



Marino Marini,
 "Gentiluomo a cavallo", hand
 chiselled bronze with brown
 and green patina, h. 156 cm.
 Conceived in 1937 and cast in
 a numbered edition of three
 plus one artist's proof in the
 artist's lifetime.
 Estimate: SEK12-15 M.

"Gentiluomo a cavallo" by Marini

The horse and rider are recurring themes in the work of modernist Italian sculptor Marino Marini. This 1937 version of his signature equestrian sculptures forms part of Stockholms Auktionsverk's Modern Art and Design sale, on 28-29 April. This is the first of only four copies, which include the artist's copy on display at Camera dei Deputati, Rome. It was snapped up by Swedish insurance firm Folksam in 1955 through the Svensk-Franska Konstgalleriet gallery to decorate their head office. Marini's horse and rider sculptures initially appeared in 1936, becoming increasingly abstract with the dawn of the Second World War. Born in 1901 in Pistoia, Tuscany, he studied sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts, Florence, after initially taking lessons in drawing and painting. The simple elegance of Etruscan art inspired him, as did the sculptures at Bamberg Cathedral in Germany, and Egyptian and Chinese art (notably of the Tang dynasty). He is naturally associated with the other artists experimenting

STOCKHOLM

with new modes of figuration, who all made a lasting imprint on the landscape of 20th century art, and is considered one of the great "M's" in Italian sculpture alongside Arturo Martini, Giacomo Manzù and Marcello Mascherini. He was also a close friend of Swiss sculptor Alberto Giacometti. This sculpture could be seen as part of a poem assembled over several decades. Later horse and rider pieces are less balanced, with the symbiosis between the two figures less apparent. "Il miracolo" 1959-1960 marks the climax of Marini's abstract Brutalism. "Gentiluomo a cavallo", then, perhaps represents a moment of seeming tranquillity in a modern world on the verge of war.

Anna Stephens