

THE SLADMORE GALLERY

57 JERMYN STREET, ST. JAMES'S, LONDON SW1Y 6LX
Telephone: 020-7629 1144 Facsimile: 020-7495 3668
e-mail: eh@sladmore.com web: www.sladmore.com

Artist: Albéric Collin
(Belgian, 1886 - 1962)
Ref: 9613

Elephant, c.1920

Description:

A rare, good quality, twentieth century bronze model of an 'Elephant' by Albéric Collin (Belgian, 1886 - 1962). This bronze was cast by the lost wax process at the Valsuani Foundry, Paris circa 1920. Before casting it was signed and stamped in the wax 'A. Collin' 'C Valsuani Cire Perdue'. This example has a dark brown patina.

Dimensions:

Height	5 in	13 cm
Length	6 in	14 cm

Provenance:

Private Collection, Belgium.

Exhibitions:

Collin's debut exhibition was at Antwerp Zoo in 1910 and from thence he regularly participated in exhibitions in Antwerp, Ghent and Brussels as well as the Paris Salon.

Model Illustrated:

To be illustrated in the forthcoming Catalogue Raisonné by Paul Verbraeken to be published by Marjon Publications.

Footnote:

Albéric Collin was born on April 6th 1886 at Antwerp, and was to remain a citizen of the city all his life. He studied at art at the Antwerp Academy from the age of sixteen or seventeen, and seems to have had no doubt as to his vocation as a sculptor; specifically a sculptor of animals.

The Zoological art centre of Europe, and seems to have had no single gallery representing his work either in Belgium or abroad. He acted as his own agent, and exhibited at the annual Salons of Belgian and French artists. He came to

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the fore with a 1910 exhibition at Antwerp Zoo itself and enjoyed further solo exhibitions in 1922 and 1955, the latter a substantial retrospective.

Information is scarce on Collin, who appears consciously to have underplayed any eventfulness in his life. It is difficult to establish whether he married or had family, and records of his business dealings are untraced. In rare interviews he spoke of his 'ivory tower', introversion and all-consuming desire to depict the animals who, he said, knew him best. Even in terms of his art he was reticent, commenting that he had no stylistic preferences, but simply sought to make and emulate the works that he found personally moving, in whatever style.

This very reclusive demeanour may have been influenced by Rembrandt Bugatti, whom Collin acknowledged as his one mentor. Though they were close in age, Bugatti was already established in Paris as an artist when he came to Antwerp to at the Zoo. Collin learned much from him about the importance of observation and of pursuing one's personal vision; indeed Bugatti discouraged any emulation from his admirer, except in the principle of commitment and vigour. He too, was famously withdrawn from human company.

Interest in his work has however, increases since his death, notably with the 1999 exhibition at the Sladmore Gallery, London, and more information on this talented figure will surely come to light.

Casting Note:

His early works were cast in Belgium, by the Petermann Foundry, however he soon formed a liaison with the well-known French foundry C. Valsuani. A maximum of seven casts were made of each model and this model is one of the largest works completed by Collin.

Gardens at Antwerp were constitutionally committed to attracting artists to work within its walls, and Collin habitually stated that self-motivated study of the animals there constituted the most important part of his education. He made no attempt to travel for any significant period to Paris, the