

JEAN-AUGUSTE BARRE

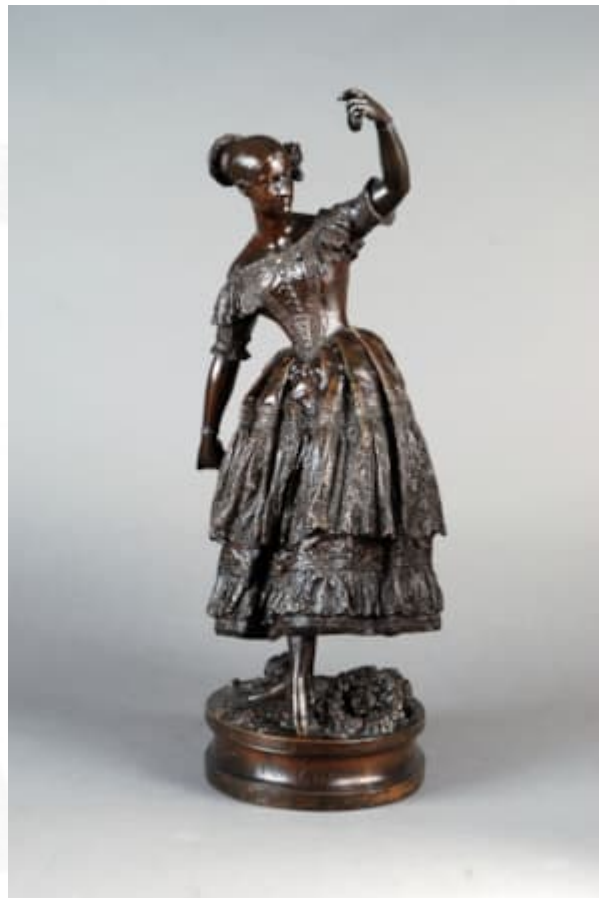
FANNY ELSSLER

Bronze, richly dark brown patina

H : 43,6 cm, L : 19,1 cm, D : 14,5 cm

Lifetime cast signed "A .Barre F[ec]it 1837", titled "Fanny Elssler",
old edition.

Circa 1850



Fanny Elssler was one of the best ballet dancers of her time. Born in Gumpendorf, Austria, in 1810, she studied dance at the ballet school of the Theater der Wen, then at the Theater of the Port of Carinthia beginning in 1818. She made a brilliant

debut in Naples in 1825 before dancing in Berlin (1830), London (1833) and Paris, where she became the rival of the dancer Marie Taglioni. After having shined in the role of Zoloée in La Bayadère and the role of Lise in La fille mal gardée, Elssler

triumphed in Le Diable boiteux of Jean Coralli with music by Casimir Gide, performed in Paris on June 1, 1836. It was in this last role, particularly the moment when she bravely danced the Cachucha (a Spanish dance that comes from the gypsy tradition), that inspired Jean-Auguste Barre to sculpt her in 1837.

After a shining American tour in 1840-41, Elssler returned to Europe where she played Giselle in 1843. She left the stage definitively in 1851 and retired to Hamburg, then to Vienna, where she died November 27, 1884. Under the July Monarchy, Jean-Auguste Barr created a series of statuettes representing different members of his entourage, including Madame Delaroche and

her son Horace and popular personalities like the Duke of Orleans, Melle Rachel and Marie Taglioni. Fanny Elssler dancing the Cachucha belonged to this series. The Romantic influence is apparent here: a sense of movement, reference to current events, exotic costume. The sculpture was a great success and later became an edition by Eck and Durant. There is one version at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, in the Romanticism room.

Jean-Auguste Barre received his first apprenticeship beside his father, a medal engraver, before studying sculpture alongside Cortot and David d'Angers. He exhibited his work at the Salon from 1831 to 1886 and his reputation permitted him to pursue an official career executing portraits, sculptures and medals of the imperial couple.

The creator of large commissions for the historical museum of Versailles and of monumental sculptures (La Prudence for the Saint-Michel fountain in Paris in 1861), Barre made himself a specialist of small portrait statues of women beginning in the 1830s. He depicted close friends (Madame Paul Delaroche) or famous artists of his time (Fanny Elssler, Marie Taglioni), with a refined decorative charm. Barre was named a Knight of the Legio