

FRANÇOIS POMPON

CORBEAU Large model (1928)

Bronze, richly shaded black patina

H: 37,5 cm, L: 16 cm, D: 51,7 cm

Artist example signed "Pompon", old cast by "C.Valsuani cire perdue (seal)" - one of the eight examples identified.

Circa 1928-1933

This piece is on loan for the exhibition.



Le *Grand corbeau* fait partie des dix modèles emblématiques du sculpteur, qu'il a exposé à maintes reprises dans ses manifestations les plus importantes. Il a été envoyé deux fois au Salon d'Automne en 1928 et en 1931 et il y figure une troisième à la rétrospective posthume de 1933. Il avait fait enfin partie des envois de l'artiste à la XVIII^e Biennale de Venise en 1932.

La pureté de la ligne, la puissance du modèle, son aspect monumental prouve la totale originalité de l'artiste qui compte avec Barye et Bugatti comme un des trois grands animaliers de l'histoire de l'art. La grande force de Pompon est ici de simplifier le modelé de l'animal sans réduire la portée artistique de son sujet.

Pompon n'a pas confié l'édition de cette œuvre à un éditeur. L'analyse des comptes du sculpteur et de l'historique du modèle atteste qu'il existe tout au plus huit exemplaires, tous des tirages d'artiste.

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.

