

# AUREL SCHEIBLER

Ernst-G. Güse

Norbert Kricke  
*Grosse F.II*, 1980

Kricke's artistic beginnings in the late nineteen-forties were influenced by Rodin and Lehmbruck, whose work provided him with orientation in his early figurative drawings and sculptures. Quite soon however—already around 1950—he was confronted with a problem that would then occupy his thinking as a sculptor almost exclusively: the examination of the phenomena of movement and space. At that time, Kricke had already formulated his artistic intentions in a way that would continue to apply in the following decades: "My problem is not mass, not figure, but it is space and it is movement—space and time. I do not want a real space or a real movement (mobiles); I want to represent movement. I am trying to give form to the unity of space and time."<sup>1</sup> His central goal was to liberate sculpture from mass and volume.

It was from this perspective that he looked at and assessed the sculpture of the twentieth century. He thus recognized Brancusi's achievement in developing form to the utmost perfection, shedding the impression of material through the reflecting smoothness and becoming "intangible art for the eyes,"<sup>2</sup>. Regarding Giacometti's *Diego* heads he stated: "The space around these heads—charged full of energy—hammers apart mass, the volumes of matter."<sup>3</sup>

Following the multipartite, dynamic bundlings, crossings, and dispersions that characterize his sculptures of the fifties and sixties and give rise to the impression of movement, openness, and lack of matter in ever new differentiated forms, Kricke's late works created after 1975 are linked to the early orthogonal *Raumplastiken* (space sculptures) of 1950. At a time when sculptors in Germany frequently followed late-Expressionist representational concepts, Kricke found his way to sculptures that develop from the line alone and obtain spatiality as a result of multiple right-angled changes of direction. In these sculptures, there is no tangible volume. Space does not seem to be something that is displaced by mass, and also not something that is enclosed and bordered by a line; instead the line becomes the phenomenon that opens up space. Space is portrayed as being open and limitless and denied a precise determinability and measurability. It is not least the rounded corners of these forms that convey the impression of a continuously guided movement in space.

The sculptures created after 1975—hence also *Grosse F II* of 1980—are connected with this. This stainless steel sculpture also conveys the impression of a line that makes space become visible in right-angled bends, points beyond its actual appearance, and, coming from the infinite, seems to lead into the infinite. This line does not limit, does not define, but rather shows space in its limitless quality. These sculptures were thus also seen as "Verlaufsfiguren"<sup>4</sup> ("progressive" figures), which realize "the continuity of space as the infinity potential of possible positions and orientations."<sup>5</sup> Kricke's incisive statements on his sculptures repeatedly include terms such as humanity and freedom. The experience of space as a deliverance from material, structural limitations, from individual constriction, as an experience of limitlessness and infinity, ultimately as a dimension of freedom—in this spirit, Kricke's work obtains its true significance.

**A separate catalogue dedicated to Norbert Kricke's *Raumplastik Große F.II*, 1980 is available at the stand of Aurel Scheibler, Hall 2.0, Booth C17.**

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<sup>1</sup> Norbert Kricke, in: Carola Giedion-Welcker, *Plastik des XX. Jahrhunderts. Volumen und Raumgestaltung*, Stuttgart 1955, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Norbert Kricke, Constantin Brancusi, May 24, 1976, in: *Constantin Brancusi: Plastiken—Zeichnungen: Klassiker der modernen Plastik*, vol. 2, exh. cat. Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museum der Stadt Duisburg, July 11–September 5, 1976, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Norbert Kricke, Alberto Giacometti, August 16, 1977, in: *Alberto Giacometti, Plastiken—Gemälde—Zeichnungen: Klassiker der modernen Plastik*, vol. 3, exh. cat. Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museum der Stadt Duisburg, September 17–November 27, 1977, p. 84.

<sup>4</sup> Max Imdahl, in: *Norbert Kricke*, exh. cat. Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museum der Stadt Duisburg, Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, June 28–August 31, 1975, p. 104.

<sup>5</sup> See note 4.