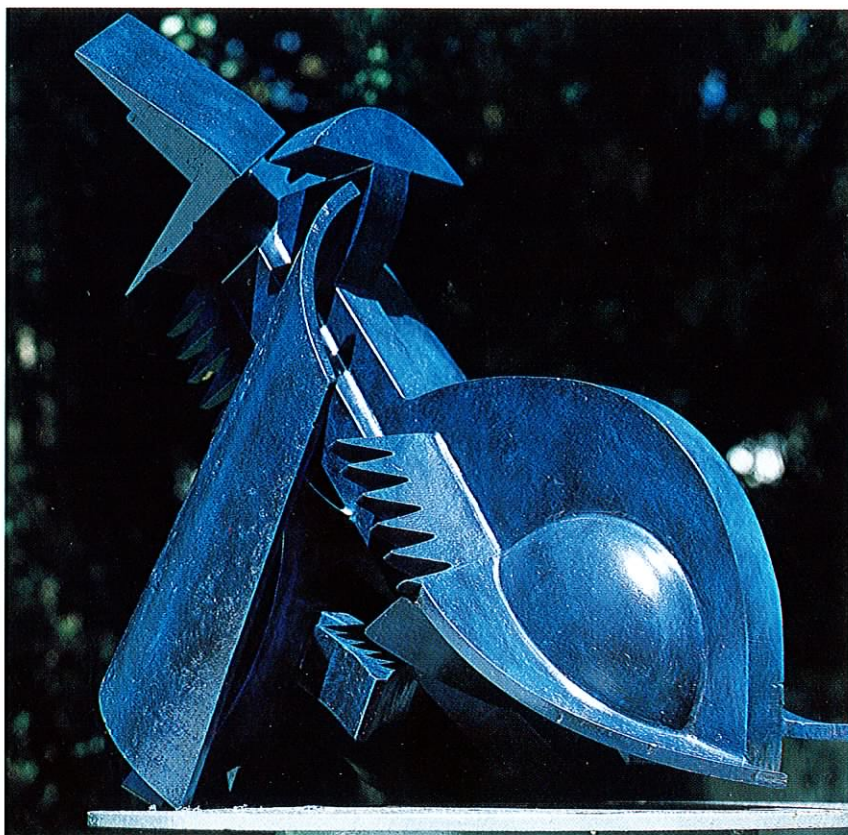


This issue of Global Art News features the work of Edoardo Villa, one of the great sculptors of the twentieth century.

For almost forty years, Villa has worked mainly in steel, interspersed with short periods of modelling for bronze. In this recent series of steel sculptures, he shows his consummate mastery of the medium, creating powerful, evocative works that evoke the human figure at times. The full richness of a formal language that he has built up over many decades, comes into play: seemingly mechanical forms, softer curves derived from modelled shapes, the solidity suggested by solid cast bronzes.

Each work has been sensitively finished in subtle color shades, recalling the patina formed on rusted steel.

The main composition of his oeuvre has been the vertical construction, based on the standing figure; previous series exploring the reclining figure, and the resultant "War Machines", gave rise to these dynamic horizontal pieces.



above: **Abie, steel, 1992**
37x12x16"/93x30x40cm

left: **Japzi, steel, 1992**
28x26x20"/70x65x50cm

Edoardo Villa's sculptures were exhibited at the following biennales:

