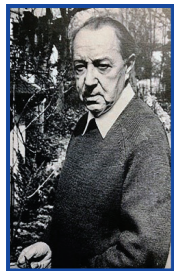


## Auguste TRÉMONT (1893-1980)



### *POULAIN* (1923)

Bronze, *H*: 31.4 cm, *L*: 26.3 cm, *D*: 8.7 cm

Artist example signed «Trémont», cast by «C.Valsuani, cire perdue» (seal), stamped «bronze».

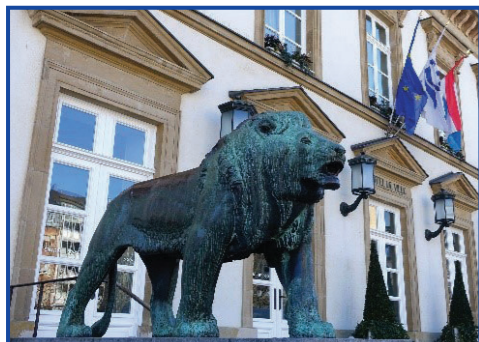
Circa: 1930-1940

Auguste Trémont (1893-1980) initiated himself into Art by drawing by following his first courses at the State Craftsmen's School in Luxembourg. In 1909, he joins the National School of Decorative Arts in Paris where he gets brilliantly his degree in 1912, which allows him to continue his training at the Beaux-Arts School, in the studio of Gabriel Ferrier. While he stays in Luxembourg, he is surprised by the first World War and then finds a job as an industrial designer at Dudelange's Arbed steel company.

After the War, he continues with little interest his studies in the Fine Arts School in Paris, because he is fascinated by the wild animals of the Jardin des Plantes. Questioned later by Art critics on his choice in favor of Animal Sculpture, Auguste Trémont answers: Because it was the most difficult task. He appears among the exhibitors of the Salon d'Automne in 1923 with two drawings of beasts, only one year after the exhibition of his *Polar Bear* by Pompon. He gets success with his *Chimpanzee*, first presented in a pastel drawing and painting in 1924, before a bronze sculpture (lost wax then) in 1927.

Now, he takes part in many exhibitions. At the Salon des Tuileries in 1930, he presented a *Bison* and a bronze of an *Asian Elephant*. Its new creations are also showed alongside those of Petersen, Godchaux, Jouve, Pompon... at the Edgar Brandt Gallery in 1929 and 1930. He takes the opportunity to get closer to these animal sculptor colleagues as a guest of the Groupe des Douze, founded in 1931.

The sculptor also remains very close to his origins in Luxembourg. He is co-founder of the Salon de la Sécession in Luxembourg, to which he contributes as an exhibitor from 1927 to 1929. In 1931 he gets the commission of the *Lions* in front of the Luxembourg City Hall. In 1936, he works on bronze low reliefs for the portal of the Notre-Dame du Luxembourg Cathedral. He will be chosen to create the central sculpture of the Monument dedicated to Victims of the War 1940-1945 at the Diekirch Church, inaugurated in 1955. In 1956, he represents the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg at the Venice Biennale, with seven of his sculptures. He returned definitively to Luxembourg in 1976. The Musée Nationale d'Histoire et d'Art, Luxembourg, there today preserves in its collection a whole number of his animal pieces.



*Lions*, Hôtel de Ville, Luxembourg.



With the *Poulain*, this is the origins of the animal sculpture by Auguste Trémont in 1923. All the characteristics of a mastered Art are visible there, born from the observation, and from his studies for an essential view, almost inspired by the lion representations in ancient Babylon.

In his daily visits to the Jardin des Plantes, what immediately fascinated him are beasts, elephants and monkeys. Very few models of European animals are known in his oeuvre. Only cervids (*Cerf de France*, Salon d'Automne in 1944) and the horses seem to find place there. During the same period, he creates a young horse model, walking with a down head and another foal model, close to ours, whose head is tilted slightly to the side, with ears turned back and the legs are more spread out. Our *Foal* has a straight stature, ears tuned front in an attentive attitude, camped on little spread legs. Trémont has appreciated straight lines that give strength and temperament to his model. The head is proudly placed here in the extension of the body. However, if one looks closer, we notice that the left hoof of the hind leg is positioned on the tip. Like his *Chimpanzee* or his *Couple of tigers*, his animals are mostly in motion, or if this is not the case, there is always a trace of a movement, like movement of head, feet, hooves...

Auguste Trémont does not choose a smooth and stylized aesthetic, like the pure line defended by Pompon, Petersen or Proffillet with whom he exhibits at the Brandt Gallery. He opts for vibrating surfaces with delicate hatching that he reworks in the wax before the moulding with his founder Valsuani. However, it evacuates the anecdote by treating the mane and tail of his foal with simple strokes for one and by a volume curved for the other. In his search for mass rendering, he comes closer to a sculptor like Paul Jouve when he modelled his great beasts in 1914. Trémont is a sculptor who follows his own way, not really attached to an aesthetic trend, like Cubism or Art Deco.

The surface animation visible on this example, the quality rendered by the meticulous work Valsuani's in direct association with the sculptor and the rarity of the model confirm our analysis to conclude this bronze is an artist edition. The artist and the founder were friends and Tremont has modelled the bust of Valsuani's wife.

