



Joseph BERNARD (1866 - 1931)

Water porter or young girl at the jug

Circa: Circa 1915-1920

Circa 1915-1920

64.5 x 30.8 x 14.3 cm (25 ³/₁₆ x 12 ¹/₁₆ x 5 ⁵/₁₆ inches)

Bronze

Signed "J. Bernard"

Bronze with brown nuanced patina, signed "J. Bernard", "Claude Valsuani" cast (from his lifetime), bears the founder's stamp "C. Valsuani lost wax", numbered 16

Circa 1915-1920

Joseph Bernard created most of his sculpted work from 1905 to 1913. He mainly devoted himself to female figures and more particularly to those of young women, in stone, marble or bronze. Two exhibitions were dedicated to the artist in Paris, at Galerie Hébrard in 1908, and at Galerie Manzi Joyant in 1914. He was one of the few sculptors exhibited at the Armory Show in New-York in 1913. A perfect incarnation of the post-Rodin current, he carved a path of his own between Antoine Bourdelle's expressionism and Aristide Maillol's classicism.

His female nudes are always depicted with utmost grace and smoothness, with pure and simple lines. In this representation of a young girl walking, Joseph Bernard plays on the impression of the poised figure and the counterbalance of the weight of the jug on the right side and the movements of the head and arm on the opposite side. The pigeon-toed figure has something awkward about it, giving it a naive charm.

A first version of the model with an outstretched arm is dated 1905-1907. Our copy represents the young girl, with the left arm bent and close to the body. Two copies of the sculpture were issued whereas 50 were announced. One of them, 175cm high, a State purchase, is kept at the Musée d'Orsay.

LITERATURE

René Jullian Joseph Bernard, Fondation de Coubertin 1989, page 301, n° 154.