

Georges GUYOT (1885-1973)

*OURS ET SES PETITS* (c. 1962)

H : 51,5 cm, L : 43 cm, D : 37,5 cm

Beautiful plaster example signed "Guyot" probably used for bronze casts (moulding traces) - rare in this quality.

Circa 1962



Our plaster example shows a bear sitting in wait, protecting three of its cubs. As well as felines and monkeys, as mentioned above, Guyot's great passion was the bear and its representation. Actually, the bear inspired much of his work and embodies some of his most emblematic sculptures, such as the large brown bear destined for the Vincennes zoo, which he completed in 1949.

The strength of our model lies, on the one hand, in the artist's choice to represent a situation between passivity and activity and, on the other, in the set of movements given to the belligerents, enabling the sculpture to come as close as possible to the reality of the subject. Guyot used to emphasise passive attitudes such as resting, waiting or watching. Here, we have the representation of a very specific moment, between the passivity of the body linked to the search for imminent danger and the activity of the mind linked to the beginnings of an initiative by the bear and its cubs to flee once the threat has been spotted. In real life, a similar situation would last a few seconds and could not be so well represented. The sculpture as a whole, through the different movements that make it up, invites us to immerse ourselves in a very realistic situation: the mother, head to one side, gazing into the distance, best portrays the wild instinct of the mother bear wanting to protect her cubs. She senses and looks for danger, and the mixture of fear and determination is present in her dark eyes.

It's easy to imagine the inevitable flight once the danger has been spotted. At the base of the sculpture, the cubs are playing around their mother without worrying. The contrast between the serious figure of the worried mother and the candid nature of the young cubs as they play and struggle to hold on to their mother's protective paws, unaware of the threat, is striking.

The imposing pyramidal composition could give the work a heavy appearance, but this structure allows a very airy and agile approach to the representation of the protective mother figure. On the one hand, the representation of an animal protecting its clan brings us closer to the totem pole, and on the other, the ceremonial aspect that can be attributed to this plaster. The mother dominates the scene, leaning in, ready to flee, carrying off her offspring as they play around her. The whole is harmonious and extremely close to reality, the artist's own reality. This plaster highlights all the work Guyot has done on animal life upstream. The extremely precise way in which the situation is represented is the fruit of his years of study, reflection and passion for the wild life of the Ursidae.

Our model of wonderful surface quality is signed "Guyot" and is easily recognisable, particularly by the distinctive "G" and "T", common to most of the artist's sculptures.

