



JEAN CARTON (1912 - 1988)

Woman Leaning Over Examining Her Foot also called, Simon at her Toilette

Bronze proof with black patina, #7/10

Lost wax cast by Godard

Signed (on the base): "J. Carton, 7/10"

Founder's stamp (on the back side of the base): "E. Godard cire perdue" ("E. Godard
lost wax")

H. 56, W. 24, D. 24 cm

Provenance

- Paris, private collection

Bibliography

- "23 hommages à Jean Carton (1912-1988)," *Connaissance des Hommes*, n°129, March-April, 1989, p.17-21, repr.
- *Carton, Sculpture, Sanguines, Estampes (Carton, Sculpture, Red-chalk Drawings, and Prints)*, Paris, Galerie Art France, October-November, 1980, repr.
- *Carton, Quimper*, musée des Beaux-Arts, October 15-December 13, 1982, n°51.
- Trémolet, Jacques, "Jean Carton est mort" ("Jean Carton is Dead"), *Permanences*, n°257, December 1988, p. 4-7, repr.
- *Jean Carton, Sculptures-Dessins-Gravures (Jean Carton, Sculptures-Drawings-Engravings)*, Chambéry, musée d'art et d'histoire; Mont-de-Marsan, musée Despiau-Wlérick, July-December, 1989, repr.

- *Hommage à Jean Carton- Ecole de Moret*, Biennale de Fontainebleau, Théâtre de Fontainebleau, June 13-July 3, 1994, repr.

Exhibitions

- *Carton, Sculpture, Sanguines, Estampes (Carton, Sculpture, Red-chalk Drawings, and Prints)*, Paris, Galerie ArtFrance, October-November, 1980. Model shown: Godard cast, H. 57 cm.
- *Hommage à Jean Carton- Ecole de Moret*, Biennale de Fontainebleau, Théâtre de Fontainebleau, June 13 to July 3, 1994. Model shown: 3/8 cast by Coubertin, H. 68cm (n°7).
- *Jean Carton, Sculptures-Dessins-Gravures*, Chambéry, musée d'art et d'histoire; Mont-de-Marsan, musée Despiau-Wlérick, July-December, 1989. Models shown: 1/8 cast by Godard, H. 29.5 cm (n°32) and 3/8 cast by Coubertin, H. 68cm (n°35).

Jean Carton's major interest was in working from nature. He put all his faith in his eye, saying "if you work without a model, you inevitably fall back upon forms already created by others."[\[1\]](#) Carton did not share the contemporary taste for abstract sculpture that arose after the Second World War, but instead responded to "a demand for clarity and cohesion."[\[2\]](#)

Jean Carton was fascinated by the vital energy held in the body, which he first discovered while admiring Degas' *Petite danseuse de quatorze ans (Small Dancer Fourteen Years Old)* in the Musée d'Orsay.[\[3\]](#) From then on, he felt a deep need to "give life to forms"[\[4\]](#) and centered his work around the human figure, particularly the feminine. To grasp this hidden life and reveal it, he chose simple postures and sculpted ordinary gestures, such as a woman stretching,[\[5\]](#) or holding her breast,[\[6\]](#) or a man walking.[\[7\]](#)

Woman Leaning Over Examining Her Foot, also called *Simone at her Toilette*, was done in 1979. Jean Carton created most of his major sculptures between 1965 and 1980; these include *la Pensée (The Thought)*, 1965, *l'Adolescent*, 1971, *l'Athlète vaincu (The Vanquished Athlete)*, 1975, and *l'Offrande (The Offering)*, 1979. *Simone at her Toilette* is a work from his artistic maturity and was shown in all of his exhibitions.

During these years, he moved his attention away from the model's identity and focused on internal and external movements that animate being in general. This particular pose is also found in the 1976 pastel *Marèze, Seated with Plaster* and in *Drawing of a Nude* in brown chalk.[\[8\]](#) *Simone at her Toilette* allows us to appreciate it from every angle. The composition's rhythm, both studied and dynamic, is based upon alternating voids and volumes, letting viewers discover

a balance of perfect forms constantly renewed as they move around the work.

Jean Carton created *Simone at her Toilette* in three sizes:

- Height: 29.5 cm cast in an edition of 8 by Emile Godard
- Height: 57 cm cast in an edition of 10 (of which this sculpture is one) by Emile Godard
- Height: 68 cm cast in an edition of 8 by Coubertin

[1] Statement by Jean Carton cited in the preface by Roger Passeron in. *Jean Carton*, exhibitions at Chambéry and Mont-de-Marson.

[2] Statement made by Albert Camus on the work of the sculptor. SENILLE-RAPATEL Carole (dir.), *Jean Carton (1912-1988), Homage for the Twentieth Anniversary of his Death*, p. 7.

[3] *Jean Carton*, exhibitions at Chambéry and Mont-de-Marsan, p. 3.

[4] Idem.

[5] *Petite Marèze*, 1969, bronze proof cast by Godard, H. 30.5 cm.

[6] *La Jeunesse* (seated woman), 1949, bronze proof cast by Bisceglia, H. 66 cm.

[7] *Patrice en mouvement*, 1970, bronze proof cast by Susse, H. 77.3 cm.

[8] Works shown at the exhibitions at Chambéry and at Mont-de-Marsan respectively under the numbers 96 and 67.