

# BRUNO CATALANO

Portfolio

# Biography



© Pascale Cholette

As the artist of the **travellers**, Bruno Catalano makes a stopover from face to face for the duration of a sculpture, seeking to capture in each of his models the singular baggage that he carries with him. The series that has become emblematic and that he continues to work on today began in 1995 as the resolution of a family epic and the new beginning of an artistic adventure.

When he was born in Morocco in 1960, he was already the child of various journeys. His family, of Franco-Italian origin, had Jewish ancestors who were expelled from Spain in the 15th century and took refuge in Sicily before settling in North Africa. He was ten years old when they left the country to settle in Marseille. Then, trained by his father as an electrician, he began his professional life at the age of twenty by working on boats for a shipping company, then joined the SNSM. He is still far from art, but this experience will remain a determining factor in the construction of his sensitivity. It was with friends that he first discovered leather masks, then he devoted himself to clay from 1991. Determined to master this material, he enrolled in a modelling and drawing workshop, and completed his self-taught training by reading. Step by step, Bruno Catalano set up his own workshop, acquired his own kiln, and finally made sculpture his main activity.

It gained official recognition when, in 2001, the town hall of the 5th arrondissement of Marseille entrusted him with the execution of a bust of Yves Montand to decorate the square dedicated to him. He thus inaugurated a production of public works of art that would become the core of his work.

During all this time, Bruno Catalano has never stopped wanting to perfect his representations, to seek ever more accuracy and truth in the expression of his figures. However, his practice took a new turn when, in 2004, a formal invention invited itself into his studio. A simple accident in the casting of metal opened a breach in the body of the sculpture and in the artist's habits. He decided to seize this accident and made this tear in the material a central element in the production that followed. From the figurines of his beginnings, he began to produce increasingly monumental figures, reaching several metres in height, always in bronze and sometimes enhanced with colour. Today, he continues to be a sculptor in the full sense of the word, i.e. in touch with the physical matter that makes up his works as much as with the impalpable matter that shapes human existence.

# Process

In Bruno Catalano's path, art is the experience of a technique and a material. But art is also a particular look at humanity, an acuity that is cultivated and shared in the creation of works. His "Travellers" series, which has become emblematic in a few years, illustrates all the intensity that is at play here. In the great diversity of models that the artist has represented, he was drawn to an attitude, to a few details that concealed an intense humanity. From this he created bronze figures. They represent men, women and children who move forward, baggage in hand, driven by determinations that the public is left free to imagine.

In the end, it doesn't matter where they come from or where they go. Bruno Catalano's sculpture catches time around these individual and anonymous trajectories, leaving room for introspection. And the silhouettes open wide, physically split, torn like paper down the middle. The bust floats above the legs as if by a miracle. Only the loaded suitcase makes the link between the thinking head and the walking feet. The sculptor's gesture echoes universal emotions by suggesting that absence, lack, separation are constitutive elements of any identity. And it doesn't take long to realise that Bruno Catalano's works are traversed, if not innervated, by the landscapes that host them.

In his artworks, figuration is enhanced by a metaphorical, even dreamlike power. For they speak to the feelings of each individual, and also manage to awaken a secret emotion, unanimous and inscribed in our flesh. Bruno Catalano tells how life itself shapes faces and bodies, and how human flows, groupings and movements end up building and animating cities. His sculptures are of course forms of wax and bronze, but they are also the expression of an art that is above all democratic. An art that makes each figure a monument to an intimate humanity. Bruno Catalano sees heroes where ordinary men and women stand.



