

"The Saint of Monparnasse" between Document and Myth: a Century of Constantin Brancusi Scholarship.

Scientific Report

January - December 2012

Between January and December 2012 the team carried out the following operations regarding the classification and the inventory of Barbu Brezianu Archive, according to the principles established in the prior stage.

Books

1684 volumes introduced in the on-line catalogue of the Institute's Library. Another 127 publications were found inside some volumes.

The specialist in archiving (Maria Magdalena Anghelescu, Antoaneta Alexandru and Marina Aposteanu) followed these steps in this operation of classification:

- a) it was initiated a book of entries containing specific data of the items
- b) evaluation of the books according of the market values using information accessible on-line
- c) archiving the documents found in books and creating 82 files along with lists of content

The documentary dossiers

The inventory of files which contain the same categories of documents as well those mentioned above, found inside the books and the making of content lists.

Analytical classification and organization of the archive; systematization of the archive according to the typo-dimensional criteria (keeping the of the documents in boxes, envelopes for a better conservation).

The researchers of the Art History Institute - Virginia Barbu, Irina Cărăbaș, Olivia Nițiș, Corina Teaca Ioana Vlasiu, Ruxanda Beldiman inventoried a total of 172 cases and selected about 300 documents that have been scanned by Sorin Chițu, following that in the future to be integrated in the project. Research materials put into light the diversity of paths pursued by Barbu Brezianu The research materials from files bring to the light the diversity of research lines pursued by Barbu in order to edify his subject: relations with its predecessors, for instance with Auguste Rodin, relations with Romanians friends (Victor Popp, Ion

Gheorghian) maintained also by correspondence that revealed Brancusi's personality, detailed study of Brancusi's works, starting with their materiality (see the dossier about Pietrari and correspondence regarding the stone used in the assembly in Targu-Jiu) up to cultural context in which has developed his work.

Another large chapter includes documents relating to the relationship by Barbu Brezianu with various institutions and officials - National Museum of Modern Art, the Center Georges Pompidou's in Paris on the occasion of the first retrospective Brancusi in 1995. The correspondence with Margit Rowell, one of organizers, for instance, revealed much the appreciation of his colleague.

Another category of files is dedicated to the Barbu Brezianu's research related to other artists than Brancusi), Nicolae Grigorescu (interesting documents on mural on wall of the church in Puchenii Mari, her state of conservation and its successive restorations), Constantin Lecca at, Nicolae by Tonitza, Cornel Medrea, Stefan Luchian, which indicates the interest of the art historian in other major figures of the Romanian art.

The letters received by Barbu Brezianu (around 500) have been counted and classified alphabetically. It has been identified most contacted of his correspondances. Have been scanned over 1,700 pages of correspondence with numerous personalities, including with important Romanian and foreign historians of art, (Friedrich Teja Bach, Ionel Jianu, Sydney Geist, Margit Rowell, Doina Lemny) specialists in Constantin Brancusi's sculpture.

The Letters

Corespondența

Scrisorile primite de Barbu Brezianu (aproape cinci sute) au fost inventariate și clasate alfabetic. A fost identificată majoritatea interlocutorilor lui. Au fost scanate, de către Sorin Chițu, 1700 pagini de corespondență cu numeroși interlocutori, printre care istorici de artă importanți, români și străini (Friedrich Teja Bach, Ionel Jianu, Sidney Geist, Margit Rowell, Doina Lemny) care s-au ocupat de sculptura lui Brâncuși, urmând a fi integrate în etapa următoare pe situl proiectului

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Conferences, colloquia

In Romania:

2012

- The Center Of Studies "Barbu Brezianu", a project of the Institute of Art history "G. Oprescu", communication presented by Ioana Vlasiu at the commemorative conference dedicated to Constantin Brancusi. "New documentation sources, the Romanian Academy, 16 February 2012.
- Brancusi Colloquium - photo, film, organised by the Institute of art history in collaboration with University of Arts Bucharest, October 31 - have participated Ioana Vlasiu Elena Dumitrescu, Irina Carabas, Virginia Barbu, Alexandra Croitoru, Olivia Nitis, Corina sheath, Ruxanda Beldiman.
- Brancusi's our contemporary Conference held by Dr. Doina Lemny from The Museum of Modern Art, the Center Georges Pompidou's, Paris - November 22

Abroad:

Irina Carabas participated at the Third Conference of European Network for the Study Vanguard and modernism, Material meanings, organized from the University of Kent in Canterbury, September 7 2012. Network conferences established four years ago have become the most important events in Europe to meet researchers of vanguard and modernism. Her presentation was related Constantin Brancusi's reception in Romania of the 1960s both in political discourse, as well as in the art history and contemporary art in practice (the wooden Avant-Garde and the reception of Brancusi in Romania). The junction of the three areas forms her individual area of her research as part of the project that will develop in the next step. Within the same conference Irina Carabas organised a panel debating the conditions and forms of existence of vanguard of the 1960s in Romania (Elusive Avant-Garde . Materials, practices, Connections to post-war Romania), inviting three researchers from Romania who investigate the topic in independent surveys or related to their PhD thesis.

