



## **DIEGO GIACOMETTI (1902-1985)**

### **Couple Dequibristes**

Signed base, "Diego"

bronze

13 1/4 x 9 1/8 x 3 1/2 in.

39006

### **PROVENANCE:**

Private Collection, France (acquired from the Artist in 1978)

Private Collection

Sotheby's London, Impressionist & Modern Day Sale, 20 June 2006, lot 397

Private Collection, Washington

### **LITERATURE:**

Daniel Marchesseau, *Diego Giacometti*, Paris, 1986, illustration of another cast, p. 117.

Francoise Francisci, *Diego Giacometti, Catalogue de l'oeuvre*, Paris, 1986, illustration of another cast.

Diego Giacometti (1902-1985) was a Swiss sculptor and designer, and the younger brother of the sculptor Alberto Giacometti. After business studies in Basel and Saint-Gall, at age 25 he followed the advice of his mother and went to Paris to rejoin his brother Alberto, then a student of the sculptor Antoine Bourdelle at the Academy of the Grande Chaumière. All three of the Giacometti brothers went into the visual arts: Alberto and Diego into painting and sculpture, and Bruno into architecture.

The working relationship of Diego with Alberto was so close that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the work of Diego from that of Alberto, 13 months his senior. They shared the same sculpture studio at 46 rue Hippolyte-Maindron in Paris until the ends of their lives and executed the commissions of their cultured clients such as the Maeght and Noailles families. During World War II Diego Giacometti did his first animal sculptures. Animals

regularly adorned his works, such as the Table arbre à la souris (Tree table with mouse) which belonged to the collection of Jean-Paul Binet, an eminent surgeon who was a close friend and patron of Diego Giacometti. His fascination with the animal kingdom was tied to the mythological and dream-like world of his childhood. His sculptures are sometimes amusing or picturesque. For example, L'Autruche (The Ostrich) owed its existence to the

fact that his friend Dr. Binet, not knowing what to do with an ostrich egg, gave it to Diego who integrated inside an ostrich that he dreamt up and sculpted. Diego Giacometti's animal art was rich. Along with familiar animals he liked to have animals that symbolized force, power and beauty such as the heads of lions, wolves and horses. He used bronze, a material that permitted him to sculpt in great detail, grace and elasticity. Diego's animals called for special, often costly techniques such as the lost wax method. His animals were so finely done they helped make his reputation. After the death of Alberto in 1966, Diego redoubled his efforts, doing works of importance for decorators such as Georges Geffroy and Henri Samuel, or ensembles for public works such as the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, the Chagall

Museum in Nice, and the Picasso Museum in Paris. It was only after Alberto died that Diego came to be widely recognized as an important artist.

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