

*G. Paolozzi*



EDUARDO PAOLOZZI



The Tate Gallery

EDUARDO PAOLOZZI



The Tate Gallery

*Edwards*



E. Pavlozzi.

*e. Parolagi.*

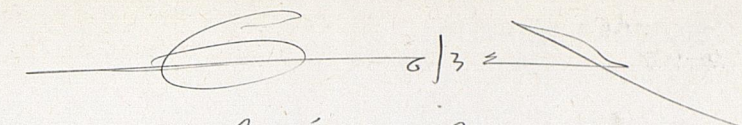
## EDUARDO PAOLOZZI

by Frank Whitford

Eduardo Paolozzi, born in Edinburgh in 1924 of Italian parents, has been, since his emergence internationally at the Venice Biennale of 1952, one of the leading exponents of a style erroneously described as 'pop'. He prefers the term BASH, a continuation of radical Surrealism with which he first came into contact in Paris during the late 1940s. From the beginning Paolozzi has been a maverick master of many media. Apart from the sculpture and graphics (for which he is best known), he has made films written poetry and published books. He continues to be a resourceful innovator in all these forms, and draws on an unusually wide span of references and source material for his art, on 'kitsch', technology, the grotesque and pseudo philosophy, all of which he variously mixes to create effective metaphors for modern life. His work in all media is preoccupied with the complex use of irony and satire. Even the modern art world does not escape his perverse sensibility, and by filling a hopper with earlier, discarded sculpture (*Waste: Cloud Atomic Laboratories*, 1971) he demonstrates that even his own work is not above criticism. By drawing at each stage of his career on previously overlooked or undervalued source material, and by adopting a wide variety of styles with which to transform it, Paolozzi has regularly re-defined the aims and nature of art in general, and links can be made between his Independent Group activities (where he demonstrated the vitality of images from pulp literature and technology) to his recent work where he even employs traditional École des Beaux Arts sculptural modelling to shock the spectator into a new appraisal of apparently banal subject matter.

The exhibition in conjunction with which this book appears is,

*continued on back flap*



la vi. Londres 1971



**EDUARDO PAOLOZZI**

The Tate Gallery  
22 September—31 October 1971

Exclusively distributed in USA and Canada by  
Boston Book & Art Publisher  
655 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass 02116

Exclusively distributed in France by Idea Books  
24 rue du 4 Septembre, Paris (2e)

## CONTENTS

- page 5 Foreword by Sir Norman Reid  
6 Eduardo Paolozzi by Frank Whitford  
30 Retrospective selection of sculpture and graphics  
106 Brief chronology  
108 Bibliography  
108 Catalogue

*Front cover:*  
Illustration from advertisement  
for Vietnam US soldiers boot. The  
boot occurs in the exhibition in  
three dimensions and in various  
scales.

*Back cover:*  
Piece of gold bullion  
100% F\*ART 1971  
polystyrene, unlimited edition  
published by Snail Chemicals  
(Publishing).

Published by order of the Trustees 1971

Copyright © 1971 the Tate Gallery

Designed and published by the  
Tate Gallery Publications Department  
Millbank, London SW1 and printed in  
Great Britain by the Beric Press  
Crawley

Pages 30-105 designed by Eduardo Paolozzi

## FOREWORD

Paolozzi has been one of the most volatile of twentieth century sculptors. He does not appear as a figure heroically struggling with massive and intractable materials but as a man of imagination and great curiosity; finding, collecting, experimenting, directing. His prints and sculptures, collectively and often individually, are compendia of his fantasies and his obsessions, which include science fiction monsters, toys, Micky Mouse, Japan, robots, armaments, artificial limbs, devices for extending or testing the human frame and mind, the media in which he works. In fact all of these are closely linked in the notion of translation from medium to medium (that is, image), eg: object to photograph, photograph to half-tone, half-tone to air-brush, air-brush to etching, and so on indefinitely. But an artificial limb is also a flesh and blood limb in a different medium and Mickey Mouse is a man translated into a child, a child into a mouse, a mouse into a geometric diagram, a diagram into cinematography.

