Inv. no. B 104

SVEND RATHSACK (1885–1941)
GANYMEDE AND THE EAGLE, 1917
FIRE-GILT BRONZE

H: 35; W: 21; D: 16 CM

Rathsack's statuette depicts a scene from Greek mythology, from the tale of how the mighty god Zeus fell in love with the beautiful Trojan prince Ganymede and decided to carry him away to Mount Olympus. Here the prince was to replace Hebe as cupbearer for the gods and goddesses. Rathsack focused on the dramatic moment in the story when Zeus, in the form of an eagle, is swooping down to snap up Ganymede and fly away with him.

As the statuette clearly shows, Rathsack's interests did not run towards classical calm and static serenity. Quite the contrary. *Ganymede and the Eagle* exudes vibrant movement: The soaring eagle, its wings and sharp talons extended as it steers directly towards its prey, and the kneeling prince reaching out to the eagle, arms open and outstretched in rapture. The interaction between the two is portrayed with potent poignancy, a result of their movement and physical expression and of the way in which they are only just touching.

During and immediately after World War I, Rathsack produced a series of bronze statuettes. He sold the reproduction rights to several of them, including *Ganymede and the Eagle*, to Dansk Kunsthandel – a newly established, elegant gallery in Copenhagen with which Rathsack was not permanently affiliated, but nevertheless had some connection to.[1] At this time, the statuette production was popular in Denmark because of the great demand for such pieces among an affluent audience, including art collectors such as C.L. David. He was very fond of statuettes and acquired several for his collection, which, in addition to the Rathsack, included works by artists such as Jean Gauguin (B 296) and Agnes Lunn (B 375).

[1] *As is apparent from Lone Rathsack's inventory of Svend Rathsack's work in Erik Zahle: 'Svend Rathsack II: 1920-1941' in Kunstmuseets årsskrift, XXXI-XXXII, Copenhagen 1945, p. 56, 1917, no. 8.*

Published in:
Sigurd Schultz: *Nyere dansk billedhuggerkunst: fra Niels Skovgaard til Jais Nielsen*, København 1929, p. 67;
Leo Swane: *Svend Rathsack: et udvalg af billeder* / with introductory text by Leo Swane, København 1934, (*Vor Tids Kunst*; 17), pp. 11-12;
Erik Zahle "Svend Rathsacks ungdom", *Kunstmuseets årsskrift,* XXX, 1943, p. 121;
Lone Rathsack's list of Svend Rathsack's works in Erik Zahle: "Svend Rathsack II: 1920-1941, year 1917, no. 8, p. 56", *Kunstmuseets årsskrift*, XXXI-XXXII, 1945;
Erik Zahle: "Billedkunst" in *C.L. Davids Samling. Nogle Studier,* [1], København 1948, pp. 212, 264-265;
Lars Dybdahl in Kjeld von Folsach and Nana Lund (eds.): *Dansk kunst i Davids Samling – fra Philipsen til Saxbo*, Davids Samling, København 1995, cat.no. 67, pp. 160-161;
Lars Dybdahl: *Dansk design 1910-1945: art déco & funktionalisme,* Kunstindustrimuseet, København 1997, cat.no. E102;
Mikael Wivel (ed.): *På Græsk! Billedhuggerne og antikken 1898-1962*, Thorvaldsens Museum and Bornholms Kunstmuseum, København 2014, p. 33;
Marie Oxholm Zigler (ed.): *Art Deco i dansk billedkunst 1910-40*, Gl. Holtegaard, Holte 2015, cat. 26, p. 52;