XAVIER EECKHOUT



Marcel LEMAR (Paris 1892 - Paris 1941)

Crouching orangutan

Edition of terracotta realised during the artist's lifetime

Signed 'LEMAR', at the back of the base

H. 15 ; L. 11 ; P. 9,5 cm.

Related work :

Number 3 in bronze, cast by C. Valsuani, exhibited at the Musée La Piscine, Roubaix, 2013, Les Lémar de La Pisicine, bequest of the artiste in 1941, deposit from the Centre Pompidou to the Musée La Piscine in 2013, Inv. AM 772S., and reproduced in the exhibition catalogue,Roubaix, 2013, p. 106 n. 109.

Artist description:

"Lémar doesn't like beasts, he is crazy about them, and if I didn't know his excellent heart, full of naïveté and depth - I would venture to say that he preferred them to men. " (1)

Parallel to his activity of postman, Marcel Lémar, who was still only Léon-Marcel Marceau, was studying anatomy at the Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, and went daily to the Jardin des Plantes, where he met Pompon; both men forged a deep friendship. In 1920, his name appeared in the booklets of the Salon des Indépendants, Lémar was then drawing animals in cages and it was probably Pompon who encouraged him to model them. In 1925, he abandoned painting to devote himself to sculpture. He exhibited regularly at various salons–le Salon des indépendants, Le Salon d'Automne, Le Salon de la Nationale et le Salon des Artistes Animaliers and enjoyed great fame.

Lémar was a member of the Group of Twelve - or Twelve French animalier sculptors - an association of animal artists founded in 1931 by Pompon and Jeanne Poupelet, and whose members were Artus, Baugnies of Saint-Marceau, Chopard, Guyot, Hilbert, Adrienne Jouclard, Jouve, Margat and Anne-Marie Profillet. Thus, the animalier artists formed a large family, they gathered, organized exhibitions and constituted an avant-garde, and advocated a new aesthetic based on the animal subject and the simplification of the form. This artistic circle thus constituted a creative emulation conductive to the recognition of the public, of the critics and of political powers.

The Musée National d'Art Moderne of Paris has a large collection of his sculpted works and drawings.

(1) Jean-Daniel Maublanc, « Lémar, sculpteur animalier », Mediterranea, septembre 1930