



HDK-VALAND – ACADEMY OF ART AND DESIGN

Transmutation of the Human Body

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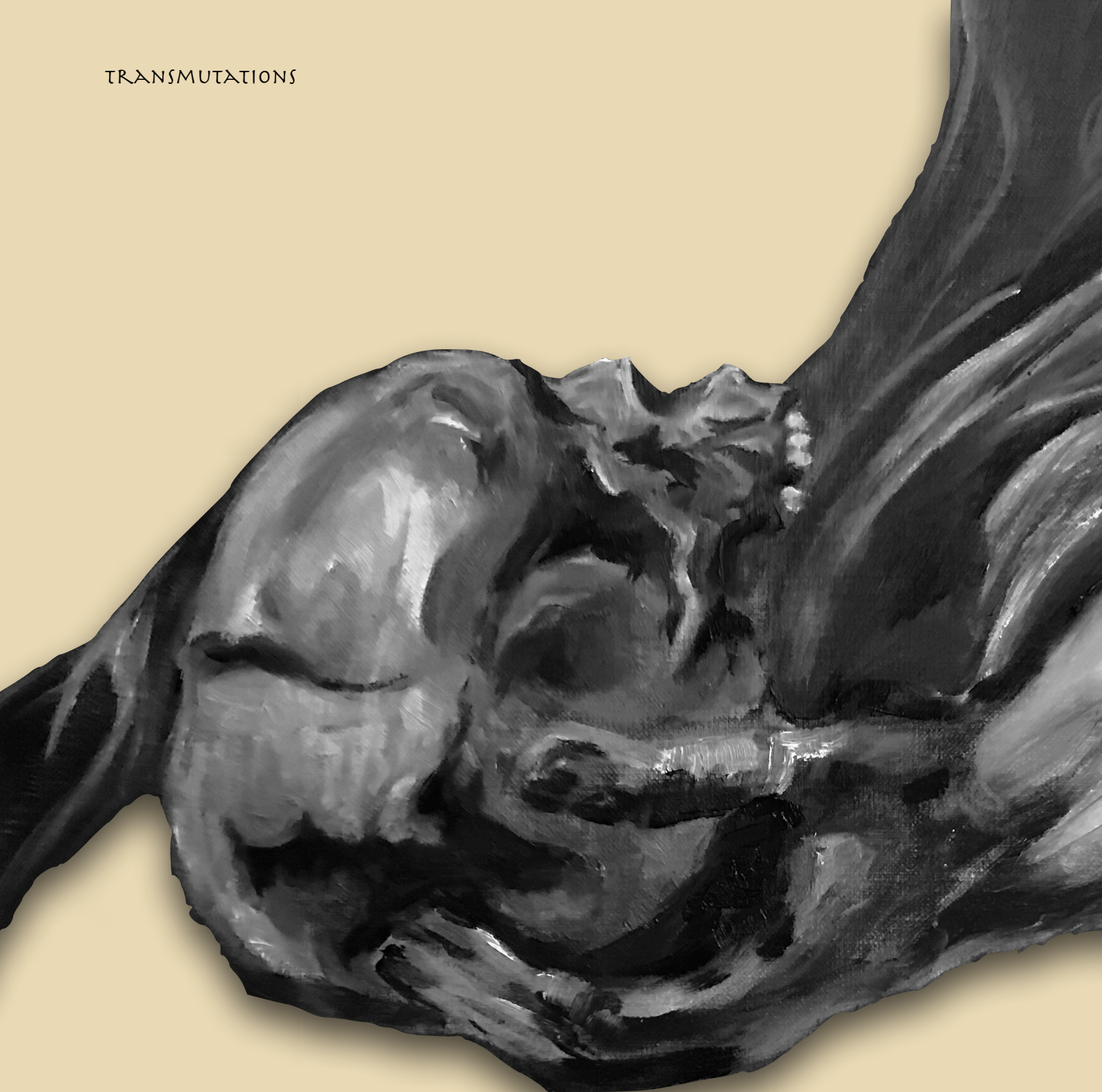
Transmutation of the Human Body



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XVIII . V . MMXXIV

TRANSMUTATIONS



Abstract

The Human body exists in a state of a constant change, marked not only by the passage of time but also by each person's character, faced challenges and choices. A plethora of experiences and emotions act as a motor for behavioural and physical changes which is the subject of the current project. Via various sculptures I exaggerate and transform "humans" into metal bodies with undefined features, conveying certain emotions, movement patterns with the main goal of exploring the boundaries of the Human Transmutations.

In this humanitarian quest for defining a language for describing the morphed human body I rely on the use of various techniques centred around the use of metal. Starting from the Oxyacetylene welding, going through volume building and even exploring different surface textures I extended my visual artistic expression and understanding. Furthermore I firmly believe the metal metaphorically morphs, changes and ages as much as the human body, creating beautiful parallels and connections between the two, naturally becoming the central topic of my project.

Key words

**TRANSMUTATION, HUMAN BODY, METAL, CHANGE,
SCULPTURE, OXYACETYLENE WELDING, EXAGGERATED BODIES,
HUMANITARIAN, EXPRESSION, EMBODIED IN METAL.**

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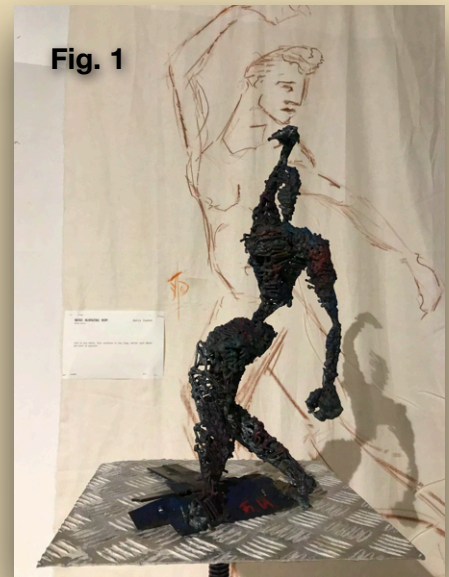
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Background

I. Developing the idea for the project

During the last couple of years studying Metal art, I was always curious about the perspective to materialise the image of the human body I had in my mind using the fluidity and the characteristics of the metal. There were vigorous experiments that were bringing me mixed results. However in my second year I had a moment of realisation and I found the expression that helps me express my vision about the body. **(Fig. 1)** There were still more than few questions that were feeding my curiosity, for example I became interested in developing connections between my sculptures and fine art elements. Furthermore I was intrigued by the possibility of creating an ensemble of “bodies”, united by non-descriptive feeling that can transform into different narratives.



The end of the summer 2023 presented me with opportunity to travel and expand my artistic ability in Spain. Naturally, once there I was mesmerised by the art of El Greco and the way he views the human body. **(Fig. 2 on page XII)** In addition I found similarities between the exaggeration of the limbs in his paintings **(Fig.3 on page XII)** and my previous sculptures **(Fig. 4 on page XII)**. In the documentary called “The Untold Darkness of the Renaissance” by Waldemar Januszczak, the author defends the term “Mannerism plus” to describe the El Greco’s approach to painting. He argues that mannerism is a tool for an artist to showcase craftsmanship and talent, where poses are overly dramatic, the gestures are overly expressive and the bodies are depicted with emphasis on exaggerated body parts such as hands, legs and

heads where the movement becomes centre of attention (Perspective, 2020). Here I found the starting point for my further research.

