

Auguste RODIN (1840-1917)



MASQUE DE FEMME AU NEZ RETROUSSÉ

Small model (1885-1890)

Five versions, this one on asymmetric base
Bronze, richly shaded clear brown patina.

H: 13,2 cm, L: 10,8 cm, D: 8 cm

Lifetime cast (unsigned, insignificant signature's missing),
probably cast by Auguste Griffoul.

Circa 1898

Provenance :

*Professeur André Kuss (surgeon),
then by descendance*

Comité Rodin inclusion advice (2024-7278B) :

Only two other examples of this variant currently identified

The mask of this young woman with her nose turned up is one of a series of studies produced in the 1880s on the theme of the Damned, intended to adorn the tympanum and frieze that crown the master's masterpiece, the *Gate of Hell*.

As with other portraits, notably that of the Japanese artist Hanako, Rodin was looking for a particular physiognomy. He worked on his angle of vision, found a slope, and allowed his subject to evolve, but never to stand still. There were a dozen variations in plaster (eleven are in the Musée Rodin in Paris), resulting in five different versions, with changes to the hair, the cut-out at the base of the neck, and the tilting back of the face. Our version of the mask, which is distinguished from the others by its asymmetrical neck, is similar to the one now in the Brooklyn Museum of Art (Gift of Iris and B.G. Cantor Foundation, 1984, inv. 84-75-14).

Auguste Rodin was particularly fond of this unusual, intimate mask. He exhibited it at the Pavillon de l'Alma in 1900. It can also be seen facing him, on his desk in the small salon of the Villa des Brillants in Meudon. Attached to this face, he gave bronze examples on several occasions: in 1901 to the Kaiser-Wilhelm Museum in Krefeld, in 1912 to Prince Eugène of Sweden, in 1916 to the Rodin Museum in Paris...

The edition produced during the sculptor's lifetime began with the Auguste Griffoul foundry, who was most probably the founder of this bronze around 1898. To date, only two other bronze examples of this version are known, the one in the Brooklyn Museum cast before 1900 and another made around 1894, identified in a private French collection. The model was subsequently cast by François Rudier, without a mark, and then, from 1922 onwards, bearing the mark Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris, under the supervision of the Musée Rodin. Between 1958 and 1965, the Georges Rudier foundry completed the edition of the model with the design of nine bronzes. Our bronze was part of the collection of Professor René Küss, a pioneering kidney transplant surgeon.

• Bronze examples currently identified :

- c. 1894, cast probably by Auguste Griffoul, Paris, private collection.
- c. 1898, cast probably by Auguste Griffoul, Paris, UDB collection.
- Before 1900, cast probably by Auguste Griffoul, Brooklyn Museum of Art, inv. 84-75-14.
- 1900, purchased by the banker Félix Koenigs at Cologne, private collection.
- c. 1901, without foundry mark, probably by François Rudier, Krefeld, Kaiser-Wilhelm Museum, gift from Rodin.
- 1905, purchased by the widow of Ernest Koenigs, paid 500 Frs.
- 1912, "Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris" cast, Stockholm, Prince Eugène de Suède, gift from Rodin.
- Before 1916, "Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris" cast, Paris, Rodin Museum, gift by Rodin.
- 1922, "Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris" cast, private collection.
- 1949, cast by Eugène Rudier, San Francisco, Palace of the Legion of Honor, gift from Mrs Sprekels in 1950.
- 1958-1965, nine bronze casts with the "Georges Rudier Fondateur Paris" mark.

