

The Season in Review /continued

Kosso Eloul at the Koffler Centre of the Arts (October 3-26)

The exhibition of sculptures at the Koffler Centre displayed many aspects of Kosso's art. The 25 pieces ranged in scale from small maquettes shown in the indoor gallery to monumental pieces in the outdoor sculpture garden.

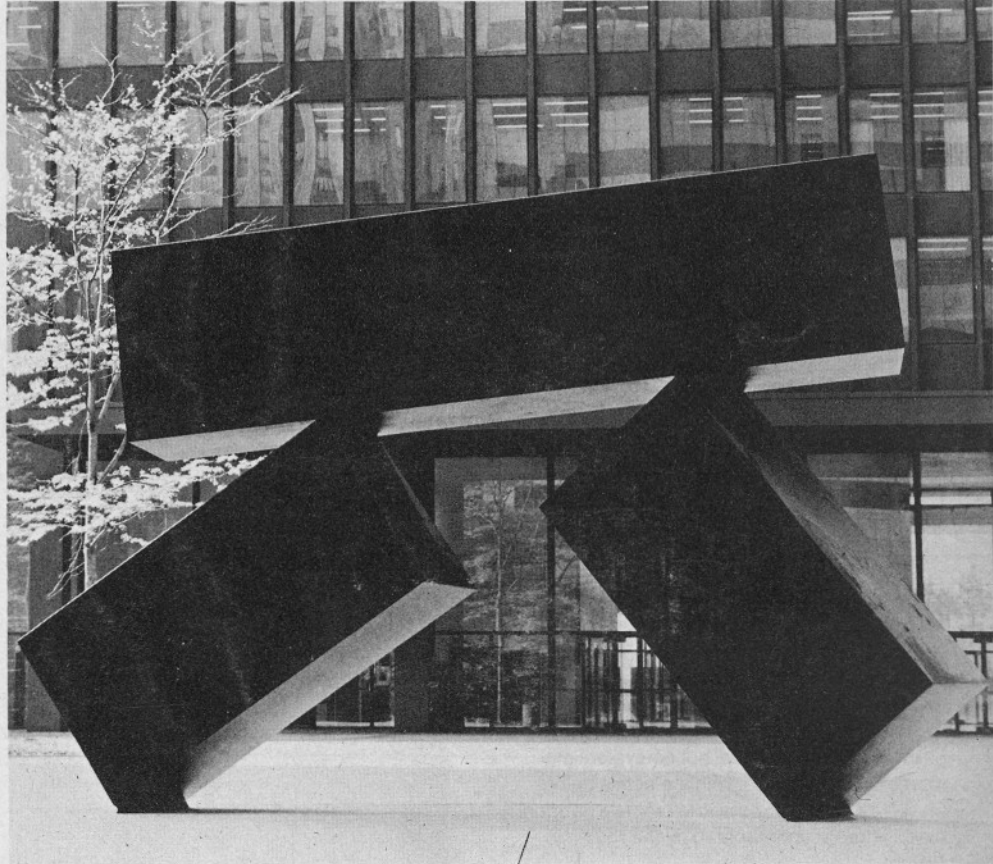
Inside the gallery the small scale models served as an introduction to Kosso's ideas and his recurring themes. Most pieces consisted of simple, rectangular block-like structures placed at angles to one another on flat bases. The variety of relationships built from one, two and sometimes three units seem endless. They lean, tilt, slide at different angles to one another and form exciting internal relationships despite the simplicity of these reduced geometric forms. At these sizes, the pieces of brushed aluminum blocks are easily manageable, may even be picked up and examined from all sides.

For contrast, one large sculpture of wood painted black, *Maada* (or *Proposal K*) served as a focal point in the room. The black colour and scale gave it a dramatic effect in comparison to the cool silver of the aluminum pieces or the decorative appearance of the ones in stone. Placed indoors, *Maada* encouraged the viewer to examine the piece more closely than if it would have been in an outdoor context.

While the sculptures indoors allowed the viewer to concentrate and even to handle the component parts of the sculpture, the outdoor pieces in the garden were larger and established a different relationship with the viewer. One could approach them, walk around them but at the same time, they did not overwhelm in size. Therefore, one could relate to them comfortably. These works too sometimes consisted of one element slightly split, sometimes two at close proximity, or sometimes three elements to express a mood or bring forth an emotional response.

Perhaps the most exciting works by Kosso are the monumental pieces which awe us with their scale, yet are carefully planned not to overwhelm. Often they act as a mediator between the viewer and the landscape or an architectural background. Only one example of a work this size was erected. *Shalom*, 16' high, of corten steel stands at the entrance of the Centre on a raised ground. Consisting of three pieces, its silhouette clearly visible from a distance, *Shalom* is a suitable symbol for the entire complex, a Jewish community centre of which the Koffler Gallery is one part.

If this exhibition permitted only this single example of a work the scale of *Shalom*, there are at least half dozen pieces of similar size and impact in different parts of Toronto. *Meet*, for



Kosso Eloul/ *Innecity Gate* (TD Centre, Toronto)/ 1978/ steelcoloy/ 10' x 14' x 5'.

example on Finch Avenue consists of two blocks, seemingly precariously balanced, over the entrance of a building. The illusion that it is about to topple over, a momentary quality, is often part of Kosso's sculptures. *Braha*, is one of the suburbs, Rexdale, was installed to enhance an otherwise non-descript building. Placed in front of its entrance, it punctuates it and almost becomes the entrance way as the workers have to pass underneath it, coming from the parking lot into the building. *Free Arch* at Harbourfront, Toronto, consists of two vertical blocks, which in turn, effortlessly, almost playfully, support a third piece. *Innecity Gate*, in front of the Toronto Dominion Centre, a complex of buildings designed by Mies van der Rohe, acts almost as an intermediary between the tall perpendicular architectural forms and the viewer. Block-like, resembling the shape of the buildings, *Innecity Gate* has angles which lead to the vertical blocks of the buildings. The exhibition at the Koffler Centre, then, was an informative and instructive introduction to all of these important monumental pieces throughout the city. □

Julianna Borsa

Ottawa

Quintessence in the

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group

Group