II. Why the Human body?

Looking back I believe my fascination with the living human body is intertwined with my love for the movement and sports. I was always watching football, volleyball and basketball with my father and even more so I was playing on the streets. Furthermore the ability of the body to stabilise

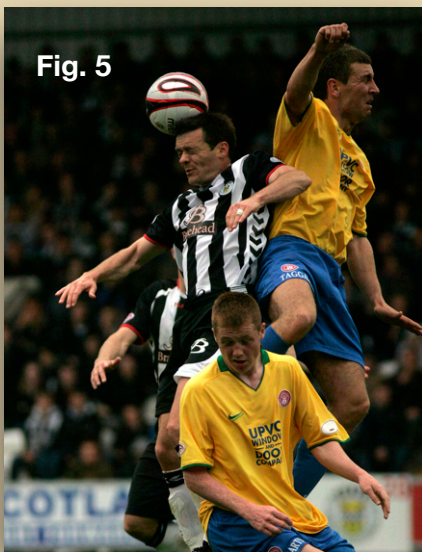


Fig. 5

and find itself in an awkward looking balance positions (**Fig.5**) made me realise that I might not notice the clothes or the haircut of a person, for example, but instead his movement patterns. If you think about it, a person can be recognised only by his silhouette or the way he shambles on the road. Nevertheless for me each gesture or body position gives a small glimpse into a person's inner world. For this reason I am stressing on my fascination with the

living body and even more so I want to translate this fluid beauty of the body adaptation and movement into my sculptural work.

My thoughts on the subject I found perfectly illustrated in the words of the revolutionary sculptor Giacometti from an interview for the film "Un homme parmi les hommes" (Spectacles Sélection, 2018) where he states that:

"I used to stare so intensely at people [...] As if I wasn't seeing what I wanted to see. As if everything was so cloudy that it was impossible to decipher what I wanted to see, what I was seeing." (Spectacles Sélection, 2018)

This uncertainty, mixed with fascination and curiosity, I found



Fig. 6

present in his sculptures (**Fig. 6**) and it gave me the idea that if I want to be able to see the human body and find what I was looking for I need to develop my own sculptural language and for that purpose I found the oxyacetylene welding the right tool for me...

III. Welding technique enhances the expression

Since I have explained the choice of subject matter (the human body), it is important to expand on my reasoning for utilising welding techniques in my sculptural work. Furthermore I will describe what they give me expression wise.



An year ago I found myself reading a guide book on creating welded sculpture by Nathan Cabot Hale (1994), where he carefully explains the steps he uses when crafting a sculpture. From there I experimented with his instructions about creating abstract and geometrical shapes (Hale, 1994) and discovered possible draft for creating my own twist on the technique. Afterwards with the help of a workshop held at the Steneby campus by

Miriam Ståhlgren and further experiments on my own (**Fig.7**) I developed an expression that reflects my view on the matter and was different from the examples I found in the mentioned book. It is based on creating abstract skeleton and foundation by welding together pieces of steel wire by the means of Oxyacetylene welding (gas welding) and then adding welding rods, copper wire and small scrap steel pieces to create volume. All the while still leaving parts of the skeleton exposed. Learning more and more about the welding and the materials I



found it interesting that the human body and the metals have similarities: they are sturdy, yet subject to changes, morphing and aging. This realisation defined my eagerness to “shape” bodies with the help of metalworking techniques. The experiments I carried last semester were all about creating lighter and more stable bases and constructions (**Fig.8**) in attempt to exaggerate further the mannerism so it can compare to the aforementioned “Mannerism plus” found in El Greco’s works, described in the documentary, narrated by Januszczak.

There will be more information on the technique provided in the “**Approach**” chapter but it was important to stress how this technique unlocked my artistic expression while working with the metal. In my opinion the unpredictability and the spontaneity of the gas welding method brings fluidity and strength to the sculpted human bodies, they evoke emotion and curiosity.

IV. My sculptures will not be just empty expressions. The role of Allegory and the influence of painting.

On 28th of November I arranged, in agreement with the Bohusläns museum, to look through artefacts and artworks located both in their archive and in their permanent collection. Furthermore thanks to the thorough guidance and explanations of the specialists there (Birgitta Ahlund, Ingela Lundin, Anna-Lena Segestam Macfie), I found the topic of Allegory in art very intriguing. Especially the simple yet sophisticated depiction of the Allegory of the “Virgin between Virtue and Vice” in the painting by the Flemish painter Jacob Jordaens (1593 - 1678). In short Allegories in art are used to convey certain moral or philosophical concepts in pictorial language so the message and symbols are recognisable by the audience. (Tate, 2018) Sometimes there might be included more complex and hard to read components which makes that genre so fascinating to me.

Between 18th and 20th of December I had the opportunity to study up close the aforementioned work by Jordaens and one still life by Abraham van Beijeren (1620 - 1690) and draw them and create studies (**Fig. 9-13 on page XIII and XIV**) in the museum hall, helping me to clear my concept and get familiar with such valuable works. The experience became the foundation for my further exploration and gave start to my current project. All the while pushing me to dig deeper into the topic of Allegory in Fine art and defining my own understanding of it. For example Allegory was used historically (including the seventeenth century I was interested in) to communicate familiar topics of morals and behaviour, emphasising on clear messaging for the audience.(Tate, 2018) However my intention is to allegorise the human body itself and with the help of the material (metal) to empower the audience to find their own readings on the topic of change, transmutation and complexity that life and time bring inevitably. In addition I will develop an artistic language that combines my sculptural expression in metal with symbols that I will adapt to my needs. For example I will use the skull, the skeleton and the representations of the earthly delights found in the paintings by Jordaens and van Beijeren, since I had the opportunity to study them up close. Yet, at the same time, I will try to craft my own symbols that incorporate the topics of hubris, wrath, the Ego, etc.

Simplified, the essence of my exam work will be to create sculptures conveying mixed feelings, obscure meanings and my view on the internal and external world of the humanity. In the same time carrying the influence of the rich history of seventeenth century paintings and the craftsmanship and mysteriousness of the ancient art.

V. My Idea around the Transmutations

During a lifetime, the human body experiences constant change, continuous wear and adaptation periods, marks are left on the skin and in the soul. Its not different for a sculpture, it experiences rapid development in

the hands of the artist and vigorous interpretations, furthermore once finished it continues to slowly morph and change its artistic values (for example Greek marble sculptures - **Fig. 14**). However I want to add another transmutative dimension with the use of metal - plasticity that breathes life into the sculpture, making the aging process more intense yet more humanlike because to me it feels like the “soul” of the sculpture (the symbols it is charged with) ages at the same time as its physical dimensions, making it hard to predict how many of the symbols are going to be able to hold strong or ... or just fade away with the passage of time.



Fig. 14

What is more, I want the texture and the traces of the metal on the surface and in the skeleton of the sculptures to feel and to be read as brushstrokes, where my hand is the brush and the steel is the colour. Where the metal keeps its fluid expression and adds tension with the sense that I have poured all my talent into the form. Simply put I want to construct “humans” where their foundation (skeleton) is either exposed or covered with “skin” - an idea of their inner world shining through. Nonetheless to show this narrative instead of “telling” about it, I chose techniques that give a voice to my creative idea, not leaving anything unexpressed.





Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

Fig. 12



Fig. 13

Purpose

With my current project I want to explore and prove that the human body is not only what we see or what we have been taught at school but it is also a language of movement and ideas. It is not only inspiration for artists but in the same time it lets them communicate with each other, whenever it is the headless, limbless ancient remains of a sculpture or the almost unrecognisable humans of Giacometti. They all carry the universal values and patterns, making me believe that I can create ensemble of sculptures, transmuting the human body and connecting it to the painterly language in metal I have been developing during my education at Metal Art program. On more philosophical note I want to explore the inner world of a human with each sculpture in a context of the social acceptance and the cultural heritage of the mankind.

