

# Galerie Canesso

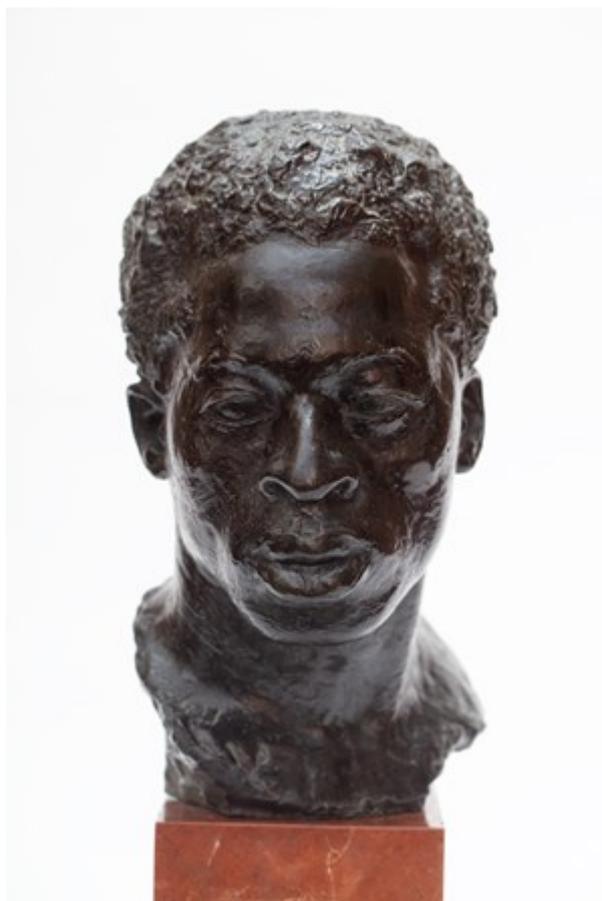
Tableaux anciens

**CARLO SIVIERO**

(NAPLES, 1882 - CAPRI, 1953)

*Head of a Man*

Bronze, 13 x 7 5/8 x 10 1/4 (33 x 19.5 x 26 cm)



## PROVENANCE

Naples, Morino collection.

## LITERATURE

*Carlo Siviero alla Galleria Dedalo*, Milan, March - April 1940, Rome: Arti Grafiche P. Casetti & C., 1940, no. 76 (illustrated).

## EXHIBITIONS

*Carlo Siviero alla Galleria Dedalo*, Milan, Galleria Dedalo, March - April 1940

Signed and dated on back: "Siviero 1939"

This portrait is a rare example of sculpture by Carlo Siviero, who is better known as painter, writer and

art critic. Indeed, we only know of a small group of sculptures, in terracotta and wax, as well as a very few in bronze<sup>1</sup>. These works reveal a multi-talented artist and inheritor of the sculptural art of Vincenzo Gemito (1852-1929). It may even have been his admiration for the Neapolitan master that led Siviero to try his own hand at this medium; in any case a close friendship is documented between the two artists from the 1910s onwards. Meanwhile, Gemito created several sculptures of Siviero's daughter Irene, and in 1920 he portrayed Carlo Siviero in armour in a work associated with the statue of Charles V on the façade of the Palazzo Reale in Naples. In 1953, the year he died, Siviero wrote one of the more perceptive monographs on Gemito.

Within this new realism, Siviero found a personal and deeply-felt path to the vibrant material – basing his bronze directly on terracotta – that was essentially modern. This sculpture is a powerful embodiment of the sitter and exudes a splendidly living quality. The subject belongs to the repertoire of the period, reflecting a revival of interest in the 1930s for Italian colonies in East Africa, especially Eritrea and Somalia. Naples, as a port that was open to the Mediterranean, had become the stage for the movements of international populations, and the figure is rendered with humanity, delicacy and refinement.

Carlo Siviero was trained in Naples and Rome before becoming an instructor in 1915 at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Naples, first at the School of Decoration, and then progressing in 1930 to the position of Director of the School of Painting. In 1935, he was entrusted with the reorganisation of the gallery in the School of Fine Arts (the Accademia), before moving to the Accademia in Rome. It was during this period that he focused on his exploration of sculpture, and there followed exhibitions in the Galleria Dedalo in Milan in 1940, where our *Head of a Man* was displayed; the Galleria San Marco, Rome, in 1942; and two in Naples – one personal and one collective – in 1945. In 1951, the artist left for Brazil to carry out some commissions before he died in Capri in 1953.

Note:

1- The *Young Girl with Braids* (terracotta) and the *Head of a Woman*: see M. De Nicolais, *Carlo Siviero*, Naples, 1922, figs. LIII, LIV. A *Head* was exhibited at the Sixth Roman Quadriennial in 1951-1952.