



**PUTTO PAPAGENO MICHAEL
POWOLNY WIENERBERGER
CA. 1916/17**

€65.000,00

Large garden figure "Papageno", Michael
Powolny, Wienerberger AG, ca. 1916/17

Concurrently with the sale of Wiener Keramik, founded by Bertold Löffler and Michael Powolny, Wienerberger AG decided to improve its reputation by producing its own high quality ceramics. To this end, it concluded a cooperation agreement with the artist Michael Powolny, in the course of which he was to supply Wienerberger AG with designs of representative artworks.

One of the most famous figures was the Papageno putto, an impressively large composition based on the figure of the bird catcher from Mozart's Magic Flute. Standing on a round footplate, Papageno strikes his carillon to attract birds. Songbirds, parrots and various owls have already gathered around him, magically attracted by his playing and singing. On his back, the feather-adorned putto carries the opened birdcage. The execution of the complex scenery was demanding and testifies to the mastery of the craftsmen in charge.

The richly detailed depiction needed structural reinforcement to stand firm in the kiln and to withstand the weight of the putto. The lush vegetation behind the putto thus supports not only the graceful stance of the large figure but also the birdcage with its struts. The latter was particularly complex to execute. The structure helped the huge pottery survive the dangers of the firing process unscathed.

The Papageno Putto is among the most impressive and complex ceramics Powolny ever designed. Due to the challenging execution and associated costs, it was only produced a distinctly small number of times. Two other examples can be found in the Niederösterreichisches Landesmuseum and the Museum of Applied Arts Vienna.