Objective

For me to complete the purpose of the project, it is essential to clearly establish what I want to accomplish artistically and quality wise. Currently I am aiming to create around ten sculptures of morphed human bodies (or body parts) with exaggerated mannerism and varying in size, anywhere from 30 centimetres to more than 150 centimetres in height. In addition I want to connect some of them physically via metal base or other method to explore possible interactions. Important role in my project will be played by the texture and the feeling of the surface, where despite the different approaches

in the individual sculptures, there will be one clear visual and expressive language connecting them.

Questions formulation

- ❖ How can I maintain the feeling of the living human body via a transmutation into metal?
- ❖ Which qualities of the human body remain after the transmutation into metal sculpture and what new qualities are being introduced?
- ❖ How the sculptures interact with and influence one another while exhibited together?

Approach

As mentioned in the chapter about welding in the **Background** part of the Project description, my technique of choice for building the sculptures is Oxyacetylene welding (Gas welding). However I also intend to use Shielded metal arc welding (Stick welding) and Plasma cutting and gouging to create surfaces and expressions of more spontaneous nature. Welding is fairly popular technique in terms of creating sculptures and provides the artist with freedom to experiment and achieve results similar to classical stone sculpting but also to convey a very modern feeling as it can be seen in the written work of Judy Collischan - "Welded Sculpture of the Twentieth Century". There she methodically explains the origins of the welding in the industrial age and then how Picasso and his friend, a skilled metalworker named Julio Gonzáles, create intriguing visual languages of their own. (Collischan, 2000) However in the same book I found the works of Herbert Ferber (**Fig.15**) and they inspired the way I am finishing two of my sculptures

in the end of January this year. The use of Stick welding and plasma cutting to create texture and morph the surface, I discovered on my own during my first year of the current education via some experiments (**Fig.16**) and more over I found arc welding techniques explained in a simple manner in the work of Nathan Cabot Hale. (Hale, 1994) As a final touch to some of my sculptures I intend to add oil paint but in a way that does not cover the expression of the metal but enhances it subtly.

Before I start sculpting, I use type of sketching I call “mood drawings” - via simple lines, ink splashes and few colours I decide on the composition and the wanted result.

Having said that I intend to, in addition to all of the mentioned above, to read the book by Arline M. Fisch - “Textile Techniques in Metal” and attempt to find

interesting expressions to implement in my work.



Fig. 16

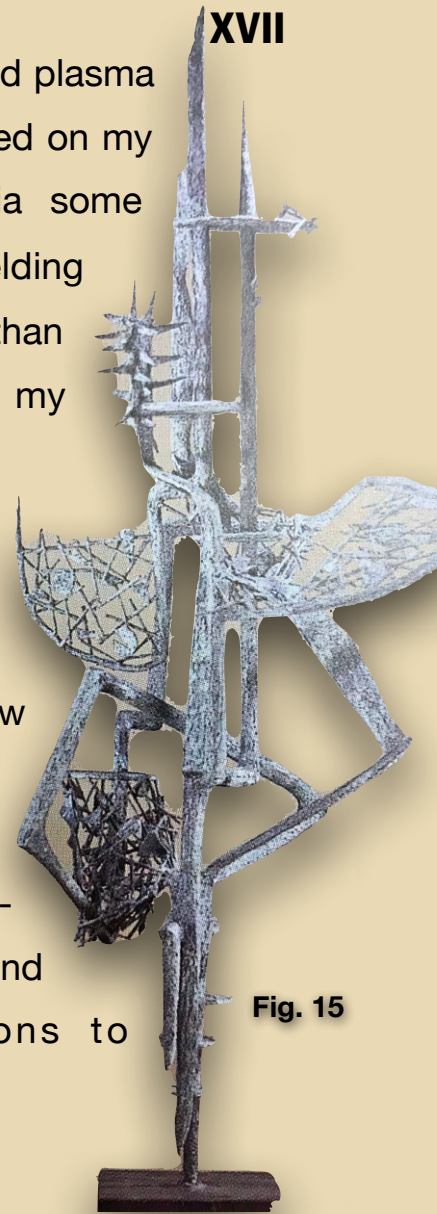
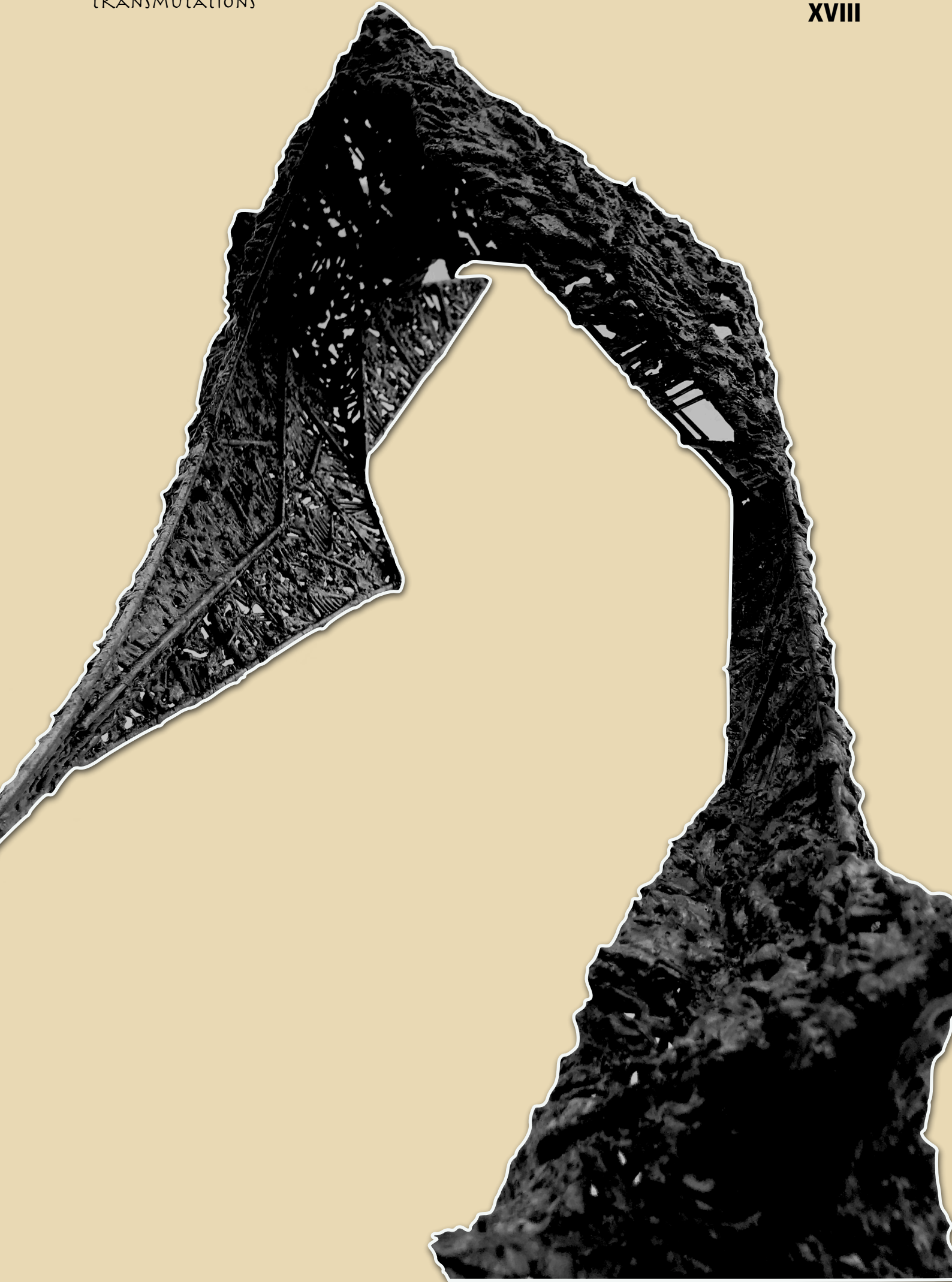