Venice: 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964

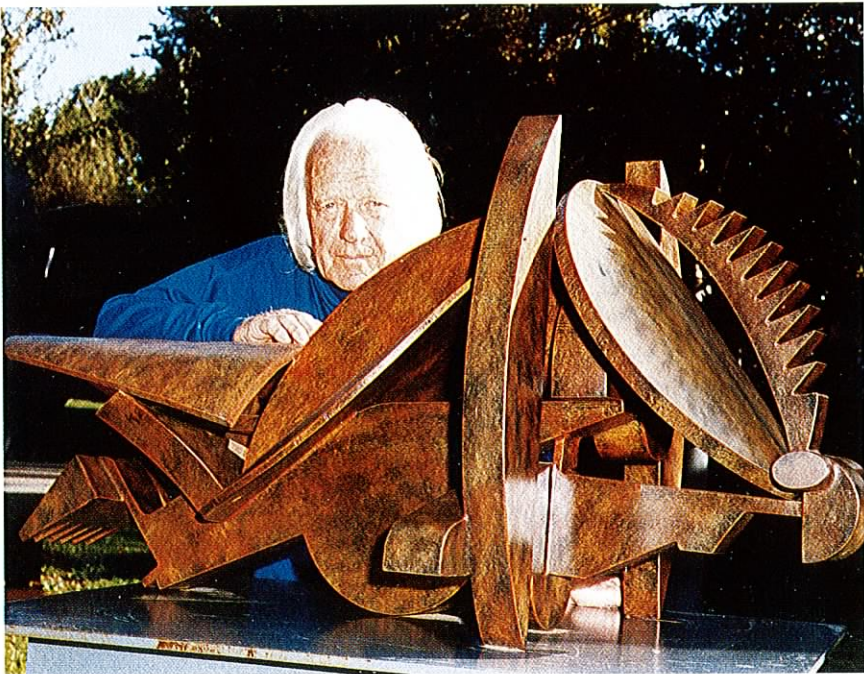
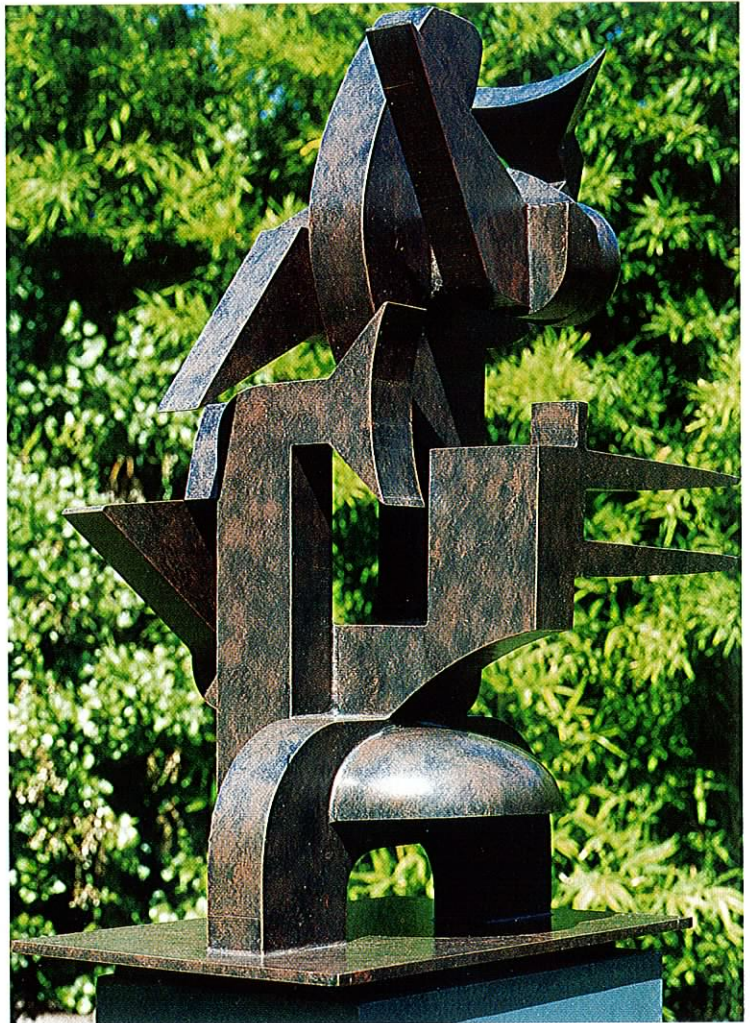
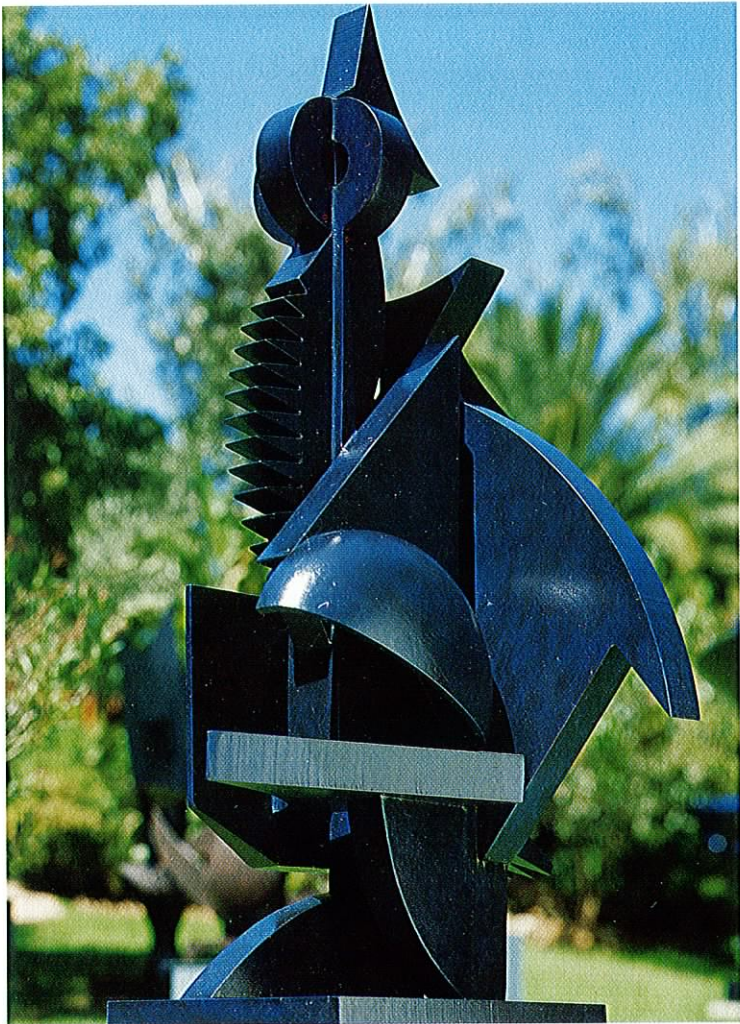
Sao Paulo: 1957, 1959, 1963, 1969

