HELIDON XHIXHA IN THE SUN CITY

By Aldo Menéndez

When year-end comes to the Wynwood Art District, it seems as though the whole world is there, at least the art world, coming from great metropolises, mainly from the United States and Latin America. At this time of inaugurations, fairs and exhibitions, there is a re-empowerment of the area and new and prominent artists decide to open permanent spaces there in which to show their work.

One such artist is an Albanian sculptor, who studied at London's Kingston University, as well as the Accademia delle Belle Arti di Brera in Milan. Helidon Xhixha (Durazzo, 1970), arrives not only preceded by his oeuvre and a consistent style that has already garnered wide recognition from critics in numerous countries, but also anteceded by a catalog of monumental pieces placed in significant scenarios like the Museum of the Violin—seat of the Stradivarius Foundation—in Cremona, the Plaza Real in Milan, the Lombardy Government Building, the Municipality of Stabio in Ticino, Switzerland; and the Presidential Palace in Tirana, among others.

The most recent book devoted to his work, prologued by Francesco Poli, is titled *The Moulding Power of Light*, a clear definition of the energy that sustains Helidon's aesthetic pursuits, an energy, which joined with his experimental spirit and his technical contributions starting with his use of stainless steel, places us before a creator who, in spite of his youth, finds himself at full maturity. His abstractionist work and emblematic visuals allow him to intervene with flawless elegance in both closed spaces and open-air vistas. However, this latter type of environment exposed directly to sunlight and multiple city reflections is optimal in order for his surfaces to attain maximum reflective capacity. The mirrored surface forces the light to interact, acquiring changing movements, upon being obligated to adopt forms dictated by the surge of accidents provoked by higher and lower elevations.

There are dents, which only appear to be random, arising from the artist's strict control of the haphazard, in the same way that a painter manipulates dripping. Without these metal wrinkles, the piece would be limited to being impregnated with light and projecting it, without deconstructing its planimetry and pulchritude. It is in this play of lights with volumes and hollows that Helidon establishes a dramatic design; the convections make voices arise from the material. His majestic monoliths are presences that confer sophistication. Doors, walls, roofs, etc., any elements on which Helidon unfolds his textures, acquire another ornamental dimension.

There is a conscious exploitation of sensationalism by Helidon, by means of a pronounced stunning finish taken from modern industry, which awakens new emotions in the pupil.