

MANUEL MARTINEZ HUGUÉ DIT MANOLO (1872-1945)

Woman Drying Herself

Terra-cotta proof, #1/15
Label (under the base): GALERIE LOUISE LEIRIS / 47, rue de Monceau / PARIS / Manolo / #8220 / 1 / Femme s'essuyant / 1923 / tirage : 15 epr. / Ht 285 / Ph. #4529
H. 28.5, W. 13.5, D. 7 cm

Provenance

- Paris, Louise Leiris gallery
- Sweden, private collection

Bibliography

- Pla, Josep, *Vida de Manolo contada per ell mateix*, Sabadell, 1928.
- Pia, Pascal, *Manolo*, "Sculpteurs nouveaux," ("New Sculptors") Paris, Gallimard, 1930.
- Benet, Rafael, *El Escultor Manolo Hugué*, coll. Miguel Angel, Libreria Editorial Argos, Barcelona, 1942, Pl. I, repr.
- *Manuel Martinez Hugué, dit Manolo, Sculptures, gouaches, dessins*, Paris, galerie Louise Leiris, May 17 – June 17, 1961, n°63, repr.
- *Manolo, Plastik und Zichnungen*, Dortmund, Museum am ostwall, April 5 – May 5, 1963, n°54.
- Blanch, Montserrat, *Manolo, Sculptures, Peintures, Dessins*, Editions Cercle d'Art, Paris, 1974, n°459, p. 244, repr.
- *Manolo Hugué Als cinquanta anys de la seva mort*, Columna, Barcelona, Sala d'art Artur Ramon, May 4 – June 17 1995, p.50, n°12, repr.

- *Manolo Hugué Escultura, Pintura y Dijubo*, Madrid, Centro Cultural del Conde Duque, janvier – février 1997, n°18, p. 34, repr.
- Ramon, Artur et Vallcorba, Jaume, *Àlbum Manolo Hugué*, Barcelone, Quaderns Crema, 2005, p. 146-147, repr.
- Fontbona, Francesc, *Manolo Hugué*, Museo de arte contemporaneo Esteban Vicente, 2006, fig.53, repr.

During the years that he lived at Céret between 1920 and 1928, Manolo experienced a true flowering of his art. He created numerous works in clay in which he established the force of his personal style. In this striking composition, he deploys the human body in space in a way that makes its parts into a synthetic geometry. The rhythm of its motion borders on exaggeration, but retains its spontaneous and realistic character. This approach, which shows the influence of analytic cubism,[1] itself the beneficiary of Cézanne's vision according to which nature should be treated in terms of "the cylinder, the sphere, and the cone, all put into perspective … "[2] has resulted in a work charged with energy and palpable power.

Holding the towel with two hands while she dries her feet, the *Woman Drying Herself* moves dynamically through space. Like the *Callipygian Venus*,[3] this strongly arched, asymmetrical figure looks back over her shoulder and down toward her bottom. Her opulent body resonates with the stocky figures of Catalan women that people Manolo's work. The spiraling rhythm emanated by the body's rotating on its axis and the play of obliques created by the positions of the limbs are formal solutions that Manolo frequently used to impart a sense of life and motion, particularly when treating the vernacular subjects of which he was so fond. These same approaches and solutions are found in his *Grape Picker* (1912) in the Museum of Modern Art in New York,[4] in *Dancer* (1940-1941)[5] and *Toreador* (1943-1944),[6] and in *Seated Toreador* (1923)[7] from the same year as the work presented here. That figure, bent at the knee, is shown sitting down, as is his *Juggler* from 1931.[8] They also appear in the monumental figure that he did for the monastery at Monserrat, *The Good Shepard* (1943).

Woman Drying Herself works in conjunction with another sculpture that he created also in 1923, a *Torso*.[9] That work either influenced or was influenced by *Woman Drying Herself*. Manolo used the technique of marcottage[10] to work between one model and the other.

This proof carries the label of the Louise Leiris gallery, which is the third gallery that D-H Kahnweiler ran. After the First World War, on September 1, 1920, the dealer, all of whose property had been sequestered, went into business with André Simon to open a second gallery at 29 bis rue d'Astorg; this

was the Galerie Simon, which was open from 1920 to 1941. All his goods had been auctioned off in sales in 1921, 1922, and 1923, but fortunately, he was able to buy back his Manolo sculptures.[11] In 1941, Kahnweiler's business was again threatened when the gallery was subjected to an "Aryanization process." His step-daughter, Louise Leiris, saved the gallery, buying up its stock and running it until her death in 1988. The editioning of Manolo's sculptures continued, and they were marked and labeled just as they had been in the days of the Galerie Simon.

In editioning his models, Kahnweiler scrupulously numbered and identified each one on a label pasted inconspicuously on the inside of the work. Though it is stated that the *Woman Drying Herself* was editioned in 15 copies, nothing is known about any of the others at this time.

Editioning the works in this way allowed Kahnweiler to make Manolo and his work more widely known; he also organized the first solo exhibition of Manolo's work at the Galerie Simon in 1923, the year that *Woman Drying Herself* was done. The critic Maurice Raynal praised it, writing in an article: "[…] Most of his busts, figurines, and reliefs of his subjects reflect an intensity of animal life that no other sculptor of today has attained—and he achieves this precisely because he asks nothing of his art but that. As a result, his work is linked to Gothic art; he possesses its flame, its supple symmetry, and, at times, it's roughness of style.[12]
Woman Drying Herself was shown many times, both in France and abroad, and it is referenced in Rafael Benet's 1942 monograph on Manolo (plate 1).

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[1] This is the name given to the first phase of cubism (1908-1912); natural forms were analyzed and retranscribed on the basis of simple geometric forms.
[2] Excerpt of the letter from Paul Cézanne to Émile Bernard, April 15, 1904.
[3] The most famous version of this sculpture is held in the archeological museum in Naples.
[4] Manolo, Hugué, *Vendangeuse*, 1913, bronze proof, H. 44 cm MoMA, New York (inv. 260.1957).
[5] Blanch, 1974, #222.
[6] Blanch, 1974, #260.
[7] Blanch, 1974, #464.
[8] Blanch, 1974, #156.
[9] Blanch, 1974, #460, and two good reproductions of the two works on facing pages in the catalogue from the Galerie Louise Leiris, 1961, #63 and 65.
[10] Marcottage is an operation that consists in creating a new work in sculpture by reusing, either entirely or partially, earlier works by the same sculptor. The sculptor breaks up his own works and reconfigures them into a new piece. (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication ; Inventaire général des monuments et des richesses artistiques de la France, *La sculpture Principes*

d'analyse scientifique, méthode et vocabulaire, Paris, imprimerie nationale, 1978).

[11] June 13-14, the first sale of the goods sequestered by the Germans, "Henry Kahnweiler collection: modern paintings, sculptures, and ceramics" Part 1: https://archive.org/details/CollectionHenryKahnweiller13To14June1921/page/n25

[12] *Manolo Hugué*, 1995, p. 81