Fig. 15



Result of the process

Exploration, problems and technicalities

During my creative journey completing my exam work, I encountered plenty of intriguing questions and problems that helped me elevate my artistic output and aspiration. First of all when I started building my first two sculptures I made sketches to decide on the pose and the captured movement I wanted to express. I continued working with almost the same type of sketches during the whole process afterwards. (Fig.17-18)



Fig. 17



Fig. 18

Furthermore I found myself developing my ideas further, modifying my initial intentions, deviating from the sketches and finding new movement qualities that changed my perspective. This approach proved to be the most suitable for my project purpose since it is a fluid working attitude that develops over time as the bodies and the sculptures do in their own right. On the other

hand it let me be more flexible when interpreting movement and translating it into sketches and then sculptures. After completing my first two sculptures I felt that there is a room for growth and experimentation in my subsequent work. Although my sketches barely changed, my gas welding technique and ideas rapidly expanded. Looking at my works from last year (shown in the chapter [Background](#)), I found interesting expressions I wanted to follow further and at the same time I also carried few more experiments with textures (Fig.19) so that I can match my ideas to my actual work. Feeling confident I started working on few new sculptures at the same time while exploring different sport



Fig. 19

and dancing events so I can use inspiration from the movements I find there. However to describe better the development of my approach I will describe shortly how I was working on my first two sculptures. As a starter I created relatively heavy looking architectural structures to use as a base to compliment the expression I was going for in the actual sculpture. Furthermore for the bodies I was using welding rods with 3.2 mm thickness with combination with flat wire. My intend was to create

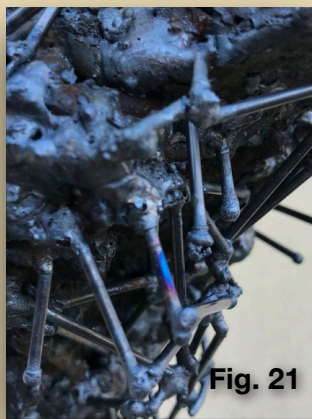


Fig. 21

surfaces that are clearly separated and defined by the direction I was welding the rods in. (Fig.20)

Resulting in sculptures with easy

to read direction and movement. At the same time I was exploring the possibility of welding small thinner freestanding rods, coming out of the sculpture to enhance the artistic message. (Fig.21)



Fig. 20

With that in mind I continued with my sketching process and looked through the book by Arline M. Fisch - "Textile Techniques in Metal" that I briefly mentioned in the **Approach** chapter. Despite the fact I did not find the described techniques suitable for my style, I did find the results, expressions and compositions not only interesting but also inspiring. (Fig.22 - Visual reference from Fish, 1996) Due to the new curiosity



Fig. 22

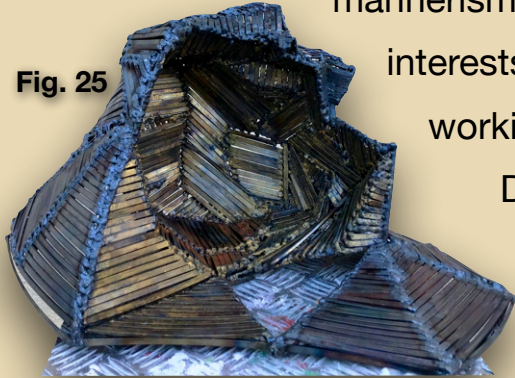
rush I explored more chaotic arrangement of the wires and the rods, combined with the previously explored pattern. (Fig.23) At that point I started experimenting with adding oil colour to the already finished pieces all the while working simultaneously on few new ones. On another note I was omitting limbs, or parts of the body



Fig. 23

adding new exaggerated features or even going as far as keeping just the head, discarding the body in one of them. (Fig.24-25) All in effort to develop sculptural

Fig. 25



mannerism in my pieces, a topic that interests me throughout the whole working process.

During this phase I arrived on another crossroad

where I was looking at my separate pieces and how they interact with one another but still are separate

bodies, standing on their own heavy bases, almost like different people that exist simultaneously in a community but are yet not united. Furthering that thought I decided to experiment with more simple and related bases, not heavy in appearance and relying more on the airy volume created by the empty space. With that approach the body of the sculpture will seem heavier than the base and in the same time an interesting question grabbed my attention: "What if I unite few sculptures with a shared base, creating a narrative?". After applying this intention to my newly built three sculptures I had the time to reflect on the result. The composition and the common base made the joined sculptures appear bigger and engaged with one another.

(Fig.26) Additionally it was the right time to develop on top of the used technique. I started with combining small elements and organically shaped wire on the surface of the sculptures, the postures become simplified and

heavily heading towards the abstraction.

Fig. 27



At the same time I had not stopped looking at the opposite direction - experimenting with textures created by the means of Shielded metal arc welding (Stick welding) and Plasma cutting (Fig.27). With that creating a different and still heavy base, intended for a female body sculpture. The

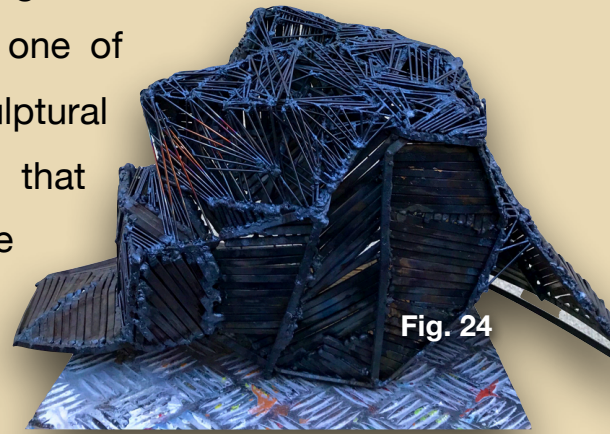


Fig. 24



Fig. 26

sculpture was inspired by the Venus de Milo (**Fig.28**) and the Venus of Willendorf (**Fig.29**), exploring the themes of femininity and grace, of fertility and adoration. In order to translate the sensory experience that the



Fig. 28

prehistoric humans had while carrying the Venus of Willendorf, I created surface for the body of the sculpture that evokes the feeling of touching something old and mystical, a symbol of believe or even hope. Instead of leaving the wire and the rots intact on the surface I melted them together, adding material or leaving holes when necessary. (**Fig.30**) It felt natural to my hand as if I was painting with a thick brush - leaving marks and character to the canvas, in that case the body.