Valparaiso: 1983

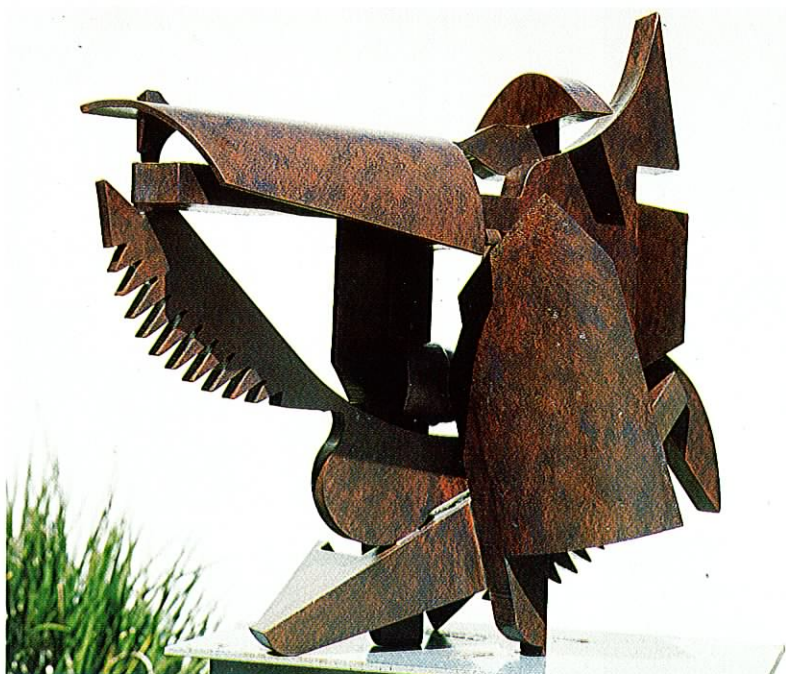
South Africa: 1st and 2nd Triennials of SA Art
(travelling) 1956, 1960

Cape Town: Triennial 1982

VILLA 1992 STEEL



SCULPTURE SERIES



above, left to right:

