

James PRADIER (1790-1852)



***NÉGRESSE AU TAMBOURIN*(1837)**

Bronze, red shaded richly dark brown patina

H : 42,6 cm, L : 13 cm, D : 12 cm

Lifetime cast unsigned, limited cast by "E. Quesnel".

Circa 1840

Possibly in pair with "Négresse aux Calebasses"

Edition details :

Probably for a fair or an exhibition

*(one example at the Musée d'Art et d'Art et d'Histoire
in Geneva, another in a private collection)*

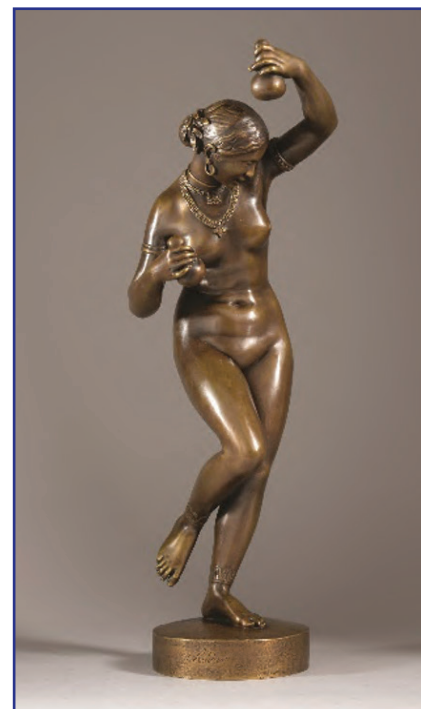
If Pradier left us an important monumental Œuvre and if he was the almost official sculptor of the Monarchie de Juillet, it is undoubtedly through the corpus of his small female statuettes that he passed to Posterity. It is this coherent set of female nudity and intimate scenes that has taken a completely original place in Art History and which, in some ways, can be compared to the David d'Angers' Medallions Gallery. Romantic in their dimensions, they are also romantic in spirit, subject and material – bronze.

For Pradier, their creation corresponds to a leisure activity. They are usually modeled in wax at night when he returns from the studio, sometimes in one session, to be sold quickly between 1,000 and 2,000 Frs to editors, who ensure their dissemination.

This one is particularly original, because it is one of the rare pair among its first nudes of the same year, the *Négresse aux calebasses*. It appears as his reflection in a mirror with complementary variants first in the gesture, then in the choice of accessories, loincloth, tambourine (European) and hairstyle (which seems rather Indian).

But what is particularly surprising is that as much as the *Négresse aux calebasses* has been widely cast by several editors, so much this one is rare, although listed and reproduced in the catalogue of the Maison Thiébaut, before 1870. There may be only a few examples, only three are listed in the artist's catalogue raisonné.

Our example was cast by Quesnel, one of the main founders of Pradier during his lifetime, most of all in the 1840s.



Pradier, *Négresse aux calebasses*, former UDB collection.

