Baroque, Goethe's figure, time and memory, kouroi). In this period, he uses more traditional materials such as limestone or marble. A particular comment has to be devoted to his large sculptures, which made in a monumental scale and with the purpose of being incorporated in public spaces as real collective monuments, are found in a number of Spanish (Madrid, Valencia, Barcelona or Burgos) and German cities (Cologne, Mainz o Francfurt).