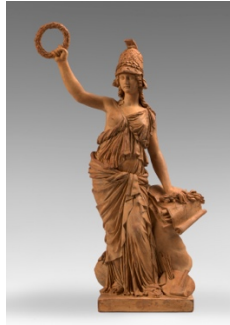


BENJAMIN PROUST

FINE ART LIMITED

LONDON



ATTRIBUTED TO

JOSEPH CHINARD

LYON, 1755 - LYON 1813

MINERVA PROTECTING THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

CIRCA 1790-1800

Terracotta

Height : 41.5 cm

Width : 21 cm

Depth 14 cm

Bear a signature "Chinard"

Provenance:

French private collection

Comparative literature:

Amédée Salomon de La Chapelle, "Joseph Chinard, sculpteur. Sa vie et son œuvre," *Revue du Lyonnais*, 1896, vol. XXII, pp. 77-98, 209-218, 272-291, 337-357, 412-442 ; 1897, vol. XXIII, pp. 37-52, 142-157.

Paul Vitry, *Expositions d'œuvres du sculpteur Chinard de Lyon (1756-1813) au Pavillon de Marsan (Palais du Louvre)* (exh. cat, Paris, nob. 1909-janv. 1910), Paris, 1910.

Stanislas Lami, *Dictionnaire des sculpteurs de l'école française*, vol. I, 1910-1911, pp. 194-218.

Catalogue des sculptures par Joseph Chinard, de Lyon formant la collection de M. le Comte de Penha-Longa (vente Paris, Galerie Georges Petit, 2 décembre 1911).

Madeleine Rocher-Jauneau, *L'Œuvre de Joseph Chinard : 1755-1813* (exh. cat. Lyon, Musée des beaux-arts de Lyon, 1978), Lyon, 1978.

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Isabelle Leroy-Jay-Lemaistre, 'Joseph Chinard', in *Les Muses de Messidor. Peintres et sculpteurs Lyonnais de la Révolution à l'Empire* (exh. cat. Lyon, musée des beaux-arts, 1989-1990), Lyon, 1989, pp. 72-89.

Frédérique Brinkerink, 'La carrière de Joseph Chinard (1756-1813). Prémices et stratégies' in Christophe Henry and Daniel Rabreau (ed.), *Le public et la politique des arts au siècle des Lumières. Célébration du 250^e anniversaire du premier Salon de Diderot*, Paris, 2011, pp. 281-292.

Alexandre Maral, 'Bicentenaire de la mort de Chinard, 1813-2013. Chastel et Chinard, Rome, 1792. Sculpture et Inquisition', in *Les Cahiers d'Histoire de l'Art*, no. 11, 2013, pp. 79-90.

Philippe Bordes, 'L'invention d'une iconographie révolutionnaire : Joseph Chinard (1756-1813)', in *Studi Neoclassici. Rivista internazionale*, no. 4, 2016, pp. 41-50.

Joseph Chinard was the most important French sculptor working outside Paris at the time of the French Revolution and the first Empire. He was imprisoned twice, first in Rome where his works were seen as religious attack, then in Lyon where he was ironically perceived as counter-revolutionary. Despite that, he pursued a great career, producing refined bust portraits, medallions and allegorical sculptures and designing public monuments.

Born in 1755 into a family of master silk weavers and merchants, Chinard first studied with the painter Donat Nonotte (1708-1785) at the Ecole Royale de Dessin and the sculptor Barthélemy Blaise (1738-1819). In 1784, he travelled for the first time to Rome where he stayed for three years and making a number of copies after the antique as well as portraits for private patrons. His reputation grew when he won the first prize in the Concorso Balestra of the Accademia di San Luca with a terracotta sculpture representing *Perseus and Andromeda*.

Back in Lyon at the time of the French Revolution between 1787 and 1791, he obtained several commissions. He sculpted an allegorical portrait of the Van Risamburgh, a prominent Lyon merchant family (fig. 1): it represents Madame Van Risamburgh, dressed as Minerva, raising her shield as a canopy over her young son, while her husband is portrayed in a medallion.¹

After a second stay in Rome in 1791-92, where he was imprisoned for two months in the Castel Sant'Angelo for religious infamy, Chinard continued his career in Lyon (he also spent several months in jail in his native city for not being revolutionary enough). Finally acquitted in 1794, Chinard went on to serve the République, the Directoire, and the Empire as organizer of civic festivals and designer of patriotic monuments. Most of his many public works survive only in the form of models (primarily in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon).

Talented portrait sculptor, he was greatly esteemed by Napoleon's family for whom he created a number of busts in terracotta, plaster and marble. He showed a particular gift for portraits of women, such as the *Bust of Empress Joséphine* (terracotta version in The Cleveland Museum of Art) or the *Bust of Juliette Récamier*, a socialite of the Empire society celebrated for her beauty and love affairs (terracotta version in Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum).

