

Sarah BERNHARDT (1845-1923)

MARS ENFANT

Earthenware, glazed cream, matt velvety polychrome bust.

H : 39 cm, L : 28.3 cm, D : 25.2 cm

Lifetime example, not an edition, probably unique, signed «Sarah Bernhardt sculpteur», and inscribed «Lachenal céramiste».

Realised in 1895

Provenance :

Lachenal studio 1895

Lachenal exhibition, Georges Petit Gallery (November -December 1895)

Bernheim Gallery, May 1897.

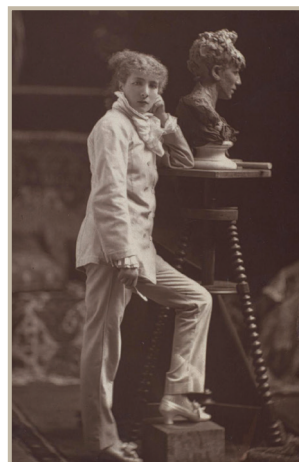
This work will be included in the Sarah Bernhardt catalogue raisonné of sculptures by Miranda Mason.

Designated as a «Monstre sacré » by Jean Cocteau, Sarah Bernhardt flew over and tried all the artistic creations of her time, including sculpture. In addition to practicing this discipline at a high level that earned her the recognition of her peers, she maintained many friendly relationships with artists and practitioners who benefit from her influence and patronage.

Thus, Sarah Bernhardt presented at the Salon of 1885 a remarkable marble portrait of *Bellone* as a child, usually angry and determined, formal prototype of our bust. This same subject will be evoked a few years later around 1895 through our bust of *Mars enfant*, god of War with a helmet surmounted by a griffin that gives the opportunity to the ceramist Lachenal to play on the contrasts of glazes for the silvered headgear. This helmet offers an additional presence to the young god whose gaze is already the one of an adult; and the diaphanous face and red hair directly remind the features of Sarah Bernhardt herself. The polychromy of the bust follows quite the air of the time of Art Nouveau ceramics that develop during this decade.

In addition to his collaboration with Sarah Bernhardt for whom he made several busts, often adapted from her marble busts, Lachenal also worked with other great figures of sculpture of the time such as Rodin, Falguière or Prosper d'Epinay.

Our earthenware, probably a unique piece, will be included in the catalogue raisonné of Sarah Bernhardt in preparation by Miranda Mason.



Bellone, marble, unknown location.



Illustration from the *Journal amusant* about the Salon in 1885.



