



Leaping Fish - Georges Despret (1862-1952)



13 000 EUR

Signature : Despret

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Glass paste

Height : 25,5 cm

Description

Polychrom glass paste sculpture
unsigned

France
before 1906
height 25,5 cm

- A similar model, with different colours, is now exhibited in the collections of the Petit Palais in Paris (inv. OGAL246).

In 1912, Georges Despret donated forty-six works in glass paste to the City of Paris, including the fish.

- Two further fishes are presented in the Chrysler Museum of Art, in Norfolk (Va) (inv.71.6354 et 71.6356).

Dealer

Galerie Tourbillon

Specialist Sculptures 19th and 20th century, Art Nouveau

15 rue drouot
Paris 75009

Biography :

Georges Despret (1862-1952)

was a Belgian artist, glass-maker, engineer and captain of industry, then naturalized French. He came from an old family of forge and glass-makers from Hainaut region (Belgium). Georges Despret was prepared for the profession of glass-maker from childhood by his uncle, Hector Despret, forge master and industrial glass-maker, who saw in him his successor in charge of the mirrors Manufactures in Floreffe (Belgium) and Jeumont (France) . When the latter died in 1884, Georges Despret succeeded him.

In 1887, Despret obtained the freedom to export, and his glassworks then experienced a great boom in the field of glass, mirrors, slabs and coatings in glass paste. He created the "Union of mirrors and special glasses from the North of France". His great technical creativity has led him to file numerous patents. Georges Despret was also successful in finance. For example, he was Chairman, from 1931 to 1940, of Banque Transatlantique, one of the oldest private banks in France. He was elevated to the rank of Commander of the Order of Leopold in 1926 and decorated with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor in 1935.

In parallel with this brilliant career, Georges Despret set out in search of the secret of the glass paste of ancient Rome, following the example but independently of the Parisian artist Henry Cros. From 1889, in his workshop set up in his Jeumont factory, he made masks of historical and contemporary figures (Bonaparte, Cléo de Mérode) as

well as small classical statuary (Venus of Cnidus, Faun). Despret surrounded himself in this work with renowned collaborators, such as the Belgian painter and sculptor Yvonne Serruys with whom he had more than 300 different pieces executed, or his draftsman Gérard Nicollet, or the sculptor Pierre le Faguays.

Despret also met with success at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900, which according to critics "offered him the opportunity, among other things, to publicly demonstrate the extraordinary possibilities of his process. His glass paste is perfectly pleasing to the eye. and to the touch. It appears to amazed contemporaries as the materialization of the dream of all the previous generations of passionate researchers who tried it in vain".

His factories, his workshop and the Municipal Museum of Jeumont were destroyed by bombardments during the two world wars. These events then caused the disappearance of many works by Georges Despret as well as his technical and iconographic archives, and are one of the reasons for the relative ignorance of this artist by the general public.