

## Short Biographies

### **Biography: Paolo Bellini (b. 1941)**

Paolo Bellini was born in 1941 in Mendrisio. During his apprenticeship at an art foundry in the village where he grew up he learned the techniques of melting down metal and casting bronze statues using wax models. His diverse artist acquaintances such as Jean Arp, Emilio Stanzani or Remo Rossi played a key role in his decision to enrol at the art academy in Brera, where he studied under Marino Marini. After completing his studies, Bellini spent a while in Belgium where he worked as an assistant for the sculptor Olivier Strebelle. On a study tour through Europe he met the sculptor Henry Moore who henceforth influenced his work. After the tour he moved into his own studio in Ticino. As an artist Bellini experimented with a diversity of materials such as bronze, corrugated iron, aluminum and iron. From the 1980s onwards he preferred to use the latter for his sculptures. These, however, seem to contradict the characteristically unwavering quality of the metal, which the artist shapes, bends or twists, and paints over.

### **Biography: James Licini (b.1937)**

James Licini was born in 1937 in Zurich. Following an apprenticeship as a blacksmith he worked as an ironworker on construction sites as well as a locksmith and a sheet metal worker. Since his apprenticeship he has frequented the artists' circles of Muz Zeier and Friedrich Kuhn. From the 1960s he was employed as an assistant on and off by Hans Aeschbacher and Kurt Laurenz Metzler. But contrary to expectations, James Licini had no desire to become an artist himself during this period. Rather he wanted to apply his craftsmanship and work with metal, creating something of his own without having the end product dictated by someone else when he made his first sculptures out of iron. Thus James Licini considers himself to be a steelworker and not an artist. It is his proficiency as an artisan and tradesman that made him into an expert in working with metal and enabled him to produce sculptures of such high precision. His basic materials are I-beams and steel plates, which he purchases directly from where they are produced.

### **Biography: Josef Maria Odermatt (1934–2011)**

Josef Maria Odermatt was born in 1934 in Stans. He did an apprenticeship as a locksmith and visited courses at the school of applied arts and sciences in Lucerne. He graduated as a master locksmith in 1960. He already became interested in iron sculptures during his apprenticeship. During this time he also made the acquaintance of the sculptor, painter and draftsman Hans Christen. In the early 1960s during a longer sojourn in Paris he met the sculptor Robert Müller, who also worked with iron, and the painter Bruno Müller. From 1962 onwards Josef Maria Odermatt had a forge workshop in Stans. After traveling through Italy for several months he constructed a studio house in Huob above Stans. There he lived and worked until he died on November 6 2011. Odermatt always worked with the material of the trade he had learnt. His sculptures had no titles and he made no preparatory sketches or studies for them. Prior to the 1990s, Odermatt did not weld but used bands, rivets and hinges to unite the pieces of metal into sculptures. The pieces of his last phase of work are more compact and made by forging and welding. Simultaneous to making iron sculptures he executed an independent oeuvre of sketches.