

FESTIVAL OF VISUAL ARTS
HARROGATE August 6-13

Olga Jancic

The young Yugoslav sculptress, who displays a selection of her work at Harrogate, combines that rare blend of consummate technical skill with a clear, uncluttered sense of conception, that recalls the superb, simple imagery of Miss Barbara Hepworth. She has of course different things to say than Miss Hepworth – and is, anyway, a figurative and not an abstract sculptress – but the lucidity of her thought, and the clarity of her style and powers of technical execution, do bear a striking comparison with the work of the British sculptress. But here the comparison ends. In all else Olga Jancic is much closer to the anthropomorphism of Henry Moore.

'The starting point of my work' says Miss Jancic 'arises from the elemental experiences, thoughts, and feelings of man; those which link him indissolubly with the forces of creation, existence, and death. I simply try to find the most adequate forms through which to express, and subdue, the ideas and emotions that bind him to these themes'.

This powerful and revealing statement is in itself an illustration of the purpose and clarity of Miss Jancic's approach to the problems of her art.

Born at Bitola (Macedonia) in 1929, she now lives and works in Belgrade. At the age of 16 she was admitted to the Academy of Fine Arts, and subsequently worked in the studio of the great Yugoslav sculptor, Toma Rosandic. She has had many exhibitions of her work in Yugoslavia, Italy, Poland and Belgium, and last year, won the major award for sculpture at the Paris Biennale with her *Maternity* and *Forms in Love*. Among the Judges were Ossip Zadkine, and Henry Moore who thinks highly of her work.

There seems little doubt that Olga Jancic is among the most forceful and promising of young sculptresses at work in Europe today. An artist of immense potential who already forges the creative surge and energy of a Mestrovic on the anvil of a technical calmness, and impeccable control of her materials which evokes, as I say, comparisons with Miss Hepworth. She is unquestionably marked for greatness.

MERVYN LEVY

Above, OLGA JANCIC *Forms in love*, 1959, bronze. Harrogate Festival of the Visual Arts 1960
below OLGA JANCIC herself Harrogate Festival of the Visual Arts, 1959

