

Charles ARTUS (1897-1978)

COQ (1926)

Salon d'Automne, 1926 (plaster, n°109)

Salon d'Automne, 1927 (bronze, lost wax, n°60).

Bronze, richly dark black brown patina

H : 28,2 cm, L : 19,7 cm, D : 13 cm

Artist example signed "Ch.Artus", cast by "C.Valsuani, cire perdue" (seal), based on the Belgium black marble (like the one exhibited at the second Animaliers Exhibition at the Galerie Brandt in 1928, reproduced in "Mobilier & Décoration", november 1928) - two examples currently identified in this condition.
Circa 1927-1928



Student of Edouard Navellier (1865-1944), this very gifted sculptor presented his first animal works at the Salon d'Automne with a *Étude d'un barzoï* in 1920 and at the Salon des Artistes Français in 1921 with a *Oie dormant*. He soon left the studio of Navellier, too realistic for him, and whose influence will hardly impacted in his work, to join François Pompon (1855-1933) whose smooth manner that favors volume over realism suited more to his temperament. He remained faithful to this style throughout his life. In 1931, he was one of the twelve artists associated around Pompon with whom he exhibited at the Salon des Animaliers organized at Ruhlmann's. Like most of the animaliers of his time, he was successful in the interwar period with the vogue of Art Deco. In 1920, he had a studio built at the back of the Villa Bligny in Étretat, a family home where he will retire more and more from the Second World War and present his works.

He was a specialist of representation of birds, whose shape suits itself particularly well to stylization, and participates in many Salons such as the Salon des Animaliers, the Salon des Indépendants, the Salon d'Automne from 1920 to 1935, the Salon des Artistes Français from 1921 to 1927 where he got an honourable mention in 1922 and a bronze medal in 1926.

It was at the Salon d'Automne in 1926 that the sculptor first exhibited the original plaster model of *Le Coq*. The immediate success of the model's exhibition prompted him to offer a bronze example of the subject at the same Salon the following year. In synergy with Pompon's work, Charles Artus gave his animal a perceptible movement through the interplay of its shifted legs and the slight twist of its head that stretches the rest of its body. Artus's *Coq* stands out from the other very fluid works by his friends in the "Groupe des Douze", like Pompon and Petersen, because of the volume of the animal's morphology and plumage. This combination of hollows and bumps, combined with a vertical dynamic, densifies the sculpture and restores this competition animal to its dominant position in the barnyard. It was praised in 1928 in an article in the magazine *Mobilier & Décoration*, in connection with the second Animaliers exhibition at the Galerie Brandt. The bronze cockerel exhibited at the time was reproduced in the article. It has a marble base very similar to ours.

Paradoxically, few examples of this model are known, with only two identified by us. The Valsuani stamp and the quality of the casting suggest that this was an artist example. It is possible that the subject was given a new lease of life with the model of the *Coq Leghorn* (Salon d'Automne, 1929, bronze), in a more horizontal position, tail extended, for which the sculptor had planned two formats.