Zoopy, steel, 1992

45x24x24"/115x60x60cm

Pesanti, steel, 1987

41x20x24"/105x50x60cm

Winkie, steel, 1992

80x26x20"/203x65x50cm

Stallone, steel, 1992

80x24x21"/203x60x52cm

Bridjat, steel, 1992

82x24x24"/209x60x60cm

below, left to right:

Hula, steel, 1992

24x48x24"/60x120x60cm

Hucka, steel, 1992

18x32x25"/45x82x65cm

Flipsy, steel, 1992

36x41x20"/91x105x51cm

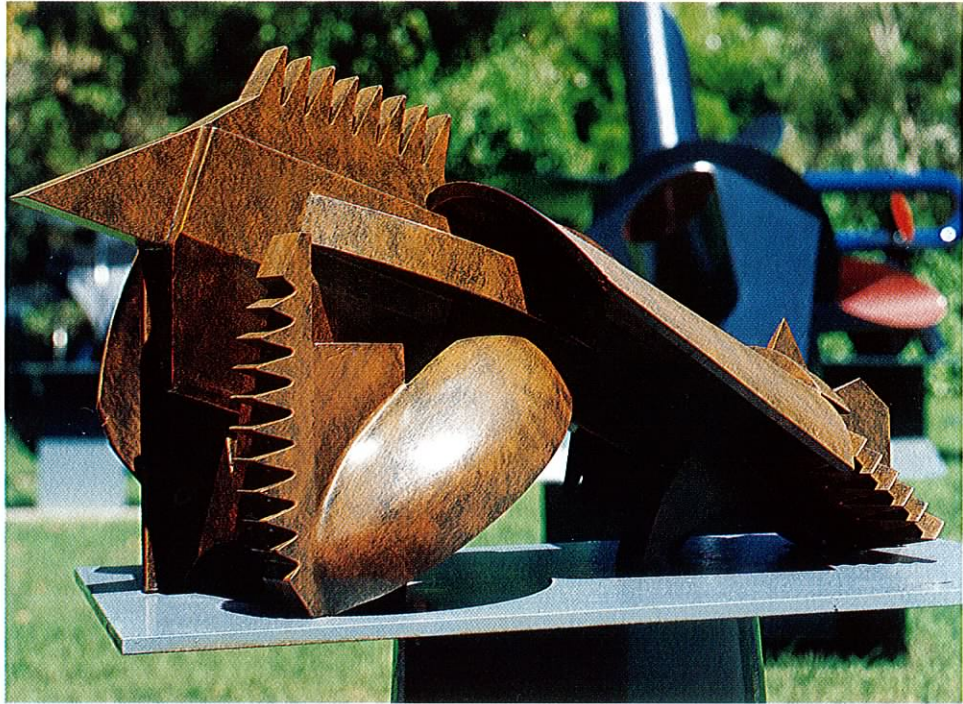
EDOARDO VILLA

"...the symbolism and imagery Villa has invented is personal and independent of visual reality. Humor, the sensual, aggression and the serious are various emotions experienced when viewing Villa's sculptures. His work exudes a powerful inner energy."

right:

