



Simon Doucet, Baiser cristallin, Italian Marble

## Soul of Stone at Simon Doucet at Gallery d'Arte n New York City

by Robert Curcio

Simon Doucet's debut solo exhibition brought together many of the nuances he draws upon from personal narratives while referencing universal metaphors. These are coupled with his skillful treatment of the figure and abstraction. The exhibit is an overview of Doucet's development as an artist encompassing his beginnings with very realistic and traditional figurative pieces that he made at the Art Students League, NYC. To his "emerging years" when he was influenced by master sculptors and various "isms" that brought about subtle changes. Culminating with exquisite sculptures that are finely crafted and epitomize the very idea of



Simon Doucet, Un bijoux de femme, resin and marble powder

pure gestures that only an artist that is in full understanding and control of his abilities, as well as fully knowing his materials, can create.

The early pieces such as *Reine Abyssiniene*, *Dancing with Myself*, *Roi Abyssinien* and *Full Beauty* all capture the sitter's countenance and body with clear understanding and deft technique. The delicate bronze figure of *Dancing with Myself* shows a lone woman in mid-performance with extended arching body and outstretched arms with fabric. The piece is in bronze, including the fabric, but you would never think of it as solid and heavy; a piece of metal. Doucet carries the movement of her body in tandem with the swaying

fabric in a soft, sensuous and elegant manner. *Roi Abyssinien* is clearly the opposite, portraying a man of solemn dignity, strength and perseverance as he commands the viewer's gaze. What makes this bust a standout is Doucet's use of continuing with the center section of the torso to just above the navel. An interesting choice of structural support for the bust and it enhances the piece tremendously. As with many "young" artists at some point they come to Surrealism, it's practically a rite of passage. The influences of Henry Moore and Jean Arp in *Do you Dare?*, *Uniquement le Touche*, *Un Bijoux de Femme*, and *Delicate Promise* are clear. In this group of sculptures, the figure begins

to morph slowly into a reference of a figure with extenuating lines, shapes, volumes, curves, and a touch of sensuality in some of them. A female form, *Un Bijoux de Femme*, appears to be sitting on her folded legs with the torso stretched back and her right shoulder jutting upward. There is a fluid line bisecting the whole form from the upper left of the point of the shoulder down and across to, what could be considered her knees. The line is a thin cut into the form at the knees, then in a slow and gentle curve moves across the legs becoming a little deeper until at the waist the cut begins to open up as it moves upward creating a hidden cave within the torso.

Doucet brings the exhibit to very nearly a crescendo with *Decouvre mon Coeur*, *Comet in Transit*, *Baiser cristallin*

and *Presence*. The gorgeous marble used for these four pieces, three Italian and one pink Portuguese marble, heighten and almost overshadow the pieces themselves. It is by Doucet's skillful removal of the marble in creating the negatives spaces, deep dark cuts and flowing contours that he releases motion and emotion from within these solid stones.

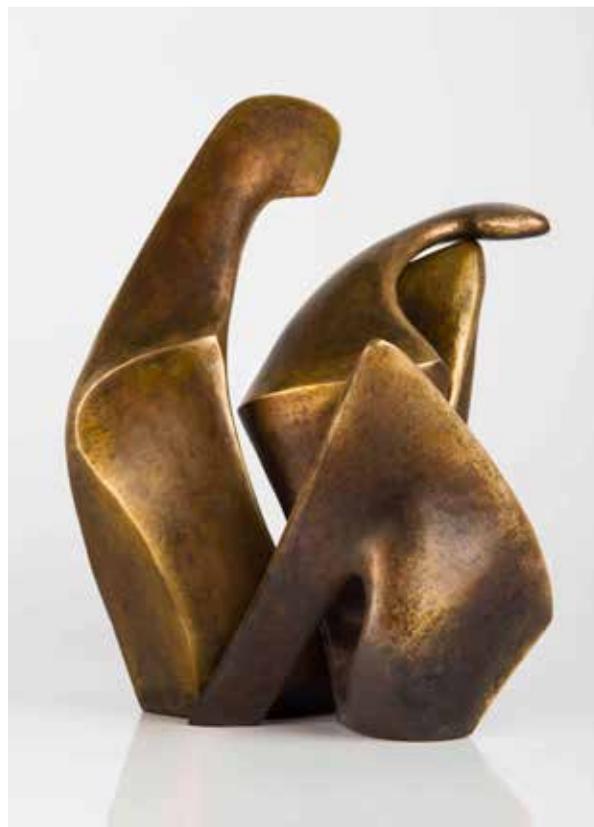
The piece that is Doucet's major breakthrough and breakout is, *Comet in Transit*. It is completely and truly his own creation; there is no figure, however a presence is considered, no reference to another artist or "ism," not a traditional piece although it is classical and contemporary at the same time. Doucet goes beyond depiction and eliciting a basic response from the viewer, this is conceptual and connects

more personally and deeper with the viewer changing one's expectations. When you think of the title, *Comet in Transit*, you would just think it was a horizontal piece depicting some object hurtling through space – you would be very wrong.

The piece is a vertical rectangle of two carved marble sections of a continuous twist that is firmly placed on its pedestal. The "comet" is nestled in a hollow near the base; it's not going anywhere anytime soon. Doucet contradicts the commonplace expectation of a comet, but, it does have everything to do with "transit" meaning journey, travel or passage. Through this shared journey between the artist, the sculpture and the viewer, a genuine conversation and connection between them is taking place.



Simon Ducet, *Comet in Transit*, bronze



Simon Ducet, *Will You Dare (Hommage à H. Moore)*, bronze, 12"x12"x12", 120Lbs