



D I E G O G I A C O M E T T I

GUÉRIDON ARBRE (1964 or before)

SOLD

(first version)

Bronze, black brown patina, with oxydation green traces.

H : 72 cm, L : 72 cm, D : 41 cm

Artist example unsigned as usual for early works, direct purchase at the artist studio by a business man owner of paintings by Alberto Giacometti, then by descendance.

Manufactured in 1964





Diego Giacometti was often considered as a discreet personality, who has always lived in the shadow of his brother Alberto. Out of work in 1925, he followed the advices of his mother and came from Switzerland to Paris « We will take care of Alberto, mon son » ; they already lived together, at the 46 rue Hippolythe Maindron in 1926.

He became his intimate, the person who was always here for him, the patient model and his talented and diligent assistant preparing the iron structures, moulding, stone and marble ... In brief, the little brother who has always seemed to be lost in his own life became quickly the stowage and the daily protector of Alberto existence.

With Diego's help, Alberto created decorative objects for Jean Michel Franck in the 1930's. These pieces are composed with pure lines and shapes which make them universal, lamps, lights, low reliefs and bouquet doors, etc... At the end of this decade, Diego began to create his own decorative objects. From those, only few pieces are known, because of the War, then because he devoted his time to help his big brother who got a worldwide prominence after 1947. During this period, Diego created two chairs for the painter-designer Christian Berard. He worked alone, considered himself as an "artisan-meublier" and got more and more commissions, mainly from Galleries and Art dealers, like Aimé Maeght, Pierre Matisse et Daniel Kahnweiler. In June 1961, he established in a house bought by his brother at 16 rue du Moulin-Vert and continued to enrich his decorative productions with furnitures, armchairs, stools, guéridons and lights.

But it is only after Alberto's death in 1966 that his production increased, above all in his last fifteen years. He was always reluctant to sign his pieces, respecting his brother memory, in spite of the insistence of his dealer in New York, Pierre Matisse. We has signed only at the beginning of the 1970's, few pieces, and just with the monogram DG or his firstname. Getting older, Diego got three assistants and the last will be Phillipe Anthonioz, who helped him for his last commission, maybe one of the most important, for the Picasso museum, 1983-1985.

His inspirations come from Greek, Roman and Egyptian Antiquity but he was also inspired a naturalistic influence, fully expressed in our Guéridon arbre, first version, manufactured in 1964.

THE GUERIDONS

The Guéridon-arbre (first version) which can be dated before or circa 1964[1], could follow the Guéridon bourgeon (1962) and have been created before the Guéridon arbre, second version (owl, mouse, etc.) from the 70-80's with thinner elemnts. The Guéridon racine is the fourth of the serie for which one example is only identified in the reference documentation. At last, a Petit Guéridon arbre exists, which means that we currently know five different models. For the first version of the Guéridon arbre, three examples are currently identified, our and two others in the reference documentation.

Nevertheless, approximately fourty examples of the second version from the 70-80 decade are known, with a thinner central pedestal, more branches and an animal, "élève de classe" from the Bestiary ; more decorative and less impressive,

less “Alberto”. By the chiselling quality and the beautiful black brown patina with oxydation green traces, by the fine architecture of the structure, this Guéridon arbre, première version manufactured in 1964 with the usual assembling technique[2], belongs to the first part of the production, production of excellence[3] : the «artist examples », which were produced, chiselled and patinated entirely by himself.

[1] Not circa 1978 as it was considered until now; « a posteriori », his style corresponds to the period of the 1960's (strong branches, simple composition).

[2] In his creative process, Diego joins the essential components by welding them, which allows to create assembling variations. The elements are cast with the sand cast technique ; the assembling and the chiselling are then controlled by him as the patina, in which he was excellent, known as « l'As des patines ». He continues the « Artiste-Artisan » tradition after, Barye et Fratin, his predecessors from the last century. The pointing of the welding joints on our Guéridon presents the production process.

[3] After that, some wrote : « Inhérent au bronze, la patine lui confère sa nuance, sa vibration et sa profondeur. Comme la lumière qui s'y accroche, elle anime la surface de l'objet ; Diego les aime dorée, brune ou noir ; plus tardivement vert-jade. Celle-ci caractéristique des dernières années de sa vie a à nos yeux moins d'attrait. Perdant progressivement la vue et la sensibilité aux couleurs, il ne peut retrouver la qualité d'antan ; la matière, autrefois épaisse et riche se fait plus incertaine, le bronze moins tactile » (C. Boutonnet & R. Ortiz, Giacometti DIEGO, Paris, Éditions de l'Amateur, Galerie Arc en Seine, 2003, page 136)

Artist description:

Diego Giacometti est souvent présenté comme une personnalité effacée, qui a toujours vécu dans l'ombre de son frère aîné Alberto. Sans travail en 1925, c'est sur les conseils de sa mère qu'il vient de Suisse à Paris, « Tu veilleras sur Alberto, mon fils » ; ils demeurent ensemble, déjà au 46 rue Hippolythe Maindron en 1926.

Il deviendra son confident, celui qui est toujours là, le modèle patient, et son praticien zélé et talentueux, praticien pour les armatures, le moulage, la pierre et le marbre... Bref, le frère cadet qui semble s'être toujours senti comme un peu perdu dans la vie devient rapidement « l'arrimage » et le garant du quotidien dans celle d'Alberto.

Avec l'aide de Diego, Alberto produit dans les années 1930 pour Jean Michel Franck les objets décoratifs que l'on connaît, simples de dessin et aux formes qui semblent universelles, lampes, lampadaires, bas-reliefs et portes bouquets, etc., C'est à partir de la fin de cette décennie que Diego commence à créer ses propres objets décoratifs.

Ceux-ci, en petit nombre d'abord, en raison de la proximité et des turbulences de la guerre, puis du fait qu'après celle-ci, il se consacre largement à la pratique pour son aîné dont la notoriété devient mondiale dès 1947. C'est dans ces années que Diego réalise deux chaises pour le peintre décorateur Christian Berard. Il travaille alors seul, se dit “artisan-meublier” et reçoit des commandes qui vont vite croissant, essentiellement de ses galeries et marchands, Aimé Maeght, Pierre

Matisse et Daniel Kahnweiler.

En juin 1961, il s'installe alors dans une maison achetée par son frère au 16 rue du Moulin-Vert et continue de développer son corpus d'objets décoratifs, meubles, fauteuils, tabourets, guéridons et lampes.

Mais il faudra attendre la mort d'Alberto en 1966 pour voir sa production s'accélérer, surtout dans les quinze dernières années, production qu'il aura toujours des réticences à signer, en respect pour son aîné, malgré l'insistance de son galeriste Pierre Matisse à New-York. Il ne signera qu'au début des années 1970, certaines pièces seulement, et encore simplement du monogramme DG ou de son prénom. L'âge venant, Diego s'adjoindra alors des praticiens, ils seront trois, le dernier étant Phillipe Anthonioz, son assistant pour l'ultime chantier, et non des moindres, celui du musée Picasso, 1983-1985