Sylvan, steel, 1992

24x43x24"/60x110x60cm



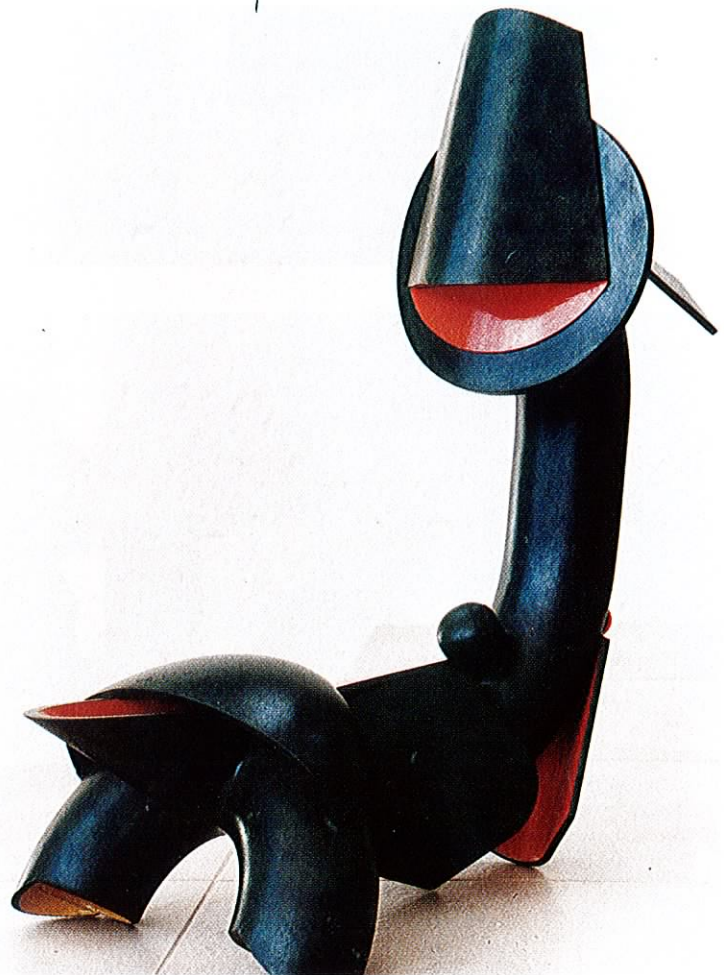
below, left to right:

Zurgon, steel, 1992

82x80x55"/210x205x140cm

Smoley, steel, 1987

26x13x26"/65x32x65cm



EDOARDO VILLA



Confrontation, steel, 1979 The artist and his assistant Lucas Legode.

Born in Bergamo, Italy, Edoardo Villa trained as a sculptor in Bergamo and Milan. He now lives in Johannesburg with his wife, Claire, whom he married in 1965.

Villa's sculpture has been exhibited at ten international biennales in Venice, Sao Paulo, and Valparaiso in the period 1956 to 1983.

His work has been shown in more than one hundred one-man and group shows, in Milan, Rome, New York, Paris, London,

Sao Paulo, Taipei, Athens, Venice and South Africa.

In 1995, the Edoardo Villa Museum officially opens in Pretoria, South Africa to celebrate the artist's 80th birthday.

Although his work at first glance appears to be non-representational, Villa is an inherently figurative artist who draws his inspiration from his immediate environment — his main source of inspiration has always been man. His work, however, cannot be described as representational, for the symbolism and

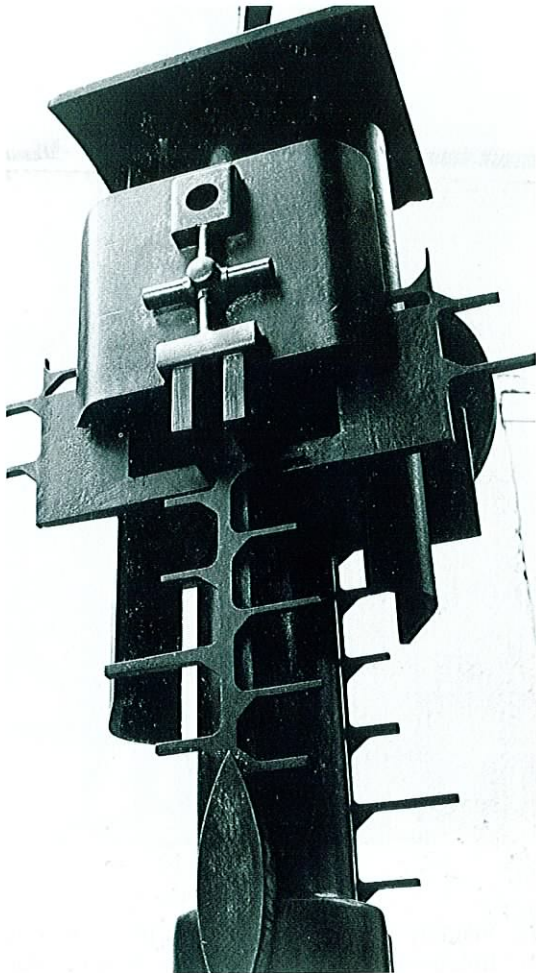
imagery Villa has invented is personal and independent of visual reality. Humor, the sensual, aggression and the serious are various emotions experienced when viewing Villa's sculptures. His work exudes a powerful inner energy.

