

JEAN-BAPTISTE CARPEAUX

L'ESPIÈGLE (1865)

Marble

H : 52,6 cm L. 24,7 cm D. 27,3 cm

Lifetime example signed « J.Bte Carpeaux », back of the bust very carefully worked with stripes treatment and polished cut angles (similar type of work as the back of « Mater Dolorosa », unique piece at the Salon in 1870, carved by Barbedienne and currently at the Clark Art Institute).

A good candidate to be the one referenced in the accounts of Barbedienne studios carved and sold in 1871.

Only one other marble known : the former Fabius collection one.

Barbedienne accounts | 1871 :

«Carpeaux got first 1.000 Frs « for the composition and cares about the bust » then 348,5 Frs as « benefices part for the sale of L'Espiegle bust sold at 2.800 frs ».

Marble block sale could be counted at 200 Frs.

Amounts for practioneers at 771Frs.»



In the spring of 1860, upon returning from Rome where he was working on the creation of Ugolin, Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux stayed with his friend Jean-Baptiste Foucart, for whom he had carried out decorative work in 1848-1850. It was then that, "charmed by the smile of his friend's eldest daughter", Carpeaux would later create the mischievous figure based on the bust of the young Anna Foucart. He adored children, and the sessions with the mischievous girl were filled with a cheerfulness that delighted him." The girl's father, however, was less charmed when the artist, who "had a very strong desire to marry in the country," confessed his love for his 14-year-old daughter.

In *L'Espiègle*, Anna Foucart's figure is crowned with vine leaves, the first allegorical arrangement of the model created in 1865. Her face reigns supreme in the edited work, as Anna Foucart appears in numerous adaptations, notably *Jeune fille à la coquille*, *La Rieuse napolitaine* and *La Rieuse aux roses*.

While there are many bronzes and, above all, terracotta versions of *L'Espiègle*, its marble version is rare, as we have only identified two significant examples : ours, which was recently rediscovered, and the one from the Fabius collection (Sotheby's 2011).

We were fortunate to rediscover this year the marble carved in 1871, from the F. Barbedienne accounts, produced in partnership with Carpeaux and sold by the dealer in the same year. In addition to its marble quality and carving, it has similarities in its perfect finish (vermicular surfaces and cutangles in the back) and the very distinctive cut at the back above the pedestal with that of the *Mater Dolorosa* from the Salon in 1870, also produced by Barbedienne.

These two works, along with three other marbles, *Printemps*, *Candeur* and *L'Espérance*, appear on Carpeaux's current

account page at Barbedienne's on October 31st 1871. These are the only ones we have listed in this half account category.
In 1873, with the development of the studio, Carpeaux partnered with Samuel Meynier⁴ for the carving of marble.
Meynier had invented a machine for

