La Motte

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Deurdagte Reis – 'n viering van vrouekunstenaars
Thoughtful Journey – a celebration of female artists

Elza Dziomba (1906 – 1970)

Dziomba is in 1906 in Dt'Eylau, Duitsland gebore. Deel van haar formele studies was vyf jaar aan die Kunst Akademie, Berlyn, onder die leiding van prof. Becker, Académie de la Grande Chaumiere in Parys en, as 'n beursstudent, verdere studies in Duitsland en Nederland. Dziomba was vanaf 1933 in Suid-Afrika woonagtig en is bekend as een van die eerste vrouebeeldhouers wat in die land aktief was. Haar werke is realisties sowel as abstrak.

Die temas van Dziomba se werke is universeel, maar die menslike vorm en realiteit was altyd die fokuspunte. Die invloed van Afrika-stambeeldhouwerk is in haar werk waarneembaar en, as beeldhouer, het sy 'n sensitiwiteit vir materiaal en tekstuur getoon. Sy het 'n liefde vir verskillende steen gehad en het ook graag van hout, klip, marmer, malagiet, ivoor en verdiet vir haar beelhouwerk gebruik gemaak.

In 1938 het sy 'n lid van die *Nuwe Groep* geword – een van net ses beeldhouers wat tot 1953 onder die kunstenaarslede van die groep getel het. Sy was bekend om die gebruik van verskeie borsbeelde as deel van haar opdragwerke.

Dziomba het vanaf 1936 aan groep-uitstallings deelgeneem wat in Suid-Afrika, Arnhem (Nederland), die Tate Gallery in Londen en in Venesië gehou is. In 1938 het sy haar eerste solo-uitstalling in Kaapstad gehou, gevolg deur 'n uitstalling saam met Jack Lugg en Gabor Tallo in Pretoria, gedurende 1941. Die belangrikste van hierdie gesamentlike uitstallings was dié saam met Jean Welz, waarvan die eerste in 1945 in die Constantia-galery in Johannesburg gehou is.

Sy was in 1953 'n pryswenner by die International Sculpture Competition in die Tate Gallery en in 1963 is haar werk deur die Kamer van Mynwese, Transvaalse Akademie met 'n silwer-medalje bekroon.

Publieke opdragte sluit in: Die ontwerp, in 1937, van die Suid-Afrikaanse deel van die Kroningsmedalje; 'n bronsreliëf vir die Bank van Athene in Johannesburg; 'n borsbeeld van dr. Robert Broom vir die Transvaal Museum, Pretoria en die Sterkfontein-grotte, Krugersdorp; portaalbeelde vir die Ontvanger van Inkomste-gebou, in 1955; 'n standbeeld by die Afrikaanse Hoër Meisieskool, Pretoria, in 1961.

Dziomba is in 1970 oorlede terwyl sy in Johannesburg gewoon het.

Dziomba was born in Dt'Eylau, Germany in 1906. Her formal studies included five years at the Kunst Akademie, Berlin, under Prof. Becker, the Académie de la Grande Chaumiere in Paris and, as a bursary student, further studies in Germany and the Netherlands. She resided in South Africa from 1933 and is known as one of the first female sculptors active in the country. Her works are both realistic and abstract.

The themes Dziomba portrayed in her pieces are universal, but the human form and reality were always the focal points. The influence of African tribal sculpture is traceable in her work and, as a sculptor, she was sensitive to material and textural use. Dziomba had a love for different kinds of stones and also favoured wood, marble, malachite, ivory and verdite for her sculptures.

In 1938 she became a member of the *New Group* – one of only six sculptors who were amongst the artist members of the group until 1953. She was known for using various portrait busts as part of commissions.

Dziomba participated in group exhibitions from 1936. These exhibitions were held in South Africa, Arnhem (the Netherlands), the Tate Gallery in London and in Venice. In 1938 she held her first solo exhibition in Cape Town, followed by joint exhibitions with Jack Lugg and Gabor Tallo in Pretoria, during 1941. The most important of these joint exhibitions were the ones with Jean Welz, starting at the Constantia Gallery, Johannesburg in 1945.

She was a prize-winner at the International Sculpture Competition at the Tate Gallery in 1953, and in 1963 she was awarded a silver medal by the Chamber of Mines, Transvaal Academy.

Public commissions include: Designing the South African part of the Coronation Medal in 1937; a bronze relief for the Bank of Athens in Johannesburg; a bust of Dr. Robert Broom for the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria and Sterkfontein Caves, Krugersdorp; portal statues for the Receiver of Revenue Building, Johannesburg in 1955; a statue at the Afrikaans Girls High School, Pretoria in 1961.

Dziomba passed away in 1970 while she was living in Johannesburg.

Bronne / Sources:

Ogilvie, G. 1988. *The Dictionary of South African Painters and Sculptors – including Namibia*. Everard Read: Johannesburg.

Dziomba, Elsa (1906 – 1970)
Portrait Study of Eliza Ronald Webster, [s.a]
Terracotta

Versameling / Collection:
Rupert Kunsstigting / Rupert Art Foundation, Stellenbosch