



PROANTIC
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Bronze Bas-relief "the Miner" (1904) By Constantin Meunier (1831-1905)

1 450 EUR



Signature : CONSTANTIN MEUNIER (1831-1905)

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bronze

Length : 22,50

Width : 18

Description

- THE WORK: In the dark twists and turns of a coal mine, stands a man with a face marked by effort and suffering. His emaciated profile bears witness to years of hard work, years spent extracting riches from the earth for the masters of industry. In his tired eyes lies the story of an entire working class, sacrificed on the altar of progress and greed. The Miner's Head, a masterful creation imbued with Meunier's social art, emerges from the darkness of oblivion to remind us of the dignity stolen from those who plowed the bowels of the earth. Commissioned by coal merchant and patron Edouard Taymans in 1904, this striking work is a silent cry of despair and resilience. In the background, the menacing silhouette of a factory chimney and the barren mound of a slag heap evoke the relentless reality

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of miners' daily lives. Each line, each hollow of the bas-relief sculpted by Meunier is impregnated with the sweat and blood of those who paid the price of their lives for the benefits of the powerful. This miner's head exists in different forms - plaster, bronze, sandstone - but in each, it bears the indelible imprint of the workers' struggle. It recalls Meunier's earlier sculptures, such as the Miners at the Exit of the Well exhibited at the Salon in 1893, where figures exhausted by the labor of the "Black Country" are immortalized in bronze, moving testimonies of an era of poverty and of broken hope. -

BIOGRAPHY OF CONSTANTIN MEUNIER:

Constantin Meunier, Belgian artist, evolves from religious painting towards a realistic and social representation of the working world, influenced by his exploration of the Borinage, a mining region of Belgium. This journey had a profound impact on him, pushing him to capture the tragic beauty of industrialization. His dark, dramatic painting and expressive sculptures depict the new realities of the industrial age. His stay in Spain reinforced his commitment to blue-collar work, despite external artistic influences. Van Gogh praises him, recognizing his unique talent. Unfortunately, Meunier faced personal tragedies, losing both of his sons. Despite this, he is honored by renowned art institutions and influential artists such as Rodin. His artistic legacy is preserved at the Constantin-Meunier museum in Ixelles, his sculptures adorning public spaces in Belgium and Europe. As a Freemason he was also involved in philanthropic activities.