It is this intense interest in medium together with Paolozzi's life-long opposition to any established, elitist, tasteful or exclusive view of art that entitles him to be regarded as one of the founders of Pop, Assemblage, Multi-Medium art, and what he calls BASH.

The exhibition and this book, which accompanies it, equally reflect Paolozzi's fantasies and obsessions.

Both are aggregations of material linked by a network of associations, metamorphoses, puns, references. Everything is transformed, but nevertheless it may remain the same. Paolozzi is not afraid of the meaning which an object may have in its own context and not afraid of direct political or art-critical comment.

I should like to thank first of all the Artist, both for creating the works, and for his major part in devising the show itself, and for designing and making the image section which forms the central part of this book; also Artur Laskus, his assistant, and Christopher Swaine. We are only less indebted to Frank Whitford who has written a long introduction with much new information and has helped both in the conception and in the selection of the exhibition.

Finally, we are most grateful to those who have lent works to the exhibition. By far the greater number of these are from the collection of the artist himself, but important pieces have been lent by Mr Colin St John Wilson, Bernard Jacobson and the Ulster Museum, Belfast.

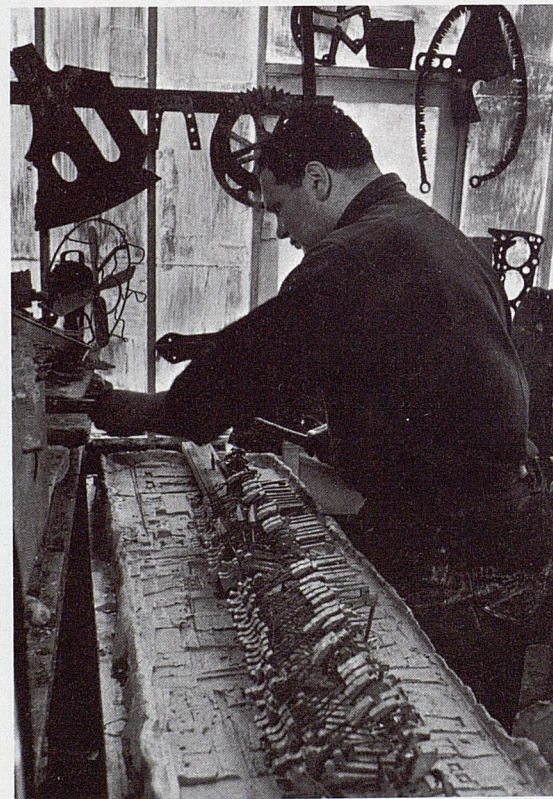
Norman Reid  
*Director*

combine found images on paper, but it was not clear how similar results might be achieved in three dimensions. In pieces like the famous *Baboon* Picasso had pioneered one solution to this problem, and his welded sculptures and wood and paper constructions proposed others. But Paolozzi not only wanted to combine a much wider variety of objects made from all kinds of materials in his sculpture, he also wanted to unify them totally.

He found the answer in a combination of plaster, wax and metal-casting. Objects which appealed to him, toys, bits of machines, sheer junk, could be impressed into plaster which, when dry, could have hot wax poured into it. The result was a sheet of positive shapes from the plaster negative, and this could be easily stored until Paolozzi wanted these particular shapes for a particular sculpture. Moreover, the wax sheet was a very versatile tool. It could be

shaped, cut, bent, torn, fused, welded together and turned directly into sculpture. Unique bronzes could be made by the lost wax method without any intermediate stages (figs 15 & 16).

