

布鲁诺的叔叔，1934 年去世。他的作品对小时候的布鲁诺很有启发。

Bruno Walpoth's uncle, died in the year 1934. His work has inspired Bruno as a child.



缄默的邂逅：突破传统 布鲁诺·瓦尔波特

布鲁诺·瓦尔波特 1959 年出生于意大利北部多罗迈特群山环抱中的格勒登（或称瓦尔加迪纳）山谷，他在这里成长，至今仍居住于此。和他同时代的许多艺术家一样，布鲁诺几乎从摇篮中就开始从当地鲜活的木雕艺术传统中汲取养分。

这座狭窄的山谷以农耕为主，四周山峰巍然耸立。17 世纪末，木雕逐渐成为这一地区的典型标志，经过几百年的发展，已然成为一项大有“钱”途的贸易。在此之前，人们制造的家用器皿和农耕用具只是供农民自身使用，后来，人们开始制作基督教信物，诸如耶稣受难像和圣徒雕像，供阿尔卑斯山区的教堂使用。到了 1800 年前后，人们开始大量制作画框和小件木雕物品，包括婴儿床和玩具。后来，从格勒登出口的木雕人像与日俱增，为当地许多居民带来了可观的收入。在 20 世纪初期，随着旅游业的兴起，来自格勒登的手工艺品开始赚取外汇。

老派的木雕艺人通常是为了订单而创作的，然而，一批年轻的艺术家出现了，他们开始摆脱这种商业化的传统，逐渐形成自己的风格，并在现代艺术中找到了一席之地，不再仅仅是为了销售木雕人像而创作。这些艺术家大多得到人们的认可，他们的作品深受人们喜爱，如今的布鲁诺·瓦尔波特正是其中的一员。

在布鲁诺艺术生涯中，最突出的特点就是一次次地邂逅。这一特点不仅决定了他的艺术发展方向，还在有意无意间影响了他创造风格的形成。第一次邂逅实际上是一种非直接经历：那是几幅挂在他父母房屋墙上的艺术作品——他叔叔画的打猎场景，虽然他叔叔很早就已去世，但对小时候的布鲁诺影响极大。还在上小学的时候，布鲁诺就开始临摹这些图画，临摹的精确性显示了他在写实方面的才能和追求完美主义的创作倾向。即便如此，在这个阶段，这位才华横溢的少年艺术家就已明白，他所喜爱的不是二维图像，而是三维立体创作，尤其是木雕。

他在圣乌尔里希中学的老师维尔弗里德·塞诺纳给了他很大的支持，使他决心成为一位雕刻家而不是木匠。在 20 世纪七八十年代，越来越多的富有创造力的年轻艺术家离开了这片狭窄的山谷，前住意大利其他地区或者奥地利和德国这些说德语的国家，去那里的艺术学院寻求更为广阔的艺术发展道路，他们乐意和志同道合的人们一起交流思想。

年轻的布鲁诺·瓦尔波特先是做了一段时间的传统木雕学徒，然后又在当地打了无数次雕刻圣徒的零工，随后便追随这一趋势，跟同是雕刻艺人的阿诺德·霍尔茨克内希特一起前往维也纳，带着心中对现代艺术的无限憧憬，去追求自己的艺术理想。

维也纳是奥地利的首都和文化中心，那里丰富多彩的生活和生动、开放的场景吸引了众多年轻的艺术家。在 20 世纪 80 年代，当格勒登的艺术家们还在被传统木雕人物形式所束缚时，自由雕刻却在大城市的艺术院校里广受欢迎。

人们当时所需要的，是那种扩展意义上的雕刻作品，如奥地利的弗朗茨·韦斯特的作品，或者同是奥地利人的埃尔文·沃尔姆一分钟雕刻。人们最爱说的一个词就是“随性自然”。一位画家是这样描述 20 世纪 80 年代的艺术的：“我们感觉就像是摇滚歌手！我们挥舞着画笔，就像在舞台上弹着吉他放声高唱。”

