

FRANÇOIS POMPON

GRUE COURONNEE AU REPOS (1926)

Bronze, slate patina, specific to Pompon.

H : 26.5 cm, L : 10 cm, D : 15.4 cm

Artist example signed by the artist «Pompon» in the wax, cast by «Cire C.Valsuani perdue», confidential edition at only few examples.

Circa 1926-1933

Bronze à patine ardoise, caractéristique de Pompon.

Haut : 26.5 cm, Long : 10 cm, Prof : 15.4 cm

Tirage d'artiste signé par «Pompon» lui-même dans la cire, fondu par «Cire C.Valsuani perdue», tirage confidentiel à quelques épreuves.

Circa : 1926-1933



The model of *Grue couronnée au repos* from 1926 is a synthesis which expresses all the virtuosity of the sculptor. There is a perfect balance between the lines, vertical of the leg resting on the ground and diagonal of the body, and the tubular volume of the bird. The genius of the artist is also measured by his ability to keep the naturalness of the bird whose hidden leg under its feathers emerges only from its end, while designing a polished, stylized version of the wader that he thus brings into the modernity of the 20th century. We can highlight here this constant search for harmony with the curved ergot of the hidden leg that responds in parallel to the horizontal line of its beak. We also perceive all the usual subtlety of this sculptor in his work of animation of the surfaces with this game of striations supported on the ridge and so delicate on the side of the curved body of the bird and on its tail.

The edition was confidential, probably with five examples, cast by the Claude Valsuani foundry. Consecrated by his exhibition at the Salon des Artistes Français in 1922, the success that finally arrived prompted Pompon to take care of his own editions and supervise the production. From then, he took back his freedom and stopped collaborating with the Galerie Hébrard, but the latter kept the models already edited. From that date on, Pompon was the only editor of his "little beasts", as he called them and approached the foundry of Claude Valsuani, son of Marcello, who had also worked for the Hébrard foundry. Perfectionist and true to his nature of practitioner, Pompon retouched the waxes before casting, signs in wax and himself watches over the chiseling and patina of his bronzes. Our *Grue* bears one of the most beautiful patinas specific to Pompon, known as the "slate" one.

Literature:

About the model :

CHEVILLOT Catherine, COLAS Liliane, PINGEOT Anne (dir.), *François Pompon (1855-1933)*, catalogue d'exposition (Dijon, Musée des Beaux Arts; Paris, Musée d'Orsay; Roubaix, Musée des Beaux Arts; Rodez, Musée Denys Puech, 1994-1995). Paris, Gallimard/Electa, 1994, pp. 204-205.

LEBON Elisabeth, "Claude Valsuani" in *Dictionnaire des fondeurs de bronze d'art : France 1890-1950*. Perth, Marjon Editions, 2003, pp. 259-261.

Artist description:

Pompon was the son of a carpenter and first studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Dijon. In 1875 he travelled to Paris, where he worked as a jobbing sculptor, whilst pursuing his studies at the Ecole des Arts Décoratifs under the sculptors Aimé Millet and Joseph-Michel Caillé (1836–81); there he also met the animalier sculptor Pierre-Louis Rouillard (1820–81). At the Salon of 1888 Pompon exhibited Cosette (plaster; Paris, Musée Victor Hugo), inspired by Hugo's *Les Misérables*. However, until 1914 his livelihood was gained as a sculptor's assistant. In this capacity he served many of the prominent sculptors of the day, including Rodin. It was his long-term employment with Charles-René Paul de Saint Marceaux that furnished him with the means to pursue his own career as a sculptor of animals. His studies of animals in the open air began in earnest in 1902, but it was only in 1923 with the exhibition of his Polar Bear (marble; Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts) at the Salon d'Automne, that Pompon was acclaimed for his refined simplification of nature. His ability to contain the essential character of creatures in smooth and abbreviated form parallels the more audacious abstraction of Brancusi. The collection of 300 works that Pompon left to the French State were eventually installed in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon, in 1948. The Musée d'Orsay in Paris has a large collection of Pompon's plaster models.

