

GALERIE MARCILHAC

XXth CENTURY DECORATIVE ARTS
PARIS



JOSEPH CSAKY (1888-1971)

Joseph Csaky was born in 1888 into a modest family of Szeged, in the South of Hungary. Supported by his father, he entered the National School of Decorative Arts of Budapest at the age of 14 ; he met Gustave Miklos there who became and stayed a close friend of his during the rest of his life. Casey quickly abandoned this academical curriculum, finding no personal satisfaction in it.

After a period of poverty and instability, the artist decided to come in Paris in 1908 where he first lived, for a short time, in the Cité Falguière before he briefly settled in « la Ruche » in 1909. While meeting with the artists of the Parisian avant-garde, the discover of Rodin, but must of all of the works of Maillol, Braque and Picasso profoundly marked the young Hungarian who developed a purified and geometrical aesthetic from then.

From 1919, Csaky's cubism became more radical, the artist introducing more and more pure volumes in his creations which soon reached a certain kind of abstraction. At the same time, several years after presenting for the first time his work to the public at the Salon des la Société nationale des Beaux-Arts and the Salon d'automne, the sculptor signed a contract of exclusivity with Léonce Rosenberg who exhibited his pieces in his gallery L'Effort Moderne from 1920. In 1924, Marcel Coard also began a fruitful collaboration with Csaky, inserting sculpted elements in his pieces of furnitures as well as introducing sculptures of the artist in the installations he conceived for his clients.

From 1927, Joseph Csaky gave a new inflexion to his work ; he partially abandoned the abstract vein he cherished until then to turn to a more literal figuration, while the subjects he favored also evolved, the animals and the feminine figures becoming his favorite ones. The shapes became rounder and more voluptuous, the angles softer, facing an increasing sensuality.

In 1930, the first monograph about Csaky was published, written by the art critic Waldemar George, while a couple of years later, the sculpter was commissioned four monumental statues for the International Exhibition of Arts and Techniques (1937) : *Art and Technique* for the pavilion of the U.A.M. (Union des Artistes Modernes), *The Couture*, *The Perfumery* and *The Fur* for the pavilions of the Elegance and the Ornament.

From 1945, if the woman still was the favorite subject of Csaky's realizations, her canon became longer and the shapes of the body more abstract than before, illustrated in lascivious poses, almost mannerist, sculpted in the round or in numerous bas-reliefs which increasingly contaminated his production.

This new orientation was not as successful as Csaky had hoped ; he progressively descended into poverty and never really made it through, despite the Assistance Committee to Csaky created by his friend Jean Cassou in 1969.



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