Papers in progress, finalised texts, artistic projects

initially, in phase for the application, the project aimed not to limit the research on Barbu Brezianu archive to the field of history of art, understood in traditional terms. The opening to artistic practice and to artists interested in Brancusi's figure has created an interesting dialog between domains. Thus, the project converted into an opportunity to promote research art, important orientation of contemporary art, still little known in the Romanian space.

A minutious research regarding the Ecorche and its beginnings, also Brancusi's collaboration with the professor of anatomy, Dr. Dimitrie Gerota, was developed by Elena Dumitrescu, lecturer at Sculpture Department of the University of National Arts Bucharest, by examining each copy (Bucharest, Craiova, Cluj, Iasi, and considering their current condition from the point of view of the conservation status. Her study Ecorșeul Brâncuși/Gerota. Cercetări recente has to be printed at UNARTE Publishing House.

Alexandra Croitoru, assistant at Foto-Video Department of The University of Arts Bucharest took at starting point Brancusi's aphorisms and meditations, the fiction texts and plays dedicated to him, various files from Barbu Brezianu Archive to initiate 2 artistic projects. Beginning with the poetry dedicated to Brancusi, she conceived a performance sequence for the International Conference After Brancusi in 2013.

The extremely extended research on Brancusi, nourishes a multitude of themes: Olivia Nițiș in a study entitled *Gender and context in Constantin Brancusi's sculpture* analyses the way Brancusi obeys or not stereotypical representation of the genre, taking account of the socio-political context of the time, the biographic and the aesthetic ones. The analysis takes as its starting point the book American theorist Anna c. Chave, *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art*, Yale University Press, 1993, but aims to enrich the feminist interpretation of Brancusi's work according to a scale of interpretation which questioned the Western-centric perspective of poststructuralist type. At the same time seeks to extend the research analysis of American historiography about the sculpture in general and about Brancusi in particular. (Anna Chave and Rosalind Krauss (*Passages in Modern Sculpture*, MIT Press, 1981) are two of the American writer with a relevant contribution to the historiography of modern sculpture and the dedicated to Brancusi. Their books offer new perspectives on the conceptual and aesthetic expression of Brancusi's sculpture, as well as the relevant directions of analysis of gender representation in the creation of the sculptor, insufficiently known in Romanian universities.)

The documentation in Barbu Brezianu archive provided the material for studies in other contexts, as well as *The Policies and Mechanisms of Power in the Romanian art in the 1980s and 1990s* of Olivia Nițiș (in course of publication). Ioana Vlasiu has focused upon Brancusi's pedagogy, a research topic which has not attracted the attention of art historians, developing master-apprentice relationship analysis starting with the records of young sculptors who have passed through his Studio. The pedagogy of Brancusi is correlated with the systems of formal education, but also with the informal school of Rodin and Bourdelle, Brancusi's famous models who knew them either directly or indirectly. The subject reveals even more importance if we consider the constant concern of the Romanian sculptor was to guide the viewer's reaction and exercise on him a real therapy. In this respect, not only the avant-garde ideology who wanted a moral transformation of the human being and society finds the Brancusi a convinced exponent.

Publications (articles and reviews)

Irina Cărăbaș

-Literary Representations of Brancusi's Studio, in *Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art*, 2012 (in print)

Olivia Nițiș

-American Art History about Brancusi after 1990: Chave, Anne contribution in studies and research of art history, 2012 (in print),

Doina Lemny, Cristian-Robert Velescu, Brancusi, the original in *Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art*, 2012 (review) (in print)

Ioana Vlasiu, Noguchi /Brâncuși. Date noi din corespondența dintre Isamu Noguchi și Barbu Brezianu, în *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2012 (sub tipar)

Ioana Vlasiu, Doina Lemny, Brancusi&Gaudier-Brzeska. Points de convergence, *L'Echoppe*, Paris, 2009

Ioana Vlasiu, Sorana Georgescu Gorjan, Așa grăit-a Brâncuși, in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2012.

Corina Teacă, Doina Lemny, Cristian-Robert Velescu, Brâncuși inedit, in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art*, 2012.

Documentation journeys abroad

Virginia Barbu, Ruxanda Beldiman, Corina Teacă travelled to Paris, France. During their visit, they investigated Brancusi's sculpture and the cultural and artistic environment where the Romanian artist completed his artistic education. The main institutions providing an important information were firstly the museums: Musée national d'art moderne-Centre Georges Pompidou, Bourdelle, Rodin, Orsay, Gustave Moreau, Musée de l'Orangerie, Musée de la vie romantique, with their libraries and archives. A special attention was paid to Brancusi Archive from Bibliothèque Kandinsky, containing a large correspondance significant for the intellectual ambiance, artist's friendships and relationships, his exhibitions. Musée Bourdelle and its archive, important for its collection of letters received by Bourdelle from his Romanian pupils, was also visited. The French sculptor had many admirers in Romania, among them, Anastase Simu, the founder of an important museum in Romania. The documentation will be use in further studies.

Acquisitions

It was bought in accordance with the schedule of project electronic equipment, supplies, and

the web site. Due to the limits imposed by law, we were restricted to buy shelves absolutely necessary to a proper conservation of the archive.

Disemination in media:

- on project's web site

-presentations of various stages of the project and of the conferences in the Radio Programm Cu minte de...Duminică (Portia de arta).

- Radio România Cultural Channel was also a media partner of the International Conference After Brancusi.

Ioana Vlasiu

Project's Director