



BARRIAS, Louis-Ernest

Paris 1841 - Paris 1905

Maker: Thiébaut

Les Premières funérailles

The First Funeral (Adam and Eve Mourning the Dead Abel)

c. 1883

bronze

group

33 1/2 x 21 x 17 in.

signature incised and heightened after casting at right side of base: " E. Barrias". Foundry name incised after casting at left side of base: "THIEBAUT F'RES FONDEURS".

Acc. No.: 92.41

Credit Line: Gift of the Mowbray Arch Society

Photo credit: Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk

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Norfolk, Virginia, Chrysler Museum of Art

www.chrysler.org

Provenance

- 1992, Gift of the Mowbray Arch Society

Bibliography

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Museum's website, 31 March 2015

1914 Lami

Stanislas Lami, Dictionnaire des sculpteurs de l'école française du XIXe siècle, Paris, 1914, vol. 1, p. 57. (n.d.)

1980 Daniels

Sculpture from the David Daniels Collection, Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Fine Arts, 1980, cat. no. 41, ill.

1989-1990 Shepherd

No Title, NY: Shepherd Gallery, 1989/90, cat. no. 41

1991 Shepherd

Viewpoints, NY: Shepherd Gallery, 1991, cat. no. 6

1994 Gazette

"La Chronique des Arts", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, No. 1502 (March 1994), ill. No. 286, p. 63

1994 Harrison

Jefferson C. Harrison, "The Death of Innocence: Louis Ernest Barrias' The First Funeral," The Chrysler Museum Journal 1 (1994), p. 26, 28-29

Exhibitions

- 1980 Minneapolis

Sculpture from the David Daniels Collection, Minneapolis Institute of Fine Arts, MN, 1980

1989-1990 New York



New York, Shepherd Gallery, Winter 1989-1990

1991 New York

Viewpoints, New York, Shepherd Gallery, 1991

1996-1997 Norfolk

Treasures for the Community: The Chrysler Collects, 1989-1996, Norfolk, Chrysler Museum of Art, October 25, 1996 - February 16, 1997

Comment

Museum's website, Object Label, 31 March 2015:

One of the most famous and poignant sculptural images produced in France between 1850 and 1900, Barrias' *The First Funeral* depicts Adam and Eve mourning their son Abel. As the Bible recounts (Genesis 4:3-8), Abel was murdered by his brother Cain in a jealous rage after the Lord accepted Abel's offering but rejected Cain's. Though the Bible makes no mention of the lamentation or funeral of Abel, later writers expanded upon the Old Testament narrative with numerous tales and anecdotes. Among them was the story that Adam and Eve were so shaken by Abel's murder that they mourned his death for a hundred years. Among the episodes composing the apocryphal narrative of Abel's death and funeral, Barrias chose the moment when, having discovered the body of their son, Adam and Eve carry him to his grave. Barrias rejected Eve's traditional characterization as a temptress and cast her in the more sympathetic role of the grieving mother who gathers her dead son in her arms to bestow a final kiss. In contrast, Adam is portrayed as embittered but controlled, his restraint meant to convey an appropriately paternal response to loss. Before the Mowbray Arch Society's generous 1992 donation of *The First Funeral*, the Museum's 19th-century European collection contained no work of overtly religious subject matter and few sculptures of comparable quality and art historical importance. Thus, the sculpture fills a significant gap for us.