This terracotta statuette depicts Minerva protecting the Arts and Sciences. The goddess, patroness of the Arts, dressed in a beautifully modelled classical drapery and wearing a decorated helmet, raises a

¹ Two versions of the sculpture exist, one in clay which current location is unknown and one in marble, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 94.SA.2.

laurel crown in her right hand. Her left hand, holding an olive branch, is resting in sign of protection on various symbols of the arts and science: geometric drawing, a music sheet, a palette with brushes, the Belvedere torso with a chisel and a hammer as well as a globe. Because of its sketchy and spontaneous aspect, less meticulously modelled than Chinard's finished works, this statuette was probably a model for an unrealised sculpture, intended to be produced in marble or maybe even in clay.

As for its iconography, the statuette could be related to an important event in the artist's career: his admission in 1800, just after his third and last trip to Rome, to the Lyon *Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts*. Chinard was among the first members of the Academy after its re-establishment as the Atheneum (Athénée). During the first session, on 8 August 1800, he offered a bust in plaster representing *Minerva* (lost). Our terracotta model may have been one of Chinard's first thoughts for this tribute.²

The present sculpture can stylistically be compared with others executed about 1790 in Lyon and Rome. It is for instance very close to the model for an allegorical group entitled *Love of Country* (*L'Amour de la Patrie*) realized about 1790-91 (Lyon, Musée des Beaux Arts, fig. 2).³ The *Republic* in the musée du Louvre dated from 1794 (fig. 3-4), represented as a female allegory wearing a Phrygian cap, shows striking similarities with our *Minerva* in the facial features (same geometrical shapes of the eyes, the nose and the mouth) and in the modelling of the drapery (especially around the feet).

The refined statuette representing *Innocence taking refuge in Justice* (*L'Innocence sous la forme d'une colombe se réfugiant au sein de la Justice*) (fig. 5), modelled while Chinard was wrongly imprisoned in Lyon in 1793, has great correspondence in the composition.⁴ The majestic, almost austere, goddess with her beautiful and neutral face is typical of Chinard neo-clacissism.

² A. Salomon de La Chapelle, *op. cit.* 1896, p. 351.

³ Cfr. Ph. Bordes, *op. cit.*, 2016, p. 43-44.

⁴ Sold in Paris, Drouot, Beaussant Lefèvre, 13 June 2012, lot 121.



Fig. 1: Joseph Chinard, Allegorical Portrait of the Van Risamburgh family, 1790, marble, 112,4cm. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum



Fig. 2 Joseph Chinard, Love of Country (L'Amour de la Patrie ou Le Génie de la France relevant la Liberté et la débarrassant de ses entraves), 1790-91, terracotta, 31cm. Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts. © Lyon MBA – Photo Alain Basset



Fig. 3 Joseph Chinard, Republic (La République), 1794, terracotta, 35cm. Paris, musée du Louvre

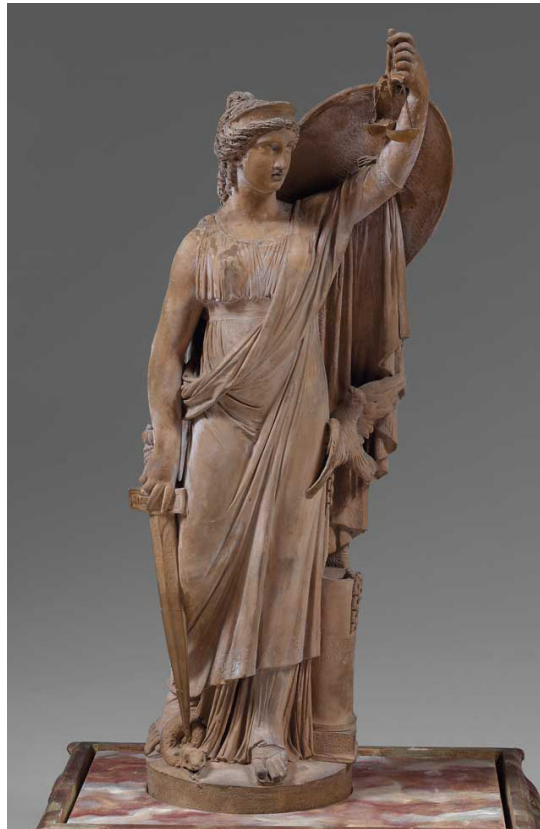


Fig. 4 Joseph Chinard, Innocence Taking Refuge in Justice (L'Innocence sous la forme d'une colombe se réfugiant au sein de la Justice), 1793, terracotta, 44cm. Localisation unknown.