Fig. 29

Using the experience I gathered from the process so far, in the next few

sculptures I decided to use the mentioned technique and combine it with fragile elements from thin 2 mm welding rod. More so I wanted to experiment also with the dimensions of the sculptures - pushing the height and narrowing the width. Uniting the base with the body in the next sculpture gave me an unexpected perspective on how the sculptures can be perceived -

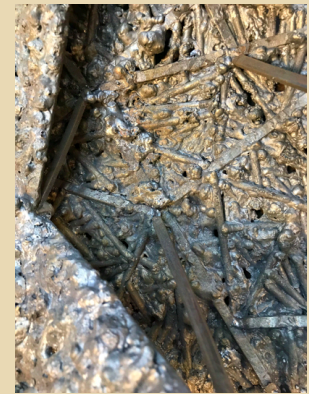


Fig. 30

as organic shape stretched and moulded from the base. On another note I decided to have another take on the construction of wings I used in my first sculpture. While still using them as the main accent of the piece I made them different in texture and feel - unrealistic in construction, aggressively spread, almost like taken from a nightmarish context, corresponding with the idea of a blind wrath. (**Fig.31**)

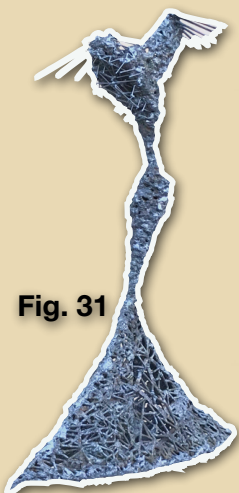


Fig. 31

For my final piece I aimed to continue on with the dimension variants and to push the height of the sculpture to new limits all the while preserving the slimmer silhouette. Furthermore I wanted to use combinations of the previously used techniques in a more allegorical way in order to explore new topic - the



Fig. 32

form and the expansion of the “Ego”. To emphasise on the engulfing properties of a huge Ego I resorted to another interpretation of the wings. Here they are as much as part of the body as they are protective coverage, shielding the morphing human body. Separating them in sections that will have no use in the nature but in the same time revealing plenty about the idea, the concept behind the sculpture. Signalling power, control and unapologetic will, dangerous concepts if left unattended. Equivalently the head of the body transmutes into predatory jaws... (Fig.32-33) Technically the sculpture



Fig. 33

towers over the others with a height of over 1.60 metres and will be exhibited as a counterbalance to the rest of the ensemble, creating a smooth and aesthetic composition to be looked at.

Expanded information, with photos and text, about some of the individual sculptures that were just briefly mentioned in this chapter I added in the chapter [“Additional Images with explanations”](#), starting from page 30.

Philosophical exploration alongside the process

During the process of sketching and developing the sculptures there were, and still are, some philosophical and ethical aspects arising and I consider them as important as the physical making of the art pieces. In their essence they are somewhat different from the questions I formulated earlier, although in the same time they touch on topics that help me analyse the aforementioned questions. First of all I wanted to find out what defines my sculptures - is it the material, the technique or the meanings. In my opinion, looking back at my sketching, material tryouts and experiments I see all three present but the technique takes over in a sense that it defines how the material will look in the end, what sensory experience there will be for the audience. The sculptures look like three-dimensional translation of my

sketches and material expression of my thoughts and aspirations. Working with the previously described welding technique, the pieces were set in cultural setting that have roots both in the modernistic sculpture from the first part of the 20th century and also spreads out to more ancient visual references. I believe that sets them in a larger historical and artistic context spreading throughout the history of humankind, yet a definition of my current artistic language and interest, incorporating techniques and topics that I can see evolving in the future.

However on the other hand there is the question about where the sculptures belong. They are narrowly connected to the structure of various societies, where different norms lead to different level of acceptance. Furthermore, in my opinion, the weird, the morphed and the grotesque have always been a curious subject throughout the history (including the art history) defining the vastly different yet somewhat shared cultural heritage of the humankind. In my sculptures, via mannerism and exaggeration, I attempt to show the understanding I have on the social norms and boundaries, relating it to the way the bodies move, stand or interact. "The humans" I construct are a look into an imaginary future where the skeleton, the cover and the soul are exposed but not vulnerable. Broadening the social acceptance and perceptions is an idea that I want to explore further after finishing my exam work, owing to the fact that it contains topics concerning the sustainable evolution of the social structures to represent more of what people need, want or see.

On a slightly different note I believe that my project touches on the humanitarian aspect of knowledge and heritage. In short this is the sustainable and cultural aspect of my project where I want to emphasise on the importance of preserving the historical artistic experience and spark interest into diving deeper into the topic. Using my knowledge on 17th century painters and combining it with my passion for ancient art artefacts, I created my sculptures in a way that gives me new perspective and base for

reflection and development. Furthermore I firmly believe that the knowledge “encapsulated” in my art is going to be present in my future work and will carry on, in a sense, an educational values, keeping the art history alive.

Discussion and reflection

Regardless of my intention to follow a straight line of work, based on sketches and ideas, my work went in many different directions, taking sudden turns and in exchange enriched my viewpoint on the entire project. The sculptures grew in size and changed in expression yet the resulting sculptures remained on par with the initial ideas surpassing my plan for possible expressions. There was a transition from more figurative work towards the abstraction which let me to develop my artistic language further and my imagination was free to explore shapes, sizes and allegories. Looking back to the questions I set in the beginning of the project I see development and possibility to expand on them in future projects. At first I was not sure if turning to the abstraction will benefit my goal of preserving the feeling of the living body while shaping it into metal. However now I believe I can go even further - for example using stereometry shapes and uniformed lines to create a body or even constructing a structure, where the form is found in the negative space (I experimented with it in the aforementioned bases and also in the sculpture of the head). In the aftermath I see the abstraction as a tool enhancing the welding techniques I used, putting an accent on the texture and making the sculpture easier to be experienced via the senses. Furthermore the question now is **“How much of the body shapes can be omitted and the sculpture can still preserve the feeling of the living body?”** I am curious to explore the topic further in a future body of work.

As my ideas were evolving during the process, my technique also went through changes, I used the guiding methods introduced in the

aforementioned book by Hale (*Creating Welded Sculpture, 1994*) but instead of filling methodically solid and heavier form(leaving less room for deviation from the initial idea) I decided to fill only the outer shell and if needed to add more solid volume. That approach led me to more flexibility in my working process and also allowed for “happy accidents” where new effects and perception helped me further my project in an unexpected directions. In a way the material took over in certain instances and allowed for the pieces to interact more organically and fluidly with each other, leaving a “red thread” uniting the group. As a result one of my questions about the role of the individual sculpture in the ensemble, found its new reading: **“How the grouping of the sculptures influences their individual qualities?”** I had the opportunity to experiment with placement and distance between clusters of sculptures. The results showed me that each decision makes huge difference, in some arrangements the smaller sculptures disappeared but when placed alone, close to a group, they appeared more eye-catching. To summarise I believe that the group influences the individual sculpture more and not the opposite.

The concept of sustaining the knowledge and the inspiration, deriving from the art history, for the future, turned out to be valuable aspect of my finished work. Whenever it is the mannerism of El Greco, the brushstrokes of the seventeenth century flemish painters or the curious observations of Giacometti, I find my sculptures to be sustainable in attempting to communicate those artistic values to a broader audience.

Conclusion and result

The short period consisting of the time during and after the exam week presented me with new challenges and many questions to think about and potentially explore in the future. First of all before the exam show I had to figure out what could be the best way to exhibit my art and my process of

creating it. Even though I worked with different arrangements and podiums, different groupings and sources of light, I managed to pick the most appealing one. (Fig.34-36) It was important to show how the different sculptures relate to each other and how they create a space of relevance, where they are perceived as a group. All of them were placed on podiums with different heights, arranged



in such order so they form an unified base space with three-dimensionality on its own, including four peaks and three valleys. In my opinion, the whole ensemble looked bigger and well proportioned. The tallest sculpture - the “Ego” was placed on the central peak so it can be explored from bellow, exaggerating the low perspective view of the sculpture, in the spirit of the Mannerism. The exhibit and the position of the individual sculptures were also a topic discussed with the opponents

during the actual exam. Hence now it is appropriate to introduce the opponents and reflect on their feedback, critiques and recommendations. The first one was Delyth Done, recently awarded with MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) by King Charles III. (HCA, n.d.) The second opponent was Benjamin Kjellman-Chapin, a successful blacksmith part of Kjellman-Chapin Smeder (Kjellman-Chapin, n.d.). Their first observation was about the titles of the sculptures - what



