

**CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI
BETWEEN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND SUCCESS**

Costina SFINTEȘ¹

***Abstract:** The road to success is always sprinkled with ups and downs, but reaching the final goal also depends on the interpersonal relationships that make their mark on the destiny of each of us. The force of the personality, our determination, the turmoil, our own madness and the capacity to dematerialize and merge with the universe, through the vitality of the latter, show the balance between the evolving form and the finished product, precisely by putting our humanity in form and matter.*

Sculpture, like any other type of art, reaches perfection through its creator, when the form and the background merge in the essence of beauty that renders the wings to the highest flight.

***Keywords:** sculpture, Constantin Brâncuși, interpersonal relationships, friends, women, success.*

Introduction

On February 19, 1876, the greatest Romanian sculptor that the Romanian Principalities praised was born in Hobita,. Born and raised in the Getic Plateau, he loved beauty and beyond time, and managed to immortalize in photography, painting and sculpture all its essence, thus remaining in the memory of great civilizations, despite the vicissitudes of time.

The life and work of Constantin Brâncuși represent a living testimony. The most important for man are the people, regardless of whether they are men or women. They are the ones who motivate us and make us evolve on the scale of life. Our beauty is highlighted by those around us.

People can be very agreeable or disliked companies for us, they can be muses, pleasures, comforts, freedom, delirium, labor power, teachers or apprentices, parents or siblings, life itself or the flight to the heights. Without knowing it, people are everything to us, even if everyone understands, perhaps, something else by the word "everything". Just imagine that you would live alone on a whole earth, without another human foot. What would it be like? Terrible. Would you still be what you are today? Excluded.

With a strong character, an iron will but also an immeasurable pride, Constantin Brâncuși polished in his works his beliefs, but also the relations with those around him, without omitting the fact that his own destiny was made "with the chisel", in part, by Professor Gerota, by the women who campaigned for them, but also by the important friends in his life.

¹ Scientific Researcher – „Constantin Brancusi” University of Targu-Jiu

Without claiming to exhaustively include the people who played an important role in the life of Constantin Brâncuși, we will try in this paper to bring to light the most important interpersonal relationships in the life of the Gorj sculptor, which have a major impact on his destiny.

During his classes at the School of Arts and Crafts in Craiova, he was financially supported by Toma Marocneanu, Nicolae Titulescu's uncle and epitrope of the Madona Dudu Church in Craiova, provided he sang in the church pew, as Constantin Brâncuși had a beautiful voice.²

Professor Gerota takes him under his wing while studying at the School of Fine Arts, and he is also the one who helps him get the money needed for the trip to Paris, receiving as a contract the bust of Carol Davila. Because of his temperament and his nature, he receives only half of the promised amount, and so he decides to walk to Paris. Also at Gerota's initiation, Brâncuși created the work "Ecorseul", with which he received the Bronze medal at the "Anatomy" Contest organized by the School of Fine Art in Bucharest in June 1901.

Also through his former teacher, Constantin Brâncuși receives a well-paid order for the realization of a funeral ensemble, from Mrs. Stănescu, a widow from Romania.

Arriving in Paris, and with too poor livelihoods, through the care of Grigore Ghika, the Romanian ambassador in Paris, he receives a scholarship from the Ministry of Public Instruction³.

Perhaps one of the greatest interventions in favor of the Romanian sculptor came from Queen Elisabeta of Romania, who mediated for Brâncuși to enter as a disciple on Rodin's landing, from where he learned a lot of what the sculpture supposed at that time.⁴ For this reason, the dismay coming from acquaintances when leaving Rodin was so great, because they could not understand that Constantin Brâncuși's refusal to work for Rodin was so great with the gesture that Queen Elisabeta of Romania herself he had made for his entry into the apprenticeship of the famous French sculptor, Auguste Rodin, born Francois-Auguste-Rene Rodin. From this stage, the help given by Otilia Cosmuță and Maria Bengescu, who in a delicate way were the “ambassador” of Brâncuși, should not be omitted either.

² <https://identitatea.ro/constantin-brancusi-sculptorul-sufletului-romanesc/>

³ <https://identitatea.ro/constantin-brancusi-sculptorul-sufletului-romanesc/>

⁴ Moni Stănilă, Brâncuși or how the turtle learned to fly, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2019, p. 24;

The language of sculptures was revolutionized by Rodin, through his power to express human truth through sculpture, starting from direct experience. Constantin Brâncuși's stay at Rodin's workshop was in 1907, and lasted about a few months. The separation of the two destinies was made in amicable terms, because Rodin recognized the value of the Romanian, and the latter of the former, remaining forever known the reply "In the shadow of the big trees nothing rises."