Over the past fiftytwo years Villa has created an unsurpassed body of work, in number, quality, and scale. His works have become an integral part of the quality of space in and around buildings in every South African city.

DEVELOPMENT OF

1935-1957: Years of early development, from classical, stylized, carved works tending towards voluminous shapes while still in Italy, to more expressionistic works in the early forties. Expansive, rounded forms followed in creating woman as archetype during the late forties. Then Villa broke away to abstraction in minimal torsos and plant-like figures. 1955 was a turning point with the discovery of the use of metal, and a dramatic change with line and plane becoming major formal elements expressing internal dynamic forces. Villa had found construction in steel the method most suited to him.

1957-1970: Exploring construction by welding and attaining exuberance in bronze. Villa works without sketches, directly in the material. Strips of metal give rise to space enclosing compositions. The vertical framework, not always figurative, becomes very important. Works start to express situations and relationships. References to Africa increase. During the early sixties the structures become more figurative, symmetrical, and frontality is prevalent, emphasizing a hieratic quality. Color appears as a binding element in the figurative works. Precise finish is a permanent characteristic. Villa regularly returns to modelling resulting in reciprocal formal enriching. The bolder, fuller forms in clay are transposed to voluminous steel shapes. Found elements of machines were assimilated to create humanized technology.



Crusader, steel, 1965
height: 38"/97cm

1971-1979: Further development of scale and multiple composition. Form is drastically reduced to spindles and sheets; mass is dematerialized, also by shiny surfaces; line and plane dominate; mostly group compositions of parallel elements with only very subtle reference to the human figure occur. Gesture is controlled. The cut appears, creating subtle tension by suggesting instability.



above: Africa, steel, 1959
height: 270"/675cm

below: Sculpture III, steel, 1969/70
height: 87"/218cm



VILLA'S SCULPTURE



above: Conversation, steel, 1971
height: 172"/430cm

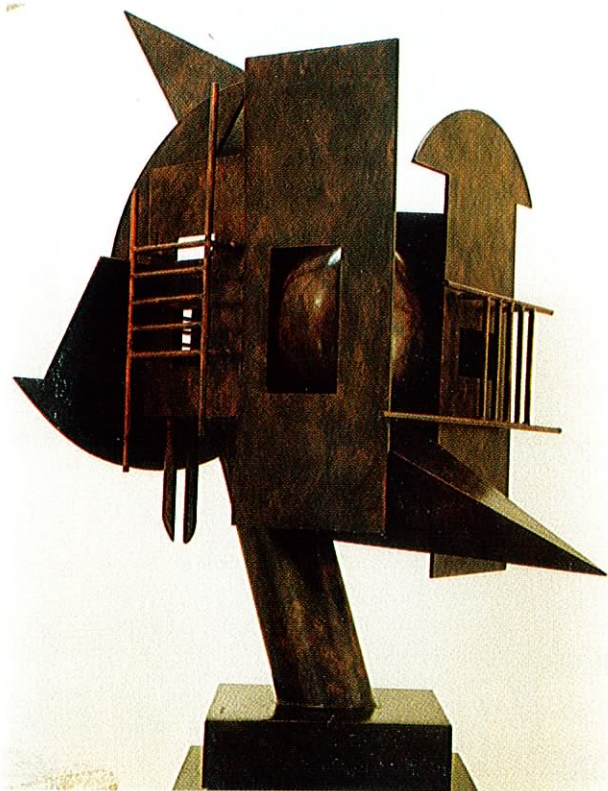
below: Zurgon, steel, 1992
82x80x55"/210x205x140cm



In the mid-seventies the pipe or column becomes the prime formal element in mainly vertical compositions symbolizing group relationships and the tensions within them. Color now features strongly both as dematerializing and binding medium. In the late seventies Villa developed large groups, encompassing both geometric and organic formal elements in his use of overlapping, cut open rounded pipes and rectangular channels. The metal was allowed to rust, resulting in a rich velvety patina, which was to influence his future use of color. The vertical encapsulated composition was less evident, with open structures becoming impersonal images of modern mechanical warfare, as can be seen in "Confrontation" on the front page.

