Statuette - Genius

Ceramics and Glass Collection

Accession Nr.:	54.1200.1
Artist/Maker:	Apáti Abt, Sándor (1870 - 1916) / form design and modelling
Manufacturer:	Zsolnay factory (Pécs)
Date of production:	1899
Place of production:	Pécs
Inscription:	masszába nyomott 5683 (fazonszám) 36, ZSOLNAY alatta ágacskával, öttorony, TJM, hátul oldalt ABT monogram egymásra írt betűkkel, 99, a művész jelzése
Materials:	porcelain-faience
Techniques:	acid-etched glaze; cast; eosin-glazed
Dimensions:	height: 32 cm base diameter: 27 cm

The back of the sculpture is constructed of a group of prisms with six sides. The strong, young, bearded male head is shown from the front. His head is turned to the side the expression of the face with eyes that look upwards is intense and passionate. The fluttering lock of hair reaches the highest column, the other part of the hair enframes the head and the neck, blending with the geometrical background. It is probably meant as the allegory of the genius of architecture or of any creative power that is able to transform material. The original model of the statuette, handshaped by Sándor Apáti-Abt is known from a private collection. The strong, broad chin, the delicate face and the details of the hair were more apparent in the unfired clay version, yet the miraculously rich shades of the reduction-fired green-gold-purple-bronze glaze that covers the details enhances the effect of the composition. The sketch of the statuette can be found in the Zsolnay factory Facon book 8, under No. 5638, with a remark "Abt Sándor mintája" (Model of Sándor Abt). Abt made altogether four allegorical busts during 1899-1900. The first was the Moon (La Luna), fajon no. 5494, followed by Genius, then Odour of Rose (also entitled Rose Dream, with facon no. 6064), and last a female figure representing music (facon no. 6130). Probably only a few copies were made of these compositions, now in private collections.

Literature

- Szerk.: Csenkey Éva, Steinert Ágota: *Hungarian Ceramics from the Zsolnay Manufactury, 1853-2001*. Yale University Press, New Haven és London, 2002. - Nr. 116.
- Szerk.: Szilágyi András, Horányi Éva: *Szecesszió. A 20. század hajnala. (Az európai iparművészet korszakai.)*. Iparművészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 1996. - Nr. 9.84 (Csenkey Éva)
- Mendöl Zsuzsa: Apáti Abt Sándor és működése a Zsolnay gyárban. *Janus Pannonius Múzeum Évkönyve*, 19. (1977). 1977. - 321.

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