View of the foundry, 2022, © Pascale Cholette



# Permanent exhibitions

# Crest, Train station, Johnny

200 cm, bronze

Acquisition by the city in 2014



# Marseille, Bleu de Chine

304 x 125 x 116 cm, bronze

Acquisition by the city in 2018



# Luneville, Train station, J4

300 cm, bronze

Acquisition by the city in 2019



# Etaples-sur-mer, Raphael

200 cm, bronze

Acquisition by the city in 2020



# Marseille, Musée subaquatique

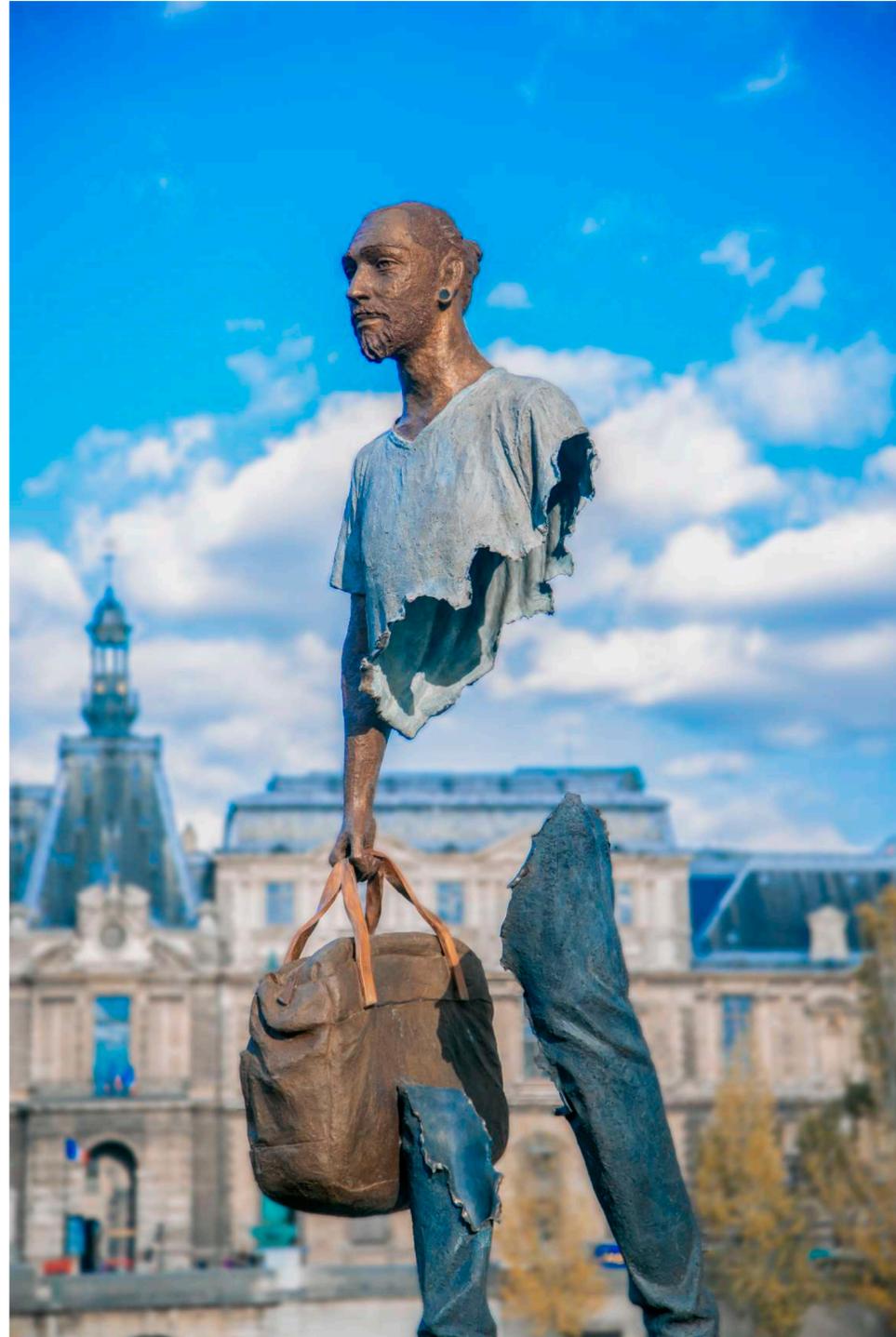
200 cm, bronze

Acquisition by the Museum in 2022



# Temporary exhibitions (selection)

# Paris, Saint-Germain-des-Prés, 2019



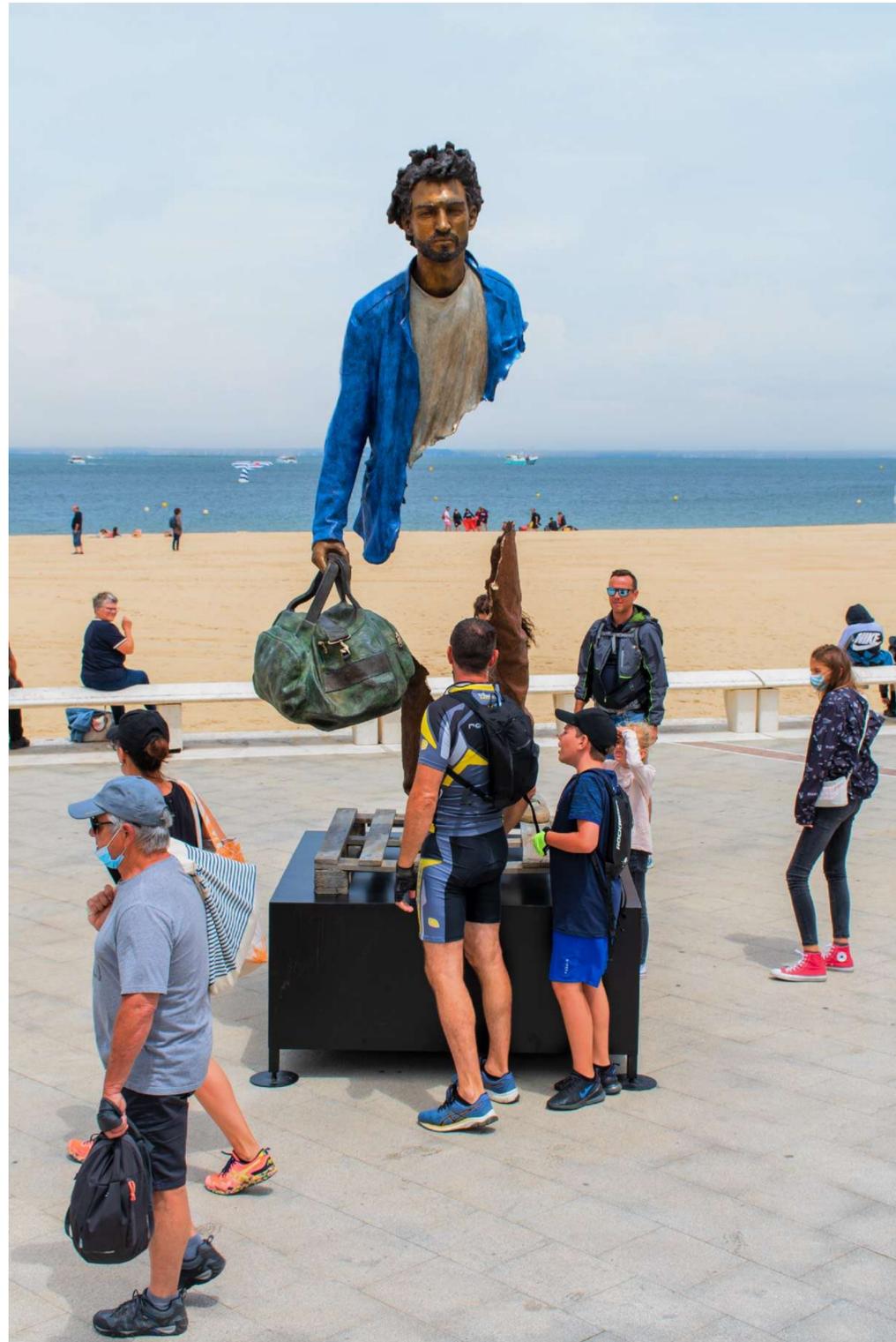


# Venice Biennale, 2019





# Arcachon, 2021



# Venice, Arsenal, 2022

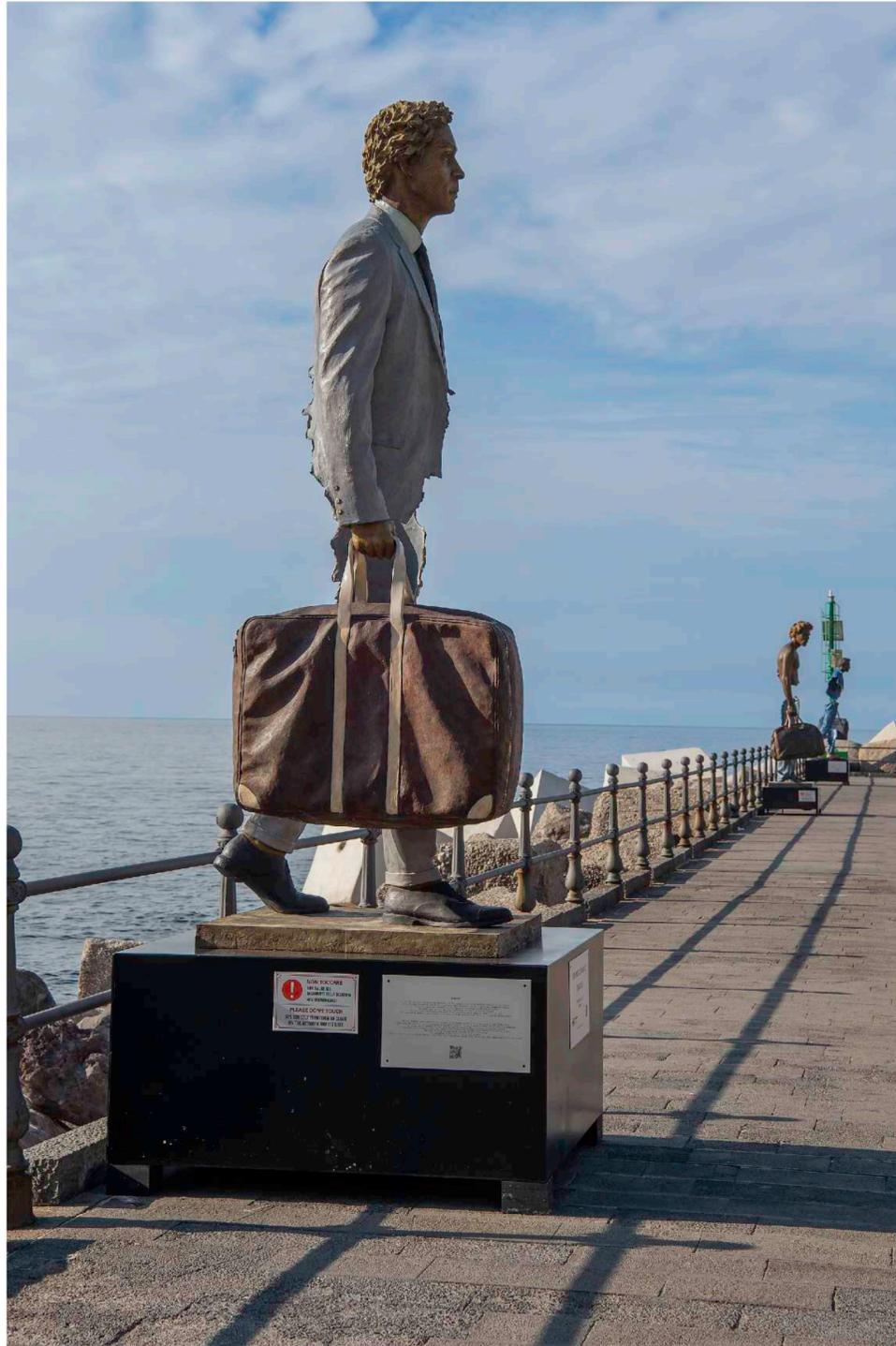




