# XAVIER EECKHOUT



**Gaston Etienne LE BOURGEOIS (Vire 1880 - 1956)**

**Walking lion**

Model created *circa* 1927, this one cast *circa* 1929

Bronze, monogrammed and numbered 4/15 Cast by Colin

(no foundry mark)

33 x 14 x 60 cm (13 x 5 $^{1}/_{2}$ x 23 $^{5}/_{8}$ inches)

**Artist description:**

Gaston Le Bourgeois was born in Vire (Calvados) on the 22nd March 1880 and he was a sculptor and art dealer in Rambouillet.

He specialized in woodcarving, often using fruitwood as a medium especially as part of interior schemes such as on furniture and mantelpieces. Much of his sculpture seen on the market today is made of wood, his bronzes are much rarer. An established sculptor, he embraced the Art Deco Movement in the early part of his career. In 1922 he took part in a successful exhibition at the Marsan Pavilion with Mathurin Mehut. This exhibition marked the start of his commercial success.

A series of wild animals, fierce and muscular are amongst Gaston Le Bourgeois's most seductive pieces revealing his ability to capture the inbuilt strength and character of the animals he portrays. He also carved busts, statuettes of people as well as decorative relief in ivory.

Due to a serious work accident, Le Bourgeois was unable to enlist during the First World War, as he was physically unfit for service. Unable to fight, he later created a Memorial to the First World War in Grasse. This stone memorial depicts soldiers of the Great War in battle, shooting at the enemy and scenes of destruction; the windmills at Meaux sur la Marne and the mutilated façade of Reims Cathedral. Another large-scale commission that he completed was to complete ornamental animal sculptures for a Palace of 'Bois Coloniaux' and the Vincennes Exhibition Centre. His works are held in collections at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and by the Ministère des Beaux-Arts.