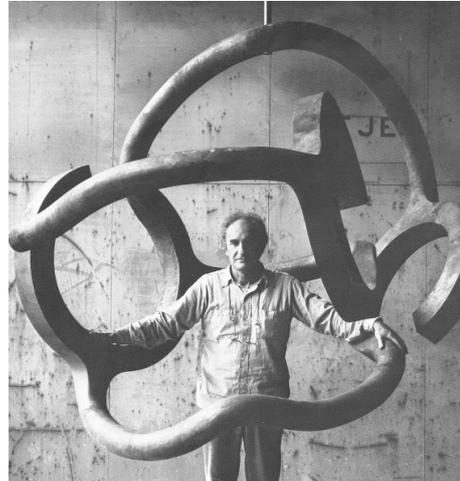


EDUARDO CHILLIDA

(San Sebastián, 1924-2002)

The artist knows what to do but he has to do the unknown for it to be worth

Eduardo Chillida is one of the greatest and most relevant sculptors of the 20th century. Born in San Sebastian in 1924, he moved to Madrid to study architecture. In 1947 he dropped out of university and he accessed to Círculo de Bellas Artes (and) turning his attention to sculpture and drawing. In 1948 he was awarded a scholarship for the *Cité Internationale Universitaire* and travelled to Paris for the first time. There he discovered the work of Pablo Picasso, Julio González and Constantin Brancusi. He visited the *Musée du Louvre* where the archaic greek sculpture influenced him to do figurative sculptures by carving plaster torsos. However, at this time he had already began to show an interest for the inner form, the mass values and the different volumes with an important sense of monumentality.



Eduardo Chillida with *Homenaje a Calder* at Taller Larrañaga, Lezo, 1979 © Zabalaga-Leku. ARS, New York / VEGAP, Madrid 2017 courtesy of Estate of Eduardo Chillida and Hauser & Wirth

Chillida also produced an enormous amount of works on paper throughout his career which allowed him to explore form and line. Over two thousand drawings, woodcuts, lithographs, silkscreens and aquatints, his reference work *Gravitaciones*, reliefs where he eliminates the adhesive from the collage, suspending the paper in the space of background.

In 1951 Eduardo Chillida returns to Hernani in the Basque Country, Spain. He abandoned figurative sculpture and began experimenting on industrial material such as steel and iron. Chillida received his first major commission for the four doors of the church of Nuestra Señora de Aránzazu. Three years later he had his first solo show at Galería Clan in Madrid. In 1958, he exhibited for the first time at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum as part of the group show *Sculpture and Drawings from Seven Sculptors*. That same year he was awarded with the Grand International Sculpture Prize at the Venice Biennale.

In the 60's he travelled several times to Italy. These trips are very important for Chillida, his interests in architecture and in the interaction between light and space are born in Italy. He starts using alabaster; a stone with strong translucent and luminous qualities. For Chillida the void and the emptiness are as important and fundamental as the material. Like in traditional drawing, shapes are made of light and shadow with the use of black and white. This subject gives him a unique personality. Chillida developed this theme not only in the works of alabaster, iron and ceramics, but also in the works made with paper. In the *Gravitaciones*, the hollow of the paper that gravitates, composes and cuts out the work.

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Chillida received many public commissions for monumental sculptures: *El peine del viento* in San Sebastian, *Gure Aitaren Etxea* in Guernica, *The House of Goethe* in Frankfurt, *Tolerance Monument* in Seville; *El elogio del horizonte* in Gijón, *Berlín* at Bundeskanzleramt in Berlín... Architects, mathematicians, philosophers such -as Martin Heidegger and Emile Cioran- and poets as Octavio Paz all have written texts and essays about his work. The research for inner space would culminate in the project of the Tindaya mountain in the Canary Islands which was never completed.

Eduardo Chillida was awarded with numerous awards during his lifetime, some of the most important: the Kandinsky Biennial in 1960, the Wilhelm Lehmbrock in 1966, the German Kaissering in 1985, the Premio Príncipe de Asturias in 1987 and the Japanese Imperial Award in 1991 among others. His work is included in museums around the world, as well as, in many important public and private collections. He has exhibited in numerous galleries and institutions around the world. In 2000 Chillida-Leku Museum opened it's doors in the Basque Country; a place where most of his work currently rests in open dialogue with nature.

Eduardo Chillida died in San Sebastian in 2002.