names have I chosen, why I have chosen them and how they fit the sculptures. The conversation mainly circled around the centre piece (“Ego”) and the two others I chose to talk about (“Wrath” and “Hubris”), found on the foremost left and right peaks in the ensemble. Furthermore, thanks to that discussion I had the opportunity to argue my choice of extreme emotions - because I believe it corresponds well with my exploration of Mannerism and Expression, without getting confused and side-tracked by searching for nuances at the initial stages of sculpting. Naturally I can always add the deeper observations once I finish the body of the sculpture, feeling freedom in changing, transmuting and improving. On the other hand I received ideas on how to progress in my next projects and advice to concentrate on exploring the current topics deeper, giving me solid ground and confidence to work with in my future projects and reflect also on what I want to include in my thinking process. Furthermore I got interesting suggestions about the use of different techniques like forging or casting and the use of more colour. Even though they sounded really intriguing, I believe I should stick a little bit longer to my technique of choice (Oxyacetylene welding) due to the fact I believe there is plenty to discover and try out in my next project. On the same note I will explore new techniques when I feel the “hunger” to develop new expression. However I am really interested in exploring further the possibilities of adding colour, either by chemical processes or by experimenting with different paints. Another intriguing dialogue spawned from a question about the size and the abstraction in my sculptural bodies. When asked about my choice of height, I explained my desire to always experiment and push the limits of what I have achieved with every sculpture. My progress in the whole project is based on improving on the technique, the discovery of possible expressions and playing with the height and the abstraction of the bodies. Every time I push the abstraction and the transmutation in a sculpture, I feel free to add elements, such as surreal wings or exposed skeletal parts, jaws even. Furthermore I can test how

much I can increase the height without changing the technique and without compromising with the stability of the sculpture. During the talk with the opponents I also received feedback from the public on my exploration of the Mannerism and the influence of the aforementioned paintings by El Greco. We discussed how they affect my artistic language and it led to the thought (post exam day) about the sustainable and the cultural aspects of my work. Where I try to preserve the knowledge about the seventeenth century art and ancient artefacts, their potential to influence the future of art. Furthermore I believe my sculpting work is centred around the thought to share this knowledge with my audience and be part of the cultural heritage carried by the art for the future.

On the more practical side of my work I received a question about my choice to exclude my paintings from the presentation. My argument was summarised by my intention to put accent only on my metal works due to the nature of the exam and exhibit my paintings in the graduation show in Bohusläns Museum in May (as seen in **Fig. 37**), when I can use them as a context for my pieces, due to the fact I was inspired by the paintings, I studied in the same museum during the previous semester. Another practical discussion topic set by the opponents, was directed towards my technique of choice and how I utilise it to “pour” my passion for art in my sculptures. While explaining how I use the welded wire pieces as abstract brushstrokes, my opponents suggested I should look for expressions defining each sculpture individually and maybe concentrate on one sculpture at the time. I believe that is a strong point to base my future art on, because I spend my last year exploring and developing expressions and now it is time to reap the benefits simply by letting my art mature in the expressions I like the most.

The conversation as a whole is something, I believe, that will become integral part of my next artistic projects since I gained new perspective on how to approach a body of work and how to strengthen my visual presentation. Nonetheless it helped me to have a clear vision on how I want

my works to be exhibited during the exam show in Bohusläns Museum, Uddevalla. However before mentioning that specific exhibition, I want to write more about my future intentions and how they correspond with my current work and how they are affected by the discussion part of my exam. First and foremost I want to explore the topic of "Passion" in a new sculpture, where I will try to implement increased volume in the base but using less material, keeping



Fig. 37

the importance of the empty space. As suggested by the opponents I will continue on my discovery journey on surfaces and attempt on creating the

illusion of really heavy standing body, stretching over two metres in height. After the project, no matter success or not I will delve deeper into the topics I have already explored in a search for more possibilities to implement mannerism and allegorical meanings. On another note I want to keep and expand on the cultural and sustainable aspects that my work carries -

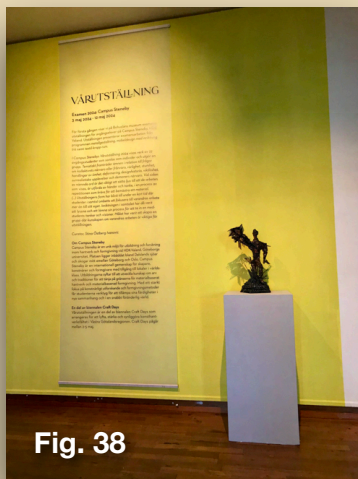


Fig. 38

keeping the historical knowledge and analogies alive and present in each sculpture because I believe that is the artistic language unifying all of my art pieces.

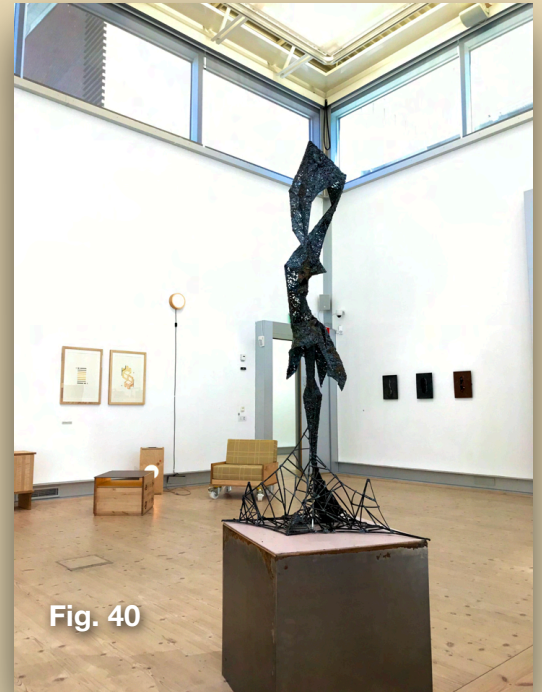
In Uddevalla, I had the opportunity to place my works alongside all the graduating students from campus Steneby in the big halls of the Bohusläns Museum. The show was curated by the artist Stina Östberg Ivanovic and was titled "Vårutställning". After aligning my vision on how to place my works with the advices of the curator I was satisfied to find how well my pieces interact with their



Fig. 39

environment. While some were placed next to the neon yellow colour (theme colour for the exhibition) and in relation to my painting (**Fig.37-39**), my centre piece (“Ego”) was situated in the middle of the largest hall on a podium composed by four slightly rusty metal sheets, attached to a base. (**Fig.40**) The feedback received during the opening of the show and the following week encouraged me to continue on my artistic path. Additionally on 11th of May together with fellow students Maia Hellman and Josefine Lundgren we held a workshop where we shared more insights about our process and techniques with the general public.

All in all, the hard work during the whole year, the exam and the exhibition might have been difficult at times, even stressful but in the end of the day they gave me stable base for my future endeavours... It was and adventure and a gateway to many more excitements!



During my education in the Metal Art program I met many new friends and inspirational people and I believe it is a good moment to end my report by thanking them. I believe my technique and experimental spirit were encouraged by the excellency of the metal workshop technician Oskar Pettersson who was always ready to help with advice or a quick tutorial. Gertrud Olsson on the other hand was a great help with furthering my understanding of the Art history and all the different methods of writing. Professor Heiner Zimmermann and Tobias Birgersson were constantly involved with practical guidance and advice so I was sure I have solid backing for my artistic development during the years. Where our other teachers Lina Söderberg, Karl Hallberg, Otto Samuelsson, Jokum Lind

Jensen were sharing their knowledge so I was able to learn how to approach any artistic task with no fear of failure. Furthermore my external tutor Marcelo Ferreira Gustafsson backed me up with interesting ideas about exhibiting my art and finding references in the contemporary setting. My classmates and all of the quest teachers helped me to broaden my perspective on creating Metal art. The people, I had interactions with, from Dals Långed and Uddevalla inspired me to give my all and finish my exam project. Without all the mentioned people above my project would not be able to carry the same energy and soul. Thank you!