# Sydney, Sculpture by the sea, 2022



# Amalfi, 2023



# London, 2023



# Immersive exhibition « Matières » Avenue Matignon, Paris 2023





BRONZES D ARTS

A wooden workbench with three shelves. On the top shelf, a desk lamp with a white shade is lit, casting a warm glow. Next to it is a large, crumpled brown paper bag. A smaller brown paper bag with a shipping label is also on the top shelf. The label includes the text 'PF', '12.5kg', and '2877'. A container of tools is visible on the top shelf. The middle shelf holds several small metal pots or containers. The bottom shelf has a wooden board and some other items. The workbench is on wheels.



A wooden workbench with two shelves. On the top shelf, there is a framed picture or drawing, a small sculpture of a human figure, and other items. The bottom shelf is cluttered with various tools, including a hammer, a saw, and a container of tools. A striped bag is also visible on the bottom shelf. The workbench is on wheels.





# Marbles (selection)

# Drapé II, 2022



# Драпé I, 2020





Exhibition View, Le Répertoire de Pluvinel, 2023, Crest, France

# **Iron and concrete works (selection)**



Mr Olingou, H 150 cm



Pierre-David, H 200 cm



# BRUNO CATALANO

[bruno.catalano.news@gmail.com](mailto:bruno.catalano.news@gmail.com)  
[emilie.catalano@gmail.com](mailto:emilie.catalano@gmail.com)

259 rue d'Endoume  
13007 Marseille

 **brunocesarcatalano**

 **Bruno Catalano**