1980-1989: Evolution of a symphony of metal forms, both geometric and organic. The large retrospective exhibition in 1980 was followed by a great variety of abstract works before he returns to the figure, the main theme of his oeuvre. The first combination of bronze organic shapes enclosed in steel geometric containers, and the series of large asymmetrical "Prisoners" followed. The sheets and bars open up to become steel structures, subtle symbols of both the machine of war and the victim.

In the late eighties huge pipes and other rounded steel forms become animalistic/humanoid images, in which sparingly applied strong color appears to accentuate the interior/ exterior dichotomy. In these assertive works, Villa's vitality and the freedom of form in space in his sculpture is affirmed.



Prisoner, steel, 1983
58x30x51"/146x75x130cm

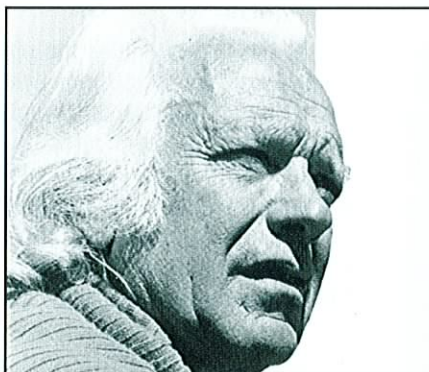
1990-1993: Villa briefly ventures into a new medium - the found shapes of polystyrene packaging. These brightly painted compositions give rise to compact, textured bronzes, small icons of the fortified, the aggressor, the fortress. These stimulate the incorporation of heavy, toothed forms into new steel sculptures: vertical anthropomorphic or horizontal non-figurative compositions in which the lively dialog between geometric form and organic structure and rhythm continues, giving rise to ever more and richer interpretations of man and his condition.

IMPORTANT EVENTS

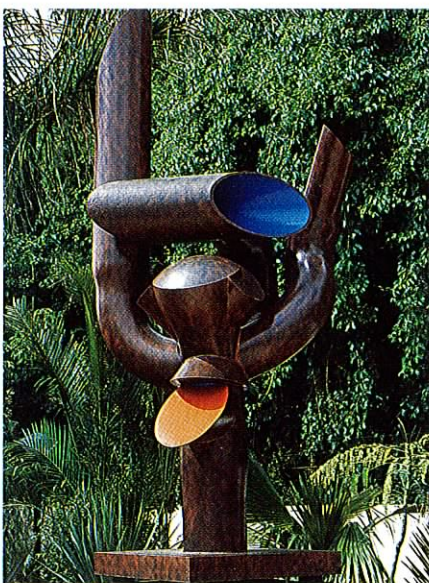
Biennales

Venice: 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964
 Sao Paolo: 1957, 1959, 1963, 1969
 Valparaiso: 1983
 South Africa: 1st and 2nd Triennials of SA Art
 (travelling) 1956, 1960
 Cape Town: Triennial 1982

- | | |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1938 | • Bergamo, Milan |
| 1939 | • Milan, Bergamo |
| 1947 | • Johannesburg Public Library |
| 1949 | • Bothner gallery, Johannesburg |
| 1950 | • Gainsborough Gallery, Johannesburg |
| 1951 | • Galerie Vincente, Pretoria |
| 1954 | • International Art Club |
| 1956 | • Venice Biennale |
| | • Triennial of SA Art |
| 1957 | • SA Art on tour in USA |
| | • Helen de Leeuw Gallery |
| | • Sao Paolo Biennale |
| 1958 | • Contemporary Transvaal Art |
| | • Venice Biennale |
| 1959 | • Artists of Fame and Promise,
Johannesburg, London |
| | • Sao Paolo Biennale |
| 1960 | • Artists of Fame and Promise,
London |
| | • Joubert Park, Johannesburg |
| | • Johannesburg Museum Show |
| | • Venice Biennale |
| | • Triennial of SA Art |
| 1962 | • Egon Gunther Gallery,
Johannesburg |
| | • Venice Biennale |
| 1963 | • Works on tour in USA |
| | • Lusaka and Salisbury, Rhodesia |
| | • Amadhlozi group in Italy |
| | • Sao Paolo Biennale |
| 1964 | • Lusaka and Salisbury, Rhodesia |
| | • Pretoria Art Museum |
| | • Johannesburg Festival |
| | • Rembrandt Art Centre |
| | • Cape Town Museum Show |
| | • Pretoria Museum Show |
| | • Venice Biennale |
| 1965 | • Johannesburg Festival,
Transvaal Academy |
| | • London, Grosvenor Gallery |
| | • Durban Museum Show |
| | • Pretoria Museum Show |
| 1966 | • Silver medal at SA Breweries
exhibition |
| | • Grosvenor Gallery, London |
| | • Republic Festival, Pretoria |
| 1967 | • Egon Gunther Gallery,
Johannesburg |
| 1968 | • Schlesinger Centre, Johannesburg |
| 1969 | • Transvaal Academy, Olivetti first
prize, Chamber of Mines
gold medal |

