

# ADRIAN ALAN

*Fine Art & Antiques*



**Théodore Louis Auguste Rivière**

**'Carthage' – A Fine Patinated Bronze Group of Salammbô at Mathô's, Cast by Susse Frères**

Circa: French, Circa 1910

French, Circa 1910

42 x 20 x 20 cm (16 1/4 x 7 7/8 x 7 7/8 inches)

Patinated bronze

Signed 'THEODORE-RIVIERE'

'Carthage' – A Fine Patinated Bronze Group of Salammbô at Mathô's, By Theodore Riviere, Cast by Susse Frères.

Signed 'THEODORE-RIVIERE' and titled "Carthage".

Stamped with foundry mark "Susse Frs Edt", and the cachet "SUSSE FRERES FONDEURS PARIS" and the monogram "MM" to the base.

The subject of this work was taken from Gustave Flaubert's novel, *Salammbô*, published in 1862. The figure of Salammbô, the legendary femme fatale was to inspire many Symbolist artists.

The story takes place between 241–238 BC, during the war between Carthage and its rebels. Mâthô, the chief of the barbarian soldiers, fell in love with Salammbô, the daughter of the Carthaginian General Hamilcar Barca. Rivière has chosen the moment when, mortally wounded by the people, Mâthô dies at the feet of Salammbô his idol crying: "I love you! I love you!"

This model was exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français in 1895 and at the Paris 1900 Universal Exhibition, where it was considered as one of the Symbolist movement's key exhibits. A

Chryselephantine group is in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, and a plaster-model in the collection of the Musée des Beaux Arts, Dijon.

French, Circa 1910.

### **Susse Frères**

Tracing its origins to 1758, the Paris foundry of Susse Frères is one of the oldest art foundries in Europe. They were appointed suppliers to Empress Marie Louise from 1812 and the Duc de Berry from 1818. Following the 1830 revolution they were granted a Royal Warrant as an official supplier to the monarchy. Originally a stationery company selling small bronze statuettes, the company began to focus on the process of bronze casting as early as 1839 under the direction of the brothers Michel Victor and Amedee Susse. They producing in that year a six-page catalogue of bronze sculpture.

In 1847 they obtained the right to use the Sauvage procedure for reduction, similar to that invented by Achille Collas and employed by Ferdinand Barbedienne. The ability to produce reductions of large scale bronzes enabled Susse to create editions of work in various sizes and opened up the market to collectors. Michel Victor Susse died in 1860 leaving Amedee as the sole director of the foundry until 1880 when Albert Susse became the director.

In the subsequent years Susse Frères obtained the rights to produce editions of the works of some of the most important French sculptors of the nineteenth century including: James Pradier, Pierre-Jules Mêne , Auguste Cain , Pierre-Nicolas Turgenev , Yevgeny Alexandrovich Lanceray, Louis-Ernest Barrias , Jules Dalou , Alexandre Falguière and Mathurin Moreau.

Renowned for the quality of its casting and multipatinated finishes, the firm of Susse Frères exhibited with notable success at many of the great exhibitions of the nineteenth century including a prize medal at the 1851 Great Exhibition in London and a Grand Prix at the 1905 Lieges Exposition Universelle.

#### **Literature:**

Kjellberg Pierre, *Les bronzes du XIXe siècle. Dictionnaire des sculpteurs*, Paris, Les éditions de l'amateur, 1989;

Laure de Margerie, *Musée d'Orsay, catalogue sommaire illustré des sculptures*, 1986.

#### **Artist description:**

Théodore Louis Auguste Rivière (French, 1857 - 1912) was a French sculptor born in Toulouse.

He trained at 'l'école des beaux-arts de Toulouse', and at 'l'école nationale des beaux-arts de Paris'; his early work heavily influenced by the work of Falguière and Mercié.

He worked in bronze and bronze and ivory in the Art Nouveau and Art Deco style, his work was characterised by the lifelike quality of his subjects, often with a sense of contained movement and a refinement of form and materials.