然而，来自格勒登的年轻木雕艺人雄心勃勃地把自己的绘画和雕刻作品交给维也纳艺术学院的教授们之后，却很少得到赏识。失望之余，他们离开了这座行为主义艺术大都市，前往德国南部的慕尼黑去碰碰运气。在慕尼黑，人们充满同情地接纳了他们，人们相信，他们的雕刻作品在不远的将来将会再次成为当代艺术的一部分。

布鲁诺本人曾经说过，前往慕尼黑是他这一生最正确的一个决定。他在慕尼黑艺术学院邂逅汉斯·拉德纳教授可以看作是这位年轻学生艺术发展过程中最关键的一章。

在慕尼黑，作为一个学徒，布鲁诺在三年时间里刻意避开造型艺术，专门学习抽象艺术，不去接触木雕，直到有一天他决定不再拒绝接受自己的艺术根源，去雕刻一根未经加工的树干。为期两个月的假期里，在一位年轻男模的帮助下，他创作了一幅栩栩如生的真人大小的雕像。其间，布鲁诺尽管遇到种种阻碍，但还是顺从内心的渴望，把这件椴木雕像交给了他的教授和同事。尽管从风格上看，这件青年人物雕像已不符合当今的潮流，但它对观众仍然具有一定的吸引力，时至今日仍然是布鲁诺的代表作。这件比照模特雕刻的呕心之作，重新燃起了这位年轻学子对木雕艺术的热爱。就在几年前，距创作完成 35 年之后，这件曾经激励他继续从事雕刻艺术的作品，才重新回到布鲁诺手中。

从艺术学院毕业之后，布鲁诺就回到了南蒂罗尔。在这一阶段，他接受委托创作了许多宗教物品以及抽象作品，虽然他的自由创作数量减少了，但他心中念念不忘的仍然是仿真人物雕像。在 2000 年，

他又重新回到艺术学院，创作了另一件真人大小的裸体雕像《呈蹲伏姿势的青年》——一位艺术家同事做的模特。

随着雕塑艺术如预言般复兴，布鲁诺的艺术生涯发展到了令人兴奋的以实验和自我发现为主的阶段。首家国际画廊开始对来自格勒登山谷的艺术感兴趣，这为其迈向艺术市场的蹒跚脚步铺平了道路。大约在十年前，布鲁诺放弃了他从事多年的教学生涯，开始追随他从艺术学院时期就一直拥有的内心渴望：全身心投入到雕像艺术创作中。

这种不变的情怀，坚忍不拔的耐力——多少年来内心一次次挣扎，加上内化的表现手法，成为他创作的源泉，创造出一种独特的艺术形式。这一形式源于传统并以传统为基础，同时具有当代表现手法，拓展了造型艺术的疆域。不仅对布鲁诺来说如此，对同样来自格勒登的同时代的雕刻家来说也是如此，如阿伦·德梅茨，格哈德·德梅茨，沃尔特·莫洛德尔，以及其他艺术家，他们的技能、热情和毅力为他们戴上了成功的王冠。

布鲁诺·瓦尔波特的椴木或胡桃木人物雕像产生于他和模特的邂逅与辩论。那几位消瘦的青年男子雕像，还有大量漂亮女人的身体、线条和形状都是按 1:1 的比例，被布鲁诺用凿子和锉刀从大块的木材中雕凿而成。虽然布鲁诺喜欢进行人体等比复制，比如肩膀或脚踝等。创作的成功完成给他带来满足感，但他的目标并不是创造一件超现实主义的复制品：模特的外在形象只是一个媒介，内在则隐含了许多含蓄的表达。

他的雕像面部特征和身体形态也许和模特极为相似，但布鲁诺·瓦尔波特在对模特的模仿中，省却了人物最突出的特征——这些特征对于传统肖像艺术而言代表着个性。这些模特只是技艺实现的样本，而不是来自自然复制的原物。

