



BRANCUSI, Constantin

Hobitza, Romania 1876 - Paris 1957

Sculpture pour l'aveugle [I]

Sculpture for the Blind [I]

c. 1920

veined marble

head

6 $\frac{11}{16}$ x 11 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Acc. No.: 1950-134-20

Credit Line: The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection, 1950

Photo credit: Philadelphia Museum of Art

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www.philamuseum.org

Provenance

- 1950, The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection

Bibliography

- Museum's website, 16 March 2015

1995 Temkin

Ann Temkin, in Constantin Brancusi 1876-1957, 1995, p. 180 (see Comment below)

Comment

Museum's website, 16 March 2015:

Ann Temkin, from *Constantin Brancusi 1876-1957*, 1995, p. 180:

A great deal of uncertainty surrounds the origin of the title and the dating of this sculpture. John Quinn acquired it directly from the artist in 1922 as an "abstract woman's head" after seeing it at the artist's studio the previous summer. Not until 1949 was it published with the title *Sculpture for the Blind*.

The provocative title indicates that Brancusi intended this sculpture not only to be seen but to be touched as well, perhaps even touched instead of seen. It related to Henri-Pierre Roché's later recollection that the work was shown in 1917, at the Society of Independent Artists exhibition in New York, "enclosed in a bag with two sleeve-holes for hands to pass through" (cited in Tacha, Athena C. "Brancusi: Legend, Reality and Impact." *Art Journal* {New York}, vol. 22, no. 4, {Summer 1963}, p. 241). However, no record of this unusual showing has yet been found. The actual use of this title may derive from a later work, slightly larger and made in alabaster (Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris), that was shown in Paris at the Salon in 1926 with the title *Sleeping Muse (Sculpture for the Blind)* and in New York at the 1933 Brummer Gallery exhibition as *Sculpture for the Blind*.

The most commonly cited date is based on Roché's recollection. But given the 1922 date of Quinn's purchase, as well as the development of related works, it seems more likely that the correct date is about 1920.
