



VIRGINIO FERRARI  
SCULPTOR

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## BIOGRAPHY

VIRGINIO L. FERRARI (b.1937) is an internationally acclaimed contemporary sculptor, who has exhibited his work in Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and throughout the United States. Ferrari's monumental sculptures can be found on *street corners* and *public parks*, at *universities* and *libraries*, *corporations* and in *private collections* in Chicago, and all over the world.

Since the early sixties his sculptures have participated with the environment allowing the interaction of sculpture and casual observer, giving the modern city a human dimension. With over thirty monumental public sculptures in Chicago alone and other works acquired by civic, museum, and corporate collections in Atlanta, Deyang, Florence, Guayaquil, Los Angeles, Milan, Philadelphia, Parma, Rome, Shanghai and Verona, Ferrari has been a consistent presence in the international art world resulting in over 50 solo exhibitions, while participating in more than 150 group shows.

He was born in Verona, Italy where he graduated from the Scuola D' Arte N. Nanni and from the Accademia Cignaroli (1959), where he received his first teaching assignment. His father and grandfather were stonemasons who established a sense of craftsmanship in the household, and Ferrari continued this tradition, having his first solo exhibit in Venice in 1962 at the age of 24.

From 1966 to 1976 Ferrari was Assistant Professor of Art and Sculptor in Residence at the University of Chicago and since then has remained in Chicago where he has devoted his full energies to sculpting. His styles and periods have progressed and changed, marrying his mastery of traditional materials and methods with experimentation's in new forms, materials and styles embracing a philosophy of "New Ideas, New Ways, New Means and New Spaces."

Ferrari's stylistic development has included transitions in expressionistic and surrealistic forms and has evolved towards geometric reduction with a minimum of means; sculptures distinguished by massive force and dynamic tension. Running throughout his art even in his most formalistic works is a persistent search for life essences, to the condition of man, to the embracing of male and female forces.

Ferrari's work has been described as lyrical abstract sculpture in bronze, stainless steel, marble and granite. Integrating sculpture into the architectural environment, often playfully in contrast to it, at other times fully participating in it, consequently his work is preoccupied with creating situations that delight the eye in the parks, streets, squares and corners of the city.

He holds many awards for his achievements, including the Illinois State Service Award for outstanding contributions as a sculptor who has vitalized and humanized urban spaces. Honored by the president of Italy, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, Ferrari was awarded the *Ufficiale Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana* (Officer-Order of Merit of the Italian Republic) in 1992, for his important contributions to the international art world. He received the medal of the City of Verona and the Illinois Art Council Governor's Award based on his 2003 anthological retrospective exhibit *Ombre della Sera:1958-2003* at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea-Palazzo Forti, Verona, Italy. In 2005, Ferrari became *Corresponding Member of the European Academy of Sciences, Arts and Humanities* (Paris, France), presented to the academy on behalf of art historian, Ante Glibota.

Ferrari currently divides his time between his studios in Chicago, USA and Guardistallo, Italy.