每一件新作在制造悬念方面都是一次新的挑战。艺术家通过对虚与实、远和近的综合运用，成功地完成这一挑战。你也许有机会和他的雕像实体不期而遇，但是，你想捕捉这些雕像眼神的凝视，这几乎是不可能的。它们似乎在避免任何对峙，哪怕是间接的对峙；它们拒绝任何直接的回应或者自发的互动。虽然它们直接注视着前方，但那些试图想从它们面部读出其情绪的人将会痛苦地怀疑他们是否真的在观察或者凝视着什么，甚至疑惑它们身上是否散发着冷漠。问题是，它们是在自信地展望未来呢，还是深陷忧伤的布鲁斯音乐无法自拔。

Bruno Walpoth

Mute encounters – tradition outgrown

Born in 1959 in northern Italy's Gröden/Gardena Valley in the heart of the Dolomite mountains, where he grew up and still lives today, Bruno Walpoth – like many of his fellow artists – absorbed the living tradition of local woodcarving practically in the cradle.

In the narrow, farming-dominated valley, surrounded by impressively high mountain peaks, woodcarving evolved in the late 17th century into a characteristic trait of the valley that, over the centuries, became a lucrative trade in itself.

While, before the 17th century, only household utensils and farming equipment had originally been produced for the farmers' own use, people gradually began to manufacture Christian symbols, such as crucifixes and figures of saints, for churches and chapels in the Alpine regions.

By around 1800 picture frames and small objects such as figurines for cribs or toys were produced in large numbers for the first time. The export of wooden figures from Gröden subsequently increased, ensuring a decent income for many locals. The emergence of tourism in the early 1900s saw the artistic handicrafts of Gröden gaining currency abroad.

From the old school of woodcarvers, who would normally work to order, a group of young artists appeared who had outgrown the commercialised tradition, adapting their own style and finding their due place in contemporary art, away from the mere sale of wooden figures. Bruno Walpoth is today without doubt very much one of these recognised and well-regarded artists.

His career is marked by the sum total of individual encounters, a total that not only plays a role in his artistic orientation but consciously and unconsciously influences the development of his creativeness. His first formative encounter was indirect in nature, namely with the artworks on the walls of his parents' house: the hunting pictures by his father's brother, who died at an early age, much impressed the young Bruno.

While in primary school he began to copy them accurately, developing his talent for lifelike illustration and perfectionist working. Even at this stage it was clear to this talented young draftsman that his passion was not for the two- but rather the three-dimensional, especially for working with wood.

他们低调而又真实地存在着，我们很难跟他们进行对话。有些雕像眼睛紧闭，这使他们看起来更加内向。他们没有任何动作，也不为周围环境所动。它们飘忽的眼神不去寻找任何一次邂逅，也没有什么能吸引他们的目光。相反，他们跟自己的姿态一样，是一种审慎、内向的存在。

然而，邂逅布鲁诺·瓦尔波特的雕像是不可避免的。那是一种激动，是艺术家恣意挥洒并沉醉其中的激动。当观众准备好投入其中并愿意付出时，互动就成为可能。边界一旦越过，就几乎很难躲避这些人物：你无可避免地会被它们的魔力所吸引。此刻，你所面对的雕像就成了一座容器，一件过滤器，一面反射镜，容纳着、过滤着、反射着你所允许付出、愿意付出的东西。观众所产生的这种情感在房间里形成了一种不可思议的存在，一种占据空间的存在。艺术家之手所冻结的每一个姿势，那种躲躲闪闪的表情和紧张的手势，被一种没有任何背景的真空所包围。在观看时你也许会坠入其中，也许不会。

布鲁诺的作品具有一种独特的美，它进一步强化了这种亲密而又封闭的感觉。在形式和表现手法上都具有的崇高的美感，让我们想起的不是那种普通的美的典范，而是文艺复兴初期的那种美，带有一种谦卑、纯真的典雅，更进一步增添了距离感。

