



1789;1791;c. 1790

limewood;limewood;lindenwood

relief;relief;relief

27 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.;23 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.;18 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

under the base: AUBERT PARENT FECIT AN. 1789;under the base: AUBERT PARENT.
1791

Acc. No.: 84.SD.76;84.SD.194;2006.146

Credit Line: The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles;The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles;Museum Purchase, Bernard J. Reilly Fund, Katherine Tuck Fund, Visiting Committee for European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, and with funds from Joanne and Richard Brodie

Photo credit: The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles;The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles;2012 Detroit Institute of Arts

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Provenance

- ?-1984, Paris, Jacques Kugel (1912-1985, French, born Russia)
- 1984, sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum;for many years, central France, private collection
- London, Adrian Sassoon (dealer)
- 2006, Museum Purchase, Bernard J. Reilly Fund, Katherine Tuck Fund, Visiting Committee for European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, and with funds from Joanne and Richard Brodie
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- ?-1984, Paris, Jacques Kugel (1912-1985, French, born Russia)
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Bibliography

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1985 Streeter

Colin Streeter, "Two Carved Reliefs by Aubert Parent", *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal*, vol. 13, January 1985, p. 53-66

1997 Fusco

Peter Fusco, *Summary Catalogue of European Sculpture in The J. Paul Getty Museum*, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1997, p. 40, repr.; Museum's website, 22 March 2012 and August 7, 2018

1985 [Getty Journal]

"Acquisitions/1984." *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 13 (1985), p. 183, no. 66, ill.

1985 Streeter

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1993 Bremer-David

Charissa Bremer-David, et al. *Decorative Arts: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue of the Collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum* (Malibu: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1993), p. 75, no. 113

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2001 Wilson and Hess

Gillian Wilson and Catherine Hess. *Summary Catalogue of European Decorative Arts in the J. Paul Getty Museum* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2001), p. 58, no. 112

2004 Leben

Ulrich Leben, *Object Design in the Age of Enlightenment: The History of the Royal Free Drawing School in Paris* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), frontispiece (det.); 2007 Darr and Gallagher

A. Darr & B. Gallagher, "Recent acquisitions (2000-2006) of European sculpture and decorative arts at The Detroit Institute of Arts," *The Burlington Magazine*, 149 (June 2007), p. 453, pl. XV (ill)

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Exhibitions

- 2006-2007 Los Angeles

Casting Nature: François-Thomas Germain's Machine d'Argent, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center, July 11, 2006-March 25, 2007

2012-2013 Pasadena

Significant Objects: The Spell of Still Life, Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum, July 19, 2012-January 22, 2013 ; 2012-2013 Pasadena

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Comment

Museum's website, August 7, 2018:

This virtuoso carving, produced from a single plank of limewood, demonstrates the accomplished skills of its maker, Aubert Parent, who came to prominence in 1777 when one of his panels was accepted as a gift by Louis XVI, king of France. The relief shows a vase of flowers, including poppies, roses, lilac, lilies-of-the-valley, and daisies, on a plinth. Parent used various levels of carving to make the design seem more lifelike. For example, the flattened "carved" acanthus leaves on the vase contrast sharply with the "real" leaves of the roses and grapevine surrounding it. Parent once noted that the delicate lilac blossoms in particular were extremely difficult to carve, as they had to be worked from both above and below without breakage.

The lower part of the scene--a pair of birds defending their nest from a grass snake and a slug--alludes to parental responsibility and, indirectly, to the duty of the French monarchy toward its subjects at the beginning of the French Revolution.

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Museum's website, 22 March 2012 and August 7, 2018:

In response to the tumultuous political events of the French Revolution, Aubert Parent created this allegory of the French monarchy and the drafting of the new constitution by the National Assembly. On September 14, 1791, Louis XVI took an oath to support the new political regime. Parent's relief, carved from a single piece of limewood, links a medallion of the Roman Emperor Hadrian, symbolizing the French king, with a medallion of the Roman Senate, representing the National Assembly. The dead bird (the old regime) and the unguarded nest (France) symbolize the failure of the new constitution and the end of the monarchy.

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