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Figure 34 - Arrangement for the exam show, Boris Ivanov, 2024

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Figure 37 - Arrangement for the exhibition in Bohusläns Museum, Boris Ivanov, 2024

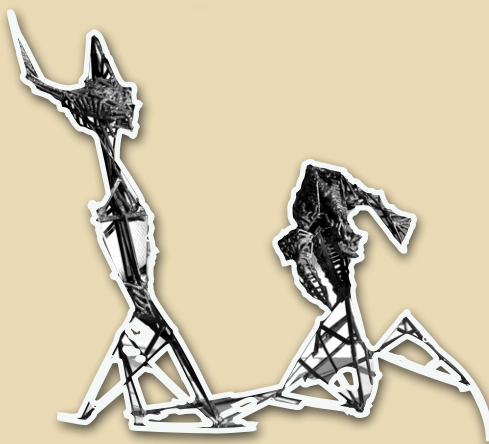
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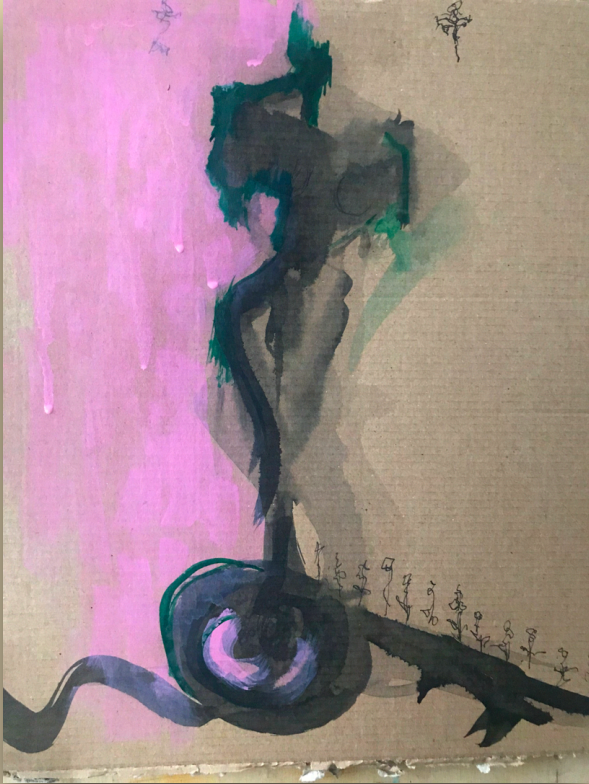
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Additional Images with explanations



Way of sketching - I use black ink to set general shapes and volumes, then I add colours that correspond to the general feel I want to convey. Photo by Boris Ivanov, 2024.



Way of sketching - I use chalk to illustrate the ideas, questions and approaches that arise during my work process. Photo by Boris Ivanov, 2024.



The working process - while using the method of Oxyacetylene welding (Gas welding) . Photo on the left by Maia Hellman, 2024.
Photo on the right by Gertrud Olsson, 2024

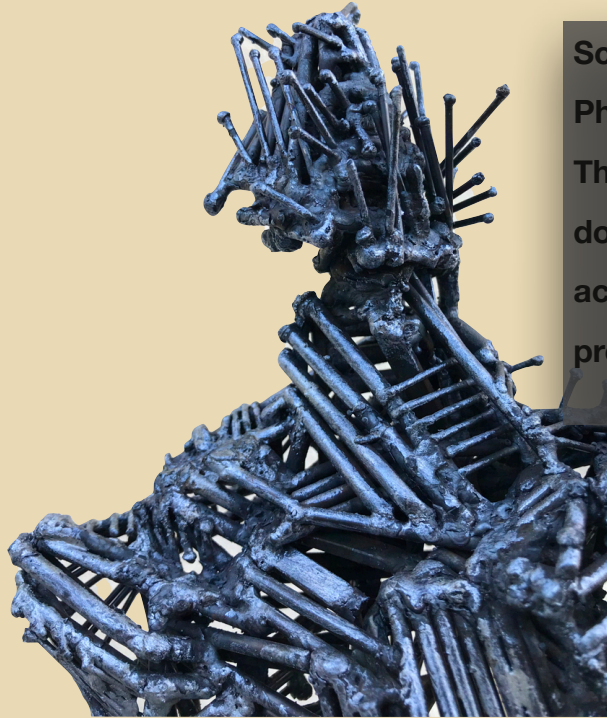


Sculpture on the theme of "Hubris".

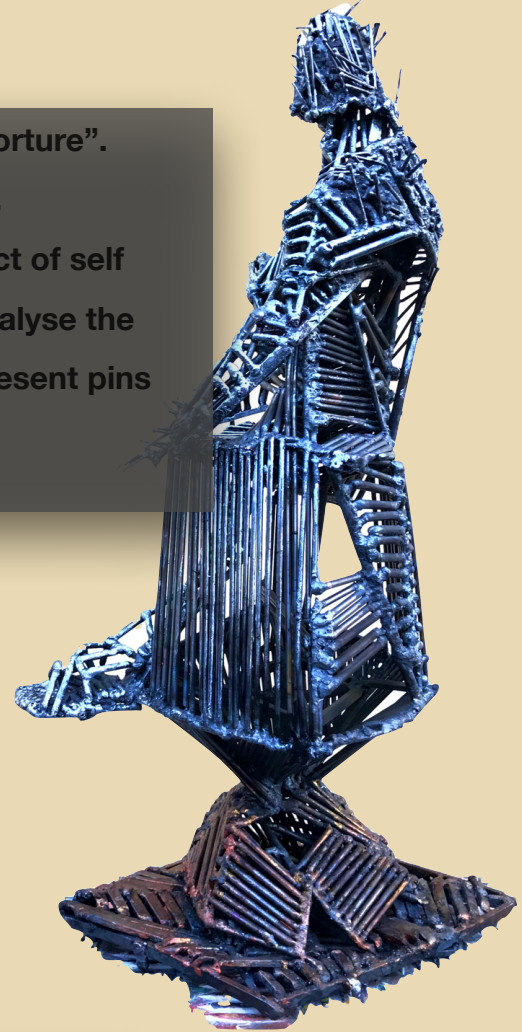
Photos by Boris Ivanov, 2024.

The movement is inspired by the act of flying and represents the hopes and falls that come together with the pride and the self-confidence.

