

MANUEL MARTINEZ HUGUÉ DIT MANOLO (1872-1945)

Man with castanets

Brooch
Silver proof
H. 3,2 ; W. 6,7 cm

Provenance

- Barcelona, private collection

Bibliographie

- 1974 BLANCH : Blanch, Montserrat, *Manolo, Sculptures, Peintures, Dessins*, Éditions Cercle d'Art, Paris, 1974, n°292, p.151 (épreuve du musée Thermalia, Caldes de Montbui)
- 1983 EXPOSITION : Manolo de Céret a Caldes de Montbui, Ajuntament de Caldes de Montbui, Ajuntament de Céret, Barcelone, Diputació de Barcelona, mai-juin 1983, p. 22, n°24, repr.
- 1995 EXPOSITION : *Manolo Hugué (1872-1945)*, Mont-de-Marsan, musée Despiau-Wlérick, 28 juin-4 septembre 1995, Pontoise, musée Tavet-Delacour, 16 septembre-26 novembre 1995, n°61 ; p.63, repr. (Épreuve du musée d'art moderne de Barcelone)

Other silver proofs known

- Caldes de Monbuy, Thermalia Museum, Mas Manolo collection

- Barcelona, Musée national de catalogne (National Museum of Catalonia)

Manuel Martinez Hugué, known as Manolo, was born in Barcelona in 1872 to a family of modest means. In 1900, he decided to leave his native country and move to Paris. On the advice of Francisco Durrio, known as Paco Durrio (1868-1940), a Basque sculptor and silversmith who lived and worked in Paris, Manolo went to work for the Parisian jewelry manufacturer Arnould et Vin. In a 1919 letter addressed to Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler (1884-1974), he says, *"At that time, I often went to the Louvre where I transformed everything I saw into pendants and belt buckles that I worked up in plaster, and when they were finished, I walked them around Paris, taking them to all sorts of shops, often ones completely unrelated to what I was doing."*

At first, Manolo designed the pieces, and silversmiths executed them, but later he decided that he would, himself, create more personal jewelry according to the sculptural techniques that he'd learned during his training, based on models he made either in plaster or clay. Manolo's earliest jewelry, in a symbolic and decorative style, took the forms of willowy insects, graceful birds, and sensual feminine faces and bodies, all typical subjects of Art Nouveau jewelry.

From 1910 on, Manolo worked less in jewelry, though he went back to the form later, in the 1930s, offering his creations to his wife, Totote, and his adopted daughter, Rosa. His style at this period, however, was different from that of his earlier works; his compositions echoed those of his sculptures. Our silver broach was made during this second period, in 1930, when he was living in Caldes de Montbui, where he was recovering from a bout of severe polyarthritis.

There are other brooches from this period in the National Museum of Art of Catalonia, such as *Vénus devant son miroir*(*Venus Before her Mirror*), *Femme jouant de la harpe* (*Woman Playing a Harp*), and *Buste d'homme* (*Bust of a Man*). The composition of the bust is similar to ours.

These different brooches integrate emptiness into their compositions. They testify to Manolo's taste for constraining frames and contorted figures. Our *Man with Castanets* is seen from the back; his face is in profile, turned to the right while his arms are raised to the left to the height of his shoulders. This dynamic movement, based on oppositions, recalls the poses of many figures of dancers, toreadors, preachers, etc. that people Manolo's body of sculpted work. The detail of the fingers folded over the castanets gives this small sculpture, mounted as a brooch, both grace and expression.

Between 1912 and 1933, Manolo was under contract to the dealer Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler. According to their agreement, Manolo's entire production went to the dealer in exchange for a monthly stipend. The silver brooch was made in this commercial context, but given what we know at this time, we cannot say whether it is from one of Kahnweiler's editions.