Fig 15-16  
The artist working in his Essex studio, circa 1956



### Part one, Frozen Terror . . . Part two, Fangs of Death

The method was first applied to the making of heads and figures (fig 17), and an enormous variety of objects was used. An often-quoted statement of Paolozzi's lists some of the things he incorporated into his work at the time: 'Dismembered lock, toy frog, rubber dragon, toy camera, assorted wheels and electrical parts, clock parts, broken comb, bent fork, various unidentified found objects. Parts of a radio. Old RAF bomb sight. Gramophone parts. Model automobiles. Reject die castings from factory tip sites. CAR WRECKING YARDS AS HUNTING GROUNDS.'<sup>6</sup>

The method ensured a rich texture of detail. Paolozzi has always been fascinated by art which exploits large areas of exact and small-scale description and repelled by large, open abstract canvases which, he often says, he would like to improve by adding something here, and there. The painting which most impressed him in the Ashmolean, for example, was Piero di Cosimo's *Forest Fire* and what he once said about it is most revealing: 'Each detail, such as a leaf on a tree or an animal's eye, is handled with enough attention and sense of wonder to be a complete composition in itself. At the same time, all these magnificently conceived and composed details are again conceived and composed as elements of a larger whole, a tree or an animal and these larger units, each one of them a perfect picture in itself, are again part of a larger group of such units until the larger

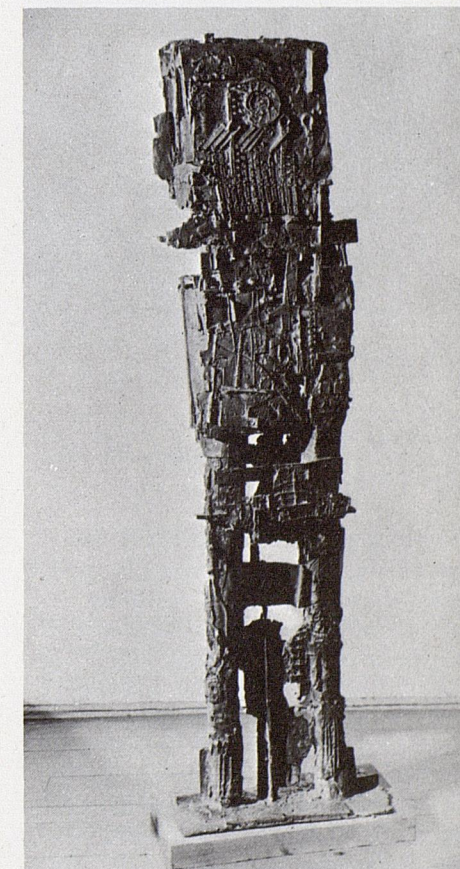
groups are orchestrated in turn within the general structure of the whole picture'.<sup>7</sup>

But such rich detailing is not only fascinating for its formal qualities. It also provides layers of symbolic meaning. In the same interview, Paolozzi refers to the choice of tattoos on a man's body which are 'clues to an understanding of his biography or of the compulsive nature of his urge to modify his own appearance to exhibit in public his private dream-world'. In the same way, the figure encrusted with junk can be seen as a man carrying with him the symbols of his own culture, for, as Frank Zappa said, you can tell a society by what's in the garbage. Rubbish pits are the first things archaeologists turn to.

The figures themselves are simultaneously humanoids, golems and hieratic totems (fig 18). They relate both to primitive ritualistic objects, to the idea of mechanised man and to the science-fiction film. They can be compared to the robots which later appeared throughout Paolozzi's graphics (one of these early figures is, in fact, called *Robot*) and to the creatures in such films as *The Mummy* and *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (fig 19). What, after all, are such figures as the Frankenstein monster and the Golem except robots in more or less human form, as functional systems activated by forces beyond their control? Frankenstein even makes his monster up from component parts, like a master collagist.

The collage principle behind the sculptured heads is made clear by

Fig 17  
9XSR 1958-9  
Bronze  
Private collection



surprisingly, the first large-scale showing of the artist's work in Britain. An unusual feature of the book is the long retrospective selection of illustrations of sculpture and graphics from, roughly, 1950 to the present day. Much of it is from the artist's own collection and is published here for the first time.

Frank Whitford, a Contributing Editor of the magazine *Studio International*, teaches fine art at the Slade School, London. He has published a short monograph on Kandinsky and a study of German Expressionism. He is also a cartoonist, and a commentator on art for the BBC German Service and on German radio.

THE TATE GALLERY

*Printed in Great Britain*



