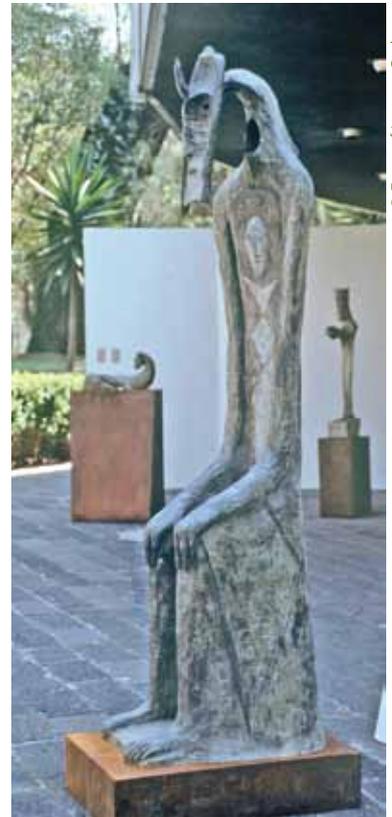


Leonora Carrington And Her Fantastic Oeuvre

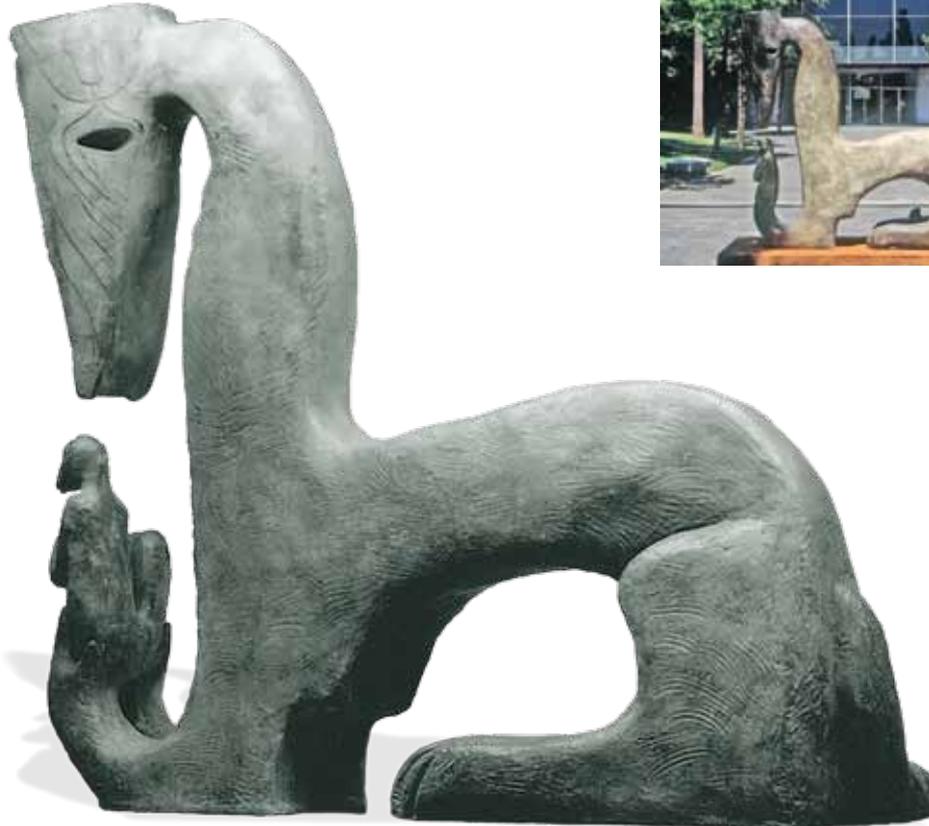
Isaac Masri*



ING, 1994 (bronze).

◀ Detail *ING*, 1994 (bronze).

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Sphinx, 95.5 x 35.5 x 106 cm, 1994 (bronze).

Born in 1917 in Lancashire, England, Leonora Carrington is recognized and admired as one of the greatest exponents of the surrealist movement. She lived in Mexico, where she produced the greatest part of her visual oeuvre. Here, she found a setting conducive to exploring the dreaming unconscious and developing the diaphanous atmosphere of her universe. She showed her essential predilection for creating a bestiary fraught with chimerical figures who wander from her painting to her sculp-

* Curator and art critic. Director of Mexico City's India-nilla Station Museum.

ture and her fantastic writings. Down through the years, as a result of hard, original work, without aiming to, Leonora became a legend in world art.

In her childhood, she already needed to express herself visually, to represent the world and her own dreams to understand them, to create in order to imitate the original act; she also had a very particular idea of writing as the track left by a language, a squiggle in which knowledge ends by being said in the form of an enigma, where the real is the mystery of the body that speaks, the mystery of the unconscious. What she writes or paints, the gesture that breaks the fearsome blank space is the condition for pleasure, the

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Lion Moon, 62 x 63.5 x 10 cm, 1995 (bronze).

In her work, Leonora Carrington maintains that passion of the surrealists for masks, for the hypnotic challenge launched by everything that confronts them.



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Monsieur, 31 x 62 x 23 cm, 1994 (bronze).

She seeks with interest
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impetus toward the depth that is so difficult to assume: in its truth shines the symbolic.

In her work, Leonora Carrington maintains that passion of the surrealists for masks, for the hypnotic challenge launched by everything that confronts them. Her images, whether in painting, texts, or writing, recover Celtic myths, create a short circuit with day-to-day reality, forcing the viewer to unfold an internal gaze, where a trace of the mythical can be found. She seeks with interest constant signs of absence, and at the same time, unleashes rituals in which poetic representations are invariably put forward.