The road to interpersonal relationships and success

The road to success has not been easy at all. Sometimes in utter poverty, other times torn down by the vicissitudes of time, cracked by the years of the First World War, split between consciousness and truth, Constantin Brâncuși, supported by friends and girlfriends, stepped up step by step and shaped what modern sculpture would mean. . The whole work of the great sculptor only renders his hottest belief, that simplicity is only the solution to solving complexity.

The ideal of simplicity, naturalness, beauty was reversed in sculpture by the great sculptor Constantin Brâncuși. In this way he knew the perfection and laid the foundations of what modern art means. The power of work, the inspiration and the very flight of the sculptor was given to him by women, who have for a longer or shorter period of time, were passed by the great Brâncuși, both through stone and through the heart. He raised them to the sublime and rendered them in his works, years in a row (for about 20 years he worked on copies of the work Miss Pogany - 19 works of the work, which had as muse, the Romanian painter of origin Hungarian Margaryt Pogany, who, for a short period of time, 3 years, was also the sculptor's girlfriend.). He idealized the woman in the most beautiful way possible and restored her to immortality.

Constantin Brâncuși's greatest pleasure was to see his girlfriends recognizing themselves in his works:

- Margaryt Pogany - opera "Miss Pogany",
- Rene Irane Franchen - works "Sleeping Muse", in - 5 versions in bronze, three versions in marble, but also in wood "Baroness", "Study for the RF Baroness" and a "Muse"
- Agnez Meier ⁵- opera "La Reigne Pas dedaigneuse".

⁵ She is one of the most important women in the sculptor's life, being the woman who protected and promoted him, bringing in the workshop the largest art collections of the time, of which we exemplify: Miss Beckett, Mrs. Picabia;

- Leonie Ricou - the work "Madame LR", the only work that was not exhibited, being held in his workshop. This work ranked second in the top of the most expensive works of art sold in Paris, reaching the art collection of Yvet Saint Laurent.

- Marie Bonaparte⁶ - the work "Princess X", which can be seen from two points of view: through the prism of the representation of a vain woman or through the prism of a phallus⁷.

- Eillen Lane - opera "Eillen Lane"⁸

- poet Nancy Cunard⁹ - the works "Young Sophistication"¹⁰ and "Blonde Black"

The list goes on.

Margareta Cosăceanu Lavrillier said about the great Brâncuși that he taught his friends how to hold the "chisel and the hammer", sharing with them his knowledge about sculpture.

Milița Pătrașcu and Irina Codreanu were the Romanians who started their apprenticeship in Brâncuși's workshop. The sculptor gave them the names of boys so that they could swear at them better, although he took great care of them.¹¹

It should be mentioned that Milița Pătrașcu was at the same time a promoter of Brâncuși's art, being the one who mediated the beginnings of the professional relationship between the sculptor and Arethia Tătărăscu, by entrusting the realization of the Calea Eroilor Monumental ensemble from Tg-Jiu. From the sculptor's correspondence with Milița Pătrașcu results the immense happiness of Constantin Brâncuși that he will make a work at his home. This announces Arethia Tătărăscu to start the necessary preparations for the construction of the monument dedicated to the heroes of our nation in Tg-Jiu. At that time, Arethia Tătărăscu was the president of the Women's League from Gorj, benefiting from help in this project and from the prime minister Gheorghe Tătărăscu, whose wife she was.

After the sculptor's visit to his workshop in Paris, in the early 1930s, Constantin Brâncuși came to Romania, where he was hired by Arethia Tătărăscu to build the monumental ensemble

⁶ Princess of Greece and Denmark

⁷The exhibition of the work in 1919, at the Salon of Independent Artists, made the work "very scandalous", and this fact had two major consequences: the vain princess left him, and the work was excluded from the exhibition. Constantin Brâncuși said then about the work "I made the matter say what it cannot say. And what is the woman really? A smile between the lace and blush on the cheeks. In order to release this entity, to bring into the realm of the sensible this eternal in ephemeral forms, for 5 years we have simplified.

