HANDLE POT WITH MASKS GUSTAV GURSCHNER K.K. KUNST-ERZGIESSEREI CA. 1904

Small handle pot with theater masks, design Gustav Gurschner, manufactured by K.K. Kunst-Erzgiesserei Wien, circa 1904, bronze patinated, signed

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Gustav Gurschner was one of the most important bronziers of Viennese Jugendstil. He was member of the artists association Wiener Secession and Hagenbund and contributed his distinctive formal language to Viennese arts and crafts around 1900.

This handle pot falls into the category of Gurschner's small sculptures, including figural sculptures and various bronze vessels. In its shape it is reminiscent of an antique cauldron and is adorned with two grimacing heads. With their puffed cheeks and grotesque expressions, they strongly remind of theatrical masks from ancient Greek comedy. This reference to costume and amusement may well have been the reason why this particular model was chosen as a ball donation for the 1905 Vienna Hunters' Ball. Such giveaways presented by the host were intended to remind visitors of a particular society- event they had been attending.

With the curious design of this vessel, Gustav Gurschner again impressively demonstrates his versatility.

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