尽管布鲁诺称自己为“古典”雕刻家，喜欢使用椴木，最近又喜欢上了胡桃木，但他经常打破自己的图式，尝试新的手段：用多层的瓦楞纸板作为上半身半身像的材料。从艺术史的角度来看，这种传统形式是通过人们使用认为的低级材料来实现的。布鲁诺·瓦尔波特的一件作品——它的头颅覆盖着一层敲薄的焊接在一起的铅，可以看作是又一例证。他尽管试图避免使用木头，但仍然一次又一次回到这种有机材料（木头）上来，并且始终保持对它的忠实。

布鲁诺·瓦尔波特以一种神秘的方式，成功地给自己的人物赋予了一种情感距离，由此使雕像摆脱了它的物质性，并且以现实主义方式创造了一种形而上的存在空间。其结果就是一种力量，一种可供移动运动的空间，使观众体验到与自己的沉默邂逅。

It was Wilfried Senoner, his teacher at the secondary school in St. Ulrich, who supported him in his decision to become a sculptor rather than a carpenter. In the 1970s and 1980s more and more creative young minds were leaving the narrow confines of the valley and heading for artistic academies in other parts of Italy or in German-speaking lands such as Austria or Germany in order to exchange ideas with like-minded people.

Following this trend, after a classical apprenticeship as a woodcarver and innumerable local jobs carving figures of saints, the young Bruno Walpoth along with his fellow sculptor Arnold Holz-knecht set off for Vienna to pursue their vocation, a passion for contemporary art in their hearts and great visions in mind.

Vienna is the capital and cultural centre of Austria: its diversity and its lively, open-minded scene attract numerous young artists. While, in the 1980s, artists in Gröden stuck with the traditional forms of wooden figures, free sculpture was celebrated in the big city academies.

The demand was for extended sculptures such as those by the Austrian Franz West or the one-minute sculptures by his fellow Austrian Erwin Wurm. Spontaneity was the watchword. One painter described the art of the 1980s as follows: "We felt like rock'n'rollers! We waved our brushes around as if we were up on stage playing guitar".

The drawings and sculptures that the young woodcarvers from Gröden ambitiously presented to their professors at the Vienna academy were little appreciated, however. Disappointed by this rejection, they left the Metropolis of Actionism and moved to southern Germany to try their luck in Munich, where they were received sympathetically and with the vision that their sculptures would once more become contemporary in the near future.

As Walpoth himself says, the move to Munich was not only one of the best decisions of his life; his encounter with Professor Hans Ladner at the Munich Academy can at the same time be seen as a formative chapter in the artistic development of the youthful student.

As an apprentice in Munich, Walpoth abstained from the figurative for three years, working exclusively in abstract forms and not touching wood until he finally ceased denying his roots and decided

to start work on an untreated tree trunk. During the two-month semester holidays, assisted by just a young male model, he worked on a realistic life-size figure.

In spite of the resistance he encountered, he followed his inner need and presented this lime-wood figure, typical of him even today, to his professor and colleagues. It is not just that the figure, despite its stylish anachronism, exerts a certain attraction on the spectator: this figure of a youth can be seen as his key work.

The painstaking work with the model rekindled the young student's passion for working with wood. It was only a few years ago, after 35 years, that Walpoth succeeded in regaining possession of this work that was so decisive for his motivation.

Following graduation from the Academy he returned to South Tyrol. In this phase his free works diminished in number, with many commissions for sacral objects alongside abstract works, even though it was the true-to-life figure that was always in his heart. In the year 2000, he revisited his Academy period for the first time and produced another life-size nude figure. An artist colleague posed as a model for the crouching youth.

