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FINE ART & ANTIQUE FURNITURE

92 Fulham Road, London, SW3 6HR, United Kingdom - Tel: +44 (20) 7584 2200 - Web: www.godsonandcoles.co.uk



John Milne (1931 - 1978)

Gnathos, 1967

REF940

(Original carving in wood dated 1960)

Height: 25 in (63.5 cm)

Width: 34 in (86.5 cm)

Depth: 14 ½ in (37 cm)

Patinated bronze on slate base

Signed, dated and numbered 3/3 on base

EXHIBITION

Austin Reed Gallery, London, St Ives Group 3rd Exhibition, July-August 1971, cat. 20

Other casts in the permanent collections at the Tate Britain, London and the Arts Council, London

Accompanied by a letter from the artist, dated 18th February 1972, the original copy held by the Tate Britain, London; published in the Tate Gallery Report 1970-1972, London 1972.

DESCRIPTION

Gnathos, 1967 is an important sculpture by Milne, who made two editions of the piece, each with three casts; one patinated, one polished bronze. Milne wrote: "I often cast works with more than one type of finish in order to be absolutely sure that the final result is the most perfect that I can obtain." A polished edition belongs in the permanent collection of the Tate Britain, London, with another belonging to the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Of this sculpture Milne wrote: The Greek word 'Gnathos' means 'jaw' or 'jawbone' which describes my feeling of biting or 'getting ones teeth into something' be that something my life, or my work – this was the emotion of the sculpture. Gnathos was a complete change of direction in my work at that point (1960)."

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

John Milne (1931-1978) was born in Lancashire. He first studied electrical engineering at Salford Royal Technical College in 1945, transferring to the art school at the College, specialising in Sculpture, until 1951. In the following year he attended the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere, in Paris. For two years he was then a pupil of Barbara Hepworth as well as her assistant.

He is regarded as one of the most interesting and sophisticated of the sculptors associated with St. Ives, the English post-war avant-garde movement. His work of the fifties owed much to the St. Ives milieu in which he lived. Later, however, Milne was greatly influenced by the landscape and architecture of Greece, Persia and North Africa so that his mature work assumed a more international flavour.

He participated in many solo and group shows during his career, most notably at Newlyn Society, Plymouth City Art Gallery (including a retrospective in 1971) and Genesis Galleries, New York. His work is held by the Tate Gallery, London. Tragically Milne died in 1978 at the age of 47.