

Kayne Griffin Corcoran is pleased to present the gallery's second solo exhibition of work by, 96 year-old American born, Italy based sculptor, Beverly Pepper. The presentation will highlight the work this great artist created early on in her career between 1958 – 1967. During this period, Pepper carved out a niche in her own signature sculptural language. In addition to early works, the exhibition will include works from later years: 1970 – 1980.

The show title, “New Particles From The Sun” is culled from a poem written by Frank O’Hara and included in a catalogue published in support of an exhibition staged in Rome in 1965. In the poem, O’Hara uses descriptions of minerals such as sand and bronze, New World travel, and fragments of prose to assimilate the expressive nature of the works included in the exhibition. In ancient Greek mythology, it was believed that metals came from the sky and were gifts from the gods above. Of course, we now know that they are mined from the earth. “New Particles From The Sun” attempts to bridge the spirit of the fantastical with the logical.

In 1962 Pepper was one of ten sculptors invited to participate in the momentous exhibition *Sculture nella citta* for the Festival of the Two Worlds in Spoleto. This event set her career on an advanced track. In Pepper’s conversation with Judith Olch Richards, as part of her oral history for the Archives of American Art, Pepper said “it was an absolute, seminal period of my life. It formed me. Remember, I was the only woman working in these factories as an artist for Spoleto. This was an extraordinary group of artists. I was getting another education. Because remember, I didn’t study sculpture. I didn’t study welding.”

While in Spoleto, and working at factories throughout Italy, Pepper worked closely alongside Lynn Chadwick, Alexander Calder and David Smith. She worked long hours in the studio and factories, learning how to manipulate different metals and weld. Her time apprenticing in mills was enough of an education that Pepper was in control of stainless steel to “draw” with it in space. She treated ribbons of metal as though they were weightless strokes of brush. Pepper became a sculptor who was on her own and speaking in her own voice.

Her intuitive and fresh take on metal can be seen in this curated selection of work. She bends and splices the hard material as if it were something much more pliable. Through her self-taught, problem solving approach to making the work Pepper invented new forms and textures. The ribbon works, clusters and sheaths and bundles of bent steel, developed between 1958 - 1962. Then came a far more geometrical series of open-faced stainless boxes, their edges violated by the abusive fire of torch cutting. The destructive mark of the torch on these 1965 works by Pepper partake in an instinct of pleasure at the idea of undermining the strength of steel: construction open to the terms

of its own destruction. She also added colored enamel in some instances, bringing new life to the hard material. The later work in bronze was predicted in O'Hara's 1965 poem when he writes, "as the lost wax process results in bronze masterpieces."

The exhibition focuses on this timeline of works both for their rarity and their significance to the narrative of American sculpture. Beverly Pepper's work in metal, especially steel, places her in the rightful legacy of the pioneering and revolutionary sculptors celebrated throughout art history.

Beverly Pepper was born in Brooklyn in 1922. She has spent most of her adult life working in central Italy. Her works have been exhibited and collected by major museums around the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the White House Sculpture Garden, the Hirschhorn Museum, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., Les Jardins du Palais Royal in Paris, the Palazzo degli Uffizi in Florence, and numerous other national museums in Europe and Asia. She is a recipient of The Alexander Calder Prize, the International Sculpture Center's 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award and Chevalier de l'Ordre des arts et des lettres in France. Beverly Pepper recently opened a monumental land art project titled, "Amphisculture" in L'Aquila, Italy.

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