Watching the casting of Carrington bronzes creates the feeling of being part of a “permanent metamorphosis,” together with the dynamic of gravity and levity that emerges from this creative labor that leads the imaginary to the symbolic link between iron-smiths and alchemists of different dimensions. For Leonora, bronze is a civilizing witness that out in the open and assimilating the action of time recovers the poetics of the essential.

Thanks to the close friendship I had with Leonora for 25 years, we were able to produce different projects that I will mention here: “Liberty in Bronze,” a collective project for which she created eight bronze sculptures, among them masterpieces like *ING*, *The Sphinx*, *Corronus*, *Lion Moon*, *The Virgin of the Cave*, and *Nigrum*. Some years later, we created the project “Family Universe,” with 10 bronze sculptures, among them *Cuculatis* and *Albino Hogg*, which we exhibited at the Fine Arts Palace. A catalogue for that show used family photographs by Emerick Weisz, her husband; a painting by Pablo, one of her sons, and texts by Gabriel, her other son. These materials, together with the last project I did with her, “Image



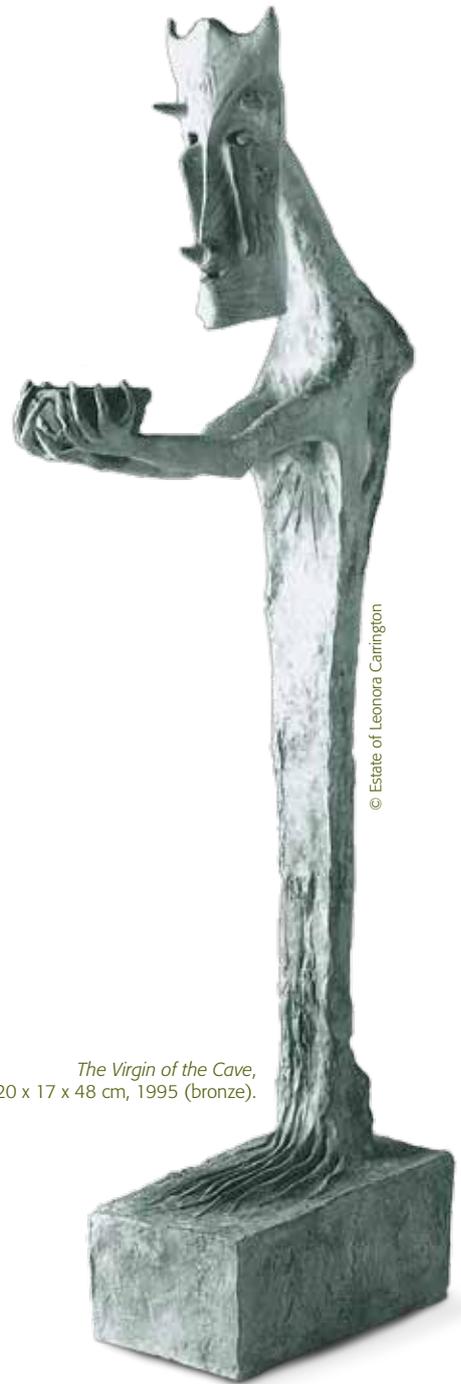
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Photo courtesy of the Ministry of
Foreign Relations Chancellery Museum.

Woman with Dove, 70 x 35 cm, 2008 (bronze).

Watching the casting of Carrington bronzes creates the feeling of being part of a "permanent metamorphosis," together with the dynamic of gravity and levity that emerges from this creative labor.



Coronus, 90 x 60 x 22 cm, 1995 (bronze).



The Virgin of the Cave,
120 x 17 x 48 cm, 1995 (bronze).

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Hunters,” ten medium-sized bronze sculptures (*Nigromante*, *Boat with Monkey*, *Minotaur*, *Horseback Ride*, and *Eagle Face*, among others), made up the exhibition “Leonora Carrington in Mexico City,” which was displayed along Reforma Avenue outside the Anthropology and History and Rufino Tamayo Museums, with 50 photographs showing different stages of her pictorial oeuvre; historic photographs of colleagues, friends, and relatives; some personal items from her childhood and adolescence; 30 bronze sculptures; and her largest piece, *Fisher King*, which is on permanent exhibit in San José del Cabo, Baja California Sur, as homage to marine life and a call to respect nature.

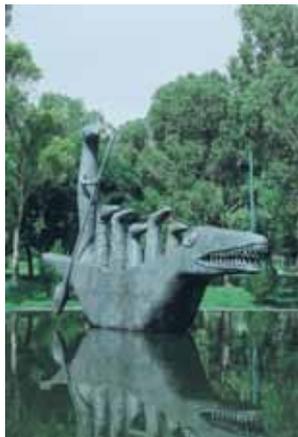
We produced a large-format sculpture entitled *How Doth the Little Crocodile* for Mexico City, which Leonora donated; it is currently located on Reforma

Avenue and is popularly known the *Boat of Crocodiles*. She also created a bench called *No More Room Left* for the “Dialogue of Benches” project, a collective piece that we donated to Mexico City’s Federal District government, and which is on display in the city’s historic center.

We arranged for Leonora to do two large-format pieces for the Cuervo tequila manufacturer, *The King of Tequila* and *The Queen of Tequila*. They are housed in the Mundo Cuervo facilities in Tequila, Jalisco, where a museum will be opened dedicated to Leonora and displaying her work.

This text has the aim of relating some moments of a 25-year history of one of the most renowned artists of the art world and whom I thank for having honored me with her trust and friendship. **MM**

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A large-format sculpture entitled *How Doth the Little Crocodile* for Mexico City, which Leonora donated, is currently located on Reforma Avenue and is popularly known as the *Boat of Crocodiles*.



How Doth the Little Crocodile, 8.5 x 4.8 m, 2000 (bronze).