



Hémione (Hemionus [wild ass])

Date

first cast c. 1874

Primary Maker

Antoine-Louis Barye

Medium

Bronze

Description

"Industrial advances in bronze casting developed in Paris in the mid-nineteenth century increased the production of small bronze sculptures for domestic display. Numerous bronze foundries where artists could cast their work in editions opened throughout the city. A growing bourgeois class provided an ample market for these decorative sculptures. Simultaneously, the public's interest shifted from Renaissance and Classical forms to the depiction of more familiar subject matter. Animals, for example, became a very popular subjects for bronzes. During this period, zoos emerged as

a popular venues for leisure activity for the middle and lower classes, piquing the public's interest in exotic animals while also allowing artists to work from direct observation. This trend resulted in the term animalier, used to describe artists who primarily depicted animals. The sculptors who designed these bronzes had an intimate understanding of musculature and anatomy and translated this knowledge to their work to create active and dynamic figures—both animal and human."

(Label text written by Katherine Alcauskas, Collections Curator and Exhibitions Manager, Summer 2016)

Dimensions

Overall: 8 3/4 x 9 1/4 x 2 1/2 in. (22.2 x 23.5 x 6.4 cm)