There now began an exciting time of experimentation and self-discovery concurrent with the prophesied revitalisation of the figure. The first international galleries began to show an interest in art from the Gröden Valley, smoothing the path for the still shaky steps towards the art market. Walpoth himself took the plunge about ten years ago, giving up his teaching career of many years, submitting to the inner desire that he had carried within himself since his days at the Academy, and dedicating his full attention to the figure.

The consistency, the persistent capacity for endurance – marked again and again over the years by inner conflict – combined with the internalised expression are the seeds of what he has created, namely an original art form that is developed from and built upon tradition, contemporary in its expression while helping to expand the boundaries of the figurative.

This holds true not only for Walpoth but also for several of his fellow sculptors from Gröden, such as Aron Demetz, Gerhard Demetz, Walter Moroder and others, artists whose skill, passion and

tenacity have now been crowned with success.

Bruno Walpoth's human figures of lime or walnut wood emerge from their encounters and debates with models. The bodies, lines and forms of the few skinny young men and the large number of beautiful women are chiselled and filed from blocks of wood at a scale of 1:1.

Although the concrete reproduction of body parts, such as a shoulder or an ankle, attracts Walpoth and their successful execution gives him satisfaction, it is not his aim to create a hyper-realistic copy of the human being before him: the model serves in his or her external appearance as an envelope for implicit projections.

The facial features and body forms may well correspond to those of the model, but Bruno Walpoth leaves out prominent characteristics of the personality – which in the classical sense of portraiture stand for individuality – from his sculptural imitation: the model is a specimen for technical implementation, not an original of something copied from nature.

Every new work is a further challenge in creating suspense. The artist succeeds in this through a mixture of presence and absence, nearness and distance. The physical presence of his figures permits encounters, but it is hardly possible to achieve direct contact with them.

If you try to intercept the gaze of the figures this seems to be denied, as if they were avoiding any oblique confrontation; they refuse any direct answer or spontaneous interaction.

Despite their open gaze to the front, those trying to read the mood from their faces will be afflicted by doubt as to whether they are watching, concentrated, or whether it is rather indifference that they emanate. The question is whether they are confidently looking to the future or are imprisoned in a melancholic blues.

Unobtrusive yet present, dialogue with them is difficult. Some figures keep their eyes shut, making them seem even more introverted. They are not in action and are untouched by their surroundings. There are no wandering eyes looking for an encounter, nothing to catch the eye; they are instead consistent with their attitude, a cautious, introverted existence.

An encounter with Bruno Walpoth's figures is nevertheless indispensable. It is an excitement with which the artist plays and that he savours. Interaction is then possible when the viewer is ready to become involved and give something of him or herself. Once this border is crossed, it is then almost impossible to avoid the figures: you are inevitably drawn into their spell. At this moment the figure opposite becomes a reservoir, a filter, a reflector of what you permit and are willing to give.

This feeling that the viewer inspires creates an incredible presence in the room, one that occupies space. Every single pose frozen by the artist's hand, the evasive expressions and tense gestures, is surrounded by a vacuum, without context, into which you may or may not slip as you observe.

This impression of intimate isolation is additionally reinforced by its unique beauty. The sublime aesthetics in form and expression, reminding us less of the common ideal of beauty and more of that of the early Renaissance, drawn with a humble and innocent gracefulness, suggests a further distance.

Even though Walpoth refers to himself as a "classical" sculptor and prefers to work with lime, or more recently walnut, he repeatedly breaks out of his schemata and tests new formulas of access: layered corrugated cardboard as a material for busts, whereby the traditional form is realised in what has been understood as a poor material from the art-historical perspective.

His heads, covered in beaten and soldered lead, can be cited as other examples. Despite all his attempts to escape wood, this organic material remains the one to which he repeatedly returns and to which he remains faithful.

Bruno Walpoth mysteriously succeeds in giving his characters an emotional distance whereby the body escapes its materiality and in its realism creates space for a metaphysical presence. The result is a force, a space for movement that permits viewers to experience a silent encounter with themselves.