⁸ <http://jurnalul.ro/thumbs/int/2015/06/11/femeile-din-viata-lui-brancusi-au-ajuns-statui-18507292.jpg>

⁹ although she was also a muse of Constantin Brâncuși, she never posed for him:

¹⁰ was sold in 2018 for 71 million dollars, also setting a new record for Brâncuși's work;

¹¹ Moni Stănilă, Brâncuși or how the turtle learned to fly, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2019, p. 115;

dedicated to heroes, and 7 years later in Tg-Jiu the Calea Monumental Ensemble was inaugurated Eroilor, which contains 3 sculptures by Brâncuși: The Infinity Column, the Kiss Gate and the Table of Silence. An important role both in the realization of the project and in the life of Constantin Brâncuși was played by Ștefan-Georgescu Gorjan, an engineer who worked at the factories in Petroșani. From him he receives the idea of creating the Column of infinity that is "from heaven to earth", liking it for the openness it had to beauty. When carrying out the project, Constantin Brâncuși arranged for Ștefan to be his engineer in the actual realization of the project, because he was only a sculptor, not an engineer, and he does not want his work to be placed on a pedestal, because he wanted a direct connection between heaven and earth. Throughout the project, Ștefan was with the Gorj sculptor.

In her apprenticeship, Milița Pătrașcu made a bust of the sculptor, who modeled her cheeks on her own, after posing for her. This episode actually shows one of Brâncuși's features, that for art he would do anything, including muse, apprentice and teacher, even at the same time. The work is currently at the Art Museum in Craiova.

The sculptor Barbara Hepworth, in 1952, London Carvings and Drawings, after visiting the sculptor's workshop, said about Brâncuși "I felt the strength of Brâncuși's personality and his so determined way of carving stone and wood. Everything I saw in this workshop showed the balance between the emerging form and the finished sculptures, the humanity that enlivened them, the full unity between form and matter. "

Over time, Constantin Brâncuși worked in several of his own workshops in Paris, which became his home. If the first workshop that hosted the initial activity of the sculptor, was located in Paris, Montparnaasse, no. 54, later moving to Rue d 'Oessa, the cornerstone of his own world puts him in the workshop moved to Paris Impasse Rodin, no. 8, behind the Necker-Enfants hospital, a street-like space with a clog. With his move to the new workshop, Brâncuși got rid of his household items, which he either gave to other people or collected and threw away.¹²

Marcel Mihalovici said about Brâncuși "Brâncuși had a weakness for everything that was beautiful, including women."¹³ Although the notion of beauty was reproduced by poets, painters, musicians, photographers, sculptors, etc., it was understood and perceived differently, depending

¹² Moni Stănilă, Brâncuși or how the turtle learned to fly, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2019, pp. 54-57;

¹³ <https://www.eva.ro/actualitate/tema-zilei/iubirile-lui-brancusi-femeile-care-i-au-marcet-viata-si-opera-articol-214657.html>

on the environment they come from, their education, their own perception, the meaning of facts, things and important people for each of us.

Although there is no exhaustive list of the data of the people in Constantin Brâncuși's life, the most important figures with whose help he overcame the problems of life, with whom he laughed and to whom he told the truth, who promoted him, they helped, being over the years with him, who were muses or took care in various aspects of the established works of the great artist, or with whom he lived some of the most beautiful moments, we remember: the sculptor's mother, Professor Gerota, Stela, Grigore Ghica, Queen Elizabeth of Romania, Otilia Cosmuță, Baroness Renee Irana Franchon, Margit Pogany, Leonie Ricou - Madame LR, Princess Marie Bonaparte, Nina Hamnet, Marthe Lebherz, Amedeo Modigliani, Marcel Duchamp (called Morice), lawyer Quinn, Man Ray, Ilerie Veronca, photographer Edward Steichen, Milița Petrașcu, Irina Codreanu, Lizica Codreanu, Sanda Kessel, Henri Coandă, Francis Picabia, Cendras Marceteau, Peggy Guggenheim, Ștefan Georgescu-Gorjan, Tristan Tzara, Ezra Pound, Raymond Radiguet, Berrenice Abbott, Eileen Lane, Cella de la Vrancea, Nancy Cunard, Agnes Meyer, Marthe Lebherz, Florence Meyer, Vera Moor, Margareta Cosăceanu Lavrillier, Barbara Hepworth, Arethia Tătărăscu, Maria Tănase, Sonia Terk-Delaunay, Margit Brauner-Kosch, Maria Chaliapine, Juana Muller, Guillaume Apollinaire, James Joyce. Sonia Terk-Delaunay, Margit Brauner-Kosch, Maria Chaliapine, Juana Muller, Guillaume Apollinaire, James Joyce. Sonia Terk-Delaunay, Margit Brauner-Kosch, Maria Chaliapine, Juana Muller, Guillaume Apollinaire, James Joyce.