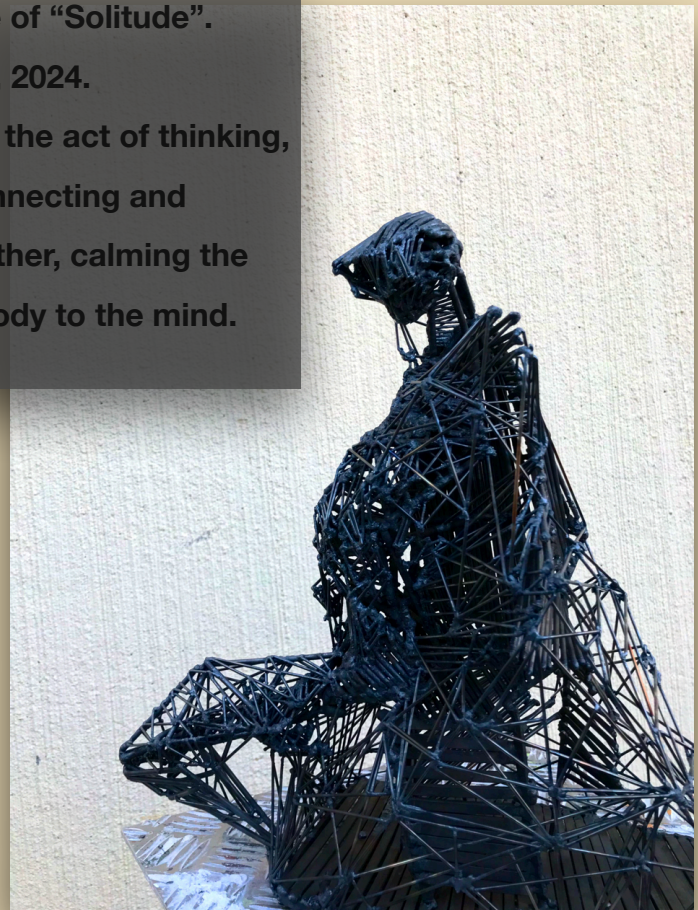
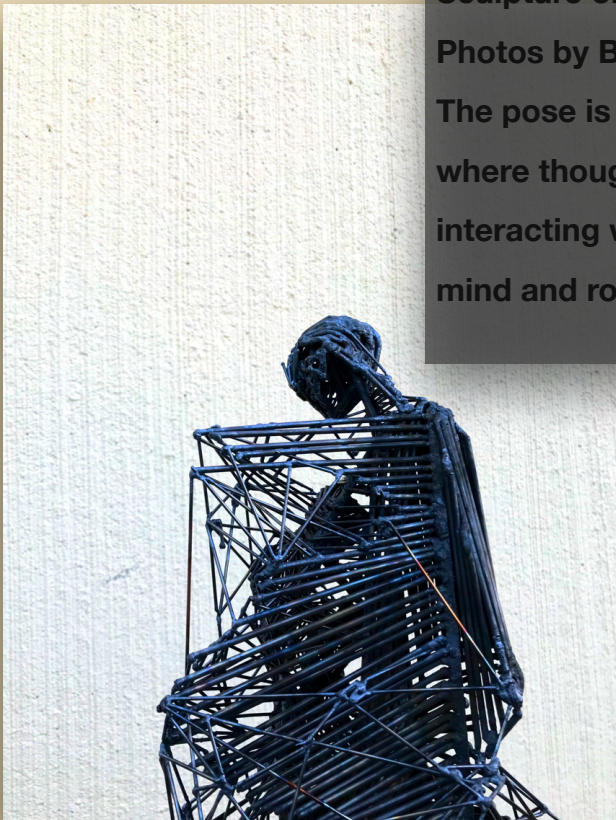




Sculpture on the theme of "Torture".
Photos by Boris Ivanov, 2024.
The pose is inspired by the act of self
doubt when the thoughts paralyse the
actions. The small wires represent pins
preventing any movement.

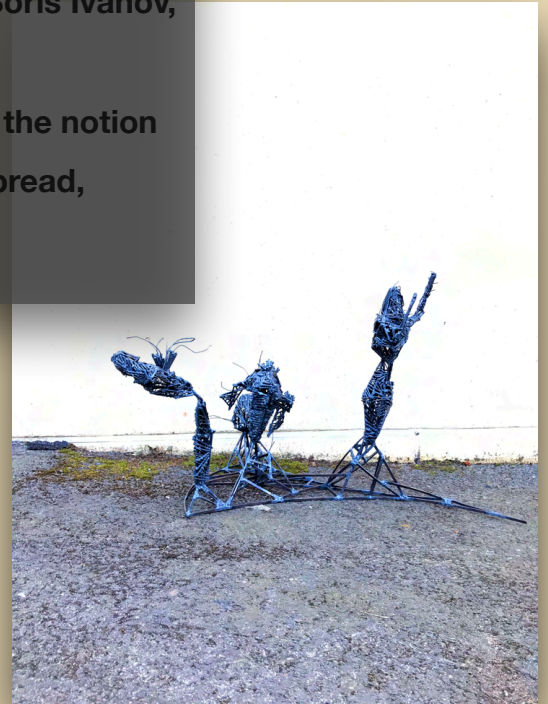
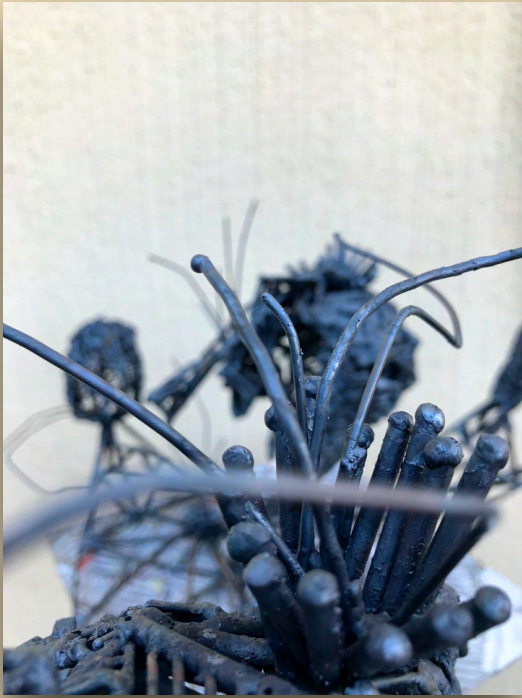


Sculpture on the theme of "Solitude".
Photos by Boris Ivanov, 2024.
The pose is inspired by the act of thinking,
where thoughts are connecting and
interacting with each other, calming the
mind and rooting the body to the mind.



Connected Sculptures on the theme of "Worship". Photos by Boris Ivanov, 2024.

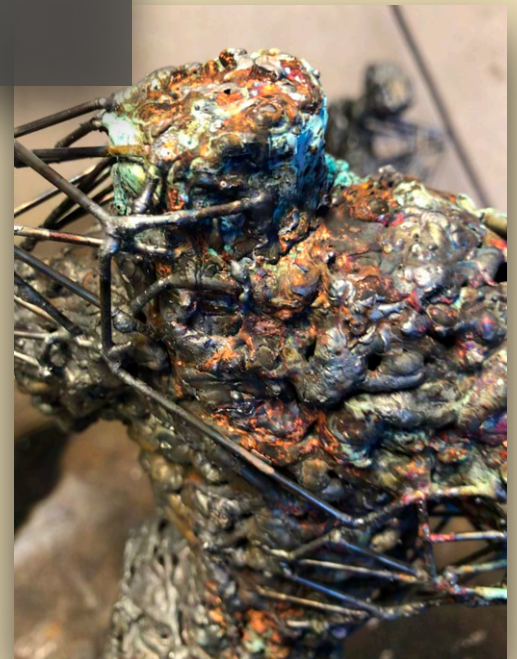
The ensemble represents the notion of how easily an idea is spread, changing its carriers.



Sculpture on the theme of "Grace".

Photos by Boris Ivanov, 2024.

The posture is inspired by ancient and prehistoric examples of embodied beauty and grace and their effect on the surroundings.





Full scale photos Sculpture on the theme of "Ego". Photos by Boris Ivanov, 2024.





While completing the surface for the last few sculptures I decided to use Copper(II) nitrate to achieve colours that enhance the expressionism and mannerism in the posture, generating the feel of movement in the upper wings. I applied it only on few spots so it do not overwhelm the sculpture itself. Photos by Boris Ivanov, 2024.