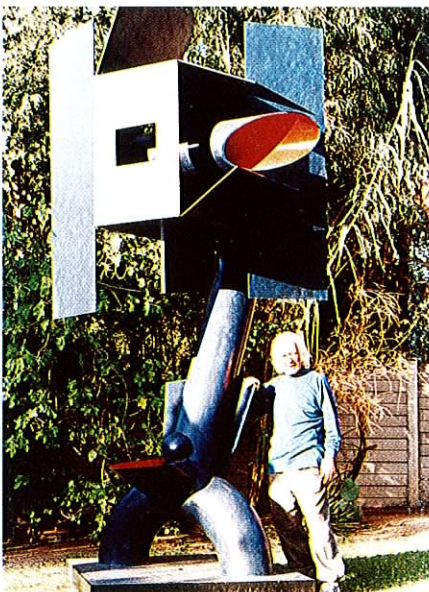


Edoardo Villa, 1980



Lica, steel, 1988
 138x60x48"/350x150x120cm

Bipo, steel, 1989
 196x74x72"/390x185x180cm



Solo Museum Shows

Johannesburg: 1960, 1970, 1987
 Pretoria: 1964, 1965, 1970, 1989 (25th anniversary)
 Durban: 1965
 Cape Town: 1964, Contemporary SA Art
 Salisbury: 1978

- | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1969 | • Sao Paolo Biennale |
| 1970 | • Pretoria, Johannesburg,
ten years retrospective |
| | • Rhodes National Gallery, Salisbury |
| | • Johannesburg Museum Show |
| | • Pretoria Museum Show |
| 1971 | • Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg |
| 1972 | • Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg |
| 1973 | • Lidchi Gallery, Johannesburg |
| | "Aspects of Italian Art" |
| | • Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg |
| 1974 | • Contemporary SA Art,
Athens, Greece |
| | • RSA Exhibition, Pretoria
Art Museum |
| 1976 | • Rand Afrikaans University,
Johannesburg |
| 1977 | • Afrox metalart,
Guest Artist, Johannesburg |
| 1978 | • SA Art in Rhodesia,
Salisbury Museum |
| | • Salisbury Museum Show |
| 1979 | • Gold medal for sculpture from SA
Academy of Arts and Sciences |
| 1980 | • Afrox metalart,
Guest Artist, Johannesburg |
| | • Retrospective of Life's Work,
Rand Afrikaans University,
Johannesburg |
| 1981 | • Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg |
| 1982 | • Cape Town Triennial |
| 1983 | • Valparaiso Biennale |
| 1984 | • University of the Witwatersrand |
| | • Randburg Municipality |
| 1985 | • Jack Gallery, New York |
| | • Sculpture Show, Windhoek,
Southwest Africa |
| 1987 | • Johannesburg Museum Show |
| 1988 | • Standard Bank Festival of the Arts,
Grahamstown, Guest Artist |
| 1989 | • Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg |
| | • Pretoria Art Museum : 25 Years |
| 1990 | • Vita Awards Exhibition,
Johannesburg |
| | • University of Pretoria, Chancellor's
Medal Awarded |
| 1991 | • Standard Bank Centre,
Johannesburg, Guest Artist |
| 1992 | • Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg |
| 1993 | • National Museum Taipei, group show |
| 1995 | • MUSUEM VILLA to be opened
in Pretoria |