The latter came to Paris with a scholarship in 1937, and two years later worked in Brâncuși's workshop. He helped him create the modern work of art "The Flying Bunting", a work in the Guggenheim Museum, New York.

The woman who marked Brâncuși's destiny in all possible aspects and who took him from agony to ecstasy was none other than the Jewish New Zealander Vera Moor. She met the sculptor in 1931 after a concert she gave in London. They met after the concert and continued to meet for about 4 years. He loved the woman's smell of roses, and the latter, the fact that Brâncuși was not in a hurry and made things exactly as they should be done.

She was the woman who understood him more than any other woman. He understood their ingratitude for not giving explanations, because no matter how many explanations they gave, people believed everything they wanted to believe.

If the friendship with Marthe Leberherz, Eillen remained just as playful after the love affair ended, if after the adventures with Florence Meyer and Peggy, between the sculptor and they remains a beautiful friendship, the end of love between Constantin Brâncuși and Vera Moore is completely and utterly different. The idea of betrayal was born in the sculptor's mind, but their relationship petrified into a cold one.

He becomes gloomy, depressed, ruthless, dissatisfied, angry because Vera Moore announces that he will become a father. She hopes things will get simpler for him at birth. Upon hearing the news that Vera Moore is pregnant, she broke off her love affair.

In 1934 Vera gave birth to John Constantin Brâncuși Moore, who became a professional photographer at Crazy Horse in Paris. Constantin Brâncuși never recognized his child and never spoke to the latter¹⁴.

At the age of 59, Brâncuși promises that he will no longer be involved in any relationship, and September brings a clarification in his life, in the sense that he does not deny the boy, but he does not recognize him either.¹⁵ Vera Moore goes to the UK and raises her child there. Periodically, Brâncuși sent him various amounts of money without having any direct connection with the child. After he grew up, Vera took the boy to visit his father in Paris, but when he arrived by car in front of the workshop, Brâncuși said dryly: "my mother enters, the boy stays outside".

Vera Moor was the most beloved woman in the sculptor's life, but other women in Brâncuși's life called her "The Witch".

Sonia Terk-Delaunay, who was Brâncuși's closest person, in the last years of her life, also talks about the impact of the relationship between the two on the sculptor. Sonia told about the sculptor that he confessed to her that after his love with Vera Moor "willingly and unforced by anyone, he became an ascetic", not loving another woman.¹⁶

She was the one who convinced him to determine during his lifetime who would take care of his works of art and who would take care of the workshop. Thus, Constantin Brâncuși made a will.

¹⁴ idem

¹⁵ Moni Stănilă, Brâncuși or how the turtle learned to fly, Polirom Publishing House, Bucharest, 2019, p. 123;

¹⁶ <https://www.eva.ro/actualitate/tema-zilei/iubirile-lui-brancusi-femeile-care-i-au-marcet-viata-si-opera-articol-214657.html>

However, the most important woman in Constantin Brâncuși's life was his mother, and with all the imperfections, the sculptor's biggest struggle, in the last years of his life, was that "he could not give his soul to him in the country.". The longing for the country, for his mother, for his Oltenians, the longing for the Jiu water, were part of his being, and these were accentuated when he heard the folk songs.

He wanted to leave everything he had achieved during his life, works and workshop, to the Romanian state, but at the refusal he received from him he gave up all the patriotism that once carried him in his soul. He renounced his Romanian citizenship and became a French citizen, and left all his cultural heritage to the French state.

Currently, the works of art of the great sculptor, hosted by the museum in New York, bear the engraved title of the author "Constantin Brâncuși - French sculptor of Romanian origin", which unfortunately indicates that although Brâncuși was ours, it is no more.

If in modern sculpture Constantin Brâncuși gave back to the beautiful the well-deserved place, the Romanian state forgot to appreciate the beautiful art of the great masters. His inner turmoil, his obsessed nature, made him in his personal life not what he should have been, but this was the essence necessary to restore his flight to immortality.

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