

Rembrandt BUGATTI (1884-1916)

BREBIS MÉRINOS (c. 1912)

Bronze, *H: 20 cm, L: 42 cm, D: 24 cm*

Lifetime cast signed «R. Bugatti», cast by «A.A.Hébrard Cire perdue» (seal), numbered «(1)», from an edition of 4 examples.

Cast in 1912

Provenance:

former Madame Anos Collection (1912).

Bugatti conceived this model in 1912, returning to the domestic subjects of his early career. However, the modelling of this sculpture epitomises his developing style, differing greatly from his farmyard subjects from a decade earlier. Here, the sharp modelling and hatching of the surface of this merino sheep, capture not only the pose of the animal, but the texture of its coat. *Merino sheep* are widely bred around the world and are an economically influential breed, regarded as having some of the finest and softest wool which is finely crimped and soft. The carcass size of this breed is generally smaller than that of sheep bred for meat.

Bugatti conveys not only the form of the animal, but also its stance as mood. Here the sheep lies slightly to one side, its head raised and mouth slightly open as it would appear to bleat. The form and position of the way that the sheep is lying is accentuated by the artist's use of the base, which is tight to the animal, angular in form, the sheep's limbs and body overhanging in places.

This model was exhibited alongside 12 other works by Bugatti at the Grubicy Gallery in February 1912 when the gallery returned to Paris to re-exhibit its Italian Divisionist artists. All were innovative artists inspired by the outdoors and the refraction of light. Also, on display were works by Paul Troubetzkoy and Medardo Rosso.

Just four examples were cast of this rare model, by the Hébrard Foundry. According to the Hébrard archives this cast, numbered one was purchased in 1912 by a Mme Anos. Example number two was cast in 1925 and was subsequently donated to the Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris and the third cast was sold before 1934.

